

SCHOOL FACTORS AS DETERMINANTS OF CLASSROOM RESOURCE UTILISATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EKITI STATE

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Abstract: *The study investigated how school factors determines classroom material resource utilisation for sustainable development in Ekiti State. It also assessed the available classroom materials in pre-primary schools in the state. The study adopted survey research design. The sample for the study comprised 24 head teachers and five primary schools in each Local Government in Ekiti South Senatorial district. Two instruments were used for data collection which are: Provision of Resource Materials Questionnaire (PRMQ) and the Checklist on Available classroom Resource Materials Innovations (CACRMI). The scores of the test were subjected to Alpha Cronbach Reliability Coefficient 0.97 and 0.80 respectively. The result from data shows that the level of sufficiency in term of classroom resource materials was generally low with most of the available ones being improvised by the head teacher or the teacher. Also, there existed a linear relationship between the three predictors of school factors (the school location, the classroom and the school administrator) and resource materials utilisation. The study concluded that the influence of school factors on resource materials utilisation was positive and noteworthy. It is recommended that the community should have the mind of supporting the development of schools to improve the facilities which will improve the pupils' performance.*

Keywords: Pre-primary education, Classroom resources, Utilisation, School factors, Environment.

INTRODUCTION

Early years in life are widely accepted as the most important period during which children experience cognitive, language, perceptual, socio-emotional and motor development which they will need for future achievements and social functioning. Although, education goes on in all aspects of human endeavour, most societies have set up specific institutions that use variety of means to promote efficient and desirable learning. The desire of National Policy of Education (FRN 2013) that Nigeria should be free, just and a democratic society, a land full of opportunity for all citizens and able to generate a great and dynamic economy, growing into a united, strong and reliant nation can be achieved when there is great impact in pre-primary education. Pre-primary education is an early childhood programme in which children learn through play in a programme run by professionally trained adults. Pre-primary schools are different from traditional day care centres in that there is emphasis on learning and development so as to

prepare them for formal primary education (Mbise, 2000).

As Castle (1993) underscored the importance of pre-primary education as to give children the opportunity to learn, to play together, to share toys, among others. Sughand (2018) also put the benefits of pre-primary education as to nurture inquisitiveness, improves child concentration, boosts cognitive skills, teaches diversity, boosts confidence, makes a lifelong learner, builds team spirit, builds resilience enhances social and emotional skills, prepares for school, develops early math skills, encourages patience and teaches cooperation. Prabhat and Rewa (2014) put some salient features of pre-primary school to include a good head start for learning, teaching in a fun filled way play method, putting children on a path of lifelong learning, higher development in language and mathematical skills, a great opportunity to develop social skills and exposure to enhance communication skills.

Moreover, pre-primary school years are meant to provide help for children's social

training before formal school. Okewole (2009) opined that pre-primary education is significant because it is an active social setting created to cater for efficient growth and development of the children where they find a 'richer' and fuller life than elsewhere. Also, pre-primary education is a starting point for a child's development and the key foundation of the Nigerian Educational system (Obiweluozor, 2015). The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) defines pre-primary education as the education given for children aged 3 through 5 years in preparing their entry into primary school. Therefore, Suzuki (2007) opined that the type of care we give to young children must develop them to take full advantage of their educational opportunities and to become effective citizens, capable workers, and loving parents of the generations to come.

Also, Oduolowu (2003) opined that early childhood education is part and parcel of an education programme of every culture. Teacher Education Partnership Commission (2008) described pre-primary education as the care and education of children from birth through age eight, and includes serving their families. It is an undeniable fact that this aspect of education is the bedrock upon which all levels of education are anchored. The rate of accessing a child at the early childhood education level will definitely determine the pace at which the child can advance through other levels of education (World Bank, 2000; Project Ministry of Health, 2004). Okunola (2004) was of the opinion that pre-primary years is meant to provide help for children social training before formal school and have been acclaimed to have positive effects on children and their families in as much all the experiences and care needed cannot be given at home. Therefore, it has to be a place which is a second home to the child and a place which has enough materials to attract and make the child feel comfortable and secure. It may be the first place where the child builds her self-esteem, learns the importance of her own name, things and friends, learns to communicate with her teachers and fellow children and the right place for the child's foundation for lifelong progress. Also, FRN (2013) stated the benefits of pre-primary education to the child. These are: the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature and the local environment, it teaches cooperation and team spirit, it teaches good habits, it prepares them for primary level education and it provides adequate care and supervision of the children while their parents are

at work. Therefore, the skills such as social, emotional, communication among others and knowledge the child develops in the pre-primary have a great impact on the aptitude and attitude of the child later in life.

In view of this, children need a well, safe and hygienic school location. The extent to which pupils learning could be enhanced depends on the location of the school. The school location such as schools in rural or urban areas, economic status of the neighbourhood, and schools built near market centres among other variables can have effect on the utilisation of resource materials (Ahmen, 2003). When a school is built near market centre, the noise from the market may distract the learners from concentrating thus affecting the process of learning. Economic status of the neighbourhood where the school is located also has an impact on the utilisation of resource materials. Aikens and Barbarin (2008) noted that schools located in low economic status communities are often under resourced due to the fact that parents from low economic status are unable to afford resources such as books, stationeries etc. Woolfolk (2007) opined that when the communities' economic status is low, they may not be able to support the school financially because the economic status of the community will make the community have the ability to support the school or not. Also, most schools in the urban areas are well staffed as compared to those in rural areas since everyone wants to work in the urban centres due to the technology which is high in the urban areas as compared to the rural areas. This causes under staffing in the rural areas thus affecting the utilisation of resource materials process.

Also, as the children need all these, stimulating environment is also essential for it leads to their overall development later in life. Stimulation is therefore a key feature of high quality early years settings (Penny, Kate, Harriet & Alan 2002). Stimulating children comes from various ways out of which adult input is the most important one which comes through interacting with the children, planning with them, providing appropriate and adequate toys and equipment while adults on their own needs to get the skills and understanding the appropriate way of choosing equipment or toys for the child. Penny Tassoni et.al (2002) opines that children needs to feel that they are in a safe, caring and loving environment if they are going to be able to settle

and separate from their parents. This implies that the children must see the school as home away from home and ability of the teacher to provide adequate care before the parents comes.

However, apart from school location and environment, provision of material resources is another factor to be considered in the utilisation of classroom materials resources. The government play a major role in the provision of material resources through financing the schools by offering services through various governmental agencies such as the ministry of education and other public institution. Chuckwu, Eze and Agada (2016) posited that resource materials are derived from various sources including collection of items from the community, improvised materials by teachers and pupils, distribution of materials by governmental and non-governmental organization, donations from various agencies and creation of resource centers. Also, classroom material resources have been defined differently by various authors who have done surveys in various preprimary schools in different areas which are owned by different people, institutions and the government. Obanya (1989) viewed them as Isola (2010) referred to classroom materials as objects or devices, which help the teacher to make a lesson much clearer to the learner. According to Nicholls (2000), exclusively oral teaching cannot be the key to successful pedagogy. To make teaching learning process interesting, the teacher has to use them. Availability of classroom resource utilisation enhances the effectiveness of pupils learning as they are the basic things that can bring about good academics performance in pupils.

Moreover, the provision of material resources in some areas is normally fraught with some difficulties and problems such as; qualified teachers, refusing appointment in isolated villages, villagers refuse to send their children to schools because they are dependent on them for help (in the farm or for hawking), parents hesitate to entrust their daughters to male teachers (for the fear of intimidation), some villagers have few children for an ordinary primary school, lack of roads or satisfactory means of communication makes it difficult to get books and teaching materials to the school which place difficulties in the way of organizing school transport among others.

Meanwhile, pre-primary education is to effect smooth transition from home to the school,

prepare the children for the primary level of education, and provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work, among others. However, classroom material resources are meant to assist pupils in learning. Some research have shown that inability to utilise them have resulted in pupils' poor performance which now become imperative for this study which sought to know how the school factors determine their utilisation in the study area, hence this study.

The aim of this study is to determine the effect of school and teachers' factor on classroom material utilization resource in pre-primary schools. Therefore, the specific objectives of the study are to;

- a. asses the available classroom materials in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State;
- b. determine the influence of school factors (location and provision of materials), on classroom material resource utilization in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State.

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions are generated to guide the study:

- a. What are the available resource materials for use in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State?
- b. What is the influence of school factor (location and provision of materials) on classroom resource utilisation in pre-primary school in Ekiti State?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have been conducted on the impact of classroom resource materials on education. A study conducted in Ypsilanti Michigan (1962-1967) found that adults who had pre-primary education had higher earnings, were more likely to hold a job, had committed fewer crimes, and were more likely to have graduated from university than adults who did not have it. Iroegbu (2017) posited that society should pay greater attention to the care, wellbeing, development and education of this level of learners: day-care/crèche (0-2 years), play group (2-3 years), nursery/kindergarten (3-5 years) and lower basic primary classes (6-8 years). She further stated that the future and the level of development of the nation lies the potentials of these children to develop to full capacity in their

various abilities. In view of this, the school has important role to play in making the pre-primary school home away from home to make the children see the need to be in school. The school factors such as location, provision of material resources among others are part of the school factors that leads to the utilisation of material resources with the hope of improving teaching and learning process for sustainable development of pre-primary schools in Ekiti State.

Moreover, Iroegbu (2016) found out in her study that learning resources and playthings are found to be important in the development of gross motor skills. Unfortunately according to the author in many of the schools the playthings and learning resources are not adequately available. This according to her means that the teachers and proprietors lack knowledge of the importance of learning resources and playthings. Momoh (2010) conducted a research on the effects of instructional resources on students' performance in West Africa School Certificate Examinations (WASCE). He correlated material resources with academic achievements of students in ten subjects. Data were collected from the subject teachers in relation to the resources employed in the teaching. The achievements of students in WASCE were related to the resources available for teaching each of the subjects. He concluded that material resources have a significant effect on students' achievement in each of the subjects. Classroom resource materials in the teaching-learning process, facilitate the learning of abstract concepts and ideas; keep the learners busy and active which helps to increase the pupils participation in the lesson; save teachers energy of talking too much; illustrate the concepts clearer and better than the teachers words only; help overcome the limitations of the classroom by making the inaccessible accessible; help to broaden pupils knowledge, increase their level of understanding as well as discourage rote-learning and helps to stimulate and motivate learners.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. It enables the researcher to

critically, accurately and objectively describe the school and teachers' factors that determines the utilization of classroom resource materials with the use of questionnaire in collecting data which was analysed. The population of this study comprised of pre-primary head teachers in Ekiti State. The sample size consisted 24 respondents. A multistage sampling approach was adopted for the study. One Senatorial District was selected from the three Senatorial Districts in Ekiti State, using simple random sampling technique. All the six Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the Senatorial District were selected. From each of the selected LGA, four schools were selected using simple random sample technique. From the selected schools, one head teacher was selected in each of the school using simple random technique to make a total of twenty four head teachers. Two research instruments were used for the study, namely: Checklist on Available Classroom Resource Materials Innovations (CACRMI) and Provision of Resource Materials Questionnaire (PRMQ). CACRMI was used to assess the availability of the materials and to check if the materials are available, sufficient and functioning while PRMQ instrument was used for collecting data on school demographic variables such as location, year of establishment and local government area. Section 'B' contained how classroom material resources are provided through the government, PTA, philanthropists, improvisation from the school, etc. The head teachers are to indicate how classroom resource materials are being provided for their pre-primary schools. The reliability of the instrument was subjected to Alpha Cronbach Reliability Coefficient which yielded 0.80. The data collected from the administration of the instruments was analysed using frequency counts, percentages, graphs and multiple regressions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One: What are the available classroom materials resources for use in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State?

Table 1: Shows the available electronic classroom materials in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State.

		Available and Functioning	Available but not Functioning	Insufficient	Not Available	Total
Computer	F	7	8	1	8	24
	%	29.2	33.3	4.2	33.3	100.0
Audio- visual(television)	F	6	2	9	7	24
	%	25.0	8.3	37.5	29.2	100.0
Magnetic Board	F	3	1	2	18	24
	%	12.5	4.2	8.3	75.0	100.0

Table 1 shows the overall percentage of the availability of electronic classroom materials in the primary school in Ekiti State.

Table 2: Shows the available classroom materials (print) in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State.

		Available and Functioning	Available but not Functioning	Insufficient	Not Available	Total
Wall charts	F	3	12	1	8	24
	%	12.5	50.0	4.2	33.3	100.0
Book kits	F	6	0	0	5	24
	%	25.0	0	0	20.8	100.0
Posters	F	7	0	11	6	24
	%	29.2	0	45.8	25.0	100.0
Picture books	F	6	0	17	1	24
	%	25.0	0	70.8	14.2	100.0
Flash cards	F	8	0	12	4	24
	%	33.3	0	50.0	16.7	100.0

Source:

Table 2 shows the overall percentage of the available classroom materials in print in the primary school in Ekiti State.

Table 3 Shows the available classroom materials (non-print) in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State.

		Available and Functioning	Available but not Functioning	Insufficient	Not Available	Total
Building blocks	F	12	1	11	0	24
	%	50.0	4.2	45.8	0	100.0
Sand Tray	F	2	1	0	21	24
	%	8.3	4.2	0	87.5	100.0
Teddy bears	F	4	1	8	11	24
	%	16.9	4.3	33.3	45.8	100.0
Water trough	F	1	0	0	23	24
	%	4.2	0	0	95.8	100.0
Bean bag	F	0	0	0	24	24
	%	0	0	0	100	100.0
Beam ball	F	0	0	0	24	24
	%	0	0	0	100	100.0
Plastercine	F	0	0	0	24	24
	%	0	0	0	100	100.0

Abacus	F	4	0	0	20	24
	%	16.7	0	0	83.3	100.0
Cereal sack	F	1	1	2	20	24
	%	4.2	4.2	8.3	8.3	100.0
Toys	F	5	1	15	3	24
	%	20.8	4.2	62.5	12.5	100.0
Puzzles	F	4	0	5	15	24
	%	16.7	0	20.8	62.5	100.0
Shapes of different sizes	F	5	0	16	3	24
	%	20.0	0	66.7	12.5	100.0
Soft small ball	F	6	0	9	9	24
	%	25.0	0	37.5	37.5	100.0
Rattles	F	2	0	0	22	24
	%	8.3	0	0	91.7	100.0
Nature corner	F	0	0	0	24	24
	%	0	0	0	100	100.0
Play dough	F	0	0	0	24	24
	%	0	0	0	100	100.0
Shopping corner	F	0	0	0	24	24
	%	0	0	0	100	100.0

Table 3 shows the overall percentage of the availability of classroom materials in non-print in the pre-primary schools in Ekiti State.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of school factor (location and provision of materials) on classroom resource utilisation in pre-primary school in Ekiti State?

Descriptives

Table 4.1

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
Rural	8	30.5000	.53452	.18898	30.0531	30.9469	30.00	31.00	
semi-urban	8	32.6250	.74402	.26305	32.0030	33.2470	31.00	33.00	
Urban	8	35.2500	.46291	.16366	34.8630	35.6370	35.00	36.00	
Total	24	32.7917	2.06375	.42126	31.9202	33.6631	30.00	36.00	

Table 4.1 reveals that schools located in urban area have high level of classroom resource utilisation ($x=35.25, S.D=0.462$) and schools located in rural areas have less level of classroom

resources utilisation ($x=30.50, S.D=0.534$). These results are statistically significant, $F_{(2,23)}=128.96, P<0.05$ as revealed in Table 4.

ANOVA

Table 4.2

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	90.583	2	45.292	128.966	.000
Within Groups	7.375	21	.351		
Total	97.958	23			

Table 4.2 shows a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) that was conducted to show how

school location affects classroom resource utilisation in pre-primary school in Ekiti State.

The locations were divided into three groups (rural, semi-urban and urban).

Table 4.3 Scheffe Post Hoc

(I) location	School (J) location	School Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Rural	semi-urban	-2.12500*	.29631	.000	-2.8719	-1.3781
	Urban	-4.75000*	.29631	.000	-5.4969	-4.0031
semi-urban	Rural	2.12500*	.29631	.000	1.3781	2.8719
	Urban	-2.62500*	.29631	.000	-3.3719	-1.8781
Urban	Rural	4.75000*	.29631	.000	4.0031	5.4969
	semi-urban	2.62500*	.29631	.000	1.8781	3.3719

Table 4.3 reveals scheffe post-hoc analysis. It shows the direction of the significant difference of the three locations (rural, semi-urban and urban).

Results show that the observed difference is in favour of schools located in the urban area.

Table 5: Provision of resource materials in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State. In an attempt to examine how material resource are provided for utilisation in pre-primary schools in Ekiti State, respondents are allowed to select more than one source.

Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Parents' contribution	12	50
Teachers' improvisation	23	95.8
Use of nature	20	83.3
NGOs Provision	3	12.5
Government(State/Local)	13	54.1
School/Head teacher	24	100
Organized Body (PTA)	17	70.8
Philanthropists	2	8.3
Prizes to the school	18	75

N=24

Table 5 shows the provision of material resource of each school. School/head teacher source has the highest percentage which is 100.

Discussions

The findings of this study revealed that the level of sufficiency in terms of classroom resource materials is generally very low. Most of the classroom resource materials and equipment are insufficient, with majority of the schools having insufficient materials. This greatly affects the teaching-learning process, thus increasing the chances of repetition and learning becoming boring and poor performance is the attendant result. These findings are in line with Asikhia (2010) who pointed out that adequately well prepared instructional materials determine the amount of learning that can take place in a learning institution. Also, Aguisiobo (2007) supported the view of Asikia that the use of resource materials is important because they

motivate learners to learn as they offer stimulus variation and assist in sustaining learners' attention throughout the lesson. In the study, it was established that schools located in urban area have high level of classroom resource utilisation ($x=35.25, S.D=0.462$) and schools located in rural areas have low level of classroom resources utilisation ($x=30.50, S.D=0.534$). These results are statistically significant, $F_{(2,23)}=128.96, P<0.05$. The Scheffe post-hoc analysis which was further conducted shows the direction of the significant difference of the three locations (rural, semi-urban and urban). Results show that the observed difference is in favour of schools located in the urban area which supports the views of Owolabi (1990) who, in his own view, asserted that qualified teachers prefer to serve in the urban area rather than the rural areas. As a corollary of the above, Kuliman et al (1977) observed that teachers do not accept postings to rural areas because their conditions are not up to the

expected standard as their social life in the areas is virtually restricted as a result of inadequate amenities. Facilities are deficient, playground are without equipment, libraries are without books while laboratories are glorified ones. Also, Aikens and Barbarin (2008) noted that schools located in low economic status communities are often under resourced due to the fact that parents from low economic status are unable to afford resources such as books, stationeries, etc. Woolfolk (2007) noted that when the communities' economic status is low, they may not be able to support the school financially because the economic status of the community will make the community have the ability to support the school or otherwise.

On the other hand, other stakeholders such as parents, organized body, government and philanthropist as addressed by (Mbise, 1989; Mbise, 2000; Mtahabwa, 2001) should support the supply of instructional materials, through providing learning equipment to the pupils. This states that, by considering the real situation of the child, the schools must be equipped with resource materials for their pupils to perform better than their counterparts in schools without resource materials or those with ill equipped resource materials. Owoeye and Yara (2010) believed that resource materials stimulate learners' interests as they are made to personally engage in useful classroom activities and learning experiences while Iroegbu and Ojo (2016) also found that unavailability of resource materials and utilization lead to low performance as the teaching/learning is made abstract and difficult to understand.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that school factors has great influence on classroom material resource utilisation in Ekiti State. Material resource also have great significance in developing pre-primary children holistically and enhancing smooth transition to primary level. At the same time they help children get attracted, sustain their interest, facilitate cognitive development and keep the children busy which can as well develop their psychomotor skills.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and its conclusion, the following it is therefore recommended that Government at the Federal, State and Local levels should show more interest in early childhood education by providing the

needed materials resources to ensure the effective implementation of the stated objectives; the community should have the mind of supporting the development of schools to improve the facilities which in turn, will improve the pupils' performances; the pre-primary school management should sensitize the parents and the community on the importance of provision and utilisation of teaching learning materials and the management of the pre-primary centres in Ekiti State should put more emphasis, not only in indoor activities, but also in outdoor activities with coherent use of learning resources and play materials in both cases.

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