

ASSESSMENT OF PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS' COMMITMENTS TO IMPLEMENTATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN PRESCHOOL CENTRES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated Preschool Teachers' Commitments in the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development of Education Curriculum in Public and Private schools in Katsina State, Nigeria. The study was conducted using two (2) research objectives. The study has two research questions and two hypotheses. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a population of (18997) and sample size of (370). The instrument used for data collection is the questionnaire tagged "Questionnaire on the Assessment of Preschool Teachers' Commitments in the Implementation of Early Childhood Education and Development of Education in Nigeria" (QAPTCIECECPPSN). The Instrument was subjected to construct and content validity. It was validated by experts in the field of test and measurement and experts in the field of Early Childhood Education. A pilot study was conducted and the data obtained from the pilot study was statistically analyzed using Cronbach Alpha Formula and the reliability coefficient of 0.97 was obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while chi-square was used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that: preschool teachers in both public and private preschool centres are committed to lesson delivery for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum. Based on the findings, it was recommended that: preschool teachers should continue to remain committed to lesson delivery for the successful implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in both public and private preschool centres.

Key Words: Preschool Teachers, Commitments, Implementation, Early Childhood Education, Curriculum.

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 (Ayodele & Ojo, 2015). 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 (Lawal & Usman, 2013). 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 cited 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 (Oluwafemi & Nma, 2017).of recent, some state governments in Nigeria have just adopted and organized Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) unit into their primary Education (Osita & Olubenga, 2014).

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, 2014). 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 researchers embarked on this study in order to Assess Preschool Teachers' Commitments in the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in Public and Private schools in Katsina state, Nigeria. 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.

Lesson delivery on the other hand refers to the interaction among and between the students, teacher, content and the knowledge/skills/dispositions that the students will need for learning and collaborating with others in a diverse society and rapidly changing world (Kid Friends, 2018). The process of lesson delivery involves applying a repertoire of instructional strategies to communicate and interacts with students around academic contents and to support students' engagements. Jeremiah and Alamina (2017) cited in Wordu and Ojarka (2018) explained that, lesson delivery is the set of all kind of activities engaged in by the teacher with the aim of facilitating change in the behaviour of the learners by using different kinds of delivery attempts. The process of instructional delivery must be based on the stated and well defined objectives of the lesson, it is based on this that when the process of instructional delivery is over, then the opportunity to determine if the aims and objectives of the lesson have been achieved or not arises, which is the evaluation act that will tell whether the stated objectives of the lesson have been achieved or not. Lesson delivery has also been seen as the process showing every activity the teacher and the learner does in the classroom setting. So every efforts that the teacher makes in order to have a fruitful time with the students by exposing the contents, employed methods and strategies, the pupils interaction with the environment, instructional resources available and even the evaluation process sums up to mean lesson delivery (Meziobi, 2009) in (Wordu and Ojarka, 2018). When a teacher consciously utilizes his training, knowledge, skills and value and relays it in order to change the behavioral position of the learner, he is carrying out instructional delivery. To Eruk and Umoh (2003) also cited in Wordu and Ojarka (2018) instructional delivery is the knowledge of teaching techniques and their application for learning to take place in such a flexible manner that would not distort the original intent of the teacher for being in classroom. Lesson delivery is also the deliberate interface between the learners and learning activities, therefore, it is from this interaction process that learning will actually take place. This interface is the implementation stage of the curriculum. Here, the teacher, the learner and the learning activities are on stage. The teacher who is the leader on this stage is free at this point to

modify the plan of action based on the reaction of the learners to the learning activities in order to promote learning.

Tips for Teachers Effective Lesson Delivery

Lesson delivery is an important activity that each and every teacher has to consider very important in the process of curriculum implementation. There are some tips that the teachers are expected to consider when delivering lesson to pupils. These tips for effective lesson delivery are outlined by Mozingo (2017). These include:

1. **Alignment with required standard:** teachers should ensure that the lesson is aligned with curriculum pacing, sequence and schools blueprint frameworks.
2. **Clear statement of objectives:** teachers should frame the objectives with behavioral verbs, performance conditions and evaluation criteria.
3. **Use of essential questions:** teachers should revisit open-ended questions aligned with lesson objectives, reinforcing the big ideas and the “why” and “how” of what students are learning.
4. **Activate learning activities:** teachers are expected to use warm-ups to engage student’s interest, activate prior learning and make connections with their experiences.
5. **Helping pupil’s move from concrete to representational and abstract ideas:** teachers should begin by modeling, using tangible demonstrations of key skills or concept. Then move students to acquire and integrate contents in increasingly independent and generalizable ways.
6. **Revisiting objectives:** teachers should helps students to develop schema to organize their thinking by revisiting lesson outcomes and big ideas.
7. **Focus on formative assessment feedback and coaching:** throughout the lesson the teacher should provide students with on-the-spot criterion feedback to help them monitor and adjust their learning.

Supervision is an activity designed to oversee the works done by the individual teachers to assist them to perform their work better. According to Oke (2016) instructional supervision is an activity designed to advise, guide, refresh, stimulate, encourage and facilitate goal achievement. Individuals charged with advisory functions have responsibility for planning, designing and controlling various activities for the systematic achievement of predetermined goals and objectives. Nwagu (2001) cited in Oke (2016) views supervision as one of the requirements of administration that concerns itself with the tactics of efficiency and effective management of human and material resources. Supervision if well managed and executed would achieve uniformity in early childhood care delivery, capacity building on the part of early childhood teachers. It has the tendency of ensuring effective implementation of the national curriculum of early childhood and care development education, to maintain standard in delivery,

ensure quality control and identify deficiency in curriculum content and implementation to bring school and community to closer end and more productive relationship. Well supervised early childhood care and development education delivery provides in-service training for teachers, strengthens data base as record are properly kept. Ukeje (1992) cited in Oke (2016) defined instructional supervision as a collaborative effort involving a set of activities designed to improve the teaching and learning process. The act of teaching and learning is supervised to in order to find out whether the desired objectives have been achieved or not. During supervision subjects are examined in relation to teaching methods applied instructional resources available for use and teacher himself in terms of educational qualification and training. Instructional supervision is very crucial because it has direct bearing on the pupils, teachers, curriculum and instruction.

Functionally, supervision concerns itself with the process of improvement and enhancement of performance. To be effective, early childhood care and development teacher must draw upon a broad range of teaching skills as well as on the human quality of humility, patience, empathy as well as a component of authority. When a child first teacher is poorly trained and motivated, the very foundation on which all subsequent learning will be built upon will be unsound.

Techniques of Instructional Supervision

There are different techniques that can be employed during instructional supervision. Petermode (1995) cited in Oke (2016) outlined different techniques that an instructional supervisor can utilize to bring about desirable effect in the behaviour of the teacher for achieving teaching effectiveness. These include:

1. **Orientation meeting:** this very necessary to assist preschool teachers improve and function at an acceptable level. During this meeting, preschool teachers are furnished with necessary information for coping with challenges of involved in caring and teaching of preschool children. Udeozor (2004) in Oke (2016) noted that, nothing is frustrating to workers especially newly employed ones as being ignored and left uninformed about the activities of the organization.
2. **Classroom observation:** this involves observing a teacher and analyzing his or her classroom practices, the teaching learning processes, teacher's personality, pupil's teacher interactions, lesson notes and lesson presentation. All these are observed by the supervisor who is present as a witness. Experience person explains or practically demonstrate a skill or a certain therapeutic preparation while teachers observe and take notes. The effectiveness of this strategy depends on the awareness of the purpose by the observer.
3. **Capacity building workshops:** this organized to improve performance through the acquisition of new knowledge, insights, skills and competencies. This activity involves a small group of people temporarily formed discuss specific topics trying to find solutions to a specific problems in face to face situation.
4. **Listening to tapes, radio or recordings:** this involves using sound recordings to present ideas to one or more listeners in such a way as to help develop understanding or

skills. The use of visual presentations through the media, film, television, video tape is increasingly important in the supervisory process.

5. **Guided practice:** this supervision technique involves individuals or small group manipulative activities. It is an approach in which doing is more emphasized rather than talking with practice activities arranged out of context

Previous researches have shown that, since the formulation and launching of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum, the programme has not been effectively implemented. Some of the major concerns include inadequate teachers' commitment to lesson delivery and lack of proper instructional supervision among others. However, studies have shown that teachers have not been properly and adequately trained on the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum and most of the supervisors do not pay attention to proper instructional supervision in the centres where the programme of Early Childhood is implemented etc. These problems may prevent preschool children from performing very well in primary school and also perform poorly in the National Common Entrance Examination. This among other problems prompted the researchers to embark on this study for the purpose of finding out the extent of preschool teacher's commitment to lesson delivery and instructional supervision in the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to assess preschool teachers' commitments in the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education in Public and Private Preschool Centres in Katsina State, Nigeria

The following are the specific objectives that guided the study which include to:

1. assess preschool teacher's commitment to lesson delivery for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state.
2. determine the extent of instructional supervision 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. What is the extent of preschool teachers' commitment to lesson delivery in the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State?
2. What is the extent of instructional supervision in ECCDE centres for the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were put forward to guide the study:

Ho¹: There is no significant difference between preschool teacher's commitments to lesson

delivery and the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state.

Ho²: There is no significant difference between instructional supervision and 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 (18,997) 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 tagged "Questionnaire on the Assessment of Preschool Teachers' Commitments in the Implementation of Early Childhood Education Curriculum in Public and Private Schools in Nigeria" (QAPTCIECECPPSN). The Instrument was subjected to construct and content validity. It was validated by experts in the field of Test and Measurement and experts in the field of Early Childhood Education. A pilot study was conducted at Mairuwa Model Primary school and Gaskiya International Nursery and Primary School in Faskari Local Government Area of Katsina, State, Nigeria. The data obtained from the pilot study was statistically analysed using Cronbach Alpha Formula and the reliability coefficient of 0.97 was obtained. With the collection of the data from the respondents, the researchers used descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentage, mean and standard deviation. For the analysis of demographic data, frequency and simple percentage were used, and to answer the research questions mean and standard deviation were used while at the inferential level chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of preschool teachers' commitment to lesson delivery 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 items 1-10 of the instrument, it was analysed using mean and standard deviation and the result is presented in the table 1.

Table 1: Analysis of responses on teacher's commitments to lesson delivery 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
1.	Preschool teachers in my school do attends their lesson regularly	3.41	.59	3.48	.69
2.	Preschool teachers in my school use effective means of communication in delivering their lesson to preschool children	3.33	.66	3.33	.66
3.	Preschool teachers in my school do not enter class to teach preschool children regularly	2.29	1.04	2.12	.99
4.	Preschool teachers in my school deliver their lesson based on the stated objectives of the lesson	3.52	.88	3.26	.83
5.	Both preschool teachers and preschool children engaged in different kind of learning activities in the process of lesson delivery in my school	3.12	.88	3.26	.70
6.	Preschool teachers in my school have knowledge of different methods and techniques of delivering instructions to preschool children	3.29	.67	3.35	.66
7.	Preschool teachers in my school interact with preschool children regularly in the process of ECCDE curriculum implementation	3.09	1.13	3.11	.76
8.	Preschool teachers in my school do not have adequate knowledge of the instructional methods used in delivering instruction to preschool children	2.49	1.03	2.50	1.13
9.	Preschool teacher's commitment to lesson delivery enables preschool children to acquire knowledge, skills and positive attitude	3.56	.85	3.27	.74
10.	Preschool teachers in my school possess the knowledge of the content to be delivered to preschool children preschool children	3.22	1.08	3.08	.84
Cumulative Mean		3.08	.88	3.13	.80

Decision mean = 2.50

The result presented in table 1 indicated that preschool teachers in both public and private preschool centres are committed to lesson delivery because the cumulative mean of 3.08 for public preschool centres and 3.13 for private preschool centres is higher than the decision mean of 2.50. Hence, private preschool teachers are more committed to the attendance of lesson than public preschool teachers. In both cases their responses are positively inclined

Research Question 2: What is the extent of instructional supervision in ECCDE centres 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 item 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 instructional supervision in public and private preschool centres 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.	Supervisory team from LGEA inspects the activities of preschool teachers regularly in my school	3.19	.74	3.30	.71
12.	Supervisors who visits my preschool centre are well trained professionals and experienced	3.11	.78	3.38	.62
13.	Supervisors provide report to preschool teachers on the areas that need improvement in my school	3.27	1.01	3.11	.76
14.	Supervisors come to my school to supervise ECCDE programme but not for fault finding	2.60	1.09	2.77	.94
15.	Lesson supervision in my school enhance the performance of preschool teachers	3.49	.84	3.36	.71
16.	Collections of data by supervisors improves the implementation of ECCDE programme in my school	3.47	.88	3.16	.99
17.	Supervisors who visit my preschool centre are friendly	3.04	1.07	2.99	.98
18.	Feedback mechanisms is put in place to help correct lapses in the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in my school	3.18	1.09	3.02	.85
19.	Supervisors evaluate preschool teachers' performance especially the newly recruited ones in my school	3.05	.73	3.16	.74
20.	Supervisors assess the performance of preschool children when they visit my school	3.05	1.07	3.13	.79
	Cumulative Mean	3.14	.93	3.14	.81

Decision mean = 2.50

The result presented in the table 2 indicated that instructional supervision is adequately conducted in both public and private preschool centres because the cumulative mean of 3.14 for both public and private preschool centres are higher than the decision mean of 2.50. Therefore, in both cases their responses are positively inclined. The following hypotheses were tested using non parametric statistical tool of chi-square:

Ho¹: There is no significant difference between preschool teacher's commitments to lesson delivery and the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State.

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

Table 3: Chi-square (χ^2) statistics test on assessment of Preschool Teacher's Commitments to Lesson delivery for the Implementation of ECCDE Curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State.

N	Mean	SD	χ^2	Df	α	P-value	Decision
370	3.10	.83	.224	3	.05	.894	Accepted

Table 3 shows the result of hypothesis testing which says there is no significant difference in teacher's commitments to lesson delivery 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 no significant difference exists in teacher's commitment to lesson delivery for the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state. It shows that $\chi^2=.224$ at Df 3, with p-value of .894 at 0.05 alpha level; $p=.894>0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Ho²: There is no significant difference between instructional supervision and the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State.

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

N	Mean	SD	χ^2	Df	α	P-value	Decision
370	3.14	.86	5.06	3	.05	.08	Accepted

Table 4 shows the result of test of hypothesis six, which says there is no significant difference in the instructional supervision conducted in ECCDE centres 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 supervision in the implementation of ECCDE curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state. It shows that $\chi^2=5.06$ at Df 3, with p-value of .08 at 0.05 alpha level; $p=.08>0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of the Findings

The first finding revealed that, there is no significant difference between teacher's commitment to lesson delivery and the implementation of early childhood care and development education curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina state and most preschool teachers in public and private schools are committed to lesson attendance and as such preschool children perform better when they are enrolled into primary schools. This finding agreed with the finding of Mudzanani and Makgato (2016) who conducted a study on the Roles of School Managers on the Curriculum Delivery in Teaching and Learning Perspectives: Perspective from Poorly and well Performing Schools in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province reported that there was a high lesson attendance by teachers and most of the teachers cover the contents adequately.

The second finding revealed that there is no significant difference between instructional supervision and the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in public and private schools in Katsina State and that instructional supervision is adequately conducted in Early Childhood Care and Development Education centres. This also disagreed with the finding of Habiba (2012) who conducted a research on Assessment of the Implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme in Nigeria (1999-2009) reported that there was poor supervision of universal Basic Education programme in the northwest geopolitical zone and most of the supervisors lacked the needed vehicles and other facilities to carry out their functions and responsibilities as instructional supervisors.

Conclusion

This study assessed the Impacts of Preschool Teachers Commitments to Lesson delivery and Instructional Supervision in the Implementation of Early Childhood Care and Development Education Curriculum in Public and Private Schools in Katsina State, Nigeria. it was concluded that preschool teachers in both public and private schools in Katsina State possessed the needed teaching qualifications to teach preschool children, preschool teachers are committed to lesson attendance in both public and private schools in Katsina State there was adequate monitoring and supervision by quality assurance officers in both public and private preschool centres in Katsina State for 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 in public and private schools should remain committed to lesson attendance and government and private school proprietors should provide incentives and motivation to preschool teachers for the successful implementation of early childhood care and development education curriculum

2. Instructional supervisors should continue to put more efforts and carry out their duties in every nooks and crannies of the state to ensure successful implementation of early childhood care and development education curriculum in both public and private preschool centres.

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