

AN APPRAISAL OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE IN PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION SCHOOLS, OGUN EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The Early Childhood years are significant in the life of any child because the training got at this year helps the child for later success in his or her immediate environment. Pre-school education also plays an important role in the children's academic, social, linguistic, psychomotor development and self-care skills, especially the disadvantaged children. However, despite the recognition and importance given to early childhood education in Nigeria, some children in the public primary schools are not displaying appropriate skills, attitude and knowledge expected of someone that has passed through the pre-school setting some pupils cannot read, write and interact effectively, couple with the problems of illiteracy and out of school children. Hence, the need for this study. The study adopted embedded mixed methods design, with the population of 1,204 teachers in public pre-primary class and 389 public primary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District. Purposive sampling technique was used to select four (4) intact classes of one hundred and twenty-six (126) pupils and four (4) teachers. Furthermore, nine (9) pre-primary teachers were selected using purposive sampling technique for the purpose of collecting qualitative data through interview procedure. The research instruments are Classroom Interaction Sheet (CIS) (0.71) and Teachers' Perception of Pupils' Readiness Interview Guide (TPPRIG). Finally, the data collected were analysed using frequency and percentages for quantitative strand, and thematic analysis for the qualitative strand. The findings showed that English and Yoruba languages were the language of instruction used by the teacher; teachers adopted learners-centered teaching method/approach and most pre-primary teachers believed that pupils transiting from pre-primary are ready for primary education. Drawing from the conclusion, it was recommended that teachers should be encouraged to use more of the indigenous language to teach the pupils. Policy makers should look into making policies that encourages more usage of indigenous languages for teaching at this level of education.

Keywords: Pre-Primary Education Programme, Teaching Methods, Language of Instruction

Introduction

The Early Childhood years are significant in the life of any child because the training got at this year helps the child for later success in his or her immediate environment. The importance of this period in the life of the child is enormous and can never be over emphasized, which is why Bamezor, et al. (2021) considered the early years as being even more vital as it sets firm grounds for future development. When the right values are instilled in the child at this tender age, his/her learning potential is increased and chances of failure in school and in life are decreased and help the child to be a better adult. Prajodh (2021) affirmed that the child's brain develops at a remarkable rate during this period, since by the age of two the brain is said to be about 80% the size of an adult. Studies on child development reveal that by the time a child turns four, a noteworthy amount of his/her cognitive and social/behavioural potentials become defined. Thus, affirming the potential implications of the tutelage and care children are exposed to in the early years on their future wellbeing (Bamezor, 2021; Barnett, 2011; Philip & Lowenstein, 2011).

Evidenced by abundant researches across different disciplines such as neuroscience and psychology (Bakken et al., 2017; Trawick-Smith, 2014; Vandenbroeck & Van Laere, 2017; Woolfolk & Perry, 2012) considered the years from birth to age 5 to 6 as a vital period for developing the foundations for thinking, behaving and emotional well-being. According to Udachukwu (2010), the early years can be said to be a period of an all-inclusive development of a child in the social, emotional, intellectual and physical sense,

aimed towards building a solid foundation for their constant learning and welfare (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021).

The Children should therefore be supported to receive an appropriate education (Kitta & Kapinga, 2015). According to Pertreena (2017) children generally begin to learn the fundamentals of talking, walking, learning the alphabet, how to count numbers, identifying colours and forms at this stage, which are foundational aspects of Early childhood education. The paramount importance of the early years is widely acclaimed in various international documents and developmental goals such as UN Convention on the Right of the Child, African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education for All (EFA) goals among others.

Preschool education also plays an important role in the children's academic, social, linguistic, psychomotor development and self-care skills, especially the disadvantaged children (Conyers et al., 2003). According to Aslan and Uygun (2019), it also aids personality development. Early childhood education is more than a preliminary step prior to primary school enrolment as it has the prospect of caring for children and grooming them into skilful and accountable individuals on the long run (UNESCO, 2019).

The need and demand for pre-primary education programmes have continued to increase over the years especially as more women join the labour force and more people come to realize that education is the most important gift that you can give to a child. Quality education is therefore considered necessary to promote children's optimal and sustainable development (Biddle et al., 2017). While experts approve of the importance of education for all ages and gender, it is said to be the most delightful, yet risky period in the development of the child as experience gained at this stage may make or mar the child permanently. A child's early years and brain development have enduring effects on his/her capacity to learn and thrive at school and in life (Centre for Disease Development and Control CDC, 2021). These are the connections that build brain architecture, that most rapid period of brain development takes place in the first two years of life, laying the pathways for significant intellectual, emotional, physical/immunological, and social functions (Evans et al., 2000).

Pre-primary learning programmes of high quality have the ability to help youngsters master the abilities that the brain is wired to learn before entering primary school. What takes place in early learning centers should reflect knowledge of developmental stages, what children can do, and how they learn (Llewellyn, 2017). Besides, pre-school education can have significant effects on the development of academic, social, language, psycho-motor, and self-care skills of children, especially the disadvantaged children (Agbenyega & Klibthong, 2015; Kitta & Kapinga, 2015; Aslan & Uygun, 2019).

However, despite the recognition and importance given to early childhood education in Nigeria, some children in the public primary schools are not displaying appropriate skills, attitude and knowledge expected of someone that has passed through the pre-school setting some pupils are not able to read, write and interact effectively. Additionally, there is problem of literacy, and problems of out of school children. Some scholars revealed that the implementation of pre-primary education programme is poor (Ngada, 2008; Alimi, 2010; David & Olabanji, 2008; Amadi, 2013; Temesgen, 2016). Children in the public primary school are not displaying the skills and attitude, knowledge expected by them, due to poor implementation of the pre-primary education programme (Ekpo, Samuel & Adigun, 2016; Adejobi, Omoare & Oyediran, 2017; Olowe, et, al., 2019). The major damage by this problem results into half-baked and shallow-know ledged pupils who often perform poorly in their examinations. It is glaring that the implementation of ECE programmes is still affected by many challenges and as a result it is believed to have an adverse impact on the displaying of the skills and attitude, knowledge expected by pupils in primary schools.

One of the factors affecting the poor implementation of early childhood education curriculum is the Teacher's Factor; the quality of any education is tied to the quality of the teachers. Pre-school teachers as key players in young children education have a crucial role to play in early childhood curriculum implementation. This may include child guidance and discipline, respecting cultural diversity, adopting the appropriate methods of teaching and learning and encouraging self-dependence (Ntumi, 2016). The success

or failure of the implementation of teaching and learning activities in preschool is dependent on the ability of teachers to carry out the functions and roles prescribed for them (Agus et al., 2021). How the teacher manages the class in terms of the teaching methods adopted, the language of instruction will be important in determining the success or the failure of pre-primary education programme. The success or failure of the implementation of teaching and learning activities in preschool is dependent on the ability of teachers to carry out the functions and roles prescribed for them (Agus et al., 2021).

The methods of teaching the subjects should be those that stimulate the pupils to perform activities, observe, associate and reason. UBEC (2013) states that the required teaching methods that match the age, interest and abilities of pupils that can be used to stimulate them shall be by play-way, use of songs, rhymes, discovery, inquiry, field trips, dramatization, story-telling, and group work. The play-way method of teaching is the method stipulated in the objective of the pre-primary education programme to be used for the teaching of the children (FRN, 2013). Also, the National Policy on Education (2013) ensures that the communication medium of early childhood institutions is principally the Mother Tongue (MT) or Language of the Immediate Environment (LIE) while English is taught and learnt as a second language. When children are taught with their mother tongue, they learn and develop faster intellectually, cognitively, and psychologically (Fafunwa, 1984).

There is an avalanche of works by Adejobi, Omoare et al. (2017), Amali et al., (2012), Charles et al., (2016), Salami (2016); Okewole et al. (2015), Uchem and Onuh (2014), Odiagbe (2015) that have been carried out to evaluate the pre-primary education; however, most of these works focused on curriculum implementation in other State. From the aforementioned, there is need to assess the quality of classroom management by teachers in pre-primary education. Therefore, this study assessed the quality classroom instructional practice in pre-primary education schools situated in Ogun East Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Pre-primary Education in Nigeria

Pre-primary Education is called different names by different countries. In Nigeria, for instance, it bears such names as: Play Class, Tea Class, Day Care, while in the United States of America and Great Britain it is called Kindergarten, to mention just a few. Oduolowu (2011) views the concept as the sum of birth to toddlerhood (0 – 24 months) and play years (2 – 6 years) while Fowowe (2017) sees the concept as all activities targeted at promotion of the holistic development of children following individually, developmentally and culturally appropriate practice. Ejieh (2006) reported a study of the provision of nursery education in Lagos, where 7.7% out of the 948 parents sent their children to either a nursery school or a group care center. A similar study according to Ejieh by Orebanjo in the same year showed that half the working mothers in Ile-Ife which by then was a semi urban settlement, preferred keeping their children with members of the extended family for child care to sending them to day care centres or nursery schools (Ejieh 2006). The above results of the studies carried out by different researchers testify that parents did not value pre-primary education at that period.

Methods of Teaching in Pre-primary Education

The term teaching method refers to the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used for classroom instruction (Hoque 2016). Kizlik (2012) affirmed that the instructional methods entail guiding principles used for instruction. A teaching method comprises the principles and method used by teachers to enable pupils learning. Methods basically set the guidelines for the pattern of behaviour which are expected from the pupils in a learning environment. Neagley and Evans (2000) stated that methods are generally procedures for promoting learning and a good teacher uses it to increase the effectiveness of teaching process. Going by Maduabum (2002), a good method of teaching is one that is result oriented, thus the teacher, as the prime mover of the class, takes the decision of the suitable method to adopt for the lesson to be effective, taking cognizance of the following factors: ability, nature and interest of the pupils, age, experience, individual differences and family background. Hence, in selecting an appropriate teaching method based on the nature and age of the pre-schooler, it is imperative to note that children at the

preschool stage are cute, funny and often eager to learn. They are energetic, active and often difficult to keep on any particular task for more than a few minutes at a time.

Liu and Shi (2007) characterised teaching method by a set of principles, procedures or strategies to be implemented by teachers to achieve desired learning in students. Mayer (2004) says, that as constructivism has become the dominant view of how students learn, it may seem obvious to equate active learning with active methods of instruction. This means the role of the teacher becomes one of facilitator and supporter, rather than the instructor. Traditional teaching methods are the methods when students perform certain instructions, work according to the model. Due to the development of science and ICT, since the end of the 20th century there has been a replacement of direct teaching methods with principle of knowledge constructing in specific increments. The aim of a teacher is to enable a learner to examine these images (preconceptions), facilitate the integration of new information into existing mental structures and assist in reflection of not only new knowledge but also in the way it was achieved and how it was involved in the image of the world (Skuttil et al., 2014).

Play-way Method

The early proponents of play method Maria Montessori and Fredrick Froebel recognized that naturally children are playful and creative, rather than receptive. Froebel was seen as the father of kindergarten which he believed is an essential step to education. Froebel developed play materials. In play method, the teacher provides stimulating environment with interesting materials and equipment. This requires enough space and safe environment. The teacher's carefulness in selecting materials is very important in laying foundations of morality, sociability and general knowledge in pupils. Here, a teacher is expected to give the child the freedom to choose play items, play materials so that the idea of developing self-confidence through play is not hindered. The teacher should provide stimulating environment with a different activity going on in each group. Make sure all have some interesting apparatus to play with. Toys and coloured books should be freely available. Materials for sorting should be ready for the pupils. Sorting shapes and colours, modelling, painting or drawing with crayons, looking at picture books, sand and clay are all activities which the pupils will enjoy. If possible, there should be simple musical instruments which the pupils can use while learning a few easy songs. Play is natural to children and involves their personal experience. Using this method in a preschool, involves incorporating the various learning activities in a subject into play. Children learn best by doing. More so, when their interest is aroused children are found paying attention and concentration for considerable longer periods.

Demonstration Method

Demonstration method refers to the type of teaching method in which the teacher is the principal actor while the learners watch with the intention to act later. In demonstration method, the teacher does whatever the learners are expected to do at the end of the lesson by showing them how to do it and explaining the step-by-step process to them (Ekeyi, 2013). According to Mundi, (2006), demonstration is a display or an exhibition usually done by the teacher while the students watch with keen interest and this involves showing how something works or the steps involved in the process. In a study by Ekeyi, (2013) students taught by demonstration method had significant effect on their achievement than those taught with the conventional lecture method.

Conventional Teaching Method

Conventional teaching method refers to a common strategy teachers employ in the teaching of any subject. According to Gbamaja, (1991), it is also called talk and chalk or textbook method. It is the most commonly used method and in the course of employing it, the teacher dominates the teaching with very little participation on the part of the learners. Education sector analysis conducted in Nigeria in 2005 found that teacher talks for an average of 35 minutes out of the 40 minutes of the instructional time in secondary school. A study by Oduolowu and Oyesomi (2012) revealed that pre-school teachers used teachers' centred method of teaching with few materials provided. In conventional method, the teacher is seen as the repository of all knowledge while the students are passive recipients of knowledge transmitted by the

teachers in the process of learning and hence, it is teacher centred. The method has the advantage of covering a wider area within a short time may not be ideal for pre-primary pupils; however, it is not uncommon to find teachers using them at this level.

Medium of Instruction in Pre-Primary Education

Language is an indispensable factor in the meaningful existence of man. Parents have not been favourably disposed to this issue, since they seem to believe that the ability to communicate fluently in English is one of the reasons why parents send their children to nursery schools. In the National Policy of Education (2013), the medium of instruction is the mother tongue or language of the immediate community in early childhood education. However, in most of our existing pre-primary institutions, the medium of instruction is the English language level. The mother tongue has not been used as a language of instruction. Akintunde and Akuta (2021) explains the concept of mother tongue that the first language or mother tongue or better still native language is the only language of a monolingual person which is acquired naturally in his native environment and which meets all his linguistic needs. From this explanation, we can infer that every human being is first a monolingual before becoming a bilingual. It is with the mother tongue that the child first conceptualizes the world.

According to the UNESCO report of 1953, instructions received in the mother tongue are easily assimilated and permanent than those received in a foreign language. Fafunwa, (1975) is of the opinion that a child taught in a language that he is not familiar with can develop skills with trauma. He believes that mother tongue is a base for learning subsequent languages and it also facilitates understanding, internalization of concepts and continuity in thinking. Also, Opoola (2002) noted that the proper development of the child is closely bound with the continued use of the language he has from birth, the language of his parents, brothers, sisters, friends and people he is used to. It is the language in which he has acquired his first experience of life. The use of mother tongue in the early education of child helps in facilitating learning, it serves as a motivation as the child moves from the known, which is the mother tongue to the unknown which is the second language or target language. First language taught should be what children are familiar with. Tribal children who are not taught in their own dialect or mother tongue in the initial years find learning difficult. He also noted that the children are unable to fully understand classroom teaching and textbooks properly as the language seem to be strange to them (Opoola, 2002). Despite of the laudable provision of the language policy nothing much seems to have been achieved. Firstly, the position of Nigerian language as a medium of instruction is hard to come by. The UNICEF (2021) reported that about 93.2% of teaching and learning in Nigeria preschools was done in English. The 6.8% use immediate language shows clear lackadaisical attitude towards the implementation of the issue of medium of instruction in mother-tongue or language of immediate community. This problem is likely to be connected with parents and pupils' interest in English which has been in use since 1842, as well as its official position in Nigeria (Tombowua, 2013).

Akintunde and Akuta, (2021) explains that when schools give children quality education in their primary language (MT) they give them two things: knowledge and literacy. It is his belief that the knowledge that children get through their first language helps make the English they hear and read more comprehensible. According to them, literacy developed in the primary language transfers naturally to the second language thereby making children learn to read getting the meaning of what they read. The use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in pre- primary schools is then imperative and should be made compulsory at the primary education level. However, one problem associated with teaching in the mother tongue is that there are not sufficient books for children at this level to interact with. The majority of those available are foreign-based and expensive, making them unaffordable and not readily available to these children. The few home-based books that are available are of low quality, making them unappealing and unattractive to read.

Implementation of Pre-primary Education Programme

Generally, studies like Delalibera and Ferreira (2019); Garcia et al., (2016) investigating the effects of early childhood have shown that the investment made in this period is critical for the contribution to the national

economy as well as the contribution to the development of the individual and society. Education for children is a guarantee for a society to move towards a bright future. Therefore, societies should raise children in healthy settings in order to develop and create safe and peaceful environments. In addition, they should offer them the opportunity to develop by providing the necessary opportunities in line with their abilities UNICEF (2014) states that children need health services, nutritious foods, education to fill their minds with useful information, non-exploitative and non-violent environments, and time and places to play. A child is psychologically balanced in the continued use of Mother Tongue as a medium of instruction and interaction. It is the language in which he dreams, thinks and he can easily express his feelings and emotions.

Teachers are the prime executors of government policies on education and they must be alive to their responsibilities by having a good understanding of the curriculum content and maintaining excellence in both the academic and non-academic aspects of school life. Uchendu (2015) attests to this view by affirming that the major duties of primary school teachers in Nigeria is to get the individual pupils to learn, remove barriers to learning, and identify and resolve weaknesses in learning. Teachers should be able to use the schools to inculcate in their pupils the skills required for effective citizenship and creative thinking. As such, the teachers have a significant role to play in the institution of an efficient and dynamic curriculum. They should always promote democracy, harmony, competence and professionalism in the conduct of their teaching/learning activities in order to meet the prospects of efficient and dynamic curriculum development in modern time (Adebile, 2009).

Expecting teachers to embrace new instructional approaches without sufficient training and information on why such changes are necessary or warranted, often results in inadequate adoption of the curriculum mandate (Oloruntegbe et al., 2010). To make it widely acceptable and therefore more easily implemented, innovations must be locally-driven and collaborative (Nomdo, 2015; Sallis, 2016). Primary school teachers have also been known to continue with the use of out-dated methodology and instructional strategies. Many of them are not computer literate and cannot use Internet resources effectively. Although the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) that licenses teachers set transition periods for computer literacy and Internet compliance as criteria for licensing of teachers, the various period shave since expired yet a large number of the teachers are not computer literate. So far, the training of teachers in this respect has been sloppy. There were low attendance and lack of computer and internet facilities in schools, compounded by the lack of regular power supply or no power supply at all. The teachers themselves do not see this innovation as important (World Bank, 2007).

Methodology

The study adopted embedded mixed methods design. In this mixed method, the qualitative strand is nested or embedded in the quantitative strand because one strand is insufficient to gather sufficient data for the study (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The population consist 1,204 teachers in public pre-primary class and 389 public primary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District. Purposive sampling technique was used to select four (4) intact classes of one hundred and twenty-six (126) pupils and four (4) teachers for the purpose of collecting quantitative data involving observation procedure. Furthermore, nine (9) pre-primary teachers were selected using purposive sampling technique for the purpose of collecting qualitative data through interview procedure.

The research instruments are Classroom Interaction Sheet (CIS) and Teachers' Perception of Pupils' Readiness Interview Guide (TPPRIG). CIS is an instrument adopted from Okpala, Onocha & Oyediji (1993) to measure instructional activities during instruction. The reliability of CIS was established through inter-observation reliability technique using Scot-pi reliability procedure. The Scot-pi reliability coefficient of CIS is (0.71). Furthermore, TPPRIG is a semi-structured interview guide designed to access how primary education teachers perceived the readiness of the pupils for primary education. Validation of TPPRIG was carried out by the researcher on two primary education teachers from a primary school outside the sample coverage. Audio recorder and participant check procedure was adopted to improve the interview process and outcome.

Finally, the data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentages for quantitative strand, while thematic analysis was used to analyse data from the qualitative strand.

Results

Research Question One: What is the language of instruction adopted by the teacher for implementing the pre-primary education programme?

Table 1: Language of instruction used in the Classroom Observed

<i>Languages of instruction</i>	<i>Extent of language usage during Instruction</i>							<i>Remark</i>
	Never	Small extent	Large extent	All the time	N	Sum	Mean	
English Language	0	0	4	0	4	12	3	Large extent
Yoruba	0	4	0	0	4	8	2	Small extent
Others	4	0	0	0	4	4	1	Never

From table 1, English language was used to a large extent during the four learning sessions observed. Yoruba was used to a small extent, while other (indigenous) languages were never used during the teaching and learning sessions observed. Overall, English and Yoruba languages were the language of instruction used by the teacher to teach pupils.

Research Question Two: What is the quality of the instructional delivery process in terms of the teaching methods adopted for implementing the pre-primary education programme?

Table 2: Instructional activities observed in pre-pry schools

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Instructional time in hours: hr; Minutes: m; Seconds: s;</i>				
	<i>School 1 (%)</i>	<i>School 2 (%)</i>	<i>School 3 (%)</i>	<i>School 4 (%)</i>	<i>Total (%)</i>
Teachers prompting learning	10m.40s	13m.50s	14m.00s	12m.30s	51m.30s
	(34.5%)	(43.5%)	(44.9%)	(38.1%)	(40.3%)
Writing on chalkboard	01m 50s	02m.40s	04m.10s	4m.50s	13m.30s
Working with individual pupil	-	-	-	3m.40s	03m.40s
Explaining	03m.10s	04m.20s	-	-	07m.30s
Questioning	01m.30s	02m.30s	04m 50s	1m.10s	10m.00s
Getting children do different activity	00m.40s	-	03m.20s	1m. 30s	05m.30s
Reinforcing correct responses	01m.20s	01m.50s	01m 40s	-	04m.50s
Monitoring	01m 30s	02m.30s	-	1m.20s	05m.20s
Working with groups	00m.40s	-	-	-	00m.40s
Students learning	18m.30s	16m.50s	16m.40s	20m.20s	1hr.12m.20s
	(60.3%)	(52.8%)	(53.5%)	(69.1%)	(57.2%)
Reciting	02m.20s	-	02m.30s	3m.50s	8m.40s
Chorus response	04m.10s	03m.10s	01m 10s	3m.40s	11m.10s
Drawing	-	-	-	10m 20s	10m.20s
Singing	07m.10s	-	12m.20s	-	19m.30s
Writing	02m.50s	11m.30s	-	-	14m.20s
Observing	-	02m.10s	00m.40s	2m.30s	05m.30s
Distractions by teachers	01m.30s	01m.10s	00m.30s	-	03m.10s
	(4.9%)	(3.7%)	(1.6%)	-	(2.5%)
Teachers talking non stop	-	01m.10s	00m.30s	-	01m.40s
Demonstrating without materials	01m.30s	-	-	-	01m.30s
TOTAL	30m.40s	31m.50s	31m.10s	32m.50s	2hr.06m.30s

From table 2, Teachers prompted learning in 51m.30s (40.3%) through activities like writing on chalkboard, working with individual pupil, explaining, questioning, getting children do different activity, reinforcing correct responses, monitoring and working with groups. Also, students prompted learning in 1hr.12m.20s (57.2%) through activities like reciting, chorus response, drawing, singing, writing and observing. However, time allocated was lost in 03m.10s (2.5%) through teachers talking non-stop and demonstrating without materials. Overall, teachers adopted learners-centered teaching method or approach because the pupils were high involved in the teaching and learning process.

Research Question Three: What is the level of pupils' readiness for primary education based on the perception of their teachers?

Table 3: Teachers' perception of pupils' readiness for primary education

Themes	Sub themes
Pupils' readiness for primary education	All pupils are ready Most pupils are ready

From table 3, most teachers in primary one believed that all the pupils transiting from pre-primary education are ready for primary education. Some excerpts are:

"...There are changes because have had the experience from pre-primary education so in primary 1, it is easy to teach them unlike before (when there was no pre-pry education programme), we start with them by holding their hands to write, read and do other things." (Pre-pry Teacher 5)

"They are doing well; I am very impressed. They can write well from pre-primary classes for mathematics. They are doing well and ready for primary education" (Pre-pry Teacher 6)

In addition, some teachers believed that most of the pupils are ready for are ready with the exception of few pupils. Some excerpts are:

"...Majority of them are matured and ready for primary one" (Pre-pry Teacher 8)

"Yes, I can see the readiness in them... The proportion of pupils that are ready is high compared to those who are not ready." (Pre-pry Teacher 4)

Discussion of Findings

The result of research question one revealed that English and Yoruba languages are the language of instruction used by the teacher to teach pupils. This is good for the education process because it highlights the importance of using mother tongue as a language of instruction in the school system. The importance of mother tongue language cannot be over emphasised because the child understand it and it is the language of his parents, brothers, sisters, friends and people he is used to. The finding supports the reports of Opoola (2002), Tombowua (2013), Akintunde and Akuta (2021) where they opined that a child is best taught in that language. Moreover, the finding of research question two revealed that teachers adopted learners-centered teaching method or approach because the pupils were high involved in the teaching and learning process. This is good for the teaching and learning process of the pre-primary education programme because a learner-centered teaching method enables the learner to be highly involved in the teaching and learning process. Also, this improves the interaction between the teacher and the pupils. The study supports the report of Maduabum (2002), Skutil et al., (2014) where they revealed that a good method of teaching is a result-oriented method. Finally, the finding of research question three revealed that most of the pre-primary teachers believed that pupils transiting from pre-primary education are ready for primary education. This finding showed how effective the pre-primary education is in producing quality pupils or product for the primary education programme. The findings of the study support the reports of Garcia et al. (2016), Delalibera and Ferreira (2019) where they revealed that quality pre-primary education is paramount for the growth and development of a child.

Conclusion

The study assessed the classroom instructional practice in pre-primary education schools, Ogun east senatorial district, Nigeria with specific focus on language of instruction used, teaching methods adopted and perception of teachers on the readiness of pupils for pry education. Drawing from the findings, English and Yoruba languages are the language of instruction used by the teacher; teachers adopted learners-

centered teaching method or approach and most pre-primary teachers believed that pupils transiting from pre-primary education are ready for primary education.

Recommendations

- i. Teachers should be encouraged to use more of the indigenous language to teach the pupils for better understanding since English language is mostly used with Yoruba language used by teachers as a secondary language of instruction.
- ii. Policy makers should look into making policies that encourages more usage of indigenous languages for teaching at this level of education.

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