

BOISTEROUS DEMEANOR DURING FINAL YEAR EXAMINATION EXERCISE: AN EXCURSION INTO EMENIKE AZUNWO'S *DONE AND DUSTED*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the attitudes of students on the final day of their examination, with a critical focus on Emenike Azunwo's play, *Done and Dusted*. Through a qualitative analysis of the play, the study explores the behavioural patterns, emotional responses, and psychological dispositions exhibited by students as they complete their final examinations. The paper examines the themes of relief, anxiety, excitement, and uncertainty that characterize this critical stage of academic assessment, while also highlighting the social and cultural factors that shape these attitudes. Drawing on Icek Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour, the study reveals that students' attitudes towards the final examination are influenced by their perceived behavioural control, subjective norms, and attitudes towards the outcome. Specifically, the theory suggests that students' intentions to perform well are shaped by their beliefs about their ability to control their academic outcomes, the social pressures they perceive from peers and family, and their evaluation of the importance of academic success. The findings reveal that the final day of examination is a complex emotional landscape, marked by both tension and celebration, as students grapple with the fear of academic outcomes and the joy of impending academic freedom. This study contributes to the broader

understanding of student psychology, educational culture, and the role of theatre in reflecting social realities.

Keywords: Student attitudes, examination anxiety, educational culture, Theatre and social reality, academic assessment

Introduction

The final day of examinations is one of the most anticipated moments in the life and career of many students. It is that day when all the sleepless nights, last minute revisions, group discussions, and intense pressure finally come to an end. For most students, it is a mix of emotions and relief that it is all over, excitement about moving on, sadness about leaving friends and familiar places, and sometimes even fear of what comes next. These emotions are real, yet they are not always talked about openly. Whereas it can be suggested that this very subject lacks depth in scholarship, most studies focus on exam preparation and performance. On the other hand, very little attention is given to how students actually feel when it is all said and done.

Be that as it may, this study takes a different approach by exploring these feelings by means of literature, specifically through a close reading of *Done and Dusted*, one of Emenike Azunwo's masterpiece. The play is rich in dialogue and situations that reflect what many students go through at the end of their academic journey in the university. It paints a vivid picture of students dealing with the finality of exams, saying goodbye to their academic life, and stepping into a new chapter. This kind of experience is worth talking about, especially because so many students can relate to it but do not always have the words nor platform to express it.

Rather than being performed on stage, this study is based solely on the text. The goal is to analyze the characters, the themes, and the playwrights use of dialogue to show the various attitudes students display on their final exam day. Through this analysis, the research aims to highlight how literature especially drama can mirror everyday student experiences and offer deeper insight into what this major turning point feels like from an emotional and psychological perspective. In a world where many students feel misunderstood or pressured to move on quickly after their final exams, this study hopes to show that it is okay to pause and reflect on what that

final day really means. Via this artistic and literary channel, this paper gets to appreciate not only the power of storytelling but also the shared human experience that comes with finishing one chapter and preparing for the next.

Per significance, this study is important because it sheds light on a part of student life that many people do not talk about, the feelings that come when exams are finally over. It also shows how drama, even without being performed, can mirror real life experiences. Students, teachers, and anyone who has gone through the stress of school will find something relatable in this.

Theoretical Framework

This study shall therefore be guided by the following theories; Theory of Planned Behavior and Emotional Contagion Theory.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), formulated by Icek Ajzen in 1985 and fully articulated in 1991, is a prominent psychological theory that aims to predict and explain human behavior across various domains. It evolved from the earlier Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), which postulated that:

Individual behavior is driven by behavioral intentions, where intentions are a function of an individual's attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms surrounding the performance of the behavior, Intentions to perform behaviors of different kinds can be predicted with high accuracy from attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen 1991, p. 179).

TPB introduced a third determinant perceived behavioral control to account for situations where individuals may not have complete volitional control over their actions.

Core Constructs of Theory of Perceived Behavior Attitude Toward the Behavior

This refers to the individuals positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior. It is determined by behavioral beliefs about the likely

outcomes of the behavior and evaluations of these outcomes. For instance, a student who believes that completing exams successfully will lead to graduation and career opportunities is likely to have a positive attitude toward preparing for and completing exams.

Subjective Norms

Subjective norms represent perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a behavior. This includes normative beliefs about the expectations of significant others (e.g., peers, family, instructors) and the individual's motivation to comply with these expectations. On the final day of exams, if peers expect celebration or emotional expression, students are more likely to conform to these norms.

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC)

PBC refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior and is influenced by past experiences and anticipated obstacles. It is akin to Bandura's concept of self-efficacy. A student who feels confident in managing post-exam emotions or engaging in end-of-exam rituals will have stronger behavioral intentions. Importantly, PBC also directly influences behavior when it accurately reflects actual control.

The TPB suggests that if a student has a favorable attitude toward celebrating the final exam day, perceives social support or expectations to do so, and feels capable of engaging in the associated behaviors (e.g., signing shirts, making videos), the likelihood of them engaging in such behaviors increases.

Numerous studies have validated the TPB in academic settings. For example, Armitage and Conner (2001) reviewed over 185 studies and found that TPB significantly predicted intentions and behaviors across a wide range of contexts, including education. In the case of students on the final day of their exams, TPB provides a framework for understanding why they might behave differently from solemn reflection to exuberant celebration based on their intentions shaped by personal beliefs, social influences, and perceived control.

Implications for Student Behavior on the Final Day of Exams

Emotional Expression

TPB can explain emotional expressions such as joy, relief, or anxiety. If students believe that expressing emotions helps them process the experience (attitude), see others doing the same (subjective norm), and feel confident doing so (PBC), they are more likely to engage in such behaviors.

Group Dynamics

Peer influence plays a crucial role on the final day. Students are highly influenced by the group's collective behavior, such as wearing customized shirts or singing, due to the subjective norm's component of TPB.

Social Media Use

TPB also helps explain why students share their last day experiences online. Attitudes (e.g., belief that sharing brings recognition), subjective norms (e.g., friends also repost), and perceived control (e.g., tech-savviness) all contribute to the likelihood of such behaviors.

Emotional Contagion Theory

The Emotional Contagion Theory, as articulated by Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson (1994), explores the phenomenon by which individuals "catch" the emotions of others through automatic mimicry and synchronization of expressions, vocal tones, postures, and movements. This process occurs subconsciously and plays a critical role in shaping collective emotional climates in group environments such as classrooms, workplaces, and social gatherings. In academic settings, and particularly on the final day of examinations.

Core Concepts of Emotional Contagion Theory

Mimicry and Synchronization

According to Hatfield et al. (1994), emotional contagion begins with the unconscious imitation of others emotional expressions. When individuals observe someone smiling, frowning, or crying, they tend to mimic these behaviors. Over time, this mimicry leads to a convergence in emotional states. According to Hatfield et al. (1994), people tend to automatically mimic and synchronize expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person, and consequently, to converge emotionally.

Emotional Convergence

This refers to the process through which shared emotions emerge within groups. When a few individuals express strong emotions, others absorb and reflect these emotions, leading to a collective mood. On the final day of exams, the jubilation or anxiety expressed by a few students can quickly influence the emotional state of an entire class or campus.

Automaticity of the Process

One of the most important claims of the theory is that emotional contagion is largely automatic and nonconscious. People do not intentionally mimic others; rather, these reactions are rooted in human evolutionary history and social functioning. Hatfield et al. (1994) opine that emotional contagion is a primitive, automatic, and unconscious behavior that serves an adaptive social function.

The final day of exams often represents a highly emotional moment, marked by relief, exhaustion, anticipation, and sometimes anxiety about future outcomes. Emotional contagion helps explain why emotions on this day can be particularly intense and widespread among students. For example, when one student begins to cry out of relief or scream in joy, peers are likely to mirror these emotions. A group of students engaging in celebratory dances or photoshoots can rapidly influence others to join in, creating a domino effect of shared emotional expression.

Several studies have validated the principles of emotional contagion in educational and social contexts. Kelly and Barsade (2001) found that group emotions significantly influence individual mood and performance in team settings. In academic environments, this suggests that a classmate's emotional display can affect another's own feelings, concentration, and even behavior. Barsade (2002) also showed that positive emotional contagion can lead to improved cooperation, reduced conflict, and greater group satisfaction. These findings are particularly relevant for final year students celebrating the completion of their degree programs.

In contemporary times, emotional contagion is not limited to physical spaces. Kramer, Guillory, and Hancock (2014) demonstrated in a controversial Facebook experiment that emotional expressions in online content can influence user's moods. Students often post celebratory

pictures, nostalgic messages, or reflective posts on social media, and these expressions can evoke similar emotions in others. “Emotional states can be transferred to others via emotional contagion, leading people to experience the same emotions without their awareness” (Kramer et al., 2014, p. 8788).

Conceptual Review

Understanding “Attitude”

The concept of student’s attitude on the final day of examination has received considerable attention from scholars across psychology, education, and behavioral studies. This is due to the final day being a symbolic culmination of academic pressure, intellectual exertion, social interaction, and emotional experience. Students’ attitudes defined as their feelings, beliefs, expressions, and behavioral tendencies toward the examinations and the conclusion of academic assessments reveal a great deal about their educational journey and sense of accomplishment.

Psychologically, the final day of an examination trigger complex emotional reaction. According to Maher and Dertouzos (2015), the final day of exams is frequently associated with a release of pent-up stress, leading to emotional expression ranging from joy to fatigue, fear, and nostalgia. These emotions influence attitudes that manifest in celebratory gestures, reflective moods, or expressions of anxiety about results. Ajzen (2005) describes attitude as, “a disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, institution, or event.”

The final day of exams can be considered as such an event. Thus, student attitudes are shaped by prior beliefs about exams, the outcome expectations, perceived fairness of the exam process, and social contexts. Students display various attitudes through behaviors such as shouting, group dancing, wearing of customized shirts, or even signing of uniforms with marker pens. These activities represent outward expressions of inward states. As argued by Ekundayo and Alonge (2017), such behaviors offer both psychological relief and a form of social bonding, especially among final year students. Attitudes are not developed in isolation. On the final day of exams, peer interactions heavily influence individual behavior. Social psychologists such as Festinger (1954) argue that individuals look to their peers for behavioral cues, particularly in ambiguous or emotionally

charged situations. This explains why one jubilant student can influence a chain of similar expressions across a group.

Cultural background shapes the way students express emotions and celebrate academic milestones. In many African contexts, including Nigeria, communal celebration is culturally encouraged. As Nwagwu (2020) observes, students in Nigerian universities often turn the final day of examinations into a day of public display singing, drumming, shouting, and even holding mini parades. These are culturally approved forms of joy and release. The rise of digital media and social networking has significantly shaped students' attitudes. Students now view the final day of exams as an opportunity to generate content for social media. As noted by Chukwuemeka and Musa (2019), students often create short videos, post celebratory messages, and participate in trending hashtags to mark the completion of exams. This behavior is both expressive and performative.

Another component of student attitude relates to anticipatory emotions tied to the expected future. The final day is not merely about the end, but also the beginning of a new phase, be it graduation, job hunting, or youth service. As a result, students may display conflicting attitudes: excitement mixed with anxiety. According to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) stress appraisal theory, the final day of exams is a major life event that requires cognitive evaluation and emotional adjustment.

Concept of Rite of Passage

The final examination is a pivotal moment in the academic journey of students. It is not only the culmination of months or years of study, but also an experience that encapsulates various social, psychological, and institutional dynamics. This section explores the concept of final examinations as both a social and academic experience, drawing from scholarly works and observations across diverse educational systems. The final examination serves as the apex of the formal assessment process. It is designed to evaluate a students' cumulative knowledge, critical thinking, and academic competence in a particular field of study. According to Biggs and Tang (2011), examinations are tools for assessing intended learning outcomes and are often high stakes in nature, influencing academic progression, certifications, and future opportunities. The pressure

associated with these evaluations influences students' perception and reaction to the process. The final examination period, especially the last paper, is emotionally charged. It represents the end of a rigorous schedule filled with deadlines, revisions, and mental strain. As noted by Zeidner (1998), examinations induce anxiety, which may peak during the final exam due to accumulated fatigue, performance pressure, and anticipation of results. While the conclusion of exams may provide relief, it may also provoke worry about outcomes and future uncertainties, leading to mixed emotions.

From a sociological perspective, the final exam day symbolizes a rite of passage. Turner (1969) refers to such events as "liminal stages," where individuals transition from one social status to another in this case, from student to graduate. The final exam day marks the end of structured learning and the beginning of new responsibilities. It is characterized by celebration, reflection, and symbolic gestures such as the signing of shirts and group photographs. Final examinations, particularly on the last day, foster a sense of unity among students. After enduring shared struggles, late nights, tutorials, and revision marathons, students often feel a collective sense of relief.

In the digital era, students' experiences of final exams have transcended the classroom. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Whatsapp and Facebook have become spaces for narrating academic journeys and sharing end-of-exam celebrations. According to Boyd (2014), social media now shapes identity performance and peer engagement. The final day of exams becomes a stage where students post videos, captions, and photos that commemorate their academic survival and social connections.

Institutions emphasize the importance of academic integrity and success in final exams. However, this expectation can increase students' academic stress. As noted by Misra and Castillo (2004), students from high pressure academic environments report higher levels of stress and emotional exhaustion, especially around final exams. This pressure influences how students prepare, participate, and reflect on their final day of examination. Not all students experience the final day of exams the same way. For some, it is a moment of triumph and jubilation; for others, it is one of anxiety and uncertainty. Factors such as academic performance, future plans, social

support, and personality traits influence individual responses. Introverted students may prefer quiet reflection, while extroverts might organize large celebrations. Socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds also mediate these experiences.

The structure and scheduling of final examinations are influenced by educational policies. In many Nigerian universities, for instance, the final paper is often seen as symbolic and celebrated by both staff and students. Some institutions organize end-of-exam briefings or thanksgiving events. These structured responses reflect an institutional recognition of the importance of the final exam day in student experience and institutional culture.

Textual Analysis of Emenike Azunwo's *Done and Dusted*

Synopsis of *Done and Dusted*

The play *Done and Dusted* is about the difficult path of Okafor, a young man whose determination to build a meaningful future remains unshaken despite overwhelming odds, and Uwem, his roommate and close companion, whose idealistic dreams are repeatedly tested in the fires of adversity. Together, these two undergraduates navigate a university environment that is as demanding socially and economically as it is academically.

At the heart of their struggle lies the oppressive presence of their landlord, Mr. Dagogo, whose relentless pursuit of rent payment becomes a symbol of the harsh realities faced by students in a society marked by economic inequity. Okafor and Uwem rent a small apartment, a space that should be a refuge but instead becomes the stage for constant conflict and humiliation. Threatened with eviction at every turn and burdened by mounting arrears, the young men find their resilience tested daily. Mr. Dagogo's unbridled greed and controlling behaviour, which escalate from verbal harassment to outright acts of intimidation and sabotage, deepen their sense of vulnerability and expose the fragile support systems available to struggling students.

Despite these pressures, Okafor embodies tenacity and discipline. Fully aware that education represents his only pathway out of poverty, he holds firmly to his academic goals. He faces the dual challenge of passing his

final examinations and completing his project work while also confronting the subtle exploitation of his project supervisor, who demands a symbolic “rite of passage” before approving the work. Through sheer intelligence and perseverance, Okafor maintains his integrity and pushes forward, becoming a portrait of youthful resilience.

In contrast, Uwem reflects the temptations and distractions of student life. Faced with the same financial strain, he is lured into the false hope of quick wealth through betting games, only to experience repeated losses. His frustration with his own supervisor boils over into angry outbursts and curses, revealing his growing sense of disillusionment and his struggle to maintain focus. Uwem’s wavering commitment highlights the vulnerability of young people who, under economic pressure, may be drawn to shortcuts that threaten their long-term ambitions.

Settings of Done and Dusted

The setting of *Done and Dusted* is rooted in the everyday experiences of a typical Nigerian university. The story unfolds across two principal environments that represent the dual realities of a student’s life: the academic space of the campus and the private, often challenging, domestic space of student housing.

First, much of the action takes place within the university campus itself, particularly in locations closely linked to the completion of final examinations. These include the lecture halls, where the tension of the last paper is palpable, and the open grounds just outside the examination venue, where students gather to release their pent-up excitement and relief, it also includes the of Okafor’s supervisor Professor John.

Complementing the campus environment is the off-campus residence shared by Okafor and his roommate, Uwem, a modest and somewhat run-down apartment owned by Mr. Dagogo. Their lodging becomes more than just a physical space, it is a symbolic site of struggle, where the tension between the students and the landlord dramatizes the economic hardships that many undergraduates face.

Analysis of Principal Characters in *Done and Dusted*

Okafor: The protagonist of *Done and Dusted*, emerges as a compelling portrait of a Nigerian undergraduate navigating the final hurdles of university life. The author portrays him as intelligent, determined and emotionally resilient, qualities that define his journey through both personal and academic challenges.

One of the most striking aspects of Okafor's character is his capacity to endure financial hardship. He struggles to pay his house rent and lives under the constant pressure of a demanding landlord. This situation reveals a young man burdened by socio economic realities yet unwilling to allow his circumstances to derail his education. His perseverance underscores the tenacity of many students in similar conditions, reflecting the broader socio-economic struggles of Nigerian undergraduates.

Academically, Okafor is both brilliant and hardworking. He is confronted with the dual pressures of passing his final examinations and completing a well-researched project requirements that represent the last threshold to graduation. His ability to meet these demands while juggling personal difficulties speaks to his strong sense of focus and discipline.

A significant test of Okafor's character lies in his relationship with his project supervisor. The lecturer wields the authority to approve or delay his graduation and subtly demands the traditional "rite of passage," an unspoken gesture of appreciation expected from graduating students.

PROF JOHN: Of course, you deserve the right to be schooled... the reason I was made your supervisor but before then... do you have the rite of passage for this phase of your academic choice? (Azunwo, 2024, p.13).

Rather than succumb to fear or confrontation, Okafor demonstrates emotional maturity and strategic thinking. He intelligently persuades his supervisor to sign off on the project first, thereby safeguarding his academic progress before fulfilling the informal ritual.

PROF JOHN: (Signs on Okafor's project) Hallelujah, today has count for you, for joy... (Looks at Okafor and present his sign project to him) Congratulation...OKAFOR: (Excitingly) Thank you very much Prof... (Azunwo, 2024, p.28).

This action reveals two key traits, his principled pragmatism and his persuasive ability. Okafor does not reject cultural traditions outright, instead he chooses the right time to present the customary bottle of wine, showing gratitude while ensuring that his efforts are not undermined by institutional pressures.

OKAFOR: Prof, I came to appreciate your supervision and say thank you... (Unwrap the bag and takes out a bottle of wine and present it to Professor John)PROF JOHN: (Sits up) This is expensively gratifying... (Collects the wine and examines it) Thank you my good friend... (Turns to the other three supervisees) You see what a hard working young man can do... (Pause) Are you three aware that he was one of you and I'm sorry to say... He might be the only one to be graduating among the lucky few in the department... (Shake his head and turns to Okafor) Thank you my dear good friend... You have indeed settled the rite of passage... Go and exceed...OKAFOR: Thank you very much, Prof... (Azunwo, 2024, p.34).

Through Okafor, the play captures the resilience and adaptability of students in Nigerian universities, highlighting the tension between institutional expectations and personal integrity. His story reflects not only academic brilliance but also a keen understanding of human dynamics and societal norms. By the end of the play, Okafor stands as a symbol of perseverance and strategic wisdom a young man who overcomes financial obstacles and subtle bureaucratic demands to achieve his dream of graduation.

Uwem: Okafor's roommate, represents the complex mix of ambition, distraction, and poor decision making that many students experience. He lives under the same financial strain as Okafor, particularly the unrelenting pressure from their landlord for prompt rent payment. Yet, rather than focusing on necessities, Uwem repeatedly diverts his limited resources to sports betting, hoping for an easy breakthrough. Each failed wager compounds his financial troubles, revealing a character prone to impulse and wishful thinking rather than careful planning.

UWEM: No!... No! (Furious and sits down on the bed again) Ah!

OKAFOR: Uwem... what happened...

UWEM: (Turns to Okafor almost in tears) My bet slip just cut...
God! Ah!
OKAFOR: Your bet slip?
UWEM: (Stares at Okafor) five hundred thousand in foreign
exchange...
a stock of high profit.... (Buries his head in his hand)
Cool money from an investment... (Azunwo, 2024, p.20).

Academically, Uwem's journey is marked by frustration and emotional volatility. His project supervisor's strictness provokes in him open displays of anger, he even goes so far as to curse in moments of exasperation. These outbursts expose both his immaturity and his struggle to cope with academic stress in a constructive way. Instead of channeling his energy into problem solving or persistent effort, he allows irritation to govern his response.

UWEM: What nonsense... I can't kill myself... To hell with project... Nonsense (The front door opens as Okafor walks in happily) UWEM: (Gets out of the bed and goes back to his desk and continues with his project work) I hate this supervisor.... I feel so unlucky and unfortunate to be assigned to him... (Azunwo, 2024, p.29).

Uwem's disorganized approach to life underscores a larger pattern, neglect of priorities and lack of discipline. Gambling takes precedence over essentials like rent and focused academic preparation, a choice that highlights his tendency to sacrifice long term goals for short term thrills. Through Uwem, the play captures the reality of many young people who aspire to success but are easily swayed by distractions. He serves as a cautionary figure, illustrating how the failure to balance ambition with self-control can hinder both personal and academic progress. In contrast to Okafor's strategic resilience, Uwem embodies the pitfalls of impulsiveness and the consequences of poor planning.

Professor John: He is Okafor's project supervisor. The playwright portrays him as a demanding yet ultimately supportive academic mentor. He plays a pivotal role in shaping Okafor's final year experience, serving both as a source of pressure and as the gatekeeper to the student's graduation. Throughout the period of supervision, Prof. John subjects Okafor's work

to rigorous scrutiny, insisting on multiple revisions and maintaining high standards. This approach often leaves Okafor frustrated and under intense academic pressure, highlighting the professor's commitment to quality and his belief in thorough scholarship.

Despite his sternness, Prof. John is not portrayed as unreasonably harsh. When Okafor finally meets the required standard, he acknowledges the student's effort and brilliance, even remarking that Okafor seems to be the only one among his supervisees certain to graduate that year.

PROF JOHN: ... He might be the only one to be graduating among the lucky few in the department... (Shake his head and turns to Okafor) Thank you my dear good friend... You have indeed settled the rite of passage... Go and exceed... (Azunwo, 2024, p.34).

This unexpected praise reveals a side of the character that values excellence and rewards diligence. It also underscores his role not merely as a critic but as a mentor who recognizes and encourages genuine academic talent.

Prof. John's relationship with Okafor culminates in a symbolic gesture, Okafor's presentation of a bottle of wine as a personal "rite of passage." This act reflects both cultural tradition and professional respect, signifying the student's gratitude for the guidance received and marking the successful completion of his undergraduate journey.

OKAFOR: Prof, I came to appreciate your supervision and say thank you... (Unwrap the bag and takes out a bottle of wine and present it to Professor John) (Azunwo, 2024, p.34).

Through Prof. John, the play explores the complex dynamics between teacher and student, illustrating how strict mentorship, though initially challenging, can ultimately foster growth, resilience, and academic excellence.

Themes of *Done and Dusted*

Resilience: The play highlights the mental and emotional strength students summon to complete their academic journey, especially on the intense final day of examinations. The characters have endured long nights of study, personal sacrifices, and the anxiety of academic pressure. Their ability to arrive at the last paper despite fatigue, fear of failure, and the challenges of an often-underfunded Nigerian educational system

illustrates resilience. The playwright uses their post exam relief and reflections to celebrate the endurance required to succeed in such a demanding environment. This theme resonates beyond academics; it becomes a metaphor for the perseverance young Nigerians need to navigate a society where opportunities are hard won and obstacles are numerous.

Friendship: *Done and Dusted* also foregrounds the bonds of camaraderie among students. On the final exam day, friendships are tested and reaffirmed, encourage one another, and dream aloud about life after school. Their shared experiences, moments of anxiety before the paper, the collective exhale when it is over, and the plans for celebration, show how friendship provides emotional support and a sense of belonging. Azunwo portrays these relationships not merely as casual connections, but as lifelines that sustain students through the rigours of university life, and which may continue to shape their personal and professional futures.

Cost of Ambition: While ambition drives the students toward success, the playwright does not shy away from showing its personal and social costs. Ambition demands sacrifices, sleepless nights, strained relationships, and in some cases moral compromises such as cutting corners or succumbing to exam malpractice. The play invites the audience to question how much one should give up time, health, or even integrity to achieve academic and career goals. This reflection extends to the wider Nigerian society, where the quest for upward mobility can push individuals to their limits. Ambition is presented as a double-edged sword, necessary for progress but costly if pursued without balance.

Through its portrayal of resilience, friendship, and the cost of ambition, *Done and Dusted* captures the complex realities of student life and, by extension, the broader challenges of Nigerian youth. These themes make the play not just a narrative about finishing exams, but a commentary on the qualities, relationships, and sacrifices that shape the journey from education to adulthood.

Social Relevance of *Done and Dusted*

Done and Dusted resonates strongly with contemporary Nigerian society because it mirrors the everyday realities, values, and challenges faced by

students and young people. At its core, the play explores the emotional and psychological atmosphere that surrounds students on the final day of their examinations, a universal rite of passage in academic life. By showcasing the tension, relief, and celebratory mood that follow the completion of exams, Azunwo captures an experience that cuts across cultural, economic, and regional boundaries.

The play speaks to the importance of education as a social ladder in Nigeria. In a country where academic success is often seen as a gateway to upward mobility, the characters' mixed feelings, relief, anxiety about results, and dreams for the future reflect the collective aspirations of many young Nigerians and their families. Through these characters, the playwright highlights how education shapes identity and influences the nation's workforce and development.

Furthermore, *Done and Dusted* draws attention to youth culture and peer relationships, offering insight into how students cope with pressure, share solidarity, and sometimes engage in celebration or mischief at the end of examinations. These moments of camaraderie and collective release portray the resilience of Nigerian students and their capacity for hope despite socio-economic uncertainties. On a broader level, *Done and Dusted* underscores the transitional nature of students, a period where choices made after school can determine life trajectories. It provokes reflection on how society can better guide young graduates toward meaningful opportunities in a country where unemployment and underemployment remain pressing issues.

Conclusion

This study examined the attitude of students on the final day of their examination with particular focus on Emenike Azunwo's *Done and Dusted*. The investigation focused on how the characters in the play mirror the real-life behavior of Nigerian students when their academic session draws to a close. Stating its major findings, it suffices to point to the fact that the play in focus captures the mixture of excitement, relief, and nervous anticipation that final day examinations generate. Students express a sense of liberation after weeks of mental stress, showing that examinations serve not only as an academic requirement but also as an emotional journey.

Another important finding is celebratory and social spirit. Characters such as Okafor, Uwem and their classmates display a collective spirit of celebration, marking the end of a long academic struggle. This reflects a wider cultural habit among Nigerian students, who often view the last paper as a communal milestone worth celebrating. The idea of persistence and perseverance is also a major finding. The narrative underscores the resilience of students who face financial difficulties, unsympathetic landlords, and demanding supervisors yet remain determined to graduate. Okafor's experience with his supervisor and the need to perform the "rite of passage" exemplify the ability to endure pressure and overcome obstacles.

The play makes to raise some moral issues. Through incidents such as betting and the questionable intimacy between lecturer and students, the play highlights the moral dilemmas and social distractions that can accompany student life. It draws attention to the need for guidance and ethical consciousness within tertiary institutions. Finally, students' struggles with rent, academic expectations, and the informal practices (like the "rite of passage") mirror the larger socio-economic challenges in Nigeria's educational system.

Granted the foregoing, it suffices to resolve that *Done and Dusted* serves as both a mirror of student life and a social critique of the pressures surrounding higher education in Nigeria. The attitudes displayed on the final day of examinations; relief, celebration, anxiety about results, and even minor acts of rebellion, are universal among students but gain particular urgency in the Nigerian context, where graduation represents a critical step toward economic survival. Okafor's journey shows that intelligence, resilience, and integrity remain key to overcoming institutional and personal challenges. At the same time, the play exposes subtle issues within the academic environment, such as the unspoken expectation of "rites of passage" and the temptation of unethical behaviour. Overall, the play reminds readers and audiences that the final day of examination is not merely the end of an academic calendar; it is a turning point that shapes students' character, outlook, and transition into the larger society.

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