THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF NICKNAMING AMONG YOUTHS IN OYE EKITI, EKITI STATE

BY

FALANA OLUBUNMI REGINA

MATRIC NO: SOC/14/2068
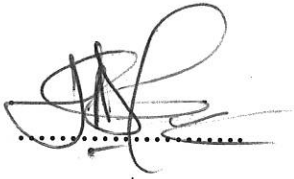
A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY,

FACULTY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES,

FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OYE-EKITI, EKITI STATE

IN PARTIAL FUFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE (B.SC) IN SOCIOLOGY

NOVEMBER, 2018

i

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project entitled, "**The Social Implications of Nicknaming Among Youths in Oye Local Government, Ekiti State**" was carried out by **FALANA OLUBUNMI REGINA** with the Matriculation Number: **Soc/14/2068**. The study meets the regulation governing the award of Bachelor Degree in Sociology of the Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State.

DR. OMOTOSHO B.J

(Project Supervisor)

DATE

DR. KOLAWOLE T.O

(Head of Department)

DATE

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the Almighty God for making everything possible and to my ever caring and loving parents. I love you Mum and Dad.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA INTERPRETATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the social implications of nicknaming among youths in Oye Ekiti. It explores youths' views on the meanings and significance of nicknames, social consequences and factors responsible for nicknaming among youths in the Ekiti state. This study explores both quantitative and qualitative method with the use of both questionnaire survey and in-depth interview .Convenience sampling technique was used to select participants for this study. Consequently, for the survey, 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents while 10 in-depth interview sessions were conducted to complement the survey. Descriptive analysis and inferential analysis such as chi square was used to analyze using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version (2.0). Nicknames, like the first names that human beings acquire at birth, are an inherent characteristic of human existence. Scholars assert that it is an incontrovertible fact that nicknaming has been a common practice in various arenas of human endeavour in many societies since ages. According to the research 23% of the respondents nicknamed themselves, roughly 6% were nicknamed by their parent. Less than 10% got it through siblings and majority of the respondents were nicknamed by friends while others got their nickname through relatives and 21% said nickname was forced on them, while many bearers of Nickname had no reason for their nickname. Some had their nickname as a result of certain situation an occurrence, behavior/personality, or a deduction from the birth names. It means that nicknaming is very popular and common thing among youths in Oye Ekiti state. As a result of the findings, this situation has positive and negative effect on the behavior and personality of youths. The study recommends that all youths should be subjected to proper enlightenment programs and awareness regarding the social implications of nicknaming. There should be a good system of proper socialization within the family for children in order to ensure a proper orientation system for youths. There should be a stated compulsory social code of behavior and anyone who goes against this should be punished. . In conclusion, Nicknaming is not a major issue in Nigeria and it doesn't constitute a real threat to the Nigeria social system.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background to the Study

Names are generally used for identification in all human society. It has been observed by scholars working in this field that names perform more functions than ordinary means of identification. Following Austin (1967) speech act theory, it is observed that names perform some illocutionary acts which can help us maintain a peaceful cohabitation in our society. It is important to give a working definition of names, and also, it is important to give its types. According to Harder (2008), names are "words signifying special and tangible things, either living, as in the case of a person or an animal, or inanimate, as in the case of a place or a concept. Since the focus is on humans, names are taken as referring expressions which are used to point out and identify human beings in their society. Harder (2008) further identified different kinds of human names. These include: personal names, which are used to designate both male and female in the human society; and first names, which are given to people at birth.

Names have a specific meaning to every nation since names convey the history and culture of that particular nation while also evoking memories of love or bitterness within members of that nation. Names reflect the way in which people think and see the world around them (Meiring, 1994). Finnegan (1970) mentioned that names are of great significance in that they can express joyful sentiments and a sense of personal aspiration for oneself or others. She further averred that names may also contribute to the literary flavour of formal or informal conversation, adding a depth or succinctness through their meanings, overtones or metaphors. The concept of name and naming is not just an identity marker; it is an important signification

1

system in African cosmology. Therefore, the processes involved in giving a name to a child and the act of naming in the African society is taken with so much seriousness. This is because, as it is said in a Yoruba proverb, the name of a person tells much about the person. Since name is very important to Nigerians, it is not strange to find people nicknaming themselves and adopting new ones as a way of reinventing themselves.

Nicknames, like the first names that human beings acquire at birth, are an inherent characteristic of human existence. Kuranchie (2012) asserts that it is an incontrovertible fact that nicknaming has been a common practice in various arenas of human endeavour in many societies since ages. Nicknaming can mark off non -members in a group where nickname is a norm, not having a nickname is a symbol of not belonging, they also identify well-knit groups who alone have access to particular names, and create scapegoats via pejorative nicknames (Holland 1990). Scholar further argues that researchers consequently have long studied the practice in various arenas of human experience, and have observed that people use varieties of them, depending on their norms and values. A significant number of other studies have been carried out on nicknaming in various communities, and this study seeks to augment such studies by focusing on the view of the society on the effects of nicknaming among youths in the society.

There seems to be no end in sight for the practice of nicknaming amongst youths. To address the nicknaming practice, it requires a better appreciation and understanding of the practice and its effects on the bearers. The practice of nicknaming is still popular in the post modern world. Result of the study by Alfred Kuranchie (2012) shows a high prevalence (77.2%) of the practice among students with boys leading the practice. A disproportionate chunk of the male students (88.5%) had nicknames. It also emerged that negative nicknames have some psychological effects on the bearers which consequently discouraged them from active

2

participation in class. There is, therefore, no gain saying that instructors ought to discourage youths from this practice as it has the tendency to suppress and stifle youths' participation in the society. The implications of this development, certainly, are far-reaching and that the continuous entertainment of this practice has a detrimental effect on the society.

Some of these nicknames have positive, neutral or negative connotations (Mehrabian, & Piercy, 1993). Certain nicknames are generally considered desirable and have positive feelings associated with them while others are humiliating and are looked down upon as being undesirable and carry negative associations. Nicknames that are deemed undesirable can have deleterious effects on the bearers' self-esteem, their learning and social relations.

1.2   Statement of Problem

Naming is an important human phenomenon, particularly meant to give bearers an identity. Likewise, each society finds it significant to change certain members' birth given names to nicknames, which also act as a form of identifying them within the relevant social groups, serving different purposes as a result. Sociologically, nicknaming represents a process of constructing individual identities within a group (Lin 2007). It reflects how others view the person named and comes to mirror how that individual views himself. Nicknames can affect a child's self-esteem positively or negatively. A study conducted by Albert Mehrabian and Marlene Pierce in 1993 found that given names were ranked high on the attributes of success and morality and thought more suitable than nicknames for business and professional settings. In turn, nicknames were ranked high on the attributes of cheerfulness and popularity. The choice of names people go by is not fixed. A person may use his given name in business settings and uses nickname in social settings. Nicknames connote a deviation from the usual; individuals who

3

change their names can be regarded as deviants (Albert Mehrabian and Marlene Pierce 1993). Deviation from the usual name may also result to the deviation from the accepted way of behaviours. An individual's nick name may affect his behaviour, identity, intentions, complexes, personality and also his actions within the social setting.

It is an incontrovertible fact that nicknaming has been a common practice in many societies since ages. Researchers consequently have long studied the practice in various arenas of human endeavour and have observed that people use varieties of them. Globally, the effects of nicknames have apparently not gained research attention although some aspects of the phenomenon have been investigated thoroughly. Thus, some aspects of this palpable practice have been scientifically and systematically investigated: sources of nicknames (Liao, 2000, 2006), reasons for nicknaming (Kiesling, 1997, De Klerk & Bosch, 1998), and gender differences in nicknaming (Liao, 2006, Kiesling, 1997). There is, however, dearth of knowledge on the effects nicknaming has on youths' self-concept and their morale in the society.

1.3   Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the effects of nicknaming among youths in Oye local government area of Ekiti state. The specific objectives are:

i.   To explore youth views on the meanings and significance of nicknames and their social consequences.

ii.   To examine the factors responsible for nicknaming among youths in the society.

iii.   To examine the effects of nicknaming on youths and their behavior in the society.

iv.   To ascertain the solution to the negative effect of nicknaming on youths in the society.

1.4   Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions must be addressed:

i.   What are youth views on the meanings and significance of nicknames and their social consequences?

ii.   What are the factors responsible for nicknaming among youths in the society?

iii.   What are the effects of nicknaming on youths and their behavior in the society?

iv.   What are the solutions to the negative effect of nicknaming on youths in the society?

1.5   Research Hypothesis

Based on the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H_0: there is significant effect of nicknames on youths in the society.

H_1: there is no relationship between nicknames and the behavior of the youths in the society.

1.6   Significance of the Study

To Africans, naming practices are very important since names are often given to mark the testimony of what a society holds dear in a given community. In other words, names bear testimony to the history and culture of a particular nation or group. This study will explain the reasons why the youths will want to change from their meaningful birth given names to other

names, this study will also help highlight the significances that youths place on the nicknames and it will also provide more insights into the names that youth change to. The view of the society on various names and the positive and negative behaviors of people that are associated with names will also be a point of discuss on this research has it is important to understand the effects of the nicknames on youth behavior and to know names that are associated with different aspect of social life of our youths. The factors that have been influencing nicknames in the society will also be studied. This study will be a form of additional knowledge in the aspect of nicknames amongst youths in Nigeria and help fill the gap in literature on this subject.

1.7 Organization of the Study

Chapter one focuses on the introduction while chapter two reviews relevant literature. Chapter three specifies the type of research methodology adopted, including the limitations of the study, how to source for data, distribution and collection of questionnaires. Chapter four is based on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data which has been gotten from questionnaire and secondary data, and as well testing of research questions and hypothesis. Finally, chapter five will be the concluding part, where the summary of findings, conclusion, restatement of the problem, and recommendations will be drawn.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Although the research will reach its aim but there are a few limitations which could limit the study. First is the dearth in literature which can make it difficult because there is no adequate data to compare the findings of this research with so has to get a proper view. Secondly, time will also be a constraint to achieving the set objectives of this study.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Name: Webster online Dictionary defined name as a word or phrase by which an individual person, place, or thing, or a class of things, is known, called, or spoken of. It is also a word or words expressing some quality considered characteristic or descriptive of a person or thing, often showing approval or disapproval; epithet.

Nickname: A nickname is a substitute for the proper name of a familiar person, place, or thing, for affection or ridicule. A nickname is often considered desirable, symbolizing a form of acceptance, but can sometimes be a form of ridicule. Cambridge Online Dictionary defined a nick-name as an informal name for someone or something, especially a name that you are called by your friends or family, usually based on your real name or your character. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary defined a nickname as a usually descriptive name given instead of or in addition to the one belonging to a person, place, or thing.

Youth: Youth is the time of life when one is young, and often means the time between childhood and adulthood. It is also defined as the appearance, freshness, vigor, spirit, characteristic of one who is young. Its definitions of a specific age range varies, as youth is not defined chronologically as a stage that can be tied to specific age ranges; nor can its end point be linked to specific activities, such as taking unpaid work or having sexual relations without consent. Much of sub-Saharan Africa, the term "youth" is associated with young men from 18 to 30 or 35 years of age. Youth in Nigeria includes all members of the Federal Republic of Nigeria aged 18–35. Many African girls experience youth as a brief interlude between the onset of puberty and marriage and motherhood. But in urban settings, poor women are often considered youth much longer, even if they bear children outside of marriage. Varying culturally, the gender

constructions of youth in Latin America and Southeast Asia differ from those of sub-Saharan Africa. In Vietnam, widespread notions of youth are sociopolitical constructions for both sexes between the ages of 18 and 35.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Concept of Name and Naming

The word "name" comes from Old English *nama*; cognate with Old High German (OHG) *namo*, Sanskrit (*nāman*), Latin (*nomen*) , Greek (*onoma*), and Persian (*nâm*), from the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) *(h₁nómṇ)*. Perhaps connected to non-Indo-European terms such as Tamil நாமம் (*namam*) and Proto-Uralic *(nime)*.

Names have always been of major importance for human communication and understanding given the fact that they have always played the role of those elements through which people, animals and objects were defined. The name was soon developed into a means of determining a person or a thing. If this is important for the plant and animal world, it is much more important for man where the personal character is much more intense and the special characteristics of each person appear in a different and unique way. The name and naming were developed in connection with the peoples' history and adventures. Through names we can follow the historical progress of an entire nation. Quite often some names hold a fascination and exercise a special power on us, and some others create distaste. This happens because the people bearing these names are associated with good memories from the past in the first case, while in the second with negative experiences and situations. Names are often distinctive for the religion of the people bearing them and are connected with the philosophical or social beliefs of the people.

Names in general are of great importance to the society at large because it has given every individual in the society a form of identity at home, in church, at mosque and also in school. Over the years name have helped people to achieve a lot of reasonable things and at the same time some people have used it for the greater good in politics to gain power either in an autocratic manner or in a democratic way. Names have always been of major importance for human communication and understanding given the fact that they have always played the role of those elements through which people, animals and objects were defined. The name was soon developed into a means of determining a person or a thing. If this is important for the plant and animal world, it is much more important for man where the personal character is much more intense and the special characteristics of each person appear in a different and unique way. The name and naming were developed in connection with the peoples' history and adventures. Through names we can follow the historical progress of an entire nation. Quite often some names hold a fascination and exercise a special power on us, and some others create distaste. This happens because the people bearing these names are associated with good memories from the past in the first case, while in the second with negative experiences and situations. Names are often distinctive for the religion of the people bearing them and are connected with the philosophical or social beliefs of the people. Especially, in a country like Nigeria people have gone as far as adding other names to their biological names in school due to poor influence as a result of socialization. A typical example can be seen on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram where youths are being influenced by their friends, acquaintances or role models on these platforms that will indirectly affect their identity.

2.2 History of Names

The history of names is so ancient that no one knows the beginning of the story. Since written history began, and as far back as oral history reaches, people have had names. It is therefore impossible to do more than guess at how the earliest given names were chosen. Most names appear to have had some sort of original meaning, usually descriptive, rather than being simply a pleasing collection of sounds. These descriptive names developed both from nouns and adjectives. Examples of name descended from nouns are the Irish Gaelic names Conan "hound, wolf" and Aed "fire." Irish Gaelic names derived from adjectives are such names as Fial "modest, honourable, generous" and Finn "fair, bright, white." A more elaborate descriptive naming practice is exemplified in the Bible, when Rachel names her last son Benoni or "son of my sorrow" and his father Jacob renames him Benjamin "son of the right hand" (Genesis 35:18). Many early names were compounds. For example, the following Frankish names are compounds: Sigibert (victory-shining), Childeric (battle-powerful), Fredegund (peace-battle) and Radegund (counsel-battle). Sometimes such compounds in pagan societies referred to their gods. For instance, the ancient Norse had many names which were compounds containing the name of the god Thor. Among the male names were Thorbjorn, Thorgeir, Thorkell, Thorsteinn and Thorvald, and among the feminine names were Thordis, Thorgunna, Thorhalla, Thorkatla and Thorunn.

Early in prehistory some descriptive names began to be used again and again until they formed a name pool for that particular culture. Parents would choose names from the pool of existing names rather than invent new ones for their children. As time went on the language changed and in many cases the words that formed the original name passed out of use, leaving the fossilized form in the name. This is why we do not recognize the meanings of many names today. Their origins are in ancient languages from words that have passed out of use. For

11

instance, the name Edwin was originally composed of the Old English words Ead, which means "prosperity, fortune, riches" and Wine, which means "friend." Both of these words have passed out of the language in the intervening thousand or so years. On the other hand, a word which has not radically changed forms the first part of the Old English name Wulfgar. The word may have changed spelling somewhat, but the word wolf is still recognizable. (The second element gar means "spear.") With the rise of Christianity, certain trends in naming practices manifested. Christians were encouraged to name their children after saints and martyrs of the church. The oldest of these names were Jewish and Greco-Roman names. The names of the apostles and other prominent early Christians mentioned in the New Testament were often Jewish, such as Mary, Martha, Matthew, James, Joseph and John. The early Christians lived in the Roman Empire, and it is among the other peoples of the empire that they first began to convert non-Jews. As a result of the persecutions in the early centuries, many Greco-Roman names entered the Christian name pool in commemoration of the martyrs and saints, such as Anthony, Catherine, Margaret, Mark, Martin, Nicholas and Paul.

These early Christian names can be found in many cultures today, in various forms. These were spread by early missionaries throughout the Mediterranean basin and Europe. At the same time pagan nations newly converted to Christianity did not abandon their original name pool. Native martyrs and saints soon arose in every culture and their names would be added to the pool of Christian names available to Christian parents. The Christian name pool sometimes preserved names that would have otherwise fallen out of use. For example, most Anglo-Saxon names fell out of use within two centuries of the Norman Conquest of England. One that did not, because it was the name of a famous saint, is the name Edward, which is still in use today. By the middle Ages, the Christian influence on naming practices was pervasive. Each culture had its

pool of names, which were a combination of native names and early Christian names that had been in the language long enough to be considered native. The naming pools did continue to evolve, so that a selection of ninth century Frankish names bears little resemblance to a selection of twelfth century French names. The interesting thing is that the "early Christian names" changed the least in most name pools. The pool of names in use in England changed radically with the Norman Conquest in 1066. Previous to this, dithematic (compound names with two elements) such as Bealdwine, Cuthbert, Eadgyth, Ethelwine, Etheldreda, Wilfrith and Wulfgar predominated. With the political ascendancy of the Normans, French names of Germanic origin became prevalent within two or three generations of the Conquest. As a result names like Emma, Matilda, Richard, and William, became constants in English nomenclature. At the same time a few Old English names, like Edward and Alfred, were preserved because they were names of saints or prominent kings; others were preserved because they were reinforced and modified by Germanic names from the Normans like Robert. Since the middle ages, this pool has continued to expand and change due to various influences.

Surnames developed from bynames, which are additional identifiers used to distinguish two people with the same given name. These bynames tend to fall into particular patterns. These usually started out as specific to a person and became inherited from father to son between the twelfth and sixteenth century. The aristocracy usually adopted inherited surnames early on and the peasants did so later. Some of the specific types are: the patronymic (referring to the father or mother), a locative or toponymic (indicating where a person is from), an epithet (which describes a person in some way) or a name derived from occupation, office or status. Most cultures use surnames developed from one or more of these types of bynames. P. H. Reaney's *Origins of English Surnames* covers the formations of these various types of bynames in much greater detail

than is possible here. Patronymics are common in almost all European cultures. These are usually formations that mean "x son of y" or "x daughter of y". The parent indicated is usually the father, but the mother's name may also occur in some cases. Patronymics were formed in various ways in English; Johnson, Richards and Henry are representative. Johnson shows the full development; it obviously means son of John or John's son. The "son" could also be understood, by the position in the name, so Richard's son Martin might be called Martin Richards instead of Martin Richardson. At the same time, Henry's son Martin might be known as Martin Henry, because to the medieval mind the position of the name Henry would imply that Martin was Henry's son. Other cultures used different ways of indicating patronymics. In Welsh, the usual form was ap X. If the father's name (X) was Rhys, it would form Rhys. Over the centuries this form yielded the names Reese and Price. In Scotland and Ireland the typical patronymic form was mac X, yield names such as MacAndrew, MacDougall, MacGregor and MacLeod.

Toponymic by-names are derived from topographic or other local features of the landscape. For example, a man dwelling near a prominent beech tree might use "atteBeche", " deBeche" or " de la Beche" as his byname. A man dwelling on or near a hill might use "del Hill," "atteHil" or "of the Hill." A man dwelling near marshy ground might use "atte Fen" or "del Fen." Names of this type are quite common in England. Eventually, of course, these usually wore down to Beech, Hill and Fen. Epithets are bynames that refer to some personal characteristic of the bearer. In the middle Ages, a person acquired this from friends and acquaintances. An appellation of this sort can be complimentary, uncomplimentary or simply descriptive. Nicknames can take various forms: descriptive of physical characteristics of some kind like Blakloc, the Small, Armstrong or Grenehod, or descriptive of character or mental or moral characteristics, such as Wastepenny, Slyman, Careless, Bonfaith. Sometimes a nickname can be

14

metaphoric (i.e.John is like a) yielding names like "Peppercorn" for a small person and "Fairweather" for a cheerful, sunny person.

Occupational names are often the most obvious in origin. Baker, Brewer, Weaver, Taylor and Smith are fairly obvious in meaning. Some of these occupational bynames also have feminine versions which became hereditary surnames. For example, the feminine of Baker is Baxter, the feminine of Brewer is Brewster and the feminine of Weaver is Webster. However, more than half of the recorded people with these feminine surnames are male. Occupational surnames as a class are considered to also contain office names. Examples of office names are those such as Marshall (a tender of horses, or an office of high state) and Steward (a manager of an estate) and Abbott (the head of an abbey).

2.3   Concept of Name Changing

A person may legally change his or her name or family name only for an important reason such as the name being offensive or funny, using another name for a long time, the name being unlawfully changed, or use of a different name as a citizen of a different country, Another typical change is the loss of the gender distinction in adjectival surnames. Western languages do not distinguish between male and female surnames, even if the language has gender-specific adjective. As the surname is, in most cases, inherited from the father (or accepted from the husband), the Western registries of birth and marriage ascribe the masculine form to the female members of the family. Countries, in contrast, the form would never be met within Nigeria, whereas it is commonly found in the US, Germany or Argentina.

Although name changing in Africa has been witnessed for decades, there has not been extensive research on the subject. Research has been conducted on naming systems of various

15

African societies. These include research conducted by Koopman on the naming systems of the Zulu people since the 1970s; Neethling (1988-2000), De Klerk and Bosch (1995) researched the naming systems of the Xhosa people, Alford's (1988) research on naming practices of various African societies including the Dogon, the Lozi, the Somalians, etc., Herbert and Bogatsu's (1990) research on Nothern Sotho and Tswanas naming patterns, etc. In recent years, the subject of name changing has attracted major media attention. Name changing in Africa is seen as a form of identity affirmation among Africans whose identities have evolved with time. This is because of the belief that African people's identity has been corrupted by among other things the arrival of white people and the insistence on the use of Euro-western names. Although onomastics is still a relatively new field among researchers and academics, the act of naming among human beings is as old as human history. Regardless of this field being relatively new, various researches have been conducted in naming and naming practices particularly in Africa.

There is vast material available from various anthropological researchers on the social practices of various indigenous people of Africa. Included in these materials are cultural patterns of the indigenous people. Culture is not static and cannot be practiced in a vacuum. It is for this reason that the cultural practices of indigenous people in Africa have undergone various changes. There seems to be a shift, for example, on religious thought patterns of early anthropologists (those who wrote in the beginning of the 20th century till late 1970) compared to the thought patterns of recent writers (writing during the 1980s to the present) on African religion and culture. Religious practices had to be looked at because religion had and still has an influence on naming of patterns of indigenous people in Africa. Identities of various peoples are embedded in their changing cultural practices. It is for this reason that cultural and religious practices of Africans from around the beginning of the 20th century to the present were investigated.

Naming does not happen in a vacuum, it happens in a society. It is for this reason that naming cannot be separated from the society where it takes place. There are various factors that affect the societies we live in and thus have an effect on the naming of various objects. These include religious, political, social and economic factors. Some religions specify the names that people should use. For example, when a person joins the Islamic religion, she adopts an Islamic name. Political factors to some extent do affect the choice of various names among various people at a given time. For example, during the apartheid era in South Africa, some people were required to have two names, one of which should be a Euro-western name. Although there was no law that stipulated that indigenous people should have a Euro-western name, in various instances people were required to have Euro-western names. According to various sources, people were not baptized in the Roman Catholic Church without a Christian or Euro-western name. At baptism people were given new Euro-western names, usually those of Roman Catholic Saints. It should be borne in mind that during the late 19th century for example, home births were common, and as a result newborn children did not have birth certificates, and as a result a baptismal certificate served as a birth certificate. Some of the government officials took it upon themselves not to register people who did not have Euro-western names. As a result people coming to register and to get their legal documents were given people including those of Euro-western origin are giving their children African names. Economic factors also play a role in the naming of individuals. During the advent of colonialism, people who had Euro-western names were more likely to be those who either worked for white people or went to mission schools. Nowadays, prominent people and those who have access to the media make up a larger number of those who change their names, compared to those who do not have access to the media and information.

2.4   Concept of Nicknaming

Phillips (1990) defines a nickname as a subset of informal or unfixed names for someone, usually addressed by acquaintances. He posits that since such names are unofficial, only familiar people call the nicknamed by those names. Liao (2006) also interprets a nickname as an informal name that is not registered at the Civil Registration Office in Taiwan. Alleton (1981) and Blum (1997) directly translate nicknames into "little names" (*xiao-ming*) or "milk names" (*ru-ming*) and consider such names as minor names that are not the official names of the nicknamed. Fang and Heng (1983) have a similar view of nickname and consider it as a milk name which is only used within the family or among intimate friends. On his part, Hsiao-ching (2008) defines a nickname as an informal term for an individual, often used by the members in a particular community of practice. He postulates that nicknames are often developed among acquaintances and that most nicknames represent familiarity, intimacy and solidarity. Although nicknames are used by members in familiar groups, others outside the community of practice can also be attracted to use such names to address the name bearers. This makes the assertion of nicknames addressed by only members of a community of practice arguable. In schools, nicknames of students are used by not only members of a community of practice but those outside the domain as well.

Nicknames might be given to anybody and anywhere at any time. Nicknames are often used in informal settings by people of the same age group. These names sometimes act as an identification of the individual and give a sense of solidarity among people of a certain group. In some instances, nicknames provide a friendly atmosphere for the people in a certain group. It is for this reason that people belonging to a certain group who do not have nicknames sometimes feel that they are not part of that group. In other instances (which is common) nicknames are

18

given to individuals because of the unique characteristics that they possess. Withycombe (1945) says that nicknames originated because the adoption of surnames was not enough to prevent the ambiguity caused by the extensive use of a very few Christian names. What Withycombe refers to is a coining of a new name to distinguish people who share the same name. The nicknames he refers to undoubtedly eventually became middle names. It is for this reason that the names he refers to are in this study not regarded as nicknames but as surnames. In some Euro-western societies nicknames and surnames were the same thing, often both known as bynames. The difference between the two is that surnames were nicknames that became hereditary. The complexity of nicknames prompts me to give a definition of a nickname as perceived in this study. In this study a nickname is defined as a name that is given to a particular individual or group because of that individual's or group's unique characteristics. Its function is not only to distinguish a person from other people with the same name, but also to describe certain distinct characteristics of the person. Though these names are given by people of various groups for identity purposes, as mentioned by Withycombe, these names are also coined to ridicule the bearers. According to Withycombe, nicknames are not coined for the purposes of group solidarity, but are used to uniquely identify a particular person from other people with the same name. This, however, means that there are various reasons that prompt individuals to give nicknames to others. While some nicknames are given for purposes of group identification, or to distinctly identify a person from others, other nicknames are derogatory and serve as criticism that the people who give the names have towards a certain individual.

Nicknames are usually additional names given to various people, over and above their personal names and surnames, because of their unique characteristics, whether good or bad. In some cases nicknames become more often used to refer to an individual than personal names and

19

take preference, while in other cases, personal names remain the most preferred and widely used names. Some people like nicknames given to them while others hate them. Initially, some nicknames are not known by the bearers, only the name givers know these names. In some cases nickname bearers do know the nicknames given to them. Usually people like these names when they say something good about them or when they have coined the names themselves, and despise them when they connote bad meanings or convey negative messages about them. No person is exempted from receiving a nickname, whether she is a President of country, an accountant, a lawyer, a doctor etc., nothing will exempt you from receiving a nickname if people want to coin one for you. Although temporary nicknames are used for a specific period of time, it is argued in this study that if a person leaves a certain place where she acquired a nickname she could lose or keep the nickname depending on circumstances. I have no doubt that if the pupils that Madman taught came across him in whatever part of the world they would identify him as Madman. The same thing happens when old school mates meet; they usually address each other by the nicknames they used at school though to some that opens old wounds. This then shows that a nickname is never temporary, it is permanent though it is sometimes rarely used because of the new location that the bearer finds herself in. In nicknaming, any language is used to coin a name. The language that is used is highly dependent on the social, cultural and sometimes political factors that are prevalent in the society where the nickname is coined.

2.4.1 Gender Differences in Nicknaming

It is observed that nicknaming researchers have shown considerable interest in gender differences in the practice. They have sought to ascertain the gender that is highly associated with the nicknaming practice. This social issue is probably based on the premise that male and female children behave differently in social discourse which can reflect in this practice. Males

20

are vociferous and do not fear public ridicule unlike their female counterparts who are very sensitive to what happens to them in public. McConnel-Ginet (2005) opines that more males have nicknames than females. This assertion is corroborated by Liao (2006) study that found a high frequency of nicknaming practices among males. In a Graduation Memory Album of Feng Dong Junior High School, it was reported that 119 out of 152 (78.29%) females had nicknames while 131 of 142 (91.61%) male students had nicknames. The study disclosed that only three out of eight classes in which all of the students, either female or male, had nicknames. In the rest of the classes, more males had nicknames than the females. Similarly, Kiesling (1997) study on verbal practices in an American College fraternity showed that joking and insults were commonly used by male students more than their female counterparts to reinforce heterosexuality. Kiesling study, however, fell short of ascertaining the effects that the negative nicknames had on the bearers' self-concept and their learning.

A study on nicknaming practices among university students in Taiwan, however, did not corroborate the above findings. The study found that nicknaming practice was more frequently implemented in all-female groups as it was with the all-male groups (Hsiao-Ching, 2008). The results of the study demonstrate that both male and female students in the institution took delight in the practice and had some nicknames.

It is unequivocal that the issue of which gender dominants the practice is inconclusive as different researches have yielded different results. The variance of the results on which sexes is noted for this practice opens the floodgate for further studies to be done on it in different cultural milieu to ascertain the global picture of the practice

21

2.4.2 Sources of Nicknames

Apparently, various sources have been identified for nicknames. Morgan, O'Neill, and Harre (1979) contend that nicknames can be understood in four fashions: norm, social control, status, and insult. A study also found that individuals used personal names, descriptive phrases and titles to address themselves. The titles used as addressed terms included both westernised and non-westernised ones (Afful, 2007). It is observed that some nicknames emanate from real-names of the bearers while some are descriptions of personal features of the nicknamed. The nicknames may describe the persons' facial appearance, skin colour, their ability, their figure or the opposite quality which may be mocking. Yang (1991) asserts that a nickname reflects a person's impression of the nicknamed. Again, the size of one's body can earn him/her a nickname. Fat and slim people are accorded nicknames that proportionate their body sizes.

In a study, Liao (2006) identified two nicknaming patterns namely real-names and personal feature nicknames. The study unveiled that some nicknames were developed from or related to the bearers' real or formal names. Some real names were also modified into an affectionate, humorous, or abusive sobriquet. Further, the study disclosed that some of the nicknames were clear descriptions of their personal features. The Liao's study, however, did not investigate which of these categorise of nickname sources had negative effects on the bearers.

It is also observed that some nicknames are given to individuals due to abilities, special skill or quality being possessed by the individuals. Individuals who exhibit dexterity, ingenuity and creativity in the society are called by their peers as "sharp brain", "shark" etc which all seek to describe the styling abilities of the individuals concerned. It is expected that nicknames that seem to portray the styling abilities of individuals would encourage the bearers to fully participate in class unlike those that have the tendency to ridicule, scorn and demean the

nicknamed. It would be expected that in societies were individuals' exceptional and unprecedented contributions to discussions earn them nicknames and their concomitant popularity students would be inspired to fully and actively participate in academic work.

2.4.3 Reasons for Nicknaming

Literature is replete with reasons for youths giving nicknames to others. It is realised that some nicknames are used to identify the person's group membership, show group solidarity, in-group relationship and a signal membership in a friendship group (Wilson, 1998). Kiesling (1998) found in a study that nicknames were used as address terms among youths in a fraternity in the society; it was used as a solidarity term and an identity maker of an in-group. To Thornborrow (2004), nicknaming represents a process of constructing individual identity within a group. Members of a group may have some unique names they identify themselves with. De Klerk and Bosch (1998) associate nickname formation with linguistic creativity and verbal playfulness and interpret the pervasive use of nicknames among youths as indexical of peer group membership and peer cohesion. Bergers (1993) regards nicknaming as a language technique that shows a sense of humour comprising allusion, facetiousness, insults, sarcasm etc.

2.4.4 Effects of Nicknames

Identifying people with names other than their real names has the tendency to negatively or positively affect the bearers of the names. Anderson (1979) postulates that nicknames have impact on the process of building a self concept because the nicknames help determine the messages other people send the bearers. Sharifah (1998) found in a study that majority of the youths had positive self concept because of the good relationship between them and the youths around them. Implicit in this issue is that if youths do not feel comfortable with the people

around them they tend to develop negative self concept which can have dire consequences on them.

Smith (1967) posits that the style of names people choose for themselves reveals a great deal about their personality and about how they see themselves. To him, nicknames create certain impressions about the bearers of those names. It is reasoned the nicknames can affect the way people behave they feel about themselves. It is therefore, expedient for all to be concerned with helping youths develop positive self concept to enable them behave effectively. All acts that seem to thwart this effort need not be countenance in societies.

2.5   Empirical Literature

2.5.1   Names and Personal Identity

In the world more than 120 million babies will be born on earth daily. Those who survive will sooner or later undergo the initiation process of receiving a name. At one time anthropologists thought that some groups of people were so "primitive" and unorganized that they didn't use names. We now know that the anthropologists were mistaken and that the idea came about because research fieldworkers were not able to get inside the minds of the people well enough to understand the customs and taboos that required that names be kept secret from strangers (Feldman). The truth is that names are a part of every culture and that they are of enormous importance both to the people who receive names and to the societies that have given them. Despite their universality, there is a great deal of difference from one culture to another in how names are given. Among most preliterate peoples, names are determined according to very definite and specific rules. Generally, in cultures with a keen sense of ancestry, children get their

names from the totems and family trees of their parents. In some cultures, names are taken from events which happen during the pregnancy of the mother or shortly after the birth of the child, and in others, names are divined through magic and incantation. In some cases, the name given at birth is only the first of several names a person will bear throughout life. When this happens, the new names are given either to mark important milestones in life or to ward off evil spirits by tricking them into thinking that the person with the old name has disappeared.

Regardless of when, why, or how often it happens, though, the giving and receiving of a name is an event of major importance. Quite frequently the significance of names is emphasized by elaborate rituals that almost always have deep religious meaning. One rather dramatic example of this is the naming ceremony of the Yoruba people in Nigeria, Africa. Among these people, children are named within a day of their births. The ceremony begins when a relative of the child prepares a sacrifice by pouring rice meal into small dishes and filling a gourd with rice liquor. After an invocation, the relative pours the liquor into the rice meal while reciting a list of names. The name the child will have is the one the relative recites during the pouring of the drop of liquor that takes the longest to leave the bottle. Once the name is "discovered" in this way, they anoint the baby's feet with the meal-and-liquor paste, and the parents and relatives eat the paste. Then, after swinging it over the baby three times, the father leaves the group to bury the placenta. The gore of a placenta flying through the air and the mess of a baby smeared with rice paste may not correspond very well with western notions of what a ceremony is supposed to be. Yet, an objective observer might well remark that some of the things Christians do in christening rites, which are generally considered solemn and dignified, are not all that different from some of the elements of the Western naming ceremony. This is especially true of the baptismal ceremony

of the Catholic Church. Although in the eyes of the Church the rite of baptism is not primarily a naming ceremony, the giving of the baptismal, or Christian, name is certainly a part of it.

In the Catholic baptismal ceremony, the priest meets the parents, godparents, and baby at the door of the church building, and the first thing he says is, "What name do you give your child?" After the parents answer this and other questions, the priest invites the parents and godparents to trace the sign of the cross on the child's forehead, and then they move into the main body of the building for the rest of the christening. After a reading from one of the gospels, special prayers, and the recitation of part of the Litany of the Saints, the priest anoints the child with holy oils. Then follows the pouring of water on the child's forehead trice, which technically constitutes the actual baptism. A second anointing with oil occurs, and the parents receive a white garment to put on the child. The priest then lights a ceremonial candle and presents it to the father or godfather on behalf of the child. The ceremony concludes with additional prayers. Modern Christian theologians speak of baptism as a sacrament of initiation into the church, and in this sense it serves basically the same purpose as naming ceremonies in preliterate societies. In Christian thought, baptism is a cleansing or reclaiming of the soul of the child, and this takes place under the name the child receives in the ceremony. Among preliterate peoples, the act of naming is a bestowal of a soul on the one who receives the name. In either case, though, the effect is the same: the person who receives a name thereby receives an identity and a place within the society. This bestowal of name and identity is a kind of symbolic contract between the society and the individual. Seen from one side of the contract, by giving a name the society confirms the individual's existence and acknowledges its responsibilities toward that person. The name differentiates the child from others; thus, the society will be able to treat and deal with the child as someone with needs and feelings different from those of other people. Through the

name, the individual becomes part of the history of the society, and, because of the name, his or her deeds will exist separate from the deeds of others.

In industrialized countries, parents must register a child's birth and record the child's name. In this way, the child's name becomes part of the public record of the society. The birth certificate the parents receive when they register the child's birth becomes a kind of ticket or passport to some of the essential services the society offers its members. For example, the public schools in the Nigeria require that prospective students present birth certificates when they register for classes. If a child doesn't have a birth certificate for some reason, the school system feels no obligation toward the child until the parents produce a birth certificate or provide some other type of verification of the child's legal name and date of birth. As mentioned earlier, the symbolic name contract requires that the society recognize and provide for the needs of individuals, at least in a general way. From time to time, however, certain individuals and groups feel that the society has failed to live up it its part of the bargain, and they sometimes respond by abandoning the name and identity under which they entered into the original contract. Such was the case in recent years with the radical Muslim organization. These people believed that the social and political system has failed them and that racist attitude and practices of culture had victimized and oppressed them. They responded by adopting a new culture that they thought would better meet their needs, and, in the process, they changed their names to Muslim names. As seen from the other side of the name contract, by receiving a name, the individual implicitly accepts membership in the society and agrees to follow its rules and customs. In the Society, the practice of within our penal system of forcing convicts to exchange their names for prison numbers emphasizes this aspect of the naming bargain. In doing this, society says, in effect, that the convicts have broken the contract with civilization that their names imply. They have

separated themselves from the community by breaking the rules; thus, they are no longer entitled to the identity and social privileges their names give them. Certain relatively closed societies within the larger society use a similar sort of practice when a member breaks the rules and has to be expelled. For example, some college fraternities and sororities strike an expelled member's name from the rolls with indelible ink to make sure future generations of members will not discover who their ex-sibling was and, presumably, not follow his or her example. From a strictly objective viewpoint, blotting out a person's name in a club registry or forbidding cadets to mention a name in the future does absolutely nothing to change either the person or what he or she did. However, the link between name and identity is so strong and the importance of the symbolic name bargain so great that we genuinely feel that actions of this type somehow have the desired effect of making the person a non-entity.

The names parents choose for their children also reflect the relationship between name and identity that the symbolic contract seals. This is particularly true of the names of twins, for whom the establishment of a unique identity is often difficult. Parents tend to think of twins as a single person who happens to have two bodies, and they often choose names for them that reinforce the idea that the twins have a single, shared identity. Robert Plank, who studied names of twins, discovered that the names fit into three patterns and that the names in two of the patterns show unmistakable similarity. The most common pattern, which occurred in the cases Plank studied, was the use of names that begin with the same letter. This included such names as Richard and Robert (Ricky and Robby), the second pattern involved names that had different first letters but where similar in sound, rhythm, or rhyme, such sets of names as Tracy and Stacy. Finally, Plank found that only the sets of names were different enough from one another to be considered dissimilar. Identical twins, which are always of the same sex and identical people,

have trouble telling them apart, fare worse than fraternal twins in the similarity of their names. The point of all of this is not that parents of twins are vindictive toward their children and purposely give them names that will confuse other people. Instead, the point is that the parents instinctively feel that their twins share an identity and hence should "share" a name. Sometimes, though, it seems that parents are unable to resist the temptation for humour when it comes to naming twins. For example, a woman in London named her twin daughters Kate and Duplicate. When a clergyman refused to baptize the second one, the newspapers picked up the mother's cause and editorialized in support of her right to give her children any names she wanted.

The same idea applies when our name is mispronounced. Most people take great care to make sure they pronounce another person's name correctly, especially in introductions. The reason for this concern is that people generally resent the mispronunciation of their name because mispronunciation amounts to a distortion of their identity. Accidental distortions are annoying, but mispronunciations and distortions of a name on purpose are sizable insults, especially if they result in unflattering puns. Martin Luther used this tactic to belittle one of his enemies, Dr. Eck, by purposely writing his name as Dreck, which means filth. Sigmund Freud saw psychological meaning in the accidental distortion of a person's name. He noticed that aristocrats seemed to mispronounce their doctors' names more often than other people did. He interpreted this as one way the aristocracy had of keeping physicians in their place. Doctors might have power over the life and death of their patients, but they couldn't compete with the aristocrats in political influence and social prestige. By unconsciously distorting the doctors' names, the aristocracy said, in effect, that the doctors were not important enough for them to bother pronouncing their names correctly. Freud and Shakespeare both recognized that the relationship between name and identity is so strong that the misrepresentation of a name amounts

to a misrepresentation of the person. The sense of personal identity and uniqueness that a name gives us is at the heart of why names interest us and why they are important to us as individuals and to our society as a whole. In spite of their importance, though, most people know very little about names and about the effects they have on us and on our children in everyday life. In a very real sense, we are consumers of names, and we have a need and right to know about the psychological, magical, legal, religious, and ethnic aspects of our names.

It seems calling someone by their rightful name and telling the truth about them is vitally important, but what are our true names and how do we discover them? Throughout time and across all cultures, the notion of name as it pertains to identity has long carried with it heavy weight, a weight for some which propels them forward and gives them momentum toward greatness in their given environment. For others, the name is dissatisfaction and the weight it imposes stymies growth and stifles the spirit.

2.5.2 Nick Naming in Religious Society

2.5.2.1 Christianity

Through the course of interaction with His people, God occasionally changed someone's name. It was generally done to establish a new identity that God wished them to embody. The practice wasn't limited to Jews. Royalty from Assyria to Judah to Ancient Egypt to China often bear different names when they assume the throne. It is tradition for a new Pope to take the name of a former pope whom he wishes to emulate ever since Mercurius was named pope and thought it bad form for a Catholic pope to have the name of a Roman god. Most of the changed names in the Bible were changed by God.

In recent times, individuals most especially youths take new names in Christianity in order to take a new form of identity for themselves. People bear names like 'miracle man' in order to exhibit their activities through their names. A clergy took a name 'father of million babies' because of his specialisation in helping couples with babies. Also, people are given nicknames as a result of the positions they hold, for instance titles like pastors, ushers, ministers, deacons, deaconess, elder, priest etc are now used to address people instead of their real names. These are factors that contribute to nicknaming in Christianity.

2.5.2.2   Islam

A person's name is one of the most important issues in people's lives, because a person's name is a title which says something about him, and is essential for communicating with him. It is an adornment and symbol for the person, by which he is called in this world and in the Hereafter. It is indicative of the religion to which he belongs, and makes him feel that he is one of the followers of that

Roles and positions in Islam also give room for nicknaming among individuals in the society. Individuals are now being addressed by their titles. For instance some youths have taken names like Alfa, Imam, Sheik etc, this names is a result of the position they hold. These nicknames are situational names and it is because of the positions people hold with the Islamic religion.

2.5.2.3   Traditional Religion

Nicknames cut across all spheres of life and this also include traditional religion. As a result of one's role and function within this religious system, one can get a new name inform of a nickname.

31

Nicknaming in traditional religion is mostly as a result of one's position. In Yoruba traditional religion certain titles has taken like 'Arugba' this title is for a young virgin girl in the who carries an item in form of a pot to the great river of Osun as a traditional rite. Other names include Yeye Osun, Babalawo, Baba Ifa etc. This titles have replaced the original names of the bearers, whereas they are being addressed as the new names.

2.6   Nicknaming in Traditional Societies

Although naming a child was the responsibility of a specified person in the family, this did not mean that the name given to the child was the one and the only name a child had from birth to death. Various people belonging to a particular peer group played a major role in assigning names to each other. Some people named themselves at later stages of their lives taking into consideration their roles in the community. Most people who named themselves were usually those who were members of various amabutho who usually gave themselves praise names and some of those praise names became more common than the names they were given at birth. It should be borne in mind that people in traditional societies had neither birth certificates nor identity documents. In traditional African societies, people were given different names at different stages of their lives. When a child was born, a name was bestowed on her by her parent(s), relatives or in some cases strangers. As she grew and reached puberty another name was bestowed on her in a ceremony where she was recognized as a woman. For some people, the name bestowed at puberty was used by everyone and the one bestowed at birth was no longer used, as it was considered a childhood name that was no longer important. Alford (1988) says:

While in many societies individuals receive at or soon after birth and then retain these names throughout their lives, in many other societies, a person may receive a new name at initiation into adulthood, at marriage, or at other times.

Krige (1951) is of the opinion that the new name that the young Zulu boy is honoured with when he reaches puberty is usually used by his peers and those younger than him; his parents, men and women older than him usually refer to him using the older name given to him at birth. Though Krige's claim may be true and may have been the norm among the Zulus, it was not universally the norm as some boys' names that were bestowed at puberty were not only used by their peers but also by their parents. Name changing in traditional cultures was influenced by the community where name changing occurred. If by the norms and standards of the community, a child should be given a new name at puberty, every child was given a new name at puberty. In traditional Xhosa culture, when a woman got married she was given a new name by her in-laws. Mabeqa (n.d) says: But for a girl the name that she inherits when she is born is substituted by another one when she marries. Her in-laws and her husband will call her by this new name. It is customary that the daughter in-law be named by her in-laws. That signifies that she has reached another stage in life which is new to her.

Though this practice is still witnessed among Xhosa people, it certainly does not exist among other indigenous people like the Sotho, the Zulu, and the Ndebele people in strict terms as it does among the Xhosa society. Although there are no precise cultural norms of naming daughters-in-law among the latter groups, naming of daughters-in-laws in some cases is inevitable. Among other cultures where name changing during marriage is not a tradition, the daughter-in-law, however, does get a new name. Nevertheless, she seldom knows it as it is not used in her presence. It is usually exclusively used by the in-laws (especially those of her age,

33

not the elders). In more cases than not, the name has a negative connotation. The new name that a Xhosa daughter-in-law is given by her in-laws, is the name that her in-laws publicly use to address her; her former name (given by her parents at birth) is no longer used, except in some cases by her family members. The choice of the marriage name depends on the feelings of the in-laws about their daughter-in-law, and the circumstances prevailing at that particular time. If they like her, they will give her a name that signifies their liking, and the same will apply, if they despise her. Pertaining to the positive attitudes of the in-laws toward their daughter-in-law, Mabeqa (1998) says:

Nobandla is one such name. 'Ibandla' means a congregation. The congregation in the marriage context is the extended family. This name refers to a newly-wed woman who is expected to look after the entire extended family.

From the above quotation, it can be seen that these names are not just used to identify a newly-wed with a new name from others; rather in-laws use these names to voice their expectations. The name as a result shapes the daughter-in-law's behavior as she aspires to conduct herself according to expectations. The bride given the name Nobandla is well aware of what is expected of her and has to do her best to make sure that she satisfies the expectations of her in-laws. It is not her duty to question or to complain about what they expect from her. As a bride she is supposed to accept her new name and behave accordingly.

2.7   Nicknaming and Occupation

Occupation can also be seen as one of the factors that propel an individual to take a nickname or being given a nickname. Nicknaming in occupation can be by the individual himself and there are other situations where it is the public that gives the individual the nickname.

34

2.7.1   Nicknaming In Entertainment

Entertainers ranging from musicians to actors, comedians etc take nicknames, for instance, Balogun Ibrahim Ayodeji a musician has Wizkid (Starboy) as his nickname, Innocent Idibia has 2 Baba as his nickname, Richard Mofe Damijo has the initials of his name RMD has his nickname, Funke Akindele is popularly addressed as Jenifa also Helen Paul a female comedian and radio personality has Tatafo as her nickname.

The use of nicknames in the entertainment industry has been in existence since years back, it is not a new phenomenon, and the major reason for the use of nicknames in entertainment is to portray a more artistic personality of the individual. It is now very common in recent times that youth who embark on entertainment as an occupation now prefers the use of nicknames rather than their real names. There is an endless list of recent entertainers popularly known as 'new school entertainers' who are being addressed by their nicknames, they include; Small doctor, Lil kesh. Kiss Daniel, Mr Eazi, Dremo, Toolz, Moti cakes etc.

2.7.2   Nicknaming and Sports

Nicknaming is also very common in various sports such as football, basket ball, athletics, golf, boxing, tennis etc. There are many reasons for the use of nicknames in sports;

A sportsman can take a nickname as a result of the position he plays in the sport, for instance a Portuguese footballer named Cristiano Ronaldo was nicknamed CR7 as a result of the position of left forward he plays, he also used the initials of his name. A sportsman can also take a nickname as a result of his wealth or worth, for instance an American Floyd Mayweather has Money as his nickname as a result of his wealthy lifestyle. Also a Nigerian footballer named Obafemi Martins was nicknamed Obagoal as a result of his regular goal scoring ability.

Also Lebron James was nicknamed The Akron Hammer, Kobe Bryant has Black Mamba. The list is endless of those individuals who have taken nicknames in the world of sport.

2.7.3   Nicknaming and Politics

Nicknames have become a regular thing in politics, most especially in Nigeria politics. Individuals in politics or politicians have taken nicknames in order to portray their power e.g. Peter Ayodele Fayose as Oshokomole, as a result of their positions e.g. Senator Dino Melaye used his initials of his title and name as his nickname SMD, their leadership position e.g. Bola Ahmed Tinubu as Jagaban. There are many other reasons why an individual can take a nickname as a result of politics.

2.8   Reasons why youths change their names

What are the most popular reasons young people change their names? Well, it could be for just about any reason or for no reason at all and it's perfectly legal unless it is for fraudulent or deceptive purposes or will result in the financial loss of a third party or the commission of an illegal act. Every now and again ordinary youths hit the headlines with their choice of new names. There's the teenager who recently changed his name to 'FacebookdotcomForwardslash-Mountaindew' in the UK to boost his chances of winning a competition, and ASDA worker Greg Lewis who changed his name to Dr Pasty-Smasher Omelette for a bet. It would be no surprise if he reverted back to Shaun. Youths who have nicknames have certainly become increasingly popular. According to the latest figures from the UK Deed Poll Service, the main commercial company that assists with name changes, 30% more documents were issued in September compared with the same month the previous year. Many youths have been inspired by celebrities or their sporting heroes. In the past few years, the UK Deed Poll Service has welcomed 15 new

Wayne Rooneys into the world, five Amy Winehouses and 30 Michael Jacksons. However, 300 people opted for the solid but less glamorous John Smith, which indicates that people have nicknames for reasons other than just fun. Aside from the reasons above other reasons why youths have nicknames include;

- For marriage or civil partnership purposes;

- to choose a surname associated with a hobby, interest, or accomplishment (e.g., old name Ife Adebayo, new name Ife Baller);

- to replace a frivolous name given by their parents (e.g., old name MikeyMaus, new name Marcus Maus);

- to replace a name which might be considered undesirable with a more desirable one (e.g. old last name Kamarudeen, new last name kam);

- to dissociate oneself from a former religion (e.g., Ahmed Abdullah to Adel Karim);

- to identify with a famous or infamous person (e.g., old name Simon Johnson, new name Simon Pendragon);

- To dissociate themselves from a family black sheep (e.g., relatives of thieves, murderers etc.);

- To dissociate themselves from an ethnic origin (e.g. some names in the eastern part of Nigeria connotes slave cast so young people prefer to change their names when they come of age);

- To make their name more attractive or "catchy" so as to increase their chance of success.

2.9 Importance of Names and Nicknaming

It seems calling someone by their rightful name and telling the truth about them is vitally important, Throughout time and across all cultures, the notion of name as it pertains to identity has long carried with it heavy weight, a weight for some which propels them forward and gives them momentum toward greatness in their given milieu. For others, the name is a malaise and the weight it imposes stymies growth and stifles the spirit. In what ways are we to stand upon our names? How do we crawl out from beneath them? A number of stories concerning names come from the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. In a few instances, God changes some peoples' names (Abram to Abraham and Sarai to Sarah) as a sort of pronouncement of a change in their lives. In another story, a tired, bitter refugee woman named Naomi desires to change her name to better reflect a new, sad stage in her life. A man named Jabez bears a name reflective of the pain endured by his mother, a name which may have propelled him in adulthood to avoid any actions that might bring pain to others. Some of us today may hear names from our childhood, positive or negative, affecting our lives in one way or another. A rising star among the first century Pharisees experienced a dramatic conversion that changed his name from Saul to Paul—as he moved primarily from Jewish to Gentile cultures. It may be that the idea of one and only one true, rightful name is a bit narrow and restrictive.

Changing one's name in crossing cultures may be helpful to some. When speaking with some students on a seminary campus, there were those who found using this very tactic helpful based on the environment and country in which they found themselves. For some, their national names brought with them cultural significance and gave them recognition within circles they were trying to integrate. Others carried names intended to bless them and give them a title and explanation of their character and background to whomever they met. After seeing neighbours

38

grow into names which carried with them an element of course, a west-African student made it a point to give his new born son a name which showed the young boy honour and respect. Some Native American customs allow for various names given throughout certain seasons of one's life. Imagine the hope a practice like this could bring the struggling teens who find themselves with the name: "paranoid," "fag," or "whore." Who are the nameless "others" in our society? It is far easier to dehumanize and commit the moral sin of apathy toward one who has no title in the eyes of the beholder. When walking into a public place and seeing any variety of social outcasts; the homeless, the mentally ill, the working boy or girl, the hustler or the struggling youth, is it easier or harder to ignore such a setting when a first name is involved? In the Gospel stories, Jesus brought healing and communal restoration to cripples and crazies, those living on the margins of society. Within his own circle of friends, his disciples, he brought those with hostile opinions and lifestyles into a community calling one another by favourite names. A hated and embarrassed tax-collector, of extremely short stature, climbed up a tree in order to see the passing rabbi, and heard him called by name: "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay in your house today." Similarly today, some students, and some despised by society, have "come to life" when they heard their own names spoken correctly with respect. Healing and growth-producing relationships can begin when the use of a name conveys genuine dignity.

2.10   Theoretical Frame Work

Sociologists relate with theories as a scientific expedition with theoretical and empirical orientation. Hence, the essence of theories in any sociological research cannot be over-emphasized even in both natural and social sciences. According to Talcott Parson, theoretical framework provides a basis for coherent organization of the factual material, thus selected without which study is unintelligible. He also said it provides a basis not only for selection and

organization of known facts, but in a way which cannot be done otherwise reveals the gaps in our existing knowledge and their importance. For the purpose of this study, basically, it will give a concise explanation to the study and the important of names and naming, meaning of names, why people have nicknames. The framework guiding this research will be the Modernization Theory by Walt W. Rostow social learning theory by Albert Bandura.

2.10.1 Modernization Theory

By the end of World War 2 it had become clear that despite exposure to Capitalism many of the countries of the South had failed to develop. In this context, in the late 1940s, Modernisation Theory was developed. Modernisation theory had two major aims

- It attempted to explain why poorer countries have failed to develop; focussing on what cultural and economic conditions might act as 'barriers' to development

- It aimed to provide a non-communist solution to poverty in the developing world by suggesting that economic change (in the form of Capitalism) and the introduction of western values and culture could play a key role in bringing about modernisation.

Rostow believed that an initial injection of aid from the west in the form of training, education, economic investment etc. would be enough to jolt a society into economic growth overcoming these cultural barriers. Rostow suggested that development should be seen as an evolutionary process in which countries progress up 5 stages of a development ladder

Rostow's five stage model of development

Stage 1: Traditional society

Traditional societies whose economies are dominated by subsistence farming. Such societies have little wealth to invest and have limited access to modern industry and technology. Rostow argued that at this stage there are cultural barriers to development.

Stage 2: Transitional stage

This stage is when western aid packages bring western values, practises and expertise into the society. This can take the form of:

- Science and technology – to improve agriculture

- Infrastructure – improving roads and cities communications

- Industry – western companies establishing factories

These provide the conditions for investment, attracting more companies into the country.

Stage 3: Take off stage

The society experiences economic growth as new modern practices become the norm. Profits are reinvested in infrastructure etc. and a new entrepreneurial class emerges and urbanised that is willing to invest further and take risks. The country now moves beyond subsistence economy and starts exporting goods to other countries

This generates more wealth which then trickles down to the population as a whole who are then able to become consumers of new products produced by new industries there and from abroad.

Stage 4: The drive to maturity

More economic growth and investment in education, media and birth control. The population start to realise new opportunities opening up and strive to make the most of their lives.

Stage 5: The age of high mass consumption

This is where economic growth and production are at Western levels.

Variations on Rostow's 5 stage model

Different theorists stress the importance of different types of assistance or interventions that could jolt countries out their traditional ways and bring about change.

- Education is most important as it should speed up the introduction of Western values such as universalism, individualism, competition and achievement measured by examinations. This was seen as a way of breaking the link between family and children.

- Media – Important to diffuse ideas non traditional such as family planning and democracy

- Urbanisation. The theory here is that if populations are packed more closely together new ideas are more likely to spread than amongst diffuse rural populations

2.10.2 Social learning theory

This is a theory of learning and social behaviour which proposes that new behaviours can be acquired by observing and imitating others. It states that learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and can occur purely through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement. In addition to the observation of behaviour, learning also occurs through the observation of rewards and punishments, a

process known as vicarious reinforcement. When a particular behaviour is rewarded regularly, it will most likely persist; conversely, if a particular behaviour is constantly punished, it will most likely desist. The theory expands on traditional behavioural theories, in which behaviour is governed solely by reinforcements, by placing emphasis on the important roles of various internal processes in the learning individual. Social learning theory integrated behavioural and cognitive theories of learning in order to provide a comprehensive model that could account for the wide range of learning experiences that occur in the real world. As initially outlined by Bandura and Walters in 1963and further detailed in 1977, key tenets of social learning theory are as follows:

1. Learning is not purely behavioural; rather, it is a *cognitive* process that takes place in a social context.

2. Learning can occur by observing behaviour *and* by observing the consequences of the behaviour (vicarious reinforcement).

3. Learning involves observation, extraction of information from those observations, and making decisions about the performance of the behaviour (observational learning or modelling). Thus, learning can occur without an observable change in behaviour.

4. Reinforcement plays a role in learning but is not entirely responsible for learning.

5. The learner is not a passive recipient of information. Cognition, environment, and behaviour all mutually influence each other (reciprocal determinism).

2.10.3 Application of the Modernization Theory and Social Theory to this Study

The modernization theory, this theory studies the process of social revolution in the development of the society and explains the reason why people no longer feel comfortable with their traditional society. Hence, this applies its usage to this research work; the Social Implications of Nicknaming among Youths in the Society. Modernization has led to various changes in the society, which includes nicknaming. In our society today names play a vital role in one's existence, because ones name is ones identity. In a country like Nigeria, people have gone as far as adding other names to their biological names in school due to poor influence as a result of socialization, some people no longer feel at ease with their birth given names maybe because it is old fashion or because it no longer suits their status in the society. Modernization has made traditional names go into extinction and western names are now in vogue and this has one way or the other affected our society at large. Modernization also has a role to play in the way people names themselves on the social media space like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and the likes. People either change the spelling of their names to make it look and sound better or use different names entirely thereby causing a nicknaming, for example names like Olusola is respelled as Holushola, someone bearing Ola Adeshola Micheal might change name to Hollar Hardeshola Mikel. People have also known to use the English version of their names both on the social media space or in real life, local names are transformed into their English meaning by the bearers so has to make the names to be more easily pronounced by members of other tribes and ethnic groups for example someone bearing a Yoruba name like "Aanu" might change it to its English translation which is "Mercy" or someone bearing "Ebunoluwa" which means gift from God might change to its English translation which is "Gift" just to make it sound more modern.

The social learning theory was used for this study because it depicts the way people in the society learn new things through interaction with other people or imitation of people they like. During the colonial era in Nigeria, people were known to have changed their birth given names during the process of learning a new religion which was Christianity. This also occurred because the society then learnt from the Europeans that most cultural given name where demonic and used to associate with evil deities.

Locally and internationally, people have been known for nicknaming just to imitate their favourite celebrities. People are nicknamed to imitate their favourite sports star, politician, academic e.t.c. For example, youths have been known to bear names of footballers such as Ronaldo (a Portugese footballer) as their nickname just to associate with him. There have also being cases where student unionists during election campaign in school use the names of popular politicians as their nicknames so as to make them more popular. For example, people campaign with Chief Obafemi Awolowo's(a Nigerian nationalist and statesman who played a key role in Nigeria's independence movement) name and bear nicknames such as "Awo" which is the short form of the name so as to imitate the political style of the late sage.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter describes the method used in collection and Analysis of data. It discusses the research design, Study area, population of study, sample size, sampling technique, research instrument, and method of analysis and data presentation.

3.1   Research Design

Research Design is the plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived so as to attain answers to research questions and to control Variable (Ogunbameru 2010). There are three purposes of research design;

(i) To provide answers to questions

(ii) To control variance

(iii) To outline conclusions (Ogunbameru 2010).

The type of research design that would be used in this study is the survey method; this method is one which involves collection of data to investigate existing phenomena. Psychologists and sociologists use surveys to analyze human behaviour; survey is also used to meet the more pragmatic needs of the media.

3.2   Study Area

Historical Profile of Ekiti State

Occupying an area of 700sq km, undulating gently in the south and west generally, flat in the central and northern parts, Ekiti is bounded in the south by Iju/itaogbolu, Ifedore and Owo local governments of Ondo state; in the east by Akoko also of Ondo state; in the west by Osun state and in the north by Kwara and Kogi state. Popularly known as the Land of honor, Ekiti state was created on October 1st 1996 by the late Former Head of state General Sani Abacha. The people of Ekiti are predominantly agrarian although, cash and food crops are grown extensively in old style land-holdings with little or no input or modernization equipment. In addition to the above, Ekiti indigenes attend in their thousands universities and other tertiary schools in all parts of Nigeria. Indeed it is almost unknown for a polytechnic, university, college of technology or of education located anywhere in Nigeria not to have a large number of Ekiti indigenes as students and in many cases also academics and administrative staff. This is the reason why people refer to Ekiti as a land of 'book-crammers'. In terms of religious affiliations, Christianity and Islam are the two religions prevalent in the state while the traditional religion is practiced by a few. Dr. Peter Ayodele Fayose (born 15 November 1960) serves as the current governor of Ekiti State in Nigeria.

Historical Profile of Oye Ekiti

Oye is a Local Government capital and town situated in Ekiti state. Its boundary in the north lies in Ilemeje while it is bounded on the south by Ifelodun, Ikole to the east and Ido to the west. Oye Ekiti boasts of a growing student community hosted by the Federal University Oye and Crawford University. Oye Local Government Area was established from the former Ekiti North Local Government on May 17 1989. Majority of its inhabitants speak Yoruba with only few dialectical variations.

Historical Profile of Ado Ekiti

Ado Ekiti is a city located in southwest Nigeria, the state capital and headquarters of the Ekiti State. Research shows that some people of unknown historical origin occupied this particular region about eleven thousand (11,000) years ago. These people were supposedly ancestors of Igbon near Ogotun, Erijiyan, Ijero, Ulesun and Asin (near Ikole). These ancient people were the ancestors of Ekiti. After many generations, a new wave of immigrant groups penetrated this homeland; their leader as Ewi, second successor of Prince Biritiokun, Son of Oduduwa, on account of his wanderings all the way from the Benin forests came to this homeland. Ulesun people welcomed them warmly and neighboring committees came together to assist the Ewi's in their settlement. Eventually, Ewi and his people overthrew the existing political structure, conquered Ulesun community, displaced its ruler Elesun and established a new town, Awamaro named Ado, meaning 'here we encamp'. Ado-Ekiti is one of the towns of the north-eastern territory of Yoruba land and passed through a succession of military, political and cultural changes from the time of Ewi Awamaro (circa 1310 A.D) who migrated there to form what became Ado-Ekiti.

3.3 Instrument of Data Collection

Questionnaire (quantitative) and interview (qualitative) was used as the research instrument of this study, which includes closed ended and open ended questions. The questionnaire and interview guide entails the issues discussed in the research objectives and research questions of the study, which majority was closed ended and the rest was open ended to give room for suggestions from respondents. For the primary data, both quantitative and qualitative data was generated using questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews.

3.4 Population of the Study

This refers to the unit or universe from which samples was selected for the study. The population for this study consists of the youths (18 to 35) in Oye Ekiti, Ekiti state

3.5 Sampling Size

Sample size is the number of respondents included in the research. For the quantitative method, a sample size of 200 was used. Having an equal representation of (100) respondents from each town. While for the interview, 12 participants was interviewed (six males and six females) participants. The study captured information from the youths on the subject matter.

3.6 Sampling Technique

The research adopts a non-probability sampling technique. Convenience or opportunity sampling was used to gather data from the respondents. In convenience sampling, the researcher chooses the closest live persons as respondents (Ogunbameru 2010)

3.7 Method of Data Collection

A mixed method of data collection was employed in this research as both quantitative and qualitative method was used in the collection of data. For the quantitative method, the questionnaire was used, while a recorder was used for conducting the interview. The questionnaire and interview was used to obtain information from the youths concerning the subject matter.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The triangulation method was employed in the presentation of data. Triangulation is a powerful technique which helps in the application and combination of several research methods in the study of the same phenomenon. Data collected and collated from the field was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The quantitative method of data analysis such as the use of questionnaire was ordered, coded, edited and entered into the computer and analyzed using Statistical Package For Social Science (SPSS) software while the qualitative data will be analyzed using content analysis and verbatim report

3.9 Ethical Consideration

The questionnaire used for data collection has no space for name and respondents were assured of confidentiality of their response. The collection of data for this study did not trample on the fundamental rights of the respondents and it not look into the privacy of the respondents. Nobody was forced to give information for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This fragment of the research focuses on the analysis and presentation of data collected from the field on the social implications of nicknaming among youths in Ekiti state. The unit will be segmented into various parts. The first portion explains the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Second slice is interpreting the meaning and significance of nicknaming among youths, and third part explaining the factors responsible for nicknaming and finally examined the social implications of nicknaming among youths in the society. Data collected both with the use of questionnaire and interview was merged together to explain the research questions better (data triangulation).

4.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 4.1.1

Location	Frequency	Percent
Ado	100	50.0
Oye	100	50.0
Age		
16-20	60	30.0
21-25	80	40.0
26-30	13	6.5

31-35	42	21.0
No response	3	1.5
Gender		
Male	107	53.5
Female	92	46.0
Total	199	99.5
No response	1	.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: Author's Construct 2018

The characteristics of the respondents as observable from table 4.1.1 indicated that the sampling was done on an equal footing from two different places in Ekiti State, viz. Oye-Ekiti and Ado-Ekiti, having fifty percent of the respondents each from both locations. 30% of them were between the ages of 16 to 20, majority of the respondents were between the ages 21 to 25-exactly 40% - with roughly 7%between ages 26 to 30, while those aged above 30 years were exactly 21%.

Table 4.1.2   Marital Status And Ethnic Group

marital status		
Single	153	76.5
Married	33	16.5
Engaged	11	5.5
Total	197	98.5

Not response	3	1.5
Total	200	100.0
ethnic group		
Yoruba	147	73.5
Igbo	33	16.5
Hausa	6	3.0
Others	14	7.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Author's Construct 2018

Of the 200 respondents, more than 52% of them were male and exactly 46% were female. Also, roughly 77% of the respondents were single; more than 15% were married. Pertaining to ethnicity, majority of the respondents were Yoruba, less than 20% were Igbo, just 3% of them were Hausa, while others ethic groups consist of closely 3% of the total sample size.

Table 4.1.3 Level of Education And Religious Affiliation

level of education		
no formal education	7	3.5
school certification	41	20.5
OND/NCE	31	15.5
HND/BSC	94	47.0
above Bsc	25	12.5
No response	2	1.0
religious affiliation		

Christianity	161	80.5
Islam	27	13.5
Traditional	7	3.5
Others	3	1.5
No response	2	1.0
Occupation		
Unemployed	39	19.5
civil servant	22	11.0
self employed	39	19.5
Student	96	48.0
Others	2	1.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: Author's Construct 2018

Regarding the level of education, a minority of the respondents had no formal education; almost 21% of them attained secondary education, while more than 70% of the respondents were attained post-secondary education. Furthermore, about 81% of the respondents were Christians, less than 15% were Muslim, while just 5% of the respondents were adherents o f other religions including traditional. Nearly 20% of them were unemployed, while exactly 11% of them were government employee, roughly 20% were self-employed and majority of them were students.

4.2 MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF NICKNAMING AMONG YOUTHS IN OYE

Do you have a nickname?
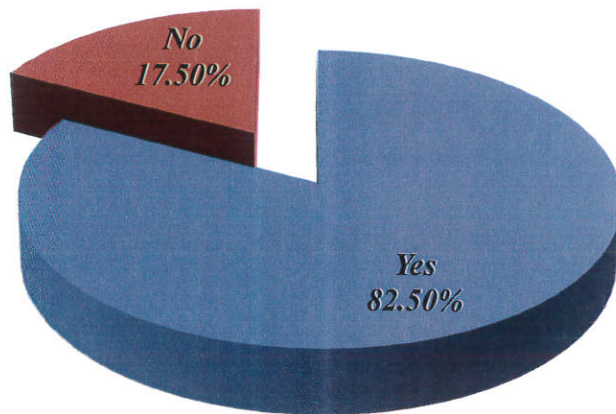
Source: Author's Construct 2018

From the data collected with aid of a questionnaire More than 80% of the respondents admitted having a nickname and less than 20% of them do not have nickname. Just 23% of the respondents nicknamed themselves, roughly 6% of them were nicknamed by their parents. Less than 10% got it through siblings and majority of the respondents were nicknamed by friends, while others got their nicknames through relatives.

According to respondents almost 21% said nickname was forced on them, exactly 63% of them were naturally given and lesser of the respondents did not respond to the interrogation, percentage of respondents that still bearing the nickname were exactly 75%,less than 30% of them are no long bear the nickname.

While many bearers of nicknames had no reason for their nicknames. Some had their nickname as a result of certain situation, an occurrence, behavior/ personality, or a deduction from the birth name.

4.2.1 Nicknaming as a result of situation.

Situation for Nicknaming
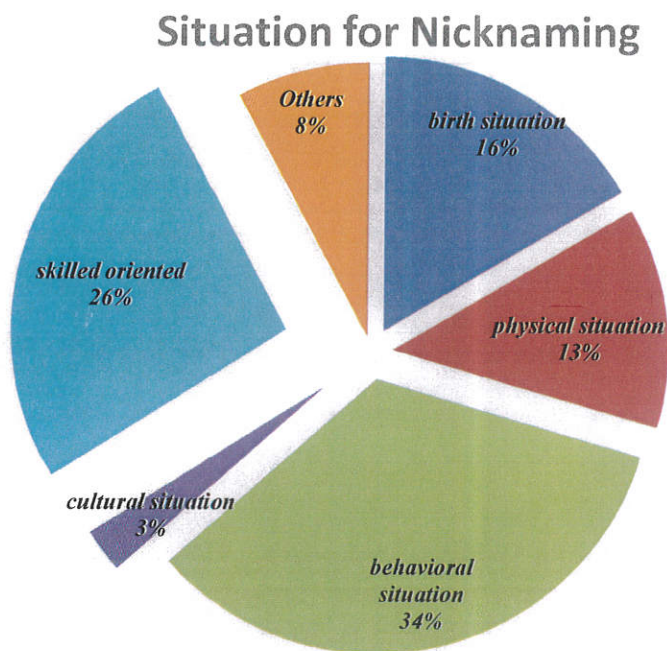
It is a common occurrence that people get named after a particular incident or a situation, as attested by above half of the respondents who responded to the question in the questionnaire that their nick were coined from a situation. Which could be one of birth ,physical, behavioral, cultural, skill oriented situations etc. also some of the interviewee mentioned some that resulted to their nick names;

"... being the last born because if am the first or second i don't think the name will be given to me" ***(Respondent 1)***

"...because of my academic skills and the ability to impact others academically" ***(Respondent 2)***

*".... because I make people laugh," (**Respondent 5**)*

*"...Because of my activeness at work, enthusiasm to work and to do things and courage and potential to work" (**Respondent 7**)*

Table 4.2.1: **Sources and meaning.**

	Frequency	Percent
Do you have a nickname?		
Yes	165	82.5
No	35	17.5
Total	200	100.0
If yes, how did you get the nickname?		
by self	46	27.9
by parent	11	6.7
by siblings	15	9.1
by friends	87	52.7
by relatives	6	3.6
Total	165	100.0
Was the nickname forced on you?		
Yes	41	20.5
No	126	63.0

No response	33	16.5
Total	200	100.0
Do you still bear the nickname?		
Yes	44	72.0
No	26	13.0
No response	30	15.0
Total	200	100.0
If yes, why do you still feel attached to it?		
to feel good	6	13.6
to fit in	30	68.2
social pressure	4	9.1
no choice	1	2.3
Others	3	6.8
Total	44	100.0
Is your nickname a situational name?		
Yes	96	48.0
No	71	35.5
No response	33	16.5
Total	200	100.0

If yes, what situation?		
birth situation	14	14.6
physical situation	10	10.4
behavioral situation	36	37.5
cultural situation	5	5.2
skilled oriented	25	26.0
Others	4	4.2
No response	2	2.1
Total	96	100.0

Table 4.2.1: Perception and Significance of Nicknaming.

What impression did you form at first about nicknaming in the society?		
I thought it was fun	101	50.5
I thought it was a great things to do	33	16.5
I admired those who change their names	23	11.5
I thought nickname make one a winner	11	5.5
Others	13	6.5
No response	19	9.5

Total	200	100.0
what do your friends or other people think about nicknaming		
Fun	103	51.5
Necessity	20	10.0
great things to do	19	9.5
sense of belonging	30	15.0
Irrelevant	10	5.0
very bad	1	.5
Others	4	2.0
No response	13	6.5
Total	200	100.0
Is nicknaming common around you?		
Yes	159	79.5
No	33	16.5
No response	8	4.0
Total	200	100.0
If yes, who are those you know with nicknames?		
Parents	17	10.7
Siblings	18	11.3

Relatives	17	10.7
Friends	100	62.9
Others	7	4.4
Total	159	100.0
Do you think nickname is a good thing		
Yes	118	59.0
No	30	15.0
I don't know	43	21.5
No response	9	4.5
Total	200	100.0
Do you think there is an increase in nicknaming among youths		
Yes	158	79.0
No	30	15.0
No response	12	6.0
Total	200	100.0
How do movies, songs etc. and media in general portray nicknaming		
Fun	82	41.0
Necessity	25	12.5
great thing to do	25	12.5

sense of belonging	41	20.5
Irrelevant	18	9.0
very bad	2	1.0
Others	1	.5
No response	6	3.0
Total	200	100.0
Does your culture gives special recognition to nicknaming		
Yes	73	36.5
No	76	38.0
I don't know	44	22.0
No response	7	3.5
Total	200	100.0

4.3. Reasons and factors responsible for nicknaming

Figure 4.3.1
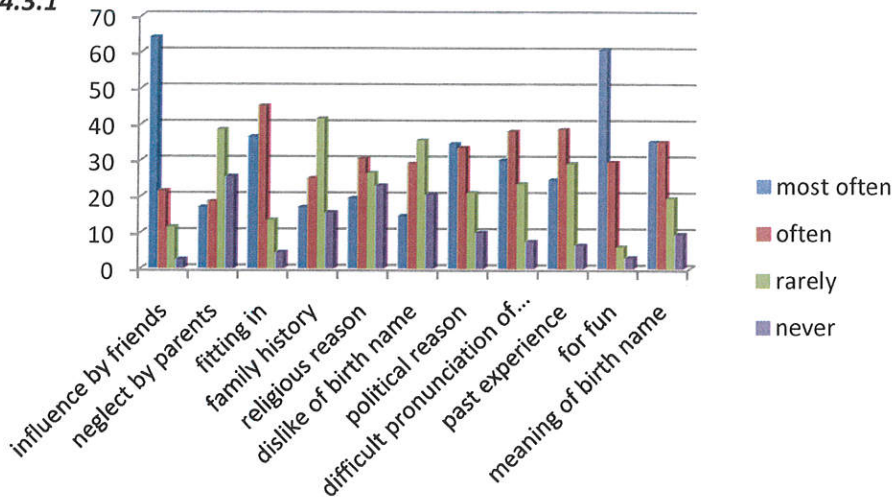
Majority of the respondents who had a nickname both in the survey and interview do not have precise meaning for their nick names. However, some of the respondents claimed to have reasons for their nicknames. Among the reasons stated by the interviewee were the following:

1. **To conceal the real birth name**

   Some of the interviewee stated that they had their nick name to conceal their real name, for reasons best known to them, some because they dislike their real-name as agree upon by nearly 45% of the respondent to be a frequent occurrence- or for other reasons.

   'my friends and Myself gave ourselves the nickname so that people will not know our real names' **(Respondent 12)**

2. **Respect and Sense of Belonging.**

   Some respondents and interviewee mention it out rightly, that the only reason they had a nickname was because many people around them had one. Almost 85% of the respondents stated that people often get   nickname so as to fit in to a group or a company

63

of friends. While some believe it commands respect as attested by some of the interviewee:

"...it commands respect and prestige from how it sounds..." (**Respondent 1**)

"...they believe the name was attached to the name of the person I was dating" (**Respondent3**)

"...did not actually refuse it because it forms a sense of belonging...(**Respondent 4**)

"It is an ego, is pride anyone been given a nickname is been unique among others and having name between peer group makes him standout"(**Respondent 7**)

3. **Political reasons.**

Nearly 68% of the respondents believed that people get nicknamed for political reasons and this was also noticed in the response of some of the interviewee as quoted below:

"...it's funny that even the government have a nickname Tinubu is bearing Jagaban same thing goes for buhari also known as Bubu or PMB and Babangida is called Maradona" (**Respondent 5**)

4. **For fun:**

Contrary to those who gave a reason for their nick, many had nick name because they think it was fun, 90% of the respondents admitted that people often have nick name for fun. Similarly, the interviewees states similarly;

"...Sometimes for fun and you can be named with what you are good at" (**Respondent 1**)

"For fun and because they want to belong" (**Respondent 2**)

" I feel is fun to be answering the Nickname and am always happy about it" (**Respondent 3**)

"I feel comfortable with it and it is fun to me." (**Respondent 3**)

"Mostly, for fun, popularity among youths and when people want to be known they pick up nickname" **(Respondent 8)**

5. Meaning of birth name:

Some of the respondents – say 70% of them - believed that in most cases, nicknames are coined from birth names.

"...when he was trying to call me by my real which is Kehindea.k.a Kenny So I didn't answer and he immediately added Kenny poko to it..." **(Respondent 1)**

"My nickname is Chi Baby and am also called Obere which means last born" **(Respondent 2)**

Table 4.3.2. **Reasons and factors responsible for nicknaming**

	most often	*often*	*rarely*	*never*	*No response*	*Total (percentage)*
influence by friends	64.0	21.5	11.5	2.5	0.5	100.0%
neglect by parents	17.0	18.5	38.5	25.5	0.5	100.0%
fitting in	36.5	45.0	13.5	4.5	0.5	100.0%
family history	17.0	25.0	41.5	15.5	1.0	100.0%
religious reason	19.5	30.5	26.5	23.0	0.5	100.0%
dislike of birth name	14.5	29.0	35.5	20.5	0.5	100.0%.
political reason	34.5	33.5	21.0	10.0	1.0	100.0%
difficult pronunciation of birth name	30.0	38.0	23.5	7.5	1.0	100.0%

past experience	24.5	38.5	29.0	6.5	1.5	100.0%
for fun	60.5	29.5	6.0	3.0	1.0	100.0%
meaning of birth name	35.0	35.0	19.5	9.5	1.0	100.0%

4.4. Effects of nicknaming on youths in the society

Figure 4.4.1
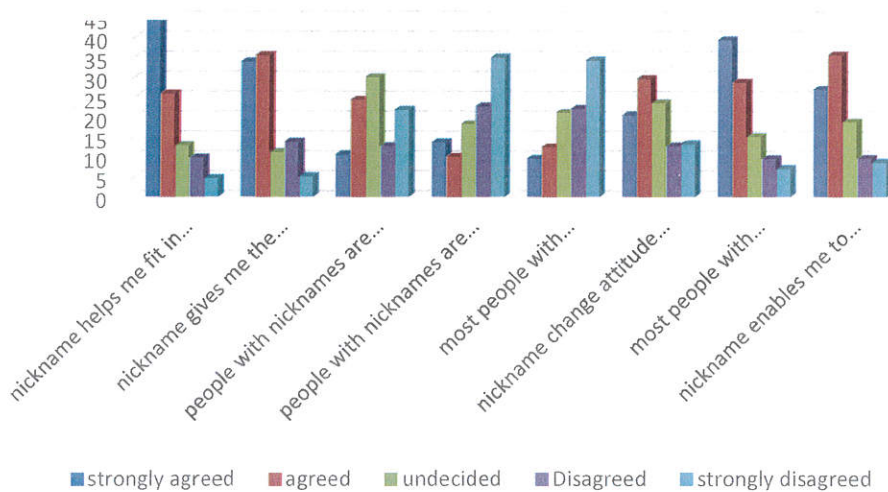
■strongly agreed ■agreed ■undecided ■Disagreed ■strongly disagreed

From the research conducted, it was observed that nicknaming had both positive and negative effects. However, it was observed that people are less aware of the adverse effect of nicknaming as majority of the respondents claimed.

Some of the positive effects discussed were as follows;

72% of the respondents agreed that nick name help them fit in to the society and make them comfortable among peers. 70% concurred that nickname gives them courage and morale to do things. A similitude to the comment of some interviewee

> "...to an extent it can boost your morale or courage, when friends try to hail you by your nickname in public if you a kind of shy person or introvert it can help bring the lively person in you out..." **(Respondent 1)**

"...Yes it does, when you are called your nickname u will want to do extra ordinary"

(Respondent 2)

On the contrary, there were many consequences stated, although most of the respondents do not agree to the negative effect. As less than 25% agreed that *people with nicknames are deviant within the society* nearly 60% of them disagreed. Larger number of the respondents disagreed with most of the negative effects of nicknames. Surprisingly a vast majority of the felt that nick name has no effect what so ever, as nearly 70% agreed *that most people with nicknames are really not different from other individuals within the society,* 15% were indifferent.

Table 4.4.1: Effects of Nicknaming on Youths in the Society

	strongly agreed	*agreed*	*undecided*	*Disagreed*	*strongly disagreed*	*Total (percentage)*
nickname helps me fit in properly to the society	46.4	26.0	13.0	9.9	4.7	100.0%
nickname gives me the courage and morale to do things	34.0	35.6	11.3	13.9	5.2	100.0%
people with nicknames are deviant within the society	10.7	24.5	30.1	12.8	21.9	100.0%
people with nicknames are irritable and display	13.7	10.2	18.3	22.8	35.0	100.0%

unpleasant behavior					
most people with nicknames tend to look scary, unkempt and unattractive	9.6	12.6	21.2	22.2	34.3	100%
nickname change attitude and manners of youth in the society	20.5	29.7	23.6	12.8	13.3	100.0%
most people with nicknames are really not different from other individuals within the society	39.4	28.8	15.2	9.6	7.1	100.0%
nickname enables me to behave and function properly	27.0	35.7	18.9	9.7	8.7	100.0%

4.5. Solution to the Negative effects of Nicknaming.

Awareness of negative effects

	are you aware of any adverse effects of nicknaming	do you think people are aware of the adverse effects of the nicknaming
■ yes	57	58
■ no	135	131
■ No response	8	11
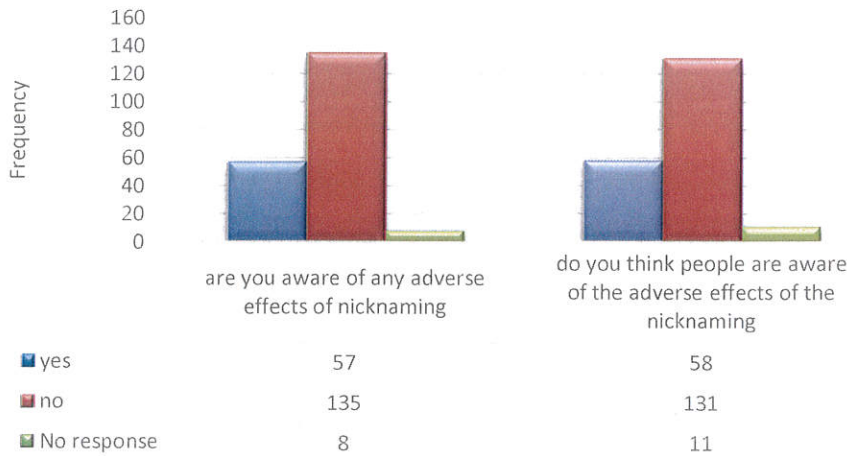
Although many refuse to admit that nicknaming had negative effects on the society, some of the respondents still proffer some suggested solution to some perceived adverse effects of nicknaming to the society as explained in the words of the interviewee below:

1. Proper Socialization

" Proper socialization and Godly way of bringing up a child so that people outside will not be able to give such person a negative name because the person will act good." (Respondent 2)

2. Good parenting

"Good parenting, when parent regulate the activities of their children I think the idea of nicknaming will somehow be reduced in the society ...." (Respondents 3)

"...when there is proper parenting, parent care and emphasis is placed on good home training then it tends to reduce Nicknaming negative effect in the society, good nurturing of young youths in attitude and character will make them behave in appropriate manner in the society...."

(Respondents 4)

69

"...parents try to educate their children and when you want to choose a nickname you try to look at the meaning..."(Respondents 4)

"by proper parenting and giving care and support to the poor and needy so they don't join bad gang that can make them take up bad nickname due to neglect by parents"(Respondents 10)

"parent advice to children telling them not to move with bad people who will give them bad names..."(Respondents 12)

3. Enlightenment

"proper enlightenment like Grass root enlightenment that will make people see the negative effect of nicknaming among youths..."(Respondents 7)

4.6 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

From the research conducted, it was observed that nicknaming had both positive and negative effects. However, it was observed that people are less aware of the adverse effect of nicknaming as majority of the respondents claimed.

. It means lots of those that participated in this study were young people. Majority of the respondents 52% were male while 46% were female. This means both sexes were well represented in this study. On the marital status of the respondents, most of the respondents 77% were single due to never marry, 15% were married while only 5.5% were divorced. This simply means that over 82.0% of the respondents were single due to one reason or the other On the occupation of the respondents which means 60% of the respondents were students, 20%were unemployed while only 20% of the respondents self-employed, civil servants or others.

The result showed that 80% of the respondents have a nickname, while 20% do not have nickname. This question actually gives birth to this study. It also means that nicknaming is a very popular and common thing among youths within the society. As a result of the findings, this situation has positive and negative effects on their behavior and on their personality. According to the research 23% of the respondents nicknamed themselves, roughly 6% were nicknamed by their parent. Less than 10% got it through siblings and majority of the respondents were nicknamed by friends while others got their nickname through relatives and 21% said nickname was forced on them. while many bearers of Nickname had no reason for their nickname. Some had their nickname as a result of certain situation an occurrence, behaviour/personality, or a deduction from the birth names.

In conclusion, the study reviews that there is a common occurrence that people get named after a particular incident or situation which could be one of birth, physical, behavioural, cultural, skill oriented situations etc.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter focused on the summary of all chapters, the conclusion of the project work, and the recommendation from the result of the research. This can serve as a tool for the development of our society. This chapter represented the last of all the chapters in a research project and it is divided into three major parts which are the summary, conclusion and recommendation.

5.1 Summary

Chapter one focused on the background to the study, statement of problem, research questions and objectives, significance of the study and operational definitions of concepts. In Nigeria, the concept of name and naming is not just an identity marker; it is an important signification. Therefore, the processes involved in giving a name to a child and the act of naming in the African society is taken with so much seriousness. Nicknames, like the first names that human beings acquire at birth, are an inherent characteristic of human existence. There seems to be no end in sight for the practice of nicknaming amongst youths. To address the nicknaming practice, it requires a better appreciation and understanding of the practice and the social implications on the bearers. The practice of nicknaming is still popular in the post modern world. Globally, the social implications of nicknames have apparently not gained research attention although some aspects of the phenomenon have been investigated thoroughly. Globally, the social implications of nicknames have apparently not gained research attention although some aspects of the phenomenon have been investigated thoroughly. There is, however, dearth of knowledge on the social implications nicknaming has on youths' self-concept and their morale in the society

Chapter two was mainly on review of important current and past works that are related to topic of the project. It focused on the theoretical framework which explained the social implications of nicknaming on youths in Nigeria. In chapter three, the methodology of this was discussed, that is, the methods used in the collection of data or information related to this study. It had sub-topics like the historical background of the study which was Oye-Ekiti, sample population, sample size and sample techniques, source and collection of data and method of data analyses. It was also ensured that the respondents were within the age of 16 and above.

Chapter four interpreted the findings of the study; questions asked in the questionnaire were related to the research questions and objectives of the study. From the findings, 30% of respondents were between the ages of 16 to 20, majority of the respondents were between the ages 21 to 25 at exactly 40% with roughly 7% between ages 26 to 30, while those aged above 30 years were exactly 21%. This implies that those that participated in this study were young people. They have the capacity to supply good information on the subject matter because the study is about youths in the society. It means lots of those that participated in this study were young people. Majority of the respondents 52% were male while 46% were female. This means both sexes were well represented in this study. On the marital status of the respondents, most of the respondents 77% were single due to never marry, 15% were married while only 5.5% were divorced. This simply means that over 82.0% of the respondents were single due to one reason or the other. On the educational qualification of the respondents, most of the respondents 70% have B.SC/HND, 21% had secondary certificate, and only 3.5% respondents have no formal education at all. It means over 94.5% of the respondents are

literates at different level. This also will enhance good information on the subject matter because of the literacy of the respondents. . Majority of the respondents 81% were Christians, 15% practice Islam while 5.0% of the respondents were either traditional religion practitioners or free thinkers. This indicates that most of the respondents belong to one religious faith or the other. On the occupation of the respondents which means 60% of the respondents were students, 20%were unemployed while only 20% of the respondents self-employed, civil servants or others. This unravels the fact that most of the respondents were students because the study took place in students' area.

The result showed that 80% of the respondents have a nickname, while 20% do not have nickname. This question actually gives birth to this study. It also means that nicknaming is a very popular and common thing among youths within the society. As a result of the findings, this situation has positive, neutral and negative effects on their behavior and on their personality.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, nicknaming is not a major issue in Nigeria and it doesn't constitute a real threat to the Nigerian social system. This is because of chain reactions of the respondents such that 67.5% of the respondents are not aware of any adverse effect of nicknaming in the society. To a particular extent, nicknaming has been proven to have negative effects within the

society, but to a larger extent as a result of the findings, nicknaming doesn't have any negative effect within the society.

5.3 Recommendation

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were opined to curb the negative effects of nicknaming within the society.

1. There should be a good system of proper socialization within the family for children in order to ensure a proper orientation system for youths at a tender age to recommend good behavior among them.

2. There should be proper enlightenment and awareness regarding the negative effects of nicknaming within the society.

3. There should a special and concrete cognizance of birth name within the society in order to discourage the use of nicknames within the society.

4. There should be a stated compulsory social code of behavior and anyone who goes against this should be punished.

REFERENCES

Alford R.D.(1988). Naming and Identity: A cross cultural study of personal naming practices. HRAF Press, New Haven, Connecticut.

De Klerk V & Bosch B. (1995) "Naming in Two Cultures: English and Xhosa Practices". Nomina Africana Vol 9(1).

De Klerk, V., & Bosch, B. (in press). Naming practices in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Names.

Harder, Kelsie (2008): "Names". In: *Microsoft Encarta* (2009) [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation.

Holland, T. J., Jr. (1990). The many faces of nicknames. Names, 38, 255-272. Hammond-Tooke D.W.(1993) The roots of black South Africa. Jonathan Ball Publishers, Johannesburg.

Herbert R.K. &Bogatsu S. (1990) "Changes in Northern Sotho and Tswana Personal Naming Patterns."Nomina Africana 4(2).

McDowell, John H. (1981): "Towards a Semiotics of nicknaming: the Kamasá Example". *Journal of American Folklore* 94:1–18.

Morgan, Jane/O'Neill, Christopher/Harré, Rom (1979): *Nicknames: Their Origins and Social*

Neethling, S. J. (1994). Xhosa nicknames. South African Journal of African Languages, 14, 88-92.

Phillips, B. (1990). Nicknames and sex role stereotypes. Sex Roles, 23, 281-289.

Raper, P. (1987).Aspects of Onomastic theory.Nomina Africana, 78-91.

Koopman A. (2002). Zulu Names, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg.

Koopman A. (2002b). Zulu Names as Social Messages. Unpublished paper read at the 21st International Congress of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) at Uppsala, Sweden, 19th -24th August.

Mabeqa .T. (1998). Getting a New Name: The Xhosa Daughter In-law. Unpublished paper presented at the 10th Names Congress in 1998 at Hermanus, Cape Town.

Madubuike .I. (1994). A handbook of African names. Three Continents Press.

Natal Witness Editor(1999) "Naming", The Natal Witness, 17 December, page 8.

Neethling S. J.(2000) "An onomastic renaissance: African names to the fore" South African Journal of African Languages, Vol 20 (3).

Withycombe E.G.(1945). The Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

LETTER TO RESPONDENTS

Department of Sociology

Federal University Oye-Ekiti

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is aimed at collecting data on the social implications of nicknaming among youths in Oye Ekiti, Ekiti State. The information you provide will be treated in utmost confidentiality and it will be used only for academic purposes. Please respond to all items with utmost sincerity.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

FALANA OLUBUNMI REGINA

SOC/14/2068

SECTION A: SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTRISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Please fill the following as correctly as possible or by ticking the appropriate bracket.

1. Age?

   16-20 years (   )   21-25 years (   )   25-30 years (   )

   31-40 years (   )   45 and above   (   )

2. Sex (gender)?

   Male (   )   Female (   )

3. Ethnicity?

   Yoruba (   )   Hausa (   )   Igbo (   )   others (specify)...............................

4. Religion?

   Christianity ( )   Islamic ( )   Traditional ( )   others (specify)......................

5. Occupation

   Student (   )   Civil Servant (   ) Trader/Business (   ) Unemployed (   )

   Self employed/Artisan (   ) others (specify)..

6. Family size (specify)......................................

7. Number of children in the family (specify)...................................

8. Father's occupation

   Civil Servant (   ) Trader/Business (   ) Unemployed (   )

   Self employed/Artisan (   ) Retired (   ) Others (specify)................................

9. Mother's occupation

   Civil Servant (   ) Trader/Business (   ) Unemployed (   )

   Self employed/Artisan (   ) Retired (   ) Others (specify)................................

10. Father's income

High income ( )   Average ( )   Low ( )   No income ( )

11. Mother's income

High income ( )   Average ( )   Low ( )   No income ( )

12. Father's educational level

Illiterate ( )   Reading and writing (   )   Elementary (   )   Middle school ( )

High school diploma (   )   Bachelor's degree (   )   Master's degree ( )

Others (specify).....................................

13. Mother's educational level

Illiterate ( )   Reading and writing (   )   Elementary (   )   , Middle school ( )

High school diploma (   )·   Bachelor's degree ( )   Master's   degree   (   )

Others (specify).....................................

SECTION B: YOUTHS VIEW ON THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANT OF NICKNAMES

The following questions are focused on youths view on the meaning and significant of

nicknames.

Please fill the following as correctly as possible or by ticking the appropriate bracket.

14. How can you describe your relationship with family members over the last few years?

Good ( )   Fair ( )   Not good ( )

15. How can you describe your relationship with individual family members over the last few years?

Father	Good ( )	Fair ( )	Not good ( )
Mother	Good ( )	Fair ( )	Not good ( )
Siblings(s)	Good ( )	Fair ( )	Not good ( )

16. What impression did you form at first about nicknaming in the society?

I thought it was fun ( )   I thought it was a great thing to do ( )

I admired those who change their names ( )   I thought name changing make one a

winner ( ) others (specify)...............................

17. Is nicknaming common around you? Yes ( ) No ( )

18. If yes, who are those you know with nicknames?

Parents ( )   Siblings ( )   Relatives ( ) Friends ( )   others

(specify)...............................

19. Do you have a nickname? Yes ( ) No ( )

20. If yes, how did you get the nickname?

By self ( )   By parent ( ) By siblings ( )   By friends ( )   By relatives ( ) Others

(specify)..

21. Why did you give yourself the nickname? ....

22. Why were you given the nickname by others? ....

23. Was the nickname forced on you? Yes ( ) No ( )

24. Do you still bear the nickname? Yes ( ) No ( )

25. If yes, why do you still feel attached to it?

• To feel good ( )   To fit in ( )   Social Pressure ( )   No choice ( )   Others

(specify)..

26. Is your nickname a situational name? Yes ( ) No ( )

27. If yes, what situation?

Birth situation ( )   Physical situation ( )   Behavioural situation ( )   cultural

situation ( )   skill oriented ( )   Others (specify)....................................

28. Do you believe that the following factors could have contributed to nicknaming among youths?

Factors	believe	strongly believe	don't believe
Influence by friends	( )	( )	( )
Neglect by parents	( )	( )	( )
Fitting in	( )	( )	( )
Family history	( )	( )	( )
Religious reasons	( )	( )	( )
Dislike of birth name	( )	( )	( )
Political reasons	( )	( )	( )
Difficulty in pronunciation	( )	( )	( )
Past experience	( )	( )	( )
For fun	( )	( )	( )
Meaning of birth name	( )	( )	( )

29. Do you think there is an increase in nicknaming among youths? Yes ( ) No ( )

30. What are some characteristics of people who have nicknames?

(a)   ....