

Assessment of Public Pre-Primary School Learning Environments in Ilorin East L.G.A., Kwara State, Nigeria

Rachael O. Agarry & Rebecca O. Fawole

University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

Email: agarry.ro@unilorin.edu.ng; tolany4u@gmail.com

Abstract

The environment that children relate to significantly influences their learning and development. This study sought to assess the public pre-primary school learning environment, basically, indoor and outdoor learning materials, based on the level of adequacy, aesthetics, and safety in the Ilorin East Local Government Area of Kwara State. The population of this study consists of teachers teaching pre-primary classes in Ilorin East. There are sixty-five (65) public primary schools in Ilorin East. The purposive sampling technique was used to select thirteen (13) schools, which make up 20% of the population of the study, and therefore, the respondents for the study were chosen from the targeted sample. One instrument used is a checklist titled Checklist on Public Pre-Primary Learning Environment (CPPLE) based on the contents of the environment models of Pre-Primary Education as spelt out in the National Minimum Standard for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Nigeria, which was validated and a reliability coefficient of 0.72r was obtained in the study. Frequency count, percentage and mean were used to answer the four research questions. The findings revealed that the learning environments are slightly attractive and safe, and there are no adequate indoor and outdoor learning materials in public schools for teaching pre-primary school pupils in Ilorin East Local Government Area. Hence, it was recommended that the relevant authorities, such as the Ministry of Education, among other development agencies, should facilitate the provision of adequate instructional materials such as toys, books, charts, educational media technology and school facilities such as toilets and game equipment so as to ensure the holistic development of preschoolers.

Keywords: *Public, pre-primary school, learning environments, indoor materials, outdoor materials*

INTRODUCTION

It is an established fact that children's learning and development hinge so much on the environment created for them to interact with. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure optimal learning environments are created to foster the

physical, intellectual, language, social and emotional development of these young ones. In the realm of education, the environment is considered a key factor in academic success and sustained interest motivation for learning, especially in the early years. Education is a lifelong affair, and one of its objectives is to promote a child's holistic development, which is reflected in the form of refined and functional members of society contributing positively to national growth and development. Whitebread (2015) thus affirms that the experiences and education throughout the early years have lasting impacts on children's later years, specifically in the formation of their intelligence, temperament, and social behaviours.

According to Bush (2001) in Ajayi (2008), the first five years of life are critical for a child's overall development and later life chances. It is a period of rapid learning. All the experiences, language skills acquired, and habits formed during these early formative years of life frame an individual's personality. This reality is acknowledged on a global scale, and every country is fervently working to provide their young children with high-quality early education and care. In Nigeria, early childhood education, also referred to as pre-primary education according to the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013), is the education given in an educational institution to children before they enter primary school. Among the purpose of preschool education in Nigeria is ensuring a smooth transition from the home to school. Early et al. (2009) emphasised that preschool children typically spend more than a third of their time in transitions and routines such as standing in line, cleaning up, and washing hands rather than engaging in other learning activities. Inculcating the spirit of enquiry and creativity in children through the exploration of nature and the immediate environments is also outlined in the NPE (2013). To achieve these objectives as well as others, it is essential to create engaging and challenging environments that enhance children's learning and optimal development. A learning environment encourages children to view learning as a lifelong and helps them develop moral principles that will guide them to developing self-awareness. The overall goal of preschool learning is to support children's all-around learning and development – physical, intellectual, social and emotional developments. The learning environment is considered to be the diverse physical, social, and pedagogical context in which learning occurs. Likewise, it can be referred to as all the human and material resources available to the pupils and teachers in the school.

It also encompasses all the influences that affect children and adults in the classrooms and the outdoor space within the school (Bullard, 2010; Cople & Bredekamp, 2009). These include the planned arrangement of the physical space, the relationship between and among the people and the content, values and goals of a particular classroom. Simply put, the teachers, pupils, other personnel, the buildings, instructional materials, outdoor equipment and space, toilet facilities, as well as classroom arrangement all constitute the school environment (Aiwuyo, 2013). A comprehensive and total learning environment, according to Jalongo and Isenberg (2012), consists of two parts, namely the physical and social environments. The physical environment is the most visible, and it consists of the space, classroom arrangement, schedule, equipment and materials, while the social environment has to do with the interactions between and among the children and adults, which include the content experiences, values, goals, and daily organization. In this study, emphasis is laid on the physical environment, that is, indoor and outdoor environments. This is because they significantly attract children to school through the fascinating classroom layout and design, attractive furniture and equipment, the learning centres, activity stations and sensory-rich environment, the outdoor learning spaces and displays as well as opportunities for personalized learning. The indoor learning space is within the four walls of a building or classroom where children acquire skills, concepts, attitudes and values about the world. Strong-Wilson and Ellis (2007) described it as a children's home for learning, where they visit every day. A good indoor learning environment makes room for different kinds of learning experiences because it can easily be changed to suit different learning activities. In addition, the design usually considers the needs of current and future children and learners.

Outdoor learning environments, on the other hand, are usually in the open space, that is, outside the classroom or confined space. According to Jalongo and Isenberg (2012) and Agarry (2018), the outdoor learning environment stimulates critical thinking, improves physical fitness and self-regulation, enhances brain development, and improves academic achievement and problem-solving abilities in children. It also provides opportunities to socialize, try out new ideas, and make decisions with little or no interference from adults. Virtual Lab School (2023) established that what makes children want to go back to school again and again depends largely on how good their experiences are in terms of how appealing the environment is to their senses. An environment will be attractive to children when it is colourful, appropriately designed, aesthetically

arranged, spacious, and adequately equipped with developmentally appropriate materials that support their learning through play. In this context, a well-equipped environment offers every child the opportunity to interact with sufficient and a variety of age-appropriate learning materials as well as trained and caring personnel. Another point of discourse in this study is the safety of the learning environments. A safe environment encompasses the child's emotional, mental and physical well-being. A safe environment is where children feel loved, valued and respected each day they go to school and would always want to return there (The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2020). Children learn best at school when they feel safe and valued, have secured relationships with both peers and responsive adults and are free to explore and learn. In school, children learn best in environments where they feel safe and free to explore and learn and where they have secure relationships with peers as well as caring and responsive adults (Virtual Lab School, 2023). This study, however, examined the physical aspect of children's safety, which is the first layer of protection for children. This involves reducing potential hazards to the preschool children, such as sharp edges, electric socket outlets, stagnant water, playground surfaces, equipment and fencing, among others. It is, therefore, important that children have access to enriching learning environments that are comfortable, interesting, safe and aesthetically pleasing for learners.

Haque (2013), cited by Aiwuyo and Omoera (2019), alleged that in Nigeria, the condition of the public pre-primary level of education was very poor. They further affirmed that an inadequate and poor learning environment is one of the obvious challenges facing public pre-primary education since its introduction in 2007 by the federal government into public primary schools in Nigeria. Odinko (2008) posited in a study carried out on Nigeria's preschool environmental characteristics that most preschool environments are characterised by inadequate provision of materials such as classroom, furniture, equipment and teaching/learning materials, decay in school building structures, teachers not trained to teach at this level, use of lecture methods instead of play as well as teacher-whole class interaction is adopted during instructional delivery. The contents of the environmental models of Pre-Primary Education, as spelt out in the National Minimum Standard for ECCC in Nigeria Ighalo (2015), stipulates that teaching of the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and forms should be done through play in pre-primary schools. Also, teaching through play requires facilities and equipment such as toys, swings, and slides, among others, which should be adequate

and safe. Children usually learn by using concrete elements and objects, and they build their understanding by using manipulative materials (Reem et al., 2020). Several studies on preschool learning environment have been conducted, like Aiwuyo and Osakue (2019), who studied the assessment of the learning environment of early childhood and development education in public schools in Esan West Local Government area of Edo state, Nigeria. Shuaib et al. (2021) examined the impact of well-ventilated classrooms, furnished computer/laboratories and good furniture facilities on pupils' attendance in primary schools in Kwara State, but deserved research attention has not been given to public preschool learning environments, particularly in Ilorin East, Kwara State. Hence, there is a need to examine the level of adequacy of indoor and outdoor learning materials as well as the extent of attractiveness and safety of the indoor and outdoor learning environment in Ilorin East, Kwara State.

Research Questions

Four (4) research questions were raised to guide the study. These are as follows

- i) What is the level of adequacy of indoor learning materials?
- ii) What is the level of adequacy of outdoor learning materials?
- iii) Are the indoor and outdoor learning environments attractive?
- iv) Are the indoor and outdoor learning environments safe?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The method is considered appropriate for the study because it provided an x-ray of the actual status or condition of the learning environments in public pre-primary schools in the Ilorin metropolis. The population of this study consisted of the teachers teaching in public pre-primary schools in Ilorin East Local Government Area. The target population was represented by the selected public pre-primary school teachers in Ilorin East L.G.A. with pre-primary education classes. There are 65 public primary schools in Ilorin East. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 13 schools with pre-primary education classes, which make up 20% of the population of the study. The instrument used for this study was tagged "Checklist on Learning Environment in Public Pre-Primary Schools" (CLEPPPS).

It was designed following the requirements or the contents of the environment models for Pre-Primary Education as spelt out in the

National Minimum Standard for ECCE in Nigeria (FGN, 2007). The instrument comprised two sections, A and B. Section A asked questions on the year of establishment and the location of the school. At the same time, Section B had sixty (60) items on facilities in both the indoor and outdoor learning environment in terms of their adequacy, aesthetic or attractiveness and safety. The instrument was validated, and a reliability coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. Having gotten the consent of the head teachers in all thirteen (13) selected schools, the researchers personally went to each of the schools. They collected the necessary data for the study using the instrument (CLEPPPS). The data generated were analysed using the descriptive statistics process of frequency counts, percentile, and mean. The entire learning environmental models that are spelt out in the National Minimum Standard for ECCE in Nigeria was the yardstick used in checking the indoor and outdoor learning environments in the selected schools.

Results

Research Question One: What is the level of adequacy of indoor learning materials?

Table 1: Table Showing the Level of Adequacy of Indoor Learning Materials

S/N	Indoor Learning Materials	Very Adequate N(%)	Adequate N(%)	Not Adequate N(%)	Mean	Remark
1	Classroom size/space	4(30.8)	9(69.2)		2.31	Average
2	Classroom wall chats	1(7.7)	3(23.1)	9(69.2)	1.38	
3	Classroom picture roll/charts		2(15.4)	11(84.6)	1.15	Low
4	Flash Cards		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
5	Storage shelves		3(23.1)	10(76.9)	1.23	Low
6	Child-sized furniture		4(30.8)	9(69.2)	1.31	Low
7	Mini-Library			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
8	Paper and writing materials		3(23.1)	10(76.9)	1.23	Low
9	Learning centres/corners			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
10	DVD Player and CDs			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
11	Television			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
12	Audio Player			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
13	Musical materials			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
14	Sorting tray/bowl		3(23.1)	10(76.9)	1.23	Low
15	Internet facility			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
16	Art and Craft Materials (Scissors, crayons, glue, paper, paint...)		7(53.8)	6(46.2)	1.54	Low
17	Playmats			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
18	Computer			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
19	White Board		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
20	Toys (Varieties)		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
21	Puzzles		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
22	Measuring tools		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
23	Blocks		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
24	Cots/beds			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
25	Sand Tray		4(30.8)	9(69.2)	1.31	Low
	Weighted Mean				1.17	

Key: *Low = 0.00 -2.00 Average = 2.01 -4.00 High level = 4.01- 6.00*

Table 1 shows the level of adequacy of indoor learning materials. Among the materials itemised, only Classroom size/space is adequate, with a mean value of (2.31). In contrast, all other itemised indoor learning materials were not adequate as indicated by their mean score: Art and Craft Materials (1.54), Classroom wall chats (1.38), Classroom picture roll/charts (1.15), Flash Cards (1.08), Storage shelves (1.23), Child-sized furniture (1.31), Mini-Library (1.00), Paper and writing materials (1.23), Learning centres/corners (1.00), DVD Player and CDs (1.00), Television (1.00), the Audio player (1.00), Musical materials (1.00), Sorting tray/bowl (1.23), Internet facility (1.00), Printer (1.00), Computer (1.00), White Board (1.08), Toys (1.08), Puzzles (1.08), Measuring tools (1.08), Blocks (1.08), Cots/mat/beds (1.00), Sand Tray (1.31). Considering the mean score of items outlined, it is obvious that the indoor learning materials available are not adequate. This is a numeric indicator that the level of adequacy of indoor learning materials is low.

Research Question Two: *What is the level of adequacy of outdoor learning materials?*

Table 2: Table Showing the Level of Adequacy of Outdoor Learning Materials

S/N	Outdoor Learning Materials	Very Adequate	Adequate	Not Adequate	Mean	Remark
1	Playground		8(61.5)	5(38.5)	1.62	Low
2	Slide		2(15.4)	11(84.6)	1.15	Low
3	Seesaw		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
4	Swing		2(15.4)	11(84.6)	1.15	Low
5	Playhouse		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
6	Water Trough		2(15.4)	11(84.6)	1.15	Low
7	Balls (varied sizes and textures)		2(15.4)	11(84.6)	1.15	Low
8	Tumbling mats		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
9	Tunnels		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
10	Wash hand basin		2(15.4)	11(84.6)	1.15	Low
11	Sand Box/Pit		2(15.4)	11(84.6)	1.15	Low
12	Geographical garden			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
13	Bouncer		1(7.7)	12(92.3)	1.08	Low
14	Sand Wheels		3(23.1)	10(76.9)	1.23	Low
15	Natural materials (plants, shells, stones, rocks)		8(61.5)	5(38.5)	1.62	Low
16	School garden			13(100.0)	1.00	Low
	Weighted Mean				1.17	
<i>Key: High level = 4.01- 6.00</i>		<i>Average = 2.01 -4.00</i>		<i>Low = 0.00 -2.00</i>		

Table 2 shows the level of adequacy of outdoor learning materials. All the itemised outdoor learning materials were not adequate, as indicated by their mean score: Playground (1.62), Natural materials (plants, shells, stones, rocks) (1.62). The following outdoor learning materials were not adequate: Slide (1.15), See-saw (1.08), Swing (1.15), Playhouse (1.08), Water Trough (1.15), Balls (varied sizes and textures) (1.15), Tumbling mats (1.08), Tunnels (1.08), Wash hand basin (1.15), Sand Box/Pit (1.15), Geographical garden (1.00), Bouncer (1.08), Sand Wheels (1.23), School garden (1.00). Going by the mean score of items outlined, the outcome shows that the available outdoor learning materials are inadequate. This is a numeric indicator that the level of adequacy of outdoor learning materials is low.

Research Question Three: *Are the indoor and outdoor learning environments attractive?*

Table 3: Table Showing the Attractiveness of the Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environments

S/N	Attractiveness	Absolutely Attractive	Attractive	Slightly Attractive	Not Attractive	Mean	Remark
1	Painting on the classroom walls	2(15.4)		9(69.2)	2(15.4)	2.15	Attractive
2	Display of toys around the classroom		2(15.4)	7(53.8)	4(30.8)	1.77	Attractive
3	Wall charts		2(15.4)	7(53.8)	4(30.8)	1.85	Attractive
4	Children's cots/mats		2(15.4)	5(38.6)	6(46.2)	1.69	Attractive
5	Classroom furnishing		2(15.4)	9(69.2)	2(15.4)	2.00	Attractive
6	Indoor floor covering		1(7.7)	5(38.5)	7(53.8)	1.54	Attractive
7	Neatness of the surfaces		2(15.4)	1(7.7)	10(76.9)	1.38	Not- Attractive
8	Arrangement of outdoor equipment			4(30.8)	9(69.2)	1.31	Not- Attractive
	Weighted Mean					1.71	
	Minimum		Mean				Value:>1.50

Table 3 shows if the indoor and outdoor learning environments are attractive. Painting on the classroom walls (2.15) was slightly attractive. The following were not attractive: Display of toys around the classroom (1.77), Wall charts (1.85), Children's cots/mats (1.69), Classroom furnishing (2.00), Indoor floor covering (1.54), Neatness of the surfaces (1.38), arrangement of outdoor equipment (1.31). The weighted mean is 1.71, which indicates that the indoor and outdoor learning environments were attractive.

Research Question Four: Are the indoor and outdoor learning environments safe?

Table 4: Table Showing the Safety of the Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environments

S/N	Safety	Absolutely Safe	Safe	Slightly Safe	Not Safe	Mean
1	Playground equipment		1(7.7)	9(69.2)	3(23.1)	1.85
2	Fencing of playground	2(15.4)		8(61.5)	3(23.1)	2.08
3	Outdoor playground surfaces		2(15.4)	8(61.5)	3(23.1)	1.92
4	Placement of trash can	1(7.7)	5(38.5)	5(38.5)	2(15.4)	2.38
5	Surface of the floor	1(7.7)	3(23.1)	7(53.8)	2(15.4)	1.23
6	Covering of electric socket outlets		1(7.7)	10(76.9)	2(15.4)	1.92
7	Mat/bed provided for each child		1(7.7)	8(61.5)	4(30.8)	1.77
8	Play area, free of standing water	5(38.5)	2(15.4)	4(30.8)	2(15.4)	2.77
9	Edges and surface		4(30.8)	7(53.8)	2(15.4)	2.15
10	Drainage area		7(53.8)	4(30.8)	2(15.4)	2.38
	Weighted Mean					2.04

Minimum Mean Value:>1.50

Table 4 shows if the indoor and outdoor learning environments are safe. The following indoor and outdoor learning environments were safe: Play area, free of standing water (2.77). However, the following indoor and outdoor learning environments were slightly safe: Playground equipment (1.85), Fencing of the playground (2.08), Outdoor playground surfaces (1.92), Placement of trash can (2.38), Covering of electric socket outlets (1.92), Mat/Bed provided for each child (1.77), Edges and surface (2.15), Drainage area (2.38). The surface of the floor (1.23) was not safe. The weighted mean is 2.04, a numeric indicator that the indoor and outdoor learning environments were safe.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that the level of adequacy of indoor learning materials in public pre-primary schools was low. The reason is that only two schools out of the thirteen schools sampled had adequate indoor and outdoor materials. The necessary indoor materials like classroom wall charts, classroom picture rolls, toys, and puzzles, among others, were not adequate. One of the purposes of pre-primary education includes teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc., through play. Inadequacy of all these learning materials may deny the children of the opportunity to shape their activities, remodel their plays and explore their own knowledge. The finding corroborates the assertion of Omoera (2013) that in many early childhood education centres in Nigeria, the physical/learning environment is poorly designed and lacks ample space, furniture, toys, wholesome pictures, and other materials. The study also revealed that the level of adequacy of outdoor learning materials was also low. This shows that the school learning environment was a challenge to pre-primary education. No appropriate and adequate outdoor learning materials and other relevant facilities were available to aid pupils' learning and development in public primary schools. This agrees with the observation of Odiagbe (2016), who stated that most learning materials and equipment for outdoor engagements by pre-primary school pupils are not available in schools. In the majority of the sampled schools, play facilities were not provided. The use of play facilities is a very important aspect of children's development. Any attempt to deprive the children of these important facilities may have a negative effect on the children's learning and cognitive development. This is in line with the report of Mbuko (2017), who argued that there is an acute shortage of essential teaching and learning resources such as books, classrooms as well as child-sized furniture, toys (slide, see-saw, merry-go-round, swing... and other materials in pre-primary schools in

Tanzania. Findings also revealed that the school's indoor and outdoor learning environment is slightly attractive.

In most of the sampled schools, from the researchers' personal rating through the instrument, the walls were not colourful. Hence, they were not attractive to the children. It has been emphasised by different authors that an attractive setting is important for children's learning, and this means that a blend of attractive colours and textures should be carefully selected for use in a pre-primary school environment (Odiagbe, 2016; Shuaib, 2021). Lastly, it was revealed that the indoor and outdoor learning environments of the sampled schools were slightly safe. Based on the researchers' observation, the indoor and outdoor learning environments looked unkept, hence making them unsuitable for meaningful learning and development of the children. Additionally, in most of the schools, the very few available materials, such as mats and toys, were old, the broken ones were neither repaired nor replaced, and soft toys were dirty. This poses a danger to the children's health and safety. All the shortcomings in the facilities and maintenance could be a result of inadequate supply from the government (Aiwuyo, 2013), inadequate support from the public (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015) as well as poor attitude to work by assigned teachers (Agarry, 2017).

Conclusion

This study examined the learning environments in public pre-primary schools with a focus on the adequacy of the materials, attractiveness and safety of the environments. It was established that most of the public pre-primary school learning environments within the scope of this study had inadequate indoor and outdoor learning materials such as toys, charts, picture rolls, slides, swings, merry-go-round slides, swings, merry-go-rounds and see-saws that could aid learning in early years. Also, indoor and outdoor learning environments were slightly attractive and slightly safe.

Recommendations

- i) Teaching and learning materials, such as furniture for both teachers and pupils, television sets, nature tables/corners, toys and models, flash cards, and charts, should be vital provisions in all pre-primary learning centers for effective teaching and learning.
- ii) The government and philanthropists in society should improve the provision of learning materials and playing equipment like

- see-saws, merry-go-rounds, slides, and swings for children to play with in order to create an enabling environment.
- iii) The appropriate government agencies should build more classrooms and be intentional about choosing colours when providing materials and equipment, including painting the pre-primary classroom walls.
 - iv) The Ministry of Education Officials should regularly monitor and inspect school facilities to ensure the best use of materials and repair and replace spoilt or broken materials and equipment preschoolers use in public schools.

References

- Abdullah, M. H. (2007). *Evaluate the public and private kindergarten in Egypt* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Aedan Shams University].
- Agarry, R.O. (2017). *Effects of participatory training programme on early childhood education pre-service teachers' knowledge, production and utilization of locally-made instructional materials in kwara state* [PhD thesis, University of Ibadan].
- Al-Taib, E. J. (2006). The status of the government kindergarten in Kuwait. *Studies Journal*, 7(4), 243-255.
- Aiwuyo, O.M. (2007). *An assessment of the challenges of early childhood education in primary schools in Esan West Local Government Area, Edo State* [Master's thesis, National Open University of Nigeria].
- Aiwuyo, O.M. & Omoera, O.S (2019). An assessment of the learning environment of early childhood and development education in public schools in Esan west local government area of Edo state, Nigeria. *Sociol Int J*, 3(1),15-19.
- Ajayi, H. O. (2008). Early childhood education in Nigeria: A reality or a mirage? *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 9(4), 375-380.
- Amali, I. O. O., Bello, M. B., & Okafor, I. P. (2012). An assessment of pre-primary school programme activities in Kwara State, Nigeria, *European Scientific Journal*, 8(8).
- Bush, L. (2001). White house summit on early childhood cognitive development. *TeachBush, L.* White house summit on early childhood cognitive development. *Teaching Our Youngest; A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Family Providers*; Washington, D C.
- Citizen information (2011). *Early childhood care and education scheme*. Retrieved from <http://www.citizensinformation>.

- Dudek, M. (2000). Architecture of schools: The new learning environment, Woburn Federal Republic of Nigeria. *National policy on education (4th Ed.)*. Lagos.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (2009). *Road map for the Nigerian educational sector*. Federal Ministry Education.
- Gbadegesin, T. F. (2018). *The assessment of quality in early childhood care and education in Nigeria* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds].
- Hanssen, E., & Zimanyi, L. (2000). *Support for families: Working with parents and caregivers to support children from birth to three years of age*. Coordinators' Notebook.
- Haque, M. N., Nasrin, S., Yesmin, M. N., & Biswas, M. H. A. (2013). Universal pre-primary Education: A comparative study. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 1(1), 31-36.
- Ighalo, S. (2015). "The national minimum standard on early child care centers (ECCE) in Nigeria and the status of pre-primary education in Uhumwode local government area of Edo state." *American Journal of Educational Research*, 3(4), 399-405.
- Jawabreh, R., Danju, I., & Salha, S. (2020). Quality of pre-school learning environment in Palestine. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(10), 4769-4775.
- Msuya, M. M. (2017). *An assessment of school learning environment in relation to implementation of early childhood education in Tanzania: A case of Mpwapwa district* [Doctoral dissertation, the Open University of Tanzania].
- Mupa, P. & Chinooneka, T. I. (2015). Factors contributing to ineffective teaching and learning in primary schools: Why are schools in decadence? *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(19), 125 -132.
- Nath, S. R., Afrin, S., Mallick, U., Nahid, D., & Jahan, I. (2013). *An assessment of BRAC pre-primary schools' environment*.
- Obiweluozor, N. (2015). Early childhood education in Nigeria, policy implementation: Critique and a way forward. *African Journal of Teacher Education*, 4(1).
- Odiagbe, S. I. (2012). An evaluation of early childhood care and education in South-South of Nigeria. *Edo Journal of Counseling*, 5, 60-74.
- Okorafor, A. O., & Nnajiifo, F. N. (2017). TVET policies and practices in Nigeria: Why the gap. *European Journal of Education Studies*.
- Olaleye, O., Florence, O., & Omotayo, K. A. (2009). Assessment of quality in early childhood education in Ekiti-State Nigeria. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 7(5), 683-688.

- Odiagbe, S. I. (2012). An evaluation of early childhood care and education in South-South of Nigeria. *Edo Journal of Counseling, 5*, 60-74.
- Odinko, M. N. (2008). Nigeria pre-school environmental characteristics: A survey study. *West African Journal of Education, XXVIII*, 9-27
- Omoera, O. S. (2011). Repositioning early childhood education in Nigeria: The children's theatre approach. *Academic Research International, 1*(2), 206.
- Shuaib, F. M., Rilwan, A. A., & Oladimeji, O. (2021). Relationship of learning environment to learners' attendance in public primary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Research in Developing Areas, 2*(2), 153-163.
- The Thomas B. Fordham Institute (2020). Children learn best when they feel safe and valued. Retrieved from <https://for.dhaminstitute.org/national/commentary/children-learn-best-when-they-feel-safe-and-valued>
- UNESCO. (2002). *Early childhood care? Development? Education?* UNESCO Policy brief on Early childhood. Paris, France.
- Virtual Lab School. (2023). *School-age learning environment: An introduction*. Retrieved from <https://www.virtuallabschool.org/school-age/learning-environments/le-son-1>
- Whitebread, D., Kvalja, M. & O'Connor, A. (2014). *Quality in early childhood education: An international review and guide for policy makers*. Qatar Foundation.