



ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND PRIMARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM: NEW DIRECTION AND COMMON CHANGES IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined the assessment of the implementation of the minimum standards of early childhood care and primary education curriculum in Ondo State. It assessed the adequacy of the minimum standards in early childhood care and primary education curriculum. It also examined the level of implementation of the minimum standards in early childhood care and primary education curriculum. The study further ascertain the adequacy of provision of educational resources to implement the minimum standard. It investigated the factors affecting the implementation of early childhood care and primary education curriculum. These were with a view to providing information on the assessment of the implementation of the minimum standard of early childhood care and primary education curriculum in Ondo State. The study adopted the survey research design. The population consisted of all Early Childhood Care and Primary Education learners, care-givers/teachers, head teachers and supervising officers in the ministry of education in the three senatorial districts in Ondo State. The sample which comprised of Head-teachers, Teachers and Supervising Officer in the Ministry of Education was selected using multistage sampling technique. Data were collected using four instruments, namely: Adequacy of Minimum Standards Checklist (AMSC); Teachers' Qualifications and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (TQQAQ); Educational Recourses Questionnaire (ERQ); Factors Affecting Implementation of ECCPE Minimum Standards Questionnaire (FAIEMSQ), Data for this study were analysed using simple frequency, percentage and ranking. Results showed that the adequacy of

the minimum standards in early childhood care and primary education curriculum is adequate in the study area. The dominant item “child protection materials” (3.72), seating arrangement (3.70) guidance and counseling unit (2.99). Result also showed that the level of implementation of minimum standards in early childhood care and primary education curriculum are encouraging. Results showed that the adequacy of educational resources of minimum standards in early childhood care and primary curriculum were adequate. Results showed that “trained teachers” (3.45), “teachers’ qualifications (3.34), “funding” (3.24), language of instruction (3.20), early childhood curriculum (3.07) were factors affecting the implementation of the minimum standards in early childhood care and lower primary curriculum. The conclusion drawn from this study is that the assessment of the implementation of the minimum standards of early childhood care and lower primary education curriculum are not given the same attention in the school system judging from the way the various centres and lower primary education curriculum are being implemented in the school programme.

Introduction

Early childhood care and primary education curriculum are important aspects on the educational development in Nigeria and very crucial to the growth of every Nigerian child. Early childcare development and education is the stimulation, protection, care As well as learning enhanced in pupils from 0 – 8 years of age at the nursery or Crèche level according to National Policy on Education (2013).

Quality instruction at the formative years of a kid is vital and there is no increase saying the way that these early stages enormously affect the later advancement of the kids and thus the general development of a nation. Fundamentally, the physical, enthusiastic and psychological improvement of the kid, if appropriately dealt with would profit the kid and the country overall. This is the reason the Education for all (EFA) objective urges all countries to grow youth care and schooling administrations to all kids.

Youth schooling is seen to be as old as the human life. Abdullahi (2003) claimed that in the traditional African setting, Early Childhood Care (ECC) was the duty of the close family with the dynamic association of the more distant family

individuals. Such customary youth training included greeting of elders, cleaning of teeth, washing of face in the early part of the day, playing and resting, appropriate dinner propensities, learning of good codes of conducts, actual wellness, standards and customs in the public that are basically managed by the seniors in the society.

To understand these elevated goals, childcare educational plan was planned along the previously mentioned targets through the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2009) and suggested for use by all youth training centers. It ought to be noted nonetheless, that private people and associations had been authoritatively permitted to give youth schooling while government will give measures to cause quality control and confirmation in the framework. Governments, particularly at the State level have since started setting up youth training centers in each state-funded school (UNICEF, 2018).

The categorical goals of early childcare enhancement and training are to:

1. Promote an easy transition to school from home.
2. Ensures that the kid is prepared for the essential degree of training, i.e. primary education
3. Inculcate accepted practices.
4. Make provision for sufficient consideration and oversight for the kids while guardians are busy with different enterprises, farms, office, and so forth
5. Inculcate in the kid a curious and imaginative spirit through the investigation ability, and the immediate atmosphere, play with varieties of toys, creative and melodic exercises and so on
6. Teach co-activity and camaraderie.
7. Help children to learn the basics of numeracy, colours, structures, shapes and so forth through play and so on.
8. Teach beneficial routines, particularly great wellbeing propensities.

Early Childhood Care learning is concerned with the general building of a kid, which will in the long-run structure the premise of their deep-rooted venture. This is the reason the government of Nigeria in addition to other things and

premised on the NPE (2014), restated its commitments by stating that the Federal Government will:

- a. Set and screen least principles for ECCDE venues;
- b. Develop and transmit educational plan materials, for example, IECD Curriculum, IECD Implementation Guidelines and any remaining items that will upgrade the execution of ECCDE, the Integrated Early Child Care Development (IECD) Policy;
- c. Persuade the local area and private endeavors in the foundation of ECCDE sites dependent on set norms;
- d. Make arrangement in educator training courses for specialization in early childcare and instruction, and for re-training of instructors;
- e. Make sure that the educational programme of educator schooling is situated towards play-strategy;
- f. Certify that ECCDE Centers embrace the accompanying guardian/in fact ratio; Crèche 1:10; Nursery 1:25
- g. Create reasonable ECCDE educational plan for cross-country execution;
- h. Coordinate and control nature of ECCDE;
- i. Make arrangement for the creation and successful usage of learning and educational materials in satisfactory numbers; and
- j. Certify that the vehicle of guidance is the indigenous, i.e. mother tongue language.

Then again, essential training is the schooling given to pupils between 6 – 12 years of age.

The mandates of the primary education as indicated by the NPE (2014) are to:

- a. Instill perpetual proficiency, numeracy and the capacity to impart viably;
- b. Lay a sound reason for logical, basic and intelligent reasoning;
- c. Facilitate patriotism, reasonableness, understanding and public solidarity;
- d. Inculcate social good standards and qualities in the kid;
- e. Develop in the kid the capacity to adjust to the evolving situation; handle the kid work viably in the public inside the constraints of the kid's ability.

- f. Create openings for the kid to foster life manipulative abilities that will empower the kid work adequately in the public inside the constraints of the kid's capacity.

To achieve these goals, essential training will be made necessary, widespread and sound. The consideration of all-inclusive essential schooling underlines the significance of essential instruction in the improvement interaction of each country. Least norms are utilized to screen, assess and investigate the nature of training arrangement. As such, they can likewise improve responsibility in instruction. Least guidelines of ECCE and essential training add to various parts of value schooling. For instance, consistence to class foundation and climate, may advance the security, wellbeing and general prosperity of the students yet assuming the norms, educator quality and showing learning assets are not met acceptable understudies' learning results may not be accomplished. However, these areas are not properly addressed by implementers and researchers over the years. The minimum standards for ECCE and primary education in Nigeria (2007, 2012) was developed to address the gaps noticed in the implementation process and used as template for stakeholders and operators in other for both the operation and practice of primary education and ECCE to be standardized throughout the country. The question is 'Are ECCE centers and lower primary education schools actually implementing the minimum standards set out by the government? Are standards and quality control prioritised and implemented in schools? Some experts are of the view that ECCE Centers and lower primary schools abide by some of the minimum standards while others do not. In order to address these inconsistencies about minimum standards in ECCE Centres and primary schools as it relates to the execution, adequate attention is expected to be paid to the implementation process. Hence, the essence of this study is to assess/leverage on the execution of minimum standards set out for ECCE and primary education in Nigerian in order to call the attention of stakeholders for rapid response and to promote effective execution of the programme in Ondo State.

Statement of the Problem

Standards and quality control are paramount in enhancing training and learning in early stage childcare and primary education curriculum. However, it appears implementation is still an issue at these stages of the educational system in Nigeria. This may be due to lack of proper monitoring and control of these educational institutions among others. This view has it relates to assessment of

the execution of the ECCE and primary curriculum minimum standards has not been well established, hence this study.

Purpose of the Study

This research assesses the implementation of minimum standards of early stage childcare and primary curriculum in Ondo State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. assess the adequacy of the minimum standards in Early Childhood Care and Primary Education Curriculum in (ECCPE) in Ondo State;
- ii. examine the level of implementation of the minimum standards in Early Childhood Care and Primary Education Curriculum in (ECCPE) at their various centres;
- iii. ascertain the adequacy of provision of educational resources to implement the minimum standards in the centres; and
- iv. investigate the factors affecting the implementation of Early Childhood Care and Primary Education Curriculum (ECCPE) minimum standards in Ondo State.

Research Questions

On the accounts of the stated objectives, the under listed questions were raised and investigated:

1. How adequate is early childhood care and primary education curriculum minimum standards in Ondo State?
2. What is the level of implementation of ECCPE minimum standards at the centres in the study area?
3. How adequate are the educational resources needed to implement minimum standards in the centers?
4. What are the factors affecting the implementation of ECCPE minimum standards in Ondo State?

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopts the descriptive survey research design, which enabled the researcher to obtain the opinions of a representative sample comprising

caregivers/teachers, head-teachers and officials of the ministry of education on the assessment of the implementation of the minimum acceptable standards of early childcare and primary education curriculum in Ondo State. The population size consisted of early childcare and primary education curriculum (ECCPE) learners, caregivers/ teachers, head teachers and supervising officers in the ministry of education in three senatorial districts in Ondo state.

The study sample, which comprised of ten (10) Head teachers, fifty (50) Teachers and one (01) Supervising Officer in the Ministry of Education totaling sixty-one was selected using multistage sampling technique. In the first stage, all the three senatorial districts were used. In the second stage, one Local Government Area (LGA) was selected from each of the senatorial districts using simple random technique making three LGAs. Then, ten (10) schools consisting of five (05) Early Childhood Care Development and five (05) lower primary education were selected from each LGA using stratified random sampling technique with school type as an index for stratification. In stage three, Early Childhood Centres and lower primary schools were selected using purposive sampling technique.

In stage four, each schools, one (01) head teacher and five (05) teachers were sampled using the simple random technique. In addition, one (01) supervising official from the Ministry of Education was selected using accidental technique. Four research instruments, which contained three sections, were used; Adequacy of Minimum Standard Checklist (AMSC) was used by the researcher to gather on the spot data from the centres and lower primary education. To ascertain the validity of the three (3) instruments, the drafted items in AMSC, TQQAQ, ERQ and FAIEMSQ were presented to experts in Early Childhood Education and curriculum studies. All their observations and suggestions were effected. Test-retest was used to determine the reliability of the instruments, which were trial-tested on 12 participants consisting of two Head-Teachers and ten Teachers who were not part of the sample selected for the study. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients obtained for AMSC, TQQAQ, ERQ AND FAIEMSQ are 0.73, 0.84, 0.82 and 0.74, respectively. All the values were significant which indicated that the instruments were capable of consistently measuring the traits they were designed to measure.

Data for this study were analysed using descriptive statistics.

Findings

The respondents' characteristics are reported with frequency and percentages. These characteristics include rank, education and year of working experience. Other variables considered are availability, implementation and adequacy of the minimum standards items. Also presented are the weighted mean and standard deviation of items under each of availability, implementation and adequacy of the minimum standard. These are later ranked to identify the dominant item in each category.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Rank/Responsibility		
Headmaster	30	16.4
Class teacher	118	64.5
School helper	23	12.6
School nurse	9	5.9
Supervisory officer	3	1.5
Gender		
Male	57	31.0
Female	126	69.0
Educational qualification		
Ph.D.	NIL	NIL
M.Ed./M.Sc.	NIL	NIL
B.Ed./BSc Ed	49	26.8
NCE	143	73.2
Working experience		
0-5 years	31	16.9
6-10 years	79	43.2
11-15 years	55	30.1
16-20 years	11	6.0
21 years and above	7	3.8
Total	183	100

Table 4.1 presents the summary of the respondents' background characteristics. The distribution of rank of the respondents showed that 16.4% of them are head teachers, close to two third (64.5%) are class teachers, 12.6% are school helpers, 5.9% are school nurses and 1.5% are supervisory officers. Early childhood care and primary education curriculum were dominated by females. More than two third (69%) of the teachers are females while the remaining 31% are males. The distribution of their educational qualifications show that slightly above one quarter (26.8%) hold either B. Ed/BA. Ed/BSc. Ed while 73.2% are NCE holders. Respondents' educational status indicate that they have minimum primary school teaching qualification. Considering their working experience, 16.9% have spent 5 years or less, 43.2% reported to have spent between 6 – 10 years, 30.1% spent between 11 – 15 years, just 6% spent two decades or less (16 – 20 years) and 3.8% have spent 21 years and above in early childhood care and primary education.

Research Question One

How adequate is the early childhood care and primary education curriculum minimum standards in Ondo State?

In answering this question, data of items on 'Adequacy of Minimum Standard Checklist' (AMSC) were used. The data were analysed using percentage. The results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Adequacy of Minimum Standards in ECCPE

Items	Weight	Mean	Sd	Rank
Child protection materials	656	3.72	0.56	1
Seating arrangement	51	3.70	0.57	2
Environment is free from excessive noise and other hazards	639	3.59	0.54	3
Floor of at least 16 square meters for 10 – 15 children	607	3.48	0.62	4
Community/parents participation in the PTA	605	3.46	0.65	5
Admission, attendance, time book, PTA minutes register	604	3.45	0.64	6
TRCN certificate for the children	590	3.43	0.68	7
Provision of facilities e.g. library	586	3.41	0.7	8
Provision of meal for the children	574	3.38	0.7	9
School properly fenced	594	3.35	0.56	10

Provision of N.E.R.D. curriculum	567	3.33	0.74	11
Minimum qualification of NCE	555	3.32	0.78	12
Sleeping arrangement	581	3.31	0.63	13
Environment is spacious	579	3.31	0.65	14
Functional health services	567	3.31	0.7	15
Non-teaching staff	489	3.11	0.91	16
Playground such as slides, balls, swings, rocking boasts	569	3.28	0.64	17
Classroom ventilated	531	3.26	0.84	18
Stimulation materials e.g. puzzle, block for shapes, toys, radio, TV and CD	534	3.21	0.81	19
Medium of instruction is strictly to language of the immediate environment	472	3	0.89	20
Guidance and counselling unit	492	2.99	0.84	21
Water and environmental sanitation e.g. toilet, waste disposal, clean surrounding	410	2.98	1.18	22

Table 4.2 summarized the adequacy of minimum standards in early childhood education and primary education curriculum. The adequacy of minimum standards was assessed by 22 constructs. Thereafter, the minimum standard was determined and measured. After measuring all questions according to a 5-point, the Likert scale, 2.5 was considered as the appropriate cut-off point. A mean value greater than 2.5 implies that the item is available (agree) while a mean value less than 2.5 implies that the item is not available (disagree). A mean score that near 5 shows a high adequacy while a mean score that is near 1 implies a low adequacy of the item.

The mean score and standard deviation for each statement displayed in Table 4.2 indicate that all the items are adequate though the level of adequacy defers. The dominant item is “child protection materials” with mean score of 3.72 and standard deviation of 0.56. This was closely followed by seating arrangement item with mean score of 3.70 and standard deviation of 0.57. On the other hand, guidance and counselling unit (2.99) and provision of water and environmental sanitation (2.98) are the least. This suggests that the minimum standard in early childhood care and primary education is adequate in the study area.

Research Question Two

What is the level of implementation of ECCPE minimum standards at the centres in the study area?

In answering this question, data of items on ‘Teachers’ Qualifications and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (TQQAQ) were used. The data were analysed using frequency and percentage. The results are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Level of Implementation of ECCPE Minimum Standards.

Items	Weight	Mean	Sd	Rank
Provision of library	558	3.29	0.71	1
Playground for pupils	541	3.20	0.77	2
Medium of instruction	524	3.16	0.8	3
Sleeping/rest room	522	3.14	0.82	4
NCE minimum qualification for the teacher	491	3.10	0.9	5
Classroom ventilation	509	3.09	0.79	6
Spacious environment	479	3.07	0.94	7
Provision of curriculum	466	2.92	0.85	8
Pupils safety	474	3.05	0.94	9
Pupils seating arrangement	440	2.87	0.95	10
Simulation material	471	2.99	0.88	11
Non-teaching staff	465	2.98	0.95	12
Provision of health services	489	2.97	0.85	13
Provision of fence	486	3.07	0.89	14
Proper classroom sizes	489	3.02	0.83	15

Table 4.3 summarized the level of implementation of ECCPE minimum standards in early childhood care and primary education curriculum. The results showed that all the items are implemented. Meanwhile, the predominant item of all the items was ranked 1st. Provision of library is the most important item implemented. This is closely followed by provision of playground for pupils. The third most important item is medium of instruction. The least implemented item is provision of proper classroom sizes. Although, not all the schools have implemented this but majority of the schools sampled have no proper classroom

sizes. Another minimum standards that is not implemented fully is provision of fence around the schools as well as health services for the pupils. Many of the schools utilized health services around the school when the need arose.

Research Question Three:

How adequate is the provision of educational resources to implement the minimum standards in the centres?

In answering this question, data of items on 'Educational Resources Questionnaire (ERQ) were used. The data were analysed using frequency and percentage. The results are represented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Adequacy of Educational Resources in the Centres

Items	Weight	Mean	Sd	Rank
Playground	666	3.71	0.46	1
Stimulation techniques	661	3.68	0.47	2
School curriculum	556	3.31	0.71	3
Staff qualification	630	3.51	0.5	4
Staff welfare	622	3.52	0.55	5
School location	554	3.39	0.79	6
School records	508	3.15	0.83	7
P.T.A. programme	545	3.34	0.81	8
Classrooms	626	3.52	0.53	9
Furniture	542	3.39	0.87	10
Class size	536	3.38	0.86	11
School fence	646	3.67	0.54	12

The results presented in Table 4.4 summarized the adequacy of educational resources in the centres. The results revealed that playground is the number one item that is mostly adequate across the schools. Another item was adequate simulation techniques. This is followed by school curriculum. This is also reported to be adequate across the school. The least adequate minimum standard is school fence, class size and furniture in that other.

Table 4.5: Adequacy, Implementation and Educational Resources

Items	Frequency	Percent
Adequacy		
low available	61	33.3
Moderate available	62	33.9
High available	60	32.8
Implementation		
low implementation	64	35.0
partial implementation	59	32.2
Full implementation	60	32.8
Educational Resources		
Not adequate	92	50.3
Adequate	91	49.7
Total	183	100

Presented in Table 4.5 is the distribution of aggregated items under each of adequacy, implementation and educational resources of minimum standards in early stage childcare and basic curriculum. All the items under each of availability, implementation and adequacy were pulled together to derive new constructs. Availability was categorized as low, moderate and high availability, implementation was regrouped into low, partial and full implementation and adequacy was classified as not and adequate.

The results reveal that 33.3% reported low availability, 33.9% reported moderate availability and 32.8% reported high availability of minimum standards. While 35% of the respondents reported low implementation of minimum standard, 32.2% and 32.8% reported partial and full implementation of the minimum standards. Half of the respondents claimed that minimum standard in early stage childcare and primary education are not adequate while 49.7% reported that they are adequate.

Research Question Four

What are the factors affecting the implementation of ECCPE minimum standards in Ondo State?

In answering this question, data of items on the ‘Factors Affecting the Implementation of ECCPE Minimum Standards Questionnaire (FAIEMSQ) were used. The data were analysed using frequency and percentage. The results are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Factors Affecting the Implementation of ECCPE Minimum Standards in Early Childhood Care and Primary Education Curriculum Standards.

Factors	Weight	Mean	SD	Rank
Trained Teacher	591	3.45	0.75	1
Minimum qualifications	566	3.34	0.76	2
Funding	563	3.24	0.66	3
Supervision	553	3.20	0.65	4
Language of instruction	539	3.20	0.74	5
Early childhood curriculum	512	3.07	0.80	6

Table 4.6 presents the summary of factors affecting the implementation of ECCPE minimum standards in early stage childcare and primary education curriculum within the study area. All the factors are scored above the average (2.5) which indicates that they are all noticeable factors. The prominent factor are “trained teachers” with mean score of 3.45 and standard deviation of 0.75. This may be unconnected with the fact that the quality of teacher reveals the strength of any educational system and the value of learners. The factor with the next highest mean score is minimum qualification with mean score of 3.34 and standard deviation of 0.76. Though, the results showed that many of teachers have minimum qualification (NCE) but the current curriculum of primary education studies in Nigerian colleges of education do not sufficient for early stage childcare and education. However, the training only makes them adequate for primary school only. This may not be enough for early childhood care and education. In addition, funding was also identified as one of the factors militating against minimum standard. This item has mean score of 3.24 and

standard deviation of 0.66. In early stage childcare and education, the issue of fund cannot be overlooked. The high mean score implies that there may be problem of staffing, teacher pupil ration, and infrastructure among others. Supervision by the ministry of education is also identified as one of the factors. Another factor identified is the language of instruction with mean score of 3.20 and standard deviation of 0.74 while the last factor identified by the respondents is early childhood curriculum. This item has the lowest mean score (3.07). This indicated that issue of curriculum may not be general but observed as one of the factors affecting minimum standard in early childhood care and primary curriculum.

Table 4.7: Distribution of Suggestions by the Respondents

Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
Enforcement of laid down regulations by state ministry of education	73	39.9
Effective quality monitory units	29	15.8
Provision of logistic support for supervisory officers	57	31.1
Regulations of teachers' salary	24	13.2
Total	183	100

Table 4.7 presents various suggestions by the respondents revealed how early childhood care and primary education can be improved. The results showed that 39.9% of the respondents suggested enforcement of laid down regulations by state ministry of education, 15.8% of them suggested effective monitoring units, 31.1% suggested provision of logistic support for supervisory officers and just 13.2% suggested regulations of teachers' salary.

Discussion of Findings

The outcome of the quantitative analysis produced a wealth of data. To the first research question adequacy of ECCPE minimum standards in Ondo state, the results showed that all the items are adequate though the level of adequacy

differs. These findings point to the fact that ECCPE centres and lower primary schools merely pay attention on those minimum standards that best suit their situations. Hence, the varied level of adequacies in the centres and schools investigated. The implication of these findings is that in terms of teaching and learning and following the set out minimum standards based on government's stipulations as enunciated in the NPE (2014), most of the Centres and lower primary schools were still struggling to meet up with the minimum standards set out by the NPE (2014) and the Minimum Standards for schools in Nigeria (2012). Findings on the adequacy of ECCPE minimum standard in most of the centres and lower primary schools observed in this study corroborate the views of UNICEF (2018), Sweeney (2008), Hall and Hord (2001) that most of the schools are not particularly keeping with the spirit of the minimum standards set out by the concern agencies of government.

To the second research question on the level of implementation of the ECCEP minimum standards in Ondo State. The results showed that all the items identified in this study are implemented. However, there are variations in the level of implementation depending on the centres and the lower primary schools investigated. The imbalance in the level of implementation in the various centres and lower primary schools are really obvious. These findings point to the fact that while some centres and lower primary schools were fairly implementing the minimum standards other centres and schools are merely doing enough to carry out implementation. This shows clearly why most of the centres and schools are to getting the best out of their pupils and even the teaching staff. It is therefore obvious that school authorities are not really compelled to implement the minimum standard in the various centres and lower primary schools. So, implementation becomes discretionary. If the monitoring agency as typified by the Ministry of Education is still finding it difficult to chat a coordinated course of action with regards to full implementation of the minimum standard in the schools, then it will be hypocritical to accuse school authorities and teachers of non-compliance when it comes to implementation of the minimum standard in the school system. The findings of this study reinforce the findings of Ajayi (2007), Friedman and Wallace (2005), Bruoro (2000) and Omotayo, Iheberene and Maduwesi (2008) that implementation challenges in

Nigeria can be attributed to the centralized system of the educational system. All these tend to remove adequate implementation from the minimum standard. On research question three which focused on the adequacy in the provision of educational resources to implement the minimum standard in Ondo State. Results showed that most of the centres are fairly adequate in the provision of educational resources in their centres. However, it was very obvious in most of the schools that School Fence, Class Size and furniture are major resources that are not adequate. The implication of this findings is that most of the schools in Nigeria are not fully equipped in order to take care of the educational tasks during the teaching learning situation. This shows clearly why teaching and learning at these centres and schools are not prioritized. One of the importance of the various educational resources is to enhance teaching and learning. Besides, they assist in achieving some of the aims of the school curriculum. This finding corroborate Newhouse (2001), Straub (2009), Anderson (1997) and NCCE Minimum Standard for Colleges of Education (2012) that the importance of educational resources cannot be overemphasized in the school system and during the teaching learning process.

On research question four which is asked in respect to the factors affecting the implementation of ECCPE minimum standards in Ondo State. Results showed that trained teachers, minimum qualifications by teachers, funding from appropriate authority, effective supervision, language of instruction and curriculum were factors affecting the implementation of the ECCPE minimum standards at the centres and lower primary schools. In addition, the findings of this study corroborate Eriba (2001), Ajayi (2008), Nwagbara (2003), Ogunsaju (2006), Sooter (2013) and Nakpodia (2011) submission on challenges to implementation and reasons why implementation is not properly carried out. They traced the issue of slow implementation to lack of adequate funds and inexperienced personnel among others. The findings of this study reinforce Nwakaego (2007), Ejiej (2006), Okoro (2004) and Obidike (2012). They state that making choices as to the learning experiences which are appropriate and desirable for learners in the society should be the motivating factors in the school system during the implementation of any programme.

Conclusion

The conclusion drawn from this study is that the assessment of the implementation of the minimum standard of early childhood care and lower primary education curriculum are not given the same attention in the school system judging from the way the various centres and lower primary curriculum are being implemented in the school programme. Stakeholders in the education sector should pay more attention to the implementation of the minimum standards in schools. The various factors affecting the implementation of the minimum standards in Ondo State in particular and in Nigeria in general should be systematically approached and addressed holistically by all those concern.

Recommendations

Following the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

- (1). school administrators / managers and stakeholders should device effective strategies in the school programme that would allow for proper implementation of school activities and programmes,
- (2). adequate funds should be made available for schools in order to ensure that necessary facilities are made available and teachers' salaries are poor regularly,
- (3). governments at all levels should provide the enabling environment through the provision of requisite facilities and resources that will meet the desires of the learners, teachers need regular training on the changing nature of the classroom and its learners,
- (4). proper implementation should be put in place in schools through adequate monitoring and supervision by relevant authorities, supervisory agencies such as the ministry of Education and Quality Assurance Agencies should spread their monitoring tentacles to cover all the school aspects.

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