**COVER LETTER**

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# Novelty and Importance of the findings

This study was able to develop a Cascade Bi-level feature selection techniques using a combination of Relief and Particle Swarm Optimization techniques for student performance prediction. This proposed technique has not be used in previous related works. The importance of this study is that improves student performance prediction task and highlights which features influences a students’ performance.

# Declaration

We confirm that the manuscript has been read and approved by all named authors and that there are no other persons who satisfied the criteria for authorship but are not listed.

# Conflict of Interest Statement

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

# Informed Consent

Not application

# Ethical Approval

Not applicable

# Trial Registration

Not applicable

# Contributorship

* Conception or design of the work – Wokili Abdullahi
* Data collection - Kenneth Mary Ogbuka,
* Data analysis and interpretation - Kenneth Mary Ogbuka and Wokili Abdullahi
* Drafting the article - Kenneth Mary Ogbuka and Morufu Olalere
* Critical revision of the article - Morufu Olalere
* Final approval of the version to be published – All Authors