

TEACHING AND LEARNING FACILITIES FOR EFFECTIVE TRAINING OF
CAREGIVERS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN
ONDO WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF ONDO STATE

¹Udo, I.E., ²Popoola, T.J (PhD) & ³Okoroafor, N.C.
^{1,2,3}, Department of Early Childhood Care and Education
Adeyemi Federal University of Education,
Ondo, Ondo-State, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper investigated teaching and learning facilities for effective training of caregivers of early childhood students of tertiary institutions in Ondo west local government of Ondo state. The study adopted the survey research design. Population consisted of all the students in Adeyemi Federal University of education, while the sample size consisted of eighty (80) ECE students of the department of Early Childhood Care and Education. An instrument named (TLMETPCLCQ): Teaching and Learning Materials for Effective Training of Pre-school Caregivers in Large Classes Questionnaire was adapted, adopted and constructed by the researcher and was used to collect the data for the study. Three research questions were raised to investigate teaching and learning facilities for effective training of caregivers in early childhood students in tertiary institutions in Ondo west local government are of Ondo state. Data collected were analysed using percentage, mean and standard deviation. Findings from the study suggested that ECCE caregivers lack adequate materials for effective training. It also revealed that both lecturers and students have been improvising using local materials in early childhood Centres, school management, should ensure that adequate teaching and learning facilities are provided for caregivers such as physical facilities like, spacious classrooms, language laboratories and exhibition rooms. Instructional materials and monitored policies should be laid down for effective training of caregivers in early childhood Centres.

Introduction

The effective training of early childhood caregivers has become a paramount necessity in the education of children. To attain the goal of effective training of caregivers all necessary teaching and learning facilities must be deployed to achieve competence and quality in early childhood education. Hence, the primary aim of this research is to analyse the existing teaching and learning materials and their effects on training of caregivers in tertiary institutions. For training to take place education must have taken place. Education is the act of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and development and participation in the society, it is a tool for individual empowerment, critically used to drive in national development. (Fafunwa (1974). Through education, culture is being transmitted and experiences are made available for the consumption of the society, it prepares individual to live effectively and efficiently in the society (Adesina, (1985). The field of early childhood is the basis of education for every child.

Early childhood been a foundational stage for every child significantly impacts a child's cognitive, emotional, social and physical development in which if there is a lacuna t this stage, it poses a big issue for the child while growing and in other levels of education. In Nigeria it is a formal education provided for children from birth to eight years, it is a critical stage of education for the formation of a holistic being. Aguh and olutola (2023) describes ECE as essential for fostering language skills, motor development, and emotional regulation, laying the basis for

lifelong learning and societal participation. Education in early childhood is paramount for the foundation of lifelong learning and national development, Nwaokugha and Agbarakwe (2024), opines that ECE is crucial for fostering receptive attitudes towards learning and instilling behaviours conducive to academic success. It enhances cognitive and social skills, Agauh and Olutola (2023) emphasizes that ECE is crucial for impacting children's cognitive abilities, languages skills, and social interactions. Education also helps to promote sustainable development through professional teaching. Anyaegbunam and Anozie (2023), asserts that professional educators in ECE plays an important role in guiding children's development. In other words they strongly believes that trained early childhood teachers will impact more in guiding, and fostering skills for a better holistic child. Atakpo (2024), discussed that digitalization on ECE will enhance personalized learning and engagement in which teacher training plays an important role. For teachers' training to be effective, the importance of teaching and learning facilities cannot be over emphasized.

Teaching and learning facilities are the physical and instructional resources necessary to support effective educational delivery. In the context of early childhood education, they include classrooms, child friendly furniture, instructional materials, playgrounds, technological tools that create a conducive learning environment. These facilities are essential to teach, engage and support the holistic development of young children. Aiywuyo and Omoera (2019), supports that child-friendly indoor learning environment enhances children's social and emotional development and makes the caregiver's instructional role more effective. Odiagbe (2020) asserts that a well-resourced classrooms not only stimulates learning but also reduce instructional stress on caregivers allowing for better attention to each child's needs. Lawal and orsadare (2024) further highlight that availability of instructional tools empower caregivers to use innovative and inclusive methods that foster lifelong learning habits in children.

Okogbuo (2000), classified instructional materials into: Visual materials, such as pictures, projectors, charts, real objects and teachers themselves, Audio materials which include: tape recording cassette, radio, teleconferencing, language laboratory, teachers voice which all appeal to the sense of hearing. Audio visuals which include: television, video recording motion pictures with sound tracks, slides and films with sound tapes, which appeal to senses of hearing and seeing. Materials / software which include: graphic materials, printed materials etc. Equipment hardware which include black boards, white boards, flannel graphs, magnetic board used for lecture presentation. Lastly, Electronic interactive: such as projectors, computers, mobile phones etc. However, in getting a full maximization of the use of the listed instructional materials, teachers must therefore identify with all the available teaching methods and techniques therefore, exploring the best technique that will suit his classroom and learners based on their knowledge, environment, set goals within the academic curriculum . Sikaleya (2022), gave a good number of teaching techniques in education which includes lecture method, demonstration method, discussion method, panel method, synthetic method, peer tutoring method, programmed teaching method, project method of teaching, the Montessori method of teaching, question and answer method, story method, debate method, deductive method, inductive teaching method, case based method, project based method, problem based method, team teaching, direct teaching method, concentric method, role play method, textbook teaching method. dramatization method, testing teaching method, analytic method, play way method, discovery method, field trip method, modelling, creative writing method etc.

To teach a person a particular skill, behaviour, process, knowledge over a period of time for a specific useful competences and to improve performance in job related tasks is known as the act of training. Training being the act of learning how a structure of a programme works, teaching of skills, knowledge and attitude towards performance when necessary is a crucial aspect among caregivers in the early childhood centres. In this regard, Manpower services commission (1981), defined training as a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through a learning experience to achieve effective performance in any activity or range of activities. Therefore, for training to be effective, trainees must be actively involved with a lot of practical, observances and hands on activities in order to retain knowledge and experience. Training is an integral part of a caregiver's educational process that enhances his abilities to perform his job related tasks efficiently. In this vein, the teacher or facilitators for training has a responsibility to perform to ensure that effective training and impartation of knowledge is achieved through quality teaching and learning materials. To buttress this, a caregiver is one who monitors, cares, assesses and follow up the growth and development of children either as a parent, guardian or as a caregiver.

Caregivers are persons who take care of infants and young children (World Health Organization, 2004). However, for the purpose of this study, a caregiver is one who cares, monitors the growth and development of children in the early childhood centres. For a caregiver to be able to handle the classrooms for children, the caregivers must themselves know how to create the right kind of classroom context to facilitate this learning, therefore the training given to caregivers during their pre-service period must be in line with what they are expected to exhibit in their in-service classrooms, using the right teaching and learning materials for effective teaching to take place. According to the purpose of early childhood education which is as follows according to (NPE 2004)

1. Effect a smooth transition from the home to the school;
2. Prepare the child for the primary level of education;
3. Provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work (on the farms, in the markets, offices etc).
4. Inculcate social norms;
5. Inculcate in the child the spirit of inquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music, and playing with toys, etc;
6. Develop a sense of co-operation and team-spirit;
7. Learn good habit, especially good healthy habits; and
8. Teach the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc, through play (NPE, 2004).

To this effect, it is important to know if there are available teaching and learning materials for the training of caregivers in large classes that will aid effective learning and ability to practice in the early childhood centres. Teaching and learning facilities are the most important aspect of early childhood development components. Therefore, the learning environment, methodologies and materials used in the caregivers training environment should also be a replica of what they should find when they are in the real classroom with children, meaning that they are to be taught same way children are taught in the classroom with necessary materials and teaching aids needed. According to Esikuri, (2010), materials that can be found in the classroom should be materials that will enable them to learn as much as they can, about objects in their real sense or world. Therefore teachers are or lecturers are meant to teach caregivers with materials that will help them relate with reality. Therefore, it is also important that caregivers in training are exposed to the various early childhood curriculum, policies, resource books and essential instructional methods as stated by

Sikaleya (2022) such as the lecture method, demonstration method, discussion method, peer tutoring method, programmed teaching method, project method, play way method, case based teaching method, problem based teaching method, team teaching method, role play teaching method, textbook teaching method, homework method, field trip method discovery method to mention a few. In the field of early childhood, the following teaching or instructional method for effective learning which this research feels that the caregivers in training should imbibe include the Montessori Method which is usually an individualist approach which believes that every child should learn through his creative exploration and natural motivation. The Reggio Emilia's approach believes that children are meant to learn through the available provisions created by their surroundings, it exposes them to creativity and self-expression, students are meant to work with in-depth projects, collaboration and representational growth and emergent curriculum. The Waldorf Steiner method focuses on the hands on learning opportunities, they learn through feelings, imaginations and through thinking by this method (Rema, 2022).

Having known the necessary teaching and learning materials useful for effective training of caregivers, it is important to analyse the availability of these teaching and learning materials in large classes in higher institutions from other researchers. According to Haddad, Agaba , Suberu, Danjuma, Patricia, Idris, Samuel, and Murtala (2019) in their study on availability and utilization of instructional materials in a North-west School of Nursing, Nigeria, revealed that there is shortage of instructional materials (teaching and learning material) in the school which hampers the effective delivery of content. Another study by Adewoyin (2014) postulated in his work on fundamentals of educational technology that most schools in Nigeria were hardly and properly equipped with instructional materials for teaching-learning activities. Mohammed (2016) mentioned in his work on assessment of the availability and use of instructional materials, the findings of the study found out that most teachers do not advocate the use of instructional materials in teaching, partly because many teachers are not conversant with certain instructional media or finds it difficult to use instructional materials when teaching due to lack or inadequate training on its application for effective use in dissemination of knowledge, therefore most teachers often teach without instructional materials.

In conclusion, to buttress the efficacy of this study, cognitive learning theory was adopted. Lawless (2019), stipulates that learners are influenced by both internal and external elements for effective cognitive process. This internal and external elements could be related to the methodologies and materials that is adopted for effective learning to take place. The proponent of this theory is Jean Piaget. The theory favoured the learner centered approach to teaching which is important in the field of early childhood education. It modifies what we already know to take in new information. It helps in assimilation of new knowledge and it balances what we already know and what we are currently learning. According to Jean Piaget, the teacher is meant to create a safe environment that is designed for curiosity for learning and development. This implies that the materials and teaching methods adopted are very crucial for effective learning to take place. Based on this research, cognitive learning theory helps a teacher to use both materials and methodologies of teaching to actualize effective learning, it gives room for learners to be able to create their own knowledge and experience, they get to evaluate if what they have learnt has imparted knowledge unto them through practice. Based on this research, cognitive learning theory, tackles this topic effectively, because for a care giver to be able to practice the hierarchy of cognitive learning theory, he must have been made to go through the process of these hierarchy to be able to handle children at the early childhood centres.

Statement of the problem

Effective training of students especially caregivers in the field of early childhood education is a very paramount aspect of training that has been paid little or no attention to. Caregivers have no effective training, no teaching and learning facilities, inadequate qualified teaching staff of ECE etc. The absence of these have posed a great problem in early childhood education. It is at this juncture this research seeks to find out the effect of teaching and learning facilities for effective training of caregivers of early childhood students of tertiary institutions in Ondo west local government area of Ondo state

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the availability of teaching and learning facilities for effective training of caregivers of early childhood students of tertiary institutions in Ondo west local government area of Ondo state.

The specific purposes of the study are:

- i. To determine the level of teaching and learning facilities for effective training of caregivers of early childhood students of tertiary institutions in Ondo west local government of Ondo State .
- ii. To examine the effect of teaching facilities on caregivers in large classrooms in ondo west local government area of Ondo State

Research Questions

Based on the purpose of the study the following research questions were raised:

- i. What level of teaching and learning facilities are available for the training of caregivers in Ondo west local government area of Ondo State.
- ii. What effect have the teaching and learning materials on caregivers in Ondo west local government area of Ondo State.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey researsch design. Population consisted of all the students in the School of Early Childhood Care and Primary Education, Adeyemi Federal University of education. The sample size consists of eighty (80) students from the department of early childhood education, Adeyemi Federal University of education, Ondo because that is the number of caregivers available and the only institution within the area training caregivers in early childhood education. An instrument named (TLMETPCLCQ): Teaching and Learning Materials for Effective Training of Pre-school Caregivers in Large Classes Questionnaire was constructed by the researcher and was used to collect the data for the study. Result were analysed using percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Result Analysis

Table 1: Responses on the availability of teaching and learning facilities

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	There are more than enough students the lecture rooms can accommodate	1.25	1
2	Teaching and Learning facilities are made available for caregivers in training	1.8	1.6
3	Instructional materials are provided for caregivers in training	2.2	2
4	The available instructional materials provided for caregivers in training are usually not enough	1.81	1.7
5	Caregivers in training do enjoy the use of instructional materials in large classes when provided	1.61	1.4
Weighted Mean=		1.74	

KEY: 1 = Strongly Disagreed, 2 = Disagreed, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agreed

Decision Value: Not Enough: 0.00 –0.99; **Sparingly Enough;** 1.00 -1.99; **Averagely Enough:** 2.00 - 2.99; **Enough:** 3.00-4.00.

The table above shows that there are more than enough students the lecture rooms can accommodate (x=1.25), teaching and learning materials are made available for caregivers in training(x= 1.8), Instructional materials are not provided for students for caregivers in training (x: 2.2), the available instructional materials provided for caregivers in training are usually not enough (x:1.81), Caregivers in training do enjoy the use of instructional materials in large classes when provided (x: 1.61). With the weighted mean of (1.74), the result analysed shows that the teaching and learning facilities available are sparingly enough to teach large classes.

Table 2: What are the effect of the usage of these materials if found available in determining the quality of learning early childhood rudiments of teaching younger children?

S/N	Effect of instructional materials	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Caregivers in training have acquired improvisation skills of instructional materials for use in the classroom	1.62	1.4
2	There is an effective usage of instructional facilities during practicum /teaching practice	1.71	1.5
3	Teaching and learning facilities gives room for factual training of caregivers	1.5	1.4
4	Caregivers in training are exposed to age-appropriate teaching and learning facilities	1.54	1.3

5	Teaching and learning materials expose the caregivers in training to the knowledge of inquiry and creativity in children	1.51	1.2
Weighted Mean		1.58	

KEY: 1 = Strongly Disagreed, 2 = Disagreed, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agreed

Decision Value: No effect: 0.00 – 0.99; **Little Effect:** 1.00 - 1.99; **Average Effect:** 2.00 - 2.99; **Much Effect:** 3.00 - 4.00.

Caregivers in training have acquired improvisation skills of instructional materials for use in the classroom (x: =1.62), There is an effective usage of instructional materials during practicum /teaching practice (x:= 1.71), Teaching and learning materials gives room for factual training of caregivers (x: = 1.5), Caregivers in training are exposed to age-appropriate teaching and learning materials (x: = 1.54), Teaching and learning materials expose the caregivers in training to the knowledge of inquiry and creativity in children (x= 1.51). With the weighted mean of (1.58), the analysis made under this table implies that the positive effect of instructional materials listed above, has a little effect on the training of caregivers and the teaching of the rudiments of teaching younger children.

Discussion of Findings

Insufficient teaching and learning facilities have posed a lot of hindrances on effective teaching and learning of students especially caregivers in training in the early childhood department especially in the use of teaching and learning materials, based on the findings gotten from the study carried out, it detected that there are available teaching and learning materials, however, they seem to be sparingly available to the extent that they get to go round and serve their purpose during teaching and learning process. Which could be as a result of tertiary institutions not being able to provide enough teaching and learning facilities that could go round to serve students needs in the classroom, or the inability to device the right teaching method that could aid the effective use of the available instructional materials when teaching large classes. Haddad, Agaba, Suberu, Danjuma, Patricia, Idris, Samuel, and Murtala (2019) in their study revealed that there is shortage of instructional materials in the nursing school used for their study. Adowoyin (2014) also stipulated in his work on fundamentals of educational technology that most schools in Nigeria were hardly and properly equipped with instructional materials for teaching-learning activities. The National Teachers Institute (2011), affirmed that most of the instructional materials used for teaching and learning in schools are expensive and not richly available. This situation has deteriorated due to economic recession and high exchange rate of dollar to naira that makes it impossible for many schools to purchase instructional materials to serve large classes. Onyeagbako (2014) postulated that the major problems militating against teaching and learning materials in classes could be as a result of lack of policy guideline for development of infrastructure in schools, insufficient fund, lack of technical knowledge to handle maintenance and supplies, enrolment explosion, security and safety, lack of timely maintenance lack of effective supervision of staff responsible for maintenance and supplies, lack of storage facilities, and lack of consultation between supplier and user.

The use of teaching and learning facilities in the classroom irrespective of the class size can never be underestimated. It aids good understanding of the subject matter, makes the work of the teacher easier and effective, saves time and helps meet with individual learning needs depending on the method of teaching and the type of instructional material adopted. It could as

well help to give a factual training to caregivers, preparing them for the task ahead at the early childhood centres. It exposes caregivers to age-appropriate teaching and learning materials found in the early childhood centres. Akom (2013), stated this in his study on factors related to the utilization of instructional media, that instructional materials have the quality (ability) of influencing the psychology of the Student to be able to learn and understand what they have been taught. Chililia (2018), also stated that the use of instructional materials enhance the passing of information to the learners making it easier for them to understand the concepts. However, findings from this study stipulated that the use of instructional materials has little or no effect on the training given to caregivers and has little or no effect on their ability to teach the rudiments of teaching younger children. This could be because, lecturers don't always mandate the students to come up with creative ideas during teaching and learning, lecturers don't always make use of instructional materials in the classroom, or that the available materials are inadequate to cater for each caregiver in order to master the techniques surrounding its use. Little attention may not be paid to the use of instructional materials during practicum by the lecturers and caregivers. Keshav, (2020) asserted that non-availability of materials, laziness of the teachers, lack of strategies, financial constraints, lack of skill and strategies, lack of appropriate materials in textbooks, time constraint, lack of support from authority could be a major cause why instructional materials do not have a positive effect on the training of caregiver for effective teaching of younger children

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that there are available teaching and learning materials, however, they are inadequate therefore, does not cater for the needs of caregivers in large classes. However. Due to the above statement, caregivers do not give much attention to their improvisation capabilities which could be as a result of the inability of the lecturers have adequate knowledge on the subject matter, or having an idea to explore materials around for improvisation and the laziness on the part the caregivers to dedicate time and energy to improvise learning measures while in training. In this vein, it affects the quality of training given to caregivers which in turn affects the quality of learning early childhood rudiments of teaching younger children.

Based on the findings above the following recommendations were made:

1. school management, should ensure that adequate teaching and learning materials are provided or students especially caregivers such as physical facilities like, spacious classrooms that could accommodate caregivers so that lecturers could have enough space to attend to each student accordingly, language laboratories, exhibition rooms etc. the management should also make monitored policies to ensure that lecturers abide by the rules of mandatory use of instructional materials irrespective of the class size.
2. Lecturers and students should ensure that they work on their improvisational capabilities so as to ensure effective training, teaching and learning of caregivers. By mastering their subject matters, devising the appropriate method of teaching to accommodate large classes, exposing caregiver to age-appropriate teaching and learning materials in the early childhood centres, encouraging the use of instructional materials during student's practicum in schools. Using critical thinking strategies to fetch out students creative improvisational abilities.

3. Lastly, the government should uphold the purpose of implementing early childhood education by ensuring that caregivers are trained, based on the right teaching and learning materials stipulated for early childhood education.

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