Eunice David Adesua\textsuperscript{1}, Aduragbenro Adedapo\textsuperscript{2}, Titilola Akingbola\textsuperscript{2}, Ezana Negusse\textsuperscript{3}, Adedayo Ariyibi\textsuperscript{4}, Saroj Pramanik\textsuperscript{4}, Oludare Owolabi\textsuperscript{5}, Keyshawn Moncrieffe\textsuperscript{6}, Richard Damoah\textsuperscript{3,7}, Willie Rockward\textsuperscript{3}, and Antony Kinyua\textsuperscript{3,7}

\textsuperscript{1}Department of Applied Liberal Arts  
\textsuperscript{2}School of Community Health and Policy  
\textsuperscript{3}Department of Physics  
\textsuperscript{4}Department of Biology  
\textsuperscript{5}Department of Transportation Engineering  
\textsuperscript{6}School of Education and Urban Studies, Morgan State University (MSU)  
\textsuperscript{7}Space Systems Technology Laboratory, All Nations University (ANU)

January 13, 2024
**The Impact of Homefront Factors on Student-Instructor Interactions in Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Education: An Empirical Study of Canvas Messages**

Eunice David Adesua¹, Adaragbenro Adedapo², Titilola Akingbola², Ezana Negusse³, Adedayo Aribibì³, Saroj Pramanik⁴, Oludare Owolabi⁵, Keyshawn Moncrieffe⁶, Richard Damoah⁷, Willie Rockward⁸ and Antony Kinyua⁹

¹Department of Applied Liberal Arts, ²School of Community Health and Policy, ³Department of Physics, ⁴Department of Biology, ⁵Department of Transportation Engineering, ⁶School of Education and Urban Studies, Morgan State University (MSU), Baltimore, MD, U.S.A., ⁷Space Systems Technology Laboratory, All Nations University (ANU), Koforidua, Ghana.

**BACKGROUND AND GOALS**

Student learning and outcomes, in STEAM education, is heavily impacted by factors such as needs for technology [1], shelter, income-earning activities, family care [2], teamwork and security. We have been examining the impact of these “Homefront factors” on student-instructor interactions since 2019 and sharing some insights of our qualitative analysis in various forums with the same running title. While efficient communication via Canvas messaging between students and instructors is crucial, little is known about how Homefront factors affect the exchanges. The goal for this project has been to analyze the trends of metrics, such as scholarly preparedness, for insights of student communication with their instructors to study Homefront factors. We have found that preparedness were high (65%) in 2019, then increased to even higher values (89%) in 2023.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

1. We evaluated qualitative data that was gathered from a wide range of students between 2019 and 2023.
2. We used a Likert grading system to make this analysis easier. Ratings were from 1 (very unprepared) to 5 (very prepared).
3. Six elements were assessed in the study: preparedness, respect, human behavior, social structure, greetings and salutations, and request specification (as shown in Table 1).
4. Results from the scoring are then analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

**DATA ANALYSIS: MULTI-ELEMENT SCORING TOOL**

A multi-element scoring tool was developed to analyze Canvas messages. A given message is scored with adapted Likert scale from Very impolite (score 1) to Very polite (score 5). Examples of messages along with the scores given by the reviewer are shown in Table 1.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

There are ten significant findings in this study. First, 1005 Canvas messages from 2019 to 2023 were scored using the multi-element scoring tool (see Table 1). This pattern signifies the period before, during, and after COVID-19. Fig. 1 to Fig. 6 show the percentages of messages scored for different elements in the years 2019 (296), 2020 (236), 2021 (34), 2022 (412) and 2023 (27) [3,4]. Secondly, over 30% of students began their messages with polite greetings and salutations in 2019, increasing to almost 70% in 2023 (Fig 1). Thirdly, the same pattern is observed with the respect metric (Fig 2). Fourthly, the percentage of messages with request respect was 25% in 2022 and increased to 74% in 2023. However, it declined to 14% in 2020. Such a change probably is caused by an increased fear of loss with students being away from their friends and normal social environment, away from the usual learning atmosphere and resources they are used to, and away from their possible form of employment. Causing a biological reaction that increases dishonest behavior [5]. Fifth, this study found that Homefront factors play a significant role in shaping the students’ interaction on Canvas as displayed by the scored underline of their individual experiences. Sixth, the trends shown in the metrics request specification tracks very well with that of the metric preparedness (Figs. 3 and 4).

Seventh, the percentage of messages showing clear request and demonstrating preparedness were high (70% and 65%) in 2019, decreased in 2020. It then to even higher values (74% and 89%) in 2023. Eighth, the social structure; only 25% of the student’s messages showed projected social inclination and refined ability to relate well in 2019. The percentage increased to about 70% in 2023 (Fig 5). Ninth, the element human behavior improves to 90% in 2023 from 25% in 2019 (Fig 6). Tenth, our study indicates a common trend in the six elements analyzed with the scoring tool showing a significant (p < 0.001) improvement compared to during COVID-19 period.

**REFERENCES**


**CONCLUSION**

This study underscores the crucial relevance of addressing Homefront factors in education, especially when dealing with pandemics, which can dramatically influence student-instructor interaction and academic performance. There is, therefore, a great need to move more on the Homefront factors to support services and the delivery of education among other inherent community activities so as to improve student success [4,6,7]. Future work include integrating public databases that address Homefront factors in communities.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We are very grateful to MSU for their continued financial support and confidence with our team, our students who have continued to make us proud because of their resilience and tenacity, the teams from NASA and ANU for their technical support and guidance. This work was previously supported by NSF under grant under Grant No. 1915614. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of MSU and NSF.