

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Politeness research, initiated by scholars like Lakoff, Brown and Levinson, and Leech, has grown significantly as a research area in Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics, and Sociolinguistics. Despite its long history, politeness remains a relevant and thriving field of research in Pragmatics. At first, politeness research combined theories of meaning creation and speech act analysis to examine how language use varies per context and utterances. However, in recent years, the field has expanded to include two main areas: the development of improved theory and methodology, and the study of a broader range of linguistic phenomena and data types<sup>1</sup>.

The study of polite language is a component of Pragmatics, a field that underwent a shift in the latter half of the 20th century, primarily due to the contributions of Dell Hymes, John Austin, and John Searle. These scholars criticized the previous narrow focus on language grammar and advocated a greater emphasis on examining communicative competence and real-life language use. While there is no consensus on the definition of Pragmatics within linguistic studies, it is generally viewed as a functional approach that takes into account the cognitive, social, and cultural dimensions of language and its significance in human life<sup>2</sup>.

The study of politeness in the field of Pragmatics is concerned with the interpersonal aspect of language use, beyond its purely informational function. Communication involves both the message's content and the relationship between the speakers. Politeness research focuses on how language is used in communication and its effects on the relationship between the speakers. The field of "interpersonal Pragmatics"

investigates how cultural, societal, and personal factors shape the relational aspect of interactions between people. This perspective does not constitute an independent theory but rather a framework to analyse language use<sup>2</sup>.

A study on social media usage found that there is increasing interest among researchers in the field of linguistics to study impoliteness. However, most prior research was concentrated on face-to-face interactions. As technology rapidly progressed, including the widespread use of computers and the Internet, communication methods underwent significant transformation. People now communicate through various means beyond in-person or telephone conversations, leading to significant evolution in how individuals communicate and respond to communication. This evolution led to noticeable differences in reactions to face-to-face and on-line communication<sup>3</sup>. This study on social media usage also discussed how impoliteness can be a tool for those who hold power, providing them with confidence to behave rudely or disrespectfully. Impoliteness is not limited to oral communication, it can also be conveyed through written comments on social media. Social media provides a platform where people can express their opinions freely, and the dissemination of information is rapid and widespread. Through social media, we can gain insights into how people use language by analyzing the posts and comments they make. Generally, social media users engage in direct and confrontational exchanges, particularly when responding to comments from influential individuals or public figures. The principle of free speech on social media allow users to express their opinions without any restrictions, which has resulted in an increase in the use of profanity and disrespectful language. However, these expressions are often not taken seriously by many users and have instead become more prevalent<sup>3</sup>.

*Twitter* is a popular social media platform that has hundreds of millions of active users worldwide. As of the fourth quarter of 2022, *Twitter* had around 330 million monthly active users, with most of them residing in the United States. Studies have revealed that approximately 22% of American adults use *Twitter*, with higher usage rates among younger generations, highly educated individuals, high-income earners, and racial and ethnic minorities<sup>4</sup>. A study also states that *Twitter* users are highly engaged with the platform, spending more than an hour on the site daily. They are also more likely to engage with news content on *Twitter* than on other social media platforms<sup>5</sup>. In 2021, a survey showed that *Twitter* is considered highly trustworthy for news and information compared to other social media platforms, with 56% of respondents expressing confidence in the information they see on the site. This highlights the popularity and widespread use of *Twitter*, along with its rapidly expanding user base, high levels of engagement, and the trust it garners from its users<sup>6</sup>. Statistics indicate that *Twitter* has a high level of usage in Nigeria, with a usage rate of 21%. Only *Facebook* surpasses *Twitter* in terms of usage, with 50% of internet users in Nigeria utilizing the platform<sup>7</sup>. The platform is therefore a platform of choice among internet users in Nigeria. It is therefore worthy of academic consideration.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Many studies have examined politeness and impoliteness especially when found in how language is used on social media. A study which examined the usage of impolite language on *YouTube* used rapport management model, however it did not focus on any geographical location<sup>9</sup>. Another study examined impoliteness and hate speech by users of *Twitter* in Brazil using the theory of form and reference of swear words<sup>10</sup>. Another study focused on impoliteness in political tweets but does not have a geographical focus and it used impoliteness strategies<sup>11</sup>. A research examined hate

expressions directed at Meghan Markle, a celebrity on *Twitter* by netizens, that is *Twitter* users from various locations. This study used theories by Culpeper, Mondal et al and Bebee<sup>12</sup>. A study investigated how emotions are expressed via impolite language on *Instagram* by Indonesian users. This study used the theory of the form and reference of swear words and the theory of impoliteness<sup>13</sup>. These studies examined politeness, impoliteness and hate speech on various social media platforms. However, studies which examined (im)politeness and rapport management by *Twitter* users in Nigeria are few. Therefore this study investigated the use of (im)politeness in selected *Twitter* posts and replies by Nigerian users, with the goal of identifying and highlighting the polite and impolite language used.

The problem addressed in this study is the discovery that some *Twitter* users in Nigeria post tweets and replies that express both politeness and impoliteness. These users experience emotional distress and suicidal tendencies due to the negative reception their tweets enjoy, a negative reception which is referred to as "dragging" on the platform.

### **1.3 Justification for the Study**

This work is located in the Socio-Pragmatics area of linguistics research. It considered how language is used to either enhance or attack face and other dimensions of personality in interaction, especially on *Twitter*. In view of this, the work considered how social media, specifically *Twitter*, is seen by many as a means of entertainment and fun, thereby helping them find relief from the rigour and stress of daily life. These people are usually disappointed if the use of language exacerbates their condition instead of helping them find relief. They access the platform only to be faced with impolite use of language which causes offence and leads to mental anguish for them.

The posters of the tweets which have this effect are usually trying to entertain themselves too (or “catch cruise” in the parlance of the vocabulary of Nigerian *Twitter* users). This in turn makes them receive undesirable responses to their posts and replies. This can affect certain groups of people on the platform economically since they have gathered a large following to whom they advertise various products and services.

#### **1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The study aims to analyse the politeness or impoliteness of the language use in some *Twitter* posts and replies of Nigerian *Twitter* users. The specific objectives are to:

1. identify and categorize the forms of face and sociality rights in *Twitter* posts, and in *Twitter* replies,
2. analyze the linguistic devices used to activate (im)politeness, and support/infringement of rights in *Twitter* posts and replies,
3. comment on the pragmatic functions and implications of the faces and rights in selected *Twitter* posts and replies,
4. identify strategies used to threaten/enhance face or support/infringe equity rights and association rights in selected *Twitter* posts and replies.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What are the forms of face and sociality rights in *Twitter* posts and in *Twitter* replies?
2. What are the linguistic devices used to activate rapport management/mismanagement in *Twitter* posts and replies?
3. What are the pragmatic functions and implications of the faces and rights in selected *Twitter* posts and replies?

4. What are the strategies used to enhance or threaten face in selected *Twitter* posts and replies?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study examines two language phenomena namely politeness and impoliteness from the perspective of rapport management. It is significant to the use of language on *Twitter* by Nigerians as it not only examine the emotional impact of language use in a social setting, it also examines its effect on rapport between users of *Twitter*.

The final draft of this work will be published in an on-line publication outlet for public consumption. It will add to the body of existing knowledge in discourse Pragmatics and new media discourse. It also further validates the theoretical framework used for analysis in the work.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

This research covers an area of Pragmatics specifically, (im)politeness. In other words, it examines how utterances either enhance or attack face in social media interactions. It also examines how language use either supports or infringes on sociality rights of interactants. The geographical focus of this study is Nigeria, thus it examines tweets originating from Nigerian *Twitter* handles. The tweets used are actually sourced from *Facebook* pages which re-post such tweets because of their entertainment value.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Pragmatics:** A branch of linguistics which studies utterance meaning rather than sentence meaning. It examines how speaker intent for example, intent to be (im)polite and context shape the meaning of what is written or said.

**SocioPragmatics:** The meaning of communicative events as determined by the specific social context(s) in which language is used.

**Rapport Mismanagement:** Face threat. The act of using language and other tools of interaction to offend others or to cause emotional hurt. It also involves the use of language to infringe on other peoples' sociality rights. This is usually done to assert oneself.

**Rapport Management:** The use of language to enhance the face(s) of interactant(s) while interacting. It also entails the use of language to support the sociality right of interactant(s). This is usually done to create or maintain good relationship with others.

**Face:** The value an individual claims for himself/herself in an interaction with others.

**Quality Face:** This refers to the value we claim for our self in terms of competence, abilities and appearance.

**Relational Face:** This face is relevant when dealing with significant other(s). It is therefore the self in relationship.

**Social Identity Face:** This is the public worth we place on our self.

**Sociality Rights:** This means the social identity we feel entitled to in interaction. There are two types of social identity rights namely equity rights and social identity rights.

**Equity Rights:** The right to not be imposed upon, exploited or disadvantaged.

**Association Rights:** The rights we enjoy as a member of a group by virtue of our interaction with others.

**Strategy:** It is the logical or reasoned use of language to achieve certain goals. It is also the coordination of communicative event through the use of shared knowledge about how language is routinely used within particular communities<sup>13</sup>.

**Twitter:** A micro-blogging social media website and software application where interactants (tweeters) upload short posts known as tweets, pictures and videos.

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## Endnotes

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## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter examines various scholarly works that have been done on the topic under consideration. This is done to locate the work in the milieu of academic research where it belongs. The review examines various concepts, theories and studies which are relevant to the topic. The thematic thrust of the review is to show that politeness as a concept cannot be considered with attendant neglect of impoliteness. The reason for this is that the former cannot enjoy analytical coherence. It is also done with a view to showing that impoliteness can be strategic, systematic, sophisticated and quite common. This qualifies it as a subject of study.

#### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

##### **2.1.1 Pragmatics and Pragmatic Competence**

Pragmatics is the study of the meaning of utterances. It is the study of how contextual factors like presupposition, shared knowledge, participants etc. determine the meaning of utterances. While sentences, clauses and phrases make up utterances, they are not the major purview of pragmatics<sup>1</sup>.

Utterance is the object of study in Pragmatics. Similar to this concept is the concept of context. What makes an utterance meaningful is the context in which it was uttered. In other words, Pragmatics looks beyond semantics and logic to decipher the meaning of an expression<sup>1</sup>. Things like speaker intention, hearer perception, shared knowledge, presupposition, and so on form the basis of meaning negotiation in Pragmatics. At the heart of Pragmatics is the question: what does a speaker mean when he says or writes something? This of course requires an understanding of the verbal signals used in spoken communication and visual symbols cum words, phrases, sentences plus text

used in communication<sup>2</sup>. However the precise meaning of what a speaker says is put in focus by the social and physical context of communication<sup>2</sup>. This means that an understanding of words, sentences, phrases and the context of language use is required in Pragmatics. As a matter of fact, an author defines Pragmatics as the study of speaker meaning or what the speaker means by an utterance meaning by the term “utterance” actual use of language in a particular context<sup>2</sup>.

Pragmatics studies the attributes of utterances using various theories. The process of studying these attributes classifies the field of Pragmatics into near side Pragmatics and far side Pragmatics<sup>1</sup>. The former x-rays ambiguity and vagueness with a view to deciphering meaning from the twin phenomena, indexicals and demonstratives, anaphors and aspects of presupposition. These deal with deictics, that is the use of language to point at something or someone or to a particular point in time. How context of usage and speaker intention helps to resolve these is the focal point of near side Pragmatics. The latter deals with what language is used to do. When something is uttered, the speaker usually wants to do something or effect something. What is done with the use of language is the purview of far side Pragmatics. Under this class of Pragmatics speech acts and implicature is primarily dealt with.

The areas of linguistic study, that is the scope, found under Pragmatics include deixes, speech act theory, conversational implicature, conversational maxims, relevance, presupposition, applied Pragmatics, and general Pragmatics<sup>3</sup>. Certain linguistic items do not carry meaning except what they refer to is clearly shown in context. As stated earlier, this area of Pragmatics is known as deixis. It studies how words like here, there, where, you and so on yield meaning from contextual usage. When these words are used the specific thing or person referred to or pointed at cannot be determined without resorting to the context in which they are used. If for instance a person says

“We are here.” at the end of a journey, someone who is new to the place might ask “Where is here?”, indicating that the word here is meaningless until the name of the place is specified or clearly stated. In other words, the specific name pointed to by the word “here” is important for contextual understanding to take place.

Speech act theory analyzes what is done using language. It posits that language is not merely a tool of expression: it is also a tool for getting things done. This dimension of language was brought to the fore by the works of J.L. Austin and J.R. Searle<sup>4</sup>. While language is generally known to communicate ideas and feelings, it also does certain things alongside communication. This theory explains how language is used to command, make requests, ask questions, express emotions, and make declarations. These speech acts form the basis of classification of sentences into imperatives, interrogatives, statements and exclamations. Unsurprisingly, these classes are collectively referred to as functional classification of sentences thereby highlighting that its about utterances or language in use and goes beyond the rules of grammar. As a matter of course, context is an important dimension of the usage of language in the functions highlighted above. For instance, when talking to a superior, a subordinate is much more likely to use requests rather than commands. The reverse is also true.

Conversational implicature in another area of study in Pragmatics. This area examines how meaning is read between the lines. This process of reading between the lines is otherwise known as inference<sup>5</sup>. Conversational implicature is about how speakers say less than they mean but hearers are still able to decipher what is said. For instance a person may ask “When are we writing the assignment?” and another responds “Power outages are the order of the day.” While the respondent has not said anything remotely connected to writing, the speaker understands the response nevertheless. The

contextual information which makes this possible is the fact that they both work for a newspaper company.

Conversational maxims explain how people subconsciously cooperate in the process of conversing. At the heart of this area of Pragmatics is the work of Grice Paul who proposed the cooperative principles. The Cooperative Principle by Grice refers to the idea that communication involves a shared understanding between speakers and listeners, where both parties cooperate to achieve a common goal of effective communication<sup>6</sup>. Grice expanded on this principle by outlining four conversational maxims that individuals should follow in order to effectively cooperate in conversation: quantity, quality, relation, and manner. These maxims suggest that speakers should provide as much information as necessary and no more, be truthful in their speech, stay relevant to the conversation, and be clear and organized in their delivery. While the Cooperative Principle is not a set of strict rules, it is a generally recognized and useful framework for understanding effective communication. The Cooperative Principle has been recognized as an important concept in Pragmatics, and its observance is helpful in improving language communication skills.

### **2.1.2 Sociolinguistics and Sociolinguistic Competence**

Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and society. It is an interdisciplinary field that draws on linguistics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and communication studies. The aim of Sociolinguistics is to understand how language is used in different social contexts and how it reflects and influences society's attitudes, values, and beliefs<sup>7</sup>.

One of the key concepts in Sociolinguistics is "language variation." This refers to the idea that there are different ways of speaking a language, depending on factors such

as region, social class, ethnicity, and gender<sup>8</sup>. For example, African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is a distinct variety of English that is commonly used by African Americans and has its own grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Another important concept in Sociolinguistics is "language and identity." This refers to the idea that people use language to express their identity and to create a sense of belonging to a particular group<sup>8</sup>. For example, people may use particular accents, slang, or language styles to signal their membership in a particular group or to express their individuality.

A key figure in the development of Sociolinguistics is William Labov, who is widely recognized as the founder of the sociolinguistic approach to the study of language variation<sup>8</sup>. Labov's studies on African American Vernacular English and language variation in New York City helped to establish the field of Sociolinguistics as a discipline in its own right.

Another influential figure in the field of Sociolinguistics is Deborah Tannen, who has made significant contributions to our understanding of gender and language. Tannen's research has shown that men and women use language differently and that these differences can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts in communication<sup>8</sup>.

In conclusion, Sociolinguistics is a rich and dynamic linguistic field that sheds light on the relationship between language and society. It offers a unique perspective on how language reflects and influences social attitudes, values, and beliefs, and how language can be used to express identity and create a sense of belonging.

Sociolinguistic competence refers to a speaker's understanding of the social and cultural context in which language is used, and their ability to use language appropriately in those situations<sup>9</sup>. It encompasses the knowledge of the sociolinguistic

rules and norms that govern language use, such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and style, as well as the awareness of the social, cultural, and historical context in which the language is used.

Sociolinguistic competence is an important component of communicative competence, which is the ability to use language effectively for social purposes. It enables speakers to understand and interpret the messages conveyed by others, and to use language in a way that is appropriate and effective in different social contexts<sup>9</sup>.

Studies in Sociolinguistics have shown that sociolinguistic competence is shaped by a range of factors, including age, gender, ethnicity, social class, and education<sup>10, 11, 12</sup>. For example, research has found that speakers from different ethnic and social groups may use language differently, and that these differences may be associated with social, cultural, and historical factors.

There is a growing body of research on the development of sociolinguistic competence in second language learners. This research has found that, in order to develop sociolinguistic competence in a second language, learners need to have exposure to the language in context, and to have opportunities to practice using the language in real-life situations<sup>10</sup>.

In conclusion, sociolinguistic competence is a critical component of effective communication, and it is shaped by a range of social, cultural, and historical factors.

### **2.1.3 Politeness**

Politeness has been conceptualised as the use of language to mitigate or avoid face threatening acts<sup>13</sup>. It is the act of showing awareness and consideration for the social self-image or face of other people<sup>1</sup>. Failure to show awareness for other people's face

results in emotional discomfort and embarrassment for the affected co-interactant. This definition narrows politeness down to the field of Pragmatics although politeness is also expressed through body language which is outside the purview of Pragmatics but which, however contributes to the meaning making process of communication between humans. This makes politeness an interdisciplinary concept since it can thus be considered in sociology and communication studies as well. However, for the purpose of this study, its linguistic manifestation through language is the sole focus. Only insights which can help with the pragmalinguistic understanding of the concept is drawn from other fields of study.

Explaining the phenomena of politeness in linguistics is traditionally done with the aid of what is known as Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. This prominent theory which was propounded in 1978 and revised in 1987 is based on Goffman's concept of face. Goffman coined the term positive face and stated its importance to interactions. Brown and Levinson expanded this concept of face and also proposed other components of the theory<sup>14</sup>. These include positive face, negative face, face threatening acts, politeness strategies and factors which influence strategy choice<sup>15</sup>.

The politeness theory expanded the concept of face by stating that face is a concept with two sides. The first side stipulates that face has a positive view and a negative view. The second side stipulates that the positive and negative views of face capture the wants of co-interactants. These concepts of face are related with politeness. Thus the positive and negative characteristics of face are referred to as positive politeness and negative politeness respectively. Positive politeness points to the use of language to satisfy the needs of positive face. It is the use of language to acknowledge a co-interactants membership of a social group, that is to show that he is liked and approved of<sup>1</sup>. In contrast, negative face points to the use of language to address the

need to not impose upon others. It is the use of language to acknowledge the independence or autonomy of others<sup>1</sup>. In line with Goffman's proposition, this theory posits that smooth interactions between co-interactants depends solely on the recognition of the other's face by each interactant.

The need to recognize or maintain others face is occasioned by possibility of threatening other peoples' face. This is done via face threatening acts. These acts can take the form of words or language, they can be conveyed through tone of voice, inflection etc. and they can also be in the form of facial expressions and other forms of body language. Like face, face threatening acts can either be positive or negative in nature. Face threatening acts can either threaten an interactant's sense of acceptance to a group or impose upon him by depriving him of his autonomy.

In the process of preventing face threatening acts, politeness theory proposes politeness strategies which interactants use to mitigate or preclude them. These include Bald-on-record, Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Off-record And Don't do the FTA strategies<sup>16</sup>. Bald-on-record politeness involve doing the face threatening act on record in direct, and clear manner using few words without any form of redress. Positive politeness mitigates the face threatening act by highlighting a sense of membership in a group and it is on record. Negative politeness mitigates the face threatening act by downplaying imposition on another's autonomy. Off-record politeness communicates in a way that what is said can be denied while Don't do the FTA completely avoids saying anything<sup>13</sup>. Politeness strategies in this theory are taken to mean "rational linguistic means for achieving certain ends and goals<sup>17</sup>."

Politeness theory also considers the social factors which inform the selection of a strategy over others in particular contexts. The factors considered include the relative power, social distance and degree of imposition. The factors combine in various ways to determine the choice of politeness strategy used by co-interactants. Relative power refers to the social status of both the speaker and the hearer. Social distance means how familiar they are with each other. Degree of imposition is the rank that a co-interactant enjoys. It is therefore also known as absolute rank. It determines a co-interactants capacity to impose his ideas and desires on others. These factors are important as they determine the appropriate linguistic tools a co-interactant can use in an interaction.

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is a seminal contribution to the understanding of politeness. It catalyzed inquiry into the notions of face, politeness, its strategies etc. These inquiries critiqued the claims of the theory and various aspects of it. The claim of the proponents that the theory's concepts of face and politeness are universally applicable to all cultures is one of the focal points of criticism. Brown and Levinson concluded that their conception of face as having both a positive and a negative characteristic is valid across cultures. They believe cultural variation only determines which speech act affect each type of face. A scholar argues that this is not the case. The scholar stipulated that Brown and Levinson need to study non-Western cultures before coming to this conclusion<sup>18</sup>. A study shows that the concept of of face in non-Western culture is different from Brown and Levinson's. For instance, the Chinese and Japanese notions of face contain an element of morality. For a person to be approved and liked in Chinese and Japanese communities, he needs to be seen in a good light by members of his community. In other words, while Brown and Levinson define positive politeness as a face saving act which shows approval and likeness for a

person, the Chinese concept of face requires that it also involve recognition of the reputation and respect an individual enjoys by virtue of his relationship with others in his community. The absence of this moral component in Brown and Levinson's concept of face means that it is not universally applicable.

Another criticism of the theory is its focus on only the use of speech acts to express politeness and negligence of group identity within a community<sup>19</sup>. A study demonstrated that expression of impolite use of language has its own purpose within certain groups in a society e.g. in the army and in literary drama<sup>11</sup>. This criticism highlights the impact group identity has on the expression of politeness hence its importance in the study of the phenomena. The lack of focus on group identity and failure to treat impoliteness once again shows that politeness theory is not universally applicable as a framework for explaining and predicting politeness.

The inadequacy of the theory's conceptualization and structuring of face is further buttressed by a study which defines what face is in Chinese culture<sup>21</sup>. This study finds that the Chinese concept of face refers to the respect and reputation an individual enjoys as a result of his interaction with others in his community. The study also posits that the structure of face in Chinese culture is different from Brown and Levinson's positive and negative face in some regards. Positive face in Chinese culture is known as *lian* and it entails a moral component alongside the desire to be liked and approved. The moral component makes *lian* different from Brown and Levinson's positive face. Negative face, on the other hand, is known as *mianzi*. It is the prestige and reputation of an individual as determined by external factors namely the social norms of his immediate community. Its determination by social norms once

again highlights the importance of group identity as determined by an individual's sociocultural milieu. These dual differences question the applicability of politeness theory across cultures.

It has also been argued that the concept of autonomy in the theory is based on the proponents' prioritization of the founding of American and European cultures on individualism. East Asian culture is instead found on communalism<sup>22</sup>.

A study investigated the applicability of the theory to non-goal-oriented interaction using Japanese participants. This study found that the participants in the investigation displayed certain attributes which were not explained by the theory. These attributes were instead explained as forms of politeness. However, the study finds that politeness theory is suitable for non-goal-oriented interactions. This means that it is oriented to the hearer and not the speaker, thereby making it deficient for universal application<sup>23</sup>.

Another criticism of the theory is that it does not account for self politeness. It only accounts for processes of interaction in which face is lost by a co-interactant in order to save the face of others<sup>24</sup>.

Other studies carried out in Japan also indicate that politeness theory does not apply to Eastern cultures. A study argues that it is not suitable for Japanese politeness<sup>12</sup>. Another study indicates that the desire to be free from imposition is absent in the

Japanese culture. Hence the inability of politeness theory to explain the way speech acts are expressed in Japanese<sup>25</sup>.

Contrasting viewpoints were raised by other scholars which sought to highlight similarities between Western Pragmatics and Eastern Pragmatics. These similarities include areas like social power, use of honorifics, use of euphemisms, hedging, questioning, and apologising, and the use of the Japanese expression ‘yoroshiku oregaishimasu’, which indicates deferential begging and implies the recognition of the higher rank and prestige of another<sup>21, 15, 16</sup>. Although these studies show that Western Pragmatics and Eastern Pragmatics are similar in certain aspects, they do not investigate the concepts critical to politeness theory specifically. Thus, the need for a theory which can transcend sociocultural boundaries is not filled by the theory. Moreover the theory does not account for impoliteness making it analytically deficient.

The deficiencies highlighted in the politeness theory stimulated scholarly investigations which led to the proposition of other theories. One of them is the Rapport Management which is based on it but accounts for sociocultural differences in the conceptualization of face and politeness.

#### **2.1.4 Impoliteness**

Debate surrounds the term impoliteness. The debate stem from issues like the appropriate label to use for the concept, the role of intention in its conceptualization, the concepts and categories that can be used to explain its properties, the relationships between these concepts and categories and, the analytical framework suited to its analysis<sup>28</sup>. Scholars however agree on one thing: the term implies the use of language

which is perceived to affect one or more interactant(s) negatively<sup>25</sup>. In other words, it is agreed that impoliteness causes offence.

As regards the appropriate label, a work based on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory termed the phenomena impoliteness<sup>17</sup>. However, a scholar argues that the term impoliteness does not adequately articulate the concept it is supposed to represent. This is because the words sounds "too tame" to describe intentional use of language to threaten face. Also, its connection to the term politeness is unclear. The term "face attack" was suggested instead<sup>29</sup>. This is similar to the position taken by another scholar who believes that rudeness rather than impoliteness should be used because it features more in everyday language than the latter<sup>30</sup>. Both views differ from the traditional position of conceptualizing the phenomena as impoliteness<sup>31</sup>.

Intentionality is another component of impoliteness which causes debate. The traditional view is that impoliteness is an intentional act which is usually premeditated. The act of intentional impoliteness is then inferred by hearer(s)<sup>26</sup>.

Many scholars have defined the term impoliteness from various perspectives. According to a scholar, impoliteness is realized when a speaker intentionally threatens the public self-image of another person with the use of language and other communicative means<sup>26</sup>. The scholar further states that sometimes the speaker may not intentionally want to threaten the self-image or identity of another but that the threat may result from the hearer's perception of what is communicated<sup>26</sup>. Also, impoliteness may be realized via a combination of both<sup>15</sup>. Another scholar defines it as a face-aggravating behaviour. The aggravation is occasioned by the exhibition of said behaviour in certain contexts<sup>26</sup>. The concept was described as rudeness by another scholar<sup>27</sup>. The scholar conceptualized it as a face threatening act or a feature

of a face threatening act which breaks a rule of interaction in a particular social context<sup>15</sup>. Another work on the concept also describes it as rudeness which is non-cooperative and competitive. Thus, it can destabilize personal relationships of co-interactants<sup>15</sup>.

### **2.1.5 Social Media**

Social media refers to online platforms that facilitate the sharing of ideas and information through virtual networks. It is a means of socializing through the use of computers, phones and other gadgets that have access to the internet. It helps people with similar social interests to converge virtually in order to discuss topics, issues, news items etc. which they find worthy of consideration. It can also be a means of collaboration and networking with people of common interests in terms of profession<sup>28</sup>.

Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube have transformed communication by creating virtual networks for sharing ideas and information. With 4.7 billion users, social media represents about 60% of the world's population, with messaging apps and social platforms being the most popular. Twitter, a widely used social networking site, allows users to share concise messages called tweets, combining elements of blogging and instant messaging. It serves various purposes, such as following brands, connecting with friends, and staying informed about influential figures, news, and events. Notable features include rapid information sharing through permanent and searchable tweets, with the option to protect visibility to approved followers. Founded in 2006, "twitter" aligns with the platform's goal of sharing prompt information, akin to the bursts of inconsequential information or bird chirps <sup>28,29</sup>. The use of *Twitter* provides innumerable instances of language use to

manage or mismanage rapport by users of the platform in Nigeria. These instances provide the data for the present study.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.1 Rapport Management Model**

As shown in the section on politeness and politeness theory, Brown and Levinson's theory has some shortcomings. In order to address these shortcomings, the rapport management model was created. The model addresses issues like its inability to transcend cultural boundaries due to inadequacies in its conceptualization of face, and failure to adequately account for impoliteness.

The model replaces the term politeness with rapport. This was done because its proponent argues that the former is ambiguous and confusing. The former implies that only the use of formal and deferential language qualify as polite use of language. In other words, only words like sir, madam, please, kindly and words that show gratitude (thank you, I'm grateful etc) indicate politeness. However, in actual language use, perception of politeness or impoliteness is context dependent. What is important is the appropriateness of what is said depending on several factors. For instance it would be inappropriate to use formal language when talking to a bosom friend. Moreover, the term does not account for impoliteness when used in Brown and Levinson's politeness theory since it means the use of language in cordial human relationships<sup>34</sup>.

In contrast to Brown and Levinson's concept of politeness, rapport in this model means the subjective perception people have of (dis)harmony in human interpersonal relationships. The mention of harmony and disharmony in this definition captures the use of the model for analysing both politeness and impoliteness. Apart from the

(dis)harmony dichotomy, the definition of rapport also mention other dichotomies. These include smoothness-turbulence and warmth-antagonism. These dichotomies are also present in other parts of the model. Their presence addresses the failure of politeness theory to account for impoliteness thereby making the model more robust than the former. The definition of the term also show that Spencer-Oatey recognizes the impact of context language use in human interactions.

### **2.2.1.1 Main Motivational Bases of Rapport**

Rapport management model has three bases namely: face sensitivities, social rights and obligations, and interactional goals<sup>37</sup>. These bases are not mutually exclusive. They collectively impact the outcome of any interaction. This they do by influencing the behaviour of co-interactants.

**2.2.1.1.1 Face Sensitivities:** Face in rapport management refers to the social value a person “effectively claims for himself by the line he has taken during a particular contact<sup>38</sup>.” Co-interactants want others to recognize their value based on the attributes they believe they possess. Failure to recognize these attribute(s) results in face loss. Sometimes, co-interactant(s) deny having certain attribute(s). Recognition of such denied attributes has the same effect.

Face sensitivities depend on three elements namely: quality face, relational face, social identity face as described as follows:

**Quality Face** refers to the value individuals claim for themselves in terms of personal attributes like abilities, competence, and appearance.

**Relational Face** refers to the value individuals claim for themselves in relationship(s) they enjoy with significant other(s).

**Social Identity Face** refers to the value individuals place on themselves with regards to their social or group roles.

These differentiation of face into three sub-elements takes care of certain deficiencies in Brown and Levinson's conceptualization of face. Politeness theory sees face as a concept which applies only to the individual. However, Rapport management model argues that there are three levels of interaction and that these levels ought to reflect in the conceptualization of face. These are individual, interpersonal and group level. Quality face, relational face, and social identity face corresponds with each level respectively. The addition of social identity face takes care of a point of criticism against politeness theory namely its failure to account for a sociocultural milieu in which the individual interacts. Rapport management model argues that the joy of a compliment and the embarrassment of criticism is experienced at the individual level, for instance. However, it can also result from the experience of a close significant other(s) or the experience of a group to which an individual belongs<sup>15</sup>.

Rapport management model also distinguishes between face types that emerge during interaction and the one which is durable over time. The former dynamically unfolds in interactions while the latter is tied to the prestige or good name an individual or a group has within their sociocultural milieu or community. This differentiation accounts for the Chinese conceptualization of face which is based on the reputation of a person as determined by the norms of his community otherwise conceptualized as *mianzi*<sup>18</sup>. This concept is captured as respectability face in rapport management model. Since this concept is also found in Japanese culture, its inclusion in rapport management model makes the model more robust and hence more suitable in different cultural domains of (im)politeness studies.

### 2.2.1.1.2 Sociality Rights and Obligations

Another point from which rapport management model departs from politeness theory is the conceptualization of negative face. A scholar from Eastern culture contend that the proposition of the latter that acts which impose on another are considered face threatening is not necessarily true for Eastern culture. Requests, offers and invitations are not perceived as face threatening by individuals involved in the scholar's study. Their perception of such acts is instead tied to their perception of their roles and relationships in the sociocultural milieu to which they belong. This perception entails a set of rights and obligations or duties that are tied to being a member of said sociocultural milieu. Certain behavioural expectations are expected to flow from the perception of these roles and relationships. Therefore, the central issue in this dimension of rapport management is not imposition but rather the decision by the individual to either fit into those roles and relationships or not<sup>19</sup>.

Rapport management model agrees with the Eastern scholar. It posits that rapport is influenced by people's perception of their roles and relationships in a given society or social group. The rights and obligations entailed in the perception affects rapport by creating certain behavioural expectations. In light of this, rapport management model defines sociality rights as basic entitlements people effectively claim for themselves in interactions with other people<sup>31</sup>. The basis of these basic rights are legal and conventional or normative behaviour. These basis have created a reiteration or pattern which means people expect certain things to happen within certain contexts. In other words, people develop a sense of entitlement to those patterns. When these things don't happen, people may feel irritated. It is noteworthy that these basic entitlements can be infringed, not threatened and the end result of such infringement

is irritation, not embarrassment. The bottom-line is, sociality rights differ from face in terms of their nature.

Rapport management model proposes two broad interactional principles to which people develop a sense of entitlement. These include equity rights and association rights. However, these two are not the only elements which are tied to the expectation of certain behavioural patterns. Other things tied to it are explicit and/or implicit definitions of roles they are to play and positions they hold.

**Equity Rights** is the belief that we are entitled to personal consideration from others. This means that we do not deserve to be treated unfairly, unduly imposed upon, ordered about unfairly and exploited. The element concerns autonomy and corresponds with negative face in politeness theory. It comprises of two elements: cost-benefit and autonomy-imposition<sup>35</sup>. In other words:

Equity rights = Cost-Benefit + Autonomy-Imposition.

Cost refer to the extent to which an individual is exploited and benefit is the advantage which they enjoy as a result of the exploitation . It also comprises of the belief that the costs and benefits of rapport should roughly be balanced in order to maintain positive rapport. This balancing is either achieved or not, through the principle of reciprocity or a lack of reciprocity respectively<sup>35</sup>.

Autonomy is the belief that we are entitled to independence while imposition is the extent to which others can impose upon us. The extent to which we lose autonomy and are imposed upon should be determined by personal consideration from others.

**Association Rights** is the belief that we are entitled to social involvement with others. The level of this social involvement is a function of the nature of our relationship with

them. Factors which influence this level of social involvement are personal preferences and sociocultural norms. This element of sociality right is related to the autonomy-imposition dichotomy. In other words, it relates to the extent to which people are allowed to control us or impose upon us. Two elements make up association rights namely interaction involvement-detachment and affective-detachment<sup>35</sup>. Involvement-detachment is the extent to which we associate with others or dissociate from them. Affective-detachment on the other hand, is the extent to which we share feelings, concerns and interests. In a nutshell,

Association rights = Interaction Involvement-Detachment + Affective Involvement-Detachment

#### **2.2.1.1.3 Interactional Goals**

This base of rapport refer to a co-interactant's wants from an interaction. These wants are of two types, relational and transactional. Relational goals refer to the use of rapport by co-interactants to create or maintain their friendship with others, while transactional goals refer to the use of rapport to achieve certain ends for instance to get information<sup>35</sup>. Alternatively, a mixture of both types of goals may form the wants of an interactant. The achievement or otherwise of these wants affect the perception of rapport by people: failure to achieve interactional goals leads to annoyance and frustration.

#### **2.2.2 Rapport Analysis Elements**

The process of managing rapport is based on the three basis mentioned above. Analysis of the process of rapport management or mismanagement is done using various various vis-a-vis rapport orientation, rapport management domain, rapport management strategies and rapport management across cultures<sup>35</sup>.

### **2.2.2.1 Rapport Orientation**

Rapport management model analyses the desires of co-interactant via how they oriented themselves towards interactions. Interactants may desire to strengthen relationships, maintain relationships, show a lack of concern in the quality of relationships, challenge or even impair relationships. These desires are analyzed by rapport management model as rapport enhancement, rapport maintenance, rapport neglect and rapport challenge respectively<sup>38</sup>.

### **2.2.2.2 Rapport Management Domain**

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory may be said to imply that certain aspects of communication threaten face e.g requests. However, scholars argue that various linguistic feature can threaten face. Based on this rapport management posits that the management of rapport is done in a number of closely related domains. These domains include illocutionary, discourse, participation, stylistics and nonverbal<sup>35</sup>.

Illocutionary domain deals with the performance of speech acts. Discourse domain refers to the structure and content of discourse. Conversational procedures like turn taking and the inclusion or otherwise of people present is captured by participation domain. Stylistics refers to paralinguistic features like tone, genre etc while nonverbal deals with gestures, facial expressions etc. These domains of language use are employed to analyze rapport.

### **2.2.2.3 Rapport Management Strategies**

The model mainly analyzes this domain using illocutionary speech acts. This is an area where the model requires more work<sup>35</sup>.

#### **2.2.2.4 Rapport Management Across Cultures**

Perception of appropriate ways of using language varies across different cultures. This difference in perception can determine the outcome of rapport management in different cultures. Cultures in this case may refer to national culture, family culture, tribal culture etc<sup>35</sup>. Whatever the type of culture may be, the model takes into account the following elements: how context is assessed, values held by people, the style of interaction, linguistic conventions of terms and phrases usage, and strategies used to manage rapport.

#### **2.2.3 Justification for the Use of Rapport Management Model for the Present Study**

Rapport management model is selected as the theoretical framework of analysis for the present study because it accounts for both politeness and impoliteness. Moreover, its conceptualization of face makes it more adequate than Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness. Also, its differentiation of rights from face fine tunes it for more precise analysis of the phenomena of politeness and impoliteness. Another point which justifies its selection is its removal of ambiguity from the concept politeness, preferring the term rapport instead and conceptualizing it to reflect the realities of actual language use.

### **2.3 Review of Empirical Studies**

Many studies have focused on the use of language both impolitely and politely on social media and through other means of communication. For instance, a study describes the politeness strategies used by female undergraduates of the English Language Studies department in a public Malaysian university<sup>35</sup>. The study uses the tweet updates of said female undergraduates as data. It also uses questionnaires to

gather demographic data and data on their awareness of how politeness is used on *Twitter*. Analysis of the data was done using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. Findings of the study show that four politeness strategies were used by participants in their tweets. Positive politeness enjoyed the highest level of usage followed by bald-on record, off-record, and negative politeness in that order. Positive politeness' enjoyment of the highest level of usage is occasioned by the absence of other communication cues to provide precise meaning for what is tweeted thereby increasing the possibility for misunderstanding. This possibility for misunderstanding what is tweeted is further increased by the limitation of tweets to 140 characters, overuse of profanity and ambiguity. The study is similar with the present one because they both focus on (im)politeness and they both make use of tweets as data. However, this study uses Spencer-Oatey's Rapport Management Model while the study under review made use of Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory.

Another study examines the role of politeness plays in customer service engagement on social media (*Twitter* specifically)<sup>39</sup>. The study uses a novel mining methodology to gather data on politeness strategies from customer interaction with two hundred and twenty (220) firms. Analysis of tweets for politeness is done using Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory. The study found that companies are more likely to respond to polite customers. It also found out that the likelihood of a response is further enhanced if the customer has a social status. The study is correlated with the current one where data used is concerned: the two studies make use of tweets. However, it diverges from the current one in terms of theoretical framework. The former uses Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory while the latter uses Spencer-Oatey's Rapport Management Model. It also diverges from the present study in terms of the domain of focus. While it examines engagement with customers, the present

study examines various domains of discourse vis-a-vis football, politics, social media usage etc. Moreover, the study under review is aimed at looking for a correlation between customer politeness and the response of certain companies while the present one only aims to describe how the language of (im)politeness is used on *Twitter* by Nigerians.

A similar study describes linguistic (in)directness in *Twitter* complaints<sup>40</sup>. This study contrasts how linguistic (in)directness is used in interactions between SNCF (the French National Railway company) and its customers on the one hand and the SNCB (the Belgian National Railway company) and its customers on the other. The study used complaint tweets on *Twitter* posted by customers and the responses given by the aforementioned companies. Analysis was done using Decock and Depraetere's taxonomy of complaints in interaction to categorise the explicitness or otherwise of complaints by customers. This paper argues that explicitness, also known as linguistic (in)directness, is different from (im)politeness or perceived face threat. There is a connection between the current study and the one reviewed in terms of data: tweets from *Twitter* are used by both. However, the present study focuses on the Pragmatics of (im)politeness while the reviewed study focuses on differentiating impoliteness from linguistic (in)directness. Also, the reviewed study focuses on how customers use the French language to make (in)direct complaints while the present study focuses on how English and Pidgin are used to communicate (im)politeness in Nigerian *Twitter* space.

A research work on the use of polite comments on the official *Instagram* page of the President of Indonesia was also carried out<sup>41</sup>. Comments of followers of the page which made use of positive politeness on the page were collected as data. These comments were collected using the note taking, documentation and heuristic listening

techniques. Analysis of the data was done using intralingual equivalent technique, the extralingual equivalent technique and the Levinson's politeness analysis technique. The intralingual equivalent technique was used to identify the politeness strategy used by the followers. The extralingual equivalent technique was used to identify the politeness of politeness and positive politeness used in the comments in line with the expectations of Javanese culture. The study found that the form of politeness which followers prefer to use is that of giving attention to speech partners. Followers were less likely to use the language of praise, influence, motivation and suggestion. This study converges with the present one in the area of medium of communication that is the two focus on social media. The two also focus on the same pragmatic concept of politeness. However, the studies diverge in terms of the social media platforms focused on (*Twitter* and *Instagram* respectively). Also, there is a point of divergence in the theoretical frameworks used.

Another related study investigates how the language of (im)politeness is used to articulate class struggles in Brazilian *Twitter*<sup>42</sup>. Tweets with hashtags related to the trending topic "What the poor do to survive" were collected as data for the study. Qualitative analysis was done to describe how the hashtags and the accompanying tweets made use of various (im)politeness strategies to mock rich and middle-class Brazilians. The analysis also categorized the (im)politeness strategies used. Findings of the study indicate that the tweets and hashtags were used to poke fun at social class divisions in Brazil. It also indicates that the tweets and hashtags are way of identifying the poster as a member of the lower class that as members of a community of practice. The study is similar to the current one in terms of the social media from which data was gathered. It is also similar in term of the pragmatic concept focused on namely (im)politeness. It however differs from the current one in term of

geographical focus. While the reviewed work focuses on Brazilian *Twitter*, the present one focuses on Nigerian *Twitter*. Another point of divergence is the language used in the tweets used as data. The present study used tweets made in English and Pidgin while the reviewed work made use of tweets made in Portuguese. The studies also differ in terms of the theoretical framework used.

A work done on how the expression of emotion is used to articulate impoliteness is also similar to the current study<sup>43</sup>. The study describes the form, reference, and impact of using emotional expressions as impoliteness markers. Data was collected from *Instagram*, specifically swear words used on three accounts on the platform. Observation and note-taking techniques were used to collect data, thereby making it a qualitative study. Theory of the form and reference of swear words in Indonesian developed and the theory of impoliteness were used for analysis. The result of the analysis showed that the swear words in the *Instagram* accounts which are used took the forms of words, phrases, and clauses. The swear words which appeared in the findings referenced characteristics/conditions, animals, objects, body parts, spirits, activities, and professions. These findings show that positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm or pseudo-politeness are impoliteness forms used by interactants. This study focuses on the pragmatic concept of (im)politeness thereby making it similar to the present study. Its collection of data from *Instagram* however makes it different from the present study. There is also a difference in the theoretical framework used.

A study on variations of responses to impoliteness is also similar to the present study<sup>44</sup>. This study examines the reactions of interactants to impolite language in five *YouTube* podcast videos. The study utilises descriptive qualitative data, which is authentic and in the form of real-life conversations between hosts and guests that

include impolite responses. Data was collected from five podcasts of Deddy Corbuzier on *YouTube*. The research methodology entailed taking notes and transcribing the speech with the help of a free-competence technique. Analysis was done with the aid of a pragmatic and contextual matching approach. Results of the study indicate that speech partners exhibit three types of responses when faced with impolite language, each with various representative variations. The basis for differentiation between these variations is mainly based on the variations themselves. "Offensive countering" is a variation where the speaker reacts with curses, ignores or dismisses the speech partner. "Defensive countering" is a response where the speaker defines their position in the interaction by presenting themselves as innocent, superior to others, and taking actions to protect themselves. The "Face Attack Response" entails accepting the impolite behavior, confirming the speech partner's claims, and striving to resolve the issue collaboratively. This study is similar to the present study in terms of focus on impoliteness and social media. However, its source of data is *YouTube* while the present study gathered data from *Twitter*. Also, while the study employed pragmatic and contextual matching approach, the present study makes use of rapport management model.

Another related study focuses on impoliteness in a variety of social situations especially where language is involved<sup>45</sup>. The study specifically examines how impoliteness is expressed through digital communication media, such as *Twitter* and blogs. The researchers collected a corpus of 512 hashtags from Brazilian *Twitter* and analyzed them to see if they were used to express offensive or impolite behavior. The findings indicate that hashtags served as a tool for intensifying the contents of tweets and framing them as aggressive, and that the targets of the verbal attacks were mainly politicians and public figures. The study highlights how the features of digital

communication can be utilized to convey impoliteness. This study and the current one are similar in terms of the media in focus specifically *Twitter*. The two studies also examine the language of impoliteness. However, the current study does not examine hashtags which makes it different from this study.

A work on the language of hate used on *Instagram* is also similar to the present study<sup>46</sup>. The study examines how the language of impoliteness is used to express hate towards celebrities on *Instagram*. Comments on the posts of the celebrities on the platform are gathered for use as data. Culpeper framework on politeness strategies were used to analyse data. The study found that five strategies of impoliteness are used with positive impoliteness enjoying the most use. This study and the present one are similar in terms of focus on social media. However, there are differences in terms of data used and the framework of analysis.

A study on *Twitter* hashtags involving the use of impolite language examines how hashtags involve the use of impolite language to express and reinforce impoliteness in Brazilian *Twitter*<sup>47</sup>. Hashtags from tweet were gathered as data for the study. The contextual conversations related to the tweets were also gathered to provide more information. Quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis was carried out on the data. The former was done to isolate hashtags containing impolite words while the latter was done using theoretical frameworks from Culpeper, Dynel and Hardaker to analyze the offensive potential of the hashtags. The findings of the study shows that hashtags are means of using impolite language to intensify impolite content of tweets. The study and the present one make use of data from tweets and are focused on the phenomena of impoliteness hence their similarity. There is however a difference in terms of theoretical framework of analysis.

A study titled ““Wikipedia does NOT tolerate your babbling!”: Impoliteness induced conflict (resolution) in a polylogal collaborative” is also relevant to this study<sup>48</sup>. It examines the use of impolite language on Wikipedia discussion forums. These forums constitute the source of data analysed. Apart from the language of impoliteness, this study also examines how language is used to negotiate vis-a-vis conflict creation, escalation and resolution. Analysis was done using taxonomies of impoliteness, defensive strategies and participants response and patterns. The study shows that on-record impoliteness is more common than the off-record variety, offering an explanation is the most preferred defensive strategy and that participants tend to favour conflict resolution. The similarity of this study with the present one is in terms of media of communication namely computer and the focus on impoliteness. However, the two studies differ in terms of the theoretical frameworks used and where the online platform from which data was gathered.

A work on impolite expressions and impoliteness strategies examines political tweets posted in English with a view to showing how age and gender determines differences in expression of opinion on social media<sup>49</sup>. The work used political tweets as data. Analysis was done using Culpeper’s model and Brown and Levinson’s model of Politeness . Findings indicate that impolite expression are prevalent in political tweets. Males are found to be more likely to use impolite expressions in political tweets. It also found that *Twitters* withing the age of 25-35 are more likely to post on the platform. The study is similar to the present one in terms of the social media platform from which data was gathered. It is also similar in terms of focus on impoliteness. Its however differs from the present study in terms of theoretical framework.

Another relevant work on impoliteness focuses on political tweets posted by Donald Trump<sup>50</sup>. These tweets addressed Middle East countries. The data collected for this

study are tweets posted by Donald Trump. Analysis was done using Culpeper's impoliteness strategies model. Results of the analysis show that the impoliteness strategies used were bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm while withhold politeness strategy was not used at all. Points of similarity between the study and the present one include source of data and focus the the impoliteness phenomena. However, the two studies differ in terms of theoretical framework of analysis.

A research work titled "Divine impoliteness: How Arabs negotiate Islamic moral order on *Twitter*", also explores the phenomena of impoliteness on social media<sup>51</sup>. The study investigates how Arabs respond to attacks on Islamic cultural face. It uses tweets posted in Arabic as data. Herring's computer mediated Discourse Analysis, Bateman's Multimodal approach, various discursive theories of facework and impoliteness and Bakhtinian concept of intertextuality were used to analyse the data. The findings of the analysis show that the major approach used to respond to attacks on Islamic rites and practices is divine (im)politeness that make use of intertextual references to religious texts as a means of redress. The present study is similar to the reviewed work in terms of source of data and the phenomena explored. However, the theoretical framework used for analysis are different.

A study on hate expressions directed at Megan Markle is also similar to the current study<sup>52</sup>. The aim of the study was to categorize the forms of hate expressions, recognize the tactics utilized for hate expression, and explain the functions of hate expressions made by *Twitter* users towards Meghan Markle, following the report that she may run for the US presidency. The research relied on hate expressions made by *Twitter* users. The study employed qualitative descriptive research method, utilizing *Twitter* replies that exhibited hate towards Meghan Markle. The analysis was based

on the theories of the scholarly works of Mondal et al., Culpeper, and Bebee. The findings revealed as follows: (1) Six types of hate expressions towards Meghan Markle exist on *Twitter*, including expressions based on behaviour, class, disability, ethnicity, religion, and gender. (2) There are four tactics for hate expression, namely bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness, and sarcasm or mock politeness. (3) *Twitter* users engage in four functions of hate expression, which include expressing unpleasant feelings, entertaining the target audience, mocking the figure, and expressing disagreement. This study and the current one are similar: they both collect data from *Twitter*. The two studies also focus on impoliteness. However, the current study does not examine only impoliteness, it also examines politeness. While the current study uses rapport management theory, this study makes use of theories from Mondal et al., Culpeper and Beebe. However, the two studies use the theories as tools of qualitative descriptive research. Also, the current theory does not focus on an individual. Instead it focuses on political, relationship, and feminism discourse.

The study notes how only the negative functions of (im)politeness is explored in various scholarly articles on computer mediated communications. It therefore proposes categories which can be used to analyse positive functions (im)politeness in online communication. These categories are “emotional pleasure, voyeuristic pleasure, aesthetic pleasure and pleasure of being superior”<sup>53</sup>. This study is similar to the present with regards to focus on computer mediated communication. However the present study narrows its focus to a social media platform namely *Twitter*.

A related study explores Arab viewers response to political talk shows on *YouTube*, a social media platform<sup>54</sup>. The comments of viewers on the *YouTube* platform constitute the data for this work. The data was analysed with a view to revealing how common

impolite responses are on such shows and the place of context, respondent identity, and power in determining responses. Analysis was done using aspects Spencer-Oatey's work to find the correlation between identity, power and impoliteness and Culpeper bottom-up model of impoliteness triggers. Findings of the work indicate that identity and power are possible triggers of impoliteness. It also indicate that impolite responses are quite common. The study posits that obscuring the identity of commentators leads to the use of conventionalized impoliteness to assert their power and identity against presenters and guests. While the study is similar to the present one in terms of focus on impoliteness as a pragmatic concept, it differs in terms of the social media from which data is drawn. Also, the theoretical frameworks used differ clearly from that of the present study.

A study on the use of Indonesian languages to express hate on *Instagram* also relates to this work. Its relevance to it is in terms of its focus on language of hate manifested as impoliteness<sup>55</sup>. The comments of *Instagram* users on the social media platform, especially in Indonesian languages make up the data for the study. Impoliteness theory and forensic theory were used to analyze the data. Findings of the analysis show that three strategies of impoliteness are commonly used namely impoliteness strategies, negative impoliteness strategies, and satire. This means that impolite hate speech took the form of words, phrases, clauses, sentences and discourse. The present study is similar to the study under review in terms of the source of data namely social media. However, the present study draws data from *Twitter*, unlike the reviewed on which draws from *Instagram*. Moreover, the present study uses a different theoretical framework.

Linguistic impoliteness on the Chinese social media platform, Sina Weibo, is the focus of the next study<sup>56</sup>. Data, in the form of utterances, from the platform was

gathered and analyzed using the theory of impoliteness strategies. The result indicate that four strategies are commonly used namely bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness, negative impoliteness and mock impoliteness. It also indicate that among the four, positive impoliteness is the most commonly used. However, withhold politeness strategy does not appear in the result. This study is relevant to the current one by virtue of its use of data from social media. It is however unlike the current one in terms of the platform used namely Sina Weibo. This also means that it does examine the use of the English language but at Chinese.

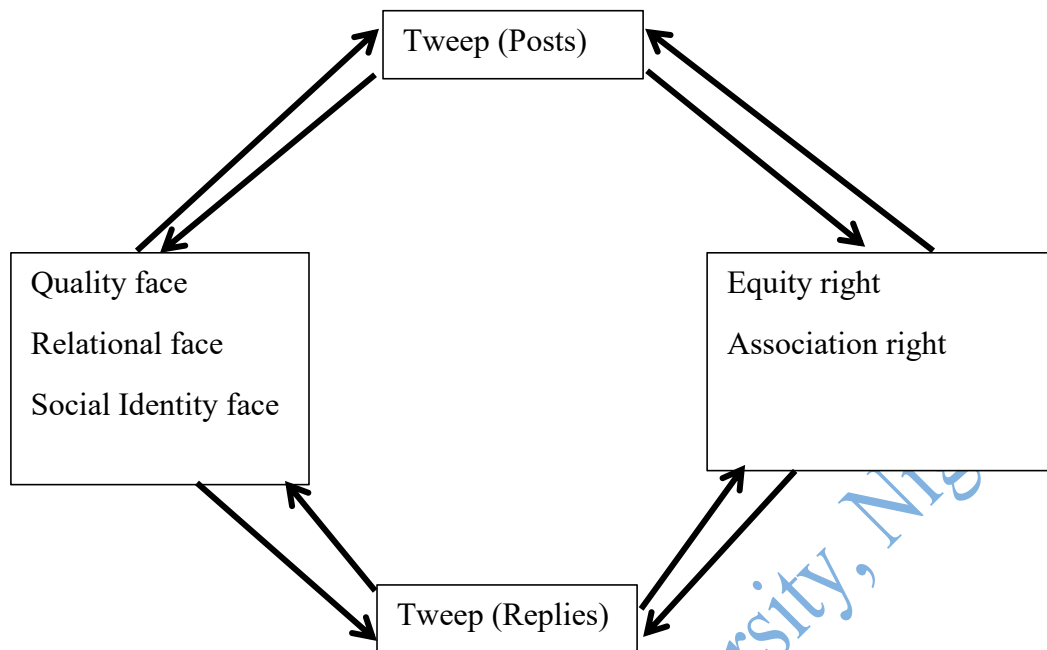
A study examines an area which is largely ignored: how impoliteness is a response against social actions or characteristics which are undesirable<sup>57</sup>. Comments against an Iranian actress who posted her nude picture on *Facebook* constitute the data source for the study. The work argues that the comments were occasioned by the common beliefs and social values demanded and shared by the members of the community to which the actress belongs. The study connects with the present one in terms of the data source, namely social media and the treatment of impoliteness. However, both studies differ in terms of the social media platform from which data was drawn. While the current study draws from *Twitter*, the reviewed study draws from *Facebook*.

A study on unapologetic *Instagram* posts also falls within the purview of this review<sup>6</sup>. The study examines the use of the “sorynotsorry” hashtag to create online identities on the social media platform. Posts on *Instagram* were used as data for the study. Findings reveal that the hashtag mentioned is used to transcend ideological norms of acceptable behaviour while doing facework at the same time thereby presenting the poster in a certain light. In other words, posters use language, against social norms

and expectations to create desirable perceptions of themselves by others. The study and present one research the use of impoliteness on social media hence their similarity. However, different kinds of social media are explored.

A study on homophily in *YouTube* comments is also relevant to this work. Data for this study was drawn from *YouTube* videos related to Greta Thunberg<sup>58</sup>. On these pages, there are impolite comments expressing hate towards the environmental activist. These, along with the videos, form the specific data source for the study. Word cluster analysis was used to find homophilous comments while the framework for interpretation is rapport management model. The study found that the use of impolite language may serve as a means for identifying people with like minds on social media, thereby creating bonds between users. The similarity between this study and the current one includes the study of impoliteness, and the use of social media as data source. Theoretical framework is another point of similarity. However, while the current study makes use of *Twitter* as the social media of choice, the reviewed work makes use of *YouTube*. Also, the present study examines rapport management via use of (im)politeness while the reviewed one specifically focuses on homophily.

## 2.4 Conceptual Framework



Researcher's field work (Oyedeji, 2023).

The framework shows the relationship between the post and replies by tweep (that is users of *Twitter*). Posts and replies affect the quality face, relational face and social identity face of tweeps. This leads to back and forth communication between tweeps as indicated by the arrows connecting tweeps' posts and tweeps' replies. The same applies to equity rights and association rights.

## 2.5 Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed

Many research works have been done on impoliteness and politeness especially as they are used on social media. The empirical studies reviewed in this work are similar to it in many aspects. These include focus on the Pragmatics concepts of politeness and impoliteness, collection of data on social media and analysis of data using various theories. However, none of the studies reviewed examined the use of (im)polite language on *Twitter* as by users in Nigeria.

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## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

This chapter discusses the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling method, research instrument, validity of research instrument, reliability of research instrument, and the method of data analysis used for the study.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research design adopted for this study is descriptive research design. The approach selected from this design is content analysis. Content analysis approach was adopted because the work described how language is used to either manage or mismanage rapport by isolating certain elements in the utterances posted on *Twitter*.

#### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The study analyzed tweets posted by users of *Twitter* in Nigeria as its population. Screen-shots of tweets posted on *Twitter* between January, 2021 and January 2023 by *Twitter*s users in Nigeria make up the population for the study.

#### **3.3 Sample and Sampling Method**

The sampling method employed for this study is the purposive sampling technique. Discourse rich in instances of the use of language either politely or impolitely were purposively selected. The time period covered is between January, 2021 and January, 2023.

#### **3.4 Research Instrument**

Twitter is the instrument used for the research.

### **3.5 Validity of The Research Instrument**

Validity of the research instrument for gathering data it is ensured by the supervisor of this work.

### **3.6 Reliability of The Research Instrument**

To ascertain the reliability of the research instrument and analysis of data, a screenshot of a tweet separate from the ones to be used for final analysis was selected and analysed. This pilot study ascertained the reliability of the research instrument as it found that the tweet contained linguistic markers on impoliteness and that the marker indicated the specific types of face threatened by the use of language and the impoliteness strategy used, in line with certain aspects of the theory of analysis. This indicates that the research design is suited to the research work.

### **3.7 Method of Data Collection**

Data was collected from *Twitter*. An android phone was used to take screen-shots of thirty nine posts containing instances of (im)polite use of language in tweets by Nigerian users. Data collection covered the period between January 2021 and January 2023.

### **3.8 Method of Data Analysis**

Data description was done using directed content analysis with rapport management technique as the theoretical basis of analysis. Thus the analysis highlights how language is used to either manage or mismanage the relationship between co-interactants. Linguistic markers of (im)politeness in tweets are highlighted. Specific aspects of rapport management model are then used to analyse the markers. The aspects used are bases of rapport, rapport orientation, interactional goal.

Conventionalized impoliteness strategies and formulae were used to analyse the strategies used to enhance/threaten face and to support/infringe rights<sup>1</sup>. These strategies/formulae were expanded to accommodate polite use of language where necessary. Analysis was done manually using contingent analysis and frequency counts rather with the assistance of computer software.

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## Endnotes

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## Chapter Four

### Results and Discussion of Findings

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data. Directed content analysis is used for analysis using aspects of the rapport management model as the basis of analysis. In line with the number of research questions, presentation of data is divided into six parts with each part presenting plates of data from tweets and/or replies. Analysis of data is also presented.

An important point to note is that within the framework of analysis selected for this work face, rights/obligations and interactional goals are emphasized as components of rapport in the process of using language. That means they are not isolated but instead treated jointly as either enhancers/support to harmony between language users or as a vehicle of threat/infringement, in which case they act as facilitators of disharmony between language users.

#### 4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

##### 4.1.1 Forms of Face and Sociality Rights in *Twitter* Posts and Replies

The forms of face identified in *Twitter* posts and replies are categorized into three sub-elements namely quality face, relational face, and social identity face. The forms of sociality rights identified in *Twitter* posts and replies are two namely equity rights and association rights.

The study identified 17 instances of the use of language in the form of insults, 4 instances of the use of language in the form of unpalatable questions/presuppositions, 2 instances of language in the form of pointed criticisms. These forms of language use threaten face or results in rapport mismanagement. Only 7 instances of the use of

language take the form of personalized positive assertion. This form of language use is save face or results in rapport management.

The forms of sociality rights identified are categorized as follows:

a. Sociality rights related to association:

1. The right to initiate and terminate relationships
2. The right to choose the level of intimacy in relationships
3. The right to choose the type of relationship

b. Sociality rights related to equity:

1. The right to be treated fairly and justly
2. The right to be respected and valued
3. The right to have one's opinions and beliefs respected

#### **4.1.2 Linguistic Devices Used to Activate Rapport Management or Rapport Mismanagement**

Various linguistic devices were used to activate politeness and impoliteness in the data. Various linguistic devices were also used to activate support and infringement of rights in the data. The linguistic properties of these expressions are varied. The linguistic devices include elements such as syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and meaning. Some expressions are complete sentences, while others are phrases or clauses. Analysis of these expressions highlights the following linguistic properties:

"She's earning 880k per month, in Abuja, and he's earning 60k per month in Lagos. After the wedding who should relocate?,"

Her because I'm the King.

Pele, king of sapa kingdom.

The first is a compound sentence with two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction. The sentence contains information about two people's salaries and their locations. The first and second clauses of the first sentence activate rapport mismanagement by assigning disproportionate salaries to two spouses and further cements rapport management by placing them in different locations. Rapport management is further activated by the second sentence. It is a simple sentence which activates rapport mismanagement by means of an interrogative.

The response to the interrogative mentioned above shows an attempt to activate face enhancement by assigning a title to the respondent. Considered alone, it is a mere sentence fragment. But when considered as a response to the interrogative its meaning becomes clear. The last expression activates rapport mismanagement by assigning a negative title to the speaker in the second expression.

LOML

This is an abbreviation which means Love Of My Life. It activates rapport management by expressing endearment.

"...was in my dm two years ago ooo." - This is a sentence fragment that lacks a subject and a verb. In the context of the data, it activates rapport management by stating that another is valuable.

Imagine you responded favourably, he would have settled for less.

This expression activates rapport mismanagement by implying that another is not valuable.

"When you reach market tell iya mulika say you wan buy beef tripe." - This is a command in the form of an imperative sentence. It instructs the listener to communicate a message to someone else. In the context of the data, it activates rapport mismanagement by implying that a poster is uses an expression which is not suited to his or her milieu.

"March" - This is a single word that is intentionally singled out to highlight the incompetence of a poster.

You can't discuss your malaria with the mosquitoes... - This is a metaphorical expression that uses the concept of mosquitoes to represent people who are not able to help with a particular problem.

"Velar" - This is a single word that can function as an adjective or a noun. It is an attempt to correct another's spelling.

"You no fit buy am

The expression is a sentence fragment that is commonly used in Nigerian Pidgin English. It is a declarative sentence which activates rapport mismanagement by stating that another is financially deficient.

"I don't use cheap perfume like this." - This is a simple sentence. The speaker I activates rapport mismanagement by making a statement about their perfume preferences and thereby implying that another's taste in perfume is deficient.

"Are you people wild animals?" - This is a question in the form of an interrogative sentence. The speaker is activates rapport mismanagement by asking why the listeners are behaving in an uncivilized manner.

"Happy 81st birthday in addy babe" - This expressions is a sentence which uses feilcitation to activate rapport mismanagement. It does this by implying that the celebrant is quite older than they claim

You once said,

This expression activates rapport mismanagement by showing that a poster made contradictory statements.

Iku ti te cursor si ori daddy e. - This is a direct quotation. It is a pointer to humourous banter between two interactors. Thus, it activates rapport management.

"Which foolish family is your family ruling?" - This is a question in the form of an interrogative sentence. The speaker activates rapport mismanagement by asking about the listener's family background.

"Manchester United to the world ko, Manchester City to the village ni!" - This is a statement that uses parallel structure to reject two football teams. The speaker is expressing a preference for neither Manchester United nor Manchester City. The rejection creates rapport management by bantering with the listener.

"Same goes to guys who are into fraud, but it seems you have a problem with women." - This is a compound sentence with two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction. The speaker is making a statement about fraud and gender.

The tone of the sentence suggests rapport mismanagement since the speaker faults the listener's attack on women.

"He speaks against fraud." - This is a simple sentence used by the speaker to make a statement about someone else's views on fraud. It thus activates rapport management.

The day I caught my dad cheating, I just walked passed him like we aren't related. - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The

speaker is describing their reaction to a particular event. It shows how the speaker choose to maintain rapport management.

"I like or RT comments that either agree with me or disagree as long as it's respectful." - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The speaker is describing their social media behavior. The sentence is an attempt to manage rapport between the speaker and the audience.

"...avoid broke and entitled women..." - This is a sentence fragment which activates rapport mismanagement by stating a certain set of women are nit eligible for assocation.

"The way married men have normalized having side chics is scary, sad, and unbelievable." - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The speaker is making a statement about a social phenomenon. This statement about married men activates rapport mismanagement castigating the normalization of the side-chic phenomenon.

"this government sef" - This is a direct quotation that is attributed to someone else. It is a comment on the government which creates both rapport management and rapport mismanagement. It does the former by helping the user of the expression to converse with others. It does the latter by attacking the face of the government.

Barcelona no get match today nah how u come take miss them.

You dey watch Barcelona on TV while She dey enter the city.

The two sentences are in Nigerian Pidgin English. They both activate rapport mismanagement by highlighting an inability to comprehend what is said by a speaker.

"This is actually a very foolish take." - This is a simple sentence with a subject and a predicate. The speaker is making a statement about someone else's opinion. It is direct

What did Femi ever do to you to make you profile everyone that bears his name as chronic womanisers and demonic heart breakers?" - This is a question in the form of an interrogative sentence. The speaker is asking about the listener's behavior. This comment on the listener's behaviour activates rapport mismanagement.

Instead of saying "be strong" or "stay strong" or "don't be tired" say this instead, "I'm so sorry you're going through this. I'm here for you", - "You're allowed to be tired, let it all out" - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and two independent clauses. The speaker is suggesting alternative ways to offer emotional support. By suggesting alternative ways of offering support, the sentence activates rapport management.

"I love how Yoruba men are slandered constantly for being total demon... but even join in the joke," - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The speaker is making a statement about a stereotype. The content of the expression activates rapport mismanagement.

the next day I cook, you eat ... I look for trouble, you fight for me, they beat you, I laugh Now that's 50/50." - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The speaker is describing a relationship dynamic. The presence of reciprocity shows rapport management.

"Billing plug" - This is a phrase which the speaker uses to activate rapport mismanagement by reducing another to a mere money dispenser

"When I depend on my people for emotional support I start to feel like I'm bothering them and just start keeping my problems to myself." - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The speaker is describing their feelings about seeking emotional support. Consideration for others shown in the expression activates rapport management.

"Being vocal about your standards will be a natural filter for u and keep ppl who don't fit in away from ur space." - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The speaker is making a statement about setting boundaries. This act of setting boundaries activates rapport management.

"When u you spend more time (chatting, calling or hanging out) with an opposite sex other than your sposuse, this in itself is termed "cheating"." - This is a sentence in Nigerian Pidgin English that defines the concept of cheating. This definition activates rapport mismanagement.

"Manipulators finding fault in your reaction instead of their disrespect is the craziest shit ever." - This is a complex sentence with a dependent clause and an independent clause. The speaker is making a statement about manipulative behavior. The sentence is an activator of rapport mismanagement.

#### **4.1.3 Pragmatic Functions & Implications of Faces and Rights**

##### **4.1.3.1 Instances of Language Used to Enhance or Threaten Quality Face**

Quality face refers to the value an individual claims for them-self in terms of appearance, competence and abilities<sup>1</sup>.

She's earning 800k per month in Abuja, and he's earning 60k per month in Lagos. After the wedding who should relocate?

Her because I'm the king

Pele, king of sapa kingdom

**Plate 4.1:** Threat to Decision Making Ability<sup>4</sup>.

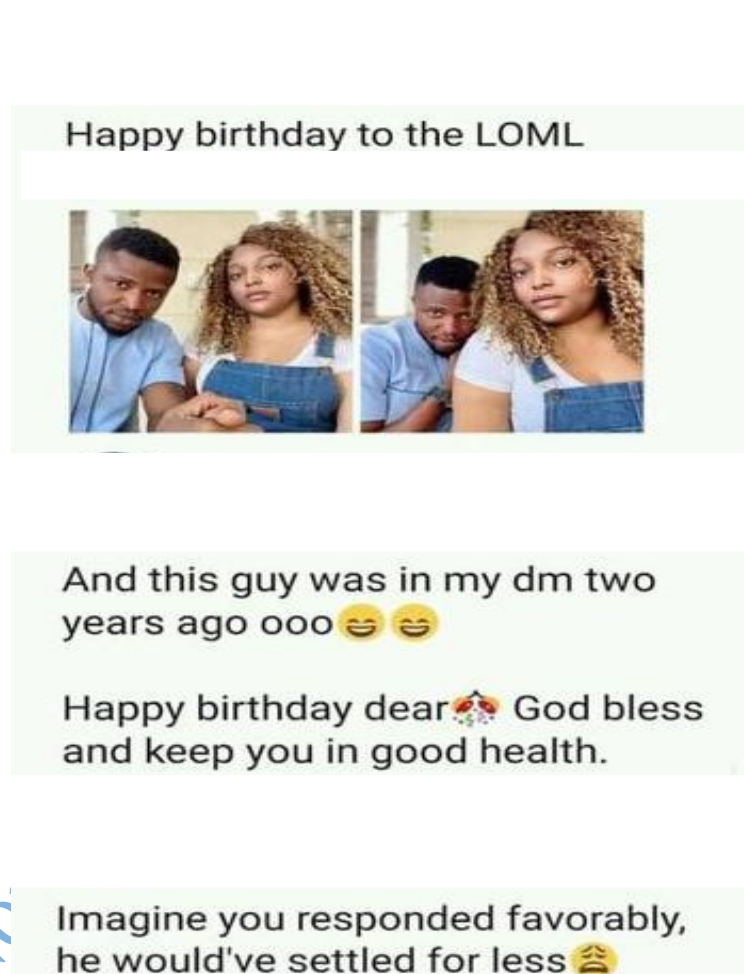
Language use in the initial tweet implicitly challenges the ability of a man to provide for his family. It assigns to an hypothetical woman a salary which is thirteen times the amount earned by an equally hypothetical man. The challenge is rounded up by a somewhat rhetorical question: "After the wedding who should relocate?" In other words, the tweet intentionally assigns more power to the woman and emasculates the man. By doing so, it pits societal expectations that the man should always provide for his woman against him. This hypothetical situation mandates the poster's quiet assertion that the man should submit to his wife since she is the breadwinner of the family. In other words,

it threatens the quality face of the man by orientating her rapport to challenge harmonious relationship between a man and a woman. This means that her goal in the tweet is to acquire power and thus become the leader in the relationship, in the stead of the man.

However, the threat to the quality face of a man is countered with a simple assertion by the second poster: “Her because I’m the king”. This simple assertion is an attempt to enhance the quality face of the man in question who is a representative of all men. The assertion is oriented toward rapport maintenance since it seeks to maintain the status quo and prevent emasculation of the man. Stating that “I’m the King” aligns with societal perception and expectations and hence his role in a relationship. It is an expression of the poster’s interactional goal to repair his sense of worth which has been battered by the threat in the initial tweet.

The last tweet reveals an evaluation of the decision making skills of the author of the second tweet. Apparently, the respondent believes its author does not possess the ability to make sound financial decisions hence the prioritization of his ego over common sense. This informs the authors deployment of rapport challenge in the tweet via the expression “Pele, king of sapa kingdom”. This statement means that the second tweet betrays a desire to show that the author is the man of the house even if it results in inability to cater for the needs of the family. The first tweet shows that the hypothetical wife earns more than the husband. This means that she is more competent financially than the poster of the second tweet in the plate. This financial competence of the woman threatens the ego or the quality face of the second poster as stated earlier. It is also threatened by how the question in the initial tweet is structured. It states explicitly that the hypothetical wife earns thirteen times what the husband earns. This statement informs the choice of the second poster to threaten the quality face of the hypothetical

wife by declaring that she is the one to change location. His use of language suggests that she is an inferior being who should submit to his whims and caprices not minding the consequences. This creates second hand embarrassment on the part of the respondent to his tweet. The respondent therefore calls him “king of sapa kingdom” and thereby threatens his quality face.



**Plate 4.2:** Threat to Spouse Selection Ability<sup>5</sup>.

The first tweet in the plate is felicitation. It is a greeting which reveals her relational goal namely the enhancement of the quality face of the man in the picture. It does this by calling him “LOML”, that is Love Of My Life. This appellation contains an implicit acknowledgement of the competence and ability of the man to woo a woman,

and to keep a relationship going. It shows that the woman acknowledges his manhood. In a nutshell, she uses her words to enhance his quality face.

The second tweet further affirms the postulations of the first by stating that the man in question “was in my dm two years ago ooo”. This further buttresses the fact that the man knows how to woo a woman. This also enhances his quality face in that area. The poster also attacks her own quality face in the plate quoted earlier. She explicitly stated that she could not see a future with the man, thus implying that she is not competent where foresight and character discernment is concerned.

The respondent to the two preceding tweets buttresses the threat on the quality face of the second poster. His use of language shows his belief that she is not worthy of a relationship with a good man. This conclusion is premised on her refusal to date the man. In other words, she does not have the ability to identify a man of good character hence the threat to her quality face.

Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria

It's called beef tripe and not shaki ...ought to let y'all know



When you reach market tell iya mukaila say you wan buy beef tripe.

**Plate 4.3:** Threat to Language and Social Skill<sup>6</sup>.

Language use in the first tweet implies a lack of knowledge on the part of *Twitter* users in Nigeria. This knowledge concerns the name of the innards of cattle, goat or sheep. Through this tweet, the poster intentionally attacks the quality face of of his audience by explicitly stating that the part pictured is not called “shaki” but “beef tripe” instead. He thus constitute himself into a vocabulary police. Thus his interactional goal is to achieve the purpose of showing he is superior to other users of the English language in Nigeria because he possesses this knowledge. In other words, he intends to enhance his quality on the social media platform by attacking the quality face of others.

However he achieved the exact opposite of this, as far as the respondent to his tweet is concerned. The respondent implies that the author lacks the social competence required to realise that the use of the phrase “beef tripe” rather than “shaki” in the

market place results in misunderstanding meaning that communication is not effectively facilitated using Queen's English to describe the object in question in the context of market women in Nigeria. The appropriate language of communication is either pidgin or any of the indigenous languages, as the case may be. This assertion therefore attacks the quality face of the first poster by orientating the second tweet to rapport challenge.

Nigeria

Wait, just curious, what happened to that proposed two million match in Kaduna?

\*march. If not for nepotism, you should be selling watermelon

Presidential media aide wey no sabi spell "march".

Tragic.

Do N

**Plate 4.4:** Threat to Spelling Skill<sup>7,8</sup>.

“Wait, just curious, what happened to that proposed two million match in Kaduna” is an expression intended to threaten the quality face of those who purposed to organize a march to show their support for a presidential candidate in Nigeria. Their inability to go through with the plan forms the basis of the face threat, albeit the state of security in the state informed the decision. The poster seizes this inability to imply that they

are not capable of successfully making reality conform to their words meaning that they lack integrity and competence. This shows that his tweet is orientated to rapport challenge. It also shows that the poster interacts with his followers and target audience with a goal in mind. His purpose is to articulate a major reason the candidate being sold by the organisers should not be trusted to steer the affairs of the country and hence should not be elected into office. Language use in the tweet shows that the poster intentionally uses words to elicit embarrassment in the targets of the tweets. This shows that one of his goals is to show that he and his party are superior to the opposition in terms of the ability to think things through.

The responses to his tweet shows that impoliteness justifies impoliteness. His threat to the quality face of his targets serves as justification for their usage of language to threaten his quality face in return. The first respondent in the plate foregrounds a word in his tweet: match. This foregrounding is done by correcting the spelling used by the poster of the initial tweet. He spelt it wrongly as match as opposed to march. This mistake in spelling is the basis of the respondent's attack on the competence of the first poster at a basic skill of language use, namely usage of letters to form words. This attack or threat explicitly addresses the quality face of the first poster. It is thus oriented to rapport challenge, that is, it is not interested in maintaining rapport with him. Instead, the first respondent clearly has the interactional goal of showing that the party he belongs to does not have the requisite personnel to take the country to the promise land. This goal and the threat are further achieved by the next part of the tweet which declares that he is fit to be a watermelon seller, and not someone working with the office of the President. Her threat to his quality face implies that he lacks the qualification required to work as the media aide to the President. In the same sentence, she states that he only got the position because he is within the President's circle of

friends and families. This further threatens his competence and ability to be a media aide. The third respondent backs her up by agreeing with her declaration that he lacks the basic language skill of using letters to form words. As stated earlier, their threat to his quality face is unrestrained because his threat came first.



**Plate 4.5:** Threat to Problem Solving Ability<sup>9</sup>.

The first poster uses language which shows that she is experiencing, or has experienced frustration in her relationship with her significant other. The frustration stems from her husband's refusal to share his problems and frustrations with her. This makes her feel unwanted possibly because it means he does not see her as someone who can proffer solutions to the problems and soothe the frustrations. His refusal to share constitute an attack on her sense of self-worth, therefore her quality face is threatened. His refusal to use language is thus oriented towards rapport challenge, although he may not intentionally have the goal of causing disharmony in the relationship by refusing to communicate. He may infact be acting out the subconscious and uniquely male script of mulling things over without saying a word

until he finds a solution to his problem. This is different from the way women handle problems by talking things out. This difference in the way of handling issues is probably the reason the poster believes her husband does see her as a problem solver. Hence the perception of his actions as an attack on her quality face.

The woman's belief about her husband's perception of her is confirmed by the poster of the second tweet. His use of language uses certain symbols to drive home his attack on the woman's quality face. He metaphorically compares her to a mosquito and calls the problem "malaria". He orientates his words to challenge the woman's question by stating that "You cannot discuss your malaria with the mosquito". This response threatens the quality face not only the initial poster, but also all wives who may be experiencing the same thing. His response implies that wives do not possess the competence required to solve problems but instead create them competently. His use of metaphors betrays his feeling of sadness towards this state of affairs and further buttresses his attack on the quality face of wives; while malaria is used to symbolise the problem, mosquito is used to symbolise the cause, that is, wives. The failure of women to meet the relational need of the respondent as regards problem-solving probably occasioned this response. This failure occasions an attitude of rapport challenge and neglect in the author of the response: the author of the tweet couldn't be bothered with improving the relationship so long as it requires opening the lines of communication with his wife especially where problems he is facing are concerned since he believes what he needs is to focus on himself, on his thoughts until the problem is solved. Rapport challenge is also expressed by the poster's choice of words and metaphors: they expressly show his desire to impair the relationship.

Yo @SportyBet my baby

Will you pay? Or you got a brand new range rover velar? Plus a semi detached duplex in lekki ?

If yes , then we can deal 😊

It's called Velar. Bush man 😊

Well ... you only know the spelling but you no fit buy am 😂😂😂

**Plate 4.6:** Threat to Language Skill and Financial Ability<sup>10</sup>.

The first tweet of plate 6 acknowledges the ability, and competence of a betting company to fulfil their promise. The tweet therefore enhances the quality face of the company and also engages in rapport maintenance. The poster won some money on the betting platform and he desires to convert his winnings from cash to a new car (range rover velar) and a duplex in a high brow area of Lagos. The expression of these desires shows that he believes the company have the financial competence to meet his demands. He is therefore not abash in making them known and in the process putting the company in a good light thereby articulating the worth of the company and of those running it. His tweet balances his desire on one side of the interaction and the need of the company to be recognized on the other side thereby facilitating rapport enhancement. His facilitation of rapport enhancement aims to achieve his interactional goal namely the acquisition of a car and a house in place of the cash prize the company usually give.

However, the poster of the second tweet has other ideas where the quality face of the first poster is concerned. He singles out a particular grammatical error for castigation. This threatens the quality face of the poster by highlighting an inability to spell correctly. To articulate this threat he refers to the poster as a “Bush man” simply because he failed to spell the name of the car he requests correctly. The second poster feels this perceived inability is worth mentioning. He therefore threatens the quality face of the poster by doing so. His goal for interacting with the tweet is to display a sense of superiority compared to the poster. To achieve this goal he uses rapport challenge which can possibly result in conflict with other users of the platform.

The tweet made by the second poster eventually results in the use of language to threaten his quality face too. The poster who comes after him states that his competence is located in the ability to spot spelling mistakes. It is however not located in the ability to afford the car desired by the initial poster. He therefore submits that the poster does not have any basis to feel superior to the first poster since he can only correct spelling mistakes but cannot buy the car whose name was incorrectly spelt. This of course constitutes the interactional goal of the last poster. Also, it is oriented to rapport challenge albeit its use of laughing emojis. The emojis can be perceived as a means of making jest of the second poster and not as a means of downplaying the threat to his quality face. This perception of the emojis further deepens the threat.

Men. Reply with some of the reasons you stopped talking to a lady you were interested in:

Went to the mall to get my mom's favorite perfume, and because she was with me, I asked her if she wanted anything for herself. "I don't use cheap perfumes like this and even if I did, within this price range, it'll be a deodorant", she replied. Someone that doesn't have a job.

**Plate 4.7:** Threat to Conversational Skill<sup>11</sup>.

Plate 7 begins with a question which enquires about "reasons" which inform rapport challenge and rapport neglect between two interlocutors. The tweet targets the male gender and seeks to know why they "stopped talking" to ladies they had interest in. The tweet is direct in how its question is structured. It is therefore clear that its interactional goal is to elicit specific responses from its target audience. Its goal is relational in that it seeks to create rapport with others, particularly men. It also acts an expose for women who desire to gain insights into the factor that can cause rapport challenge, rapport maintenance, rapport neglect, and rapport enhancement when interacting with the male gender, especially in the context of a relationship with a significant other. In summary, the tweet seeks to create a knowledge base on how females can take care of the three bases of rapport namely face sensitivities, sociality rights and obligations and interactional goals with a view to create positive rapport with males.

The second tweet in the extract is a response the question posed in the first tweet. It articulates how language use to cause disharmony or negative rapport can result in

rapport challenge and rapport neglect. A male respondent explains why his interaction with a lady he was interested was truncated by her threat to his quality face and that of his mum. He had taken her to the mall to buy his mum's favourite perfume. While there, he got a face threatening response to this simple enquiry to know "if she wanted anything for herself". She created negative rapport through her response by implying that he and his mum possess a bad taste in perfumes. This threat to his quality face is further deepened by her state of being unemployed. He therefore felt insulted by her response. This eventually led to rapport neglect meaning that he lost interest in her and consequently stopped talking to her.

Some men are screaming they want an independent woman, a successful woman blah blah.... Until they meet one and they don't know how to handle her 📌📌📌

It's always "handle" with you lots. Are you people wild animals?

**Plate 4.8:** Inferiority Complex Implied<sup>12</sup>.

The first tweet in the plate threatens the quality face of men. It explicitly states that some men do not possess the ability, competence and knowledge required to deport themselves as a significant party in a relationship with a woman. The basis of this threat is their perceived inability and lack of knowledge on how to "handle" "an independent woman, a successful woman blah blah...". This perception is further

emphasised by the fact that “Some men are screaming” when they express their desire for independent and successful women. However, their failure to handle such type of women informs the use of rapport challenging language as shown by the quoted selections above. It clearly shows the intention of the poster to make men up their efforts instead of whining. In other words, the poster’s interactional goal is transactional in that it hopes to accomplishing the task of motivating men to do better through a threat to their quality face. The tweet employs rapport challenge, although its goal is to enhance rapport. By the same token of challenge, the tweet puts women in a good light. Thus they are painted as strong, good at making decisions, able to take care of themselves, competent at their jobs and/or business etc. In other words, the tweet enhances the face of independent and successful women. This aims to make women feel good about themselves while men are expected to cower in shame until they measure up to the set standard in the tweet.

This however violates the desirable preservation of other people’s faces or sense of worth while enhancing one’s face. This informs the threat to quality face expressed in the respondent tweet. The poster of the response questions the eligibility of independent and successful women as good partners in a relationship. This he does by posing a rhetorical question which is a way of confirming exactly what is on his mind: that metaphorically, certain set of women are wild animals. In other words, they cannot control their emotions and thus need to be “handled”. This use of language is intended to threaten the quality face of such women. These class of women who are successful and independent according to the initial tweet need to be “handled” differently from the way other women are related with hence the threat. The respondent questions their credentials as humans because he believes they behave like wild animals rather than as a woman. He therefore employs rapport challenge in his

tweet with the explicit intention to achieve his interactional goal: completing the task of dismantling a basis of the first tweet which states that independent and successful women are intractable and difficult to relate with. Another thing worthy of note is the fact that the tone of the second tweet expresses a high level of frustration and anger towards the belief that independent and successful women are difficult. This feelings are captured by the expression “Are you people wild animals?” This expression shows that face threat is not desirable because it creates feelings of anger, frustration and embarrassment.

I am going to be 18years in December. Full adult. Thank you Jesus



Happy 81st birthday in addy babe

**Plate 4.9:** Threat Based on Physical Characteristic<sup>13</sup>.

A face enhancing attempt was made in the initial tweet of this plate. The posted picture shows a woman who is much older than eighteen (18). However, the poster attempts to downplay her age by stating a much lower age and thereby hiding her real age. This is probably an attempt to position her self as woman who is young at heart. This attempt is however foiled by the picture posted under the tweet. The tweet is oriented to rapport enhancement. Its interactional goal is relational in that it seeks to

create a favourable social persona for the poster. With the tweet she claims a personal attribute which makes her feel good about herself.

The respondent tweet in this plate effectively challenges the quality face of the initial tweet's poster by implying that the latter is lying in order to position herself as young when she is in fact much older than the 18 years she tweeted as her current age. This is an attack on the personality of the tweet's author hence the orientation to the quality face. Its clear use of rapport challenge further buttress this via the the simple act of flipping the positions of digits 1 and 8. This deploys the use of hyperbolic language to express the respondent's intent to threaten rather than enhance quality face.

Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria

I thought a certain set of people said Obasanjo was frowning when he received Tinubu?

#TableShaker



You once said 🤔🤔🤔

Some people smile to be polite. Others smile because they want something from you. Few smile because they like you. Thus, never be fooled by a smile. What is on a person's face is often not what is on their heart. Some smile with their face and **frown** in their heart #RenosNuggets

4

103

177



**Plate 4.10:** What Does a Smile Mean<sup>14</sup>?

The two tweets in plate 9 are threats to quality face. They both question possession of the personal attribute of integrity. The first tweet addresses a set of people who asserted that Olusegun Obasanjo, was frowning when Bola Tinubu, paid him a courtesy visit in a bid to improve his chances at the polls. The former is a past President of Nigeria, while the latter is the Presidential candidate running on the platform of All Progressives Congress. This highlights the political nature of the tweet. To drive home his point, the poster of the first tweet submits that a set of people

intentionally twist the narrative to suit their agenda by spreading falsehood. The falsehood that Olusegun Obasanjo was frowning during the visit is exposed by the picture underneath the tweet which shows one person laughing and the other smiling.

With this tweet and the accompanying picture, the poster effectively achieves his interactional goal of informing the uninformed of the falsehood peddled by a section of the Nigerian populace. To achieve this, he intentionally deploys rapport challenge which shows he does not care if his target feel embarrassed by the revelation.

The response to his tweet equally threatens quality face. The poster simply enacts a polite way of questioning the integrity of the first poster by using his words against him, in the process of arguing his position. The first poster had at an earlier time posted a tweet with the simple message that things are not always what they seem, that appearance does not necessarily dictate the nature of a thing. The post specifically mentions that “ some smile with their face and frown in their heart.”. It also says “...never be fooled by a smile”. By implying that the first poster is a hypocrite, the second poster has acknowledged a negative attribute of the former hence the threat to his quality face. The tweet also questions his ability to remember things he had said in the past. This is another threat to his quality face. By using the words of the first poster in the response, the second poster also imply that he is easily fooled by a smile, which means he does not take his own advice. This is yet another use of rapport challenge which is an attack on the quality face of the first poster.

Language use in both tweets shows an unmistakable intention to achieve the interactional goal of validating their respective positions of the posters.

#### **4.1.3.2 Instances of Language Used to Enhance or Threaten Relational Face**

Relational face refers the value an individual places on themselves as a significant participant in a relationship with another<sup>1</sup>. Examples of relationships involving significant others include husband-wife relationship, father-son relationship, boyfriend-girlfriend relationship, teacher-student relationship, coach-player relationship, etc.

Instances of the use of language to enhance or threaten relational face are analysed below.

*Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria*



**Plate 4.11:** Threat to Thinking Ability<sup>5</sup>.

By referring to the man in the picture as “the LOML” (Love Of My Life), the poster of the first tweet in plate 11 enhances the relational face of her significant other. The tweet acknowledges the man’s value as a significant participant in a romantic relationship. The tweet testifies to his ability to deport himself as a man whom his

woman loves and respects. This informs her public declaration of her love for him. This declaration also doubles as rapport maintenance via face enhancement that is the act of valuing his relational self. Her use of language also shows her interactional goal of maintaining the relationship. The maintenance of positive rapport is further facilitated by the description of the man as “the LOML” in a birthday message which makes use of congratulatory language. Her public congratulatory message on his birthday also reveals her ability to perceive good character in a man. This ability is confirmed by a respondent to her tweet and shows that she values herself. The message also implies that she has a sense of self-worth. This means that she also enhances her relational face by putting up the congratulatory message. In all, the tweet shows her possession of the relational skills necessary to ensure a good relationship, meaning that it enhances her relational face.

The relational worth of the poster above is confirmed by the subsequent poster whose tweet reveals that the man whose relational face was enhanced in the first tweet wooed her two years before the tweet was posted. However, she failed to see in him a partner. She therefore appreciates him by revealing what happened two years ago, which further enhances his relational face. She also tweeted a congratulatory birthday message and prayed for him. Her use of language in doing these shows that she wants to achieve the interactional of showing that the man in question is a gentleman.

The relational face of the second poster is threatened in the plate by the last respondent. The failure of the second author to respond favourably to the advances of the man in the first tweet occasions this. Her failure to give a favourable response prevented a relationship with a potential significant other. In the eyes of the author of the last tweet, she does not possess the relational skills required to discern the characteristics of a good spouse. She is therefore not worthy of a relationship with the

man in the picture attached to the initial tweet. How he uses language shows his intention to achieve rapport challenge rather than rapport enhancement. This use of language therefore supposes that the second poster does not have a valuable sense of self in a relationship.



His Mom supposed wipe you  
oraimo cord that day, if she  
overheard your crazy conversation  
😂😂😂

**Plate 4.12:** Dark Consolation<sup>15</sup>.


At the surface level, the tweet above presents the poster as insensitive to his friend's feeling at a period of bereavement. However, there is tacit agreement between the two parties to use any event, no matter how weighty, as banter material. In other words, dark humour is acceptable to both parties. His expression that "iku ti te cursor si ori daddy e", which literally means death has placed a cursor on the head of your dad,

and implies his dad is death's latest victim is therefore as apt and in fact enhances the relational face of the poster and the receiver of the banter. This is because the expression acknowledges their abilities to take a joke in good faith, even if it is dark humour especially at a period when the family is mourning. The expression is an allusion to a feature of football video games which involves the placement of a sign on the head of a footballer with the ball to signify his possession of the ball. The sign is also used to signify the footballer who is next in line to act on the ball. The post in actuality shows that the poster knows exactly what is required in the given situation hence the response of the receiver with laughter. This shows that his use of language is oriented to rapport enhancement and creates positive rapport between both parties. The creation of positive rapport is also facilitated by the acknowledgement of the receiver's ability to see the expression in the right light. This constitutes an effort to claim a relationship with his jovial friend. It can also be described as a coping mechanism for the situation in which the receiver has found himself.

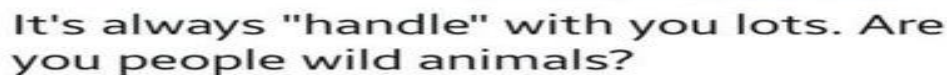
Another aspect of the tweet which shows that the poster is sensitive to the emotional situation caused by bereavement is his choice of making the joke as a whisper to his friend, thereby excluding his mom and other relatives from their rapport. This sensitivity is a skill which highlights his recognition of their relational face, thereby enhancing it. This singular action also enhances the relational face of the poster by showing that he has the requisite skills to discern his environment with a view to knowing the appropriate forms of communication to use per time. His awareness of the requirements of his sociocultural milieu is highlighted by this action. His action in the process of using language therefore creates positive rapport and showcases his interactional goal of identifying with the sorrow of the family at large and his friend in particular.

The response to this tweet also validates the success of the initial poster at enhancing the relational face of both himself, his friend and the family. The poster jocular suggestion that “His mom supposed wipe you oraimo cord that day, if she overheard your crazy conversation” validates his successful use of language and the understanding of sociocultural norms to enhance his relational face.

However, the tweet states that “the mom and the relatives were looking him with amazement” as he laughs at the friend’s joke. This shows that they may have wondered what could have caused laughter at such a sober time. The tone of the tweet suggest that this did not have any consequence for the first poster and his friend. In other words, their relational face was not threatened by this act. This absence of relational face threat is facilitated by the exclusion of the parents and relatives from the joke by the poster ensured this, and as stated earlier, enhances his relational face.



Some men are screaming they want an independent woman, a successful woman blah blah.... Until they meet one and they don't know how to handle her 📌📌📌



It's always "handle" with you lots. Are you people wild animals?

**Plate 4.13:** Wrong and Right Handling<sup>12</sup>.

The initial tweet in plate 13 list some criteria which some men require before engaging a lady in a relationship. In other words, independence and success are criteria which enhances the relational face of a woman enhances in their eyes, according to the tweet. This tweet enhances the relational face of such women by stating that “some men scream” that they want such types of women “until they meet

one and they don't know how to handle her". In the same breath, the tweet threatens the relational face of the men. The tweet is therefore oriented to rapport enhancement on one hand: it seeks to show solidarity with independent and successful women who may come across it on *Twitter* time line. On the other hand, it is oriented to rapport challenge: it seeks to show some men's lack of relational skills to "handle" "successful and independent" women. The overall interactional goal of the tweet is to communicate the superiority of the types of women mentioned when compared to some men. It therefore creates negative rapport with the target of the tweet, that is "some men". This is caused by its failure to enhance the relational face of the set of men targeted.

The response to the first tweet of the extract equally threatens the relational face of successful and independent women. The poster questions the need to "handle" these set of women whenever men wants to have a relationship with them. He wonders if they, like "wild animals" cannot exercise self control and therefore need to be handled by a man. The tweet directly questions their ability to handle their emotions, show empathy, be sensitive to emotional contexts etc. In a nutshell, he threatens their relational face by rhetorically asking if they don't have the requisite skills for negotiating a romantic relationship. This tweet therefore uses language that is oriented to rapport challenge, although its overall outlook is to achieve the interactional goal of opening the minds of the "independent and successful" women to their responsibilities. This means the eventual purpose of the tweet is rapport enhancement.

On your birthday, I send you 50k make  
you flex. On my birthday, you send me  
"It's your day! A king is born today"  
Which foolish kingdom is your family  
ruling?

**Plate 4.14:** Flex Money<sup>16</sup>.

The tweet in plate 14 expresses the anger and irritation of the poster towards a significant other, possibly his girlfriend. The anger and irritation stems from her failure to appreciate him appropriately on his birthday. This lack of appreciation threatens his relational face because it implies that she does not appreciate his significance in her life. This informs his usage of language to threaten her relational face in retaliation. He rhetorically questions her to know “which foolish kingdom” her “family is ruling”.

His action on her birthday shows his awareness of his role as a significant partner in the relationship. He had gifted her “50k make you flex.” This act enhances her relational face by showing that he puts some thought into the relationship thereby valuing her. She however does not value his effort as shown by her message on his birthday which only states that he is a “king” but is not accompanied by a gift. This is perceived as a threat to his relational face. This informs his use of language to respond in kind. Furthermore, his act of gifting her money “to flex” on her birthday is an enhancement of her face among her friends. It presents her as a lady of value whose spouse holds in high esteem. This enhances her quality face and her social identity

face in relation to her friends. His act presents her as a lady who is perceptive enough to know and choose a good man (competence, quality face). It also presents her as a lady whose role among her friends is supported by her man (social identity face). This is shown by his facilitation of a get together by gifting her “50k” on her birthday.

The interactional goal of the tweet is to demand reciprocity in the relationship. The man is annoyed by the lack of thought and effort on the part of his significant other. This to him shows that she does not value the relationship but is out to extort him in the guise of being in a relationship. He therefore states explicitly that he does not appreciate the lack of reciprocity. In the same vein, he orientates his tweet to rapport challenge and seeks to create disharmony or turbulence in the relationship in a bid to achieve his relational cum transactional goal.

Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria

Continue **deceiving yourself**. Just DMI @akaebube and collect your free Blues Membership form. Manchester United to the world ko, Manchester City to the village ni!



**Plate 4.15:** Chelsea Fan vs Manchester United Fan<sup>17</sup>.

Plate 15 shows how distance-closeness can impact rapport between two people. The tweet by the first poster (in relatively smaller font size) creates closeness with the poster of the second poster (in relatively bigger font size) by stating his love for football and his visit to Stamford Bridge, the home ground of Chelsea football club. These acts creates positive rapport between both posters by providing common grounds on which to relate, that is mutuality. The first poster's visit to the stadium mentioned also enhances the relational face of the second poster. His act of mentioning it on the platform also does this. In a nutshell, his use of language and choice of information to disclose enhances the relational face of the second poster

thereby creating closeness between the two. Rapport enhancement is further facilitated by the fact that the poster is not a fan of the club whose grounds he visited. He only visited “Stamford Bridge as a show of love”, thereby strengthening his bond with the second poster. It is obvious from his use of language that his goal for interacting is to create or maintain relationships with all lovers of football, also known as soccer.

The first poster’s show of love is reciprocated through friendly banter by the second poster. He enhances the relational face of the first poster by jocularly stating that he should “continue deceiving” himself. This use of language presents a move to negotiate positive rapport and hence, a relationship with the first poster. His tweet is replete with such usages. These usages include “just dm @akaebube and collect your free Blues Membership form”, and “Manchester United to the world ko, Manchester City to the village ni!” These lines of banter portray the closeness of the two interactants. They show that there is harmony and smoothness in their relationship rather than disharmony and turbulence. The interaction between the two also shows mutuality of interest and reciprocated respect.

Every prostitute has a "touching" story.

But always remember, she had options.

To survive, every one will go for the options they think their minds & happiness resonate with.

A prostitute is happy being a prostitute.

Don't always get carried away by her "sorry" tales.

End.

77 314 991

Same goes to guys who are into fraud, but it seems you have problem with women.

10:42 PM · 14 Sep 22 · [Twitter for Android](#)

He speaks against fraud. Get your facts straight before yapping.

- 1) He's into fraud/you're unsure of what he does
- 2) He's addicted to betting
- 3) He doesn't speak with you like a wife
- 4) He keeps too many friends
- 5) You don't know his core friends
- 6) He can't make decisions w/out his mother
- 7) He speaks low of his father

16:59 · 28 May 22 · [Twitter for Android](#)

**Plate 4.16:** Tweep vs Some Audience<sup>18</sup>.

The relational face of the first poster in plate is based on his teachings about relationships and marriages. His claim to value or self worth on the platform is perpetuated by treating various topics as they relate to romantic relationships of singles and married people. These teachings show his competence at handling and knowledge of relationships. This means it enhances his quality face. It also enhances his relational face by extension because it attracts those who want to learn from and criticize his teachings. This creates a teacher-student or mentor-mentee type of relationship.

His tweet in this plate threatens the relational face of a certain set of women, namely prostitutes. He posits that such women choose to be prostitutes although they “had options”. According to him, their choice is based on what “they think their minds and happiness resonate with”. He submits that men should not “get carried away by her “sorry” tales.” This implies that they do not possess the required qualities for a successful relationship: instead of loyalty to their spouse, they possess loyalty to whatever will make them comfortable, even if it strips them of dignity and worth. This submission therefore threatens their relational face by orientating language use to rapport challenge. This use of language creates feelings of embarrassment in the targets of the tweet and some of his audience feel second hand embarrassment on their behalf. However, his interactional goal is to achieve a shift in the ideology of men who are prospecting for potential mates. He therefore unavoidably creates negative rapport which results in face threat as a by product of what he teaches.

The respondent to the initial tweet questions the fairness and balance of his submission. He does this by stating that “same goes to guys who are into fraud, but...you have problem with women.” The tweet posits that its only women he speaks against and he is thus biased. This postulations questions his right to be seen as a

teacher and threatens his relational face by implying that he does not deserve to have a follower-ship of mentees/students. The poster thus orientates his use of language to rapport challenge. His intention for interacting with the tweet is to show that the first poster is not qualified to teach people about relationships. He therefore seeks to create negative rapport with the poster.

However, a third poster enhances the relational face of the initial poster. She posts an earlier tweet of the mentor which shows that he is in fact qualified to teach topics on relationships and marriage. The tweet she posts shows that “ He speaks against fraud.” This obliterates the claim that he is biased and shows that he actually has ardent supporters and students. This further enhances the relational face of the first poster as a teacher. The poster intentionally uses language to create negative rapport with the second poster in the process of doing this.

What will you do if you catch your dad cheating? 🤔

The day I caught my dad cheating, I just walked passed him like we aren't related, later the dude call me and said "you took after me 100" and hung up 🤔🤔. Ever since then I

**Plate 4.17:** “There Was a Caught”<sup>19</sup>.

As shown in the extract, a particular father has failed in his role where his son is concerned and is thus deserving of disrespect. However, the son chooses to enhance his father’s relational face by walking on in silence and doing nothing to shame his father. This effectively enhances the father’s relational face.

Most times if I don't like your comments, it's because I either don't like it or you're commenting on a tweet that's a little older.

Although it is ultimately your decision how to respond to comments, it gives a pleasant feeling when the owner of the tweet responds to your comment and it demonstrates that they value you in some manner... My take on that..



I like or RT comments that either agree with me or disagree as long as it's respectful.

I was thinking you even usually like all comments cos I can say 70% of my comments get likes from @jon\_d\_doe

Now I get better

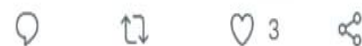


Otherwise, I read your comment but I don't like it.

End.

10:13 PM · 14 Sep 22 · Twitter for Android

Always waiting for your tweets like a child waiting for candies. 😊



**Plate 4.18:** Reasons<sup>20</sup>.

Language use in the plate above indicates an interactional goal of encouraging engagements with the tweets of the first poster. As a social media personality, many people follow him and they read his tweets. This creates a relationship between him and his followers. In order to maintain this rapport, the poster explains reasons he might choose to like a response to his tweet or do otherwise. This is done in order to negotiate his relationship with his followers. His choice of words indicate that he

values their response, that is the reciprocity his attention to them enjoys. This creates positive rapport in the relationship as indicated by some responses to the tweet. It also shows that the poster cares about the enhancement of the relational face of his followers. Furthermore, the tweet enhances the poster's face by showing that he possesses the skills required to negotiate relationships, has a sense of mutuality, knows the importance of reciprocity etc. He also has a sense of distance-closeness which is indicated by the expression "I like or RT comments that either agree with me or disagree as long as its respectful." This expression highlights his ability to discern those he needs to get closer to on the platform, and those he needs to cut off. It also shows he is not afraid of opposing viewpoints so long as they are respectful in their use of language. In other words, he is not afraid of defending his face while interacting with others on *Twitter*.

The first response to his tweet shows that his followers value his enhancement of their relational face. The poster expresses this by saying that "it gives a pleasant feeling when the owner of the tweet responds...it demonstrates that they value you". This shows that engaging with one's follower on *Twitter* is an act which creates positive rapport by enhancing their relational face. The language of the tweet shows a recognition of the mentor role played by the first poster by stating that "...it is ultimately your decision how to respond to comments". This statement creates positive rapport by recognizing the roles of the participants in the relationship and enhancing the relational face of both parties. The enhancement of the relational face is further deepened by the next respondent who acknowledges and accepts the rules of engagement as spelt out by the first tweet. This acknowledgement and acceptance indicates a mentor-mentee kind of relationship and also indicates the roles of each one in the relationship. Thus, language is used to create positive rapport between the

respondent and the author of the initial post. This makes for good management of rapport between the two.

As a hustling Young man, you should always avoid broke & entitled women no matter how big their ass or attractive their face appears to you, they'd slow down your progress and f\*ck with your mentality.  
Stay focused kings 🤪

**Plate 4.19:** Focus<sup>21</sup>.

Language use in this plate shows an interactional goal with the motive of informing young men about a certain class of girls to avoid. Its threat to the relational face of “broke & entitled women” shows that the author does not care for positive rapport with these set of people. Instead of being contributors to the progress of the “Young man”, they only contribute “big ...ass or attractive...face” to the relationship. Hence the use of language by the author to threaten their relational face. This is because such actions show that the women in question do not value their role as a significant other in their relationship with the “Young man”. Instead, the feelings of entitlement stemming from the fact that they are broke prevents them from playing their roles as

girlfriends or potential wives. This informs the use of language to interact in a way that leads to rapport neglect and rapport challenge. In other words, the author of the tweet encourages young men to abandon their relationship with such women since it “slow down your progress”. Overall the tweet involves the use of language to threaten the relational face of some group of women.

The way married men have normalized having side chics is scary, sad, and unbelievable. Like it’s so normal—they talk about it with so much effrontery. God, please, I’m not such a perfect man; I have my sins, but please, let me not be in that league of men.

**Plate 4.20:** Normalized Abnormality<sup>22</sup>.

The plate implies that one of the things which qualifies a man as a married man is faithfulness to his wife. This means that respect for the sanctity of marriage is a key element of any marriage and shows regard for ones role as significant participant in a marriage. For this reason, the author of the tweet is surprised by the act of “having side chics”. Language use in the tweet is therefore a threat to the relational face of the men the author has come in contact with. While the tone of the usage does not convey rapport challenge towards men, it explicitly shows the authors aversion to such behaviour. This constitutes his interactional goal for putting up the tweet.

#### **4.1.3.3 Instances of Language Used to Enhance or Threaten Social Identity Face**

Social identity face refers to the value placed on oneself as a member of a social group and as a member of the society at large.<sup>1</sup> It is closely related to the identity enacted by an individual's role in a group. This type of face is thus tied to the role or roles performed by the individual within the context of a group. Thus, it is realised at the group or social level of human interaction. Individuals play various kinds of roles as members of a group. These roles include but are not limited to spouse, employer, employee, father, mother, student, citizen, student, leader, follower, member of a community, etc. These roles have expectations attached to them. For instance, a father is expected to provide for his wife and children within the context of the social group known as the family. Stating overtly or covertly that an individual is not playing their role as expected constitutes a threat to their social identity face. This creates feelings of embarrassment and inadequacy. On the other hand, stating or implying that an individual is effective in their role enhances their social identity face and thereby creates feelings of confidence. In other words, such a usage of language constitute an act of saving the social identity face of the individual.

Instances of language use with the purpose of either saving or threatening social identity face are analysed below.

She's earning 800k per month in Abuja, and he's earning 60k per month in Lagos. After the wedding who should relocate?

Her because I'm the king

Pele,king of sapa kingdom

**Plate 4.21:** Threat Social Identity Face<sup>4</sup>.

In the plate above, the social role in focus is that of a spouse specifically fiancée. The second respondent in the tweet believes his role as the potential head of the family, he is entitled to be respected as the “King” of his family. Hence his assertion that the wife should leave her relatively high paying job in Abuja to settle down with him in Lagos. This assertion invites the subsequent tweet which threatens his social identity. The author of the third tweet posits that the second author apparently plans to subject his prospective wife to a life of penury. This is shown by the description of the second

author as a “king of Sapa kingdom”. This is apparently an assertion meant to describe the second respondent as an irresponsible spouse. It is thus oriented to rapport challenge and does not seek to create positive rapport between the two authors.

The initial tweet is intended to threaten the social identity face of men. This is shown by its intentional assignment of 60, 000 naira to the man and 800, 000 naira to the woman as their respective salaries. This obviously tilts the balance in favour of the woman. In other words, the author of the initial tweet intentionally structures her post as a threat to the social role of the man as the provider thus putting him on the defensive. This prompts the second respondent’s assertion that he is the “King” hence the need for his wife to join him in Lagos. This assertion highlights the embarrassment felt by the man as a result of the threat to his perception of his role as the provider and head of the family. This threat is occasioned by the structure of the question in the initial tweet to the effect that the man in question earns far less than the amount his potential wife earns. This of course emasculates the man by presenting an extreme example of difference in income level. In other words, the author of the first tweet intentionally structures her to create rapport challenge and thereby creates negative rapport as shown by the response of the second author.

It's called beef tripe and not shaki ...ought to let y'all know



When you reach market tell iya mukaila say you wan buy beef tripe.

**Plate 4.22:** Beef Tripe vs Shaki<sup>6</sup>.

Rapport challenge in this plate stems from an indication that the first poster is not aware of the sociolinguistic requirements of a typical Nigerian market. This sociolinguistic expectation is underlined by the linguistic facility of market men and women who possess local facilities rather than English words for the purpose of describing parts of livestock. In this case, the author describes the internal organ shown in the picture as beef tripe and advocates for the usage of same by his followers. This suggestion does not however help his followers in their social role of buying beef in the market. Thus, one of his followers counters with another suggestion to the effect that the author should tell a typical market woman namely “iya mulika” that he wants to buy beef tripe. This rapport challenge to the poster’s social identity face is thereby threatened because the respondent implies he does not

possess required knowledge of his social and cultural milieu. This lack of knowledge occasions his failure to realise that most market women are illiterates and semi literates. This counter suggestion therefore highlights his failure to realise that most market women cannot comprehend certain English words. Thus his suggestion stands in the way of social interaction at the group level instead of facilitating it.

On the other hand, the initial tweet can be seen as a wilful imposition of English vocabulary on illiterate and semi-literate market women. In this wise, the author can be seen as creating rapport challenge by threatening the social identity of market women knowing fully well that they do not possess the linguistic facility to comprehend the word “beef tripe”. The tweet can therefore be seen as an intentional attempt to create negative rapport between buyers and sellers of beef. It can also be seen as an intentional threat by the author to highlight the lack of education among market men and women. This is also an attempt at belittling them which is an attack on their social identity face as members of their host community.

In conclusion, the author of the tweet structures his use of language in a way that depicts an intentional threat to the social identity face of market women in their role as providers of an important source of protein. His tweet is therefore oriented to rapport challenge and does not create positive rapport between interactants at the social interaction level of human interaction, especially where the use of language is concerned.

Wait, just curious, what happened to that proposed two million match in Kaduna?

\*march. If not for nepotism, you should be selling watermelon



**David Hundeyin** ✓  
@DavidHundeyin

Replying to @BashirAhmaad

Presidential media aide wey no sabi spell "march".

Tragic.

**Plate 4.23: Nepotism Denounced<sup>7,8</sup>.**

The first author in plate 23 above is the special assistant to the President of Nigeria on New Media and was formerly a personal assistant to the President. His role therefore entails the use of social image to put the Federal Government of Nigeria in a good light. In the process of doing this, he threatens the face of a group of politicians by asking a rhetorical question. The question points to the fact that these set of politicians do not possess the organizational acumen to bring together two million people in Kaduna as they purposed to. This question is an obvious attempt to threaten the social identity face of the set of people in question. It is thus oriented towards rapport challenge which means the author does not care about having a good relationship with the target of his tweet. By the same stroke of questioning, he attempts to carry out his role as a special assistant on new media by diverting attention to the incompetence of others and thereby taking it away from the government.

However, his attempt his is truncated by a singular mistake in language use which is harped on by his target. The two subsequent responses to his tweet are threats to his effectiveness as a special assistant. The two authors harp on his misspelling of the word “march”. They thereby pin the very thing he accuses them of on him namely incompetence albeit it is in in the area of language use in his own case. The first respondent threatens his ability to play his social role by stating that his failure to spell correctly shows that nepotism is the only reason he is holding an office. This effectively throws the spotlight back on the government and effectively puts paid to the attempt to take away attention from it. The second respondent also emphasizes this point and further reinforces the position of the first. By doing this, both respondents employ the tools of negative rapport to threaten the social identity face of the initial author. They therefore show their intention to use language for the sole purpose creating rapport challenge.

If you wish to enjoy interesting stories in a public bus,  
just shout "this government sef" and relax  
People will take it from there

**Plate 4.24: Simple Path to Interest<sup>23</sup>.**

There is a social contract between the government and the people. The former is expected to provide security of lives and property, good roads electricity etc. The latter is expected to obey the law and to pay their tax. The former fails to hold up its end of the bargain hence the threat to its social identity face as glue which holds the society together.

Another side to this tweet is that it saves the social identity face of passengers. Their role as passengers in a public vehicle is well played by their willingness to create a socially interesting atmosphere for themselves and other passengers. The discussion suggested by the tweet centres around the failure of the government to play its social role. It however serves as a facilitator of the roles of citizens in their department as words, it creates rapport maintenance and rapport enhancement. passengers. The use of the government as a topic creates positive rapport between passengers and reduces the likelihood of rapport challenge.

missed u barcelona ❤️



Barcelona no get match today nah how u come take miss them.

That's the difference between you both.  
 @YABALEFTONLINE  
 You dey watch Barcelona on TV while  
 She dey enter the city

**Plate 4.25:** Barcelona on Ground or on TV<sup>24</sup>?

The face threat in the plate above is expressed using pidgin English. It shows the societal gulf between the author of the initial tweet and the first respondent. It effectively shows that the author belongs to the upper class who can afford expensive trips to exotic cities while the initial respondent belongs to the lower class who makes

do with television images. Thus, it effectively orientates the third tweet to rapport challenge, effectively attacking the social identity face of the initial respondent.

Social identity threat to the face of the second author is made explicit by the third tweet. It effectively describes the gulf in social standing between the two initial authors by stating that “she dey enter the city” while “you dey watch Barcelona on TV”. This threat to his social identity face is occasioned by his assertion “Barcelona no get match today nah how come take miss them.” However, the third respondent shows that he does not possess the social credentials to question the statement of the first author since he does not have the financial wherewithal to travel to Barcelona at will. The third respondent therefore creates negative rapport with the second author by orienting his tweet to rapport challenge.

The day my friend pops died, I walked into the room where the mom and all relatives are grieving and I whisper into his ears 'iku ti te cursor si ori daddy e' man bursted into laugh even the mom and the relative were looking at him with amusement...

120 229 1,092

His Mom supposed wipe you oraimo cord that day, if she overheard your crazy conversation



**Plate 4.26:** Cursor Humour<sup>25</sup>.

The social expectation from a friend during a time of bereavement is consolation. This is usually expressed in the way language is used by callers at the house of the bereaved.

However, certain situations are exceptions to this rule. The use of words by the first author in plate 26 above shows an unusual way to console his bereaved friend via the route of humour. Thus his choice of the expression “iku ti te cursor sori daddy e”, a mix of Yoruba and English codes which betrays an understanding of the playfulness which underlines their friendship. This playfulness makes the use of language appropriate as shown by the response of the author’s friend. Thus the author’s use of language saves the social identity of his friend in his role one who is bereaved of his father. His allusion to the cursor feature of football games in his use of language would normally be expected to rile the recipient of his message. However, his audience’s response shows that the author has a firm grip on the situation despite his use of humorous language in a grave situation. This firm grip also shows his understanding of the thinking process of his friend and behaviour in any given circumstance. His use of language is thus oriented towards rapport maintenance. It therefore creates positive rapport.

Another dimension to this tweet is the author’s awareness of his sociocultural milieu. This is shown by his discretionary action of whispering his humorous take on his friend bereavement to the latter’s ear rather than to the hearing of all and sundry. This saves the face of both the author and that of his friend. It also saves the face of his friend’s mum and relative while lifting the burdens of mourning from his friend’s showing to an extent. Thus, the overall effect of his rapport maintaining use of language is to create some level of mirth in the midst of sadness for the friend and a welcome distraction to the grieving relatives and the grieving wife. His wise use of language thus effectively creates positive rapport by saving the social identity face of all concerned by respecting their social role as mourners.

The effectiveness of the author’s use of language and wisdom is buttressed by the respondent tweet. Its use is so effective that the author of the second tweet could not but

agree with him by humorously declaring that the mother of the bereaved friend ought to have “wipe you oraimo cord that day”, and ending his tweet with three laughing emoticon.

This is actually a very foolish take. While I won't condemn or judge them, they are adults that should know how to build self value, acquire better skills and get their lives together instead of waiting for a guy to foot their bills.

No one is obligated to help them out.

If you have no any money supports to help her out of that Hookup business, shut up bruh, na because you no fit pay for her services, that's why the tears. Help them out, don't judge them.

**Plate 4.27:** Foolish Take<sup>26</sup>.

One of the roles of any member of a community is to take care of him or herself so as not to constitute a nuisance to other members of the community. This is the position of the first author who posted in reply to the tweet in rectangle below it. This author challenges the social identity face of the “Hookup” girls referenced in the second tweet.

The first tweet not only threatens the social identity face of the hook up girls, he also threatens the face of the author of the second tweet by referring to his take as a “foolish take”. He employs rapport challenge throughout his tweet and emphasizes the fact that Hookup girls are adults who refuse to grow up and take responsibility for their life by equipping themselves with “better skills” and getting “their lives together”. They therefore expect “a guy to foot their bills”, especially if the guy is their patron. This mindset shows that they are not responsible members of the community hence the attack on their social identity face. For this same reason, the author achieves his interactional goal of letting the second author know that his take is foolish and baseless since “no one is obligated to help” the hookup girls “out”.

The second tweet in the plate is an attempt by the author to save the social identity face of those in the “Hookup business”. To the author, the women engaged in it are legitimate business people who have every right to charge any amount for their services. He therefore uses his words to save their face as regards their social roles as providers of sexual services to their patrons. In the same vein, he does not believe that anyone who cannot pay for their services should approach them. He therefore believes that the target of his tweet is “shedding” tears” because he cannot play his social role as a patron of their business. In other words, he threatens the social identity face of anyone who complains about their charges. His is therefore oriented to rapport challenge and shows his intention to save the social identity face of hookup girls while threatening the face of those attacking their source of income. His use of language is meant to achieve the transactional goal of defending those who provide sexual services.

What about Femi? What did Femi ever do to you to make you profile everyone that bears his name as chronic womanisers and demonic heart breakers?

Profiling is normal human behaviour.  
Weep.

**Plate 4.28:** Profiling Wahala<sup>27</sup>.

The plate above seeks to justify the habit of profiling that is the habit of attributing certain behavioural patterns to a certain set of people because of their characteristic or because of the past experience of the profiler. In the process of doing this, the author of the tweet threatens the social identity face of his opponents who believe that profiling is not right and that he should not engage in it. The tenor of his submission shows that he believes they are not cognizant of the actual behaviour of people in any society especially as it regards profiling. In other words, he posits that they do not possess the basic knowledge of how their immediate community operates. This, to him, makes them ineffective and inefficient in playing their role as members of their community. This is the basis of his deployment of rapport challenge in his use of language in the tweet. His position on the matter is informed by the assertion that “It’s wrong to profile someone because of waist beads and nose rings” when the proponents of this assertion stereotypically refer to any Yoruba man named “Femi” as a “chronic womaniser demonic heart breaker”. In other words, their use of double standards stands in the way

of their effectiveness and efficiency as members of their immediate community both on-line and off-line. The author concludes his tweet by saying “weep”, which shows that his use of language is intended to cause negative rapport. It also shows his intention to achieve the task of presenting his argument with caring how it makes his target feel.



When someone that has a terminal or chronic illness says “I’m tired & exhausted”, instead of saying “be strong” or “stay strong” or “don’t be tired”

Say this instead;

- “I’m so sorry you’re going through this. I’m here for you”

- “You’re allowed to be tired, let it all out”



**Plate 4.29:** Terminal Illness Etiquette<sup>28</sup>.

The plate above examines the role of a sympathiser in the process of socialising with an ill member of a social milieu. The use of language in the tweet shows that the author has either witnessed or experienced the way people communicate with others who are either terminally ill or are chronically so. To the author, the choice of expression betray a lack

of emotional intelligence which negates their role as consoler in the social context they have found themselves. This invalidates how the sufferer feels as a consequence thereby making the consoler lose face especially if the sufferer voices their frustration or expresses it non-verbally. In order to prevent this, the author prescribes expressions which helps to save the social identity face of the consoler while validating the feeling of the sufferer.

In a nutshell, the author of the tweet does not seek to threaten the face of the would be consoler. Instead, her interactional goal is inform them so as to facilitate the relational goals of the consoler.

From the analysis, it can be seen that the tweet is oriented to rapport maintenance. Its use of language is meant to help people in a specific social context to create positive rapport with the target of their consolatory messages.

However, the tweet can be said to threaten the social identity face of a consoler. This is because the very fact that what they are doing wrong is brought to light in a public space can cause them to lose face. It can therefore be said to be oriented to rapport challenge. This can create negative rapport and work against the relational and transactional goal of the tweet's author. In other words the goal of creating and maintaining relationships between the ill and sympathiser can be hampered by the placement of the correction in a public space that is, *Twitter*.

I love how Yoruba men are slandered constantly for being total demons, but they take it so well, even join the joke because they just don't care as they know they still get the babes 🤔🤔

10:56 AM · 24 Jan 23

24.4K Views 70 Retweets 21 Quote Tweets

298 Likes



They know it's their selling point na 😏



1,533



They have "bad boys" down pat. 🤔

**Plate 4.30: Bad Boy Arrogance<sup>29</sup>.**

The first tweet in this extract is a compliment to “Yoruba men”. It enhances or saves their social identity face by acknowledging how they treat slander towards them in a civil manner. The author praises how they “even join the joke” thus using her language in a way that creates positive rapport. This shows that the tweet is oriented to both rapport enhancement and rapport maintenance. This fact is further buttressed by the

author's assertion that "they just don't care as they know they still get the babes". This assertion further shows that the author believes that the social identity face of Yoruba men is not threatened by the slander. Instead, their civil handling of the matter results in enhancement for their social identity face. Hence, women still fall for them because they know how to play their social role of asking them out effectively. The tweet also enhances their social identity face by pointing out their confidence in themselves despite the slander aim towards them which is meant to make them lose face. The author's goal is therefore relational in nature. It is meant to form or maintain relationships with Yoruba men.

In another light, the tweet can be seen to be transactional in nature. This is because it subtly threatens the social identity face of those slandering Yoruba men. It is therefore an attempt to carry out the task of showing that Yoruba men are not perturbed by it, therefore the slanderers slander in vain. The use of language in the tweet subtly suggests that a set of people slander Yoruba men by referring to them as "total demons". However, the way Yoruba men join in the slander against them turns it into a joke and turns it into harmless banter while ensuring that they continue to have access to women. Seen in this light, the joke is a subtle jibe at the ineffective effort of the slanderers and thus doubles as a threat to their social identity face. It effectively makes nonsense of their role as slanderers, while in the same vein enhances the face of Yoruba men who are "total demons". This perception of the tweet shows that it also employs rapport challenge and creates negative rapport, especially where the slanderers are concerned.

#### **4.1.3.4 Instances of Language Used to Support or Infringe Equity Rights**

Equity rights are basic entitlements of autonomy.<sup>1</sup> It is the belief that an individual does not deserve to be exploited or imposed upon. This makes it different from face in that it is a claimed entitlement and not a claimed value. Also, it is based on reiterative patterns of behaviour, fairness and consideration expected within certain contexts. Efficient management of practical demands sometimes form the basis of reiterative patterns of behaviour. This is usually also rooted in deeply held values in the context of usage. In other words, it is based on social expectancies and not social, personal or relational value. Moreover, when these expectations are not met, it results in irritation or annoyance, not loss of face.

Equity right is made up of cost-benefit and autonomy-imposition. Cost refers to the extent to which an individual is exploited and benefit is the advantage which the individual enjoys as a result of the exploitation . It also comprises of the belief that the costs and benefits of rapport should roughly be balanced in order to maintain positive rapport. Autonomy is the belief that we are entitled to independence while imposition is the extent to which others can impose upon us. The extent to which we lose autonomy and are imposed upon should be determined by personal consideration from others.

When individuals are treated fairly and are not unduly imposed upon, rapport is enhanced. However, unfair treatment and undue imposition results in feelings of irritation and annoyance.

Instances of language used to either infringe or support equity rights are considered below.

On your birthday, I send you 50k make  
you flex. On my birthday, you send me  
"It's your day! A king is born today"  
Which foolish kingdom is your family  
ruling?

**Plate 4.31** Flex Money<sup>16</sup>.

This plate expresses the author's frustration at the failure of his significant other to reciprocate his loving gestures. This is shown by his mention of the sum of "50k" and the expression "Which foolish kingdom is your family ruling". From the tweet, it is seen that the author is expending his financial resources on a female. However, there is no corresponding benefit to him hence his frustration. For the same reason, his tweet is oriented to rapport challenge and tends towards rapport neglect. In other words, the goal of the interaction is relational. It seeks to create lacuna rather than intimacy in the relationship. His frustration stems from the lack of consideration for his emotional well being by someone he considers a significant other.

Dear future husband, all I want is a 50/50 relationship 😊 I cook, you eat, I do shopping, you pay, I wash, you iron, I clean, you arrange, I look for trouble, you fight for me, they beat you, I laugh

56 269 625 33.1K

The next day I cook, you eat, I do shopping, you pay, I wash, you iron, I clean, you arrange, I look for trouble, you fight for me, they beat you, I laugh

Now that's 50/50

**Plate 4.32:** 50/50<sup>30</sup>.

The plate above is a humorous examination the principle of reciprocity. Both tweets list a series of things they expect their spouse to do for them and underline them with the expression “50/50”. Both parties express their desire to be fairly treated by the other. They want the cost and benefit of their relationship to be roughly balanced by the activities of the other party. They also do not want their significant other to impose unfairly on them, especially where chores and finance is concerned. The tweets are therefore an attempt to create positive rapport and do not infringe the equity rights of both parties. Instead, they orientate their tweets to rapport

maintenance and rapport enhancement. In other words, their use of language creates harmony rather than disharmony between both parties.



**Plate 4.33:** Bills, Bills, Bills<sup>31</sup>.

Plate 33 shows a desire by the second author to exploit or impose upon his significant other. He perceives his significant other as a “billing plug”. This response is elicited by the question in the first tweet which seeks to find out how “Lagos girlfriends” are perceived by their male counterparts. As shown by the response, the tweet is oriented to rapport challenge and can create negative rapport. This shows the interactional goal of its author to inform prospective girlfriends that he is on the lookout for those who

will sponsor his expensive lifestyle. This submission shows that the author does not believe in the principle of reciprocity.



**Plate 4.34:** Emotional Support<sup>32</sup>.

Language use in this plate shows that the first author believes that the cost expended by any of her significant other should be matched by the benefit she provides as a compensation for their efforts. Hence her assertion that she feels “I’m bothering them” whenever she “depend on my people for emotional support”. For this reason, the author begins to pull away since she believes that “These people probably have their own problems”. In other words, she believes that despite the fact that they are

significant others, they deserve to be autonomous and she must therefore impose upon their time.

The use of language shows that the author desires rapport maintenance and enhancement. It also shows that the author would rather create positive rapport with her relatives and friends even at her expense.

When a man has standards,  
alot of women will consider him  
difficult.  
He'll be talked about like he has a  
defect and should be avoided.  
However, this is a good thing cos  
being vocal about ur standards  
will be a natural filter for u and  
keep ppl who don't fit in away  
from ur space.

8:29 AM · 26 Jan 23

754 Verified Views 8 Retweets 35 Likes



Never trade your standard, might lead to  
a long life of sadness. Use ya head.

**Plate 4.35:** Standards for Men<sup>33</sup>.

The use of language in this extract shows that a man ought to demand for equity in his relationship with women especially. Thus the authors postulation that “being vocal about your standards” is “a natural filter for u and keep ppl who don’t fit away fro your space.” The authors position, based on his experience, is an effective way to ensure that men are surrounded by women who treat others fairly and will thus put

him into consideration when making and executing her plans. Moreover, vocalisation of the man's standards ensures that the women around him do the same. This results in the likelihood that both parties get what they desire from their association with each other. In other words, his advice can ensure that women and men get to enjoy commensurate benefits of the cost they have invested in their relationship. This means that there is less occasion for any of the parties to feel frustrated or annoyed. This is corroborated by the respondent to the tweet who stipulates that failure to stick to standards results in a "long life of sadness". In all, the use of language shows orientation to rapport maintenance and rapport enhancement. It also shows intentionality to create positive rapport in the long term.

**Sex is not the only way you can cheat on your spouse. When you spend more time (chatting, calling or hanging out) with an opposite sex other than your spouse, this in itself is termed "cheating".**

**Plate 4.36:** Kinds of Cheating<sup>34</sup>.

The tweet in the plate above talks about considerate treatment of a spouse by their significant other. It is about consideration for the emotional wellbeing of another. This consideration implies that a spouse gives away some of his or her autonomy in a relationship. In other words, either of the parties can impose on the other. This is especially true if a party "spend more time(chatting, calling or hanging out) with an opposite sex other than your spouse". The author's submission is that such an act "is

termed “cheating””. This tweet uses language to show that people who do such are infringing the equity rights of their significant other. This tweet is uses language that is therefore oriented to rapport challenge and does not seek to create positive rapport. Instead, its interactional goal is to inform “cheats” that their actions constitute an infringement of the equity rights of their significant other.



**Plate 4.37:** Note on Manipulators<sup>35</sup>.

The plate above shows the use of language to advocate for equity when people are manipulated. It exposes one of the tactics of a manipulator namely fault finding. This tactic underlines the manipulators belief that their victim does not deserve to be treated fairly. It shows they do not believe that their victim do not deserve to enjoy the benefit that accrues to them as a result of their association with the manipulator. This is in spite of what it must cost them to relate with the manipulator. This informs the authors exposition of the tactic of fault finding. The author states that they try to

escape accountability and transparency by diverting attention away from their unfairness and lack of consideration for the other party by blowing the reaction of their target out of proportion. This tactic is negative rapport creator and results in rapport challenge. This shows that the obvious goal of their interaction is to get what they want from their victim without caring about how healthy the relationship becomes as a result.

The position of the first author is buttressed by the respondent who states that manipulator do not “own up to their role” and that they try to “flip the situation in their favour”. This further highlights their failure to put other people into consideration when making decisions. This shows the need to not “let them guilt trip you”. This response shows the need for vigilance in order to ensure fair treatment, cost-benefit balance and absence of imposition.


She doesn't deserve your  
attention just because she has a  
vagina.

Do Not  
Raise your standards. Qualities  
over body parts.

**Plate 4.38:** Criterion for Getting Attention<sup>36</sup>.

This plate considers cost versus benefit in a male-female relationship. The author of the tweet advises men to consider more important things other than vagina when considering a life partner. He posits that men should stop seeing the possession of a

reproductive organ as a major benefit of being in a relationship with a female. In other words, there are more important things like “Qualities” which should be rated higher than “body parts”. The submission of the author is that these perceived qualities are the commensurate benefit a man should enjoy before women can “deserve your attention”. The tweet is therefore aimed at rapport challenge since it seeks to break down relationships that are not based on the proposed ideal. Its use of language shows that the author does not care about creating positive rapport with the opposite gender and those who may disagree with him among his own gender.



Nigerians (men) going on about Paternity Fraud is incredibly weird, but I'm not surprised because it's every day people demonstrate they don't know anything about their own country

Legally and culturally, children not biologically your husband's are still your husband's children

**Plate 4.39:** Paternity Fraud<sup>37</sup>.

The use of language in this plate suggests that women who commit paternity fraud are justified in their action. In other words, men can “legally and culturally” be imposed upon even if the children born by their wives is not “biologically” theirs. Language use in the tweet is therefore meant to create negative rapport because it stipulates that

its is okay for a man to expend financial and emotional resources on a child even if the child belongs to another man. This obvious use of language to create rapport challenge shows that the author does not believe that there should be a balance between the cost which a man pays for raising a child and the benefit he should enjoy as the father of the child. The tweet is therefore an attempt to infringe the equity rights of “Nigerian (men)”.

igeria

When I am dating a woman, I  
don't ask her to do my dishes,  
I don't ask her to cook for me, I  
don't ask her to do my laundry.  
I can do all, but let her wisdom  
guide her.

I don't want a woman to be  
DOWN with me while I am  
struggling, a man's true nature is  
known when he has WEALTH

Do N

**Plate 4.40:** Chores<sup>38</sup>.

The plate above uses language in such a way that the equity rights of a “woman” is “dating” is not infringed. The tenor of the tweet shows that the author does not believe in imposing his desires on a woman. In other words, he lets her autonomously decide whether or not to “do my dishes...cook for me...do my laundry”. This shows that the author of the tweet seeks to be fair and considerate in the way he treats his woman. Hence, the tweet does not infringe on the equity rights of the author’s target audience.

#### **4.1.3.5 Instances of Language Used to Support or Infringe Association Rights**

Association rights are basic entitlements of social involvement.<sup>1</sup> It is the belief that the level of social involvement we have with others is a function of the nature of our relationship with them. In other words, people believe that they have a right to enjoy meaningful relationships with others. Like equity rights, it differs from face in terms of its nature. It is a claimed entitlement and not a claimed value. Like equity rights, it is based on reiterative patterns of behaviour, fairness and consideration, expected within certain contexts. It is also based on the need to manage practical demands efficiently, is rooted in deeply held values in the context of usage and socially apt behaviours for certain role relationships. This means that it is based on social expectancies and not social, personal or relational value. It therefore follows that an infringement of this right results in feelings of irritation and not embarrassment which results from loss of face.

Association rights can be supported through acceptance into a group or friendship. When this occurs, feelings of goodwill are created. If on the other hand an individual is not accepted, feelings of irritation and annoyance are created. Two components make up association right, affective involvement-detachment and interactional involvement-detachment. The former is the extent to which concerns, feelings and interests are shared. The latter is the extent to which we associate with people or the extent to which we dissociate ourselves from them.

Instances of the use of language to either infringe or support associations rights are

analysed below.



Plate 4.41: DM Wahala<sup>5</sup>.

The respondent's tweet is an infringement to the association right of the second tweet in the plate. He implied that the type of relationship she deserves to have with the first author is at best platonic. In other words, she does not deserve both interactional and affective involvement with the man. Instead, she deserves interactional and affective detachment from the man. This is due to the fact that he believes she does

not possess the ability to recognize a potential partner. This lack of ability makes her less of a woman from his perspective.

The second respondent in the plate also carried out a face threatening act by exposing her failure to respond positively to a prospective husband. However, the face she threatens is her own relational face. This threat to her face reinforces the perception that she does not deserve to enjoy affective and interactional involvement in a romantic relationship. This means that her own tweet, is oriented to rapport challenge that is, it may discourage others who have the same mindset as the last poster from approaching her for a relationship. It therefore has a tendency to create rapport neglect.

On the other hand, her admission of her mistake in the words “and this guy was in my dm two years ago” may cause others to perceive her as someone who is willing to learn. This perception can possibly create positive rapport that may eventually result in affective and interactional involvement with other men. In other words, there is a possibility for the tweet to create rapport enhancement.

Some of you stay longer in the toilet  
than in Relationships.

**Plate 4.42:** Duration Palava<sup>39</sup>.

Relationships are a form of social involvement with others, the others in this case being significant ones. This social involvement is threatened in this plate: the author believes some people do not have what it take to maintain a relationship. This results in an infringement of the association right of the people in question. This also informs his use of rapport challenge in the tweet. The association right of the targets of the

tweet is infringed by the implied lack of desire and lack of the wherewithal to stay long in relationships. This means that the targets of the tweet do not possess the ability to treat others fairly and considerately. They do not possess the ability to depict themselves as significant others in a loving, romantic relationship, especially for the long haul. This inability creates rapport challenge and results in negative rapport between them and their significant other. In a nutshell, the author of the tweet orientates his use of language to rapport challenge by stating that set of people in question “stay longer in the toilet than in Relationships”.

Some men are screaming they want an independent woman, a successful woman blah blah.... Until they meet one and they don't know how to handle her 📌📌📌

It's always "handle" with you lots. Are you people wild animals?

**Plate 4.43:** Independence<sup>12</sup>.

Rapport challenge is evident in the plate above. The author challenges the initial author and people like her who need to be “handled” rather than be related with. Their excesses as implied in the initial tweet makes it difficult to enjoy relationship with them. This means that the respondent tweet infringes their association right. The tweet shows that it is better for men to exercise their affective and interactional detachment rights when they encounter such kinds of women. In other words, the tweet is oriented towards

rapport challenge and rapport neglect. This orientation is occasioned by their lack of consideration and fairness when relating by their male counterpart. It is also the reason language use in the tweet is meant to create negative rapport. In other words, the interactional goal is negatively relational and interactional in that it shows why women who behave like “wild animals” do not deserve to enjoy association rights.



**Plate 4.44:** Broke People<sup>40</sup>.

The plate above is an attack on the social identity face of the target(s). It is also doubles as infringement of the association right of the target. It implies that the target should not enjoy good relationships with others simply because he is broke and expresses this fact through an ability to recall his bank account number from memory. The author of the first tweet perceives this ability as a sign of eagerness occasioned by poverty. Hence his conclusion that only broke people possess this ability. Due to the possession of this ability, these set of people, in the estimation of the first author should not enjoy interaction with wealthy people like himself. The initial tweet is obviously oriented to rapport challenge and seeks to show why a certain class of people like the respondent do not qualify for fair treatment and consideration. The goal of it author is therefore to

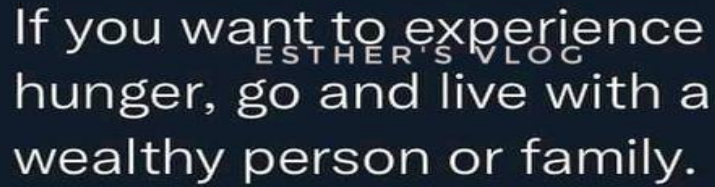
show his superiority to others who do not have and are thus too eager to call out account details from memory whenever there is an opportunity to make some money.

On your birthday, I send you 50k make you flex. On my birthday, you send me "It's your day! A king is born today" Which foolish kingdom is your family ruling?

**Plate 4.45: Birthday Flexing<sup>16</sup>.**

This tweet infringes the association rights of the target since it implies that she is not worthy of being in a romantic or give and take relationship. She fails to give gifts which adequately expresses the value she places on her significant other. This failure is interpreted by the tweet's author as an infringement on his right to be associated with someone who values the association. Hence he berates of her by asking rhetorically "Which foolish kingdom is your family ruling?"

The author of the tweet is feels like his right to be treated with consideration and fairness has been trampled by the woman's action. His language use therefore tends towards negative rapport. His use of language also shows a tendency to detach from her, both emotionally and in terms of interaction.



If you want to experience  
ESTHER'S VLOG  
hunger, go and live with a  
wealthy person or family.

**Plate 4.46:** Wealth of Hunger<sup>41</sup>.

The plate above implies that wealthy people are expected to take care of people from the lower classes. In other words, one of their perceived roles in a society is philanthropy in various forms. Apparently, the author of the tweet believes wealthy people fail to play this societal role effectively hence the tweet. He thereby implies that they are not qualified to enjoy close relationships with people on the lower rung of the societal ladder. In other words, their actions means that they do not deserve to enjoy association rights (affective involvement and interactional involvement) in the society. Thus the tweet infringes on the association right of wealthy people. The choice of words clearly shows an orientation towards rapport challenge.

Seen another way, the tweet shows a difference in the eating habits of the rich and that of the poor. While the rich may take just two slices of bread and a cup of tea as breakfast, the poor require a combination of garri (a local staple food made with cassava) and porridge beans which forms a concrete like solid to feel satisfied. This difference in preference can be said to be the basis of negative rapport between the wealthy and the poor. Language use in the tweet points to the fact that this difference can only result in detachment between the two social classes - interaction between the the will be negatively impacted and commonality of interest will also be negatively impacted.

There's a special place in Hell For all those Mama-put that'll tell you "Oga the kpomo is very soft" only for you to get home and realize you bought a Carpet and Italian Leather Belt 🤔🤔🤔

**Plate 4.47:** Leather Ponmo<sup>42</sup>.

For roadside restaurants to thrive, they need the patronage of commuters and pedestrians. In other words, some level of relations must exist between the two parties. This relationship is facilitated by reciprocity of good gestures between the restaurant owners and their customers. This gesture is absent on the part of the “mama put” referred to in the tweet above hence the its author’s belief that the restaurant owners do not deserve to be associated with customers. The absence of reciprocity is pointer to a lack of fairness and consideration by the ‘mama put’ restaurant. This is enough reason for detachment from them by the author of the tweet. How strongly the author feels about the action of the restaurant is shown by the metaphorical expression “Oga the kpomo is soft.” and the expression “only for you to get home and realize you bought a Carpet and Italian Leather Belt.” This metaphorical use of language buttresses the assignment of the “mama-put” to “a special place in hell.” This is because the social identity face of the “mama put” has been threatened by their lack of integrity which also makes them ineligible to enjoy association rights where potential patronage from customers is concerned. The author’s consignment of the owners of

the roadside eatery to “a special place in hell” further reinforces the perception of their failure to reciprocate the trust placed in them with good service delivery. The service is bad that the author describes what he was served as carpet and leather belt. This use of language to create negative rapport, and to orientate rapport to challenge shows how much the author feels cheated by the food seller.

If you wish to enjoy interesting stories in a public bus,  
just shout "this government sef" and relax  
People will take it from there 

**Plate 4.48:** Interesting Stories<sup>23</sup>.

Interestingly, this tweet, which is meant to threaten the quality face of the government, also serve a rapport maintenance purpose. Following the advice given in the tweet results in the facilitation of a discussion thereby creating rapport. The advice thus helps it audience to exercise their association right in the society. The various ways in which the government of Nigeria has failed in its basic duties of providing pipe borne water, electricity, and good roads supply topics for conversation between passengers. As their use of language in discussing these issues threaten the social identity face of the government at different levels, it also brings passengers closer. This is because the suffering that results from the failure of the government is felt by all in the society. This suffering show the failure of the government to play its social role effectively. This suffering facilitates affective involvement with each other. The affective

involvement is based on interactional involvement in the form of stories, instances and example of failure in governance and politics by those at the helm of affairs in the country. The fact that merely shouting “this government sef” can create an appreciable level of camaraderie between total strangers attests to the failure of the government, and justifies the threat to their social identity face.



**Plate 4.49:** Disgusting Familiarity<sup>43</sup>.

This plate entails the use of language to show that people have a right to show that people are at liberty to decide their level of closeness to you. This level of closeness, otherwise known as affective attachment - detachment, is determined by the nature of the relationship. In the example cited in the first tweet, looking down on a person creates a relationship with a particular nature, a nature devoid of cordiality. This

absence of cordiality can further be exacerbated by a sudden change in attitude once it is realised that the person being looked down on is rich. It is therefore an infringement of association rights for the condescending participant in this context to “suddenly change”.

The author of the second tweet runs foul of this societal expectation by stating that such a behaviour is “peculiar to all humans”. This prompts the response “speak for yourself”. This shows that the author of the initial and last tweet does not agree with the justification of infringement of associated as advocated by the second author. He therefore orientates his response to rapport challenge effectively informing the second poster that he is not ready to rapport with him if he holds such a mentality.

Found out she cheated, broke up with her a day before her psychology exam lol she failed

It's not my fault tho it's her fault for letting a man stop her from reading and concentrating



 **Baby Designer.** 🙋 @adesolaaaaa · 1d  
Yk there are times that are actually inappropriate to break up with someone?

**Plate 4.50:** Cheating Punishment<sup>44</sup>.

The plate above is an example of the exercise of association right albeit at a “time: that is “inappropriate”. Language use in the first tweet shows that the author exercised his right to detach (affective-detachment) from his significant other when he discovered that “she cheated” on him. This means that her action caused a change in

the nature of their relationship. In keeping with this change in nature, the author breaks up with her. This action is informed by the unfair treatment meted to him. Moreover, he feels she is not considerate where how he feel is concerned. Furthermore, her action shows that their interests, concerns and feelings no longer align, hence the need to detach.

Language use in the tweet shows that the author action is oriented to rapport challenge. His timing of the breakup also shows that his interactional goal is to exact revenge on his erstwhile girlfriend. Another thing revealed by the use of language is that the author is not interested in creating positive rapport. It also shows that he does not care for the stipulation of the author of the second tweet. Hence his tweet challenges it and is oriented to creating negative rapport or disharmony with its poster.

#### **4.1.5 Face-saving and Face-threatening Strategies in Selected *Twitter* Posts and Replies**

Strategies in this study refer to rational linguistic means of achieving certain ends. They also mean coordination of communication through routine and shared linguistic means recognized by members of a particular community. They refer to how language is used to either enhance or threaten face. They also refer to how language use supports or infringe rights. This include choice of words, phrases and sentences depending on the interactional goal of the speaker or writer.

For the purpose of this analysis, (im)politeness strategies/formulae is employed<sup>2</sup>. These strategies/formulae are solely focused on impolite use of language. However, for the purpose of this study, they are extended to accommodate polite use of language. For instance personalized positive assertion was coined from personalized negative assertion to account for polite use of this impoliteness formula.

Impoliteness strategy/formulae was deployed for quality face, relational face and social identity face as follows:

The impoliteness strategy/formulae named personalized negative assertion appears in plates 1 (Pele, king of Sapa kingdom), 2 (He would have settled for less), 3 (When you reach market, tell Iya mulika say you wan buy beef tripe), 4 (You cannot discuss your malaria with the mosquito), 16 (Same goes to guys who are into fraud but...you have problem with women), 19 (Avoid broke and entitled women), 20 (Normalized Having side chics), 22 (When you reach market tell Iya mulika say you wan buy beef tripe), 23 (March), 24 (This government sef), 25 (She dey enter the city...you dey watch Barcelona on TV ), 27 (Foolish take), 29 (Be strong/stay strong/ don't be tired), and 30 (I love how Yoruba men are slandered constantly for being total demons, but they take it so well, even join the joke because they just don't care as they know they still get the babes).

Another strategy/formulae, namely personalized negative vocatives appears in plate 5 (Bushmen).

Personal criticism/Complaints is another strategy formulae in the work. It appears in plates 6 (You only know the spelling but you no fit buy am) and 20 (Normalized Having side chics).

The keywords in plates 8 (Are you people wild animals?), 13 (Are you people wild animals?) and plate 14 ( Which foolish kingdom is your family ruling?) involve the use of the "unpalatable question/presupposition" strategy/formulae.

Personalized positive assertion is the strategy/formulae used in plates 12 (iku ti te cursor sori daddy e), 15 ( Continue deceiving yourself/Stamford bridge as a show of love), 17 ( I just walked by), 18 ( I like or RT comments that either agree with me or

disagree as long as it's respectful), and 26(Iku ti te cursor sori daddy e).

Support and infringement of rights is also captured by the impoliteness strategy/formulae.

Plates 31 to 40 are focused on equity rights. Of these, plates 31(Which foolish kingdom is your family ruling), 33 (Billing plug ), and 39(Legally and culturally, children not biologically your husband's are still your husband's children) are instances of the use of failure to reciprocate strategy. Plates 32(The next day I cook, you eat, I do shopping, you pay, I wash you iron, I clean, you arrange, I look for trouble, you fight for me, they beat you, I laugh.), 35([Being] vocal about your standards" [is] "a natural filter for u and keep ppl who don't fit away fro your space.), 36(When you spend time...with an opposite sex other than you spouse, this...is termed cheating cheating), 38(She doesn't deserve your attention because because she has a vagina) and 40(I don't ask her to do my dishes...cook for me...do my laundry) involve the use of reciprocation. Encroachment is the strategy used in plates 33(Billing plug), 39(Legally and culturally, children not biologically your husband's are still your husband's children), and 37(Manipulators finding fault in your reaction instead of their disrespect is the craziest shit ever.). Patronising behaviour was used in plate 37(Manipulators finding fault in your reaction instead of their disrespect is the craziest shit ever.) while condescension was used in plate 39.

Plates 41 to 50 are focused on association rights. Of these, plate 48(This government sef) involves the use of inclusion strategy/formulae while plates 41(He would have settled for less), 42 (Some of you stay longer in the toilet than in Relationships), 43(Are you people wild animals), 44(Na broke people dey sabi account number off hand), 45(Which foolish kingdom is your family ruling), 46(If you want to experience

hunger, go and live with a wealthy person or family), 47(Special place in hell, Carpet and Italian leather), 49(It is a disgusting behaviour to look down on people, but suddenly change when you find out they have money.) and 50(Found out she cheated, broke up with her a day before her psychology exam...) involve the use of exclusion strategy/formulae.

#### **4.2 Discussion of Findings**

Analysis of the plates show that Nigerian users of the *Twitter* platform make use of language both politely and impolitely. Of the 50 plates used for this research work, 15 involves the use of personalized negative assertion, 2 involve the use of personalized negative vocative, unpalatable questions/presuppositions make up 4 of the total, personalized positive assertion are 2 in number and pointed criticisms and complaints are 2 in number. This means that there are 17 instances of the use of language in the form of insults since personalized negative assertion and personalized negative vocative are forms of the insult strategy, 4 instances of the use of language in the form of unpalatable questions/presuppositions, 2 instances of the use of language in the form of pointed complaints/criticisms and 7 instances of the use of language in the form of personalized positive assertion. This means that, of the 7 possible (im)politeness strategy, only 5 is used by Nigerian users of *Twitter* namely personalized negative vocative, personalized negative assertion, unpalatable question/presupposition, pointed complaints/criticisms and personalized positive assertion. Personalized negative references and personalized third-person negative references in the hearing of the target were not used.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of Face Oriented (Im)Politeness Strategies/Formulae**

<b>Insults</b>		<b>Other (Im)Politeness Strategies/Formulae</b>		
<b>Personalised</b>	<b>Personalised</b>	<b>Unpalatable</b>	<b>Pointed</b>	<b>Personalised</b>
<b>Negative</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Question/Pres</b>	<b>Complaints/C</b>	<b>Positive</b>
<b>Vocative</b>	<b>Assertion</b>	<b>opposition</b>	<b>criticism</b>	<b>Assertion</b>
	2	15	4	2
				7

**Source:** Researcher's fieldwork

In terms of equity rights and association rights, infringement is higher than support. Failure to reciprocate is the most employed strategy (6), while condescension and patronizing behaviour are the least(1 each). Encroachment is used 4 times. On the other hand, clear boundaries and reciprocation are 4 in total with the latter being 3 and the former 1. Of the 9 equity right infringement/support strategies, only 5 were used. Taboo behaviours, message enforcers, dismissals, silencers and threats were not used.

In terms of association rights, language use shows a preference for exclusion rather than inclusion. There are 9 instances of exclusion and 1 of inclusion. Of the possible 13 support/infringement strategies/formulae, only 5 were employed by Nigerian users of *Twitter*. These are clear boundary, reciprocation, inclusion., patronizing behaviour, condescension, failure to reciprocate, encroachment, and exclusion,

These findings show that there is a preference for infringement strategies.

**Table 4.2: Distribution of (Im)Politeness Strategies Oriented to Sociality Rights**

Infringement of Right					Support/Acknowledgement of Right		
Patronizing Behavior	Condescension	Failure to Reciprocate	Encroachment	Exclusion	Clear boundary	Reciprocation	Inclusion
1	1	6	4	9	1	3	1

**Source:** Researcher’s fieldwork

These findings show that insults are used liberally by users of *Twitter* in Nigerian. The platform provides a good level of anonymity for tweeps. This may account for the boldness to use impolite language on people who users cannot confront face to face. This is corroborated by a study on impolite language used on *YouTube* which posits that anonymity and social detachment facilitates impoliteness on social media platforms. <sup>1</sup>

The findings show that use of polite language occurred few times: instances of the use of personalized positive assertions are 7 in number. This means that most Nigerian users do not show restraint when relating on the platform. Instead, they display a natural tendency to employ face threatening language on *Twitter*. This is because Nigerian interlocutors, as shown by the plates in this work, want to dominate the conversation by using language to express their superiority over other users. This is in line with the submission of a study on impoliteness in Javanese jokes which submits that Javanese interlocutors on *YouTube* use impolite language to dominate conversations on the platform.<sup>3</sup>

The findings also show that use of impolite language cuts across several topics e.g feminism, age, politics, relationship etc. This implies that the use of impolite language is not restricted to any one topic of discussion. This indicates that the choice to use either polite language or impolite language lies with the user of the language and is not determined by the topic of discussion.

A major limitation of the study is that it is focused on language use by Nigerian users on *Twitter*. There are other platforms which are not covered by its scope. These include *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *Quora*, *MySpace* etc. This limits its coverage of (im)polite use of language.

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## Chapter Five

### Conclusion

This chapter has five sections. The first section summarizes the findings of the work, conclusions drawn from the findings are given in the second section, the third section gives recommendations, while contribution to knowledge and suggested areas for further research are stated in sections four and five respectively.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

The analysis of 50 *Twitter* plates from Nigerian users found that they use language in both polite and impolite ways. Out of the 50 plates, 15 contained personalized negative assertions, 2 contained personalized negative vocatives, 4 contained unpalatable questions/presuppositions, 2 contained personalized positive assertions, and 2 contained pointed criticisms/complaints. This means that 17 instances of language were used in the form of insults, 4 in the form of unpalatable questions/presuppositions, 2 in the form of pointed complaints/criticisms, and 7 in the form of personalized positive assertions. Of the 7 possible (im)politeness strategies, only 5 were used by Nigerian *Twitter* users: personalized negative vocatives, personalized negative assertions, unpalatable questions/presuppositions, pointed complaints/criticisms, and personalized positive assertions. Personalized negative references and personalized third-person negative references in the target's hearing were not used.

The analysis found that in terms of equity rights and association rights, there are more instances of infringement than support. The most commonly used strategy is failure to reciprocate, which was used 6 times, while condescension and patronizing behaviour were used the least, each only 1 time. Encroachment was used 4 times. On the other

hand, clear boundaries and reciprocation were used a total of 4 times, with reciprocation being used 3 times and clear boundaries being used 1 time. Out of the 9 equity right infringement/support strategies, only 5 were used, while taboo behaviours, message enforcers, dismissals, silencers, and threats were not used.

The analysis of the language use in terms of association rights reveals a preference for exclusion over inclusion, with 9 instances of exclusion and only 1 of inclusion. Out of the 13 possible support/infringement strategies, only 5 were used by Nigerian *Twitter* users: clear boundary, reciprocation, inclusion, patronizing behaviour, condescension, failure to reciprocate, encroachment, and exclusion. These results indicate a preference for infringement strategies.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the analysis of 50 *Twitter* plates from Nigerian users, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Encourage the use of more positive language: The analysis revealed that there were only 7 instances of personalized positive assertions and 2 instances of pointed criticisms/complaints, indicating a need to promote the use of more positive language. Strategies such as reinforcing language, which highlights students' skills, positive efforts, and attitudes, and quality work, can be used to acknowledge students' positives.
2. Reduce the use of impolite language: The analysis found that out of the 50 plates, 17 instances of language were used in the form of insults, 4 in the form of unpalatable questions/presuppositions, and 2 in the form of pointed complaints/criticisms, which indicates a need to reduce the use of impolite

language. Strategies such as reminding language, which involves reminding students of previously learned concepts, can be used to address impolite language.

3. Promote equity rights and association rights: The analysis found that there were more instances of infringement than support in terms of equity rights and association rights. Strategies such as clear boundaries, reciprocation, and inclusion need to be promoted to ensure equitable communication. For example, practitioners can use affirmation to express genuine appreciation and confirm a positive regard for clients' hidden and expressed strengths.
4. Reduce the use of infringement strategies: The analysis found a preference for infringement strategies such as failure to reciprocate and exclusion, indicating a need to reduce their use. Practitioners can empower clients to become involved in the change process by taking responsibility for choices they make about their substance misuse and the effect on treatment initiation and outcomes.
5. Encourage the use of more supportive strategies: The analysis found that strategies such as clear boundaries, reciprocation, and inclusion were underutilized, indicating a need to encourage their use to promote a more supportive communication environment. Researchers have provided empirical evidence pointing to emphasis on learners' motivation as an effective device in improving language of learners

### **5.3 Contribution to Knowledge**

This study contributed to the body of research in the area of discourse Pragmatics and new media discourse. It has made explicit the basis of “dragging” in *Twitter* posts and replies as located in impolite use of language to create disharmony rather than harmony. It shows how orientation of impolite language to quality face, relational

face and social identity face creates negative rapport on *Twitter*. It also shows how frustration is created by infringement of equity rights and associations. The study further broadens awareness of how language is used to smoothen interaction with others and avoid “dragging” by opting for face saving usage of language.

The study also contributed to knowledge by validating and expanding the rapport management model. It specifically expands impoliteness strategies and formulae by providing politeness/support strategies for personalized negative vocatives, encroachment, failure to reciprocate, and exclusion. The politeness/support strategies provided in the work are personalized positive vocatives, clear boundary, reciprocation and inclusion.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Research**

Based on the findings of this study, there are several areas for further research in the field of discourse Pragmatics and new media discourse. Some of these areas include:

1. A comparative study of impolite language use across different cultures and countries on social media platforms.
2. An investigation into the reasons behind the preference for infringement strategies in communication on social media platforms.
3. An exploration of the relationship between impolite language use and the creation of negative rapport on social media platforms.
4. An examination of the role of gender and power dynamics in the use of impolite language on social media platforms.
5. A study of the impact of social media algorithms and user behaviour on the creation of positive or negative rapport on these platforms.

6. An exploration of the relationship between language use and social identity on social media platforms.
7. A longitudinal study of the evolution of impolite language use on social media platforms over time.

## 5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of 50 *Twitter* plates from Nigerian users indicates that language is used in both polite and impolite ways, with a range of (im)politeness strategies employed. However, the findings show that there are more instances of face threatening than face enhancing/saving language among users of *Twitter* in Nigeria. Insults and unpalatable questions/presuppositions, pointed complaints/criticisms enjoy more usage when compared with personalized positive assertions. Furthermore, the findings suggest that there are more instances of equity rights and association rights infringements than support, with exclusion and failure to reciprocate being the most commonly used strategies. While clear boundaries and reciprocation were used a few times, the use of taboo behaviours, message enforcers, dismissals, silencers, and threats was not observed.

These results suggest a preference for face threatening strategies over face saving strategies and for infringement strategies over support strategies when it comes to association rights. It is therefore important for users to be mindful of the impact their language use can have on others and to strive for more inclusive and supportive communication on-line in order to avoid the creation and facilitation of suicidal tendencies in other.

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Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria

**Appendices:** Screenshots of tweets used as plates.



When you reach market tell iya mukaila say you wan buy beef tripe.

Do 1

Pr

Wait, just curious, what happened to that  
proposed two million match in Kaduna?

\*march. If not for nepotism, you should be  
selling watermelon

Replying to @BashirAhmaad

Presidential media aide wey no sabi spell  
"march".

Tragic.

**Men, why can't you confide in your  
wives about your problems and  
frustrations.**

**You cannot discuss your malaria  
with the mosquito**

Will you pay? Or you got a brand new range rover veler? Plus a semi detached duplex in lekki ?

If yes , then we can deal 😊

Replying to @Ekitipikin and @SportyBet

It's called Velar. Bush man 😊

Well ... you only know the spelling but you no fit buy am 😂😂😂

Men. Reply with some of the reasons you stopped talking to a lady you were interested in:

Went to the mall to get my mom's favorite perfume, and because she was with me, I asked her if she wanted anything for herself. "I don't use cheap perfumes like this and even if I did, within this price range, it'll be a deodorant", she replied. Someone that doesn't have a job.

Some men are screaming they want an independent woman, a successful woman blah blah... Until they meet one and they don't know how to handle her 📌📌📌

**@GISTHOOD**  
**07087412620**

It's always "handle" with you lots. Are you people wild animals?



**Nwa mummy**  
@Nkwobi\_Freshnez

...

I am going to be 18 years in December. Full adult. Thank you Jesus



...

Happy 81st birthday in addy babe



I thought a certain set of people said Obasanjo was frowning when he received Tinubu?

#TableShaker



You once said 🙄🙄🙄



← Tweet

22h



The day my friend pops died, I walked into the room where the mom and all relatives are grieving and I whisper into his ears 'iku ti te cursor si ori daddy e' man bursted into laugh even the mom and the relative were looking at him with amusement...

120 229 1,092

Replying to @IamHollar and @Letter\_to\_Jack

His Mom supposed wipe you oraimo cord that day, if she overheard your crazy conversation



11:48 PM · 13 Sep 22 · Twitter for Android

Reply Retweet Like Share

Tweet your reply





On your birthday, I send you 50k make you flex. On my birthday, you send me "It's your day! A king is born today" Which foolish kingdom is your family ruling?

← Tweet



Frank Edoho  
@frankedoho

Continue **deceiving yourself**. Just DMI @akaebube and collect your free Blues Membership form. Manchester United to the world ko, Manchester City to the village ni!

I am not a Chelsea fan ohh! But for the love of football, I visited Stamford Bridge as a show of love. Football brings unity, not hate. Anyway, Manchester United to the World #SecurityTips



Tweet your reply



← Tweet



Every prostitute has a "touching" story.

But always remember, she had options.

To survive, every one will go for the options they think their minds & happiness resonate with.

A prostitute is happy being a prostitute.

Don't always get carried away by her "sorry" tales.

End.

77 314 991

Replying to [@jon\\_d\\_doe](#)

Same goes to guys who are into fraud, but it seems you have problem with women.

10:42 PM · 14 Sep 22 · [Twitter for Android](#)

2 Quote Tweets 6 Likes

Tweet your reply



← Tweet

He speaks against fraud. Get your facts straight before yapping.

Don't marry a man if:

- 1) He's into fraud/you're unsure of what he does
- 2) He's addicted to betting
- 3) He doesn't speak with you like a wife
- 4) He keeps too many friends
- 5) You don't know his core friends
- 6) He can't make decisions w/out his mother
- 7) He speaks low of his father

16:59 · 28 May 22 · [Twitter for Android](#)

 3  5  63 

Wait, just curious, what happened to that proposed two million match in Kaduna?

**@BOI\_TRIPLEHAY**

\*march. If not for nepotism, you should be selling watermelon

Presidential media aide wey no sabi spell "march".

Tragic.

---

← Post

..

If you wish to enjoy interesting stories in a public bus,  
just shout "this government sef" and relax  
People will take it from there

9:36 AM · Oct 8, 2021

---

176 Reposts 2 Quotes 306 Likes 2 Bookmarks



Post your reply!

Reply

missed u barcelona ❤️



Barcelona no get match today nah how  
u come take miss them.

That's the difference between you both.  
@YABALEFTONLINE  
You dey watch Barcelona on TV while  
She dey enter the city

---

← Tweet

---

This is actually a very foolish take. While I won't condemn or judge them, they are adults that should know how to build self value, acquire better skills and get their lives together instead of waiting for a guy to foot their bills.

No one is obligated to help them out.

-- h  
If you have no any money supports to help her out of that Hookup business, shut up bruh, na because you no fit pay for her services, that's why the tears. Help them out, don't judge them.

For you

Following

"It's wrong to profile someone because of waist beads and nose rings."

What about Femi? What did Femi ever do to you to make you profile everyone that bears his name as chronic womanisers and demonic heart breakers?

Profiling is normal human behaviour. Weep.

12 28 155 4,328

My female friend closed a deal of 85 million naira, her very first one ever since she started marketing real estate. I'm talking about an entire two years of learning and showing up without a single sale. Late last year she told me going to stop and focus on her 9

28 1,340 1,051 96.6K

← Tweet



When someone that has a terminal or chronic illness says “I’m tired & exhausted”, instead of saying “be strong” or “stay strong” or “don’t be tired”

Say this instead;

- “I’m so sorry you’re going through this. I’m here for you”

- “You’re allowed to be tired, let it all out”

2:07 PM · 24 Jan 23

← Tweet

ed

⋮

I love how Yoruba men are slandered constantly for being total demons, but they take it so well, even join the joke because they just don't care as they know they still get the babes 🤔🤔

10:56 AM · 24 Jan 23

24.4K Views 70 Retweets 21 Quote Tweets

298 Likes



They know it's their selling point na 😂

1



8



1,533



They have "bad boys" down pat. 🤔

Tweet your reply



← Tweet

Dear future husband, all I want is a 50/50 relationship 😏 I cook, you eat, I do shopping, you pay, I wash, you iron, I clean, you arrange, I look for trouble, you fight for me, they beat you, I laugh  
..

56 269 625 33.1K

The next day I cook, you eat, I do shopping, you pay, I wash, you iron, I clean, you arrange, I look for trouble, you fight for me, they beat you, I laugh

Now that's 50/50

8:12 AM · 26 Jan 23

1,397 Verified Views 3 Retweets 53 Likes



Tweet your reply



← Tweet

He who finds a Lagos girlfriend has found what?

130 147 344 15.1K

**Obi\_Follower**  
@BilliriSam

Replying to @Atine30

**Billing plug**

9:21 AM · 26 Jan 23

71 Verified Views 1 Like



Sure kpa

1 1 69

5

Tweet your reply



When I depend on my people for emotional support I start to feel like I'm bothering them and just start keeping my problems to myself.

5:57 AM · 26 Jan 23

10.3K Verified Views 55 Retweets

8 Quote Tweets 111 Likes



These people probably have their own problems they have to deal with that might even be bigger than mine.

1 Retweet 5 Likes 632 Views

It's understandable to feel that way. If

Tweet your reply



← Tweet

When a man has standards,  
alot of women will consider him  
difficult.  
He'll be talked about like he has a  
defect and should be avoided.  
However, this is a good thing cos  
being vocal about ur standards  
will be a natural filter for u and  
keep ppl who don't fit in away  
from ur space.

8:29 AM · 26 Jan 23

754 Verified Views 8 Retweets 35 Likes

Never trade your standard, might lead to  
a long life of sadness. Use ya head.

Tweet your reply

Sex is not the only way you can  
cheat on your spouse. When you  
spend more time (chatting, calling  
or hanging out) with an opposite  
sex other than your spouse, this  
in itself is termed “cheating”.

← Tweet

Manipulators finding fault in your reaction instead of their disrespect is the craziest shit ever.

3:00 PM · 25 Jan 23

**601K** Verified Views **4,173** Retweets

**314** Quote Tweets **11.8K** Likes



Manipulators will flip the situation in their favour cos they lack the accountability and courage to own up to their role.

Don't let them guilt trip you, stay ahead of their game.

1 Reply 33 Retweets 141 Likes 7,559 Views

Tweet your reply



← Tweet

♥ Tolulope • Mental Health ❤️👍 liked



She doesn't deserve your attention just because she has a vagina.

Raise your standards. Qualities over body parts.

6:18 PM · 25 Jan 23

2,030 Verified Views 11 Retweets

1 Quote Tweet 82 Likes



There are some part that won't let you think straight 😂..... Heaven save us from that gender



19



---

Nigerians (men) going on about Paternity Fraud is incredibly weird, but I'm not surprised because it's every day people demonstrate they don't know anything about their own country

Legally and culturally, children not biologically your husband's are still your husband's children

← Tweet

When I am dating a woman, I don't ask her to do my dishes, I don't ask her to cook for me, I don't ask her to do my laundry. I can do all, but let her wisdom guide her.

I don't want a woman to be DOWN with me while I am struggling, a man's true nature is known when he has WEALTH

9:26 AM · 27 Jan 23

437 Verified Views 3 Retweets 9 Likes



Am thinking you don't want anyone coming out to claim that they were there for u when you were still struggling

Tweet your reply



Some of you stay longer in the toilet than in Relationships.



Na broke people dey sabi account number off hand

What will you now say to me way sabi card Number off hand too?



If you want to experience hunger, go and live with a wealthy person or family.

ESTHER'S VLOG



[@uroanyoòbá](#)

There's a special place in Hell For all those Mama-put that'll tell you "Oga the kpomo is very soft" only for you to get home and realize you bought a Carpet and Italian Leather Belt 😂😂





**Ugly\_Mofo** 🧑🏾🤪 @kayzywizzy · 6h  
 It's a disgusting behavior to look down on people, but suddenly change when you find out they have money.

🗨️ 95 ↻ 1,245 ❤️ 2,942 📊 105K 🔗



**Mr Klassiq** ❤️  
 @Mrklassiq\_

Replying to @kayzywizzy

It's peculiar to all humans ...

9:28 AM · 26 Jan 23

2,829 Verified Views 2 Quote Tweets 7 Likes



**Ugly\_Mofo** 🧑🏾🤪 @kayzywizzy · 6h  
 Replying to @Mrklassiq\_  
 Speak for yourself.



**Elroy** 🙌🏾🌱🌿 da Failed Punter  
 @thisiselroy

Found out she cheated, broke up with her a day before her psychology exam lol she failed

It's not my fault tho it's her fault for letting a man stop her from reading and concentrating



**Baby Designer.** 🧑🏾 @adesolaaaaa · 1d

Yk there are times that are actually inappropriate to break up with someone?



She's earning 800k per month in Abuja, and he's earning 60k per month in Lagos. After the wedding who should relocate?

⋮

Her because I'm the king

⋮

Pele,king of sapa kingdom

What will you do if you catch your dad cheating? 😞



**Avoid** •• **Finish** @Avoid... · 4h ···

Replying to @kayzywizzy

The day I caught my dad cheating, I just walked passed him like we aren't related, later the dude call me and said "you took after me 100" and hung up 🤔🤔. Ever since then I start linking him up with some good bannies to have a good fu\*k. Dude now call me O.G 🤔🤔🤔🤔🤔

💬 13 🔄 4 📍 @mandibloc ❤️ 26 📄

@ · 2h ···

You are the son of your father comrade

← Tweet

---



Most times if I don't like your comments, it's because I either don't like it or you're commenting on a tweet that's a little older.

I like or RT comments that either agree with me or disagree as long as it's respectful.

Otherwise, I read your comment but I don't like it.

End.

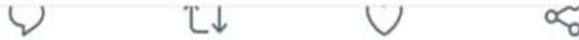
10:13 PM · 14 Sep 22 · [Twitter for Android](#)

---

**18** Retweets **261** Likes

---

 Tweet



Although it is ultimately your decision how to respond to comments, it gives a pleasant feeling when the owner of the tweet responds to your comment and it demonstrates that they value you in some manner... My take on that..



· 3h

I was thinking you even usually like all comments cos I can say 70% of my comments get likes from [@jon\\_d\\_doe](#)

Now I get better



Always waiting for your tweets like a child waiting for candies. 😊



As a hustling Young man, you should always avoid broke & entitled women no matter how big their ass or attractive their face appears to you, they'd slow down your progress and f\*ck with your mentality.

Stay focused kings 🤴

← Tweet

The way married men have normalized having side chics is scary, sad, and unbelievable. Like it's so normal—they talk about it with so much effrontery. God, please, I'm not such a perfect man; I have my sins, but please, let me not be in that league of men.

9:54 AM · 27 Jan 23

---

**2,388** Verified Views **15** Retweets

---

**5** Quote Tweets **62** Likes

---

## Bio-data

### A. Personal Data

**Full Name:** Obaloluwa Ezekiel OYEDEJI  
**Address:** Zone C 12, Oluyinka Awomolo Crescent, Felele, Ibadan  
**Email Address:** adeyemidelijah@gmail.com  
**Phone Numbers:** 08160746668  
**Date of Birth:** 23rd Oct 1985  
**Place of Birth:** Lagos  
**Nationality:** Nigerian  
**Marital Status:** Single  
**Name and Address of Next of Kin:** Oyeleye Ebenezer, Oyedeji, 16, Imasai Street, Orile Agege, Lagos.

### B. Educational Background

#### Educational Institutions Attended with Dates and Qualification:

**Primary Education:** Ife-Oluwa Primary School, Idi Mangoro Agege, Lagos State: First School Leaving Certificate - 1996  
**Secondary Education:** Anwarul Islam Model College, Dopemu Road Agege, Lagos State: Senior School Leaving Certificate- 2002  
**Tertiary Education:** Lead City University, Toll Gate Area, Ibadan, Oyo State: Bachelor's Degree - 2018

### C. Other Academic/Professional Qualifications:

Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (2018)

### D. Work Experience and Position with Dates:

Departmental Administrator, Lead City University, February 2019-till date

### E. Membership of Academic Professional Bodies:

Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (2018)

**F. Publications, if any:** Nil

### G. Creative Work:

### H. Major Conferences/Workshops Attended:

Nil

**I. Extra-Curricular Activities:**

Singing, Dancing

**J. Referees:**

Associate Prof. Robbin,

Faculty of Arts,

Lead City University,

Ibadan.

08039272638

Associate Prof. Ukamaka Akuche,

Faculty of Education,

Lead City University,

Ibadan.

08055425576

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Signature

---

Date

*Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria*

### **The University Compliance Certification**

This is to certify that this thesis written by Obaloluwa Ezekiel OYEDEJI with matriculation number LCU/PG/001142 in the Department of Languages and Literature, Lead City University, Ibadan, is in full compliance with the approved University format and style.

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Signature

---

Date

*Do Not Copy, Lead City University, Nigeria*