

PARENTAL INVOLEMENT IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: A FUTURE FIT STRATEGY FOR THE CHALLENGES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

¹OODO, Ichima Michael & ²AJAYI, Bisi Jamiu

¹Department of Educational Administration

Faculty of Education

University of Abuja

Gwagwalada, Abuja – Nigeria

oodomichael3@gmail.com, +2348066042007

²+23408038678139

Abstract

Early childhood care and education seeks to meet a child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs holistically in order to lay a solid foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing. Early childhood is a critical period of rapid physical growth, cognitive, and psychosocial development of the child. The quality of care and education a child receives at this important age will determine to a great extent the level of his or her physical and cognitive development in the future. Early childhood education is considered the most crucial aspect of the Child's academic life. Parental involvement is a key element of early childhood education. Parents have the right to be involved in the management of their children's education. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study was guided by three (3) research questions. Simple random sampling technique was employed in selecting the sample size of 150 parents and 150 teachers out of the study population of 410 parents and 240 teachers respectively. Data was collected using questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used in the analysis of data. The findings indicated that parental involvement in school management is a future fit strategy for the challenges of early childhood education in Gwagwalada, Area Council, Abuja, northern-Nigeria. Weak enforcement of government laws on education, dilapidated and overcrowded facilities, poor quality of teaching and learning resulting in poor quality education are problems across northern region. The study had the following recommendations among others. Parents should be ready to be actively involved in school management and pay fees as government policy on free and compulsory education did not cover this level of education. Parents must prevail on the government at the Area Council to enforce the existing policies on early childhood education as clearly spelt out by the National policy on Education. The parents should prevail on the government to ensure that the regulatory or inspectorate unit at the Area Council is strengthened for adequate supervision.

Introduction

Parental involvement in early childhood education is a key element in the education of the young ones (Herath, 2024). Children are more likely to remain academically motivated in their later school years as family plays crucial roles in the education of the young ones. Early childhood education is the education given to children aged 0-4, situated in day care or crèche, largely in the hands of the private and social development services (FME, 2018). The period of early childhood symbolizes the foundation for life-long education. Worldwide, education is the process of bequeathing age long societal values, attitude, culture, knowledge and achievement to the upcoming generation and improving of the future aspirations of society (Butcher, 2023). Since no human existence can begin without the early childhood period, the

Publication of the Faculty of Education, National Open University of Nigeria

quality of the period thus dictates fundamental issues in societal integration, *self*-actualization, growth and development.

Early childhood education is very important as the rest of educational system is built upon it. Any defect or impairment at this stage could go a long way in affecting the later intellectual ability and adjustment of the child (Babalola 2024). It is a period marked with significant changes and reorganizations in the child's behaviour. At this period a lot of changes and progress are made in terms of learning, reasoning and in the child's social relationship with others. It is indeed the period the child gains a sense of self- worth, or lack of it, and confidence, or lack of confidence, as he experiences success or failure in everyday contacts (Ige, 2011). This becomes a challenge and commitment to the parents, teachers, community and government to ensure that these young children receive appropriate training in their early stages of life to enable them face the reality of life.

Children in the 21st century need skills, values and knowledge and these are supposed to be provided by the school (Butcher, 2023). Parents should be involved in early childhood education through parents' teachers' association (PTA) to change their mind-sets and attitude toward education. This promotes commitment, ownership and sustainability of early childhood education, thereby increase enrollment, retention and completion. Parental involvement enhance social relation and promote a sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Sensitization of parents on the important of early childhood education, collaboration and partnership with the government and other development partners for funding of these activities are key strategies in the implementation of early childhood education. Herath (2024) affirms that parental involvement enhance academic performance, self-regulation abilities and overall well-being of young learners

Nigeria as a nation is facing a challenging time in providing her young citizens quality and affordable education. These challenges include ineffective planning and implementation, lack of accountability in the management of scarce resources, shortages of highly qualified early childhood teachers and inadequate infrastructure. This problem of quality teachers is compounded as very little is done to train and retrain teachers in the country and this takes its toll on the performance of teacher (Aguh & olutola, 2023). Agba, Ejekwu and Ndifon (2022) observed that insecurity is a major challenges of education in Nigeria. Attacks on schools and abduction of students have impacted negatively on the development of education in Nigeria. Parents find it difficult to choose between sending children to school and loose them or keep them at home without education. Butcher (2023) observed that fundamental changes in the economy of the country and its impact on family life, rising cost of living, emergence of a single-parent household, increased number of teenage parents, decrease in the impact of the extended family, and the call by many professionals who advocated for the right of children have impacted on the early childhood education. Herath (2024) observed that socio-economic barriers and cultural disparity are key hindrances to parental involvement in early childhood education.

The proliferation of early childhood according to National Policy on Education is a pertinent issue that has led to a poor standard and lack of proper regulation of early childhood institutions across the country. Corruption is seen as a destructive worm that destroys the educational system in Nigeria. Corruption was one of the factors that led to the failure of Universal Primary education in 1977. This aligns with Osunyikanmi (2018) cited in Research Gate (2023) who maintains that corruption led to underfunding of early childhood education in Nigeria. Agba,

Ejekwu and Ndifon (2022) identified lack of teaching and learning resources, low teacher-pupil ratio (over crowded classes), inadequate trained teachers and caregivers, less emphasis on play and discovery learning, lack of family involvement, too much emphasis on examination, high tuition fees, lack of proper supervision and low motivation for teachers and caregivers as the challenges of early childhood education. Babalola (2024) affirms that government-owned public school are characterized by a lack of competent and unqualified teachers and care givers. In line with the above assertion, the lack of qualified and incompetent teachers in early childhood education is another major issue. Inadequate monitoring and supervision are seen as another bottleneck experienced in early education in Nigeria. Besim (2022) affirms that early childhood centers in Nigeria are not properly and adequately supervised. Supervision as an indispensable implementation key of any given organization. Sooter (2013) asserts that early childhood education in Nigeria is characterized by poor funding and planning as the funding of Early Childhood education is the sole responsibility of the state and local government. The training gap for early childhood education teachers create vicious cycles that negates the necessary early childhood educational foundations and inevitably later education.

Early childhood education can be seen as a process of learning aimed at equipping young people with knowledge and skills. One should be equipped, sufficiently enough as to be able to contribute to the functioning of society. By equipping the newborn with skills, new ideas, guided orientation, approaches and expertise to cope with life, education (as a mental process) exerts its impact on the individual's rational, critical and reasonable responses to life in general, to emergencies, choices or options (Ige 2011). Education is a component which no misfortune can depress, no crime can destroy, no enemy can eliminate. Education, in solitude is a solace, and in society an ornament. It hastens vice, it guides virtue, and it gives grade and government to genius. Without education, man is a splendid slave and reasoning savage. The simple truth is that education empowers, emboldens, refines, civilizes, enlightens, enriches and gives confidence to the new born in the environment (Agba, Ejekwu & Ndifon 2022).

The objectives of early childhood care and education include; effecting a smooth transition from the home to the school, preparing the child for the primary level of education, providing adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work (or farms, markets, offices) and inculcating social norms. Others objectives are inculcating in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature and the local environment, playing with toys, engaging in artistic and musical activities, teaching cooperation and team spirit, teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms through play and teaching good habits, especially good health habits (FRN, 2014). The early childhood centers will improve the children's language skills and provide opportunity for each child to attain his or her potential ability. Early childhood education deals with the holistic development of children. Any negative impact that is not corrected during the early years of an individual will adversely affect the human potential, future careers, and national development. Early childhood education has the potential to develop the cognitive (intellectual), emotional, moral, social, physical, creative, interpersonal skills, cultural and religious values of the young one. Other values are self-assessments, self- identification, self- control, respect for self, respect for others, development of patience, self- confidence, senses of responsibility, encourage acceptance of others and develop public speaking abilities. Early childhood education often focuses on guiding children to learn through play. Children who often wander around when mothers are busy have the opportunity to be looked after and cared for. Parents will feel at ease about the safety of their children and their output will improve. There will be less danger of accidents among these children and their health will be monitored.

Today many children lack skills, knowledge and values that are needed in this rapidly changing world with respect to challenges and hardship the future may holds. Furthermore, many children performed poorly in the school due to poor foundation resulting from lack of opportunity at the basic early childhood. Ige (2011) established that the early childhood education of the child start from home with the mother as the child's first educator and care giver and must perform this role the best of their abilities. Others who are involved at the family level are; cousins, siblings and people in the community. Usually, they care, tell stories and folktales. As they grow and develops in traditional societies, culture and customs, children utilized toys and copied skills from relevant arts and crafts in their environment. However, with the increasing urbanization, the traditional systems are gradually being replaced by formalized systems where babies are domiciled as early as 7.00am till as late as 5.00pm. Here, it is expected that some forms of education would have taken place. The care should cover every need (physical or moral) of the child; no matter how special is the demand.

Yet, it is universally acknowledged that between three and five years are the potential period of intellectual development in the child. It is during these years that the child begins to develop intellectually. Any neglect made at this stage is most likely to have a permanent effect on the child. It must therefore, be appreciated that the shape and direction of the future of Nigerian society depends significantly on the type of educational foundation laid for the present generation of children. Perhaps, it is in realization of this that the Federal Government of Nigeria stated clearly the purpose and direction of pre-primary education in Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (NPE) published in 1977 and revised in 1981, 1998, 2004 and 2013 respectively. Currently in Nigeria, there is an awareness of the role of nursery education in the development of children among many concerned educators and parents as well as the government. The National Policy on Education has left the provision of pre-school education to private and voluntary enterprises. However, most state governments have decided to regulate and control the operation of pre-primary education as well as ensure that the staff of pre-schools are adequately trained and that essential equipment are provided.

FME, (2018) stated the goal 4 of the Agenda 2030, SDGs is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunity for all. This include expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education. The UBE Act provides that the stake-holders in education in a Local Government Area shall ensure that every parent or person who has the care and custody of a child performs this duty imposed on him under section 2(2) of this Act (UBE Act, 2004). Research Gate (2023), establishes that the Federal Government of Nigeria in its National policy on Education has given official recognition to the development and provision of early childhood education in the country. It is the responsibility of the government to provide affordable and quality programme of early childhood that are community based. However, nearly all the early childhood education in the country is provided by private proprietors. Sooter (2013) identified the inability of government to put to effect most of the measure it stated in the NPE aimed at ensuring that the policy objectives are achieved. Hence the parents have important role to play in achieving the government objective of providing care, protection and learning in children from age 0-4 years. This justified the reason for the choice of this study.

Statement of the Problem

Lack of parental involvement in early childhood education in the past seems to have brought about the under development and general neglect of early childhood education especially among the indigene in Gwagwalada Area Council. It is not too good for the Area Council to

allow only the private and social development services take over this important segment of education sector without deliberate policy for ownership, supervision and control of quality. It seems that trained early childhood education teachers are lacking, parental participation in early childhood education is low due to lack of interest and poor attitude of parents toward their children education. Government commitment to the implementation of education laws, policies and programme also seems to be absent.

It is strongly felt that serious steps ought to be taken to provide relevant educational programmes of quality that will be appropriate for school children between the ages of three and six throughout the nation. The early childhood education like any other level of education is characterized by poor funding, dilapidated and inadequate classroom and furniture, and lack of toilet facilities. Poor attitude and low interest of teachers, shortages of early childhood education teachers, socio-cultural barriers and parental attitude toward education are some of the problems militating against the development of early childhood education in the Area Council. It seems that there is deliberate lack of government interest in promoting early child education in the Area council. Most of the Day care and Crèches are in the hand of the private and social development services and are not within the formal education sub sector. It seems also that government at the Area Council failed to understand that investment in children's life at the early years pay long term social dividend by shaping the next generation of adults and families. There is a need to promote inclusive and equitable development and learning opportunities for all children from age 3 to 6 through parental involvement in school management.

Therefore, most of the problem of out-of-school children in the Area Council could have been avoided if adequate attention is given to early childhood education that will improve the overall development of children under the age of six years. This concern and the acknowledgement of the place of early childhood education as an instrument of transforming the early years and child care services constitute the statement of problem for this study. Hence, the study intends to investigate by asking this question, is parental involvement in school management, a future fit strategy for the challenges of early childhood education in Gwagwalada Area Council?

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to ascertain the parental involvement in school management, as a future fit strategy for the challenges of early childhood education in Gwagwalada Area Council?

Specifically, the study aims at achieving the followings;

1. Appraise the parental involvement in the management of early childhood education in Gwagwalada Area Council Abuja Nigeria.
2. Examine the challenges of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria.
3. Determine government commitment in the management of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria.

Research Questions

To achieve the objectives of this study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the roles of parents in the management of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria?
3. What are the government commitment to the management of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses provides the focus for the study

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between parental involvement in schools' management and the challenges of early childhood education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between government commitment to the management of early childhood education and the challenges of early childhood education

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was employed for this study. The population of the study comprised of all parents and teachers in the 30 private pre-primary schools who attended the Parents-Teachers Association Meeting of the schools at the time of the study. Five (5) parents and five (5) teachers were randomly selected from each school using simple random sampling techniques. A total of 150 parents and 150 teachers out of 410 parents and 240 teachers made up the sample size for this study. The researcher purposively use the attendance records because the study focuses on parental involvement in school management and PTA meeting is one of the most important avenue of parental involvement and participation in school activities. The instrument for data collection for this study was the 30 items questionnaire structure on a four (4) points modified Likert-type rating scale of Strongly Agree=4 points, Agree=3 points, Disagree=2 points and Strongly Disagree= 1 point. Any mean value less than 2.50 is Disagree while 2.50 or above is Agree. The questionnaire was administered 'face to face' to the respondents after validation and they were assured of the confidentiality of their response. Two research assistants hired and briefed for this purpose administered the questionnaire. Cronbach Alpha was used to find the degree of internal consistency and a value ($r=0.86$) was obtained. Questionnaire on government commitment and challenges of early childhood education was answered by the teachers while the questionnaire on parental involvement was answered by the parents. The copies of the questionnaire were immediately collated for analysis using mean scores and standard deviation.

Results

Research Question 1. What are the roles of parents in the management of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria?

Table 1. Analysis of parental involvement in the management of early childhood education in Gwagwalada Area Council Abuja Nigeria.

N=150								
s/No	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	S d	Decision

1	Parents are represented in school association and council.	70	3	24	18	3.0	0.7	Agree
			8			6	5	
2	Parents are not ready to pay token for their children education.	30	3	50	38	2.3	0.3	Disagree
			2			6	7	
3	Parents play no crucial role in the socialization process of their children.	36	2	51	34	2.4	0.1	Disagree
			9			7	7	
4	Parents see education as a joint effort between the home and the schools.	64	4	34	10	3.0	0.7	Agree
			2			7	5	
5	Parents are not reinforcing learning after school lesson.	28	3	39	45	2.3	0.4	Disagree
			8			3	1	
6	Parental participation in school activities such as open-day, career day has no academic gain	24	3	60	34	2.3	0.4	Disagree
			2			1	4	
7	Collaboration between the home and schools have no beneficial effect on children learning.	28	3	58	31	2.3	0.3	Disagree
			3			9	3	
8	Parents are aware of their responsibilities through PTA activities	52	3	37	23	2.7	0.5	Agree
			8			9	4	
9	Policies on parental education and support are existent in Nigeria.	14	1	68	50	1.9	0.7	Disagree
			8			7	7	
10	Parents are not kept informed about school activities through Newsletter and Bulletins.	27	3	35	54	2.2	0.4	Disagree
			4			3	9	
Sectional Mean: 2.50 S d: 0.50								

Table 1 shows the mean rating of parental involvement in the management of early childhood education. From the above analysis the respondents agreed that parents should be represented in the school management council with a mean rating of 3.06, education as a joint effort between the home and the schools with mean of 3.07. However, the parents disagreed with the other items such as parents not ready to pay school fees with a mean score of 2.36, not reinforcing learning at home with a mean score of 2.33 and play no crucial role on the socialization of their children with a mean score of 2.47.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria?

Table 2: Analysis of the challenges of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria.

N=150								
S/No	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	S d	Decision
1	Proliferation of early childhood education is a pertinent issue in the Area council.	80	2	22	20	3.1	0.8	Agree
			8			2	2	
2	Low tuition fees.	25	2	65	33	2.2	0.3	Disagree
			7			9	9	
3	Adequate numeration of teachers' salaries.	28	2	61	39	2.2	0.4	Disagree
			2			6	2	
4	Shortage of instructional materials.	65	4	34	10	3.0	0.7	Agree
			1			7	9	
5	Adequate Monitoring and Supervision.	30	2	49	43	2.3	0.3	Disagree
			8			0	7	

6	Provision of adequate funding for infrastructural facilities.	26	2	70	30	2.3	0.3	Disagree
			4			1	6	
7	Adequate trained teachers and caregivers.	18	1	66	53	1.9	0.6	Disagree
			3			7	9	
8	Poverty and socio-cultural issue.	60	2	37	25	2.8	0.6	Agree
			8			2	2	
9	Employment of qualified and competent teachers.	17	1	68	50	1.9	0.6	Disagree
			5			9	7	
10	Government's sensitivity to early childhood education is above average.	29	3	31	52	2.2	0.3	Disagree
			8			9	9	
Sectional Mean=2.44, S d: 0.54								

Table 2 shows the mean rating of the challenges of early childhood education in Gwagwalada Area Council. From the above analysis the respondents agreed that there is proliferation of early child education centers in the Area Council with a mean score of 3.12, shortages of instructional materials with a mean score of 3.07, poverty and social-cultural issue with a mean score of 2.82. Furthermore, the respondents disagreed with the other items such as adequate monitoring and supervision with a mean score 2.30, provision of adequate funding for infrastructural facilities with a mean score of 2.31 and adequate numeration of teachers' salaries with a mean score of 2.26.

Research Question 3: What are the government commitment to the management of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria?

Table 3. Analysis of government commitment to the implementation of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria.

N=150								
S/No	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	S d	Decision
1	Development of early childhood education curriculum	80	28	29	13	3.17	0.85	Agree
2	Ensuring regulatory standard.	20	32	50	48	2.16	0.53	Disagree
3	Government policies and laws on population management are strictly enforced.	36	29	51	34	2.47	0.17	Disagree
4	Registration and licensing of child care centers	74	42	24	10	3.20	0.76.	Agree
5	Trained teachers in early childhood education are adequate	18	37	49	46	2.18	0.51	Disagree
6	Ensuring adequate non-teaching staff.	24	32	60	34	2.31	0.53	Disagree
7	Provision of medical care and vaccination for children.	15	37	56	42	2.16	0.36	Disagree
8	No provision of aid for early childhood education centers.	60	28	37	25	2.82	0.62	Agree
9	Ensuring adequate supervision for quality assurance.	05	28	67	50	1.92	0.72	Disagree
10	Education laws, programme and policies are strictly enforced.	20	22	45	63	2.23	0.45	Disagree
Sectional Mean=2.47, S d: 0.55								

Table 3 shows the mean rating of government commitment to the implementation of Early Childhood Education in Gwagwalada Area Council. From the above analysis the respondents agreed that government developed early childhood education curriculum with a mean score of 3.17, registration and licensing of child care centers with a mean score of 3.20, there is no provision of aid for early childhood education with a mean score of 2.82. However, the respondents disagreed with the other items such as education laws polices and programme are strictly enforced with a mean score 2.23, provision of medical care and vaccination for children with a mean score of 2.16, ensuring adequate non-teaching staff with a mean score of 2.31, adequate numeration of teachers' salaries with a mean score of 2.26 and trained teachers in early childhood education are adequate with a mean score of 2.18.

Table 4: Test of relationship between Parental Involvement in school management and Challenges of Early Childhood Education.

Key: PISM- Parental Involvement in school management and CECE-Challenges of Early Childhood Education

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Correlation	Sig.	R-Square	DECISION
		Mean	Std. dev.					
1	PISM	2.50	0.50	8.65	0.770	0.002	0.593	REJECT H_{08}
	CECE	2.44	0.54	0.770		0.004		

P-VALUE <0.05 level of significance

The test analysis presented in table 4 above that the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.77, signifying that 77% of the total variation in Parental Involvements can be accounted for by the challenges of early childhood education. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between Parental Involvement and Challenges of Early Childhood Education (P-value < 0.05) hence the hypothesis of no relationship between the two variables was rejected.

Table 5: Test of relationship between Government Commitment to Early childhood education and Challenges of Early Childhood Education

Key: GCECE-Government Commitment and CECE-Challenges of Early Childhood Education

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Correlation	Sig.	R-Square	DECISION
		Mean	Std. dev.					
1	GCECE	2.47	0.5	7.6	0.690	0.00	0.508	REJECT H_{08}
	CECE	2.44	0.5	2.1		0.00		

P-VALUE <0.05 level of significance

The test analysis presented in table 5 above showed that the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.69, signifying that 69% of the total variation in the challenges of early childhood education can be accounted for by government lack of commitment in the implementation of early childhood education. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between Government commitment and Challenges of Early Childhood Education (P-value < 0.05) hence the hypothesis of no relationship between the two variables was rejected

Discussion of findings

Result from table 1 revealed that respondents agreed that parents are represented in school association and council. This finding is in agreement with Herath (2024) who opined that parental involvement in early childhood education is a key element in the education of the young ones as children are more likely to remain academically motivated. Furthermore, the finding agreed with Agba, Ejekwu and Ndifon (2022) who opined that education being a collaborative effort between the school and home, empowers, emboldens, refines, civilizes, enlightens, enriches and gives confidence to the new born. The finding also agreed with FME (2018) which stated that parents play a crucial role in the socialization process of their children.

Result from table 2 revealed that respondents agreed that proliferation of early childhood education is a pertinent issue in the Area council. This finding agreed with FME (2018) which stated that uncontrolled proliferation of nursery education in Nigeria affect adequate monitory and supervision for quality assurance. The study revealed that the respondents agreed that high tuition fees, shortages of instructional materials, inadequate trained teachers, poverty and socio-cultural issues are challenges of early childhood education. This finding agreed with Aguh and Olutola (2023), Amadioha (2019), Besim, Edita and Eliza (2022) and Butcher (2023).

The result from table 3 revealed that Education laws, programme and policies are not strictly enforced by the government. This finding agreed with Sooter (2013) who identified the inability of government to put to effect most of the measure it stated in the NPE aimed at ensuring that the policy objectives are achieved. The study revealed the absence of government support in curriculum development, provision of aids, adequate supervision and regulatory standards. The finding agreed with Evans and Ikpekogu (2016) who opined that the official curriculum of early childhood was first drafted in 1988 by the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) after many years of Nigeria's independence due to the Nigerian Government's insensitivity to early childhood education.

Conclusion

This study has examined the parental involvement in school management as a future fit strategy for the challenges of early childhood education in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja Nigeria. The study identified the following means by which parents can be involved in school management. These are; parental representative in school association and council, willingness to pay fees and active participation in school activities among others. Proliferation of early childhood education, shortages of teaching and learning resources, inadequate trained teachers and caregivers, lack of adequate infrastructure, poor numeration of teachers' salaries, high tuition fees and government insensitivity to early childhood among others are identified as challenges of early childhood education. The study also highlighted government commitment to the management of early childhood education. These are; licensing of early childhood education centres, ensuring regulatory standard and development of early childhood education curriculum.

Recommendations

The findings of this study necessitates the following recommendations:

1. Parents must be involved in their children school management though PTA meeting as education of the child is a collaboration between the home and the schools.

2. Parents must participate in schools activities through schools' engagement as this promotes commitment, ownership and sustainability of early childhood education.
3. Parents must be ready to pay token for their children education as this level of education is not cover by free and compulsory education Act, 2004.
4. The parents must engage the government to ensure effective monitory and supervision of the early childhood education centres for quality assurance. The regulatory or inspectorate unit at the Area Council must be strengthen for adequate supervision.

References

- Agba, R. U., Ejekwu P. & Ndifon F. O. (2022). Early childhood care education and the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development*, Vol. 31(1) P. 70-84
- Aguh, J. C. & Olutola A. T. (2023). Examining the challenges of early childhood education in Nigeria. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Research and Technology*. 3(2) P. 91-96. <http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/IJERT/>.
- Amadioha S. (2019). Challenges of early childhood education in Nigeria: Implication for assessment of early childhood curriculum implementation in Port Harcourt, River State. *Australian Journal of Arts and Scientific Research*, Vol. 22, No 2, pp 125-129, May 2019
- Babalola A. (2024). The role of parents in a child's education. Retrieved March 2025 from abuad.edu.ng/the-role-of-parents-in-a-child's-education.
- Besim G, Edita Bekteshi & Eliza A. (2022). Challenges facing early childhood education in developing countries. *Journal of Education and Social Research* 12(6):184. Pp184-194 November 2022 Retrieved from DOI:10.36941/j <https://www.researchgate.net/publication365>.
- Butcher M. B. (2023). Identifying challenges and solutions to early childhood Retrieved March 2025 from <https://pmc.ncbi.nih.gov/article>.
- Herath K. {2024}. The role of parental involvement in early childhood education DOI:1013140/RG2.2.16204.73607. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication387>
- Ibhaze, F. O. (2016). Issues and challenges of implementation of early childhood education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*. Vol. 6.
- Ige, A. M. (2011). The challenges facing early childhood care, development and education (ECCDE) in an era of universal basic education in Nigeria. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, Vol. 39, 161-167. <http://link.springer.com/article/10>.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014). *National Policy on Education* 6th Edition. Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council press Lagos, Nigeria.
- Federal Ministry of Education (FME) (2018). *Basic and secondary education*. Retrieved May, 2018 from www.education.gov.ng/index.phpD/articles/basic-and-secondary-education.
- Research Gate (2023). Issues and problem of early childhood education in Nigeria. Retrieved in March, 2025 from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312417832-Early-Childhood-Education-in-Nigeria-issues-and-problems>.
- Sooter, T. (2013). Early childhood education in Nigeria: Issues and problems. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*. Vol. 3 (5). <https://www.mcser.org/journal/index.php/jesr>.
- Universal Basic Education Commission Act (2004). Free and compulsory education Nigeria. Retrieved May, 2018 from www.education.gov.ng/index.phpD/articles/basic-and-secondary-education