

Assessment of Implementation of National Policy on Education (2013) in Early Childhood Education in Osun State

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ABSTRACT

This article assessed the availability of teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State; It also determined the extent to which the available teaching and learning facilities are being utilized in Early Childhood Education centres in the study area; It further examined the various method of teaching in Early Childhood Education centres in the study area. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The sample of the study comprised 120 teachers which were randomly selected from ten (10) schools from each of the local government areas that were selected from each of the senatorial districts with four (4) teachers from each school. The instruments adopted by this study for data collection were a checklist titled “Teaching and Learning Facilities Observation Checklist (TLFOC) and a questionnaire which was developed by the researchers titled “Teaching and Learning Facilities Questionnaire” (TLFQ) The instrument were validated by two experts in the field of early childhood education. To determine the reliability values of the two instruments, Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient of 0.6. and 0.72 were yielded for TLFOC and TLFQ respectively The data were analysed using descriptive analysis. The results showed that there were some learning facilities available for use though not adequate enough and their utilization rate was moderate while the most commonly used method was play-way method.

Keywords: Curriculum, Early Childhood Education. Facilities, Centres,

INTRODUCTION

It is believed in every modern society that education is vital to the development of a nation, therefore education can be referred to as a huge investment to a nation’s development. Hence, most of the countries of the world have provided various educational programmes for their citizens especially at the pre-primary stage which is believed to be the foundation upon which all other educational level builds. It has been observed that through ages, societies have one form of education or the other which were either indigenous or western and it varies from place to place and from time to time. Education, according to Labo, *et al* (2009), is the permanent change in behavior which comes by learning, and consists of all efforts (conscious or incidental) made by a society to accomplish set objectives, which are considered to be desirable in terms of the individual and also the societal needs. Osakwe (2006), noted that education is an important instrument to build a nation and it involves a system of training and instruction designed to transmit knowledge, skill, potentials and abilities, which gives room for effective and efficient growth and development of an individual. In Nigeria, education is regarded as an “instrument par excellence for social and economic reconstruction of the nation”. Government regard education as key to realization of Nigeria’s collective

aspiration of being among the top 20 develop nations of the world by the year 2020. In Nigeria according to Ifeanyi (2004), before Western Education was introduced by the Christian missionaries, there were other systems of education (Traditional and Islamic systems of education). Each communities use different approach to educate their young ones according to their values and norms in the traditional system of education. Akinkuotu (2001), stated that in an educational system, it is necessary that there would be transmission, acquisition and utilization of knowledge for education to take place no matter the purpose for which it is designed. The importance of education to the development of a society and nation as a whole, cannot be overemphasized hence the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) initiated several educational policies over the past decade. One of such policies is the National Policy on Education, which specify the objectives and guidelines of action on Early Childhood Education (ECE) (Agbo, 2008).

Educational Policies is an instrument used by the government to achieve the objectives of education. Educational policies are the varieties laws and rules that govern the operation of education systems as well as the principles and act of making policies by the government in the educational sector, hence, could be referred to as a tool for implementing educational programmes (UNESCO, 2015). Education occurs in many forms for many purposes through many institutions. They are referred to as written policies when there are documents somewhere for referencing and are unwritten when in form of pronouncements, that is, policy statements by people in power or position of authority. Policies are guides that usually provide the direction of operations of managers. It makes managers understand the extent to which they can go in the process of decision making. NOUN (2011) stated that Educational Policy of Nigeria as a general statement containing principles, regulations and rules, that govern many of the decisions on how to educate children, where to get them educated, where to get them employed, who to teach them, how to finance their education, what to teach, how to impart skills, goals, objectives and even the philosophy.

In Nigeria, the National Policy on Education (NPE,2014) prescribe national guidelines and requirements for the effective administration, management and implementation of education at all tiers of government. The National Policy on Education therefore, is a statement of intentions, expectations, goals and standards for quality education delivery in Nigeria. It is the prescription of the philosophical foundation for the Nigerian Education System which is aimed at streamlining efforts in the education sector (NPE, 2014). The first Edition of the National Policy on Education was published in 1977 and this has been successively followed by revised 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and other editions published in 1981, 1988, 2004, and 2007 respectively to the most recent which was published in 2013 and reprinted in 2014. Revision of the National Policy on Education have been necessitated by the need to address noticeable gaps in content and provisions that emerged in the implementation, maintain currency, relevance and to give adequate attention to new opportunities, issues and challenges. The revision and updating of the 5th edition (2007) of the National Policy on Education was informed by the need to:

1. Situate the education sector within the overall context of governments' reform agenda enunciated in the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS);
2. reposition the Nigerian education sector to effectively meet the challenges of the Education for All (EFA) initiatives, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and NEEDS;
3. improve and refocus educational quality and service delivery for the accelerated attainment of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) goals for social and economic transformation, wealth creation, poverty reduction, employment generation and value reorientation as well as meet the ideals of Transformation Agenda of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
4. reflect, accommodate and respond to Universal Basic Education (UBE), the provision of the UBE acts, and the implication for the education sector.
5. Achieve public ownership of the National Policy on Education and increase compliance with its provision through consensus building in its development and strengthened implementation

monitoring; and

6. Reflect the National Vision of attaining global economic relevance by 2020, Roadmap for the Development of the Nigerian Education Sector, the (4) Four Year Strategy Plan for the Development of the Education Sector (2011-2015) and the government's white paper on the report of the Presidential Task Team on Education.

The 6th edition of the National Policy on Education restates Nigerian's national goal and philosophy of education, specifies the goals and objectives education should accomplish, defines the structure and strategies for its provision, set guidelines and required standard for its delivery, management and quality assurance. It further clarifies the responsibilities of the three tiers of government, their agencies and all other education stakeholders. This edition highlights and emphasizes:

1. The consolidation of Pre-Primary, Primary and Junior Secondary Education to a 10-year Basic Education in line with Universal Basic Education (UBE) and its establishment Acts;
2. Improved quality assurance, restructuring and enhancing the capacity of the Federal and States/FCT Inspectorate Services through effective performance evaluation;
3. The development and maintenance of credible and up-to-date National Education Management and Information System (NEMIS) and corresponding State Education Management and Information System (SEMIS);
4. The effective use of strategic planning to improve the quality of education provision and service delivery;
5. Improve teacher quality through professionalizing the teaching profession in Nigeria and the provision more in-service training opportunities and other incentives for teachers; and
6. Better condition, collaboration and networking of activities, programmes and interventions of all tiers and government, development partners and all other stakeholders in the Nigerian education sector to eliminate overlaps, achieve and sustain synergy.

The Nigerian education system according to NPE (2014), is structured into Basic Education, Post-Basic Education and Career development, Mass and Nomadic Education, Tertiary Education, Open and Distance Education, and Special Needs Education. Basic Education is the education given to children age 0-15. It encompasses Early Child Care and Development Education (0-4 years) and 10 years of formal education which includes pre-primary education (for ages 5-6), 6 years of primary education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education.

Early Child Care and Development Education (ECCDE) is a pre-primary care and education given to aid physical, social, psychological and mental growth and development of the child by people other than their family or in setting outside of the home. It is the concept commonly used to describe the formal teaching and care of young children. This form of education is what is captured differently as Day-care, Creche, Play-class, Kindergarten and Nursery. Early Childhood Education in the form of nursery school or pre-primary education as we know it today in Nigeria is largely a post-colonial development. It is the children's care, development and education from birth to the period of exposure to primary schooling experience in the formal, informal and non-formal settings. Prior to this time, for malising Early Child Care and Development Education (ECCDE) was considered needless in Nigeria because the society was safe, conducive for child's learning, growth and development. Older members of the society were readily available and willing to help and guide the child in the developmental processes, even with or without the presence of the parents. Nowadays, the environment is hostile and not safe, mothers are economically engaged and children cannot safely be in the care of neighbours, due to the increasing incidences of child's sexual molestation, kidnapping, food poisoning, child trafficking, and child labour, ritual killings and so on. In averting this danger, better option is in Early Child Care and Development Education (ECCDE) which is a more affordable and reliable childcare practice, providing essential support for Early Child Care and Development

Education (Early Childhood Education) is regarded as the foundation for the development of a child because the experiences which the child comes across during the early stage could influence the child negatively or positively. It is believed that Early Childhood Education facilitates the learning that occurs in the later stage of a child's life. Early Childhood Education is a starting point for a child's development and the key foundation of the Nigerian Educational System. It is the education given to children before the age of entering into primary school (that is, age 6).

Olowe, Kutelu, and Majebi (2014), referred to Early Childhood Education as any group programme that is designed to promote children's intellectual development, socio-emotional development, language development, physical development and learning from birth to age 8 and this therefore implies that it could be formal or informal education. Sooter (2013) stated that the aims of Early Childhood Education (ECE) include fostering proper development of children, identifying and addressing their problems, harnessing their potentials, molding their characters, enhancing their learning and equipping them for life so that their actions are channeled towards positive personal, communal and global development. Therefore, all Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) activities and programmes are directed towards giving early educational experiences to children. In view of this, the importance of the early years is widely stated in various international documents and developmental goals such as the United Nations Convention on the Right of the child, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) goals, among others.

Maduwesi (1999) sees Early Childhood Education as the education offered to children who have not yet reached the statutory age of beginning primary school. He further maintained that it is a semi-formal education arrangement, usually outside home whereby young children from about the age of 3 years are exposed through play-like activities in a group setting through mental, social and physical learning suited to their developmental stages, until the mandatory age of government approved formal schooling. In Nigeria, ECE started as far back as the pre-colonial era in the form of nursery school or pre-primary education, though the demand for each education was low until recent time (Abba n.d). Early Childhood Education in the form of nursery school or pre-primary education or creche as we know it today in Nigeria is largely a post-colonial development. The semblances of ECE during the colonial era were the Kindergarten and the infant classes, which consisted of groups of children considered not yet ready for primary education. And since grouping for instruction in schools then was not age-based, some children aged six or even more, could be found in some of the infant classes (Tor-Anyiin, 2008). With the phasing out of infant classes, some parents began to feel the need for nursery schools. During the pre-colonial period also, all efforts for provision of Early Childhood Education were confined to the voluntary sector and received little or no support from the government. It was for the first time in 1977 with the introduction of the National Policy on Education by the then military government of Nigeria that the importance and need for ECE was given official recognition and linked with the child's educational performance in primary school. Gradually, early childhood institution stayed, and by 1985, Nigeria has about 4,200 Early Childhood Education institutions. Then by 1992, the number increased to about 8,300 (Federal Government of Nigeria/ UNICEF, 1993).

According to the National Policy on Education (2014), Early Child Care and Development Education is segmented into ages 0-4 years situated in creches or daycare, fully in the hands of the private sector and social development services whiles ages 5-6 (pre-primary) are within the formal education sector. It is the care, protection, stimulation and learning promoted in children from ages 0-4 in creche or nursery and one-year education given to children aged 5 prior to entering primary school.

In Nigeria, Early Childhood Education came into being in order to assist and bring early child care within the reach of majority of Nigerian children, particularly those in rural and low socio-economic areas. Currently, ECE institutions are located in various places and buildings, Universities and Colleges campuses, premises of some industries and business organisations, Churches and Mosques premises and even

residential buildings with unprecedented expansion owing to the high demand for Early Childhood Care and Education by parents. An investigation conducted in 2003 revealed that more than two-fifth (42%) of the sample ECCE facilities in Nigeria was private-owned. Government owned accounted for 34%, and 21% by local communities (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2007). As time went on, it became necessary for the government to increase its involvement in pre-school education in Nigeria. By 2004, this segment of education had been integrated into the Universal Basic Education programme (UBE) by the UBE Act 2004. All children within the pre-school age bracket were entitled to be admitted without paying school fees into any Early Childhood Education Centres, which was planned to be incorporated into every public primary school. For the year 2003/2004, the gross and net enrolment ratios were 14.7% and 10.9% respectively and the normative age groups under consideration were 3 to 5 years of age (EAGMR, 2007).

The purpose of Early Childhood Education as stated in the NPE (2014) includes:

1. To effect a smooth transmission from home to school,
2. to prepare the child for primary level of education,
3. to provide adequate care, supervision and security for the children while their parents are at work (on the farm, in the office, market places and so on),
4. to inculcate social, moral norms and values,
5. to inculcate in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through exploration of nature, the environment, art, music and the use of toys and so on,
6. to develop a sense of co-operation and team-spirit,
7. to stimulate in the child good habits, including good health habits, and
8. to teach the rudiment of numbers, letters, colour, shapes, forms and so on through play.

The government also has a role to in the achievement of the purpose of Early Childhood Education as stated in the National Policy on Education, (2014) which includes:

1. to set and monitor minimum standard for Early Childhood Education Centers;
2. develop and disseminate curriculum materials such as Integrated Early Child Care Development (IECD) Policy, National Minimum Standard for the establishment of Early Child Care Education Centers, IECD Curriculum, IECD Implementation Guidelines and all other materials that will enhance the implementation of ECCDE;
3. encourage both community and private effort in the establishment of Early Childhood Education centres based on set standards;
4. make provision in teacher education programmes for specialization in early child care and education, and for retraining of teachers;
5. ensure that the curriculum of teacher education is oriented towards play-way method;
6. ensure that Early Childhood Education centres adopt the following caregiver- infant ratios: a). Creche shall be 1-10, b). Nursery 1-25, c). Pre-Primary 1-25;
7. develop suitable ECCDE curriculum for nationwide implementation;
8. supervise and control quality of ECCDE centers;
9. make provision for the production and effective utilization of learning and instructional materials in adequate numbers; and
10. Ensure that the medium of instruction is principally the mother-tongue or the language of the immediate community and to this end will:
 1. Develop the orthography of more Nigerian language; and
 2. Produce textbooks, supplementary readers and other instructional materials in Nigerian languages.

Implementation simply put, is the step-by-step process of putting a decision, policy, idea, method or plan into effect or execution. It is also the process of making a plan, policy or decision effective or active. It is

the process of coordinating activities of carrying out drafted planned, policies and projects. Policy implementation is a critical stage in the policy process that involves needed to put laws, rules or policies into use in order to solve a problem. Policy implementation is simply referred to as the various activities or steps taken by the government and other policy makers to achieve the goals and objectives articulated in the policy statements. It involves translating the goals and objectives of a policy into an action. It involves the process of converting financial, material, technical, intellectual and human inputs into outputs in order to achieve results. It has been observed that policy making is not a problem in most developing countries like Nigeria but the implementation of the policy made is a serious problem that calls for concern. In order to achieve educational objectives, policies made for the educational sector must be implemented. Without implementation, educational policies made are mere waste of time, finance and human resources. Gallagher *et al* (2004) noted that it is also not enough to translate policy into concrete implementation but that the qualification of personnel that would implement the plan and a clearly written statement of their work description should be given consideration too. If the goal of Early Childhood Education is to ensure that best possible education is given to every Nigerian child, then, policy implementation personnel must be skilful and knowledgeable (Adamolekun, 2003). It is sad to say that almost all public schools in Nigeria do not have Early Childhood Education centres and this has resulted in leaving Early Childhood Education mostly in the hands of private schools. A lot of concern has been raised by stakeholders in the educational sector with respect to the quality of education offered in Early Childhood Education centers and this is because the essence of implementation of National Policy on Education is to ensure best and qualitative ECE. In order to ensure effective implementation of Early Childhood Education, the collaborative effort of the government, parents, school authorities and teachers are required. The goal of education is to bring about desired change in learners, therefore, availability and utilization of teaching and learning facilities, and methods of teaching are important in order to achieve goals and objectives of the National Policy on Education on Early Childhood Education. The extent of implementation of the ECE programme could be attributed to inadequate provision of physical facilities, among other issues. National Policy on Education advocate for the use of play method of teaching and this seems not effectively used in most schools, which may be because teachers are not well trained or as a result of inadequacy of the materials used in play method of teaching. The concern of this study is to examine the quality of education in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State. Therefore, to what extent has NPE on Early Childhood Education programme be implemented in Osun state?

Objectives of the Study:

1. Assess the availability of teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State;
2. Determine the extent to which the available teaching and learning facilities are being utilized in Early Childhood Education centre in the study area;
3. Ascertain the method of teaching being used if is in line with the National Policy on Education (2013) in Early Childhood Education centres in the study area.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are teaching and learning facilities available in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun state?
2. What is the extent of utilization of the available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun state?
3. What are the various methods of teaching in Early Childhood Education in Osun state?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Behaviourism and Social learning Theory

1. Burrhus Frederic Skinner (1904-1994) is known for his theory of operant conditioning which is based on the idea that children's behavior can be increased by giving the reinforcer and it can also be decreased by given punishment (Berk, 2000).
2. Bandura and Walter (1963) are known for the social learning theory which expands on operant conditioning theory by focusing on learning by observation or imitation. They observed that persistence of behaviour requires reinforcement. They believed that imitation or observational learning increases the chances that children will learn new behaviours. The behaviourists believed that children's development is outside of their own influence that is shaped by environmental stimuli (Daniel 2003).

Techniques perfect for use in Early Childhood Education includes:

1. **Drill:** This is a teaching technique that involves consistent and continuous repetition of a desired action. This method is most often used in teaching topics that requires memorization such as multiplication table and when teaching subjects like geography and grammar.
2. **Segmented Teaching:** This method requires the teacher to break a topic down into smaller, comprehensive lessons. Each segment is built upon and connected together. This method can also be used in teaching phonics where it involves breaking down a word into each of its phonemes and graphemes to help children learn how to write it out. Here, children who are learning to read begin with identifying the sound of individual letters, then letter blends, until they are able to read entire words.
3. **Modelling:** Literally speaking, this involves learning by imitation. This is an instructional strategy in which the teacher demonstrates a new concept or approach to learning and students learn by observing. This method of teaching is usually used in teaching language or writing to children.
4. **Structured Classroom routine:** Classroom routines involves creating a consistent, predictable sequence of events to help students understand what to expect and what is expected of them during class. Children must be familiar with this routine. This method maintains the focus of the children on the teacher. This theory is applicable to this study in that it will allow:
 1. Higher achievement through familiarity which create comfort zone for children;
 2. Periodic assessment with children to know their level of understanding;
 3. Immediate feedback, or reinforcement;

The policy on teacher's specialization and the concept of assessment is therefore based on this theory.

5. **Play-way Method:** Play means to do things with pleasure as children. Play-way method of learning allows children to develop social and cognitive skills through play. In other words, play is a way of relaxation rather than work. Maria Montessori and Fredrick Froebel who were the first to propose play-way method of teaching noted naturally children are playful and creative, rather than receptive (Ofoefuna, 1998). Fredrick Froebel educational philosophy stressed play as an important form of self-expression and the most natural and effective way of learning and development of abilities of children. According to him, play should not lack freedom and independent actions from children even when it is done with the supervision of adults. He believed that through handling of the different geometric shapes, children learn to observe, compare and distinguish objects based on form, size, colour, and weight. He also used small table blocks which when put together formed a large cube.

Other activities involve arrangement of objects like tablets, sticks and rings. They also practice drawing, colouring, modeling clays, folding paper and weaving mats.

Maheshwari, (2013) discovered that play allows for informal and free environment which gives the child an opportunity to learn concepts, Mathematics and Language. In play method, stimulating learning environment is provided with interesting materials and equipment. The child is given the freedom to choose items and materials to play with in order to ensure that development of self-confidence through play is not hindered.

Toys and coloured books should be freely available. Sorting shapes and colours, modeling, painting or drawing with crayons, looking at picture books, sand and clay are all activities which the pupils will enjoy. Singing and story-telling are also activities that should be included in the play-way method of learning.

Concept of Early Childhood Education (ECE)

A child is a young human between the stages of birth and puberty, or between the developmental period of infancy and puberty, a period known as childhood stages. Early Childhood Education is the foundation of the Nigerian education system and it is the starting point for a child's development. Early Childhood Education is the education given in an educational institution to children prior to their entering the primary school. It is the education given to a child before the age of entering into primary school (that is, age 6). In Nigeria, a child is considered to be anybody below the age of 18 years. Baker (2002) noted that children gain variety of experiences in the course of physical, intellectual, social and emotional growth and developmental changes. He stated that "human life proceeds by stages that are influenced by varieties of factors such as heredity; family; biological; economic and political institution and critical life issues". Childhood stages were classified by Barnett (2006) to include: Neonates which are ages 0 – 1 month, Infant which are ages 1 month – 1 year, Toddler which are ages 1– 3 years, Preschooler, ages 4 -6 years, School-aged child includes ages 6 -13 years.

According to National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the early childhood is referred to as the period from birth till about the age of eight, which is a uniquely valuable and vulnerable time in the human life cycle. Maduwesi (2005) in Ibiam (2011) stated that when a child is given adequate support and care with regards to good health, nutrition, psychological care and protection, it promotes the formation and development of intelligence, personality and social behavior of the child. Educationist need to acquire an in-dept knowledge of the developmental stages of the child in-order to plan an effective and efficient childhood programme. Child development as defined by Depemu (2004) is the biological, psychological and emotional changes that occur in human beings between birth and the end of adolescence, as the individual progresses from dependency to increasing independence. These developmental changes of an individual can be greatly influenced by genetic factors and occurrences during the period of conception. Human has the innate ability to adjust to their environment, and this is what child development entails (Onibokun, 2007). The optimal development of children is vital to the society and so, it is important to understand the social, cognitive, emotional, and educational development of children (Karloly, 2010). There have been great innovations in the practical aspect of teaching in Early Childhood Education that promotes early learning within the school system which has resulted from a lot of research and interest in Early Childhood Education.

Benefits of Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education is vital to the growth and development of a child and hence, its benefits cannot be over-emphasized. It is more than preparation for primary school. It aims at the holistic development of a child's social, emotional, mental and physical needs in order to build a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing. Meyers (2006) described it as "a catalyst for all other schooling

investments”. Modern world has recognized the importance of sending children to early schools because Early Childhood Education has been seen all over the world as a good place for children before they start primary education. Women no longer work as full-time housewives in modern society, who are solely concerned with the responsibility of taking care of the family because they now take up paid employment (Neumann, 2000). The African extended family setting, where there are always people at home to look after the children is gradually going out of practice. Likewise, domestic helps were not readily available, and in cases where they were, they were expensive to use. Therefore, in order to guarantee safety and adequate care of the children when their parents are at work, the nursery school is necessary (Reynolds, 2008). Early Childhood Education provides children with good environment for socialization. Since the children need a good environment for their proper social and emotional development, it has become necessary for parents to keep their children in the Early Childhood Education centres (Onibokun, 2007). The type of stimulation and encouragement a child receives from home determines the extent to which a child realise his potentials. In Nigeria for example, many parents cannot provide all the necessary stimulation needed for proper and total development of their child due to socio-economic problem in the country (Akinbote, 2001). Early Childhood Education is important and necessary for the child so as to avoid events or occurrences that will limit or prevent the child’s rate of maturation and high level of achievement in all aspect of life. The school enables the child to receive the necessary opportunities which are not available at home (Reynolds, 2001). There are also children with some problems which may not be noticed by the parents. These problems could be physical, for example, bad sight, hearing problems or inability to walk; it could be emotional such as fear, restlessness and so on. The various expert in the early schools could help to detect such problem on time and give advice to parents on how to correct them. The early school is compulsory for children in modern societies in order to enable appropriate social, emotional, mental and physical development of the child.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The sample of the study comprised of a total of 120 teachers which were be randomly selected from ten (10) schools from each of the local government selected from each of the senatorial districts with four (4) teachers from each school. The instruments adopted by this study for data collection were a checklist titled “Teaching and Learning Facilities Observation Checklist (TLFOC) and a questionnaire which was developed by the researchers titled “Teaching and Learning Facilities Questionnaire” (TLFQ) The instrument were validated by two experts in the field of early childhood education. To determine the reliability values of the two instruments, Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient of 0.6. and 0.72 were yielded for TLFOC and TLFQ respectively

RESULTS

Demographic Variables

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of socio-demographic information of the respondents in ECE centres in Osun State

S/N	Variables		Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	52	43.3
		Female	68	56.7
2	Age	Less than 30 years	46	38.3
		30-40 years	60	50.0
		Above 40 years	14	11.7
3	Teaching Experience	Less than 10 years	48	40.0

		11-20 years	40	33.3
		21-30 years	22	18.3
		31 years and above	10	8.3
4	Qualifications	NCE	25	20.8
		B.Sc.Ed./B.A.Ed.	68	56.7
		M.A.Ed./M.Ed.	20	16.7
		Others	7	5.8

N = 120

Results in Table 1 showed the descriptive analysis of socio-demographic information of teachers in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State. It can be gathered from the Table that 43.3% of the respondents are males while 56.7% are females even as 38.3%, 50.0% and 11.7% of the teachers are in the age bracket of less than 30 years, 30-40 years and above 40 years respectively. In the same light, 40.0%, 33.3%, 18.3% and 8.3% of the respondents have taught for less than 10 years, 11-20 years, 21-30 years and 31 years and above respectively even as 20.8%, 56.7%, 16.7 and 5.8% of the teachers are qualified with NCE, B.Sc.Ed./B.A.Ed., M.A.Ed./M.Ed. and others respectively in ECE centres in the study area.

Research Question One: How available are the teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State?

In order to answer this research question, data collected on the available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres were subjected to descriptive analysis and the results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State

S/N	Items	Available F (%)	Not Available F (%)	Mean \bar{x}
1	Government approved curriculum	27(90.0)	3(10.0)	3.25
2	Manual for caregivers	24(80.0)	6(20.0)	2.64
3	Toy-making manual	6(20.0)	24(80.0)	1.27
4	Time-table	30(100.0)	–	3.55
5	Lesson-note	30(100.0)	–	3.55
6	Whiteboard	30(100.0)	–	3.55
7	Charts	30(100.0)	–	3.55
8	Television	18(60.0)	12(40.0)	2.20
9	Radio set	24(80.0)	6(20.0)	2.64
10	Child-sized chairs	30(100.0)	–	3.55
11	Toys and model	24(80.0)	6(20.0)	2.64
12	Toilet	30(100.0)	–	3.55
13	Ventilated classroom	27(90.0)	3(10.0)	3.25
14	Safe and clean water	27(90.0)	3(10.0)	3.25
15	Reading and writing materials	27(90.0)	3(10.0)	3.25
16	Sick bay	6(20.0)	24(80.0)	1.27
17	Playground	24(80.0)	6(20.0)	2.64

18	Library	12(40.0)	18(60.0)	1.72
19	Sport facilities	12(40.0)	18(60.0)	1.72
20	Child-sized tables	30(100.0)	–	3.55

Results in Table 2 showed the descriptive analysis of availability of teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State. Considering mean scores, it can be deduced from the Table that government approved curriculum ($\bar{x} = 3.25$), manual for caregivers ($\bar{x} = 2.64$), time-table ($\bar{x} = 3.55$), lesson note ($\bar{x} = 3.55$), whiteboard ($\bar{x} = 3.55$), charts ($\bar{x} = 3.55$), television ($\bar{x} = 2.20$), radio set ($\bar{x} = 2.64$), child-sized chairs ($\bar{x} = 3.55$), toys and models ($\bar{x} = 2.64$), toilet ($\bar{x} = 3.55$), ventilated classrooms ($\bar{x} = 3.25$), safe and clean water ($\bar{x} = 3.25$), reading and writing materials ($\bar{x} = 3.25$), playground ($\bar{x} = 3.25$), and child-sized tables ($\bar{x} = 3.55$) are the teaching and learning facilities that are available in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State.

Research Question Two: What is the extent of utilization of the available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State?

In order to answer this research question, data collected on the 20 items of the extent of utilization of available teaching and learning facilities in ECE centres were scored such that ‘Utilized’ (U) response was allotted 1 and ‘Not Utilized’ (NU) was allotted 0. Twenty items were used to measure the extent of utilization of teaching and learning facilities in ECE centres. Responses from individual to each item were computed and the minimum and maximum scores obtained were 0 and 20 respectively. Rated scores on the scale 0-14 were adjudged as having low extent of utilization of available teaching and learning facilities in ECE centres. Rated scores on the scale 15-20 were adjudged as having moderate extent of utilization of teaching and learning facilities in ECE centres. Rated scores on the scale 21-30 were adjudged as having high extent of utilization of available teaching and learning facilities in ECE centres. The summary of the results is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of the extent of utilization of the available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State

S/N	Class	Extent of Utilization	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
1	0-14	Low	9	30.0
2	15-20	Moderate	15	50.0
3	21-30	High	6	20.0
	Total		30	100.0

N = 30

Results in Table.3 showed the descriptive analysis of the extent of utilization of the available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State. It can be deduced from the Table that the extent of utilization of the available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres is moderate at 50.0% in Osun State.

Research Question Three: What are the various methods of teaching in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State?

In order to answer this research question, data collected on the various methods of teaching by the teachers in Early Childhood Education centres were subjected to descriptive analysis and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of the various methods of teaching in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State

S/N	Methods	Utilized F (%)	Not Utilized F (%)	Mean \bar{x}
1	Play-way method	104(86.7)	16(13.3)	3.72
2	Excursions	96(80.0)	24(20.0)	3.58
3	Memorization	111(92.5)	9(7.5)	3.85
4	Story-telling	85(70.8)	35(29.2)	3.27
5	Reading and writing	85(70.8)	35(29.2)	3.27
6	Singing rhymes	111(92.5)	9(7.5)	3.85
7	Questioning	96(80.0)	24(20.0)	3.58

N = 120

Results in Table 4 showed the descriptive analysis of the various methods of teaching in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State. Considering mean scores, it can be observed from the Table that play-way method ($\bar{x} = 3.72$), excursions ($\bar{x} = 3.58$), memorization ($\bar{x} = 3.85$), story-telling ($\bar{x} = 3.27$), reading and writing ($\bar{x} = 3.27$), singing rhymes ($\bar{x} = 3.85$) and questioning ($\bar{x} = 3.58$) are the various methods of teaching in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings of the study showed that government approved curriculum facilities and materials such as, manual for caregivers, whiteboard, charts, television and radio sets, child-sized chairs, toys and models, toilet, ventilated classrooms, safe and clean water, reading and writing materials, playground and child-sized tables are available in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State but facilities like sickbay, Library, sport facilities and toy-making manual are not readily available in most of the Early Childhood Education centers in Osun state. This findings corroborate the results of the study carried out by Research Clue.com (2020) on the implementation of the Early childhood Education curriculum in Ethiopie-East local government area of Delta state. The study carried out revealed that provisions were made for teaching and learning facilities in primary schools in Ethiopie-East local government area of the state. The findings of this study are in tandem with the findings of Bassey, Louisa, and Amie-Ogan (2019) when they examined the availability and utilization of instructional materials for effective teaching in public primary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State which revealed that visual instructional materials are available for effective teaching in Public Junior Secondary School in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Also, the study further revealed that visual instructional materials are utilized to a High Extent (HE) for effective teaching in Public Junior Secondary School in Port Harcourt Metropolis. It was recommended among others that there should be provision of visual instructional materials in all the Public Junior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. This will enhance effective teaching and learning. This will enhance effective teaching and learning.

Results of the study further revealed that the extent of utilization of the available teaching and learning facilities in Early Childhood Education centres is moderate at 50.0% in Osun State. This implies that teaching and learning facilities are not maximally utilized in private Early Childhood Education centres in Osun state. The finding of the study supports the views of Hailu and Biyabeyen (2014) who asserted that school physical facilities which consists of all types of buildings that are used for academic and non-academic activities, which include equipment, classroom facilities, furniture, toilet, ICT, library, health facilities and laboratory materials and others play a pivotal role in the smooth running of teaching and

learning process in schools and therefore should be provided and utilized maximally in schools. Also, the finding corroborates the views of Cotton, O'Connell, Palmer, and Rutland (2002) who asserts that the furniture in each classroom should function to facilitate learning while allowing the appropriate level of participation without distractions. The result in a way supports the findings of Nnabugwu, Onwuka and Ugwu (2020) when they investigated the availability and utilization of instructional materials for the implementation of early childhood literacy curriculum in public schools in Orumba South L.G.A, of Anambra State. Two research questions guided the study. The major findings were that some of the instructional materials were not available in the implementation of early childhood literacy curriculum and that teachers do not use some of the instructional materials. They concluded that teacher do not use instructional materials which would have helped learners to gain information, think, recall and also assimilate what they have been taught. This hindered the implementation of early childhood literacy curriculum. Based on their findings, recommendations were made that workshops and seminars should be organized from time to time to re-train teachers on how to use instructional materials. The findings from this study also in a way agrees with Okewole, *et al* (2015) when they carried out a study on the implementation of Early Childhood Education Curriculum in Osun State. The results of the study revealed that teaching and learning facilities at Early Childhood Education centres were not adequate enough starting from the classrooms, playground, resting/sleeping facilities and lot of others are all in appalling state begging for repairs. Some of these centres are using residential buildings converted into schools. Some centres do not even have any space that could be called playground whereas children at this level cannot stay in the classroom for long but desire to play and that is why the NPE (2004) recommends play-way method for these children. After play, these children would be expected to have a place to rest or sleep. Unfortunately, most of the centres according to this study do not have adequate resting/sleeping facilities. Though the concern of the study carried out is not on the adequacy or otherwise of teaching and learning facilities in Osun State but it can be deduced that the adequacy of the teaching and learning materials affect the extent of utilization of the teaching and learning material which is in moderate in private Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State. Also, personal interaction with the teachers revealed that although the curriculum is available in ECE centers in Osun State, most teachers haven't seen it and do not use it in preparing their lesson notes.

Finally, results of the study indicated that play-way is the most commonly used method as contained in the recommended National Curriculum. Most of the ECE centres also used excursions, memorization, story-telling, reading and writing, singing rhymes and questioning are the various methods of teaching in Early Childhood Education centres in Osun State. The result of this finding in a way corroborates the report of Ekanem, Essiem and Ekanem (2011) on a study on investigation of play facilities and socio-motor skills development of pre-primary school and primary school pupils in Akwa-Ibom State since the concern of this study is on the extent of utilization of methods of teaching in Early Childhood Education centres. The paper revealed that no public schools employ play facilities in teaching and learning but private primary schools utilize play facilities.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that most ECE centres in Osun State have moderate provisions of learning facilities that could enhance the teaching learning activities as provided for in the recommended curriculum. The study also revealed that most facilities available at the centres are moderately used for learning activities. Finally, the study also showed that play-way method was commonly used as medium of instruction which is in line with the provision of the ECE curriculum in Osun State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is hereby recommended that the stakeholders such as the teachers, parents, school

owners, inspectors and other relevant agencies, departments and ministry of education :should ensure that the curriculum contents are implemented and the facilities are adequately provided.

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