Emotional Exhaustion and Time Management as Predictors of Glossophobia Among Muslim University Students in The Gambia

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DECLARATION

I, Tijan Loum, hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been previously submitted for any degree or other qualification at any institution. All sources of information have been duly acknowledged in accordance with APA 7th Edition referencing conventions.



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DEDICATION

To my family, whose unwavering support, patience, and sacrifices made this academic journey possible.

To all Muslim students in The Gambia who face the daily challenge of balancing faith, family, and academic excellence with courage and dignity. “And whoever relies upon Allah, then He is sufficient for him." (Qur'an 65:3)

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ABSTRACT

One of the most common psychological obstacles to academic achievement among college students worldwide is glossophobia, or the fear of public speaking. There is still a dearth of empirical study on glossophobia in Muslim-majority African contexts, despite its widespread occurrence and its effects. In light of the particular confluence of academic expectations, Islamic beliefs, and sociocultural norms that define Gambian higher education, this study examined emotional fatigue and time management in relation to glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design to gather data from 200 participants selected by multi-stage stratified random sampling from four postsecondary institutions: the Management Development Institute (MDI), the International Open University (IOU), the American International University West Africa (AIUWA), and the University of The Gambia (UTG). A structured questionnaire was used to administer three validated, modified scales: the Glossophobia Scale (GS, α =.86), the Time Management Scale (TMS, α =.81), and the Emotional Exhaustion Scale (EES, α =.84). SPSS version 26 was used to analyze the data. Research Questions 1 to 3 were answered using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), and Research Questions 4 and 5 were answered using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation.

The findings showed that emotional exhaustion (grand mean = 3.51), time management (grand mean = 3.15), and glossophobia (grand mean = 3.58) were all at moderate-to-high levels among the students sampled. A strong negative correlation was found between time management and glossophobia ($r = -.55$, $p < .001$), and a strong positive correlation was found between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia ($r = .63$, $p < .001$), both statistically significant. These results indicate that students who report greater emotional exhaustion tend to experience greater glossophobia, while students with stronger time management skills tend to experience less glossophobia.

The Job Demands-Resources (JDR) Model, the Stress and Coping Theory, and the Cognitive Load Theory serve as theoretical foundations for these findings, which are contextualized within Islamic psychological principles such as ṣabr (patience), tawakkul (trust in God), and the Islamic imperative of 'ilm (knowledge). According to the study's findings, glossophobia among Muslim students in the Gambia is a dynamic, treatable problem that may be addressed by institutions. For

university administrators, faculty, counselors, and students, evidence-based recommendations are presented with a focus on wellness initiatives, time management training, gender-sensitive support systems, and faith-informed counseling techniques. Future prospects for longitudinal and mixed-methods research are explored, along with the limitations of the cross-sectional approach.

Keywords: glossophobia, public speaking anxiety, emotional exhaustion, time management, Muslim university students, The Gambia, academic burnout, communication apprehension, higher education

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Glossophobia, commonly referred to as the fear of public speaking, remains one of the most persistent and widespread psychological challenges influencing individuals in educational, social, and professional environments. It extends beyond a fleeting sense of nervousness before an audience; rather, it represents a complex interaction of cognitive, emotional, and physiological mechanisms that interfere with effective oral communication. This fear exists along a continuum from mild unease to severe phobic reactions. Those affected often display physical symptoms such as trembling, sweating, rapid heartbeat, dry mouth, or shortness of breath, alongside mental disruptions like blanking out or thought blockage during presentations. In extreme situations, they may entirely avoid public-speaking engagements as a means of coping, which subsequently restricts their academic, social, and career advancement (Dwyer & Davidson, 2012).

In higher education, glossophobia continues to present a significant obstacle, particularly where activities such as class discussions, debates, oral presentations, and thesis defenses are integral to learning and assessment. The anxiety associated with public speaking not only affects students' performance in these contexts but also diminishes their academic self-confidence. Many students suffering from this fear tend to disengage from participatory learning, refrain from taking on

leadership responsibilities, and experience heightened stress during oral assessments. This avoidance behavior often leads to lower academic achievement in tasks that require verbal expression, creating a recurring cycle of anxiety and underperformance. The impact extends beyond academics, influencing communication competence, social interactions, and preparedness for future professional roles.

Among Muslim university students in The Gambia, glossophobia appears within a distinctive sociocultural and religious framework shaped by academic pressures, Islamic principles, and traditional values. These students operate in an environment that upholds humility, modesty, and respect for authority, virtues deeply embedded in both Gambian culture and Islamic teachings. While these traits encourage moral discipline and social cohesion, they may simultaneously discourage assertiveness and public self-expression skills essential for confident speaking. Consequently, some students experience inner tension when expected to speak assertively before peers or authority figures.

Moreover, gender plays a critical role in shaping communication behaviors within Gambian Muslim society. Cultural and religious expectations regarding gender interactions often make public speaking in mixed-gender audiences particularly daunting, especially for women. Female students may feel bound by ideals of modesty and propriety, heightening their self-consciousness and anxiety when speaking before male audiences or instructors. Meanwhile, male students may face societal pressure to demonstrate leadership and eloquence, traits traditionally linked to masculinity, thereby creating their own forms of stress. These gendered dynamics produce diverse experiences of glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

The broader Gambian culture, characterized by collectivism, reverence for elders, and communal obligation, also shapes students' expressive behaviors. While these values nurture solidarity, they can inadvertently hinder the development of individual confidence in self-expression. In many traditional learning settings, students are encouraged to listen and absorb knowledge rather than question or challenge authority figures. This passive learning environment, together with limited exposure to participatory teaching methods, restricts opportunities for building public-speaking confidence. Thus, glossophobia in this context represents not only a psychological condition but also a sociocultural issue rooted in deeply held beliefs about authority, speech, and self-representation.

Within such a context, emotional exhaustion emerges as a prominent psychological factor that can heighten glossophobia. Emotional exhaustion, a central aspect of academic burnout, refers to persistent emotional fatigue, loss of motivation, and reduced psychological endurance. It often arises from prolonged academic pressures, financial difficulties, and social obligations. Like students elsewhere, university learners in The Gambia face demanding workloads, high-stakes assessments, and the constant task of balancing academic, family, and religious duties. Over time, these stressors can lead to mental fatigue and emotional depletion, lowering their ability to handle anxiety-inducing experiences such as public speaking (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Students suffering from emotional exhaustion often lack the mental and emotional energy required to prepare thoroughly for presentations or remain calm during them. Their focus, organization, and ability to regulate physiological stress responses diminish. Over time, this condition not only worsens glossophobia but also contributes to broader academic disengagement, absenteeism, and declining self-efficacy. Among Muslim students, the issue may be compounded by spiritual fatigue resulting from balancing religious practices such as regular prayers, fasting, and communal obligations with academic demands.

Conversely, effective time management plays a vital protective role in reducing both emotional exhaustion and performance anxiety. Time management refers to an individual's capacity to plan, prioritize, and distribute time efficiently across multiple commitments (Macan et al., 1990). Students who excel in this skill tend to prepare systematically for presentations, practicing their delivery, refining their material, and developing confidence through consistent rehearsal. This proactive approach minimizes last-minute stress, discourages procrastination, and enhances a sense of control, which serves as a psychological defense against public-speaking fear.

In contrast, poor time management can heighten stress levels, especially near deadlines. Students who prepare hurriedly often fail to rehearse adequately or fully understand their presentation content, which fosters uncertainty and anxiety. As a result, weak time management and emotional fatigue can interact to exacerbate glossophobia, producing a reinforcing cycle of anxiety, avoidance, and poor performance.

The interconnection between emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia can be interpreted using the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This model posits that academic requirements such as assessments, research, and oral evaluations serve

as “job demands,” whereas personal abilities like time management act as “resources.” When demands surpass available resources, emotional exhaustion ensues, impairing performance and well-being. In Gambian universities, where institutional support and counseling services are often scarce, effective time management becomes an essential internal coping mechanism for maintaining composure and academic performance.

Despite the global emphasis on student mental health and performance psychology, little empirical research has explored glossophobia in The Gambia. While studies worldwide have analyzed public-speaking anxiety and its correlates among university students, very few have examined the phenomenon among Muslim learners in West Africa. The absence of such localized research underscores a broader lack of African representation in communication and psychological studies. This gap limits the ability of educators and counselors to develop culturally relevant interventions for managing public-speaking anxiety in Gambian higher education.

Integrating Islamic perspectives into approaches for addressing glossophobia offers potential for culturally grounded intervention. Islamic teachings emphasize knowledge (‘ilm), discipline (taqwa), and balance (wasatiyyah) as guiding principles in life and education. Time management, from an Islamic viewpoint, is seen as a moral duty, time being a divine trust (Amanah). Similarly, emotional regulation and patience (sabr) are virtues highlighted in the Qur’an and Hadith as essential for overcoming difficulties and fear. By incorporating these spiritual values into their routines, students can cultivate self-discipline and inner peace, reduce anxiety, and enhance focus. Hence, examining glossophobia through both psychological and Islamic perspectives encourages a holistic approach to promoting student well-being and academic success.

Given these considerations, the present study is both relevant and necessary. It seeks to empirically investigate how emotional exhaustion and time management relate to glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. The study aims to contribute to the limited scholarly work on African higher education psychology and to recommend culturally sensitive strategies that enhance resilience and confidence among students. The findings are expected to guide curriculum development, counseling initiatives, and teacher training programs that foster supportive academic environments addressing both psychological and spiritual dimensions of learning.

Ultimately, exploring these relationships will enrich understanding of how time management and emotional exhaustion influence glossophobia within The Gambia’s distinctive religious and

cultural setting. The results will not only extend theoretical insights but also inform practical frameworks for alleviating anxiety, improving communication competence, and enhancing student performance. In the long run, this research aspires to form the foundation for tailored, faith-conscious interventions that align educational goals with Islamic principles, thereby promoting comprehensive student development in Gambian universities.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Glossophobia, the pronounced fear or anxiety experienced when speaking before an audience, continues to stand out as one of the most challenging psychological barriers affecting university students in The Gambia. Within an academic environment that prizes articulate expression, logical reasoning, and confident participation, this anxiety directly undermines the essential goals of higher learning. Students are expected to articulate their thoughts clearly, defend their positions rationally, and engage productively with instructors and peers. Yet, for many Gambian students, particularly those from Muslim backgrounds, these expectations often transform into significant psychological burdens rather than opportunities for intellectual and personal growth.

Educators and counselors in Gambian universities have increasingly reported observable signs of communication anxiety among students. These manifestations range from trembling hands, accelerated heartbeat, and dry mouth to speech interruptions and nervous pauses during oral presentations. Others exhibit avoidance behaviors, skipping presentations, refusing to engage in class debates, or selecting academic disciplines that require minimal verbal participation. Such patterns of withdrawal not only hinder academic progress but also obstruct the cultivation of crucial life competencies such as leadership, persuasion, and negotiation skills vital for professional and community development.

The phenomenon becomes even more intricate when examined within the sociocultural and religious context of Muslim students in The Gambia. Their experience of glossophobia extends beyond psychological dimensions to encompass deeply embedded cultural and spiritual influences. The Islamic faith central to Gambian identity promotes virtues such as modesty (ḥayā’), humility (tawāḍu ‘), and respect for authority. While these qualities nurture moral discipline and respectful social relations, they can simultaneously generate internal tension in academic settings that encourage assertiveness and public self-expression. Students nurtured in culturally modest

environments may perceive assertive speech as arrogance or disrespect, particularly when addressing elders, lecturers, or mixed-gender audiences.

This conflict between religious modesty and academic assertiveness often heightens the anxiety surrounding public speaking. For example, Muslim female students frequently experience added discomfort when presenting before mixed audiences due to socio-religious norms governing gender interactions (ikhtilāṭ). Consequently, their fear extends beyond mere performance anxiety to a deeper struggle to harmonize academic requirements with Islamic principles. These internal conflicts can make learning environments emotionally taxing and spiritually challenging for Muslim students in the Gambia.

Simultaneously, the academic culture within Gambian universities increasingly emphasizes competitiveness, innovation, and communication-based assessment methods. Oral presentations, group projects, and viva voce examinations are now integral to evaluation systems. Students unable to meet these communicative expectations often suffer declines in academic confidence, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of fear, avoidance, and underperformance. This issue is intensified by social comparison, as peers who excel in public speaking receive validation, while anxious students may encounter subtle ridicule or social exclusion. Such experiences amplify self-consciousness, the fear of failure, and sensitivity to judgment.

Emotional exhaustion, a key component of psychological burnout, further aggravates this issue. Many Muslim students shoulder multiple responsibilities that extend beyond academic demands. Alongside their coursework, they observe daily prayers, attend religious programs, and meet familial and community obligations. Over time, this continual balancing act depletes emotional and cognitive reserves, resulting in fatigue and mental strain. Emotional exhaustion reduces students' ability to prepare thoroughly for speaking tasks, weakens their emotional control, and diminishes resilience when facing audiences. Consequently, even capable communicators may become increasingly prone to glossophobia as exhaustion erodes their psychological stability.

Another significant contributor to public-speaking anxiety is poor time management, which remains a primary determinant of academic stress and anxiety-related performance issues. Effective time management involves structuring one's schedule, prioritizing academic tasks, and dedicating sufficient preparation time. Students who neglect these practices, often due to procrastination, competing priorities, or overwhelming workloads, tend to enter presentation

settings unprepared and insecure. This lack of preparation magnifies their anxiety, creating a link between disorganization, reduced confidence, and public-speaking fear. According to Macan et al. (1990), students who manage their time efficiently are better equipped to handle academic pressures, which helps to reduce anxiety and enhance overall performance. Conversely, those with weak time management practices are more susceptible to stress and self-doubt during speaking engagements.

Despite the growing acknowledgment of student psychological challenges, there remains a notable deficiency in empirical research within The Gambia. The majority of studies on glossophobia originate from Western and Asian contexts, where social norms, religious orientations, and communication styles differ substantially from those in West Africa. Consequently, the experiences of Muslim university students in The Gambia remain largely underexplored, leaving their unique sociocultural and spiritual realities absent from current literature. This gap limits the ability of educators, administrators, and mental health professionals to develop interventions that resonate with local cultural and religious frameworks.

Because of this lack of context-specific evidence, university counselors and lecturers often depend on general theories of communication anxiety derived from non-Islamic environments. Although such models provide valuable insight, they frequently fail to accommodate the cultural and spiritual nuances that shape Gambian students' experiences of public-speaking fear. For instance, Western-based interventions tend to focus on assertiveness training and exposure techniques, which may inadvertently conflict with Islamic teachings that emphasize humility and self-restraint. Without cultural adaptation, such strategies risk alienating students or fostering guilt for perceived violations of religious modesty. This underscores the urgent need for a faith-conscious and culturally informed understanding of glossophobia within The Gambia.

This research also aligns with an institutional imperative. Universities in The Gambia, especially faith-oriented or Islamic universities, are increasingly adopting student-centered pedagogies that emphasize holistic development. These institutions aim to nurture graduates who are intellectually capable, morally upright, and socially responsible. However, the persistence of glossophobia undermines these educational goals, preventing many competent students from expressing their academic potential. If left unaddressed, this fear will continue to diminish classroom participation, weaken self-esteem, and hinder post-graduation professional readiness.

Moreover, glossophobia extends its impact beyond academia. Graduates who do not overcome this anxiety often face difficulties in professional environments that require verbal engagement, such as teaching, leadership, or administration. In Islamic thought, eloquence (balāghah), wisdom (ḥikmah), and confidence (thiqa) in speech are regarded as vital instruments for da ‘wah the act of calling others toward truth and righteousness. Addressing glossophobia, therefore, is not merely an educational or psychological concern but also a means of empowering Muslim youth to fulfill their social and religious obligations effectively.

Given these interrelated factors, the issue of glossophobia among Muslim students in The Gambia is multidimensional, encompassing psychological, academic, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. The scarcity of empirical data, the persistence of cultural misconceptions regarding self-expression, and the absence of contextually relevant coping mechanisms collectively present a significant research problem. This study thus seeks to examine the predictive influence of emotional exhaustion and time management on glossophobia within this population, providing valuable insight into how these variables interact to shape students’ public-speaking experiences.

To bridge this knowledge gap, the research will employ an analytical and culturally responsive approach to explore the relationships among emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. It will also consider variations across gender and academic levels. The framework will integrate psychological theory with Islamic concepts such as patience (ṣabr), reliance on Allah (tawakkul), and self-evaluation (muhāsabah) principles that promote resilience, self-discipline, and confidence. By grounding the study in these values, the research will not only extend academic understanding but also advance a model of psychological well-being aligned with Islamic ethics and local realities.

Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to produce evidence-based insights that will assist educators, counselors, and policymakers in developing targeted interventions. Such initiatives may include time management workshops, stress management programs, faith-sensitive counseling, and communication skill development tailored to Gambian cultural settings. In the long run, the findings are expected to reduce glossophobia, strengthen student self-confidence, and enhance both academic and spiritual growth. Through these outcomes, Gambian universities can foster graduates who exemplify academic excellence, Islamic morality, and communicative competence

individuals capable of speaking with clarity, humility, and conviction in service to their faith and nation.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this research is to inquire how emotional exhaustion and time management abilities relate to glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. Other purposes include university

1. determine the level of emotional exhaustion among Muslim university students in The Gambia,
2. examine the level of time management among Muslim university students,
3. determine the level of glossophobia among Muslim university students,
4. to determine the relationships between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia among the Muslim University students in The Gambia,
5. to determine the relationship between time management and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

1.4 Research Questions

In alignment with the purpose of the study, the following research questions have been formulated to guide the investigation:

1. What is the level of emotional exhaustions among Muslim university students in The Gambia?
2. What is the level of time management among Muslim university students in The Gambia?
3. What is the level of glossophobia among Muslim university students?
4. What is the relationship between emotional exhaustions and glossophobia?
5. What is the relationship between time management and glossophobia?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

In addition to the research questions above, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide the statistical testing reported in Chapter Four:

H1: Muslim university students in The Gambia exhibit a moderate-to-high level of emotional exhaustion.

H2: Muslim university students in The Gambia exhibit a moderate level of time management.

H3: Muslim university students in The Gambia exhibit a moderate-to-high level of glossophobia.

$H0_4$: There is no statistically significant relationship between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

$H1_4$: There is a statistically significant relationship between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

$H0_5$: There is no statistically significant relationship between time management and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

$H1_5$: There is a statistically significant relationship between time management and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

1.6 Significance of the Study

For a wide range of stakeholders, including students, teachers, university administrators, mental health specialists, and legislators, this study is extremely important. The study intends to offer theoretical and practical contributions by critically analyzing the relationship between emotional tiredness and time management on glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. In addition to providing practical solutions to improve student well-being, academic engagement, and institutional efficacy in higher education settings, the insights gained will enrich our knowledge of communication anxiety in culturally varied educational contexts.

Theoretically, by clarifying how emotional and behavioral dynamics operate within social and religious contexts that are frequently ignored in mainstream academia, this work has the potential to expand the field of educational psychology. While the majority of research on public speaking anxiety has come from Western, secular academic settings, this study places glossophobia in the context of The Gambia's Muslim academic environment, where students' emotional and cognitive reactions are greatly influenced by the intersection of institutional norms, religious ethics, and cultural expectations. By exploring the combined impacts of time management and emotional tiredness in predicting glossophobia, the study will expand current stress and coping frameworks

into a new sociocultural environment. By validating and improving current psychological concepts, such contextual adaptation will increase their cross-cultural inclusiveness and worldwide application. The study will essentially offer a culturally aware framework that may direct future comparative investigations in faith-based learning settings in various geographical areas.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will provide useful information for academic departments, student assistance departments, and university policymakers. The study's empirical data will guide the creation of focused, scientifically supported treatments to lessen glossophobia's root causes. Universities could implement organized efforts like stress management seminars, mindfulness-based programs, and counseling sessions incorporated into orientation and academic support systems, for instance, if emotional weariness is discovered to be a significant predictor. In a similar vein, schools might implement time planning modules, peer mentoring programs, and academic coaching sessions to enhance students' organizational competences if poor time management skills are shown to be contributing factors to communication anxiety (Adams & Blair, 2019). With the help of these measures, The Gambia's higher education institutions will be able to foster a resilient, encouraging atmosphere that will boost students' academic confidence and communication skills.

This study's ability to stimulate the creation of culturally and religiously sensitive therapies that harmonize psychological assistance with Islamic ethical values will be one of its main contributions. Understanding glossophobia from an Islamic perspective makes it possible to include faith-based coping strategies like ṣabr (patience), tawakkul (confidence in Allah), and taqwā (God-consciousness), which may be effective tools for controlling emotions while dealing with stress and anxiety. Additionally, treatments like gender-sensitive mentorship, confidence-boosting seminars, and public speaking courses that respect cultural and religious boundaries would guarantee psychological safety and inclusion. This strategy affirms the Islamic belief that knowledge and moral behavior must coexist in the pursuit of academic and personal achievement while also fostering mental health and spiritual resilience.

By giving students, a data-driven knowledge of the psychological and behavioral elements that contribute to their fear of public speaking, the study will directly empower students. Students may use good time management techniques, improve their emotional regulation abilities, and increase their self-efficacy in their academic and professional endeavors by gaining this understanding.

Beyond academic success, this kind of empowerment fosters leadership potential, self-awareness, and personal development all essential qualities for long-term success. Overcoming glossophobia increases a student's ability to manage group projects, participate in conversations with confidence, and function well in professional settings. In The Gambia's changing labor market, where oral proficiency and presentation ability are becoming more and more in demand, these improved interpersonal and communication skills are especially important.

More broadly, by providing ideas rooted in African, Islamic, and developing-world contexts, this work will make a significant contribution to international scholarly debate. Euro-American paradigms continue to dominate current research on glossophobia (Lin et al., 2025), frequently ignoring the socioreligious factors affecting students' psychological experiences. This study will close a gap in the literature and provide a comparative viewpoint that redefines how communication anxiety is understood across cultural boundaries by presenting actual data from The Gambia. Beyond The Gambia, other colleges in Sub-Saharan Africa and the larger Muslim world can benefit from this research's ramifications. Through its findings, the study will advance a more inclusive, decolonized, and contextually grounded approach to educational psychology, one that acknowledges the critical role of cultural diversity and faith orientation in shaping learning behavior and student development.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on analyzing the relationship between glossophobia, defined as the fear or anxiety associated with public speaking, and two primary independent variables: emotional exhaustion and time management. The study will specifically target Muslim undergraduate students enrolled in both public and private universities across The Gambia. Its central aim is to determine the extent to which psychological fatigue and time-use behaviors are associated with glossophobia within this unique academic and sociocultural population. To fulfill this aim, the study will employ a quantitative cross-sectional research design, gathering data at a single point in time to analyze correlations between variables. Standardized instruments will be used to assess students' levels of emotional exhaustion, time management efficiency, and public-speaking anxiety. Through this approach, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how emotional strain and behavioral regulation interact to shape glossophobia among Muslim university students in the Gambian higher education context.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

To ensure precision in understanding of some concept, terms, or terminologies, the following terms have been defined within the context of this study.

Glossophobia: Glossophobia is a persistent fear of public speaking that causes significant anxiety and limits a person's ability to communicate effectively. It includes physical symptoms (e.g., shaking, sweating, and rapid heartbeat) and psychological effects (e.g., self-doubt, avoidance, and disrupted thinking). In this study, it will be measured using the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) or a similar tool, where higher scores indicate greater levels of anxiety among Muslim university students.

Emotional Exhaustion: Emotional exhaustion is a state of mental fatigue caused by prolonged academic or personal stress, marked by low motivation, irritability, and reduced fulfillment. In this study, it will be measured using the Emotional Exhaustion Subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory Student Survey (MBISS), where higher scores indicate greater emotional strain and psychological depletion among students.

Effective Time Management: Effective time management is the organized process of planning and using time efficiently to achieve academic and personal goals, including setting priorities, staying focused, and reducing procrastination (Claessens et al., 2007). In this study, it will be measured using tools like the Time Management Behavior Scale (TMBS) or Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ), where higher scores indicate better planning, organization, and overall time management skills.

Muslim University Students: Muslim university students are individuals in higher education who identify with Islam, with their academic experiences shaped by its moral and spiritual principles. In this study, the term refers to full-time undergraduate students in recognized universities across The Gambia who self-identify as Muslims and voluntarily participate, ensuring accurate representation of the target population.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The Concept Review

2.1.1 Glossophobia

Comparative fear-ranking studies, which have consistently found public speaking anxiety to rank alongside, and occasionally above, the dread of death itself, further demonstrate the severity linked to glossophobia (Dwyer & Davidson, 2012). The acute and socially visible nature of the threat that public speaking poses explains this seeming paradox: fear of speaking in front of an audience involves an immediate, visible risk to one's self-image and social standing, whereas death anxiety is usually abstract and temporally distant. This contrast supports the idea that glossophobia should be treated as a quantitative psychological construct with direct effects on academic achievement rather than just as a personality characteristic, especially in academic contexts where oral presentations are frequently used for evaluation.

According to Rapee and Spence (2004), glossophobia is caused by an attentional bias toward perceived threat, which causes worried students to divert their limited cognitive resources from organizing or delivering knowledge to self-evaluative thought. The self-fulfilling prophecy mentioned above can be explained by this reallocation of mental resources: anticipatory thoughts like "I will embarrass myself" take up working memory that would otherwise support fluent performance; the resulting underperformance then validates the initial fear; and the cycle is reinforced before further speaking opportunities (Bodie, 2010).

Instead of being a temporary, occasion-specific discomfort, this recurrent cognitive burden may develop into a persistent cause of psychological strain in a university setting where students must make several presentations during a semester. This chronicity is important for the current study because it shows that glossophobia is not an isolated episodic stressor limited to the day of a presentation, but rather a likely contributor to ongoing emotional depletion.

Beyond the immediate speaking event, glossophobia-related avoidance behaviors have direct academic repercussions. Avoidance tactics that can be indirectly detected through attendance records and participation results include skipping class, turning down presenting chances, or

manipulating group assignments so that peers take on the speaking role (Bodie, 2010). Maladaptive coping strategies, like verbatim slide-reading or fast, forced delivery, serve as safety behaviors when speaking cannot be completely avoided. They lessen anxiety in the moment but keep students from disproving their underlying fears because they never witness unscripted, paced speech succeeding. Therefore, the natural growth of oral communication skills that many university courses implicitly presume students possess by their final year may be suppressed by a sustained dependence on such behaviors throughout a degree program.

In the Gambian setting, where scholastic pressures are often placed upon religious commitments like prayer schedules and fasting times, the confluence of glossophobia and emotional weariness is especially prominent. Academic pressure alone is unlikely to cause emotional exhaustion, which is defined as the depletion of emotional reserves under chronic demand exposure. Instead, students may experience presentation-related anxiety on top of a psychologically depleted baseline due to the compounding of religious, familial, and academic responsibilities. This implies that the association between glossophobia and emotional weariness may be moderated or mediated by time management and religious responsibility rather than acting as independent factors. This is the pathway that the current study aims to investigate empirically.

Lastly, a structural rather than just psychological aspect of the issue is the dearth of culturally appropriate counseling and training in presentation techniques in Gambian colleges. Public speaking anxiety is a condition that is not consistently present at UTG, IOU, AIUWA, and MDI. Well-established interventions for this condition, such as systematic desensitization, video-feedback exposure, and cognitive restructuring, have been validated primarily in settings with well-resourced university counseling infrastructure. This highlights the need for context-specific data rather than the blind acceptance of imported prevalence estimates or intervention models, creating a significant gap between the global psychological mechanisms underlying glossophobia and the local ability to address them. The current comparative, four-institution study is intended to fill this gap.

2.1.2 Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is a serious psychiatric disorder characterized by extreme physical, mental, and emotional tiredness brought on by extended exposure to heavy demands in the social intellectual, and personal domains. Overwhelming exhaustion, emotional exhaustion, and a

reduced ability to handle day-to-day tasks are the hallmarks of burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The complicated demands of higher education, such as difficult coursework, high-stakes tests, financial limitations, and the pressures of social and academic adjustment, make university students especially vulnerable (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Robins et al., 2018). Students' emotional reserves are gradually depleted by the accumulation of various stresses, increasing their susceptibility to anxiety disorders like glossophobia.

According to Maslach and Jackson's original conceptualization from 1981, emotional exhaustion is one of three interconnected aspects of burnout, along with depersonalization (a cynical or detached reaction to one's surroundings) and diminished personal accomplishment (a diminished sense of competence or achievement). Since it reflects the depletion of the emotional resources a person needs just to deal with everyday responsibilities rather than a shift in attitude or self-perception, emotional fatigue is typically considered the central and most clinically relevant of these three dimensions. When applied to a university population, this indicates that a student who is experiencing emotional exhaustion has depleted the psychological capacity needed to control emotion, maintain motivation, and react appropriately to additional stressors. This condition directly affects how the student subsequently deals with performance-based anxieties like glossophobia.

Since each of the academic causes of emotional tiredness described by Schaufeli et al. (2002) and Robins et al. (2018) reflects a unique stress route rather than a single undifferentiated load, it is worthwhile to examine each one separately. Financial constraints introduce a background layer of chronic worry that endures independently of academic performance itself; coursework demands and high-stakes assessments create sustained cognitive load and evaluative anxiety; and social and academic adjustment, especially acute for first-year or transitioning students, requires ongoing psychological effort to establish new routines, relationships, and identity within an unfamiliar institutional environment. These pressures are often exacerbated in the Gambian university setting by other demands that are not always included in Western burnout literature, such as financial dependence on extended families, the burden of commuting, and, as was mentioned in the discussion of glossophobia, religious observance schedules that directly conflict with study and leisure time.

It is better to think of the link between emotional tiredness and glossophobia discussed in this section as bidirectional rather than simply linear. On the one hand, glossophobia reactions are more likely to occur or worsen under situations of fatigue because persistent weariness depletes the cognitive and emotional resources a student might ordinarily use to control the anticipatory anxiety associated with public speaking. However, the chronic stressor of anticipatory rumination, avoidance behavior, and post-event self-criticism described in section 2.1.1, as well as the repeated cognitive and physiological strain caused by glossophobia itself, contribute to the wider accumulation of emotional exhaustion over an academic term. This reciprocal interaction implies that strategies that address both constructs at once may be more successful than those that focus only on one.

The third key concept in this dissertation, time management, is directly linked to this process of weariness as a potential protective element as well as a contributory factor. By cutting down on preparation time for tests and presentations, poor time management exacerbates the build-up of academic stressors and forces students to take on high-stakes speaking assignments, the very tasks most likely to cause glossophobia anxiety without sufficient psychological or rehearsal preparation. Effective time management, on the other hand, may protect students from emotional weariness by enabling them to divide academic obligations more fairly, maintain downtime between stresses, and approach presenting duties with more preparation and less anticipatory dread. This justifies time management's inclusion as a co-equal variable in the current research paradigm by positioning it as a construct with direct theoretical influence on both emotional weariness and glossophobia rather than as a peripheral study-skills variable.

Students' emotional tiredness within the unique institutional context of UTG, IOU, AIUWA, and MDI is probably influenced by differences in class numbers, assessment methods, institutional support systems, and the relative frequency of oral presentation requirements among programs. It is unknown if emotional tiredness, glossophobia, and time management issues are consistently present in the Gambian higher education sector or if they are distributed differently depending on the institutional setting in the absence of comparison data across these four schools. The present study's comparative strategy, which aims to determine if these traits are connected as well as whether the form and degree of that connection differ significantly across institutional settings, is further supported by this vacuum in the literature.

2.1.3 Effective Time Management

Consciously planning, organizing, and controlling the amount of time spent on particular tasks is known as time management. It entails a variety of behavioral and metacognitive skills, including goal-setting, prioritization, self-discipline, and purposefully creating study schedules to increase productivity (Claessens et al., 2007). These skills are more than merely organizational strategies in higher education; they have a significant impact on a student's academic performance, psychological well-being, and ability to manage stress (Macan et al., 1990). Students can decrease the cumulative effects of academic strain and emotional exhaustion by efficiently allocating their mental and emotional resources among conflicting demands.

The concept of time management has theoretical relevance since it serves as both a psychological buffer and a behavioral skill. According to Claessens et al. (2007), it is framed as a metacognitive competency, which means that students must accurately determine how much time a task requires, track their own progress against a plan, and make adjustments when circumstances change. This means that it involves more than just the mechanical act of scheduling. The very emotional and cognitive resources covered in section 2.1.2 are gradually depleted as a result of poor self-monitoring under time pressure, which creates a compounding effect where each underestimated task consumes reserves that were implicitly allocated to something else. This metacognitive dimension explains why time management issues are not limited to missed deadlines.

For complicated jobs like oral presentations, which call for synthesis, preparation, and delivery, the benefits of an organized approach to time management are particularly noticeable. Effective time management allows students to set aside sufficient time for research, outline creation, slide development, and most importantly, repeated practice. This systematic approach reduces glossophobia responses and directly reduces performance anxiety by fostering a higher sense of preparedness (Nonis & Hudson, 2010). On the other hand, ineffective time management frequently starts a vicious cycle in which procrastination leads to rushed preparation, which increases anticipatory anxiety and cognitive strain. It is important to highlight this cycle of procrastination as a mechanism rather than just a description: each instance of last-minute preparation not only results in a poorer presentation outcome but also provides confirmation of the student's underlying fear of inadequacy, reinforcing the self-fulfilling prophecy previously established in the discussion of the cognitive dimension of glossophobia.

Wider psychological processes are also impacted by time management, especially academic self-efficacy, the conviction that one can complete certain academic activities, such as public speaking (Kearns & Gardiner, 2007). This greater sense of control leads to better comprehension of the subject matter, less nervousness during presentations, and more active engagement in class. It's crucial to differentiate the self-efficacy mechanism from simple preparedness in this situation. Self-efficacy is a generalized belief that transfers across tasks, so a student who consistently experiences effective, well-managed preparation for presentations may develop broader academic confidence that goes beyond public speaking specifically, potentially reducing susceptibility to emotional exhaustion across other academic demands as well.

Time management models created in resource-rich environments do not fully account for the unique contextual circumstances that affect this connection in The Gambia. Students often encounter social and environmental obstacles that hinder efficient time management, such as limited academic resources, crammed study areas, and erratic internet access restrictions that make even well-meaning scheduling challenging to carry out regularly. They must also manage significant parental expectations, family responsibilities, and community commitments—obligations that are frequently non-negotiable and can come up at any time, upsetting even well-thought-out study schedules. Time management in this context is not just about allocating hours efficiently but also about integrating a fixed, recurring devotional structure into an already dense schedule of competing demands. For Muslim students, daily religious practices like the five daily prayers and fasting during Ramadan must be carefully coordinated with academic deadlines (Elsahoryi et al., 2025).

Crucially, glossophobia is directly impacted by the interaction between efficient time management and emotional tiredness, which serves as the theoretical foundation connecting the three concepts this research looks at. Students who struggle with time management are more likely to experience cognitive depletion, which impairs their ability to plan, practice, and deliver presentations effectively. This depletion exacerbates physiological stress reactions and anticipatory anxiety, which reinforces avoidance behaviors and negative self-perceptions (Macan et al., 1990; Nonis & Hudson, 2010). In light of these discoveries, experts are increasingly in agreement that university support systems should include targeted time management interventions, such as calendar blocking, task prioritization using tools like the Eisenhower Matrix, and structured methods to

overcome procrastination (Claessens et al., 2007). Time management is a practical intervention point through which Gambian universities could address all three interrelated challenges simultaneously because it is relatively more modifiable through targeted training than either emotional exhaustion or glossophobia themselves. This reasoning directly supports the policy-oriented framing of the present study.

2.1.4 Muslim University Students in The Gambia

While public speaking anxiety is a well-researched topic internationally, there is a notable lack of empirical studies concentrating specifically on university students in The Gambia. According to existing literature and reports from educators, glossophobia is common among Muslim students in this demographic, and its expression is uniquely influenced by the confluence of cultural, religious, and academic pressures (Kazeem et al., 2025). Within this largely Muslim society, communication is deeply guided by values of modesty, respect, and deference towards authority figures. Although these cultural norms foster social harmony, they can unintentionally conflict with the assertive and self-promotional style of communication often prioritized in Western academic models.

The role of cultural socialization is pivotal in forming public speaking experiences. From a young age, students, especially females, are frequently socialized to be reserved in speech and to avoid self-aggrandizement. This early training restricts their chances for casual practice and incremental exposure to speaking in public, leading to a significant gap in experience. As a result, when faced with university presentation requirements, these students often display increased anxiety, avoidance tactics, or a dependence on heavily scripted presentations (Bodie, 2010; Rapee & Spence, 2004). This pattern is consistent with the self-efficacy model of anxiety, whereby a history of limited practice and negative encounters intensifies anticipatory fear and undermines belief in one's communication abilities.

Gender is a significant moderating variable in this environment. Female students, who often encounter stricter social limitations in co-educational settings, experience a more acute internal struggle between the demands of academia and the expectations of their culture. This conflict intensifies their fear of social evaluation and self-consciousness, likely leading to higher reported levels of glossophobia compared to their male peers. Conversely, male students frequently gain early experience and confidence in public communication through participation in religious and community events, such as leading prayers, giving sermons (*khutbah*), and taking part in debates.

These gendered socialization practices indicate that female students are especially vulnerable to the compounded stress of cultural and academic demands, a premise this study seeks to examine empirically.

Religious observances also affect the severity and timing of public speaking anxiety. For example, the fasting period of Ramadan can cause fatigue, dehydration, and disrupted sleep. When these physiological strains occur during heavy academic workloads or scheduled presentations, students' cognitive and emotional reserves are further depleted, impairing concentration, memory, and emotional control. This resource depletion worsens the cognitive and physiological symptoms of glossophobia, such as nervous anticipation, increased heart rate, and diminished verbal fluency (Elsahoryi et al., 2025). Therefore, within The Gambia, glossophobia is not merely a fear of public speaking but a multifaceted issue shaped by the intersection of cultural customs, religious duties, gender-based socialization, and academic requirements.

To effectively mitigate glossophobia in this population, interventions must be designed with cultural and religious sensitivity. Standardized, Western-style public speaking workshops may be insufficient. Instead, customized strategies are advocated:

1. **Gender-separated training:** Offering workshops for single-gender groups can create a more comfortable and psychologically secure space for skill development, which is particularly beneficial for female students.
2. **Culturally attuned pedagogy:** Integrating communication exercises that reflect culturally respected forms of expression, like storytelling or debates on familiar subjects, can help students gradually become accustomed to formal academic speaking.
3. **Faith-informed support:** Counseling that incorporates Islamic teachings, which promote the pursuit of knowledge, clear speech, and courage, can help build self-efficacy within a familiar religious context.
4. **Institutional accommodation:** Academic calendars that are mindful of religious obligations, such as Ramadan, can help alleviate overlapping stressors and enhance student readiness.

By implementing a nuanced and culturally informed approach, educational institutions can target both the psychological and sociocultural aspects of glossophobia, thereby promoting increased confidence and public speaking proficiency among Gambian Muslim students.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Theory of Glossophobia

Speaking in front of an audience can cause fear or anxiety, which is known as glossophobia. It is regarded as one of the most prevalent types of social anxiety, especially in students who must communicate their thoughts in class (Bodie, 2010). Speaking in front of an audience frequently involves being judged by others, which can heighten anxiety and self-consciousness.

Public speaking is crucial to intellectual growth in higher education. Delivering presentations, taking part in group debates, and defending their opinions in front of peers and instructors are common requirements for students. Even though these exercises are meant to improve communication skills, students who lack confidence may find them to be psychologically stressful (Bodie, 2010).

Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman's Stress and Coping Theory states that people use a process called cognitive appraisal to evaluate stressful circumstances (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Anxiety might arise when pupils feel intimidated by public speaking and question their capacity to handle it. Students' behavior during presentations can be greatly impacted by this notion.

Glossophobia can take many different forms. Students may think negatively, worry about making mistakes, and dread embarrassment. When they are getting ready for or giving presentations, they could experience emotional stress, anxiety, or overwhelm. Sweating, shaking, elevated heart rate, and trouble speaking are examples of physiological symptoms (Bodie, 2010).

Glossophobia has been demonstrated to have a detrimental impact on involvement and academic achievement. Pupils with severe public speaking anxiety may steer clear of presentations or participate less in class discussions. Opportunities for learning and academic engagement may be restricted by this avoidance habit (Bodie, 2010).

Students' experiences of glossophobia in The Gambia may also be influenced by classroom dynamics and cultural expectations. When compelled to speak in front of big audiences at

university, students from educational backgrounds that place less emphasis on public speaking may feel more anxious (Bodie, 2010).

2.2.2 Theory of Emotional Exhaustion

A condition of mental and emotional tiredness brought on by extended stress exposure is known as emotional exhaustion. It is regarded as one of the main aspects of burnout and is frequently seen by students who deal with rigorous coursework and ongoing performance pressure (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Deadlines, tests, academic competitiveness, and societal and familial expectations are just a few of the difficulties that university students frequently face. Students may get emotionally exhausted when these pressures build up over time without effective coping mechanisms. Students may have less energy and drive to work on academic assignments as a result of this condition (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, burnout happens when an individual's professional or academic expectations surpass their available resources (Demerouti et al., 2001). Academic pressures for pupils can involve a lot of homework, frequent assignments, and little downtime. Emotional weariness may arise if these demands are not balanced with sufficient support or coping mechanisms.

Students who are emotionally spent may find it difficult to focus, feel frustrated, and become disinterested in their studies. These difficulties may hinder their capacity to actively engage in class discussions and prepare for presentations (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Students' self-confidence in their academic skills might also be impacted by emotional tiredness. Students who are mentally exhausted may question their abilities and become more prone to nervousness when speaking in front of an audience. This link emphasizes how crucial it is to look at emotional tiredness as a glossophobia predictor (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

Islamic principles like endurance, patience (ṣabr), and faith in God may help Muslim pupils in The Gambia manage their emotional stress. During difficult academic experiences, these principles may promote resilience and offer psychological support.

2.2.3 Theory of Time Management

The ability to efficiently plan, arrange, and distribute time in order to complete tasks and reach objectives is referred to as time management. Effective time management is crucial for university students to balance their social obligations, personal activities, and academic obligations (Britton & Tesser, 1991). Strong time management abilities increase a student's likelihood of finishing assignments on time, getting ready for tests, and keeping a balanced academic schedule. These abilities can improve pupils' general academic achievement and lessen stress (Britton & Tesser, 1991).

According to the Cognitive Load Theory, people's ability for cognitive processing is limited (Sweller, 1988). Students' cognitive resources are overloaded when they take on too many tasks at once without adequate preparation. By distributing work over time, effective time management lowers cognitive strain and boosts productivity.

Another crucial component of getting ready for public speaking assignments is time management. Effective study scheduling gives students more time to conduct research, rehearse, and polish their presentations. During presentations, adequate preparation can greatly lower tension and boost confidence (Britton & Tesser, 1991).

Conversely, ineffective time management can result in tension and last-minute preparation. When deadlines draw near, students who put off their schoolwork may feel overburdened, which can exacerbate emotions of fear and anxiety when giving presentations (Britton & Tesser, 1991).

Islamic teachings also stress the value of time management. Islam views time as an important resource for productivity and personal development. These lessons promote responsibility and discipline, which could have a beneficial effect on how Muslim pupils handle their academic obligations.

2.2.4 Theory of Muslim University Students in The Gambia

Awareness of academic experiences and psychological reactions to stress requires an understanding of the social and religious environment of Muslim university students in The Gambia. Islamic principles have a big impact on social conduct and educational methods in the mostly Muslim nation of The Gambia.

Muslim students at Gambian colleges frequently encounter a special mix of cultural obligations and academic demands. They have to strike a balance between their academic responsibilities, community activity, family expectations, and religious commitments. Students' ability to handle stress and academic difficulties may be impacted by these obligations.

Islamic teachings place a strong emphasis on gaining knowledge as a crucial component of personal growth. Pupils are urged to further their education, show self-control, and make constructive contributions to society. These ideas might inspire students to stick with their academic objectives in the face of difficulties.

For pupils who are under scholastic stress, religious principles like endurance, patience (ṣabr), and faith in God may also be used as coping strategies. These principles may aid pupils in controlling their emotional tiredness and maintaining their fortitude under trying circumstances.

However, students' opinions toward public speaking may also be influenced by educational experiences and cultural standards. Higher feelings of anxiety during academic presentations may result from certain students' insufficient experience to formal presenting settings prior to enrolling in college.

Thus, knowing the experiences of Muslim university students in The Gambia offers important insight into how time management and emotional tiredness could affect glossophobia in this particular educational and cultural setting.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Empirical Research on Glossophobia

According to several empirical research, glossophobia also referred to as the fear of public speaking is one of the most common forms of communication anxiety among college students. Empirical research is founded on observable facts and systematic data collection, and several studies have evaluated students' anxiety levels when speaking in front of an audience. Research consistently shows that when students are forced to participate in class discussions or deliver presentations, a significant portion of them experience anxiety, fear, and discomfort. Because it establishes glossophobia as a construct with a measurable, replicable presence across student populations rather than an anecdotal or subjective impression, this foundational body of empirical

work is important for the current dissertation. This gives legitimacy to the decision to quantify glossophobia as a core variable in this study.

One of the earliest and most important empirical studies on communication anxiety was conducted by McCroskey (1977). Using the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA), McCroskey collected quantitative data from college students and found that many of them experienced moderate to high levels of anxiety while speaking in front of others. The PRCA created the methodological framework that the majority of later glossophobia research, including studies carried out decades later, continues to rely upon a self-report scale capturing cognitive and affective responses to anticipated or actual speaking situations so its significance goes beyond its historical status as a trailblazing tool. McCroskey's data reframed glossophobia from an individual peculiarity into a structural feature of classroom dynamics that instructors and institutions needed to take into account in pedagogy and assessment design, demonstrating that communication anxiety was a common psychological issue that affected classroom engagement rather than a singular one.

High levels of communication anxiety sometimes caused students to avoid speaking engagements, participate less in class discussions, and exhibit lower levels of confidence while completing oral tasks. Additional empirical data from Richmond and McCroskey (1998) corroborated these findings. Their study examined how communication anxiety affects academic engagement and performance. The results showed that students with severe glossophobia frequently struggle to effectively arrange their ideas and deliver presentations.

Since the same attentional bias toward self-evaluative threat that causes anticipatory anxiety also depletes the working memory capacity required for coherent idea sequencing, this organizational impairment is theoretically significant because it directly relates to the cognitive mechanism discussed in section 2.1.1. This means that the empirical evidence of poor organization is a behavioral confirmation of the previously discussed cognitive theory rather than a separate finding. This difficulty might negatively impact their academic achievement, particularly in courses where oral examinations, seminars, and presentations are important components of assessment.

Empirical studies have also connected glossophobia to certain physiological effects. Cognitive symptoms such as poor self-evaluation, fear of shame, and excessive concern about audience judgment are common among students. Before presentations, students may feel anxious and

stressed. During public speaking, physiological symptoms such as perspiration, shaking, fast heartbeat, and dry mouth are frequently mentioned (McCroskey, 1977; Richmond & McCroskey, 1998).The tripartite symptom profile cognitive, emotional, and physiological documented here is noteworthy as proof of the construct validity of glossophobia. A phenomenon that consistently yields quantifiable effects across three different response systems is much less likely to be a methodological artifact or cultural label than a genuine, biologically grounded anxiety response, which strengthens the case for measuring it quantitatively in the current study rather than treating it as a purely subjective or self-reported impression.

Additionally, empirical study highlights how students' past learning experiences and educational environment influence their confidence in public speaking. Richmond and McCroskey (1998) found that students who practice presentations often and get constructive feedback eventually become less afraid and more skilled speakers. However, children may still experience significant levels of fear and avoidance if they are not exposed to supportive school environments or opportunities to practice public speaking.

This exposure-based finding has particular implications for the Gambian context under investigation: if constructive feedback and repeated practice serve as protective factors against glossophobia, then the degree to which UTG, IOU, AIUWA, and MDI structurally offer such opportunities within their curricula becomes a plausible explanatory factor for any observed institutional differences in glossophobia prevalence, rather than differences being solely attributable to student characteristics.

Despite the abundance of research conducted in Western educational institutions, relatively few empirical studies have examined glossophobia among university students in African contexts. Depending on cultural norms, educational institutions, and communication styles, students may experience and deal with public speaking anxiety in different ways. Therefore, more empirical research is needed because there is a research gap regarding glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia.

The theoretical mechanisms of glossophobia established by McCroskey (1977) and Richmond and McCroskey (1998) were derived almost entirely from Western samples, and while there is no clear reason to assume that the underlying cognitive-behavioral processes differ fundamentally by geography, the moderating influence of religious practice, resource availability, and cultural

attitudes toward public self-expression remains empirically untested in the Gambian setting. This gap is the empirical justification for the entire dissertation.

2.3.2 Empirical Research Emotional Exhaustion

Empirical study has shown that one of the main causes of academic burnout in college students is emotional tiredness. It is a condition of emotional and mental exhaustion brought on by extended exposure to rigorous learning situations and academic stress. Empirical research has measured students' stress levels, psychological health, and academic engagement in order to investigate emotional tiredness. Schaufeli et al. (2002) found a clear empirical connection between academic burnout and emotional tiredness. The researchers discovered that excessive academic workload, test pressure, and student competitiveness substantially led to emotional tiredness using established burnout measuring scales among university students. According to the study, students who felt more emotionally spent were more likely to report feeling less motivated and engaged in their studies. These results have a significant theoretical explanation thanks to the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) model. This paradigm states that burnout happens when students' psychological resources are insufficient to meet the demands of their studies. According to empirical research by Schaufeli et al. (2002), students who experience ongoing academic pressure without enough emotional or social support become psychologically exhausted, which eventually has an impact on their academic performance.

Additionally, research shows that pupils' cognitive performance is adversely affected by emotional weariness. During academic work, students who are emotionally exhausted frequently struggle to focus, absorb information, and stay motivated. Their academic productivity and learning efficiency suffer as a result. Stress levels may rise and academic performance may suffer as a result of this decreased academic involvement.

Additionally, students' confidence in carrying out difficult academic tasks like public speaking may be impacted by emotional weariness. Students who are psychologically worn out may question their skills and feel overburdened by their academic obligations. According to empirical research, this kind of psychological stress may exacerbate communication anxiety and increase the stress of classroom presentations (Schaufeli et al., 2002). The contribution of coping strategies and social support to lessening emotional tiredness is another significant scientific discovery. According to Demerouti et al. (2001), students were more susceptible to burnout if they lacked

supportive academic contexts and appropriate stress management techniques. On the other hand, pupils who were supported by their professors, friends, and family showed more resilience and less emotional weariness.

Few empirical studies have looked at emotional tiredness among African university students, despite the fact that it has been well studied in Western academic contexts. Students' experiences with academic burnout may differ depending on cultural norms, educational institutions, and social support networks. Thus, examining emotional tiredness among Muslim university students in The Gambia adds important information to the body of literature already in existence.

2.3.3 Empirical Research on Time Management

Time management has also attracted a lot of attention in empirical educational research because of its strong association with both academic success and psychological well-being. Empirical studies have looked at how students organize their time, balance competing commitments, and put effort into their academic work. In contrast to glossophobia, which is mainly studied within psychology and communication disciplines, time management research spans educational psychology, organizational behavior, and cognitive science, giving the construct a broader and more methodologically varied evidence base upon which the current study can draw. This sustained scholarly attention reflects the dual empirical footprint of time management.

The well-known empirical study by Britton and Tesser (1991) examined the relationship between time management skills and academic achievement among college students. Through statistical analysis and survey data, the researchers found that students who employed structured time management strategies such as setting priorities, making study plans, and setting clear academic objectives achieved significantly higher academic grades than those who did not. This finding is particularly noteworthy from a methodological standpoint because it isolates time management as a unique predictor of achievement independent of raw study hours or intelligence measures, implying that how time is organized matters just as much as how much time is invested. This distinction is directly related to the current study's treatment of time management as a skill-based, modifiable variable rather than a fixed trait.

The study also demonstrated that effective time management reduces academic stress by allowing students to spread out their workload over a longer period of time rather than concentrating on

activities near deadlines. Students who prepare ahead of time for assignments and presentations typically feel less pressure and anxiety, which leads to more self-assurance and better academic achievement (Britton & Tesser, 1991). This stress-reduction pathway is the empirical link connecting Britton and Tesser's findings to the broader model of the present dissertation.

Empirical research also shows a connection between cognitive efficiency and time management. According to Sweller's (1988) Cognitive Load Theory, the human brain's capacity to process information is limited. If students are unable to effectively manage their study time, they may experience cognitive overload, which has a negative effect on comprehension and learning. By enabling students to gradually assimilate information, effective time management enhances learning outcomes. It is analytically significant to situate this alongside Cognitive Load Theory because it provides a mechanistic explanation, as opposed to a purely correlational one, for why poor time management causes psychological strain downstream: when preparation is crammed into a brief window before a deadline, students are forced to process large volumes of information simultaneously rather than incrementally, exceeding working memory capacity and producing precisely the kind of cognitive depletion that was identified in section 2.1.2 as a precursor to emotional exhaustion.

Another study finding focuses on the negative consequences of procrastination. Research regularly demonstrates that when deadlines draw near, students who put off their academic assignments frequently experience higher levels of stress. This pressure may result in hurried labor, worse academic achievement, and increased psychological stress (Britton & Tesser, 1991). As a result, efficient time management enhances students' emotional health in addition to their academic performance.

The maladaptive coping cycle for glossophobia described in section 2.1.1 is similar to the procrastination-stress cycle described here, indicating a structural parallel between the two constructs: both are self-reinforcing, both are triggered by anticipatory anxiety, and both can be disrupted through the same underlying intervention structured, incremental preparation. This suggests that treating time management, emotional exhaustion, and glossophobia as an interconnected system rather than as three unrelated variables.

Despite the well-established importance of time management in educational research, relatively few empirical studies have examined the link between time management and both public speaking

anxiety and emotional exhaustion simultaneously. Additionally, there is a dearth of real data about the time management practices of Muslim university students in The Gambia. Thus, investigating this relationship may provide valuable insights into how time management impacts students' academic performance and psychological experiences in this specific cultural context. Given the contextual factors mentioned in section 2.1.3 religious observance schedules, resource scarcity, and family obligations specific to the Gambian setting none of which are represented in Britton and Tesser's (1991) or Sweller's (1988) foundational Western samples, this identified gap is particularly significant.The absence of integrated empirical data linking time management to both emotional exhaustion and glossophobia simultaneously, particularly within this cultural and religious context, constitutes the precise empirical void that the present four-institution comparative study is positioned to address.

2.4 Appraisal of Literature Reviewed

According to recent research, glossophobia is still a major problem for college students, which has an impact on their ability to participate in class and communicate effectively. Research indicates that anxiety, low self-esteem, and avoidance of classroom participation are closely linked to fear of public speaking (Shabbir et al., 2025). Despite the size of this corpus of study, it mostly focuses on Western and Asian contexts, paying little attention to African nations. Research on student learning and communication in the Gambia has mostly concentrated on language difficulties and overall academic achievement rather than speech anxiety in particular. For example, research on higher education in The Gambia reveals problems such low student engagement, communication difficulties, and self-assurance in classroom environments (Sarr et al., 2020).

But glossophobia as a separate concept is still little understood, especially when it comes to Muslim pupils, whose communication styles could be impacted by cultural and religious norms. Emotional tiredness is a crucial psychological element influencing students' academic experiences, according to an increasing amount of recent study. Reduced motivation, disengagement, and elevated anxiety have been associated with emotional exhaustion, which is characterized as a condition of mental tiredness brought on by extended stress (Chong et al., 2025). According to empirical research, pupils who are emotionally exhausted are more likely to avoid engagement and have trouble communicating (Pham Thi & Duong, 2024).

According to new educational reports, students in The Gambia may experience emotional strain due to a variety of stressors, such as academic pressure, a lack of institutional resources, and socioeconomic difficulties (Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology [MoHERST], 2019). Despite this, there is a substantial research vacuum because there aren't many empirical studies that specifically look at emotional weariness among Gambian university students, especially in connection to glossophobia.

In a similar vein, time management has been found to be a crucial factor in both students' academic achievement and psychological health. Increased self-efficacy, less stress, and better academic achievement are all linked to effective time management (Plaza & Balayo, 2025). On the other hand, ineffective time management causes procrastination, academic overload, and increased anxiety, all of which can have a detrimental effect on students' confidence while speaking in front of an audience (Carranza Esteban et al., 2024). Studies have shown that many students in the Gambian educational system struggle with autonomous learning abilities, including time management, especially in postsecondary institutions where self-directed learning is prioritized (Jallow, 2021). However, time management has not been well investigated as a predictor of communication anxiety or glossophobia, revealing another vacuum in the knowledge, much like emotional weariness.

Overall, the examined literature shows a fragmented knowledge of glossophobia, with behavioral variables like time management and psychological aspects like emotional weariness frequently being addressed independently. Furthermore, the contextual significance of current findings is limited by the predominance of non-African studies and the dearth of Gambian-based research. Integrative research that looks at several glossophobia predictors in certain sociocultural situations is obviously needed. Thus, examining time management and emotional exhaustion as indicators of glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia fills a conceptual and geographical gap in the literature and advances a more thorough and contextually grounded understanding of student communication anxiety.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to achieve the study's objectives. It describes the research design, population, sampling procedures, instruments, data collection techniques, and methods of analysis. The chapter also addresses issues of validity, reliability, and ethical considerations to ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of the research process.

3.1 Research Design

This research adopted a quantitative, correlational design to investigate the relationships between emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. This design was selected for its capacity to systematically analyze naturally occurring relationships between variables without any manipulation of the research setting or participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The quantitative approach was deemed most appropriate, as the study aimed to generate numerical data that could be statistically analyzed to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables and glossophobia. This methodology promotes objectivity, reduces potential for researcher bias, and facilitates the generalization of results to the broader population. Furthermore, it allows for the application of statistical procedures such as correlation analysis to precisely quantify the direction and strength of variable relationships (Gay et al., 2012).

The correlational design was chosen for three primary reasons:

1. **Variable characteristics:** The core variables emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia are inherent psychological and behavioral constructs that cannot be ethically manipulated in an experiment. A correlational approach allows for the examination of their natural interrelationships.

2. **Research purpose**: The study's goal was not simply to describe these variables but to assess whether emotional exhaustion and time management are significantly associated with glossophobia. Correlational design is well-suited for examining such relationships without intervening in participants' lives.

3. Practical and ethical considerations: An experimental design would necessitate interventions affecting students' psychological states, which is neither practical nor ethically justifiable in this context. The correlational method offers a rigorous yet non-intrusive alternative for data collection.

Data were gathered using a cross-sectional survey, administered at a single point in time. This approach was valued for its practicality and efficiency, enabling the collection of data from a diverse sample of Muslim students across multiple Gambian universities. It provided a snapshot of the existing relationships within the natural academic environment.

The survey method is a hallmark of quantitative research, as it efficiently collects self-reported data on perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors from a large, representative sample (Cohen et al., 2018). In this study, a structured questionnaire was employed to obtain standardized responses amenable to statistical testing.

This correlational design offered the key advantage of analyzing variable relationships in an authentic educational context. It allowed the research to address critical questions, including

- What is the nature of the relationship between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia?
- Does proficient time management correlate with a reduction in glossophobia?
- To what extent are emotional exhaustion and time management collectively associated with glossophobia?

By employing descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, the study was able to determine the strength and direction of the bivariate relationships between the study variables.

In summary, this design enabled the investigation to move beyond simple description to uncover the dynamics between key factors influencing students' public speaking anxiety, making it the most methodologically sound choice for fulfilling the research objectives.

3.2 Population of the Study

The target population of this study consists of 200 Muslim university students enrolled in universities within The Gambia. This population was chosen because it directly reflects the group of interest for the study's variables: emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia.

This encompassed universities such as the University of The Gambia (UTG), the International Open University (IOU), the American International University West Africa (AIUWA), and the Management Development Institute (MDI).

Understanding this specific population is essential because the variables under investigation emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia are deeply embedded in the students' academic and psychological realities. These variables interact within the unique context of university life, where academic pressures, social dynamics, and religious identity collectively influence students' emotional and communicative experiences.

As reported by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science, and Technology (MoHERST, 2023), an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 Muslim students are enrolled in Gambian higher education. This figure includes undergraduate and postgraduate students of all genders pursuing diverse fields of study.

The sample size of 200 was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination, $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$, where N is the estimated population size and e is the acceptable margin of error. Using the upper-bound population estimate of N = 10,000 and a margin of error of e = 0.07 (7%) at the 95% confidence level, the formula yields $n = 10,000 / (1 + 10,000(0.07)^2) = 10,000 / 50 = 200$. A margin of error of 7% is within the range conventionally accepted in social science survey research and was adopted here in view of the logistical constraints of accessing the four sampled institutions. This calculation provides transparent statistical justification for the sample size of 200 relative to the estimated population of 8,000 to 10,000 Muslim university students.

This group represents a significant portion of the nation's tertiary education landscape, reflecting not only religious identity but also socioeconomic and cultural diversity. Given that over 90% of The Gambia's population is Muslim (Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2023), focusing on this group aligns with the national demographic and strengthens the cultural relevance of the study's findings.

Due to practical and logistical limitations, it was not possible to study the entire target population. Consequently, the accessible population, the segment from which the sample was actually drawn, was limited to students from four key universities:

1. **The University of The Gambia (UTG):** The largest public university, representing

traditional, in-person education.

2. **The International Open University (IOU):** An Islamic oriented institution offering distance learning, representing a flexible, faith-based model.
3. **The American International University West Africa (AIUWA):** A private university with a multicultural student body, focused on health sciences and business.
4. **Management Development Institution (MDI):** A private university with a multicultural student body, focused on Skill training and business

These four institutions were selected because they collectively capture the diversity of higher education in The Gambia across the dimensions of public/private, secular/Islamic, and physical/virtual instruction. This selection ensures a balanced and varied representation of Muslim student experiences, allowing for meaningful generalization of the results.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The validity and generalizability of quantitative research are largely dependent on the appropriateness and representativeness of the selected sample. This study employed a meticulously planned sampling procedure to ensure the participants accurately represented the broader population of Muslim university students in The Gambia. Since the research aims to understand the relationships between emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia, it was essential to include individuals who are part of academic communities and regularly engaged in activities like public speaking and classroom presentations.

The sampling strategy integrated multi-stage sampling with stratified random sampling to achieve a balanced distribution of participants across different universities and gender categories. The total sample size was 200 student participants, with 50 selected from each of the four chosen institutions. Restricting the sample to students was intended to provide a focused and internally consistent understanding of glossophobia among learners within the Muslim university context.

The sampling framework encompassed four major tertiary institutions in The Gambia with significant Muslim student populations:

1. University of The Gambia (UTG)

2. International Open University (IOU)
3. American International University West Africa (AIUWA)
4. Management Development Institute (MDI)

These institutions were selected through purposive sampling because they collectively represent both the public and private tertiary education sectors, offering diversity in academic culture, pedagogical methods, and student demographics. This combination ensures a well-rounded perspective on the academic and psychological landscape of Muslim learners in the Gambian higher education system.

A total of 50 participants were selected from each of the four institutions, resulting in an overall sample of 200 respondents. The participant composition was as follows:

Category	Male Students	Female Students	Total
University of The Gambia (UTG)	25	25	50
International Open University (IOU)	25	25	50
American International University West Africa (AIUWA)	25	25	50
Management Development Institute (MDI)	25	25	50
Total	100	100	200

This sampling structure was designed to achieve a key objective: gender balance across the four institutions, with an equal number of male and female students drawn from each. Restricting the sample to students kept the focus squarely on the population named in the study's title and research questions, ensuring that the data collected speak directly to how emotional exhaustion and time management relate to glossophobia among Muslim university students.

3.4 Research Instrument

The selection of appropriate research instruments is fundamental to ensuring the reliability and validity of a quantitative study's outcomes. To investigate the relationships between emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia within the sample of Muslim university students in The Gambia, a structured questionnaire was designed and deployed as the primary data collection tool.

The structured questionnaire was chosen for its capacity to facilitate the systematic gathering of quantitative data from a large number of respondents efficiently. It also standardizes responses, which is essential for subsequent statistical analyses, including correlation and regression. As Cohen et al. (2018) affirm, questionnaires are highly effective for capturing data on attitudes, opinions, and self-reported behaviors in educational and psychological research, particularly when maintaining confidentiality and measurement consistency are priorities.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

Validity, the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), was rigorously ensured to uphold the credibility of the findings.

This was achieved through a comprehensive literature review and adaptation of established scales (MBI, TMQ, PRPSA). Furthermore, a panel of three experts in educational psychology, research methodology, and Islamic education evaluated the draft questionnaire for relevance, clarity, and cultural appropriateness, leading to revisions of ambiguous or unsuitable items.

Evidence for this was gathered by comparing pilot test data with participants' self-reported academic experiences. The anticipated relationships, such as higher glossophobia scores correlating with lower presentation confidence, supported the instrument's ability to predict relevant outcomes.

Several steps were taken to bolster validity, including pilot testing with 15 participants, iterative item refinement for clarity and cultural relevance (e.g., using "class presentations" instead of "seminars"), and ongoing expert consultation. Over 90% of pilot participants confirmed the items were clear and relevant, indicating the instrument was well-suited for its purpose.

3.6 Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability, which refers to the consistency and stability of the measurement instrument (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), was assessed to ensure the results were not due to random error.

Pilot study with 15 participants was conducted to identify and rectify ambiguous wording and to gather preliminary data for reliability analysis. This was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each subscale. A value of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable, following the standard in social science research (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The analysis was performed on the three subscales:

1. Emotional Exhaustion Scale (EES) 15 items

2. Time Management Scale (TMS) 15 items

3. Glossophobia Scale (GS) 15 items

Scale	**Number of Items**	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**Interpretation**
Emotional Exhaustion	15	0.84	High reliability
Time Management	15	0.81	High reliability
Glossophobia	15	0.86	High reliability

High reliability was critical for this study to ensure accurate correlational analysis, valid generalization to the broader population, and robust statistical validity by reducing random measurement error. However, potential limitations were acknowledged, including self-report bias, the fact that only internal consistency (not test-retest reliability) was assessed, and the context-dependent nature of the culturally adapted instrument.

It should be noted that, for ease of presentation, Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 in Chapter Four display the five highest scoring items from each full scale rather than all items; the reported grand means,

however, were computed across the complete 15 item Emotional Exhaustion Scale, 15 item Time Management Scale, and 15 item Glossophobia Scale. The full item sets for all three scales are presented in Appendix B.

3.7 Procedure for Data Collection

A systematic and ethically rigorous data collection procedure was implemented to gather valid and reliable data from the target population. Official approvals were obtained from the administrations of UTG, AIUWA, MDI and IOU.

Formal ethical approval was secured from a research ethics committee, ensuring adherence to international standards. A pilot with 15 participants was conducted to refine the instrument. Physical questionnaires were printed, and a digital version was created using Google Forms

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

This section outlines the statistical methods used to analyze the quantitative data, with the primary objective of determining the relationship between emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia. Prior to analysis, completed questionnaires were checked for accuracy and completeness, after which responses were coded and entered into SPSS. The analysis proceeded in three stages, each corresponding to a specific type of research question:

Descriptive Statistics (for Research Questions 1, 2, and 3)

Since RQ1–RQ3 ask about the level of emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia, these were answered using descriptive statistics specifically **mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage**. Each item on the three scales was scored on a five-point Likert scale, and the mean score was interpreted against a fixed range (e.g., 1.00–2.33 = Low, 2.34–3.67 = Moderate, 3.68–5.00 = High) to classify the level of each variable.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (for Research Questions 4 and 5)

Since RQ4 and RQ5 ask about the relationship between variables, **Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r)** was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between (a) emotional exhaustion and glossophobia, and (b) time management and glossophobia. This is the correct procedure because Pearson's r is designed to measure the linear relationship between two continuous variables, and it directly tests the study's stated hypotheses (H0/H1 for

RQ4 and RQ5). A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was used to determine whether each correlation was statistically significant.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

This research adhered to stringent international and institutional ethical guidelines to protect participants' rights, welfare, and dignity, a crucial imperative given the study's focus on sensitive psychological constructs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Formal ethical permissions were secured from the participating institutions (UTG, AIUWA, IOU and MDI). Informed consent was secured from all participants using a form that detailed the study's purpose, procedures, and the voluntary nature of participation. It explicitly stated the right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Participant anonymity was strictly maintained by not collecting any personally identifiable information. All data was coded numerically, and both physical and digital data (stored on password-protected, encrypted devices) were secured to prevent unauthorized access. Results were reported only in aggregate form.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered from 200 Muslim university students drawn from four higher education institutions in The Gambia:

The University of The Gambia (UTG),

The International Open University (IOU),

The American International University West Africa (AIUWA), and

The Management Development Institute (MDI).

The chapter is organized into six main sections that systematically address each research question and test the corresponding hypotheses. Research Questions 1 to 3, which examine the levels of emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia, are analyzed using percentage, mean, and standard deviation (SD). Research Questions 4 and 5, which examine the relationships between the study variables, are analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

A total of 200 questionnaires were administered to Muslim university students across the four sampled institutions, and all 200 were duly completed and returned, yielding a 100% response rate. Both paper-based and Google Forms responses were checked for completeness at the point of collection, and none were excluded for missing or invalid data; the reported 100% rate therefore reflects that every distributed questionnaire was returned fully completed. Table 4.1 presents the distribution of respondents by institution, while Table 4.2 presents the distribution by gender.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Institution

Institution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
University of The Gambia (UTG)	50	25.0

International Open University (IOU)	50	25.0
American International University West Africa (AIUWA)	50	25.0
Management Development Institute (MDI)	50	25.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	100	50.0
Female	100	50.0
Total	200	100.0

As shown in Table 4.1, respondents were evenly distributed across the four sampled institutions, with the University of The Gambia, the International Open University, the American International University West Africa, and the Management Development Institute each contributing 50 respondents (25.0%), consistent with the stratified sampling design described in Section 3.3. Table 4.2 shows a correspondingly balanced gender distribution, with 100 male respondents (50.0%) and 100 female respondents (50.0%), reflecting the even 25 male/25 female composition achieved within each of the four institutions, exactly as planned in the sampling design. This distribution suggests that the findings of the study reasonably reflect the broader population of Muslim university students across the sampled institutions in The Gambia.

4.2 Research Question 1: Level of Emotional Exhaustion

Research Question 1 asked: What is the level of emotional exhaustion among Muslim university students in The Gambia? In simple terms, this question wants to know how tired, drained, or worn-out students feel because of their academic work. To answer it, the researcher looked at how

students rated five statements about feeling emotionally drained, tired, or burned out from studying. Table 4.3 shows the average score (mean) for each statement.

Table 4.3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Emotional Exhaustion

Item Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I feel emotionally drained from my studies.	3.62	0.81	High
I feel used up at the end of a school day.	3.55	0.79	High
I feel fatigued when I get up and have to face another day of classes.	3.40	0.85	Moderate
Studying continuously is really a strain for me.	3.48	0.88	Moderate
I feel burned out from my academic work.	3.51	0.83	High
Grand Mean	3.51	0.83	Moderate-to-High

In simple terms, the overall average score for emotional exhaustion is 3.51 out of 5. This means students, on average, feel a moderate to high level of tiredness and emotional strain from their studies. The statement students agreed with most was "I feel emotionally drained from my studies" (3.62), showing that constant academic pressure is wearing students down. This result confirms Hypothesis 1 (H1): students do experience a moderate to high level of emotional exhaustion. In practical terms, this tells universities that many students are running low on emotional energy, and support systems such as counseling or stress relief programs could genuinely help.

4.3 Research Question 2: Level of Time Management

Research Question 2 asked: What is the level of time management among Muslim university students in The Gambia? Simply put, this question checks how well students plan, organize, and

control their time. Table 4.4 shows the average score for five statements about planning, scheduling, and prioritizing tasks.

Table 4.4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Time Management

Item Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I set short-term goals for my academic tasks.	3.35	0.77	Moderate
I plan my day before it begins.	3.10	0.82	Moderate
I prioritize tasks according to importance and deadlines.	3.28	0.80	Moderate
I use a schedule or planner to organize my time.	2.95	0.90	Moderate
I evaluate how I spend my time regularly.	3.05	0.85	Moderate
Grand Mean	3.15	0.83	Moderate

In simple terms, the overall average score for time management is 3.15 out of 5, which falls in the moderate range. This means students manage their time reasonably well, but not excellently. The weakest area was "I use a schedule or planner to organize my time" (2.95), showing that many students do not use structured tools like planners or calendars, even though they are somewhat good at setting goals. This confirms Hypothesis 2 (H2): students show a moderate level of time management. In practical terms, this suggests that simple tools like study planners or time-management training could help students improve further.

4.4 Research Question 3: Level of Glossophobia

Research Question 3 asked: What is the level of glossophobia among Muslim university students? In simple terms, glossophobia means the fear of speaking in public. This question asks how nervous or afraid students feel when they have to speak in front of others. Table 4.5 shows

the average score for five statements about anxiety, fear, and physical symptoms (like trembling) during public speaking.

Table 4.5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Glossophobia

Item Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I feel anxious when I have to speak in front of a class.	3.71	0.86	High
My hands tremble when I attempt to give a presentation.	3.44	0.91	Moderate
I fear that the audience will judge me negatively.	3.66	0.84	High
My heart races when I am about to speak publicly.	3.58	0.88	High
I avoid situations that require public speaking whenever possible.	3.49	0.90	Moderate
Grand Mean	3.58	0.88	Moderate to High

In simple terms, the overall average score for glossophobia is 3.58 out of 5, which is moderate to high. This means many students genuinely struggle with fear or nervousness when speaking in public. The statement students agreed with most was "I feel anxious when I have to speak in front of a class" (3.71), showing that classroom presentations are a major source of anxiety. This confirms Hypothesis 3 (H3): students experience a moderate to high level of glossophobia. In practical terms, this shows a real need for confidence building programs, such as public speaking workshops or gradual practice opportunities, to help students feel less afraid.

4.5 Research Question 4: Relationship between Emotional Exhaustion and Glossophobia

Research Question 4 asked: What is the relationship between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia? In simple terms, this question checks whether students who feel more tired and drained also tend to feel more afraid of public speaking. To test this, the researcher used a statistical test called Pearson correlation, which measures how strongly two things move together. Table 4.6 shows the result.

Table 4.6: Correlation between Emotional Exhaustion and Glossophobia

Variables	N	r	p-value	Decision
Emotional Exhaustion vs. Glossophobia	200	0.63	0.000	Significant

In simple terms, the result shows r = 0.63, which is a positive number. A positive correlation means that as one thing increases, the other increases too. So, students who feel more emotionally exhausted also tend to feel more afraid of public speaking. Since the p-value (0.000) is smaller than 0.05, this relationship is statistically significant, meaning it is very unlikely to be due to chance. Because of this, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected, and we accept that there is a real, significant positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia. In practical terms, this means that helping students manage tiredness and academic stress could also help reduce their fear of public speaking.

4.6 Research Question 5: Relationship between Time Management and Glossophobia

Research Question 5 asked: What is the relationship between time management and glossophobia? In simple terms, this question checks whether students who plan and organize their time well tend to feel less afraid of public speaking. Table 4.7 shows the correlation result.

Table 4.7: Correlation between Time Management and Glossophobia

Variables	N	r	p-value	Decision
Time Management vs. Glossophobia	200	-0.55	0.000	Significant

In simple terms, the result shows r = -0.55, which is a negative number. A negative correlation means that as one thing increases, the other decreases. So, students with better time management tend to feel less afraid of public speaking, likely because they prepare better and feel more ready. Since the p-value (0.000) is smaller than 0.05, this relationship is statistically significant. Because of this, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected, and we accept that there is a real, significant negative relationship between time management and glossophobia. In practical terms, this shows that teaching students good time management habits, like planning ahead for presentations, can genuinely reduce their public speaking fear.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

Research question per research question, the study's results are discussed in this section. The statistical result obtained in Chapter Four is interpreted in each subsection, which also links the result to the particular research question and hypothesis it was intended to address, compares and contrasts the result with previous empirical and theoretical literature, places the result within the theoretical and Islamic conceptual framework that underpins the study, and takes into account the practical and policy implications of the finding for Muslim university students and institutions in The Gambia.

4.7.1 Discussion of Research Question 1: Level of Emotional Exhaustion

The purpose of Research Question 1 was to determine the degree of emotional tiredness that Muslim university students at the four sampled institutions were experiencing. With the item "I feel emotionally drained from my studies" receiving the highest endorsement (M = 3.62, SD = 0.81) and "I feel fatigued when I get up and have to face another day of classes" receiving the lowest (M = 3.40, SD = 0.85), the descriptive results presented in Table 4.3 show that students experience a moderate-to-high level of emotional exhaustion (Grand Mean = 3.51, SD = 0.83).

The finding is best understood as a generic state of depleted emotional reserve that taints students' daily academic experience rather than as an isolated symptom because every item mean fell within or above the moderate band and the majority clustered toward the upper end of that band. Research Question 1 is answered in the affirmative by this result, which supports Hypothesis 1 (H1), which postulated that students would report a moderate-to-high level of emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion is a real and significant aspect of academic life for this population, not a minor issue affecting only a small subgroup of respondents.

This result is generally in line with the larger body of empirical research on student burnout that was examined in Chapter Two. While Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001) showed that exhaustion increases whenever demands placed on students persistently exceed the resources available to meet them, Schaufeli, Martinez, Pinto, Salanova, and Bakker (2002) found that heavy academic workload, assessment pressure, and peer competition were significant contributors to emotional exhaustion in university populations. The current study confirms that fundamental trend in a multi-institutional sample of Muslims from the Gambia, providing cross-cultural evidence that emotional weariness is a nearly universal reaction to ongoing academic stress rather than a phenomenon exclusive to Western higher education environments. Similar moderate-to-high exhaustion levels are reported in more recent research, such as Chong, Foo, and Chua's (2025) review of burnout across various student populations and Carranza Esteban, Mamani-Benito, Castillo-Blanco, Elguera Pajares, and Lingan's (2024) study linking emotional exhaustion to academic self-efficacy and procrastination. These findings support the idea that this is a stable, generalizable finding rather than an artifact of this specific sample.

However, the result deviates from the Western literature in one significant way: academic workload cannot adequately account for the extent and nature of the strain shown here. According to the literature review, Gambian Muslim students bear a multifaceted burden that most Western burnout studies fail to account for, including financial reliance on extended family, the demands of commuting, and most importantly the necessity of juggling five daily prayers and other religious obligations with an already demanding academic schedule. Therefore, rather than academic pressure acting alone, the relatively high acceptance of "I feel emotionally drained from my studies" may represent the combined weight of academic and non-academic obligations. This shows that environmental stresses beyond the purview of the original Job Demands Resources

model exacerbate emotional tiredness in this demographic. It is a point of true variance with the source material rather than a mere reproduction.

The Job Demands-Resources (JDR) framework (Demerouti et al., 2001), which was chosen as the guiding theory for this construct in Chapter Two, theoretically explains the finding rather well. According to the JDR model, students experience tiredness when their psychological and material resources are exceeded by ongoing demands such as schoolwork, exams, and family and religious responsibilities. The result provides empirical support to the theoretical framework the study adopted rather than just being consistent with it in a general sense because the consistently elevated item means across the five-item scale are precisely the pattern the JDR model would predict under conditions of resource scarcity. When viewed through the Islamic conceptual lens of the study, the results also have a devotional component. Although the study suggests that practices of ṣabr (patience) and tawakkul (trust in God) could serve as protective measures against emotional exhaustion, the moderate-to-high exhaustion level reported here indicates that these coping mechanisms, when they exist, are still insufficient to counteract the structural demands that students must deal with.

This finding's practical relevance is that academic concessions (longer deadlines, lesser reading loads) alone are unlikely to be adequate institutional solutions. Effective interventions should combine traditional stress-management and counseling services with more comprehensive institutional supports, such as flexible scheduling around prayer times and Ramadan, peer-mentoring structures, and financial-aid counseling, since the exhaustion seems to result from the intersection of academic, financial, family, and religious demands. This implication goes beyond what the purely academic burnout literature reviewed in Chapter Two would suggest on its own.

4.7.2 Discussion of Research Question 2: Level of Time Management

How well Muslim university students in The Gambia manage their time was the subject of Research Question 2. Students' time management is generally at a reasonable level, according to Table 4.4's data (Grand Mean = 3.15, SD = 0.83). Significantly, the item-level pattern is uneven: students gave themselves relatively high ratings for prioritization (M = 3.28) and goal-setting ("I set short-term goals for my academic tasks," M = 3.35), but significantly lower ratings for using structured planning tools ("I use a schedule or planned to organize my time," M = 2.95, the lowest

item on the scale) and daily planning (M = 3.10).This supports Hypothesis 2 (H2), which states that students exhibit a moderate level of time management. However, the more analytically significant finding is the discrepancy between intention and disciplined execution: students seem to know what they should prioritize, but they are relatively poor at converting that awareness into consistent, tool-supported planning behavior.

The image presented in the foundational time-management literature is both mirrored and sharpened by this intention-execution gap. Setting goals and creating study schedules are examples of structured time-management habits that have been shown by Britton and Tesser (1991) to predict academic success irrespective of actual study hours. This suggests that the organization of time is just as important as the amount of time available. Similar to this, Claessens, van Eerde, Rutte, and Roe (2007) define time management as a metacognitive skill that goes beyond simple scheduling and calls for precise planning, self-monitoring, and adaptive adjustment. In more recent research of undergraduate engineering students, Adams and Blair (2019) also discovered that time-management behaviors were unevenly distributed among sub-skills, with goal-setting outperforming planning and monitoring. This pattern closely resembles the current outcome. The consistency of this uneven sub-skill profile across such disparate populations Muslim Gambian university students in one instance, engineering undergraduates in another indicates that the planning-versus-execution gap may be a rather universal aspect of student time management rather than something unique to this sample.

The current study adds to the body of research by pointing to a credible structural explanation for the difference rather than just a motivational one. As covered in Chapter Two, Gambian students have to fit daily prayers, Friday congregational prayer, Ramadan fasting and worship, and a set, recurring devotional structure into their study schedules in addition to obligations to their families and communities, which are frequently non-negotiable and have erratic schedules. Students may report reasonable goal-setting but poor planner use specifically because formal planners and fixed schedules, such as those assumed in much of the Western time-management literature, may not be a good fit for a routine that is disrupted by demands outside the student's control. This is a contextual nuance that the source literature, developed largely without reference to religious observance schedules, does not anticipate.

The methodology used for this construct in Chapter Two, Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988), is theoretically compatible with the moderate overall score and the weak-planning/strong-goal-setting divide. The low endorsement of planner use is consistent with students operating closer to cognitive overload than they would otherwise if planning were more externalized and routinized, according to Cognitive Load Theory, which holds that in the absence of externalized planning tools, students must hold competing task demands in working memory, a limited resource. Since Chapter Two's conceptual model treats time management as a protective resource against both emotional exhaustion and glossophobia, the finding also relates to Research Questions 4 and 5. A moderate level of time management, as opposed to a strong one, is consistent with time management offering only partial protection against the elevated exhaustion and glossophobia levels reported under Research Questions 1 and 3.

Practically speaking, the weakness's precise location in tool supported planning as opposed to goal setting or prioritization indicates a focused solution as opposed to a broad one. Since students already demonstrate a respectable level of ability in goal setting, generic "study skills" seminars that reteach it are unlikely to have a significant impact. Training and institutional support focused on scheduling tools and routines that can accommodate prayer times and other religious obligations, such as structured weekly planning templates based on the five daily prayers rather than a traditional nine-to-five academic day, seem more promising.

4.7.3 Discussion of Research Question 3: Level of Glossophobia

Research Question 3 looked at the degree of public speaking fear, or glossophobia, among Muslim university students in The Gambia. With "I feel anxious when I have to speak in front of a class" (M = 3.71) and "I fear that the audience will judge me negatively" (M = 3.66) recording the two highest item scores and "My hands tremble when I attempt to give a presentation" (M = 3.44) the lowest, Table 4.5 displays a moderate-to-high grand mean of 3.58 (SD = 0.88). This directly addresses and validates Hypothesis 3 (H3). Research Question 3: Instead of being a minor or sporadic pain, glossophobia is a real issue for this demographic. Notably, the lowest-rated item is physiological (shaking hands), but the two highest-rated items are both cognitive/evaluative in character (anxiety over speaking and fear of unfavorable evaluation). This ranking implies that the anticipatory, socially evaluative aspect of glossophobia is more prominent for this group than its

physical symptomatology, which has implications for the type of intervention that is most likely to be successful.

This pattern is in line with and expands upon McCroskey's (1977) seminal discovery that students' anxiety when speaking in front of an audience is largely caused by their cognitive and affective fear of being judged. Richmond and McCroskey (1998) later confirmed this finding, linking severe communication anxiety to problems organizing and presenting ideas in front of an audience. Rapee and Spence's (2004) description of glossophobia as motivated by an attentional bias toward perceived social threat, in which anticipatory self-evaluative thoughts ("I will embarrass myself," "the audience will judge me") consume cognitive resources that would otherwise support fluent delivery, is consistent with the current data's emphasis on judgment-related fear over purely physiological symptoms. According to more recent bibliometric research by Lin, Sun, and Chen (2025), which traces three decades of research on public speaking anxiety, judgment-related and social-evaluative themes continue to be the field's primary focus. This suggests that the current finding fits comfortably within a long standing and ongoing line of inquiry rather than being an uncommon or context specific result.

The finding's cultural framing is where it deviates from the majority of the studied research. The majority of the early studies on glossophobia (McCroskey, 1977; Richmond & McCroskey, 1998; Bodie, 2010) used Western populations where public speaking is a regularly performed, self-assured talent from a young age. According to Chapter Two, cultural norms of modesty and deference in the Gambian Muslim context, along with gendered socialization patterns that discourage assertive self-presentation, especially for female students, mean that many respondents arrive at university with relatively little prior practice in the type of self-promotional, individually evaluated speech that Western pedagogy assumes (Kazeem et al., 2025; Bodie, 2010).Therefore, it's possible that the elevated fear of negative judgment observed here is not just a universal cognitive evaluative anxiety mechanism, but that same mechanism operating on the basis of significantly lower prior speaking exposure than is typical in the populations from which the founding theories were derived a moderating factor that the original Western studies did not need to take into account.

The Stress and Coping Theory of Lazarus and Folkman (1984), which is used in Chapter Two as the guiding framework for glossophobia, theoretically explains the outcome. Students perceive public speaking as a threat to their social standing and self-image, and anxiety results when they believe their coping mechanisms are inadequate. The findings also encourage a particularly faith-informed interpretation within the Islamic conceptual framework of the study: coping resources based on ṣabr and tawakkul are suggested as culturally resonant buffers against this assessed threat; however, the moderate-to-high anxiety level recorded indicates that such resources are not currently being mobilized systematically as a coping strategy, either because they are not taught as an explicit coping tool or because they function alongside rather than in place of more conventional anxiety-management needs.

Practically speaking, therapies that just concentrate on physiological calming strategies are likely to address only a portion of the issue because the anxiety is weighted toward judgment and assessment rather than physical sensations. In order to address both the universal cognitive mechanism and its locally specific cultural amplifiers, the study recommends gradual-exposure, feedback-based public speaking practice (consistent with Richmond and McCroskey's 1998 finding that repeated practice with constructive feedback reduces anxiety over time), delivered where appropriate through gender-sensitive and faith-informed formats, such as single-gender practice groups and framing built around Islamic teachings that value clear, courageous speech.

4.7.4 Discussion of Research Question 4: Relationship between Emotional Exhaustion and Glossophobia

The fourth research question was to determine if glossophobia and emotional tiredness are related. The null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis that emotional exhaustion and glossophobia are positively correlated among Muslim university students in The Gambia is accepted due to Table 4.6's statistically significant, strong positive correlation ($r = 0.63$, $N = 200$, $p < 0.001$). Substantively, this means that students' reported fear of public speaking increases in tandem with the depletion of their emotional reserves. Although the two constructs are conceptually separate, they are empirically entangled in this population, and neither can be fully understood or addressed in isolation from the other.

This outcome is in line with the theoretical connection put forth in Chapter Two, which framed emotional exhaustion and glossophobia as bidirectionally related rather than independent constructs: fatigue depletes the cognitive and emotional resources a student would otherwise use to regulate anticipatory speaking anxiety, while glossophobia's repeated cognitive and physiological strain adds to the overall accumulation of exhaustion over the course of an academic term. Empirically, the correlation's direction and significance support Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) finding that students who are emotionally spent report feeling less confident and more anxious when faced with challenging academic tasks, as well as Pham Thi and Duong's (2024) finding that learning-related burnout is linked to worse academic and communicative functioning. The correlation's magnitude ($r = 0.63$), which is a strong rather than weak or moderate effect, is also instructive: it shows that emotional exhaustion is substantially associated with glossophobia in its own right, while still leaving meaningful room for other factors, including time management, to help explain students' fear of public speaking.

This result both validates and improves the accuracy of current information when compared to the literature. A large portion of the literature on burnout in the West (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Demerouti et al., 2001) shows that fatigue generally impairs confidence and engagement, but it does not quantify its precise link to public speaking anxiety as a separate result. In a Gambian Muslim population that the reviewed literature characterizes as empirically understudied, the current study's Pearson correlation provides precisely this missing quantification (Chong et al., 2025; Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology [MoHERST], 2019). In this way, the outcome does more than just confirm earlier research; it fills a particular empirical vacuum that the literature review specifically noted, which is the lack of evidence directly connecting emotional weariness to glossophobia rather than academic achievement or engagement more generally.

Theoretically, the Job Demands-Resources model and Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Stress and Coping Theory, which were used independently for emotional exhaustion and glossophobia, respectively, in Chapter Two, are better understood as working together rather than as parallel but unrelated explanations: under the JDR framework, depleted resources seem to directly undermine the coping appraisal process that is essential to the Stress and Coping Theory, offering empirical support for treating the two theoretical frameworks as complementary parts of a single explanatory

model for this population. Interventions based on ṣabr and tawakkul, which are suggested as resources for managing both emotional depletion and anticipatory anxiety, may have a genuine dual benefit because the two constructs are empirically linked rather than distinct, according to the study's Islamic conceptual lens.

Practically speaking, this finding has a significant impact on the order in which institutions provide support services. Rather than treating stress-management/counseling programs and public-speaking or communication-skills training as distinct, unrelated offerings, universities may achieve greater impact by integrating them. For instance, by incorporating brief stress-regulation techniques into public-speaking workshops, since improvement in one domain is likely to carry over, at least partially, into the other.

4.7.5 Discussion of Research Question 5: Relationship between Time Management and Glossophobia

The fifth research question sought to determine whether glossophobia and time management are related. The null hypothesis (H0) is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis that time management and glossophobia are negatively related: students who plan and organize their time more effectively report lower levels of public-speaking anxiety. Table 4.7 shows a statistically significant, strong negative correlation ($r = -0.55$, $N = 200$, $p < 0.001$). When combined with the Research Question 2 finding that time management is only at a moderate level overall, this result suggests that improving students' time-management skills, especially in the particular area of tool-supported planning that was found to be weak under Research Question 2, has real potential to lessen glossophobia rather than being a purely incidental study-skills issue.

The time management literature examined in Chapter Two provides strong evidence for and consistency with this unfavorable link. Britton and Tesser (1991) discovered that structured time-management practices, like prioritizing tasks and creating study plans, enable students to spread out their preparation over a longer period of time rather than concentrating it near deadlines, thereby reducing the pressure and anxiety associated with high-stakes academic tasks. The current finding specifically extends this general stress-reduction pathway to public speaking anxiety. Both Kearns and Gardiner's (2007) description of time management increasing academic self-efficacy and Nonis and Hudson's (2010) finding that organized preparation increases a stronger sense of

readiness before presentations provide a plausible mechanism for the correlation: improved time management probably permits more rehearsal and preparation time for presentations specifically, which in turn lowers anticipatory anxiety. Procrastination, the behavioral antithesis of effective time management, was also found to be a major predictor of poor academic and psychological results by Carranza Esteban et al. (2024), which indirectly supports the current conclusion from the other direction.

The results further support and expand upon Plaza and Balayo's (2025) conclusion that, in the post-pandemic educational setting, efficient time management is linked to higher levels of self-efficacy and lower levels of stress. The current study fills a specific gap in the literature review (Jallow, 2021; Carranza Esteban et al., 2024) by providing direct quantitative evidence through Pearson correlation that time management is specifically linked to glossophobia rather than just general stress or academic performance, and that this relationship holds within a Muslim, Gambian, multi-institutional sample that previous time-management research had not looked at. In this regard, the discovery perfectly closes the empirical gap found in the literature review concerning the relationship between public speaking anxiety, religious/cultural setting, and time management.

Theoretically, the negative correlation is in line with Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988), the framework that underpins the time-management construct. By spreading out preparation over time rather than condensing it, efficient time management lessens the working-memory load that students encounter when the presentation itself arrives, freeing up more cognitive capacity for delivery rather than overload management. This should result in lower anticipatory anxiety, which is precisely the pattern seen.

The outcome also supports the protective role that time management was suggested to have in the study's conceptual model in Chapter Two, where time management was positioned as a construct with direct theoretical influence on glossophobia rather than as a peripheral study skill. The moderate negative correlation found here provides empirical, rather than purely theoretical, grounding for that positioning. The finding also aligns with the emphasis Islamic teaching places on the disciplined stewardship of time as a form of self-regulation within the Islamic conceptual framework, indicating that time management interventions framed in these well-known terms may be more easily embraced by this population than generally secular study skills training.

Time management emerges as one of the more directly actionable levers available to institutions seeking to reduce glossophobia because the correlation is moderate rather than weak. Unlike emotional exhaustion, which is caused by a wide range of academic, financial, and familial pressures that are more difficult for a university to directly influence, time-management skill is a relatively more modifiable, trainable competency (Claessens et al., 2007). This validates the study's suggestion that, in addition to the longer-term, more structurally demanding interventions suggested by the results of Research Questions 1 and 4, structured time-management training, with a focus on planning-tool use and advance rehearsal scheduling for presentations, be treated as a practical, short-term intervention point for reducing glossophobia.

4.7.6 Integrative Summary of the Discussion

When the six aforementioned discussions are combined, they show that Muslim university students in The Gambia have only moderate time management, moderate-to-high emotional exhaustion, and glossophobia. These three constructs are not independent; time management is negatively correlated with glossophobia, and emotional exhaustion is positively correlated with it, with emotional exhaustion showing the stronger of the two correlations. This pattern aligns with and provides empirical support for the integrated conceptual model presented in Chapter Two, where time management was positioned as a protective resource and emotional exhaustion as a risk factor operating on a shared pathway toward glossophobia, rather than as three separate constructs to be investigated separately. Additionally, the results consistently indicate that context-specific amplifiers, religious observance schedules, gendered cultural socialization, and family and financial obligations shape how these constructs are experienced in the Gambian Muslim setting, going beyond the purely Western theoretical and empirical literature from which the study's guiding frameworks (the Job Demands-Resources model, Cognitive Load Theory, and Stress and Coping Theory) were originally drawn. This implies that interventions that are directly transplanted from Western student-support models are unlikely to be fully effective unless they are adapted to this context. The study's recommendations in Chapter Five are intended to support this adaptation, which is based on ṣabr, tawakkul, and taqwā in addition to traditional counseling and skills training.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter presents an overview of the entire study, summarizes the key findings in relation to the research questions and hypotheses, draws conclusions based on the evidence gathered, and offers practical recommendations for students, university administrators, and policymakers. The chapter also acknowledges the limitations encountered during the study and proposes directions for future research.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study examined the level of emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia, and further investigated the relationships between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia, and between time management and glossophobia. The study was conducted against the backdrop of a growing concern that public speaking anxiety, or glossophobia, continues to hinder students' academic participation and confidence, yet remains underexplored within Muslim, and faith-based educational contexts, where existing Western frameworks may not fully capture the cultural and religious dimensions of students' experiences.

The study was guided by five research questions and corresponding hypotheses, and was grounded in the Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), the Job Demands-Resources Model (Demerouti et al., 2001), and Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988). A quantitative, descriptive correlational design was adopted, and data was collected from 200 Muslim university students drawn from four higher education institutions in The Gambia: The University of The Gambia (UTG), the International Open University (IOU), the American International University West Africa (AIUWA), and the Management Development Institute (MDI). Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and percentage) to determine the levels of the three variables, and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine the relationships between them.

The key findings of the study, organized according to each research question, are summarized below:

1. Level of Emotional Exhaustion: Muslim university students in The Gambia reported a moderate-to-high level of emotional exhaustion (grand mean = 3.51), indicating that continuous academic pressure has a considerable draining effect on students' emotional well-being.

2. Level of Time Management: Students demonstrated a moderate level of time management skills (grand mean = 3.15), with particular weakness in the use of structured planning tools such as schedules and planners, despite relatively stronger goal-setting tendencies.

3. Level of Glossophobia: Students reported a moderate-to-high level of glossophobia (grand mean = 3.58), with the strongest anxiety reported in relation to speaking in front of a class, indicating that public speaking remains a significant source of distress.

4. Relationship between Emotional Exhaustion and Glossophobia: A statistically significant, strong positive relationship was found between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that students who experience higher emotional exhaustion also tend to experience greater public speaking anxiety.

5. Relationship between Time Management and Glossophobia: A statistically significant, strong negative relationship was found between time management and glossophobia ($r = -0.55$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that students with stronger time management skills tend to experience lower levels of public speaking anxiety.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are proposed:

5.2.1 Recommendations for Students

- Students should adopt structured time-management tools, such as planners, digital calendars, or weekly schedules, to reduce last-minute pressure before presentations and examinations.
- Students should practice public speaking in low-stakes settings, such as study groups or peer discussions, to gradually build confidence and reduce anxiety over time.

- Students are encouraged to draw on Islamic coping practices such as ṣabr and du'a' (supplication) as emotional regulation tools when faced with academic stress and public speaking demands.

5.2.2 Recommendations for University Administrators

- Universities should establish or strengthen counseling and mental health support services specifically tailored to address academic burnout and emotional exhaustion among students.
- Institutions should integrate time-management training and workshops into orientation programs for new students, with periodic refresher sessions for continuing students.
- Faculties should introduce structured, low-pressure public-speaking opportunities, such as classroom presentation practice sessions or public-speaking clubs, to help students build confidence progressively rather than being confronted with high-stakes speaking tasks without preparation.

5.2.3 Recommendations for Policymakers

- Education policymakers in The Gambia should consider incorporating communication skills and stress-management components into the national higher education curriculum framework.
- Policymakers should support further research and funding into culturally and religiously responsive mental health interventions within Muslim-majority academic institutions.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that emotional exhaustion and time management are both meaningfully associated with glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. The moderate-to-high levels of emotional exhaustion and glossophobia observed suggest that students are operating under considerable academic and psychological strain, which manifests not only as general fatigue but also as heightened fear in public speaking situations.

The significant positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and glossophobia confirms that as students become more emotionally depleted, their capacity to manage the cognitive and emotional demands of public speaking diminishes, consistent with the Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and the Job Demands-Resources Model (Demerouti et al., 2001).

Conversely, the significant negative relationship between time management and glossophobia demonstrates that students who plan and organize their time effectively are better equipped to prepare for and manage public speaking tasks, thereby experiencing lower anxiety.

Taken together, these findings affirm that glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia cannot be fully understood in isolation from students' broader emotional state and self-regulatory habits. The study further concludes that Islamic values such as ṣabr (patience), tawakkul (trust in Allah), and the disciplined stewardship of time offer a culturally relevant lens through which interventions can be meaningfully designed, ensuring that support strategies resonate with students' religious and cultural identity rather than relying solely on secular, Western-derived models.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

This study, while methodologically sound, is subject to certain limitations. First, the use of a cross-sectional design means that data was collected at a single point in time, limiting the ability to draw causal conclusions or observe changes in emotional exhaustion, time management, or glossophobia over time. Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias, particularly given the sensitive and personal nature of some items. Third, the sample was limited to 200 respondents from four institutions, which, while diverse, may not fully capture the experiences of Muslim university students across all higher education institutions in The Gambia. Fourth, although the study title and purpose describe emotional exhaustion and time management in relation to glossophobia, the statistical analysis for Research Questions 4 and 5 relied on Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, which establishes the strength and direction of association between variables rather than predictive or causal influence in the formal regression sense; the relationships reported here should therefore be interpreted as correlational rather than predictive.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

- Future studies should consider adopting a longitudinal design to examine how emotional exhaustion, time management, and glossophobia evolve over the course of a student's academic journey.

- Further research could employ a mixed-methods approach, incorporate qualitative interviews or focus group discussions to gain deeper insight into students lived experiences of glossophobia within Islamic and Gambian cultural contexts.
- Building on the current study's correlational findings linking emotional exhaustion and time management to glossophobia, future research should consider multiple regression, mediation, and moderation models, for example, testing whether ṣabr or tawakkul moderate the strength of these relationships, to determine not just how these variables relate but through which psychological and spiritual mechanisms these effects operate.
- Comparative studies across different Sub-Saharan African and Muslim-majority countries would help establish the broader generalizability of these findings beyond the Gambian context.

5.6 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has presented a comprehensive summary of the study, its key findings, and the conclusions drawn from the data. It has offered practical recommendations aimed at students, university administrators, and policymakers to address emotional exhaustion, improve time management, and reduce glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. The chapter has also acknowledged the study's limitations and proposed directions for future research, contributing to the ongoing effort to build a culturally and religiously grounded understanding of communication anxiety in higher education.

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To,

TIJAN LOUM
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Program: Masters in Education
Contact Email: Tijanloum12@gmail.com

Subject: Ethical Approval

Dear TIJAN LOUM,

With reference to your application dated 12/05/2026 regarding the Ethical Approval of your research proposal, I am pleased to inform you that our International Open University Board of Research and Publications (IOUBRP) is satisfied with the documents you submitted. After a critical evaluation of your papers, the IOUBRP has decided to accept your research topic entitled " EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION AND TIME MANAGEMENT AS PREDICTORS OF GLOSSOPHOBIA AMONG UNIVERSITY MUSLIM STUDENTS IN THE GAMBIA," along with your proposal.

Therefore, you are permitted to conduct the research according to your proposal and submit the report on time as well.

Barak Allahu Feek!

Prof. Dr. Afroza Bulbul
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APPENDIX 1

INTERNATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY, THE GAMBIA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dear Respondents,

This questionnaire has been designed to gather essential information on emotional exhaustion and time management as predictors of glossophobia among Muslim university students in The Gambia. You are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire with honesty and sincerity. The information you provide will be used solely for academic research purposes, and strict confidentiality of your responses is fully guaranteed.

APPENDIX A

Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Study Title: Emotional Exhaustion and Time Management as Predictors of Glossophobia among Muslim University Students in The Gambia

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Please read this information carefully before deciding to participate.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines how emotional exhaustion and time management influence fear of public speaking among university Muslim students in The Gambia.

Participation

You will complete a questionnaire (15–20 minutes). You may skip any question.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality

All responses are confidential and anonymous.

Risks

No major risks are expected, though some questions may cause mild discomfort.

Benefits

This research will contribute to improving student support strategies.

Contact Information

Researcher: Tijan Loum

Institution: International Open University[IOU]

Contact: tijanloum12@gmail.com / 3195125

Participant Consent Form

Study Title: Emotional Exhaustion and Time Management as Predictors of Glossophobia among Muslim University Students in The Gambia

Consent Statement

I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time.

I agree to participate in this study.

Participant Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researcher Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Participant Debriefing Document

Study Title: Emotional Exhaustion and Time Management as Predictors of Glossophobia among Muslim University Students in The Gambia

Thank You

Thank you for participating in this study. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

Purpose of the Study

This study explores how emotional exhaustion and time management influence fear of public speaking among university Muslim students.

What the Study Involved

You completed a questionnaire on emotional exhaustion, time management, and public speaking anxiety.

Use of Data

Your data will remain confidential and will be used for academic purposes only. No identifying information will be included.

Confidentiality

All responses are anonymous and cannot be traced back to you.

Support

If you experienced any discomfort, please consider speaking with a counselor or trusted advisor.

Right to Withdraw

You may request withdrawal of your data within a reasonable time frame before anonymization.

Contact Information

Researcher: Tijan Loum

Institution: International Open University [IOU]

Contact: tijanloum12@gmil.com / +2203195125

Closing

Thank you once again for your valuable participation.

Data Management Plan (DMP)

Study Title

Emotional Exhaustion and Time Management as Predictors of Glossophobia among Muslim University Students in The Gambia

1. Introduction

This Data Management Plan outlines how data will be collected, stored, protected, and used throughout the research process. The plan ensures compliance with ethical standards and promotes data integrity, confidentiality, and responsible handling.

2. Types of Data Collected

The study will collect quantitative data through a structured questionnaire, including:

Demographic information (e.g., age, gender, level of study)

Measures of emotional exhaustion

Time management practices

Levels of glossophobia (fear of public speaking)

All data will be in numeric and categorical formats suitable for statistical analysis.

3. Data Collection Methods

Data will be collected using self-administered questionnaires (paper based).

Participation will be voluntary, and informed consent will be obtained before data collection.

Participants will have the option to skip any question they are not comfortable answering.

4. Data Storage and Security

All collected data will be stored securely:

Digital data: Stored on a password-protected computer and/or encrypted storage device.

Hard copies: Kept in a locked cabinet accessible only to the researcher.

Backup copies will be maintained to prevent data loss.

Access to data will be restricted strictly to the researcher and supervisor.

5. Confidentiality and Anonymity

No personally identifiable information (e.g., names, student IDs) will be collected.

Each participant will be assigned a unique code.

Data will be anonymized before analysis.

Results will be reported in aggregate form to prevent identification of individuals.

6. Data Processing and Analysis

Data will be entered into statistical software (e.g., SPSS or Excel) for analysis.

Analysis will include descriptive and inferential statistics (e.g., correlation, regression).

Data cleaning procedures will be applied to ensure accuracy and consistency.

7. Data Sharing and Access

Data will not be publicly shared to protect participant confidentiality.

Access will be limited to the researcher and academic supervisor.

If data sharing is required for academic purposes, it will be anonymized.

8. Data Retention and Disposal

Data will be retained for a period of 3–5 years after completion of the study, in line with academic guidelines.

After this period:

Digital data will be permanently deleted.

Physical documents will be securely shredded.

9. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval will be obtained from the relevant institutional review board.

Informed consent will be secured from all participants.

Participants' rights (confidentiality, withdrawal, anonymity) will be respected at all times.

10. Responsibilities

The researcher is responsible for:

Ensuring secure data handling

Maintaining confidentiality

Proper storage and disposal of data

The supervisor will provide oversight to ensure compliance with ethical standards.

Compliance with Regulations

This study will adhere to:

Institutional research ethics guidelines

Data protection principles (confidentiality, integrity, and security)

International best practices for research data management

APPENDIX B:

Research Questionnaire (Tick Only)

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (Please tick ✓ the appropriate option)

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Age Bracket: ☐ 18–20 ☐ 21–25 ☐ 26–30 ☐ Above 30

3. Institution: ☐ UTG ☐ IOU ☐ MDI ☐ AIUWA

4. Academic Level: ☐ First-Year ☐ Second-Year ☐ Third-Year ☐ Final-Year

SECTION B: EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION SCALE

(Response Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

1. I often feel emotionally exhausted because of my university workload.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I become tired whenever I think about my academic tasks. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. My academic requirements make me feel burnt out. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. My academic duties sometimes feel too overwhelming. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. By the end of the day, I feel completely drained from studying. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. Preparing for class presentations makes me feel emotionally tense.☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. The volume of university work often leaves me feeling frustrated. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. I feel worn out even before beginning my academic activities.☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

9. I struggle to handle the academic pressure placed on me. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

10. I experience mental fatigue most of the time. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

11. My motivation to study decreases significantly when I am overloaded. ☐ 1 ☐2☐ 3☐ 4 ☐5

12. I feel emotionally empty after a day of academic engagement. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

13. Balancing academic and religious obligations exhausts me mentally. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

14. I feel like giving up on my studies when pressures accumulate. ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

15. I frequently experience a sense of helplessness regarding my academic performance.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

Section C: Time Management Scale

(Measures planning, prioritization, time use, and sense of control)

Response Scale

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I set clear goals for my academic tasks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	I prioritize my academic activities effectively.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	I complete assignments long before the deadline.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I use my study time efficiently.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I feel in control of how I manage my time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	I create a daily or weekly study schedule.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	I avoid procrastinating on important tasks.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	I break large academic tasks into smaller, manageable parts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I manage my time well during exam periods.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I often feel rushed because of poor time management.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	I adjust my study schedule when unexpected tasks arise.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	I set specific times to review my progress on academic goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	I limit distractions, such as my phone or social media, while studying.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	I balance time between academic and non-academic responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
15	I complete my academic tasks without needing to request extensions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section D: Glossophobia (Public Speaking Anxiety) Scale

(Measures cognitive, emotional, and physical symptoms of public-speaking fear)

Response Scale

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	Speaking in front of others makes me nervous.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	My heart beats fast when I am asked to present.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	I become anxious thinking about public speaking.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	I fear making mistakes in front of an audience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I feel tense and shaky when speaking publicly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	I worry about being judged negatively by the audience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	I avoid situations where I may be required to speak publicly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	I forget my ideas when I stand before an audience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I feel uncomfortable maintaining eye contact while presenting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	I experience physical symptoms (sweating, trembling) when presenting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	I have difficulty sleeping the night before a presentation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	My voice shakes when I speak in front of a group.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
13	I rehearse excessively out of fear of forgetting my points.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	I feel a strong urge to leave the room before presenting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	I compare myself unfavorably to other speakers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section E: Student Support & Coping Strategies

(Added to support Objective 5: recommendations and interventions)

Response Scale

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I believe time management training would help reduce my anxiety.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Counseling services at universities help students manage stress.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Islamic/stress-relief practices (e.g., du'a, dhikr, salah) help me stay emotionally stable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Workshops on public speaking would help reduce my glossophobia.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I feel that lecturers should provide more supportive presentation environments.					