



Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Skills Possessed by Pre-Primary School Teachers in the University of Nigeria Nsukka

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Abstract

This study set out to ascertain the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills possessed by pre-primary school teachers in the University of Nigeria Nsukka. Two research questions were posed for the study. Seventy-seven (77) pre-primary school teachers from University of Nigeria, Nsukka were sampled in the study. Descriptive Survey research design was used for the study. A questionnaire adopted by the researchers served as the instrument of data collection. The two research questions were answered using simple percentage scores and mean and standard deviation. Results showed that the qualification of pre-primary school teachers in Nsukka Campus was not highly satisfactory. The level of ICT skills possessed by the pre-primary school teachers was low. Based on the findings; it was recommended that government and private sectors should make adequate efforts to provide ICT equipment and also train teachers to effectively use them for the effective learning of the children.

Keywords: Information and Communication Technology, ICT skills, Pre-primary school, Teachers Qualification

Introduction

Pre-primary (primary and or early childhood) education is the education given in an educational institution to children prior to their entering into primary school. Pre-primary education is of vital importance and indispensable for a sound and worthwhile education for the development of children in Nigeria. It is the foundation for subsequent academic growth. Pre-primary education takes place at an impressionable and formative stage of a child's life, and Children being the nation's most precious assets therefore, ought to be addressed with adequate care. Their educational programme should be carefully planned to prepare them to face the challenges which education is likely to pose in later life.

One of the vital requirements that could enhance laying a sound foundation for the pre-primary school children is the quality of teachers employed to teach children at this tender age. Teachers constitute a vital factor to reckon with in pre- primary education because of the methodologies and teaching strategies needed to equip them for effective teaching and learning at this level. Unfortunately, majority of the teachers employed to teach at the pre-primary level lack the required qualification, methodologies and strategies needed for such sensitive job. According to Ajayi (2008), when we talk of education of children, the next relevant

issue in the sequence is the teacher. The combination of children education and teacher forms a strong link between children and education because it has a way of encouraging all inclusive education (Ngozi, Eucharia, Juliana & Faithful, 2023).

The training of teachers at pre-primary level appears not to be formalized properly. Most of the teachers are not specialists in the teaching field; many do not possess Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skill. Barnett (2011) asserts that the private sectors can only afford to recruit dropouts or "awaiting results" revealing that any primary teachers in Nigeria today appears to be school drop-outs or awaiting results, while the most qualified are holders of TC11 Certificates. In the teaching of young children, the teachers is undoubtedly the single most important factor who imparts the knowledge adequately to the children, but where qualified teachers are lacking, the children may be misled (Ekesionye, 2010).

Teachers education or training is that component of the educational system charged with the education and training of teachers to acquire the competencies and skills of teaching for the improvement in the quality of teachers for the school system (Imogie, 2010). Teacher education programmes in Nigeria are guided by the National Policy on Education (2004:10)



whose objectives are clearly stated thus; teacher education programmes in Nigeria are guided by the National Policy on Education whose purposes are clearly stated thus; to produce highly motivated conscientious and efficient classroom teachers; to encourage a spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers; to help teachers to fit into the social life of community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to the national objectives; to provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate to changing situations and to enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

These objectives sound very meaningful and pragmatic, but to what extent have these objectives been realized especially in the pre-primary teachers' training? Teachers of pre-primary education need the skills of ICT, this will aid them to be reasonable and eager to learn new methods, the future generations would therefore benefit extremely in how they will be educated. Our world is revolving at an exponential rate, and the future generations must be introduced to ICT as soon as possible (to catch them young), there is no other better way to do that than through education.

ICT already has an effect on the people and environments that surround young children. ICT technologies offer new opportunities to straighten many aspects of early childhood education practice. There is the possibility that the children can begin to develop ICT capability and ICT literacy as part of their early life childhood education experiences. ICT skill will enhance and straighten relationships between children and adults or give adults new ways to gain insight into children's learning and facilitate the emergence of new literacies in children. Many authors consider that ICT holds many potentials benefits for young children, and that when used appropriately ICT can support children cognitive, emotional, social and cooperative skills development (Ekesionye, Ajuzie & Okolo 2022; Ezema, 2015; Ezindu, 2014).

The National Policy on Education (NPE) stated (2004: 11, section 2, sub-section 14b and 14d), that government shall make provision in teachers education programme for specialization in early childhood education-ensure that the main method of teaching at this level should be through play, that the curriculum of teachers education is oriented to achieve this. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, the type of provision made in teacher education programme for specialization in primary school education is not yet visible. It then becomes necessary to carry out this study to determine

the extent to which primary school teachers are qualified to teach the primary level of education and the extent to which they are equipped with adequate technologies to handle the pre-primary school children in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What are the information and communication skills possessed by the pre-primary school teachers in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka?
2. What are the qualifications of the pre-primary school teachers in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nsukka Campus?

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. Survey research design is a design that deals with the gathering of data and describing it in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features and facts about a given population (Nworgu, 2015). The population of the study is 77 pre-primary teachers from the government, private and mission owned pre-primary school teachers in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The whole population was used. There are three pre-primary schools in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. One mission owned, one private owned and one government owned pre-primary schools. Instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Information and Communication Technology Skills". It was made up of two sections. Section one is on the qualifications and section two is on ICT skills possessed by the pre-primary school teachers. Section one and two has 7 and 8 questions respectively making up a total of 15 items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire is on four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D) with a corresponding weight of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The questionnaire was face validated by three experts from department of science education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Corrections were made as directed by the experts. Fifteen (15) copies of the questionnaire were administered to pre-primary school teachers in pre-primary schools in Odenigbo, Nsukka who were not part of the population under study. Cronbach Alpha method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient of 0.71 was obtained. This result implies that the instrument is reliable. The researchers administered the questionnaires on the pre-primary school teachers and collected the questionnaires on the spot which yield a hundred percent return rate.

Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze data for the research questions. However, the decision point was 2.50. This implies that any response with 2.50 and

above is regarded as agreed while mean response below 2.50 is regarded as disagreed.

Results

Table 1: Mean ratings and Standard Deviations of responses of Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills possessed by pre-primary school teachers

Items	Mean	S.D	Remark
1 Word processing skills such as typesetting, formatting texts, etc.	2.75	.94	Agree
2 I can design charts (poster using computer software)	2.24	.76	Disagree
3 Computer hardware set up	2.68	.75	Agree
4 Computer graphics slide projection	3.36	.79	Agree
5 Electronic projection of lesson slides in my classes	2.31	.87	Disagree
6 I usually teach my pupils how to design graphics using the computer	2.34	.99	Disagree
7 I teach my pupils how to code programs using the computer technology	2.19	.98	Disagree
8 I assemble computer parts weekly for my pupils to learn.	2.31	1.01	Disagree
9 I give my pupils assignment using the computer programs or software	2.00	.77	Disagree
10 I review my pupils assignment and send report to their parents using the computer and via emails	2.31	.84	Disagree
Cluster Mean	2.44		Disagree

Table 1 revealed that the following shows the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills possessed by primary school teachers. Items 1, 3 and 4 possess high mean scores of 2.75, 2.68 and 3.36 respectively. This implies that the following are ICT skills possessed by pre-primary school teachers. They include knowledge of word processing skills and computer hardware and also, the use of computer to design image to teach the pupils. Furthermore the teachers do not possess the following skills; inability

to design charts/posters using computer software, inability to project lesson notes in my classes using the computer, inability to teach their pupils how to design graphics using the computer, inability to demonstrate and assemble computer parts weekly for their pupils to learn, Inability to give their pupils assignment using the computer, Inability to review pupils assignment and send report to their parents using the computer or mobile phones or emails. The cluster mean shows a



total of 2.44 which indicated the low level of ICT skills possessed by pre-primary school teachers.

Table 2: Simple percentage scores of the qualifications of the pre-primary school teachers in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nsukka Campus

Qualification	Frequencies (F)	Percentage (%)
NCE	43	55.1
BSC/ B. Ed	33	42.3
PhD	1	2.6
Total	77	100

The table shows the qualification of pre-primary school teachers in University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nsukka Campus. The highest qualification possessed by the respondents is NCE (55.1%) while some (42.3%) possess B. Sc/ B. Ed. Only 2.6% possess Ph. D. The rest of the items recorded no responses from the respondents.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study reveal that the highest qualifications possessed by the pre-primary school teachers are NCE (56.1%) while 41.5% possess B. Sc/ B. Ed. Only 2.4% possess Ph.D. These findings show the moderate level of qualification of pre-primary school teachers in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Therefore the qualification of pre-primary school teachers is not highly satisfactory. These findings are in line with Mghasse (2016) outlined that the challenges among teachers includes inadequate classrooms, inadequate teaching and learning materials, long distance from schools to home and readiness of parents to enroll students and most importantly, absence of qualified teachers as discovered in this study.

The findings of the study further reveal that the Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills possessed by pre-primary school teachers. These include knowledge of word processing skills and computer hardware and also, the use of computer to design image to teach the pupils. Furthermore, the teachers do not possess the following skills; inability to design charts/posters using computer software, inability to project lesson notes in my classes using the computer, inability to teach their pupils how to design graphics using the computer, inability to demonstrate and assemble computer parts weekly for their pupils to

learn, Inability to give their pupils assignment using the computer, Inability to review pupils assignment and send report to their parents using the computer or mobile phones or emails. The cluster mean indicated the low level of ICT skills possessed by pre-primary school teachers. This also aligns with the findings of Alazam & Hamzah (2012) which showed that teachers’ ICT skills were not highly satisfactory, and that a vast majority of teachers were not good users of ICT in classroom teaching. Metu et. al (2021) revealed similar aspects of ICT skills that teachers lack.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the highest qualification among pre-primary school teachers is NCE. This implies that most pre-primary schools lack highly qualified teachers. This situation is inappropriate and has direct or indirect effect on the development of the children and quality of education in the country. Children need teachers who are highly trained due to their vulnerability and they can be easily influenced. Proper training will enable teachers to be properly equipped to teach and influence them effectively.

Consequently, the study found that pre-primary school teachers possess low level of ICT skills which is a threat to educational advancement because teachers are required to equip themselves with ICT skills to meet up with the demands of today’s era of science and technology. As ICT in education advances teachers need to design charts/posters using computer software and project lesson notes in classes using the computer. It is also required that they teach pupils how to design graphics using the computer, demonstrate and assemble computer parts for their pupils to learn and as well give their pupils assignment using the computer among others. Quality education of children is very significant.



Any nation that fails to understand this and address the needs of children is going backwards because the future of any nation is determined by the quality of her children's education. From the foregoing, it is recommended that the government and private sectors should make adequate efforts to provide ICT equipment and also train teachers to effectively use them for the effective learning of the children.

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