

Teachers' Factors as Determinants of Learning Achievement of Pre-School Children in Egbeda Local Government Area Of Oyo State, Nigeria

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ABSRTACT

Scholars are of the view that teachers' factor are important in enhancing the learning achievement of preschool children. These factors include attitude, experience and motivation. Consequently learning achievement of preschool children may be affected negatively if the teachers are not well prepared, lack experience, have negative attitude towards the children and are poorly motivated. This study therefore examined teachers' factors as determinants of preschool children learning achievement in Egbeda Local Government Area Ibadan. The participants of the study comprises of twenty preschool children .The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Data collected was analyzed using inferential statistics of Pearson Moment Correlation and Multiple Regressions. The finding of the study reveals Teachers' motivation had positive relationship with learning achievement of preschool children. Teacher' attitude and motivation had relative relationship on learning achievement of preschool children. Therefore, the school administrators provide a necessary condition that can motivate teachers such as incentive, payment of good salary, job security and having interpersonal relations with teachers. They should employ qualified teachers most especially early childhood trained teachers to teach pre-school children and organize special workshop, short courses for teachers to keep them in touch with effective teaching strategies that could enhance learning achievement of pre-school children. Also, the teachers should put up the right attitude towards the teaching and arranging of activities that are geared towards the development of pre-school children.

Keywords: Teachers' Attitude, Experience, Motivation and Learning Achievement.

INTRODUCTION

The need for holistic development of children is appreciated all over the world. Consistently, United Nations' convention on the right of the child (UNCRC,1989), and African charter on rights and welfare of the child (OAU,1990) cited in Ndanuko (2012) recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for its physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. This implies that pre-school teachers should

provide adequate and appropriate care to children, since development deficiencies that occur during this stage are difficult to reverse. The pre-school year is a crucial period for the development of the mental functions of children. This development including the emergence of the abilities and skills in areas such as language, motor skills psycho-social, cognitive and learning is now known to be greatly influenced by teacher character. Also acquisition of other ethnic language will promote interpersonal understanding between one child and the other, widen their chances of making friends, lay good foundation for health inter-tribal and inter-ethnic relationship. The nature of the educational environment to which the child is exposed during the early years also influences the intellectual attainment of pre-school children (Bowman, Donovan and Burns 2010).

Bowman et. al (2001) opined that early childhood education can be a major input into a child's formal education. Children at the pre-school age need a lot of cognitive exposure. This exposure involves what they eventually know through experience. This means that the pre-school child has to interact with the environment in order to stimulate his intellectual abilities and skills. Early education provides the pre-school children with a stimulating environment which enriches the children learning achievement.

The preschool years have been acclaimed to have a positive effect on children and their families (Okunola, 2004). It has been noted that every home could not give all the experiences and care needed in pre –school years. The pre- school fulfils these needs. It is meant to provide the help to children for social training before formal school (Okunola, 2004). Therefore children who are fortunate enough to attend a pre- school are more likely to have full social, emotional and intellectual development. According to Alao (1985) pre-school education bring children from different families together and in doing so they learn to live together like brothers and sisters.

The role of the teacher in the overall development of the child cannot be underestimated, because they establish a climate of emotional support, helpfulness and serve as facilitators of learning. Teacher is an important factor in the learning achievement of the preschool children. In view of the above, Ajao (2001) posited that the quality of education depends on the teachers as reflected on the overall development of their pupils. Evidence abound that the teacher is most important single factor in determine what a school will be like for children. Thus, creating conditions that motivate pre-school teachers

to initiate positive interaction with children and a physical condition environment that is conducive both for teachers' work and children learning achievement is essential.

A lot of teachers' characteristics are capable of influencing the pre-school children learning achievement. Such factors have been identified to include teachers' attitude, experience and motivation among others. Attitude could be explained as a consistent tendency to react in a particular way-often positively or negatively toward any mater. It concerns with an individual way of thinking, acting and behaving. It has very serious implication for the learner and the immediate social group with which the individual learner relates within the entire school system. Attitudes are formed as a result of some kind of learning experience. It may also be learned simply by following the example or opinion of teacher. Attitude possesses both cognitive and emotional components. Adediwura and Bada (2007), opined that attitude are important to educational psychology because they strongly influence social thought, the way an individual thinks about and process social information. If attitude has to do with the way one thinks and process social information, it goes therefore that pre-school teachers' attitude may influence their relationship with the children they handle. Attitude may be learnt through mimicry or imitation, which also has a part to play in the teaching and learning situation. What teachers like or dislikes appreciates and how they feel about their job, the learners they teach could have a significant effect on their learners (Yara, 2009). One can say then that attitude could be one of the factors militating against the intellectual development of pre-school children. Unfortunately, many teachers seldom realize that how they teach, behave interact with learners can be more paramount than what they teach. This is to say that some teachers do not realize the fact that their attitude could have effect on the learning achievement of pre-school children. In respect of this, it is very obvious that investigating the teachers' attitude as determinants of pre-school children learning achievement is essential. Adeyanju (2004) opine that a teacher whose has a positive attitude towards teaching and towards his pupils will obviously teach more effective than teacher who has develop negative attitudes towards the learners he has to deal with. Teachers as a molder of lives must be embodiment of good character and virtues, who is sincere in word and acts and whose personal life sets a good example to his pupils (Ryan, 2010).

Some studies have been done on teachers' attitude, teaching and learning situation. For instance, while reporting the work of Onocha, (1985), Yara (2009) reported in one of his finding that teachers' attitude toward science is a significant predictor of pupils' science achievement as well as their attitude. Also Ogunwuyi (2000) found significant causal relationship between the teachers' attitude and pupils' achievement in science. In view of this, we can say that the role of the teacher as facilitator of learning and the contributors to learners' achievement is enormous but there are few of studies on teachers' attitude as determinants of intellectual development of pre-school children. Hence the need to find out if teachers' attitude determines the learning achievement of pre-school children is essential.

Another important factor that could influence the learning achievement of the pre-school children is teachers' experience. The importance of experience teachers in schools has been highlighted by many researchers. Some of these researchers have argued that experience improves teaching skills while pupils learn better at the hands of teachers who have taught them continuously over a period of years (Ijaiya, 2000). Teachers' experience is very important because it has played a crucial role in educational attainment since teacher is ultimately responsible for translating policy into action. According to Okorji and Ogbo (2013) experienced teachers have been conceptualized as one who produces desired results in the course of his duty as a teacher. Adeyegbe (2000) posited that many pupils perform poor in examinations as a result of in-experience in teaching methodology and content. Supporting this point, Oderinde (2003) remarked that teachings of pupils by unqualified teachers who are inexperienced in teaching methodology are among the reasons why many candidates find it difficult to pass their examinations. In order words, when inexperienced teachers handle pre-school children their learning achievement is likely to be affected negatively. It is therefore, very important to research into the teachers' experience on the learning achievement of pre-school children.

Apart from teachers' attitude and experience, another factor that can hinder the learning achievement of pre-school children is motivation. Handling the challenging situation in the classroom and outside the classroom makes teachers exhausted and this might hinders the success of teachers. Being intrinsically and extrinsically motivated therefore can increase job satisfaction. So motivation has an important role in the job of

teaching. Motivation according to Harmer (2001) is a kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve something. Motivation is responsible for why people decide to engage in an activity, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it (Dornyei, 2001). According to Ofoegbu (2004), teachers 'motivation has to do with teachers' attitude, teacher desire to participate in the pedagogical process within the school environment and teachers 'interest in learner as well as in the classroom activities. This indicates that teachers' motivation is anything done to make teachers happy, satisfied, dedicated and committed in such a way that they bring out their best in their places of work. In Nigeria, educators are aware that reformers of education may establish new schools, effect changes in structure and curriculum recommended and prescribe teaching method and aids. In the end, the teacher will be solely responsible for applying them.

Unfortunately, despite the obvious leading role teachers' play in school towards attaining educational objective, several authors according to Ofoegbu (2004) lamented that the motivation of teachers had reached an intolerable low point. Similarly, Rosa Mafia Torres, the senior education Adviser in UNICEF, declared that the conditions of teachers had for too long become the most critical 'Achilles heels' of educational development in our era. In simple term, Rosa is of opinion that teachers are not adequately motivated. The submission above is that Nigerian teachers are facing an emergency situation in which thousands of teachers are dire need of motivation. This is one important reason why there is urgent need to investigate whether teachers motivation could influence learning achievement of pre-school children.

From the foregoing, it could be seen that a lot has been done on the effect of teachers' attitude and teachers experience on pupils learning outcome. A lot has also been said about teachers' motivation. This is to say that studies have established the effect of teachers' attitude, experience and motivation on learning. But there is a gap to be filled since it appears that there are few studies that have centered on the effect that teachers' attitude experience and motivation can have on learning achievement of pre-school children. It is on this note therefore that this study investigated teachers' attitude experience and motivation as determinants learning achievement of pre-school children.

Statement of the Problem

Many teachers who are supposed to be facilitators in bringing about the success in learning achievement of the children at the early stage seem not have positive attitude towards the teaching of preschool children. Some of them are in experienced teachers and some are not adequately motivated. Therefore, one can rightly say that teachers' attitude, experience and motivation could affect the learning achievement of pre-school children. A close observation by researcher have shown that teachers in Nigeria themselves do not have positive attitude towards the teaching of pre-school children and their job, when probed further, it was discovered that some of them are not showing positive attitude because they are not well paid and no incentive. It shows that some are doing the job to pass time. These will no doubt have adverse effect on the learning achievement of the children. Also it has been reveal that teaching of pupils by unqualified teachers who are inexperience in teaching methodology are among the reason why many candidate find it difficult to pass their examination. Observations have shown that some of the teachers that are teaching in these pre-schools are not early childhood trained teachers some of them are secondary school leavers. The implication of this is that when inexperienced teacher handle pre-school children, it could have effect on their learning achievements. Again, researches have shown that Nigeria teachers are not adequately motivated. If teachers are not motivated in terms of remunerations, in- service training and other fringe benefits they will not put in their best in teaching the pre-school children and this could have adverse effect on learning achievement of pre-school children. This study therefore investigated teachers' factors as determinants of learning achievement of pre-school children in Egbeda Local Government Area, of Oyo state, Nigeria.

1.3 Research Questions.

1. What is the relationship between Teachers' attitude, experience motivation and learning achievement of pre-school children?
2. What is the composite effect of teachers' attitude, experience and motivation on learning achievement of pre- school children?
3. What is the relative effect of teachers' attitude, experience and motivation on learning achievement of preschool children?
4. Which of the independent variables would predict learning achievement of preschool children?

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design describe because there was no manipulation of variables.

Population of the Study

The target populations for this study consisted of all Nursery school children of ages 3 to 4 years and all preschool teachers in registered pre primary schools in Egbeda Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Sampling Techniques and sample

Two sampling techniques were used. The first was a simple random sampling technique applied in selecting Egbeda Local Government Area of Oyo State out of the eleven Local governments in Ibadan. The selection was done using ballot method .The second sampling technique was purposive sampling technique which was used in selecting the school, the pupils and their teachers. In selecting schools, ten schools were chosen based on the following criteria: The school registered with the government, the school had been established over five years and the school had not less than twenty children in the class (Nursery 1 & 2) which fall within the age of 3-4 years.

In selecting children and teachers, twenty children and two teachers were chosen in each school based on the following criteria: Children fall within age 3-4 year and the children are in Nursery 1& 3. The sample for this study consisted of twenty (20) preschool teachers and two hundred (200) preschool children. In all, two hundred and twenty (220) respondents were used for this study.

Research Instruments

Two self-designed instruments were used for this study. The instruments were:

Questionnaire on preschool Teachers Attitude, Experience and Motivation (QPTAEM)

Achievement Test on learning achievement of Preschool Children (ATIDPC). QPTAEM had three sections and thirty-two (32) items. The first section, (section A) contained 4 items (1-4) and it sought information on demographic data of the preschool teachers. The second section, (section B) contained 13 items (items 5-17) and sought information on the attitude of teachers towards preschool children. The third section, (section C) which contained 15 items (items 18-32) sought information on the motivation of preschool teachers. The Renis Likert's summated response scale was used for the section B and C of this instrument. The response sets that were used were Strongly Disagree (SD) Disagree

(D) Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA). The numerical values that were assigned to each response option were 1 for Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 for Disagree (D), 3 for Agree (A) and 4 for Strongly Agreed (SA). ATIDPC covered three areas of intellectual component of preschool children. The areas are: Number work, Art and Language. It contains 4 sections, the first section, section (A) contained 4 items (items 1-4) and It sought information on demographic data of the preschool children. Second section Number work (section B) contained 6 items (1-6) it sought information on the ability of children in number work. The third section, Art (section C) contained 4 items (items 7-10) it sought information on preschool drawing and painting of object. The forth section, Language (section D) contained 10 items (items 11-20) and it sought information on literacy. Each question carries equal mark and all together had 20 marks.

Both instruments were developed by researcher. The face and content validity were determined by experts in the field of early childhood education and expert in the area of education research and statistics. Both instruments were trial tested on group of teachers and preschool children who share similar characteristics with the study samples. The QPTAEM and ATIDPC analysis were done using Cronbach Alpha and Kuder Richardson and the instruments yielded reliability of co-efficient of 0.72 and 0.83 respectively

Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher engaged the assistance of the pre-school teachers in all the sampled schools in the administration of the instruments. The researcher then went round all the schools for three weeks. Some of the instruments were collected immediately in some schools while others were collected later.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using inferential statistics of Pearson Moment Correlation and Multiple Regressions were used to examine the relationship among the teachers' attitude, experience, motivation and learning achievement of preschool children.

Result

Table 1: Relationship among Teachers Attitude, Experience, Motivation and Intellectual Development of preschool children.

Variables	R	Sig.	Remark
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Teachers' Attitude	-0.133	0.288	NS
Teachers' Motivation	0.291	0.106	NS
Teachers' Experience	-0.016	0.473	NS

Table shows the relationship among teachers' attitude, experience, motivation and learning of preschool children. The table shows that there is negative relationship between teachers' attitude and learning achievement of preschool children. ($r=-0.133$; $p > 0.05$) and between Teachers' experience and learning achievement of preschool children ($r=0.016$; $p > 0.05$). It is only teachers' motivation that has positive relationship with the learning achievement of preschool children ($r= 0.291$; $p >0.05$).

Table 2: Composite relationship of Teachers' Attitude, Experience and Motivation on Learning Achievement of Preschool Children

Multiple R = .558 R Square =.311 Adjusted R2= .182 Standard Error = 2.146						
Analysis of Variance						
Square of Variance	SS	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.(p)	Remark
Regression	33.248	3	11.083	2.406	0.105	NS
Residual	73.702	16	4.603			
Total	106.950	19				

Table shows the composite relationship of the independent variables. The table shows that the co-efficient of determination ($\text{Adjusted } R^2$) = 0.182 which gives proportion of variance ($\text{Adjusted } R^2 \times 100$) = 18.2%. This means that the independent variables accounted for 18.2% of the total variance in the dependent variables. The composite effect of the independent variables is not significant ($FC_{3,16} = 2.406$; $P > 0.05$).

Table 3: Relative contributions of Teachers' Attitude, Experience and

Motivation on Learning Achievement of preschool children

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
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	B	Std Error	Beta (β)	t	sig
(constant)	11.401	2.968		3.842	0.01
Teachers' Attitude	-.200	.089	-.656	-2.250	.039
Teachers' Motivation	.232	.089	.771	2.594	.020
Teachers' Experience	.169	.640	.059	.264	.795

Table shows the relative relationship of the independent variables. The table shows that teachers motivation has highest significant contribution to learning achievement of the preschool children this followed by teachers attitude Teachers' experience has the least contribution ($\beta = 0.059$; $t = 0.264$; $p > 0.05$).

From table, it is shown that there is significant contribution of teachers' attitude ($\beta = 0.656$; $t = 2.250$ $p < 0.05$) and teachers' motivation ($\beta = 0.771$; $t = 2.594$; $p < 0.05$) on the dependent variable. Therefore, they are the independent variables that predicted learning achievement of the preschool children.

Discussion

Research question 1 stated that there is no significant relationship among teachers' attitude, experience, motivation and learning achievement of preschool children. The result indicates that there is negative relationship between teachers' attitude and learning achievement of preschool children, Teachers' experience and learning achievement of preschool children but, there was positive relationship between teachers' motivation and learning achievement of preschool children.

The significant relationship found between Teachers' motivation and learning achievement is consistent with that of Oriahi (2009) who confirmed that teachers' motivation has high positive correlation in pupils learning achievement. The possible explanation for this result is that, teachers that are motivated in terms of reasonable pay, recognition for jobs well done might serve as a resource that facilitates children learning achievement.

It is also reasonable to expect that, those children that are handled by teachers that are well motivated feel secure and safe, free from fear of loss of job and psychological threats would achieve more in school than those who are handled by teachers that are dissatisfied with physical facilities.

Also, the negative relationship between teachers' attitude and learning achievement of preschool children is inconsistent with Ogunwuyi (2000) who established significant causal relationship between the teachers' attitude and pupils' achievements in science. The result above can explain that, the teachers' attitude might influence the learning ability of pupils and this may undermine or facilitates learning achievement.

The result further shows that, there was a negative relationship between teachers' experience and learning achievement of preschool children. This result has been confirmed by Schneider (1988) who found no statistical difference between novice and experienced teachers in relation to pupils' academic achievement. Also, the finding was in agreement with the findings made by Dwaltis (1983) which showed no significant difference between teachers with high teaching experience and those with low teaching experience and teacher competencies in teaching methodology. However, the findings are in contrast with Adeyemi (2008) who found that teachers experience had a significant with pupils' learning achievement. The finding was also inconsistent with those of Adeyemi (1997) who claimed that pupils tends to achieve better results when taught by teachers with more years of teaching experience. The possible explanation for this result is that, children intellectual might be affected with the teaching of inexperienced teacher.

Research Question Two

Research question number two stated that, what is the composite relationship among Teachers' Attitude, Experience and Motivation on preschool children Learning Achievement? The result shows that teachers' attitude, experience and motivation had negative and non- significant relationship to children learning achievement. This implies that, all the variables when taken together, does not predict the learning achievement of pre-school children. The non-significant established among teachers attitude, experience and motivation towards learning achievement of pre- school children is inconsistent with Adedeji (2008) who found significant relationship between teacher's attitude, experience and pupils learning achievement. This may be as a result that occurred in the relationship among teachers attitude, experience motivation and learning achievement which shows that only teachers motivation had significant with learning achievement of pre-school children while the remaining variables (attitude and experience) had non-significant relationship with learning achievement of pre-school children.

Research Question three

Research question three examined the relative contributions of teacher's attitude, experience and motivation on learning achievement of pre-school children. The results reveal that teacher's motivation has highest significant contribution to learning achievement of the pre-school children, followed by teacher's attitude while teacher's experience had the least contribution to learning achievement of pre-schools children. This

result corroborates the one obtained by Oriahi (2009) who reported positive relationship between teacher's motivation and pupils' academic performance. However, the non-significant relationship between teachers' attitude, experience is departure to Ogunwuyi (2000) and Adeyemi (2008) who found that teacher's experience had significant relationship with pupils' academic achievement. The variables, such as motivation might facilitate children intellectual development because teachers that are well motivated in terms of incentive are likely to display good attitude towards the teaching of pre-school children and this could in turn influence the learning achievement of pre-school children.

Furthermore, it may be that when teachers are satisfy with their job, accepted by others and self-fulfilled in their work, it might affect their mode of teaching which could influence the learning achievement of pre-school children. However, the non-significant of teacher's experience and attitude may be explained that, when teachers are in experienced in teaching of pre-school children and having negative attitude towards the teaching of pre-school children, it may influence children learning achievement. It is understandable that, when teachers are not having positive attitude it is likely to have impact in the teaching of pre-school children, but if teacher's motives, ability and aspiration predisposes them towards inferential level of communication of time and effort in teaching pre-school children, it may influence children learning achievement in different dimension.

Research Question four

Research question four was to determine which of the independent variables teacher's attitude, experience, and motivation would predict learning achievement of pre-school children. The result reveals that, there is significant contribution of teachers' attitude and motivation to the learning achievement of preschool children. The result is similar to Adedeji (2008) who reported that teacher's attitude had significant relationship with pupils learning achievement. The result is in agreement with Oriahi (2009) who confirmed that teacher's motivation had high positive correlation in pupils academic. Positive attitude towards the activities that develop children intellectual and teachers that are satisfied with their job condition, self-fulfilled are likely to support and help in developing intellectual development of pre-school children. However, the result showed that teacher's experience did not predict children learning achievement. This is contrary to finding reported by Adeyemi (2008) who established a significant relationship between teacher's experience and pupils' academic performance. The reason for this result may be that, among teacher's, there might be of lack experience that might likely undermine the learning achievement of pre-school teacher.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the results of this study have revealed that of all the independent variables correlated and regressed with the criterion measure of learning

achievement, teachers' attitude and teachers' motivation were the best predictor. The least predictor was teachers' experience. It is therefore becomes very paramount that the government should do everything that is possible to enhance the job performance of teachers so that the intellectual of pupils could developed.

Recommendations

Teaching and learning of pre-school children is a function of many factors such as teacher's characteristics and school factors. These factors work together to bring a unique feature in the classroom setting. The study has been able to show the various contributions of the independent variables and dependent variables. The study therefore, has some implications for the government, school Administration, teachers and parents.

The school administrators should ensure that the school environment is conclusive for teachers by providing a necessary condition that can motivate teachers such as incentive, payment of good salary, job security and having interpersonal relations with teachers. The school administrators should ensure that they employ qualified teachers most especially early childhood trained teachers to teach pre-school children and organize special workshop, short courses, training and re-training programmes for teacher, to keep them in touch with effective teaching strategies that could enhance learning achievement of pre-school children. The government should do everything that is possible to enhance the job performance of teachers so that pupils could develop intellectually.

The teachers of pre-school children should have interest of pupils in their mind and put up the right attitude towards the teaching and arranging of activities that are geared towards learning achievement of pre-school children. Also, the teacher should assist each child to discover their educational status and should not see them as adult miniature. Teachers should not view them as object to label as either bright or dull. Parents should work hand in-hand with teachers in order to assist teachers in developing children learning achievement. The government should formulate policy that would normalize the payment of school fees of pre-school children which could in turn influence the stability of the teacher's salary in private school.

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