

LITERARY TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENTAL APPROPRIATENESS FOR NURSERY SCHOOL PUPILS IN OSUN STATE: ADMINISTRATOR PERSPECTIVES

Hannah Olubunmi AJAYI, Ph.D & Olufunke Deborah LAMIDI
Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria
E-mail: olufunkelam2016@gmail.com

Abstract

The study investigated the literary textbooks selection and developmental appropriateness for nursery school pupils in Osun State. It employed quantitative research design using simple random sampling technique. The population comprised all nursery school administrators in Osun State. Multi-stage sampling procedure was used for the study. The sampling consisted of 60 administrators from 60 private schools that were randomly selected from three Local Government areas, each from the three senatorial districts. An instrument titled Administrators Textbook Selection Rationale Questionnaire (ATSRQ) was validated and used to elicit information for the study. The instrument had two sections. Section A focused on demographic information of the administrators. Section B focused on the various items of rationales. One research question was asked and one hypothesis was raised. Data obtained were analysed using frequency count, percentages, pie chart, bar chart and Analysis of Variance. The results showed that the most considered rationales for literary textbooks selection by the school administrators were influence 30%, readability 30%, and assessment levels with 30%, while the least consideration rationales were cultural relevance 10%, coverage 10%, availability and affordability with 10% respectively. Lastly, administrators' demographic factors of years of teaching experiences ($F=1.007$, $df=3$, $p>0.05$), age ($F=2.600$, $df=3$, $p>0.05$), qualification ($F=1.500$, $df=5$, $p>0.05$), did not have significant influence on the selection of literary textbooks. It is therefore recommended that the school administrators in charge of literary textbooks selection should select texts that are of pupils' great interest, age appropriateness, culturally relevance, reachable, and the early childhood education (ECE) curriculum planners should consider, checking thoroughly, review literary textbooks from time to time before recommendations.

Keywords: Literary Textbooks, Developmental Appropriateness, Children Literature, Nursery Pupils, School Administrators

Introduction

It is apparent that, one cannot undervalue the importance of literature-books in early childhood education. This is because, among additional intents, literature nurtures both the mental growth and academic development of pupils. According to Marri (2022), 'Literature transforms human experiences and reflect it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experience.' This is achieved by exposure to literature books that are selected with certain consideration of parameters such as age, interest, nature, exposure, level, environment, happenings of the time, available technology and ability for the use of pupils (Haxhihyseni, 2013).

A literary textbook is said to be a learning material that is meant for pupils to see, feel, touch, open, brood on, admire, talk to, memorise, that has colourful pictures or diagrams, and may contain written words on a specific subject like literature (Lamidi, 2022). This is in line with the definition of a textbook to be an embodiment of syllabus with all the contents to be taught and a methodological guide which has to be read, sometimes memorised through repeated readings, (Ajayi, 2021). A textbook is a written source of information, designed specifically for the use of pupils, on a particular subject or field of study, that is usually developed based on a syllabus and geared towards meeting specific quality and learning environment, (Horsley, with Sikorova, 2014). Textbooks are collections of study and reading materials related to a specific discipline or subject like literature. According to Ruxandra (2014), literary textbooks purpose can be to entertain, disseminate messages, promote almost lost culture or beliefs. It is a learning material that entails literacy activities and a few of mathematical thinking, philosophical idea in sequential arrangement to be chipped in to young learners who think they are playing but at the same time learning. Pupils build their attitude, emotional skills, self-principles, intellectual hubs and grow with these kinds of textbooks they are exposed to. And by so doing, it helps them to become a full-grown better adult in future. This agrees with Rahma, (2017) that says a literary text gives pleasure to listeners and

readers, it is a means of relaxing escape from daily problem and fills leisure moments.

As this study is concerned, textbook in this sense is pinned down to the words 'literary textbook' and literary-textbook is formed from the word literature-book and to be specific, children literature book. Children literature as one of the keywords in this study is to be discussed further. Evolution of children literature was traced back to orature (oral literature), moonlight tales, heroic-stories (legendary histories), lullabies, folktales, family-panegyrics, poetic stories, nursery rhymes and so on. These were the sources of the oldest literature for children, being in existence from many unknown years back, (Kristin, 2022). To this end, since the genesis of human development, the aforementioned literature gained extensive status among children even though their original forms were oral. However, each of them gradually became written through various world languages. Moreover, it was in China where the first sets of books for children were printed from wooden blocks which texts and illustration were carved on. Having begun T'ang Dynasty in 618 D. A., China became celebrated for Arts and literature. According to Hunt (2002), defining children's literature may be difficult for it is solely about its functions and purpose by connecting with its audience.

However, Pulimeno, Piscitelli, De Marco, with Colazzo, (2018) defines it as any creative literary work written and designed specifically for children's use. They expatiated further the children's literature products as short tales, stories, picture books, comic books, novels and rhymes. Britannica, (2022) classifies types of children literature as concepts related to school stories, religious stories, fantasies, fables and other animal stories, fairy tales, myths, and legends, poetry, rhymes, folktales, drama, comics and graphic novels, e-books and computer games. They are exclusively created for children as the target audience. Zipes, (2013) also in support that a good book for children possesses different constructive experiences such as: emotions, delight, suspense, vicarious adventure, healthy laughter, simple desire for the moment and information. Saracho with Spodex (2010) states a few criteria to be considered when selecting children literature: as a text with childlike repetition; quality of content; simple well-developed plot; washable covers; and language written in colourful ink. Ajayi (2015) identifies the physical property to be given attention to when selecting

literary texts for pupils, as follows: the cover, pages, stitched bindings (to make it lie flat when opened), typeface, spacing, pictorial pictures, colourful letterings, big fonts and illustrative content. The content structure of books for children should be repetitive, rhythmic, contain simplified vocabulary, familiar concepts, and be culturally relevant. In its formal sense and purpose of selecting texts for children, it is meant for impacting knowledge at the basic educational level, as it helps teachers not to teach in abstract and helps develop pupils appropriately

Developmental appropriateness of literary textbook matches with mental growth and academic development of pupils if selected carefully. It helps pupils to develop oral and written languages, as to analyse, illustrate their own views of dialogue in children's world (Jennifer, 2020). Even literary textbooks that are wordless like 'Ball for Daisy' (Raschka 2011), aid the pupils to explore their world, think, analyse, explain further through (monologue) and discuss (dialogue) with others in their own world, (Norton, 2010). Additionally, Strouse, Nyhout and Ganea (2018) support the selection of picture books as part of literary texts. This helps pupils to relate objects in their immediate environment with pictures in their literary texts through symbolic development, analogical reasoning, fantasy distinction and learning transfer. Picture book is a book designed for pre-readers that contain pictures and may also contain few words. According to Erkan (2016), the consideration of developmental appropriateness when selecting literary texts for pupils also provides chance for them to develop language skills (listening, speaking, writing & reading) richly. One of the main reasons teachers use appropriate literary texts in the classroom is language enrichment. Literary texts selection at the basic level should measure up to the parameters of the users as pupils at this level are restless, active, more receptive, never tired of being playful and have more curious minds. At this level, they lose interest faster than adults as their attention cannot be focused on a subject and cannot be manipulated for a long time.

Selecting literary texts that meet the needs of the pupils is further proven with the theory of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and child development. This theory serves as a straight forward framework and is easily remembered that a child can become successful (reach full potential) if the developmental needs are met. As a child, the developmental needs include physical, emotional, social, cognitive,

language, and aesthetics development. So, literary texts that measure up with their developmental needs are to be selected. Homer (2022), posited a few simple tips to be used when selecting appropriate children literary textbooks by: (i) determining the child's reading level through a tool called Lexile framework; (ii) do a background check through reviewing it on-line and seeking advice from literary teachers; children librarians, other parents and learning coaches and common sense media, rate books, apps, games by age and learning value; (iii) and teach a child to become an independent reader; by taking him or her across already set age-appropriate literary textbooks and allowing him or her to pick. Then, assess him or her indirectly by using P.I.C.K. (Purpose, Interest, Comprehend and Know) Amy, (2013). Jennifer (2020) also defines developmentally appropriate books as books that match the child's age, learning and interest level of the pupil. She buttresses her point further that, pupils are classified into groups. Such as: infants; toddlers; pre- schoolers; and elementary schoolers. Each of these groups is to be exposed to different books as individual's level varies. For instance, infants and young toddlers are exposed to books full of fun, and activities. While older toddlers make use of the books to learn basic concepts such as colour (primary colours, secondary colours, rainbow colours, tertiary colour, colours-wheels and so on), English alphabets, English phonics, figures. The preschoolers get familiar with books that teach concept, short story, simple logical concepts, by so doing, they build on the prevailing skills that they have been exposed to from the beginning of schooling. The picture books, short story books, self-crayoning books, writing books, dinosaur board books, chapter books are to be enjoyed by the pupils and impart knowledge to the pupils. Among the non- African popular children books authors are Eric Carle, Mo Willems, Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel, Tana Hoban, Nancy Carlson, Salaam Reads, Roald Dahl, A. A. Milne, Anthony Horowitz, Beatrix Potter, Caroll S. Lewis, David Williams, Enid Blyton, J. K. Rowling, Jaqueline Wilson, Micheal Rosen and so on (Grand Theatre, 2021). Among the notable African children literature book authors are Ben Okri, Diana Ejaita, Margaret Muthee, Amina Hachimi Alaoui, Shudufhadzo Musida, Sade Fadipe, Nnedi Okorofor, Lupita Nyong'o, Nagadya Isdahl, Yejide Kilanko, Jordan Ifueko, Sihle Nontshokweni, and so on (Brittle Paper, 2021). In this sense, developmental appropriateness refers to the extent to which something (in this study: literary textbooks...) meets the development of pupils.

Pupils as learners at the pre-primary education level start education with the nursery. This formal education usually begins at daycare centres, and nursery schools, these are pupils between the ages of 0-5 or 6. Also, it consists informal background imbued to the children from age 0 to 3 in preparing the children for school (Nakpodia & Achugbue, 2012). The Federal Government of Nigeria NPE (2013) also identifies the core of nursery education. Thus, in section 2, (B), page 6 of the Policy, 'pre- primary education is the One-Year Education given to children aged 5 prior to their entering primary school.' Additionally, Jummai (2012) claims that primary school education is the underpinning(s) for formal education in Nigeria. Consequently, in actualizing practical primary education in Nigeria, the Federal Government of Nigeria in NPE (2014) highlights one of the intentions of primary education "inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy and ability to communicate effectively". In order to achieve permanent literacy, and ability to communicate effectively, there is a dire need of selecting -developmental- appropriate-literary-textbooks for our pupils by those professionals in charge, in persons of nursery school administrators.

School administrator in early childhood and school administration is the administrative body of pre-primary and primary education, in person(s) of school- head, (or the supervisor), the deputy school head and the school teachers' head, Management Staff for Early Childhood and School Education (MSECSE), (2022). The school administrator has specific roles to play for effective and efficient outcome. One of these roles is to select and recommend textbooks that are developmentally appropriate and that are in accordance with the government syllabus for the pupils and usefulness of the subject teacher as instructional materials and not to teach in abstract. Subject teachers are in the best position to select literary textbooks as they are one of the stakeholders of the school administration. This is buttressed by Watkins and Ostenson, (2015), 'teachers are ultimately concerned with finding texts that are a good match for curriculum goals and the students with whom they work'. Also, Bilge (2020) agreed that 'goals of professional guidelines is to provide criteria for selection of materials and methods.' To this end, is a research need to examine the rationales of the school administrators as to the parameters, they put in place in selecting literary textbooks for the nursery school pupils? What determines their reasons for choosing particular literary textbooks among the thousands available? Are they influenced by variables such as

their working experiences, gender, age, academic or professional qualifications? These are the lacuna that are deep and needed to be searched into and filled. Thus, this paper explores the following questions that were asked:

Research Question

- a. What are the rationales for school administrators' choice of literary textbooks for pupils in nursery schools, in Osun State?

Ho: There is no significant influence on the selection based on demographic variables (Years of Teaching experience, Age, and academic qualification).

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all private primary school administrators in Osun State, out of which 60 administrators were selected as the sample of this study. In selecting this sample, multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted. The three

senatorial districts in Osun State were selected for this study. Out of each of the senatorial districts, one Local Government Area (LGA) was selected using simple random sampling technique, making a total of three LGAs. From each of the LGAs, 20 private school administrators were selected using convenience sampling, making a total of 60 administrators. In addition, one research instrument titled "Administrators Textbook Selection Rationale (ATSRQ)" was validated and used to elicit information for the study. The reliability value for the research instrument using Cronbach's Alpha showed 0.85, which is considered adequate for carrying out this study. The demographic information of respondents is diagrammatically indicated, while the research question and hypothesis were answered using frequency counts and percentages, represented in diagrams (such as pie chart, bar chart) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Results

Sex

60 responses

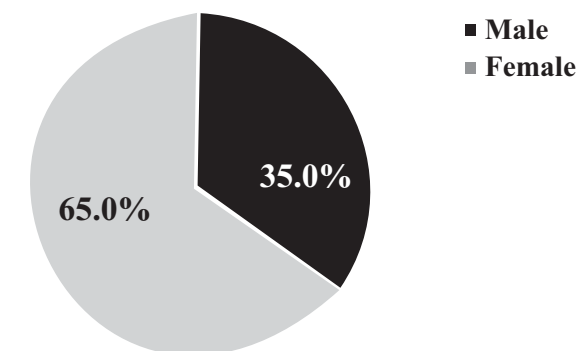


Fig.1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by sex.

Qualification

60 responses

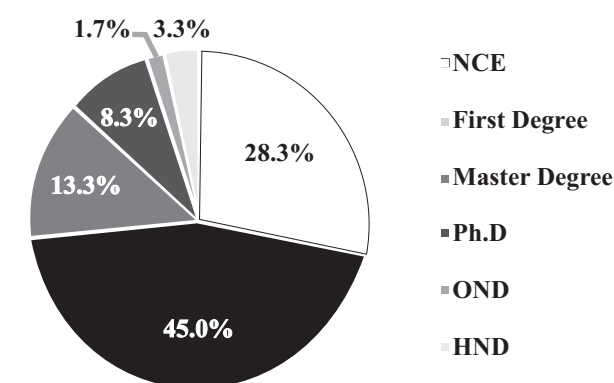


Fig. 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Qualifications. Fig. 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Qualifications.

Year of Teaching Experience
60 responses

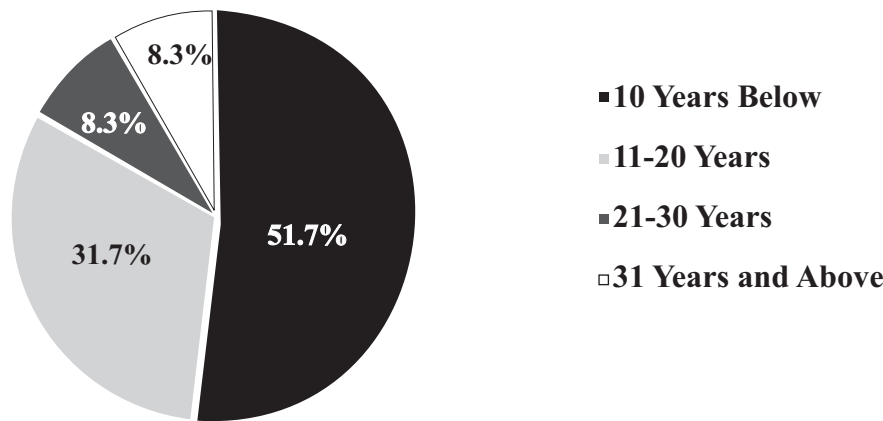


Fig.3: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Years of Experience

Age
60 responses

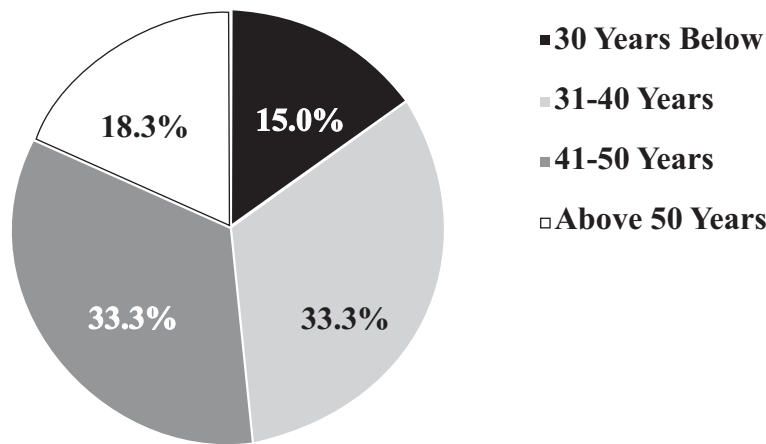


Fig.4: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Age.

Research Question

What are the rationales for selecting literary textbooks?

Relationales for Selecting Literary Textbooks

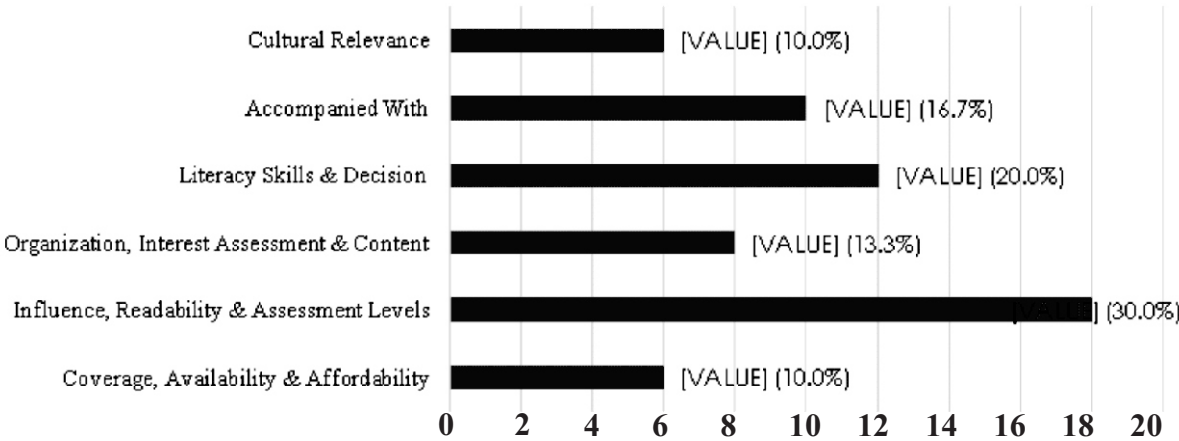


Fig. 1: Percentage Distribution of Rationale Used by Teachers

Figure 1 shows that 30.0% of teachers selected literary textbooks by considering influence, readability and assessment levels, followed by 20.0% that selected literary textbooks using literacy skills and decision, 16.7% made selections based on accompanied with CD-ROM, 13.3% made selection based on organization, 13.3% also made selection based on

interest assessment and content, 10.0% selected literary textbooks using cultural relevance and coverage, 10.0% based on availability and affordability.

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant influence on the selection based on Demographic variables (teaching experience, age and qualification)?

Teaching Experience

Table 1: Influence on the Literary Textbooks Selection Based on Administrators' Teaching Experience

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	F	Sig.
10 Yeas Below	31	68.2581	3.27585	3	1.007	0.296
11-20 Years	19	69.2632	1.40800			
21-30 Years	05	70.0000	0.00000			
31 Years and Above	05	68.8000	2.16795			
Total	60	68.7667	2.59312			

Table 1 shows the ANOVA results of the influence on the selection of literary textbooks by school administrators on the basis of years of teaching experience. On the Table, the F-value showed 1.007 at df (3), $p > 0.05$. This implies that school

administrators' years of teaching experience did not have any influence on textbooks selection. Thus, there is no significant influence on the administrators' year of teaching experience and selection of literary textbooks in Osun State.

Age

Table 2: Influence on the Textbooks Selection Based on Administrators' Age

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	F	Sig.
10 Yeas Below	09	66.667	5.65685	3	2.600	0.061
11-20 Years	20	68.9500	1.31689			
21-30 Years	20	69.1500	1.38697			
31 Years and Above	11	69.4545	1.50756			
Total	60	68.7667	2.59312			

Table 2 shows the ANOVA results of the influence on the selection of literary textbooks by school administrators on the basis of their age. On the table, the F-value showed 2.600 at df (3), $p > 0.05$. This

implies that school administrators' age had no influence on literary textbooks selection. Thus, there is no significant influence on the administrators' age and selection of literary textbooks in Osun State.

Qualification

Table 3: Influence on the Textbooks Selection Based on Administrators' Qualification

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	F	Sig.
NCE	17	67.5882	4.37405	5	1.500	.205
First Degree	27	69.0741	1.20658			
Master Degree	08	67.6250	0.74402			
Ph.D	05	70.0000	0.00000			
OND	01	66.0000	0.00000			
HND	02	69.5000	0.70711			
Total	60	68/7667	2.59312			

Table 3 shows the ANOVA results of the influence on the selection of literary textbooks by school administrators their qualifications. On the table, the F-value showed 1.500 at df (5), $p > 0.05$. This implies that the qualifications of the school administrators did

not influence their choices and rationale for textbooks selection. Therefore, there is no significant influence on the qualifications of school administrators and selection of literary textbooks in Osun State.

Discussion of Findings

Results showed that the most considered rationales for literary textbook selection by school administrators were influence, readability and assessment levels, followed by literacy skills and decisions, and then accompanied with CD-ROM. Other rationales such as cultural relevance, coverage, availability and affordability were considered in lesser terms. This implies that familiarity with the textbooks, availability of assessment exercises for learners at the end of each unit, the level of readability of textbooks are paramount to the selection of literary textbooks among the sampled school administrator. The opinions of Jummai (2012), Okeeffe (2013), Bayraktar (2021) are in line with this rationale for selecting the textbooks. Probable reason that can be said to buttress this, is the fact that, it is common in Nigerian nursery and primary schools to engage pupils in class assignments after every lesson so as to test their level of understanding of the things taught, whereas, most of these assignments are derived from and done inside their textbooks. Thus, selecting textbooks which will contain assessment exercises is considered important. In addition, because many pupils tend to learn in the play-way method, the rationale of influence, readability and assessment levels were already catered for (Sikorova, 2014). Any pupil who does not have the selected literary text at that level cannot catch up in the classroom and even at home as short exercises, class-work, take-home assignment cannot be attempted in abstract. This logical idea of individual pupil to have individual literary text paves way for the school administrators to select literary text that is affordable and reachable. Even, many private nursery and primary schools engaged in the cheaper production of recommended literary texts that promote pupils' readability level and enhance learners' developmental appropriateness (Lamidi, 2022).

Result also showed that administrators' teaching experience, age and qualification did not have any influence on the selection of literary textbooks for pupils. During the course of this study. It was found out that schools in the study area already have regular standard and benchmark through which textbooks are selected for pupils. For instance, some schools already relied on the selections made for previous terms and sessions, these selections are retained for a number of years before changing to another textbooks and this agreed with the opinions of (Sikorova, 2014; Ifiokong, 2016). Another reason could be the fact that selection of textbooks for pupils were also guided by the

ministry of education through the provisions of unified curriculum for schools (Evans, 2011; Strouse et al 2018; Tolkien 2022). Thus, most of the times, the curriculum comprised the names and numbers of textbooks that pupils are expected to use for each term, and schools are expected to follow these recommendations as at certain level of education, pupils (of private or public school) would be examined through the likes of Common Entrance Examination, Unified Promotional Examination (UPE), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and so on (Baiyelo, 2000; Evans, 2011).

Result further proved that selection of literary textbook is important as not just any texts are to be forced on the pupils. Literary textbooks as first learning tools that exposed pupils to colours, lines, articulated expression at gradual level of their development Erkan (2016).

Conclusion

From the results of this study, it is concluded that literary textbooks selected for pupils at the nursery school levels can either enhance or hamper pupils' developmental appropriateness. The criteria that influence the selection by the school administrators such as readability and assessment levels, literacy skills and decision, coverage, availability, and affordability, organization, interest and content, cultural relevance and accompanied with are of great value and good parameter to be considered. The other rationales such as school administrators' years of teaching experiences, academic qualifications, gender and age were in lesser term of literary textbooks selection's consideration.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the ECE curriculum planners should consider literary texts that are developmentally appropriate and be reviewed, from time to time. The state personnel in charge of literary texts recommendation should check thoroughly, censor literary textbooks before approving such for schools' usage. The governmental body in the section of ECE literary textbooks should work with publishers and engage them in workshops on the orientation on children literature books as to meet up with users (pupils) needs, interest, age, levels, exposure, innovation, background and so on. The school administrators in charge of literary textbooks selection should choose texts that will match the pupils' age, learning level, interest level, reachability and affordability.

References

- Ajayi, H. O. (2015). Book development for effective literacy acquisition at early childhood period. *International Journal of Language and Literature* 3 (1), 148 - 155. <http://doi.org/10.15640/ijll.v3n1a20>.
- Ajayi, H. O. (2022). Textbooks and quality teaching in the age of technology in Nigeria: Teachers' Beliefs and Practice in the Nigerian Schools. *In press*.
- Amy, M. (2013) Help kids to P.I.C.K. the Right Books./Scholastic/Parents .
- Baiyelo, T. O. (2000). An Evaluation of the adequacy of Physics textbooks used in Lagos State Secondary Schools. *ISEDJO. Issues in Education Journal* 1(1), 1- 20.
- Bayraktar, A. (2021). Value of children's literature and students' opinions regarding their favourite books. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17 (4) . Doi:10.29329/ijpe.2021.366.21.
- Bilge, N. (2020). The children 's book selection criteria: Evidence from preschool and primary school teachers . 2020 ; 15(11):<https://doi.org/10.5897/ERR2020.4066>
- Britannica (2022) Children literature/Britannica <https://www.britannica.com/art/children's-literature>.
- Brittle, P. (2021). 35 Children's Books by African Writers.
- Erkan, C. (2016). Preparing books for children from birth to age six: The approach of appropriateness for the child. *Journal of Education and Practice*. 2016; 7(6) ISSN 2222-288x
- Evans (2011) New Primary School Curriculum Modules Evans Brothers Publishers Limited. Jericho Road. Ibadan.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2013). National Policy on Education. Lagos: NERD Press Lagos. 6th Edition ISBN-978-054-216-7
- Haxhihseni, S. (2013). Academic journal of interdisciplinary studies: Using Literature through the Curriculum, as a Way to Increase Children's Potential , 2(4), Doi:10.5901/ajis.2012v2n4p113
- Homer (2022). How to determine your child's reading level and choose the best books. <http://www.learnwithhomer.com/homer-blog/3710/reading-level/>
- Horsley, M. Sikorova, Z. (2014). Classroom teaching and learning resources: International Comparison from TIMSS- A preliminary review: *Orbit Scholea*, 8(2), 43-60. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14712/23363177.3015.65>.
- Ifiokobong, (2016). List of recommended books for nursery/primary school in Nigeria. <https://prestage.com/list-of-recommended-books-for-nurseryprimary-school-in-nigeria/>
- Jennifer, Z. (2020). Helping parents choose developmentally appropriate books for their child. <https://classroom-synonyms.com/helping-parent-choose-developmentallyappropriate-books-child-45325.htm/>
- Jummai, M. R. (2012). Language education in primary schools in Nigeria: Contemporary issues and new direction. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal (LICEJ)*, 3(3), 662-666.
- Kristin, B. (2022). Oneota Reading Journal>Archive>2019 Journal
- Lamidi, O. D. (2022). Assessment of Developmental Appropriateness of Foreign and Local Literary Texts and Reading Ability of Nursery School Pupils in Osun State. *An Unpublished M. A. Ed Thesis Submitted to the Institute of Education, Faculty of Education, OAU Ile-Ife*.
- Marri, S. (2022). Creating mirrors: A look at the nature of inclusivity in children's literature/ Oneota Reading Journal/ Luther College. <https://www.luther.edu/Oneota-reading-journal/archive/2019/manuscript/creatingmirrors/>
- Maslow, A. (1943). Maslow's hierarchy of needs and child development . <http://www.futurelearn.com/info/courses/supporting-learning-primary/0/steps/58666>
- MSECSE, (2022). Management Staff for Early Childhood and School Education/Eurydice. <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/Eurydice/content/management-staff-early-childhood-and-school-education-27-en>.
- Nakpodia, E. D. & Achugbue, M.D. (2012). Problems encountered in the management of nursery and primary schools in Delta State. *Nigeria Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 4(6), 140-148.
- Norton, D., & Norton, S. (2010). Through the eyes of a child: An Introduction to Children's Literature (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Prentice-Hall.
- Okeeffe, L. (2013). A framework for textbook analysis. *International Review of Contemporary Learning Research*, 2(1), 1-13.
- Pulimeno M., Piscitelli P., De Marco E, Colazzo S. Narrative based strategies to promote healthy

eating behaviours in childhood: a systematic review. *MeTis-Mondi educative. Temi indagini suggestion. 2018; 8(1):184-220*.doi:1030557/mt0000/5.

Rahman, F. (2017). The revival of local fairy tales for children education. *Theory and Practice in Language in Language Studies*.2017;7(5):336-44.Doi:10.17507/tp/s.0705.02.

Raschka, C. (2011). *A ball for Daisy*. NY: Schwartz & Wade Books.

Ruxandra, V. S. (2014). The 6th international conference education world 2014 "Education facing contemporary world issues": The Importance of Literature in Primary School Pupils' Development and Personal Growth, vol.1(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.01>).

Saracho, O. Spondex, B. (2010). Families' selection of children's literature books early childhood *education journal*.37(5):401-409.

Sikorova, Z. (2014). The Textbook Selection in Primary and Secondary Schools. Caught in the Web or lost in the Textbook. Workshop 3: Quality, Evaluation and Selection, 341-348.

Tolkien, T. (2022). Book of the month-great new children's and YA books. <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/new-book-releases/books-of-the-month/>

Top Children's Authors/ As Chosen by the Grand T h e a t r e . <https://www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk/top-10-children-authors>

Watkins, N. & Ostenson, J. (2015). Navigating the text selection gauntlet: Exploring factors that influence English teachers' choice. *English Education*, 47(3), 245-275

Zipes' J. (2013). *Why fairy tales sticks: The evolution and relevance of genres*. New York: Palgrave Macmillian

EXPLORING THE ISSUE OF RESOURCE AVAILABILITY FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN'S WRITING SKILLS, ekiti state, nigeria

¹R. M. ODEWUMI, ²C. O. ODEJOBI, Ph.D & ³J. O. Okewole, Ph.D

¹Department of Counselling Psychology, Early Childhood Care and Education Unit, Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere- Ekiti

²Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Osun State

E-mail: ¹odewumi.ruth@bouesti.edu.ng

Abstract

The study explored the issue of resource availability for preschool children's writing skills. Observation and correlation design were used. The population for the study consisted of pre-primary schools in Ekiti State. The sample consisted of 50 pre-primary schools. Two instruments were used for the study. They are the Literacy-Rich Environment Rating Scale (LRERS) and the Prewriting Activities Material Availability Checklist (PAMAC). The reliability coefficient of the Literacy-Rich Environment Rating Scale (LRERS) is 0.71, and the Prewriting Activities Material Availability Checklist (PAMAC) is 0.80. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between prewriting activities' material availability and pre-school children's writing skills and a strong non-significant relationship between a literacy-rich environment and children's writing skill. The study recommended that caregivers and preschool teachers ensure that preschool children's activity materials are available in their classrooms and introduce children to these materials at an early stage to aid children's writing skills.

Keywords: Writing development, Literacy-Rich Environment and Prewriting Activities

Introduction

The preschool year is a crucial time for children since it is during this time that the basis for future success is established. It is the stage on which the foundations of life should be laid. Preschool, according to Maxwell (2012), is an early programme in which children integrate learning and play in a setting supervised by professionally educated adults. It is an educational programme that allows children ages three to five to enrol, though some institutions accept children as young as two. Pre-primary education is defined as an education given in educational settings for children aged 3 through 5 years in preparation for their entry into primary school.

Preschools differ from regular day-care in that they place a greater emphasis on learning and development than on allowing parents to work or pursue other

interests. The pre-school year is a crucial time in a child's development of mental functions. In support of this, Akinbote et al. (2017) pointed out that the pre-school years are formative, and the experiences that children have during this time determine a great deal about their eventual development. Therefore, it is essential to expose children to some prewriting activities and a literacy-rich environment that can aid their writing skills.

Early literacy skills such as writing skills are influenced by the child's environment and the extent to which adults around them expose them to literacy skills, activities, and habits (Olowe, 2013). It has been demonstrated that there are significant links between pre-school children's writing skills and their literacy environment, which includes access to materials such as books, alphabet materials, crayons, and paper; an introduction to the local library; caregiver or teacher literacy-related activities such as reading newspapers and street signs; and access to language-rich environments involving interesting conversations, stories, and explanations. This is why the classroom should be filled with activities that will help preschool children develop their writing skills.

Preschool children's writing skills are also aided by resource availability for the development of preschool children's writing skills, which includes pre-writing activities materials that are different items and apparatus that preschool children can use to engage in prewriting activities for the purpose of laying a good foundation and the development of writing skills. Some of these materials include play dough, building blocks, games, crafts, sounds, and buttons.

The quantity and quality of resources available for teaching writing skills will determine the capacity of educational systems to implement writing activities. Any educational program that aims to improve preschool children's writing skills must be accompanied by appropriate pre-writing activity resources. Beads, dough, building blocks, games, crafts, buttons, lace, scissors, blank paper, crayons, and pencils are among the materials. Prewriting activities and materials become a crucial and critical aspect of learning about writing skills in school settings when they are made available to youngsters.