



---

**NIGERIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF  
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES AND  
TECHNOLOGY**

[nojest.unilag.edu.ng](http://nojest.unilag.edu.ng)

[nojest@unilag.edu.ng](mailto:nojest@unilag.edu.ng)

**EXTENT OF UTILIZATION OF PLAY METHOD OF TEACHING  
IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN AWKA EDUCATION ZONE**

**ACHANYA, J. S**

**Federal College of Education, Okene, School of ECE / PES,  
Department of Early Childhood Care and Education  
achanya03@gmail.com**

**To cite this article:**

**Achanya, J. S** (2023). Extent of utilization of play method of teaching in pre-primary schools in Awka education zone. *Nigerian Online Journal of Educational Sciences and Technology (NOJEST)*, 5 (1), 22-36

**This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.**

**Authors alone are responsible for the contents of their articles. The journal owns the copyright of the articles. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of the research material.**



## EXTENT OF UTILIZATION OF PLAY METHOD OF TEACHING IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN AWKA EDUCATION ZONE

ACHANYA, J. S

Article Infor

*Article History*

Received:

06 November 2022

Accepted:

February 21, 2023

*Keywords*

Extent, utilization, play method,  
pre-primary school

### **Abstract**

This study focused on the Extent of Utilization of Play Method of Teaching in Pre-Primary Schools in Awka Educational Zone of Anambra State. The work particularly stressed on the availability and utilization of material resources; that is, instructional materials otherwise called teaching aids and the use of play method of teaching. Four research questions and four null hypotheses were formulated. Descriptive survey design was employed. A developed questionnaire was used for data collection. The targeted population for the study consisted of thirty-two (32) head teachers and one hundred and sixty (160) teachers in Awka Education Zone, and this number (total of 192) were selected through stratified random sampling. The data obtained were statistically analyzed using percentage and mean/standard deviation. Z-test was employed in testing the formulated null hypotheses. The results indicate that instructional materials needed in carrying out play method of teaching in Pre-Schools are not readily available. Due to paucity of instructional materials, both utilization and effectiveness were hindered. Hence teachers who have the necessary skills and expertise on the use of play method of teaching were limited in their performance. Some educational implication of the findings was discussed, and some recommendations were proposed for the Government, such as providing enough and requisite instructional materials for the teachers.

### **Introduction**

The need for educating children became inevitable since education in a contemporary world is seen as the corner stone for the individual social and economic development. Education forms the basis for literacy, skill acquisition and technical advancement. That is why Osakwe (2006) described education as an indispensable tool for nation building and this involves a systematic training and instruction designed to transmit knowledge, skill, potentials, and abilities, which enable an individual to contribute efficiently to his or her

growth and development. Based on this, modern societies show serious concern in the education of their young ones. They make provisions for their under-age children through a program referred to as “early childhood education”.

Early childhood/pre-primary education is education given to children 3-5 years to get them ready for primary education. According to Omozeghian (1995), early childhood/pre-primary education is education meant for children between the ages three and six years. Early childhood is a period of readiness and that is why government showed concern in recognizing its importance. Since this level of education must start early in life. The Federal Government defined in the National Policy on Education (2004) early childhood/pre-primary education as: education given in educational institutions to children prior to their entering the primary school. It includes the crèche, the nursery, and the kindergarten. With the following objectives, providing a smooth transition from the home to school, preparing the child for the primary level of education, providing adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work, inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity, through the exploration of nature, local environment and playing with toys, teaching the rudiments of number, letters, colours, shapes and forms through plays and inculcating social norms (P. 147)

For young children, play is known to be their most natural activity which not only contributes to their development but also gives them satisfaction, enjoyment as well as helps in developing their potential in full (Ibiam, 1997). Machmanorvitch, (1990), also pointed out that play is the root and foundation of creativity in arts and science as well as in the daily life. Morffitt, (2003) describes play as a straight exploration or learning activity which provide for information seeking behaviour. It is a powerful inner force through which a child reaches out to interact with his environment and it involves movement and different sensory modes (Aleke, 2011). The child seems to learn more when he/she can move around, handle, and manipulate objects. Through such sensory motor activities, he/she learns much about the properties of matter and finds way(s) to adapt to a complex environment through play experiences related to cause and effects. Children who are prevented from having a wide range of sensory motor (play) experiences in these early years, due to illness, over protection, or other reasons are not likely to develop certain kinds of cognitive information in the same way later. Play also refers to a range of voluntary intrinsic activities that are normally associated with pleasure and enjoyment. It also involves some manipulation of objects in the environment by a person with others. Curry and Arnaud (1995) observed that:

Play is a lawful predictable phenomenon that shows clear developmental regularities, although the degree to which these regularities are expressed is greatly influenced by the child’s environment. Play serves to integrate complex cognitive emotional and social element in the child’s thinking and behaviour.

Disturbances in play often reflect disturbances in the child’s personality and social functionality while Hirsch (2005) argues that play method consists of key elements of experimental learning. Kolb (2003) observed that play method allows pupils to apply concepts and problems that reflect reality introduced through lessons and readings. Play method can, therefore, be viewed as a beneficial teaching tool because it has been found to help in the development of practical professional skills, as well as academic knowledge.

The above may be seen as the reason why the National Policy on Education is regarded as

the document with the most suitable method in teaching tender age children. Play method of teaching which was advocated by the National Policy on Education was expanded to involve manipulation of objects in the environment which are pleasant to children (Okon, 2007). This means that when the activity pleases the children (learners), the tendencies of learning taking place is high. The main purpose of the study is to specifically find out the extent of instructional material available because the availability will help in the study, also the extent of utilization of the available materials. This is because it is possible to have materials that are not well utilized, and this is dependent on the teachers' expertise as it concerns training, workshop and seminar for proper information on how to handle rescue children using play method of teaching. However, this method which is advocated by the National Policy on education for teaching early childhood learners seems not to be implemented in most Nigeria schools, as Ejie (2006) observed:

The play method of teaching that is advocated in the National Policy on pre-primary education is not effectively used in most of the schools as most of the teachers are not trained on the use of it. Proprietors and teachers provide the children with toys to play with mainly for recreational purposes and not for instruction. Very few, if any, nursery school teachers in the country have received formal training in the use of play method or any other type of learning activity to inculcate social norms in pre-primary school children as advocated in the policy document (p. 61).

Owing to the above claim by Ejie (2006), perhaps the ineffective utilization of this method of teaching pre-scholars may be as a result of the nature of the school environment (location) in which these school were situated or as a result of inadequate instructional materials needed in play method and even the teachers expertise in handling play method of teaching.

Children begin learning from the time they born, to learn is to gain knowledge or skill by studying from experience. A learner is a person who is finding out about a subject and how to go about it. According to Onyemerenkeya (2001) learning has been defined as a process by which man acquires and retains attitude, knowledge, understanding, skill and capabilities that cannot be attributed to inherent behaviour pattern of physical growth. Naturally, children like to play and it is their characteristics to play, enquire and explore, that is why Maria Montosori advocated for a prepared environment which gives children opportunity to explore and learn. These arouse the interest of the researcher to find out the extent of utilization of play method of teaching pre-primary school pupil in Awka Education Zone.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The goal of teaching and learning is to effect desirable behaviours on the learner. Methods used by teachers in teaching are critical to the achievement of the envisaged goals as stipulated in the National Policy on Education. The play method of teaching that is advocated in the national policy on pre-primary education seems not effectively used in most schools, perhaps because teachers are not well trained or may be because the materials used in play method of teaching are inadequate. This situation is worrisome and has motivated the researcher to carry out this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to find out the extent of utilization of play

method of teaching in pre-primary schools in Awka Education Zone. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the availability of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching.
2. Find out the extent of utilization of these instructional materials in teaching and learning situation.
3. Find out the extent of teachers' skills in the use of play method of teaching.
4. Find out the influence of location of schools on the effective utilization of play method of teaching in teaching and learning process.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent are instructional materials needed in play method available in schools?
2. What is the extent of utilization of these instructional materials in teaching and learning situations?
3. To what extent do teachers possess skills in the use of play method in teaching and learning process?
4. To what extent does location of schools influence effective utilization of play method in teaching and learning?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypothesis that was tested at 0.05 level of significance guided this study.

- Ho<sub>1</sub> There is no significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers and teachers on the availability of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching.
- Ho<sub>2</sub> There is no significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers and teachers on the extent of utilization of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching.
- Ho<sub>3</sub> There is no significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers and teachers on the extent of teachers' expertise on the use of play method of teaching.
- Ho<sub>4</sub> Location of schools will not have significant influence on the effective utilization of play method of teaching in the preprimary schools under study.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Methodology**

The design of the study was a descriptive survey design which aimed at assessing the use of play method of teaching in pre-primary schools. Descriptive survey design according to Ali (1996) is a study in which a group of individuals or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from few items considered to be representative of the entire group. The design was considered suitable for this study because the study aimed at assessing the extent of implementation of a particular method of teaching in pre-primary schools.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study consisted of all head teachers and teachers in government approved pre-primary schools in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. Available statistics showed that there are about 162 pre-primary schools owned by the government in the area, with about 968

teachers and head teachers, comprising of 162 head teachers and 806 teachers (Anambra State Universal Basic Education Board, ANSUBEB, 2022).

### Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample of this study was 192 respondents which were made up of 32 head teachers and 160 teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was used across the nine Local Government Areas that make up the zone. 192 respondents were chosen as the sample because it is the 20 percent of the whole population. 20 percent of the entire population was sampled because the researcher felt that it was a good representation of the entire population.

### Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection was a twenty-one (21) item researcher developed questionnaire. It was of two sections; the section A contained the demographic information of the respondents while the section B contains 21 items developed in three clusters with each cluster covering each research questions posed in the study. The instrument was built on a rating scale of Very Highly Available (4), Highly Available (3), Available (2), Not Available (1), Very Great Extent (4), Great Extent (3), Little Extent (2), Very Little Extent (1), And Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1).

### Method of Data Collection

The researcher used direct delivery method to administer the instrument to the respondents. The researcher secured the services of three trained research assistants for distribution and retrieval of the instrument.

### Method of Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. Z-test statistics used to test the null hypotheses formulated for the study at 0.05 level of significance. To guide the decisions, 2.50 was posed as the bench mark for the mean scores.

## Results

### Research Question One

Extent to which instructional materials needed in play method were made available in the pre-schools sampled.

The responses by the Head Teachers and some teachers in the pre-schools sampled are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean Responses of Head Teachers and Teachers on the Availability of Instructional Materials Needed in Play Method of Teaching

S/N	Item	Head Teachers			Teacher s		
		×	SD	Decision	×	SD	Decision
		—			—		

1	Extent of availability of toys	3.00	0.64	High Extent	3.00	0.64	High Extent
2	Extent of availability of computer games	2.22	0.74	Low Extent	1.00	0.77	Very Low Extent
3	Extent of availability of charts	3.40	0.47	High Extent	4.00	0.77	High Extent
4	Extent to which materials that encourage role playing are made available	2.40	0.94	Low Extent	2.40	0.67	Low Extent
5	Tape record materials	1.00	0.76	Very Low Extent	1.00	0.84	Very Low Extent
6	Availability of colourful pictures	3.00	0.46	High Extent	3.00	0.64	High Extent
7	Costumes	1.00	0.46	Very Low Extent	2.00	0.00	Low Extent
8	Resource persons	1.00	0.49	Very Low Extent	2.00	0.64	Low Extent
9	Availability of magazines	2.00	0.57	Low Extent	2.40	0.57	Low Extent
Average of $\Sigma X$		<b>2.22</b>	<b>0.64</b>		<b>2.44</b>	<b>0.64</b>	

Table 1 shows the mean responses of head teachers and teachers on the availability of instructional materials needed in presenting play method of teaching. The average of the mean response of 2.22 for head teachers and 2.44 for teachers for all the 9 items in the tables revealed that such instructional materials like computer games, resource persons, tape recording materials, costumes and magazines were in short supply while charts, toys and colourful pictures were readily available in pre-primary schools. Since the mean scores of both groups (head teachers and teachers) were below our benchmark of 2.50, one can infer that a good number of instructional materials needed for effective play method of teaching in pre-schools are not sufficient to impact positively in the pre-primary schools under investigation.

### Research Question Two

Research question two was posed to elicit information on the extent of utilization of the available instructional materials on the teaching and learning situations in the pre-schools. This research question is relevant when one considers that one thing is to provide the instructional materials and the other things as their being used effectively or otherwise. The seven (7) point items raised to address this research questions were answered by the head teachers and some teachers in the schools sampled. Their responses are tabulated as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean Rating of Head Teachers and Teachers on the Extent of Utilization of Instructional Materials Needed in Pre-School.

S/N	Items	Head Teachers			Teachers		
		×	SD	Decision	×	SD	Decision
1	Utilization of toys in teaching and learning situations	3.00	0.64	High Extent	4.00	0.64	Very High Extent
2	Utilization of computer games in teaching and learning	2.00	0.96	Low Extent	1.00	0.79	Very Low Extent
3	Extent of utilization of charts in teaching and learning	3.50	0.76	Very High Extent	2.50	0.85	High Extent
4	Utilization of role playing in teaching and leaning	2.40	0.58	Low Extent	3.50	0.37	Very High Extent
5	Utilization of tape-recorded materials in teaching and learning	1.00	0.39	Low Extent	2.00	0.48	Low Extent
6	Utilization of pictures, magazines and costumes	2.50	0.64	High Extent	3.50	0.47	Very High Extent
7	Utilization of resource persons in teaching and learning	1.00	0.47	Very Low Extent	1.00	0.39	Very Low Extent
<b>Average of <math>\sum X</math></b>		<b>2.07</b>	<b>0.48</b>		<b>2.50</b>	<b>0.47</b>	

Table 2 shows the mean rating of head teachers and teachers on the extent of utilization of instructional materials needed in carrying out play method of teaching, with the cumulative mean of 2.07 for head teachers and 2.50 for teachers respectively. The study revealed that instructional materials most utilized include toys, charts, pictures, and role playing, while such materials like computer games, tape recorded materials, resource persons, magazine etc are rarely utilized. Perhaps this may be due to unavailability or its inaccessibility by the teachers. It may even mean that the teachers are not knowledgeable on how to operate them. e.g., Computer games.

#### Research Question Three

For research question three, which was raised in order to find out the extent to which teachers possess the expertise in the use of play method in teaching and learning, five (5) contextual remarks were drafted. The responses given by the head teachers and some of the teachers on the contextual remarks are presented in Table 3.



**Table 3:** Mean Rating of Head Teachers on the Extent of Teachers Expertise on the Use of Play Method of Teaching

S/N	Items	Head Teachers			Teachers		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Most pre-school teachers are secondary school leavers	3.00	0.50	Agree	3.40	0.49	Agree
2	Most Pre-school teachers do not attend seminars, workshops on innovation in teaching methodologies	3.60	0.81	Agree	3.80	0.40	Agree
3	Most Pre-schools do not engage university graduates in their schools	4.00	0.00	Agree	3.40	0.81	Agree
4	Play method of teaching has not been in teachers' education curriculum	2.40	0.50	Disagree	2.00	0.50	Disagree
5	Most pre-school teachers have no teachers' training certificate	3.00	0.91	Agree	3.00	0.64	Agree
<b>Average of <math>\sum X</math></b>		<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.59</b>		<b>3.33</b>	<b>0.53</b>	

Table 3 provides the answer to research question three which dealt on the extent to which teachers possess the necessary expertise on the use of play method of teaching with an overall mean score of 3.20 for head teachers and 3.33 for teachers. In this case, both the head teachers and the teachers agreed that.

- Most pre-school teachers are secondary school leavers.
- Most teachers do not attend seminars on teaching methodologies.
- Most schools do not engage the services of university graduates in their schools.
- Most of these teachers do not have teachers' training certificate.

Both groups (teachers and head teachers) did not agree with the item that said that play method has not been in teachers' education curriculum.

#### Research Question Four

Finally, the t-test and the Z-test analysis for the results presented on Tables 1 – 3 were carried out for the head teachers and teachers. These are presented in Table 4, Table 5 and Table 6 accordingly.

**Table 4:** Z-Test Analysis of the Mean Scores of Head Teachers and Teachers on the Availability of Instructional Materials Needed in Play Method of Teaching

Variable	$\mu$	$\times$	SD	Df	Calculate d t-value	Critical t-value	Significant level	Results
Head Teachers	32	2.22	0.64	190	0.262	1.960	0.05	Accepted
Teachers	160	2.44	0.67					

The Z-test analysis results presented in Table 4 above showed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers and teachers on the availability of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching. Z-test analysis of the mean scores of head teachers and teachers on the availability of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching gave calculated t-value of 0.262 and critical t-value of 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance. It then showed that there is no significant difference in mean opinion of head teachers and teachers in the availability of instructional materials needed in play method. Thus, the analysis showed no significant difference which leads to acceptance of earlier stated null hypothesis. Hence both the head teachers and the teachers agreed that there was paucity of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State.

**Table 5:** Z-Test Analysis of the Mean Scores of Head Teachers and Teachers on the Extent of Utilization of Instructional Materials Needed in Play Method of Teaching

Variable	$\mu$	$\times$	SD	Df	Calculate d t-value	Critical t-value	Significant level	Results
Head Teachers	32	2.07	0.48	190	1.741	1.960	0.05	Accepted
Teachers	160	2.20	0.47					

The Z-test analysis results presented in Table 5 showed that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of head teachers and teachers on the extent of utilization of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching. The Z-test analysis of the mean scores of head teachers and teachers on the extent of utilization of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching gave calculated t-value of 1.741 and critical t-value of 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance. It then showed that both the head teachers and the teachers share the opinion that the extent of utilization of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching was poor. Thus, the analysis leads to acceptance of earlier stated null hypothesis.

**Table 6:** Z-Test Analysis of the Mean Scores of Head Teachers and Teachers on the Extent of Teachers' Expertise on the use of Play Method of Teaching

Variable	$\mu$	$\times$	SD	Df	Calculate d t-value	Critical t-value	Significant level	Results
Head Teachers	32	3.20	0.59					
Teachers	160	3.33	0.53	190	1.571	1.960	0.05	Accepted

Table 6 showed a Z-test analysis of the mean scores of head teachers and teachers on the extent of teachers' expertise on the use of play method of teaching. The calculated t-value of 1.571 and critical t-value of 1.960 at 0.05 level of significance showed that there is no significant difference in mean opinion of head teachers and teachers on this issue. Both the head teachers and the teachers agreed that most teachers lack the expertise in using even the available instructional materials. Thus, the analysis showed no significant difference which leads to acceptance of earlier stated null hypothesis.

**Table 7:** Mean Rating of Head Teachers and Teachers on the Extent to Which Location of Schools Influences Utilization of Play Method of Teaching:

Location	Head Teachers	N = 32	$\times$	SD	Teachers	N=160	$\times$	SD
Urban		21	3.58	0.67		105	4.00	0.64
Rural		11	2.41	0.32		55	2.33	0.44
Gross Mean		3.00					3.11	

Table 7 showed the mean rating of head teachers and teachers on the influence of location of schools on the effective utilization of play method of teaching in pre-schools with the cumulative mean of 3.00 for head teachers and 3.11 For teachers in urban and rural schools, respectively. The study revealed that head teachers and teachers in urban and rural schools respectively responded similarly in terms of the extent of utilization of play method of teaching in teaching and learning activities in preschools.

**Table 8:** Z-test Analysis of the Mean Score of Head Teachers on Influence of Location on Utilization of Play Method of Teaching and Learning in Pre-Schools

Variable	$\mu$	$\times$	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value	Significant level	Results
Urban	127	3.65	0.64					
Rural	66	2.40	0.44	190	2.000	1.960	0.05	Rejected

---

The Z-test analysis in Table 8 showed a significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and head teachers on the influence of location of preschools on effective utilization of play method of teaching. This implies that pre-schools in urban areas are better than those of their counterparts in rural areas in terms of utilization of play method of teaching.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The analysis of data arising from research question one which seeks to find out the extent to which instructional materials needed in play method were made available in the pre-schools, revealed a great degree of inadequate supply in all the schools sampled. The study deduced that inadequate provision of instructional materials in pre-primary schools was one of the most significant classroom environmental problems faced by the Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. Because of the dearth of pedagogical-related data, especially in the use of instructional materials in play method of teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Childhood Education Scientists are looking into the possibility of developing indicator-based assessment tools that will allow for proper assessment in the use of instructional materials in play method of teaching in pre- primary schools. The case of Awka Education Zone thus illustrates the importance of adequate provision and use of instructional materials in play method of teaching based on the Montessori experimental approach for adequate or proper training of pre-school child.

However, the materials easily found in schools are toys and pictures while other major instructional materials and resource persons are rarely found. The results further showed no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and head teachers on the availability of instructional materials needed in using play method of teaching in pre-schools. An observed Z-value of 1.960 which was significant at 0.05 level of confidence further confirmed that there was no significant difference between the two groups of respondents (head teachers and teachers). This thus tends to confirm inadequate provision of requisite instructional materials in all the schools sampled.

(Alonye, 2007 and Ezenwa, 2010) agrees with the researcher that some factors which militate against effective application of play method of teaching in pre-schools, among other things, include lack of sufficient instructional materials in schools and that these were responsible for poor pedagogical utilization of play method of teaching in pre-primary schools.

#### **Extent of utilization of instructional material in teaching and learning situation**

In addition to the inadequate provisions of instructional materials, results from research question two suggest lack of requisite knowledge on the use of such available instructional materials, like computers exacerbate pedagogical classroom climate that favours the use of instructional materials in pre-primary schools in Awka Education Zone. However, the materials easily found in schools are toys and pictures while other major instructional materials and resource persons are rarely found. The results further showed no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and head teachers on the availability of instructional materials needed in using play method of teaching in pre-schools. An observed Z-value of 1.960 which was significant at 0.05 level of confidence further confirmed that there was no significant difference between the two groups of respondents (head teachers and teachers). This thus tends to confirm inadequate provision

of requisite instructional materials as well as poor utilization of the available ones in all the schools sampled. The responses to research question 2 also indicate that even the very little available instructional materials were not properly utilized to promote teaching and learning in these schools. Finding was corroborated by the non-significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and head teachers on the availability of instructional materials. This is in accordance with the findings made by earlier researchers (Aleke 2011 and Ezenwa 2010), who stated that play method of teaching may be unfruitful if not properly utilized by teachers.

### **Extent teachers possess skills in the use of play method in teaching and learning process**

The finding of this study also revealed that majority of the teachers sampled possess the necessary expertise on the use of play method of teaching in schools based on the fact that it is part of the teachers' training curricular. However, the materials needed in carrying out this method of teaching in pre-schools are not readily available, and hence the negative impacts observed. For example, the use of computer games, Interactive White Board (IWB) and other multimedia that provide interactive teaching-learning environment are nowhere to be found. Such IWM offers some functions such as colour, shading and highlighting emphasis similarities and differences, and this in turn enhances explanations, and allowing reinforcement through greater emphasis. The result of this study shows that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of head teachers and teachers on the teachers' expertise on the use of play method, showing that the teachers have the requisite knowledge of what to do but were handicapped by the paucity of requisite teaching materials as highlighted above.

Finally, location of school has no significant influence on the extent of utilization of play method of teaching in pre-school. This is what this study has been able to elicit from the results which have so far shown that relatively inadequate provision and management/utilization of instructional materials paved way for poor pupils' performance as they graduate into the kindergarten schools.

### **Conclusion of the Study**

From the findings and discussion of the study, the following conclusions are made:

- Instructional materials needed in executing play method of teaching in early childhood schools are not enough to meet up with the demand of the method.
- Due to paucity of instructional materials needed in play method of teaching, its utilization becomes unrealizable.
- Teachers possess the necessary expertise and skills to carry out play method of teaching in pre-schools but are hampered by the paucity of requisite materials.

### **Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers in the pre-school should endeavor to make use of their initiative (improvisation) in making available some instructional materials needed in play method of teaching which the best method of teaching young children is.
2. There should be availability of instructional material needed in play method of

- teaching in pre-school.
3. Government should send teachers on workshops, seminars and refresher courses on the use of instructional materials in pre-primary schools.
  4. Government and proprietors should as much as possible provide such materials like computers, toys and resource persons in their schools so as to ensure effective teaching and learning in pre-schools
  5. There should be closer cooperation among teachers on the use of innovative methods like play method.

## REFERENCES

- Dike, R. N. (2010). Appraisal of the Implementation of National Policy on Early Childhood Education Programme in Lagos Metropole. *Unpublished Ph.D Thesis*, University of Lagos.
- Edlich R F (1993). *My last lecture*. J Emerg Med. 11(6): 771–774
- Ekanem, I. T., Essien & T. F. Ekanem (2011). Journal of Omap Organization. *World Organization of Early Childhood Education* Vols 7 & 8 No. 1 Awka Ibon State.
- Ezema, B. C. (2002). Influence of Play Method on the Achievement of Preprimary School Children in Mathematics: *Counselling Implications Journal of the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction Nigeria Chapter 3*, 1, 30-34.
- FRN (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Abuja NERDC Press.
- Giles, M & Baker S C (1971). *International Encyclopaedia of Communication. In Communication Accommodation Theory*, Ed. Wolfgang Donsbach. Wiley Bllackwell Publishers
- Ibiam, J. & Ugwu J. C. (2009). Government Quality Control measures in Pre- Primary Education. *Problems of Implementation and the Way Forward in Review of Education 20(1)*, 57-65.
- Ibiam, J. U. (2004). Some correlation of Teachers’ Attitude Towards Young Children’s Play. *Journal of Contemporary and Science Education (JOCASC)*.
- Makinwa, P.K (1981). *Female Work Situation and Early Child-Care and Education in Metropolitan*. Lagos: Paper Presented at the National Workshop on Working Mothers and Early Childhood
- Mezieoba, K.A. (2006). Pre-primary Education: The Dilemma of Relevance in Contemporary Nigeria, *British Journal of Educational Studies and Society*. 62(10) 1 – 8.
- Montessori, M (2002). *The Montessori Method, Minneola*, New York, Dover Publications.
- Montessori, M (2009), Montessori Theory. Retrieved from <http://www.dailymontessori.com/montessoritheory>
- Montessori, M. (1912). *The Montessori Method*. Bedrock A Strokes Co. New York.
- Oblinger D. (2003). Boomers, genXers, and millennials: Understanding the “New” students. *Educause Review*, 38(4): 3747.
- Oken, I. O. (2007). *Early Childhood Development. Economic Development with a High Public Return*. Fedgazette, March 2007.

Osakwe, R.N. (2009). *Effect of Early Childhood Education Experience on the Academic Performance of Primary School Children*. Benin City. Osasu Printing Press.

Osakwe, R.N. (2010). *Understanding Teaching Profession*. Benin City: Osasu Printing Press.