

**LEADERSHIP,  
ECHO OF CHARACTER**



*A Festschrift in Honour of*  
**Prof Dr (Msgr) Obiora Francis Ike**  
at 70

*This Festschrift is published in honour of  
Prof Dr (Msgr) Obiora Francis Ike  
on the auspicious occasion of  
his 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday Anniversary  
and for his immensely distinguished  
and valuable services and contributions  
to Nigeria, Africa and the World  
as a Priest, a Scholar and an Administrator*

# Leadership, Echo of Character

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at 70*



Edited by

Peter Eshioke Egielewa, PhD  
Blessed Frederick Ngonso, PhD



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**MASCULINE IDENTITY, ETHICS, AND THE  
FUTURE OF ENGLISH STUDIES IN THE DIGITAL  
HUMANITIES: A STUDY OF GODFREY OKOYE  
UNIVERSITY SECONDARY SCHOOL, ENUGU**

**Chijioke Edward<sup>o</sup> &  
Regina Udaba<sup>\*</sup>**

**Introduction**

Masculine identity in African societies has historically been tied to notions of strength, provision, and authority, often expressed through fields perceived as “hard sciences” or practical domains of influence. Within contemporary educational choices, this identity has become increasingly associated with STEM disciplines, sidelining the humanities as feminine or unprofitable spaces. Such cultural conditioning contributes to a visible decline in male enrollment in English and Literary Studies departments across Nigerian universities, a trend that mirrors broader global patterns of shifting male participation in academic pathways (Ellis, 2022). This research aims to critically interrogate how masculine identity can be redefined in relation to ethics and English Studies through the tools of digital humanities. By reimagining male participation, it becomes possible to establish a new dialogue around why English still matters in the era of technology. The focus is not on resisting STEM, but on harmonizing it with humanistic pursuits to revive balance.

Ethics in this paper goes beyond moral philosophy to encompass the concepts of accountability, responsibility, and nurturing values in both academic and professional life. English Studies and Literature have been at the forefront of ethical questioning, providing students with the ability to think critically about human behaviour and society. Male students are growing more likely to view ethical reflection, which is commonly linked to the humanities, as less practical in comparison to the direct material rewards sought by the STEM domains. This impression is not a single case, but it is a wider trend where male students tend to

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move towards a type of discipline that can be reflected either as economically safe or more socially desirable. According to the study of the shortage of African American male educators, Rodgers (2025) notes that the expectations of society and the pressures of the system drive young men into areas that are considered more profitable, which strengthens the waning interest among males in humanities-related approaches.

The potential long-term risk in this change is the steady loss of the ethical consciousness of the future male leaders in African societies. Humanities subjects, especially English and Literary Studies, have traditionally been the areas where the qualities of empathy, moral reasoning, and social responsibility are developed. By having less of the male population participating in such subjects, women will not have access to balanced leadership with an ethical basis, and this is the trend in the world in general, with the decreasing numbers of young men seeking to enrol in reflective and value-oriented subjects already yielding considerable social consequences. This paper will recommend rediscovery of masculine involvement in the humanities by introducing ethics in English Studies and connecting it with the digital platform. The thesis is that instead of weakening male intellectual identity, morality supported by literature and digital humanities makes it stronger.

English Studies has been a source of cultural memory, critical thinking, and identity of African universities. The field is, however, becoming less perceived as relevant in the modern digital and global economy. Under the influence of social norms and economic factors, boys prefer major areas where they have a higher likelihood of earning revenue, which can be a STEM or professional focus, and English as well as other humanities classes become less popular (Rodgers, 2025).

Rodgers (2025) notes that this trend is driven by more extensive social and cultural elements, such as the symbolic pressures that young men have on them to become financially successful. These pressures influence educational decisions and have the unintended impact of marginalising humanities disciplines with regard to enrollment and value. This paper aims to fill these perceptions and make English Studies more relevant by attempting to offer insights into how the discipline can be better aligned with the growing area of digital humanities and provide ways to draw more men to the field and retain the moral and cultural value of studying English in secondary and higher education.

Digital Humanities (DH) is the application of digital technology and computing to the research, preservation, and publication of humanistic knowledge. It provides a middle ground between the innovative element of the humanities and the technological appeal of STEM, and by extension, is a valuable instrument in English Studies. New trends in literary studies, which will disrupt the traditional and technological binary, are already arriving in DH in Nigeria (Anigala, 2025). This will help in ensuring that the young male students start

Though it is reasonable to note that Godfrey Okoye University is a unique institution and its enrollment pattern cannot be applied to the general trends in Nigeria and Africa. The data indicate a localised yet consistent gender imbalance that poses some serious questions regarding the waning attendance of male students in the humanities in this particular setting. Through this study, we examine the role of the formative period of time when students form their

learners in the English and Literary Studies programme at the university is far higher than that of male students. These statistics illustrate a long-term trend where the number of female and four females, and the second-year group has four females and two year group consists of five females and two males, the third-year group has one male and four females, whereas the 2025 set had one male and seven females. The present final-year group consists of five females and two males, the 2024 set had ten female students and no males, whereas the 2025 set had one male and seven females. The present final-year group consists of five females and two males, the third-year group has one male and four females, and the second-year group has four females and two males. These statistics illustrate a long-term trend where the number of female learners in the English and Literary Studies programme at the university is far higher than that of male students.

The deterioration in the number of males taking English is evident in Godfrey Okoye University, where the departmental records in the last few years have depicted steady gender disparity. The entire set of graduating in 2023 comprised five female students, the 2024 set had ten female students and no males, whereas the 2025 set had one male and seven females. The present final-year group consists of five females and two males, the third-year group has one male and four females, and the second-year group has four females and two males. These statistics illustrate a long-term trend where the number of female learners in the English and Literary Studies programme at the university is far higher than that of male students.

this paper aims to capture as far as the revivalist vision is concerned. it influences the perception of African men in knowledge economies. This is what feeble but creative and socially receptive. It has implications beyond education as literacy in the humanities. This change brings out a hybrid masculinity that is not instead, they will start to view themselves as the champions of ethical and digital cultural scholarship. Male students will not have to run away to STEM, and history, notes that DH offers strategies for repositioning male subjectivity in ethical participation. Brown (2020), in his work on masculinity studies and art redirected from dominance and material provision to creativity, reflection, and Masculine identity, when tied to English and Digital Humanities, can be recruiting and providing a moral compass.

caused by a lack of an ethical basis. In this way, digital humanities will be required in Nigeria, where leadership and governance crises are predominantly competent but morally reflective young man. This dual role is particularly luxury. This, by implication, means that English will be able to create a digitally responsible and social engagement rather than as an abstract or unattainable Studies can be reframed for male students, presenting the discipline as a field of ethical and critical concerns to technology. The moral dimension of English (2021), digital humanities not only imply technical competencies but also bring knowledge participatory, transparent, and accessible. According to Drucker Digital humanities is morally significant due to the capability of making world as one of the main learning and form of expression.

perceiving the discipline as an active aspect of modernity rather than its refuge. It also coincides with the demands of Gen-Z who are already engaged in the digital

employability and technological competence, which are driving male students. Digital humanities can also be associated with the requirements of of cultural presuppositions in the new, more digital form.

involvement of men in English Studies is retrogressive, but instead a continuation now must be sent to inclusivity and balance. Thus, it will not imply that the re- the intellectual traditions, which were traditionally controlled by men, and that Musto (2015) also make us understand that the digital humanities are shaped by virtues that are attractive to the reflective powers of literature. Gardiner and their authority, but also due to their wisdom, moderation, and justice. These are was not the case as in the past, African societies respected men not just due to there is no conflict between ethics and masculinity, but rather a supplement. This The philosophical justification of the current work is the assumption that subject but also a school of ethical manhood.

currents of the digital world. In this context, English can be taken as not only a This rebirth is neither reminiscing about the old days nor a realistic reaction to the spaces, the male students can restore their status of cultural and ethical status. ethical conversation and cultural survival. By placing English in these electronic emphasises the importance of literary online spaces to Africa as a means of the risk of creating a crop of conscience-free technocrats. Yeku (2020) culture in which men never take courses that are reflective and value-based runs The ethical crisis of masculinity cannot be disconnected from education. A

likely to become marginalised forever in the imagination of men. integration makes English present and future-oriented. Otherwise, the field is English could be taught to Gen-Z, which are already well-known. This kind of storytelling, online archives, and interactive media are the means through which interested in digital platforms they find appealing. As an example, digital rejecting their decisions; it is a question of redefining English by getting them males are abandoning English in favour of STEM, the answer does not lie in and men to renegotiate their intellectual identities in ethical forms. When Nigerian (2015) notes, when digital humanities are inclusive, they would enable women Such anxieties are exhibited in the scholarship of the world. As Risam transition stage.

to be used to enhance male participation in English Studies at the secondary-tertiary curriculum development, mentorship practices, and specific interventions that can lived experience of Gen-Z male learners. The results will help reconsider the advocacy of English Studies is based on empirical evidence, which involves the perceptions, and future study choices expectations. This is done to make sure the session. The questionnaire examines their motivations, course relevance students enrolled in Arts and Humanities classes in the 2025/2026 academic academic and career goals by examining the two male students, SS2 and SS3

The choice of Godfrey Okoye University as a case study is strategic because the institution reflects wider trends in Nigeria's higher-education landscape, particularly within the rapidly expanding private university sector. This context spaces guarantees more ethical outcomes in national development.

participate equally in shaping Africa's digital future. Equality in intellectual task is not to replicate patriarchal dominance but to ensure men and women identities are redefined so that they can find some value in English Studies. The Nigeria. By implication, this paper will argue that it is also through DH that male demonstrates how DH transforms the discourses on the identity of women in danger of polarizing the knowledge system based on gender. Shami (2025) women control the humanities, it can be concluded that African education is in structural imbalances. When the opposite happens, and men control STEM and Ethically speaking, the disregard for the shrinkage of men in English creates ensures that English is not a dead discipline.

reclaim their ancestral roles and adjust them to the modern ones. This continuity intersect. Incorporating digital storytelling with the English curricula, men will disciplinary place where the historicity of the past and the modern expansions signify the loss of touch with culture. According to Klein (2015), DH is a cross-were the preserve of men. The disappearance of the male in English Studies, then, tradition. Traditionally, oral literature, griot traditions, and communal storytelling possibility is further enhanced by the fact that there is an African storytelling The cultural case that male re-engagement with the English language is a academic one.

The gender representation, hence, is not only an ethical requirement but also an reflect the society better and to formulate more inclusive knowledge structures. associated with STEM. A balanced department will enable the English Studies to men to study English would mean stereotype-busting that masculinity is only exploring non-binary identities (Akram and Saif 2025). In this regard, motivating digital humanities offer the prospects of understanding gender fluidity and at stake of being deprived of half the voices of society. The authors state that as well. In case the English language is perceived as feminised, its future will be The loss of male enrolment is not a numerical but a crisis of representation economic one.

or cultural analytics. Masculine identity developed here is a culture and digital learners with the ability to engage in digital archiving, code humanities projects, false dichotomy that drives men out of the profession by equipping English opposition of English to STEM but its enrichment. Universities can break the opportunities that digital literacies offer them. In this respect, it is not the supposed to adopt techno-pessimist critiques without forgetting about the Frassinelli and Treffry-Goatley (2020) state that African English departments are

provides a clearer picture of students' enrollment patterns, disciplinary choices, and perceptions of Arts and Humanities programs. Emerging observations show that many students at the SS2 and SS3 levels already display shifting attitudes toward Arts and Humanities—attitudes often shaped by societal narratives, parental expectations, and the broader belief that humanities-related fields are undervalued compared to professional disciplines. By intervening at this stage with questionnaires, the study captures a critical turning point in their academic journey. The aim is to understand their motivations and redirect them, where possible, towards English, especially by highlighting digital opportunities. This is both a preventive and revivalist strategy for the humanities.

In sum, this introduction positions masculine identity, ethics, and digital humanities as three interdependent concepts shaping the future of English Studies in Africa. Masculinity must be redefined beyond economic provision, ethics must be preserved through reflective disciplines, and digital humanities must serve as the bridge making English attractive again. Without such integration, English Studies risks extinction in male academic imagination, thereby weakening its cultural and ethical impact. With it, however, a revival is possible where English becomes a discipline of innovation, ethics, and masculine participation. This study, therefore, aims to provide both theoretical advocacy and empirical evidence through its survey of male secondary students at Godfrey Okoye University. Its ultimate vision is to revive English Studies as a viable, ethical, and digital pathway for African men in the 21st century.

### **Research Objectives**

1. To identify the career plans of SS2 and SS3 Arts students at Godfrey Okoye University Secondary School.
2. To determine whether SS2 and SS3 Arts students would consider studying English as a university course.
3. To examine the factors that motivate the course choices of Arts students.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the career plans of SS2 and SS3 Arts students at Godfrey Okoye University Secondary School?
2. To what extent would SS2 and SS3 Arts students consider English as a course of study in the university?
3. What factors influence the course choices of Arts students?

Perceived behavioural control is the third construct, which indicates the belief in the ability to do a behaviour among students, based on the available resources and barriers (Ajzen, 1991, in Bosnjak et al., 2020). Male students can evade English due to the perceived difficulty, lower financial benefits, or inability to succeed in a future career. Digital humanities can serve to make people feel in better control by offering real, technology-driven avenues to success in English, which makes the subject quite real and satisfying. The desire to learn English can

The second TPB construct is subjective norms, which involves a perceived social pressure to do or not do something (Ajzen, 1991, in Bosnjak et al., 2020). These norms are shaped in male secondary school students on the parental, teacher, peer, and societal levels as stereotypes that masculinity is synonymous with STEM success. Through the evaluation, the research will be able to determine how external expectations influence the career plans and course preferences of students. This would be possible through an intervention that features male role models in English or digital humanities (Ajzen & Schmidt, 2020).

The first construct of TPB is attitudes, which are the positive or negative judgment of the behaviour performance (Al Maskari, 2018). In our case, the perception of English Studies as either feminine, less beneficial, or irrelevant in the digital age may influence the attitude of male students towards English Studies. On the other hand, STEM is normally linked with wealth, social status, and compatibility with the conventional male ideals. These attitudes are of utmost importance to understand, as they constitute the initial determinant of intention. When attitudes can be positively redirected by using interventions, including emphasising the digital uses of English, students can become more receptive to the discipline.

Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen

Masculine identity, ethics, and career decisions among secondary school students can be critically understood through Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) propounded in 1991. TPB posits that human behaviour is guided by three main constructs: attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In the context of this study, students' decisions to pursue English or STEM courses are influenced by their personal attitudes toward the discipline, societal expectations about masculinity, and their perception of their ability to succeed in the chosen field. This theory provides a robust lens to examine why male students increasingly avoid English, despite its ethical and cultural value. By linking attitudes, norms, and control, TPB allows researchers to predict behavioural intentions with clarity (Ajzen, 2020).

### Theoretical Framework

become higher when students think that they could succeed in it using new computer-based facilities. According to TPB, perceived ease/ difficulty is a critical factor in decision-making (Bosnjak et al., 2020).

TPB suggests that behavioral intention is the direct antecedent of real behavior (Ajzen, 1991 in Bosnjak et al., 2020). In this research, intention is the plan or willingness of the student to select English as a course in higher education. This intention is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The questionnaires enabled the study to not only determine current propensities but also the likelihood of working with the English language in the future. This prediction was used to design interventions aimed at encouraging male students to pursue humanities fields (Ajzen, 2020).

In this case, ethics overlaps well with TPB. Attitudes that are positive toward English can support ethical reasoning, reflective thinking, and social responsibility in male students. On the other hand, normative forces driving males out of the humanities can potentially close their moral horizons. Using TPB, the research places ethical development in the context of the larger model of career decision making and peer pressure. As an effective technology, digital humanities can also strengthen ethical interaction by making literature, culture, and reflection available in modern media (Bosnjak et al., 2020).

Conclusively, the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen offers a wholesome system of analyzing masculine identity, ethics, and career plans of male students in their secondary school. Attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control provide understandable constructs about the reasons behind the underrepresentation of English in male academic choices and intervention methods of redirecting the focus. This paper combines TPB and the potentials of digital humanities to describe current trends as well as suggest viable measures to overhaul English Studies among male learners. The predictive power of the theory alongside the ethical and technological aspects makes it an excellent basis for this research.

### **Review of Empirical Studies**

Anigala (2025) explored the application of digital humanities in Nigerian literary scholarship, emphasising how digital tools enhance the study, preservation, and dissemination of literature. The study adopted a descriptive approach, analysing recent literary works and digital platforms in Nigerian universities. Findings showed that digital humanities facilitate critical engagement with texts and broaden access to literary knowledge among students and scholars. The study recommended integrating digital tools into literary curricula to improve engagement and research outcomes. Though the focus was on literary scholarship rather than secondary school students, the findings are relevant as they highlight

Yéku (2020) reviewed the contribution of digital literary spaces in Africa in maintaining textuality and literary culture. The case studies of African digital archives were utilized in the study to evaluate the impact of digital tools on reading, writing, and literary scholarship. It was found that students and scholars participated more actively in reading literature with the help of digital platforms and the use of print-based traditions did not exclude digital tools. The research

Shami (2025) examined the concept of using digital humanities to empower Nigerian women through increasing their voices in literature and academia. The research involved online resources, online archives, and literature publications through a qualitative content analysis. Results indicated that digital humanities provide opportunities for marginalized groups to engage in scholarly conversation and increase their agency. The research suggested the need to increase access to digital and educate female scholars on digital practices. Despite the gender specificity, the results confirm the suggestion of the current research that digital humanities can be used as an instrument to help the underrepresented groups, in this case, male students, to learn English. The two are studies into how digital humanities can be used to offer empowerment and inclusion to the marginalized or underrepresented groups. The work by Shami is centered on women's empowerment, whereas the given work is centered on the redefinition of masculine identity, ethics, and male involvement in English studies.

Frassinelli and Treffry-Goaley (2020) investigated the intersection of identity and ethical formation within English studies. The present study is the masculine identity and the future of English studies. on the aspect of gendered engagement or ethical formation, which, in the focus of literacy, engagement, and motivation in humanities learning. Their work is silent humanities courses. Both studies highlight digital media as a tool for enhancing application of digital tools to the encouragement of male students to participate in tools to motivate the students. The connection to the current research is the that more departments in the humanities embrace the use of digital humanities using critical thinking and an interactive learning process. It was recommended teaching, students developed improved literacy and comprehension, as well as online repositories. It was found that through integration of digital media into The research used secondary sources of South African English departments and platforms can alter the experience of interaction with literature and philosophy. digital media and literacy and African humanities in the context of how digital Frassinelli and Treffry-Goaley (2020) investigated the intersection of

secondary school male students and links digital humanities to masculine focuses on university literary scholarship, while the present study targets humanities in enhancing engagement and access to literary knowledge. Amigala the potential of digital platforms to enhance interest and understanding in

suggested the incorporation of digital archives in teaching literature. The applicability of this study to the present research is that it shows how the use of digital platforms can make humanities courses interesting and engaging. Both articles indicate that digital technologies encourage involvement and interaction with a literary culture. Yéku has analyzed the aspects of literature preservation and academic activity; in the present study, digital humanities has been included in the aspects of masculinity, morality, and career decisions among students in secondary school.

Bosnjak et al. (2020) explored the use of the Theory of Planned Behaviour in intentions and behaviour prediction in different educational backgrounds. The survey conducted on several populations revealed that behavioural intentions were very much dependent on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceptions of behavioural control. This research suggested the application of TPB as a model in planning interventions to modify the intentions and activity of students. The significance of the study is that it represents the theoretical foundation of the intentions of male students to study English with references to digital humanities tools. The two papers discuss the determinants of the intent and participation of students in educational pathways. Their research is psychological and theoretical, whereas the present research implicitly uses TPB in the definite situation of masculinity, ethics, and digital humanities in English education.

Drucker (2021) has offered a practical guide for utilizing digital humanities mechanisms in research and scholarship. This research entailed a descriptive analysis of digital tools, visualization techniques, and data management techniques in the research of the humanities. Results indicated that students and researchers worked more and were inspired when they used digital tools in a systematic manner. The paper suggested that digital humanities should be formally incorporated into the curriculum. Its applicability to the current research is in proving that online techniques can make people more motivated and interested in studying English and literature. In the two studies, the digital humanities tools are stressed as the means of increased motivation and productivity. The work by Drucker is methodological, whereas the present study takes digital humanities as an instrument for transforming the idea of masculine identity and moral perception among the male students.

Gardiner and Musto (2015) presented the principles of digital humanities to students and scholars, starting with the fundamental principles of digital technology in research, organization, and distribution of knowledge. The researchers revealed that learners who were being subjected to digital means acquired greater interest and critical thinking. Some of the recommendations were the training of students in digital tools to improve learning. The study justifies the current study by pointing out the motivational prospects held by digital

humanities towards the ability to influence male students to pursue English as an academic discipline. The two papers emphasise the value of digital literacy in increasing student engagement in the humanities. Gardiner and Musto do not discuss gender identity or any ethical aspects, which are central to the conceptualisation of the current research.

Brown (2020) looked at how digital humanities strategies may help education in art history and humanities. Case studies were used in the study reviewed in universities and humanities departments, and the results demonstrated that digital integration contributed to the development of critical thinking, creativity, and student engagement. The reforms were suggested, such as the curriculum, to include digital practices in humanities. It is applicable even though the article is dedicated to the history of art, as the results demonstrate how digital technologies can rejuvenate the interest in traditionally under-enrolled disciplines, including English studies among men. Both articles show how digital technologies may rejuvenate humanities subjects. Brown concentrates on art history and creativity instead of masculinity, morals, or identity formation in secondary school.

Klein (2015) has examined how digital humanities are growing in an interdisciplinary direction, focusing on cross-disciplinary boundary work in education. The study, based on the qualitative reviews of the curricula and digital projects, discovered the idea that digital humanities help to engage with various disciplines and promote innovative pedagogical methods. Certain recommendations were institutional support of digital initiatives. The research confirms the current study because it shows that the use of digital tools can help to engage students in humanities courses and maintain their interest. Both works prophesy digital humanities as a portal to new pedagogy and more interaction between students. Klein lays stress on interdisciplinarity; the current research is using digital interdisciplinarity, especially in the form of English studies and the construction of masculine identity.

Risam (2015) studies the digital humanities and social justice intersections in terms of access, inclusion, and representation. The case studies and digital repositories were used in the study to explore participation and engagement. Results revealed that digital resources had an elevated level of engagement and opened access to information. Suggestions were to offer digital infrastructure and education to more students. The suitability for the present study is that digital humanities can establish an inclusive and interactive learning environment that may encourage male students to pursue courses in English. Digital humanities are perceived by both studies as an avenue of increasing inclusion and widening participation. Risam is concerned with social justice in general, whereas the

present study confines itself to male students and relates it to the English studies and ethical masculine identity formation in the future.

### **Methodology**

The research design was a survey research to determine the career intentions, interest in English, and motivation factors to take courses among male Arts students who were in SS2 and SS3 at Godfrey Okoye University Secondary School. The survey research design was appropriate since it allows the collection of data on the whole population in a systematic fashion that will give a holistic picture of the attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control of the students in line with the Theory of Planned Behaviour according to Ajzen (1991). The research sample consisted of every 65 male Arts students who will attend SS2 and SS3 in the academic year of 2025/2026, and in this way, the perspectives of all students were represented in their entirety.

The instrument of data collection was a questionnaire, called Masculine Identity, Ethics, and the Future of English Studies in Africa in the Digital Humanities, designed to give information on career intentions, willingness to pursue university-level studies in English, and other variables that influence the choice of courses. The questionnaire was developed in a way that it has closed Likert-scale items which were aimed at measuring the three constructs of the Theory of Planned Behaviour: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, to ensure that it is aligned with the theoretical framework of the study.

To ensure that they are valid, two professionals in the spheres of English Studies and Educational Psychology were consulted to review the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the items. To be reliable, a pilot test was conducted on ten male Arts students in another secondary school, Lily Pinnacle Secondary School, New Haven. Internal consistency was tested by computing the Cronbach alpha coefficient, which was 0.7, and a value of 0.7 and above is acceptable. The ethical concerns were mitigated by seeking informed consent and permission from the school administration from both the students and their parents or guardians.

The analysis of data was done in terms of mean and standard deviation, and the cut-off point was 2.5. Mean score of 2.5 and above was accepted as it meant positive response or agreement and that means that below 2.5 was rejected as it meant disagreement or low influence. This quantitative study provided a clear vision of the career plans of the students, their readiness to study English, and those factors that impacted their course selection in accordance with the constructs of the Theory of Planned Behaviour.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Table 1: Career Plans of SS2 and SS3 Male Students**

*(Research Question 1: What are the career plans of SS2 and SS3 male students at Godfrey Okoye University Secondary School?)*

S/N	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision ( $\geq 2.5$ Accept, $< 2.5$ Reject)
1	I plan to pursue a professional career after secondary school	3.2	0.8	Accept
2	I intend to study a course related to science, technology, or engineering	3.6	0.7	Accept
3	I am interested in becoming a teacher	2.1	0.9	Reject
4	I plan to study courses related to the humanities	2.4	1.0	Reject
5	I intend to pursue business-related courses	3.1	0.8	Accept
6	I have clear career goals for the future	3.5	0.6	Accept
7	I am undecided about my future career path	2.8	0.9	Accept
8	I am influenced by my family in choosing my career	3.0	0.7	Accept
<b>Grand Mean</b>	—	3.08	0.81	—

**Table 2: Willingness to Pursue English Studies in University**

*(Research Question 2: To what extent would SS2 and SS3 Arts students consider English as a course of study in the university?)*

S/N	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision ( $\geq 2.5$ Accept, $< 2.5$ Reject)
9	I would consider studying English in university	2.6	0.9	Accept
10	I think studying English is	2.8	0.8	Accept

	a worthwhile career path			
11	I believe English is suitable for male students	2.3	1.0	Reject
12	I am motivated to study English by interest in literature	2.7	0.7	Accept
13	I am motivated to study English by potential career opportunities	2.5	0.9	Accept
14	I perceive English as less profitable than STEM courses	3.2	0.6	Accept
15	I would study English if it combines English with computer skills	3.0	0.8	Accept
16	My friends' opinions influence my decision to study English	2.9	0.7	Accept
<b>Grand Mean</b>	—	2.81	0.78	—

**Table 3: Factors Influencing Course Choices**

*(Research Question 3: What factors can be ascertained to influence the course choices of these male students?)*

S/N	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision ( $\geq 2.5$ Accept, $< 2.5$ Reject)
17	My parents influence my course selection	3.4	0.7	Accept
18	Teachers' advice influences my course selection	3.1	0.8	Accept
19	Peer influence affects my choice of courses	2.9	0.9	Accept
20	Personal interest determines my course selection	3.5	0.6	Accept
21	Perceived career	3.6	0.5	Accept

	prospects influence my course selection			
22	Societal expectations affect my course choice	3.0	0.7	Accept
23	Media and online content influence my career decisions	2.8	0.8	Accept
24	Gender stereotypes affect my choice of courses	2.7	0.9	Accept
<b>Grand Mean</b>	—	3.2	0.76	—

### Discussion of Results

The career plan analysis of the SS2 and SS3 male students shows that the majority of them plan to do professional or STEM-related courses with a grand mean of 3.08. Things like personal career objectives, parental pressure, and interest in business-related courses were rated highly, and the interest in becoming a teacher or studying humanities scored lower. This implies that students tend to choose those workplaces they find more profitable or masculine in nature, which is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which states that attitudes and subjective norms shape behavioral intentions (Bosnjak et al., 2020). This is in line with the existing literature, which proves that students make educational decisions based on the structured guidance and social norms as well as personal perceptions (Frassinelli and Treffry-Goatley, 2020; Anigala, 2025).

The results on the willingness to study English as a university course show that the interest is moderate with a grand mean of 2.81. The personal interest in literature or the career opportunities motivated some students, whereas English was less profitable or not male-appropriate due to the impact of society and gender roles. The favorable response to the introduction of digital humanities indicates that contemporary tools may be used to boost the perceived behavioral control and encourage interest in English studies. This opinion is empirically justified: Anigala (2025) proved that digital humanities can make literary knowledge more accessible and more involved in Nigerian universities, and Shami (2025) focused on the enabling character of digital platforms in underrepresented groups. Equally, Yékú (2020) established that digital literary spaces enhance active readings, and this implies that technology can enliven the feeling of studying humanities, and in this case, the secondary school level of learning English.

On the matters related to course selection, the overall average of 3.2 indicates that parental guidance, advice of teachers, personal interests, and career opportunities are the most influential factors in influencing student selection, yet peer influence, social expectations, and gender stereotypes are also important. These findings are supported by the TPB theory that suggests that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control influence behavioral intentions (Bosnjak et al., 2020). These results are also supported by the empirical data: Frassinelli and Treffry-Goatley (2020) discovered that teaching through digital media enhances the understanding and motivation of students and Gardiner and Musto (2015) revealed that exposure to the use of digital tools results in students being more engaged and analytical. The same was also stated by Drucker (2021), who pointed out that the systematic adoption of digital approaches raises motivation and productivity. On balance, these studies provide a hint that the intent and involvement of students in English and humanities courses can be reinforced by the integration of conventional instructions and emerging digital technologies.

Altogether, the current work can be considered an extension of the previous study because it shows that not only traditional sources of influence on the career plans and interest in studying English among male students of the secondary school and the choice of courses include family, teachers, and the standards of the society but also include the integration of digital humanities. Although the previous literature related to university students (Anigala, 2025; Brown, 2020), gender-specific empowerment (Shami, 2025), or cross-disciplinary uses (Klein, 2015), the research offers a new gap by considering the connection between the engagement of male students in English studies and their masculine identity, ethical formation, and digital literacy. It is a crossroads of gender, ethics, and technology, which offers a subtle insight into how digital humanities might redefine interest and engagement in secondary school humanities teaching and learning, which has the potential to generate academic motivation on the one hand and ethical growth, on the other hand.

### **Conclusions**

1. Most male students prefer STEM and professional courses over humanities.
2. Interest in English is moderate but can be improved through digital humanities.
3. Parental influence, personal interest, and career prospects are key factors shaping course choices.

### Recommendations

1. **School administrators** should promote English studies by integrating digital humanities into the curriculum.
2. **Parents and teachers** should encourage male students to explore humanities alongside STEM courses.
3. **Career guidance counselors** should address societal stereotypes and highlight the value of English courses for male students.

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