

ASSESSMENT OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS' USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND MATERIALS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated Preschool Teacher's Use of Instructional Methods and Materials in the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in Public and Private schools in Katsina State, Nigeria. The study was conducted using two (2) research objectives. The objectives were translated into research questions and hypotheses. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a population of eighteen thousand nine hundred and ninety seven (18997) and sample size of three hundred and seventy (370) respondents selected using proportionate sampling technique across three (3) senatorial districts of Katsina state. The instrument used for data collection is the questionnaire. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that: Public preschool teachers used instructional methods that are appropriate to the level and maturity of the preschool children than their counterparts in private preschool centres and Private preschool centres have more instructional materials than their counterparts in public preschool centres. Based on the findings of this investigation it was recommended that: Preschool teachers should remain committed to the use of instructional methods that stimulates and arouse the interests and curiosity of preschool children in order to achieve the desired goals of early childhood care and development education in public and private preschool centres and there is need for government and private school proprietors to continue to provide relevant instructional materials of high quality for the successful implementation of early childhood care and development education curriculum in both public and private schools in Katsina state.

Keywords: Instructional Method, Materials and Implementation

Introduction

Over the years the role of the Nigeria government in early childhood care and development education for better development of youngest citizens tend to have gone beyond mere regulatory to supervisory, monitoring and even financial involvement hence, the enactment of the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development Education which is equally in response to the global needs of children. The formulation of this policy (IECD) was one of the fallouts of the world Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in Jomtein, Thailand in 1990. Efforts to introduce the Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) in Nigeria were initiated as far back as 1989 by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) other

agencies and development partners (Olumuyiwa, Adebayor, and Dagunduro, 2011).

Since no National Policy on Education can be formulated without identifying with the overall philosophy and goals of the Nation, to this end Section 2 of the National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) has given prominence to Early Childhood/Pre-primary Education programme. This has made Early Childhood Care and Development Education programme to be given the needed attention by Federal, States and Local Governments because of the prominent role it plays in development of preschool children emotionally, intellectually, physically and socially. It is therefore, for this reason that, Governments at different levels made Early Childhood Care and Development Education programme accessible, free and compulsory for all children of preschool age. However, since the development and introduction of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum which addresses virtually all the critical areas of Early Childhood Care Education both public and private preschool centres were provided with the curriculum in order to ensure its full implementation. This has revealed a situation in Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) where there is mass production and distribution of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum documents to preschool teachers for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in both public and private preschool centres (UNESCO, 2007 in Olumuyiwa, Adebayor and Dogunduro, 2011).

Early Childhood Care and Development Education programme is a programme that if properly implemented in both public and private preschool centres will ensure adequate care and development of the child because children acquires knowledge, attitudes and skills that transforms their lives later in life. Early childhood education is very important for the development of young children before they are enrolled into primary school (Karl, 2002 in Adejobi, Omoare and Oyediran, 2017). It helps in the cognitive development of children at early stage of primary education and it has bearing on attendance and participation of children once they enter primary school. It is also considered very important for the child as it is the first step towards entering the world of knowledge as well as healthy and purposeful life. This system of education helps children become more independent and confident as well as promotes all round development of the children (Ranchandran, 2013 in Adejobi, Omoare and Oyediran, 2017).

Early Childhood Care and Development Education as a programme in Nigerian pre-primary schools was first noticed among the privately owned primary schools in the 80s while the public schools did not incorporate it in their curriculum in Nigeria. Of recent, some state governments in Nigeria have just adopted and organized Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) unit into their primary Education. As a result of this development, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) developed a National Curriculum for ECCDE which both public and private schools used in order to realize the target of the programme as enshrined in the Nigeria's National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004) (Oludele, Abuovbo and Abosedede, 2015). Progress in human sciences has revealed the decisive contribution of Early Childhood Care and Development Education for child's subsequent growth of the first few years in the child's development. Research also underlines the decisive effort of family environment from birth on the formation of the personality and on the beginning of intelligence. It is therefore the foundation upon which other levels of education are built (UNESCO, 2010).

Undoubtedly, Early Childhood Care and Development Education have the potency of affecting meaningful development in the future of any nation by nurturing children with skills, attitudes and competencies necessary for individual and national development. The researcher embarked on this study in order to make a comparative assessment of the implementation of early childhood care

education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state. Therefore, Early Childhood Care and Development Education is the type of education given to children prior to their enrolment into primary school and ensure effective transition from home to school.

Early Childhood Care and Development Education is designed to promote quality of children's lives across the globe. Stakeholders at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtein, Thailand in 1990 pledged to provide pre-primary and primary education for all children irrespective of gender, class, race and socio-economic status and massively reduce illiteracy and ignorance globally. This was followed up in year 2000 with Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All. Nigeria as a country was part and parcel of this conference and also a signatory to all the decisions and agreement reached during the conference. As part of her efforts towards improving the quality of life of the Nigerian children, besides incorporating Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) in the National Policy on Education 2004, a comprehensive ECCDE Curriculum was designed for implementation in order to provide pre-school children with the requisite knowledge, values and desired skills for effective primary education and social life. Early Childhood Care and Development Education must support children to develop the ability to work up and communicate their own impressions through creative processes with various forms of expressions (Usman, 2009 in Olumuyiwa, Adebayor and Dogunduro, 2011).

Concept of Teaching Method

Methods refers to that set of instructional techniques and strategies which enable teaching and learning to take place and provide opportunities for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes dispositions within a particular social and material context (Anders, 2015) Teaching methods should be suitable and appropriate to the age, ability of the learners. The use of a variety of instructional methods is necessary for effective and efficient implementation of curriculum (Yusuf, 2012). Some of these methods include demonstration, lecture, discussion, field trip, discovery, experimental; play way, peers teaching and dramatization.

Concept of Instructional Materials

Instructional Materials are those materials used by both the teachers and learners in the teaching and learning process. Learning has been found to be optimally enhanced by adequate and appropriate selection and use of instructional materials by the teacher and the learner as well (Azikiwe, 2019) For successful implementation of any curriculum, there is need for the acquisition and provision of adequate and relevant instructional and learning materials that are suitable and appropriate to the age and interest of the learners. This is because instructional and learning materials bring life to learning by stimulating students to learn. Good teaching materials in the classroom have the potential to help the teacher explain new concepts clearly to students (Tuimur & Chemwei, 2015).

Previous researches have shown that, since the formulation and launching of ECCDE curriculum, the curriculum has not been effectively implemented. Some of the major concerns include use of inappropriate pedagogical methods by preschool teachers and inadequate utilization of instructional materials by preschool teachers among others. These problems among others may lead to poor performance of pupils in the National Common Entrance Examination. This among other problems prompted the researcher to embark on this study which investigated the Preschool Teacher's Use of Instructional Methods and Instructional Materials in the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in Public and Private schools in Katsina State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. examine the appropriateness of the instructional methods used by preschool teachers in the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State
2. assess the adequacy of instructional materials for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How appropriate are the instructional methods used by preschool teachers in the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State?
2. What is the extent to which instructional materials are adequately provided for preschool teachers in the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were put forward to guide the study:

H01: There is no significant difference in the instructional methods used by Early Childhood Care and Development Education teachers in the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State

H02: There is no significant difference in the extent of the adequacy of instructional materials for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. This research design was adopted because it enables the researchers to accurately and systematically describe the population, situation or phenomenon. The population used in the conduct of this study stands at eighteen thousand nine hundred and ninety seven (18997) that comprised of Quality Assurance officers, Head teachers, and preschool teachers drawn from the thirty four (34) Local Government Areas of Katsina State. The sample size used in the conduct of this study is three hundred and seventy (370). The instrument used for the collection of data is the questionnaire. With the collection of the data from the respondents, the researchers used descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while at the inferential level chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses.

Results of Data Analysis and Discussion

In the course of analysis of data, Descriptive statistics was used to analyze responses to research questions where mean and standard deviation were used. At the inferential level Chi-square statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels.

Research Question 1: How appropriate are the instructional methods used by teachers in the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State?

This research question was responded to using item 1-10 of the instrument, it was analysed using mean and standard deviation and the result is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Analysis of responses on the instructional methods used by Early Childhood Care and Development Education teachers for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State

Item statements	Public ECCDE		Private ECCDE	
	SD	Mean	Mean	SD
1. Preschool teachers are using instructional methods that are appropriate to the age and maturity of the learners in my school	3.48	.9	3.35	.71
2. Preschool teachers use lecture method in teaching preschool children in my school	2.47	1.11	2.40	1.18
3. Preschool teachers used child-centered methods such as play, discovery, dramatization and field trips in the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in my school	3.23	.74	3.38	.69
4. Preschool teachers in my school use story telling method to teach preschool children	3.26	1.02	3.15	.75
5. Preschool teachers in my school use play way method to teach preschool children method to teach preschool children	3.53	.85	3.42	.73
6. Preschool teachers in my school use field trip method to take preschool children outside the school to have concrete learning experiences and knowledge	2.82	.89	2.68	.97
7. Preschool use dramatization method to teach preschool children how to perform different roles in my school	2.98	.80	3.10	.81
8. Preschool teachers in my school use discovery method to give preschool children the opportunity to learn and discover new things	2.85	.86	2.81	.92
9. Preschool teachers in my school use demonstration method in teaching preschool children	3.44	.89	3.26	.74
10. Preschool teachers in my school use recitation method to teach preschool children	3.07	.80	3.00	.96
Cumulative Mean	3.11	.89	3.05	.85

Decision mean = 2.50

The result presented in table 1 also indicated that preschool teachers in both public and public and private are using instructional methods that are appropriate to the level of preschool children because the cumulative mean of 3.11 for public preschool centres and 3.05 for private preschool centres are higher than the decision mean of 2.50. Hence, in both cases their responses are positively inclined.

Research Question 2: What is the extent to which instructional materials are adequately provided and used by preschool teachers for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state?

This research question was responded to using items 11-20 of the instrument, it was analysed using mean and standard deviation and the result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Analysis of responses on the extent of the adequacy of instructional materials for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State

S/N	Item statements	Public ECCDE		Private ECCDE	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
11.	My ECCDE centre has adequate instructional materials for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum	2.87	.94	3.21	.82
12.	Audio-visual materials (motion pictures, television, computer and video) are adequately provided for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in my preschool centre	2.78	1.03	2.98	.98
13.	Instructional materials to support quantitative learning such as bottle tops are adequately provided in my preschool centre	3.00	.85	2.98	.90
14.	Instructional materials provided in my centre are of high quality	2.80	.83	2.98	.81
15.	Art materials, clay, drawing materials papers, wet sand and writing materials are adequately provided in my preschool centre	2.96	.82	3.03	.94
16.	Audio materials such as tape, cassette and radio are sufficiently provided in my preschool centres	2.75	.94	2.85	.88
17.	Instructional materials provided in preschool centres are relevant to the level and maturity of preschool children in both public and private schools	2.95	1.05	3.09	.82
18.	Preschool teachers in my centre improvised instructional materials if they are not provided	2.99	.84	3.09	.79
19.	Chalkboard/whiteboard and relevant textbooks are adequately available in my preschool centre	3.01	1.10	3.12	.78
20.	Visual materials such as photo, slide, filmstrip and overhead projectors are adequately provided in my preschool centre	2.56	1.02	2.83	.98
	Cumulative Mean	2.87	.94	3.02	.87

Decision mean = 2.50

The result presented in table 2 shows that both public and private preschool centres have adequate instructional materials because the cumulative mean of 2.87 for public preschool centres and 3.02 for private preschool centres are higher than the decision mean of 2.50. Hence, private preschool centres have more instructional materials than public preschool centres. Therefore, in both cases their responses are positively inclined.

This research question was responded to using item 11-20 of the instrument, it was analysed using mean and standard deviation and the result is presented in table 2.

The following hypotheses were tested using non parametric statistical tool of chi-square:

H01: There is no significant difference in the instructional methods used by Early Childhood Care and Development Education teachers for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state.

The above hypothesis was tested using chi-square (X^2) statistics. The result is presented in table 3

Table 3: Chi-square (X^2) statistics test on Assessment of the Instructional Methods used by Early Childhood Care and Development Education Teachers for the Implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State.

N	Mean	SD	χ^2	Df	a	P-value	Decision
370	3.08	.86	.179	3	.05	.914	Retained

Table 3 shows the result of test of hypothesis four, which says there is no significant difference in the instructional methods used by early childhood care and development education teachers for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state. The result of the chi-square test as shown above shows that no significant difference exists in the instructional methods used by early childhood care and development education teachers for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state. It shows that $X^2 = .179$ at Df 3, with p-value of .914 at 0.05 alpha level; $p = .914 > 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained.

H02: There is no significant difference in the extent of the adequacy and teachers' use of instructional materials for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state

The above hypothesis was tested using chi-square (X^2) statistics. The result is presented in table 4

Table 4: Chi-square (X^2) statistics test on Assessment of the Adequacy of Instructional Materials for the Implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state.

N	Mean	SD	χ^2	Df	A	P-value	Decision
370	2.94	.90	8.643	3	.05	.013	Rejected

Table 4 shows the result of test of hypothesis three which says there is no significant difference in the extent of the adequacy and teachers' use of instructional materials for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state. The result of the chi-square test as shown above revealed that, significant difference exists in the extent of the adequacy and teachers' use of instructional materials for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state. It shows that $X^2 = 8.643$ at Df 3, with p-value of .013 at 0.05 alpha level; $p = .013 < 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Findings of the Study

The following findings were revealed by this study:

Public preschool teachers used instructional methods that are appropriate to the level and maturity of the preschool children than their counterparts in private preschool centres (cumulative mean of 3.11 for public preschool centres is higher than the cumulative mean of 3.05 for private preschool centres, in both cases their mean scores are higher than the decision mean of 2.50)

Private preschool centres have more instructional materials than their counterparts in public preschool centres (cumulative mean of 3.02 for private preschool centres is higher than the cumulative mean of 2.87 in public preschool centres, in both cases the mean scores for public and private preschool centres are higher than the decision mean of 2.50)

Conclusion

This study assessed Teachers' Use of Instructional Methods and Materials in the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in Public and Private Schools in

Katsina State, Nigeria. Based on the findings of this research, it was concluded that, preschool teachers in both public and private preschool centres are using instructional methods that are appropriate to the level and maturity of preschool children and instructional materials that are required for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in both public and private preschool centres are adequately provided for the successful implementation of early childhood care and development education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this investigation, the following recommendations were made:

1. Preschool teachers should remain committed to the use of instructional methods that stimulates and arouse the interests and curiosity of preschool children in order to achieve the desired goals of Early Childhood Care and Development Education in public and private preschool centres
2. There is need for government and private school proprietors to continue to provide relevant instructional materials of high quality for the successful implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in both public and private schools in Katsina state.

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