Graduation Rallies and Sign-Out Ceremonies as Correlates of Social and Behavioral Attitudes among Senior Secondary School Students in Katsina State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates how graduation rallies and sign-out ceremonies correlate with the social and behavioural attitudes of senior secondary school students in Katsina State, Nigeria. Graduation rallies and sign-out ceremonies have become prominent events in Nigerian secondary schools, but concerns have been raised about possible negative behavioural outcomes. Four objectives guided the study, four research questions were raised and four research hypotheses were formulated. The study adopted a correlational research design with a population of 10,000 senior secondary school (SS3) students in the state. A sample of 370 students was drawn through multistage sampling technique from six senior secondary schools (public). Rating scale was used in the data collection and mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, PPMC was used for the data analysis. The result of hypothesis one shows that, there is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among secondary school students ($p>0.05$). Hypothesis two revealed that, there is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and behavioural attitude among secondary school students ($p>0.05$). The finding of hypothesis three shows that, there is no statistically significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among secondary school students ($p<0.05$). The result of hypothesis four shows that, there is a significant positive relationship between sign-out ceremonies and behavioural attitude among secondary school students ($p>0.05$). It was recommended that, structured and supervised ceremonies emphasizing values, provision of guidance for students, and policy guidelines for schools.

Keywords: *graduation rallies, sign-out ceremonies, social attitudes, behavioral attitudes, senior secondary students, Katsina State.*

Introduction

Graduation rallies and sign-out ceremonies have become prominent features in the Nigerian secondary school. These events are seen as rites of passage marking the completion of formal secondary education. In Katsina State, as in many northern Nigerian communities, these celebrations often involve social gatherings, parades, and signing of shirts by peers. However, concerns have been raised by parents, teachers, and community leaders about the behavioral implications of these activities. Graduation rallies and sign-out ceremonies serve as social milestones in the educational process. They represent the culmination of academic efforts and social bonding (Umar, 2022). These celebrations are embedded in youth culture, often accompanied by public displays of excitement and relief.

According to Adeniyi (2021), school completion ceremonies provide a symbolic transition from adolescence to early adulthood. However, Okeke and Nnamdi (2020) observed that in some Nigerian states, these events have been associated with unruly behavior, property damage, and conflicts between students and the public. Ceremonial events such as Rallies and ―sign-out‖ ceremonies where graduates publicly celebrate and inscribe messages on clothing have become increasingly visible in Nigerian secondary schools (often following WAEC/NECO exams). While they ostensibly mark academic milestone achievements, recent media and community reports highlight escalating moral and disciplinary concerns, especially

among students aged 15– 17 (Nigeria Education News, 2025; Muaz, 2024). Such events have raised alarms about behavioral excesses, academic distraction, and erosion of school ethos.
In Katsina State, where educational outcomes and student welfare are already precarious, examining such trends is essential. How such events may contribute to indiscipline, highlight potential economic burdens, distract from academic preparation, exclusion of marginalized students, security risks, symbolic tokenism without substantive postgraduation support, and exacerbate social and moral issues among graduates.

Graduation rally is operationally defined as the organized movement or gathering of final-year secondary school students, either within or outside the school environment, to celebrate the completion of their secondary education. The rally may involve processions, wearing specially designed clothes, dancing, music, photography, public displays and other celebratory activities. The Nigerian experience with student sign-out activities indicates that such public celebrations can sometimes involve processions, loud gatherings and street displays, which have raised concerns about public disturbance and student misconduct. (Punch Newspapers 2025, August 30) Research by Shockden, Bahago, and Omede (2023) involving secondary school students in Northern Nigeria found that students' educational attitudes and well-being are influenced by the broader social environment, particularly in communities affected by collective violence and insecurity.

Adegbite (2025) reported that sign-out celebrations among final-year secondary school students commonly involve processions, writing on uniforms, loud gatherings and street displays. The report also noted concerns about unruly behavior, vandalism, accidents and disruption of public order. Nda (2024) examined students' attitudes toward Social Studies and

their ethical values among junior secondary school students in Kuje Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory. The study found a relationship between students' attitudes and their ethical values and identified societal influence, teacher–student relationships and instructional conditions as factors influencing students' attitudes. Similarly, Mohammed, Damar, Kajang, and Oche (2023) investigated secondary school students' attitudes toward solid-waste disposal in Jos North, Plateau State. Their study demonstrates that students' attitudes can be studied as orientations that influence how young people respond to particular social and environmental issues. Behavioral attitude refers to a student's predisposition or tendency to respond to a particular situation through specific forms of conduct. In simple terms, it concerns how a student's beliefs and feelings are translated into observable behavior. Chukwu and Ogbu (2025) examined behavioral attitudes and academic performance among students in post-basic nursing schools in Abuja. The researchers treated behavioral attitudes as an important factor associated with students' academic and educational outcomes.

Shockden et al. (2023) studied 371 public secondary school students in Northern Nigeria and examined academic attitudes, persistence, engagement and positive social orientation in a context of collective violence. Their findings demonstrate the importance of considering the wider social environment when examining students' attitudes and behavior. These activities are generally intended to celebrate students' completion of secondary education and provide an opportunity for students to bid farewell to their teachers and colleagues, observations suggest that some of these celebrations are gradually becoming associated with behaviors that may have negative consequences for students, schools, parents and the wider community.

In Nigeria, graduation rallies and sign-out ceremonies in secondary schools have emerged as popular practices. The ―sign-out‖ culture involves outgoing students marking the end of their secondary school journey by writing messages on each other_s uniforms, taking group photos, holding parties, sometimes off-campus (e.g., ―marker day‖ culture) (Shotayo, 2025). While recent reports by (Nigerian News Direct, Vanguard, 2026) have raised concerns about the negative behaviors associated with sign-out celebrations among graduating students. For example, Nigerian education stakeholders have reported that some sign-out celebrations may expose students to alcohol and substance abuse, sexual exploitation, violence, physical fights, immoral behavior and vandalism. These concerns suggest that, when such celebrations are poorly supervised, they may create opportunities for behaviors that are inconsistent with the disciplinary and educational objectives of secondary schools.

Moreover, the growing concerns surrounding graduation and sign-out celebrations have also attracted the attention of education authorities in different parts of Nigeria. In recent years, some State education authorities have moved to ban or regulate such activities because of concerns about student indiscipline, misconduct, vandalism, public disturbance, excessive expenditure and the preservation of appropriate moral and social values. For instance, Oyo State banned sign-out celebrations in public and private secondary schools following concerns about misconduct, violence and public disturbances (Adegbite, 2025). Similarly, Sokoto State banned signing-out celebrations for graduating secondary school students because of concerns about misconduct and vandalism, while Zamfara State subsequently prohibited signing-out carnivals in schools following concerns about indecent dressing, unruly conduct and behaviors

considered inconsistent with the moral and academic standards expected of students (Ndoeche, 2025;

Ahmed, 2026). In another development, Ondo State restricted certain graduation ceremonies because of concerns about unnecessary financial burdens placed on parents through elaborate ceremonies, uniforms and souvenirs (Momoh, 2025). These developments suggest that the issue of graduation rallies and sign-out ceremonies is not merely a matter of student celebration but has become an educational, social, behavioral and economic concern requiring systematic investigation.

Social attitudes of students encompass peer relations, sense of belonging/identification with the school, community engagement, and pro_social behaviors. Behavioral attitudes refer to discipline, engagement in risky behaviors, academic focus, and school involvement. Research in Nigeria indicates that student engagement in school activities

(example, sports, clubs, and rallies) is positively associated with behavioral engagement (example, attendance, task persistence) (see Nigerian Journal of Social Studies article on behavioral engagement among junior secondary students)

Statement of the Problem

Senior secondary schools graduation activities is expected to provide opportunities for students to celebrate their achievements, strengthen friendship, appreciate their teachers and schools, and mark an important stage in their educational development. But unfortunately today, there appears to be growing concern about the nature and manner in which some graduation rallies and signout ceremonies are conducted among senior secondary school students. Sequel to this, various stakeholders are making several attempt to solve the problem of sign-out and

graduation rally in Katsina state through students sensitization, banning all graduation ceremonies In recent years, some State education authorities have moved to ban or regulate such activities because of concerns about student indiscipline, misconduct, vandalism, public disturbance, excessive expenditure and the preservation of appropriate moral and social values.

Despite all those efforts, the problem of graduation rally and sign-out ceremonies are still increasing among senior secondary school students. If the problem is not cartel it may expose students to alcohol and substance abuse, sexual exploitation, violence, physical fights, immoral behavior and vandalism and when such celebrations are poorly supervised, they may create opportunities for behaviors that are inconsistent with the disciplinary and educational objectives of secondary schools.

Nevertheless, the social interaction and peer influence associated with sign-out ceremonies may also be related to students_ attitudes towards social values, school authority, discipline and acceptable behavior. It is therefore important to establish whether a relationship exists between participation in sign-out ceremonies and the social attitudes of senior secondary school students. **Objectives of the Study** The study is sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between graduation rallies and social attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.

2. Determine the relationship between graduation rallies and behavioral attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.

3. Examine the relationship between sign out ceremonies and social attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.
4. Examine the relationship between sign out ceremonies and behavioral attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between graduation rallies and social attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State?
2. What is the relationship between graduation rallies and behavioral attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.?
3. What is a relationship between sign out ceremonies and social attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.?
4. What is the relationship between sign out ceremonies and behavioral attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between graduation rallies and social attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between graduation rallies and behavioral attitudes among senior secondary schools students in Katsina State.

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between sign out ceremonies and social attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State.

H_{04}: There is no significant relationship between sign out ceremonies and behavioral attitudes among senior secondary school students in Katsina State

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for collecting data on attitudes and behaviors of students as they relate to specific phenomena. The population of the study consists of 10,000 (SS3) students in public senior secondary schools in Katsina State. Multistage sampling technique was employed to draw the sample size for the study. A sample size of 370 students was selected which according to research advisor table 2006 is adequate for the sample size. Stratified random sampling was used to select six schools (two from each of three senatorial zones), and within each school, 50 SS3 students were randomly selected (simple random sampling) to participate. The stratification by zone ensures representativeness across the state.

A graduation rally scale (GRS), social attitude scale (SAS), behavioral attitude scale (BAS) and sign-out ceremony scale (SCS) was developed by the researcher with the following sections: (a) demographic information (age, gender, school, participation in ceremony), (b) items measuring frequency and type of participation in graduation rallies/sign-out ceremonies (e.g., number of times attended, nature of event, cost, supervision), (c) items measuring social

attitudes (school pride, peer relations, community engagement) on a 5point Likert scale, and (d) items measuring behavioral attitudes (discipline, risk-taking behavior, academic focus). Reliability coefficient results of 0.82 for SAS; 0.79 for BAS; 0.74 for GRS and 0.69 for SCS using Cronbach_s alpha through a split half test for a pilot testing of 30 students was obtained. Permission was obtained from the state ministry of education and school authorities. The questionnaires were administered in the selected schools during class periods under supervision. Students were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality, and their consent (or parental consent where necessary required) was sought. Pearson Product Moment Coefficient (PPMC) was used to test the formulated hypothesis 1 to 4. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 significance level.

Results and Findings

Hypothesis 1

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among secondary school students.

Table 1: PPMC statistics on the relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among SSS Students

Variables	N	Mean	St. Dev.	St. Error	df	r-cal	r-cri	pvalue
Graduation Rally	370	64.78	9.71	0.50				
					368	0.259	0.102	
.001 Social Attitude	370	67.83	9.16	0.48				

Table above shows r-cal (0.259) which is greater than r-cri (0.102) and p-value 0.001 less than the alpha value 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among secondary school students is hereby rejected. This means that, there is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among secondary school students. The relationship is weak to moderate in magnitude.

Hypothesis 2

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between graduation rally and behavioral attitude among secondary school students.

Table 2: PPMC statistics on the relationship between graduation rally and behavioral attitude among SSS Students

Variables	N	Mean	St. Dev.	St. Error	df	r-cal	r-cri	pvalue
Graduation Rally	370	64.78	9.71	0.50				
					368	0.237		
0.102 .001								
Behavioral Attitude	370	65.58	10.44	0.54				

From the table 2 above, r-cal (0.237) is greater than r-cri (0.102) and p-value of 0.001 is less than alpha value of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between graduation rally and behavioral attitude among secondary

school students is hereby rejected. This shows that there is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and behavioral attitude among secondary school students.

Hypothesis 3

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among secondary school students.

Table 3: **PPMC statistics on the relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among SSS Students**

Variables	N	Mean	St. Dev.	St. Error	df	r-cal	r-cri	pvalue
Sign-out	370	63.92	9.05	0.47				
					368	-0.018	0.102	.729
Social Attitude	370	67.83	9.16	0.48				

Table 3 above shows r-cal (-0.018) is less than r-cri (0.102) in absolute magnitude and pvalue of 0.729 is greater than alpha level of significant 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among secondary school students is hereby retained. Consequently, there is no statistically significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among secondary school students.

Hypothesis 4

H_{04}: There is no significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and behavioral attitude among secondary school students.

Table 4: **PPMC statistics on the relationship between sign-out ceremonies and Behavioral attitude among SSS Students**

Variables	N	Mean	St. Dev.	St. Error	df	r-cal	r-cri	pvalue
Sign-out	370	63.92	9.05	0.47				
					368	0.429	0.102	.001
Behavioral Attitude	370	65.58	10.44	0.54				

Table 4 above shows r-cal (0.429) which is greater than r-cri (0.102) and p-value of 0.001 less than the alpha level of significant 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and behavioral attitude among secondary school students is hereby rejected. Consequently, there is a significant positive relationship between sign-out ceremonies and behavioral attitude among secondary school students.

Conclusion

From the above findings it was concluded that:

1. There is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among secondary school students because p-value of 0.001 was found to be less than the alpha level of significance 0.05
2. There is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and behavioral attitude among secondary school students because p-value of 0.001 was found to be less than the alpha level of significance 0.05
3. There is no statistically significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among secondary school students because p-value of 0.729 was found to be greater than the alpha level of significance 0.05
4. There is a significant positive relationship between sign-out ceremonies and behavioral attitude among secondary school students because p-value of 0.001 was found to be less than the alpha level of significance 0.05

Summary of Findings

Base on the result, the findings were summarized as:

1. There is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among secondary school students
2. There is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and behavioral attitude among secondary school students

3. There is no statistically significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among secondary school students

4. There is a significant positive relationship between sign-out ceremonies and behavioral attitude among secondary school students

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one which revealed that, there is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and social attitude among secondary school students with p-value of 0.001 which is less than the alpha level of significance 0.05. The finding of hypothesis one is in conformity with finding of Arowolo (2025) which shows that participation in graduation rallies is associated with greater school pride aligns with the recognition of milestones that can enhance sense of belonging and motivation.

Hypothesis two which revealed that, there is a significant positive relationship between graduation rally and behavioral attitude among secondary school students is in agreement with the finding of Chukwu & Ogbu (2025) which revealed that, behavioral attitude as an important factor associated with students_ academic and educational out comes.

Hypothesis three which revealed that, there is no statistically significant relationship between sign-out ceremonies and social attitude among secondary school students is in agreement with finding of Arowolo (2025) which shows that participation in sign-out ceremonies is associated with greater school pride aligns with the recognition of milestones that can enhance sense of belonging and motivation.

Hypothesis four which revealed that, there is a significant positive relationship between sign-out ceremonies and behavioral attitude among secondary school students is in contrary with finding of Shotayo (2025) which revealed that, sign-out ceremonies increased risk-taking behavior and lower academic focus among participants **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Schools and the state education authorities should develop guidelines for graduation rallies and sign-out ceremonies, emphasizing moderate, inclusive, value-oriented celebrations rather than extravagant parties.

2. Ceremonies should include structured positive activities such as mentorship sessions, talent exhibitions, community service or reflections on future goals, in addition to celebratory elements.

3. Schools should ensure adequate supervision during these events, and engage teachers, counselors or community elders to monitor behavior and instill discipline.

4. Introduce pre-ceremony orientation sessions for students emphasizing social responsibility, behavior codes, and the link between current habits and future success.

5. Parents and Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) should be consulted and sensitized about the cost and behavioral implications, to reduce financial burden on families and avoid exclusion of low-income students.

6. Future research should examine longitudinally the long_term behavioral and academic outcomes of students who participate in such ceremonies, and compare different supervision models.

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