

Early Childhood Care and Education Quality Assurance Measures in Christian schools of Kaduna State

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Abstract

This study dealt with Early Childhood Care and Education Quality Assurance Measures in Christian Schools in Kaduna State. Objective, research question and hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The population is limited to Anglican Communion schools in Kaduna State and the sample size of 924 consisting of the head-teacher/teachers, clergy/church officials, parents and graduands in Anglican schools of Kaduna state. Questionnaire and interview were used for data collection. For data analysis, mean, standard deviation were used in the measurement of respondent's opinion while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used in testing the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. From the results it was observed that, there is quality assurance mechanism put in place by Christian schools but lack adequate instructional materials for ECCE Programme in Kaduna state. It was also found out that the supervision of Christian schools programme by relevant government agencies in Kaduna State is irregular. This leads to poor enforcement of standard across all the schools. Recommendations were made based on the findings which include Establish and design mechanism and tools for tracking quality practices which will be regularly monitored by the stakeholders; Building synergies within Christian schools and government to improve the quality of ECCE and there should be regular capacity building for the quality assurance officers.

Keywords: Childhood, care, education, quality, assurance.

Introduction

Early childhood care and education (ECCE) has become a policy priority in many countries of the world which Nigeria is inclusive. Researchers has recognised that ECCE provides a wide range of benefits which includes social, economic, child well-being and learning outcome as a foundation for lifelong learning. Early childhood care and education refers to services that support young children's development, through a range of program modalities including but not limited to school-based pre-primary education, community-based pre-primary education and parenting support program (Raikes et al., 2021). Early Childhood Care and Education goes beyond preparation for primary school, as it addresses the holistic development of a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs from birth to the start of primary school. Early childhood Education whether in formal or informal settings (Raikes et al., 2021). Proponents of early childhood education, Bruce (2005), Darlherg and Pence, (2008), all agree that effective handling of early childhood is paramount to the growth and

development of the individual child and the overall development of the entire society in all aspects. Also, according to Bernette (2006) and Rolnick and Grunewald (2003), early childhood education has a positive influence on the affective, conceptional, social and in fact, overall educational development of children in later life and that investing in it can yield high returns. They went further to assert that it is not any educational experience offered anywhere by any type of teacher can have such an effect on children. This effect can only be achieved if the policy on early childhood education is consistently and effectively implemented. Research has consistently shown that access to high quality early childhood education can also have a positive impact on the school careers of children.

Quality in Early Childhood care and Education can be seen as processing two elements which are; Process Quality and Structural Quality. Process quality in ECE relates to the quality of interaction between children and their teachers as well as among their peers. It is characterised by degree of emotional support and engagement for learning that is provided by teachers. While structural quality comprises of laws, policies, regulations and other influences that originate outside of the classroom but effect process quality including teacher qualification, provision of physical spaces and supplies for ECCE and expectation for the content of ECCE curricula (Cryer et al., 1999; Raikes et al., 2019; Raikes et al., 2021). According to Maduwesi and Agusiobo (2005), quality is a multi-faceted issue, which encompasses how learning is organized and managed, the learning content, learning level achieved, learning outcomes and the learning environment.

Quality assurance is designed for systematic monitoring and evaluation of any project, service, and programme among others to ensure that quality is maintained. Quality assurance in pre-primary teacher preparation therefore is designed to systematically monitor and evaluate the preparation of the pre-primary teachers for effective teaching in pre-primary schools. Quality assurance can be seen as a process of monitoring ECCE settings to assess and ensure the quality of children's experience (Raikes et al., 2021). The children's experience cut across the learning environment which include safe space, trained teachers, access to toys, learning material, play-based curricular and pedagogy. All these has to be assessed for better learning outcomes for children (Anderson & Soonarane, 2021; Raikes et al., 2021).

The work of the early mission schools was to evangelize and convert Nigerians to Christianity. They however believed that this was not possible except through a formal educational process that would enable the natives to read and write. This was the basis upon which the need for establishment of mission schools was conceived and pursued vigorously alongside with their main objectives. The early mission schools were established in church premises. Each Christian denomination was actively involved in the establishment of their own churches and schools. They used education as a means of converting Nigeria's into their various denominations. Because of this overriding interest in evangelism, the missions confined themselves within the area of literacy, religion and moral education (Duruh, 2016).

The school were solely organized, controlled and managed by different Christian missionaries. There was discipline in schools even by the use of corporal punishment. They introduced formal education with emphasis on morality. Some of the children found morality from early age and some became prominent men and women in the society. Parents were delighted to send their children to mission

schools. The curriculum and method of studies were based on the bible. Every subject no matter how remote had to be connected in some way with the holy Bible and in addition, children received formal training in writing, arithmetic, reading and singing. Where there was a lady teacher, the girls learnt sewing. No tuition was charged initially in mission schools, and children who cared to come were welcomed. Admission was attracted by missionaries through various means which included door to door visits to persuade parents to send their children to school. Some parents demanded for payment from the missionaries before allowing their wards to attend such schools. The parents considered it a big sacrifice allowing the children to attend school instead of the farm. At a certain time, some stipends were suggested by the mission teachers for school children living at home as an inducement to make them regular at school (Agwu, 1998; Duruh, 2016).

Christian early educators based their principles on biblical worldview in all area of instruction, classroom environment and developmentally appropriate practices. They believed that all children are made in the image of God ((Genesis 1:26), are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139: 14), should train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it (Proverb 22:6), all your children shall be taught by the lord, and great shall be the peace of your children (proverbs 1: 8-9). These principles mentioned above and other ones made the Christian early educators effective. They understand the importance of educating and discipline the whole child and fostering individual growth in each student rated to personality, temperament and culture. They respected Gods development design by recognizing that young children think grow and learn differently than older children and that make plan for age appropriate learning strategies. They also communicated, collaborated and model God's unconditional love while upholding biblical Christian values with supervisors, colleagues, parents and the community.

Kaduna State, like every other state in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, is involved in the development of the western type of education. This is informed by the advent of educational activities form the Church Missionary Society (C M S) in the area. The C M S, having esteemed education as a determining factor for any nation's development, overtly employed it, actively, as an instrument to consolidate her evangelical project in all her host communities. The social role of the Anglican Communion makes her an integral organ in the education of the child. They pioneered the introduction of schools in Northern Nigeria. They had initiated the kindergarten educational arrangement, built schools, provided teachers, managed and supervised them (Lamido, 2005). The schools were solely organized, controlled and managed by the Church. There was discipline and even the use of corporal punishment. They embarked on moral and spiritual upbringing of the child and they believe in the biblical injunction that says "train up a child the way he should grow and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). This effort has remained a reference point as to the humble beginnings of early childhood care and education in Kaduna State of Nigeria formal education system.

Importance of Quality Assurance in Early Childhood Education

Raising Public Awareness

National child care quality assurance system makes public the nature and complexity of the work of educators and the components that is necessary for quality provision. This can help to broaden

community understanding and respect for the importance of the work and its ethical implications (Taylor, 2004). It improved community and family awareness of what the programme stands for. Fenech (2006) indicates that quality assurance allows parents to see what you are doing. Parents realize how much everyone works and how much training and knowledge they have. It educates parents a lot. Quality assurance also helped staff to feel more confident about their work and to engage in a more focused way with families (Mundy, 2010).

Reducing Disparity between Service

Quality assurance system helps to ensure consistency of quality across diverse settings. Reducing disparity is a matter of equity because it helps to ensure that children and families experience consistent quality standards in any child care settings. Reducing disparity is a matter of equity because it helps to ensure that children and families experience consistent quality standards in any child care setting throughout the country (Ajayi, 2007; Kenedy, 2011).

Increased Confidence and Series of Professional Satisfaction for Staff

When educators feel that they are contributing to the provision of a high quality programme for children and families, they have an increased sense of professional satisfaction which helps to sustain good practice and their retention in the sector. Educators whose work has been validated at high quality have expressed professional satisfaction at this public recognition for their work (Fenech, 2006).

Improved Protection and Outcomes for Children

Quality assurance system improves protection for children and consequently provides reassurance for families using child care services. This was regarded as one of the most important benefits by educators. Quality rating scales used in the Effective Provision of Pre- School Education (EPPE) study in the UK also found that there was a significant link between higher quality and better intellectual and social/behavioural outcomes at entry to school (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart (2004)). It also helps for raising requirement for educator's qualifications and training, broadening the scope of the quality dimensions and improves the ratios of staff to children in different age group.

Furthermore, quality assurance measure must be fair, valid and efficient. Edeh (2006) noted that nursery schools in Nigeria currently operated on university campuses, schools premises, premises of industrial and business organization, church premises, town halls, and residential building must be assessed for quality assurance.

Statement of the problem

Early Childhood Care and Education begins with developing quality standards for ECCE service delivery that promote play-based learning, which places a larger emphasis on social and emotional learning, creativity, and psycho-motor skills. Although there are few systematic reviews, observations from stakeholders indicate that some countries increasingly recognize the importance

of play-based learning and have integrated these principles into quality standards, while others are beginning the process of writing or revising standards.

Unlike in the secular genre, the guiding principle of the religious pre-schools is that children are a precious gift from God and are essentially presented with a play-based curriculum that would enable them to exercise their free will in exploring the environment by maximising the choices that are available to them. They have teachers who encourage them to exhibit their creativity, socialize among themselves and appreciate one another as dictated by religious injunctions. With the increasing global interest and emphasis placed by the government on the early childhood care and education in Nigeria, in areas like effective planning, policy implementation, accountability, management of scarce resources, shortage of highly qualified and discipline early childhood teachers and curricular which was express sometimes in 2016, were the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Yakubu Dogara, at the National Assembly complex in Abuja during the Open Week organised to enlighten the public on the workings of the legislature, directed a call to traditional and religious leaders in Nigeria to be active in the upbringing of children so that they can instil qualities in them that would make the children to ultimately make them shun violence and other vices that could stall development in the country. Foremost religious leaders in Nigeria have also heeded Dogara's call to action on early childhood education. They have established schools with a focus on the ECE which encourage and support play-based learning for children. The efforts of these religious leaders and others in their category aim at bringing up the children in the way of God for the overall improvement of society.

The church has fulfilled her mandate by establishing these schools but it seem that she lacks central school laws for this particular level of children, thus leading to no uniform standard for running the schools. Also, the qualification of the teachers, management and provision of facilities appropriate for this level seems to be inadequate. It also seems that there is shortage of fund and lack of supervision which affect early childhood education program. One wonders the extent to which the Christian schools in Kaduna state is predisposed to this initiative in qualitative terms. This study is intended to assess Early Childhood Care and Education Quality Assurance Measures in Christian schools of Kaduna State.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study was to assess the level of Early Childhood Care and Education Quality Assurance Measures put in place in Christian schools of Kaduna State.

Research Question

To what extent are quality assurance measures put in place in early childhood care and education programs in Christian schools in Kaduna State?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the opinions of teachers, parents, graduands and clergy on the extent of quality assurance measures put in place in ECCE programmes in Christian Schools in Kaduna State.

Methodology

The design used in this study was a descriptive research design. Being a descriptive research, the research used survey design in collecting the data. The population for this study consists of all the Anglican Communion Day Care, Nursery and Primary schools, teachers/head teachers, church officials/clergy, parents and graduates in Kaduna state. This is because Anglican Communion is one of the first Christian organisation to start school in Kaduna State. It is believed that they will give a fair representation of all other Christian schools.

Quantitatively, there are seven (7) dioceses, fifty – six schools (56), one thousand six hundred and sixty-two (1,662) head teachers/ teachers, one hundred and twenty-seven (127) clergy/church officials, four thousand four hundred and seven (4,407) parents and ten thousand and twenty-nine (10,029) graduands. Based on this, the target population for this study comprises of 15,225 respondents.

The sampling for the study were carried out at three levels (i.e.) diocesan/church level, school level and respondent level. Purposive sampling was employed to select four (4) dioceses from the seven (7) dioceses. The researchers selected Kaduna, Wusasa, Kafachan and Zonkwa dioceses. These dioceses were created on or before 2004. In this second stage, the researchers adopted intact sampling technique to select all the schools in the selected dioceses. Based on that, all the schools in the four (4) selected dioceses were used. There are forty-four schools in all. The sampling of the respondents which consists of teachers /head teachers, the clergy/ church officials, parents and graduates were under four stages. Firstly, in sampling the head teacher/teachers, purposive samplings are employed to select all the head teachers together with all the teachers that are handling day care and nursery classes. These groups of teachers are chosen because they deal directly with the pupils in early childhood care and education. A total of 44 head teachers and 155 teachers making a total of 199 are selected. Secondly, in the sampling of the clergy, the researchers has adopted purposive sampling to select the clergy of each of the church schools and all the diocesan educational board of each diocese. Since there are 44 schools and each of these schools are under a church and so, there will be 44 clergy for the 44 schools. More so, on the part of the diocesan educational board, each of the dioceses has a board that covers all the schools in those dioceses. A total of 40 diocesan educational board officials from the 4 dioceses are selected making a sum total of 84 clergy/officials.

Thirdly, on the sampling of the parents, the researchers used intact sampling to select all the executive members of Parents Teachers Association (PTA) of each school. They are 423 PTA officials. Lastly the researchers used balloting probability sampling technique to select two schools each from the four dioceses. More so, 10% of the total numbers of the graduates for each school selected were used. This is to give a fair representation of all the schools selected. Considering the

population of the study, the sample of the subject were nine hundred and twenty-four (924). A sample size of this magnitude will give confidence level of ninety five percent.

The research tools which the researchers used for collections of data were questionnaire and interview. The study was conducted by the researchers and with the help of Five (5) research assistants. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation in the measurement of the respondent’s opinions. The hypothesis was tested with Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Result and Findings

Research Question: To what extent are quality assurances measures put in place in early childhood care and education programmes in Kaduna State?

The investigation aimed at establishing the extent of quality assurance measures put in place by the church in early childhood care and education programme in Kaduna State. A total of 924 respondents were selected for the study out of which 904 dully responded, representing 97.8% of the total sample. The following issues were raised; the level of internal and external supervision, process of monitoring the programme, guideline to check examination malpractice and record keeping. Table 1 shows the opinions of the respondents on the quality assurance measure put in place by the church.

Table 1: Mean score of the respondents on the extent of quality assurances measures put in place in early childhood care and education programmes in Kaduna state?

| S/N | Items | Response categories | | | | Mean | STD Dev |
|-----|---|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------|---------|
| | | SA | A | D | SD | | |
| 1 | there is quality assurance mechanism put in place by Christian schools in her ECCE program in Kaduna state | 345 38.16 | 287 31.75 | 47 5.20 | 225 24.89 | 2.83 | 1.260 |
| 2 | internal supervision is undertaken by the Christian schools in her ECCE programme in Kaduna state | 188 20.80 | 355 39.27 | 225 24.89 | 136 15.04 | 2.66 | 0.971 |
| 3 | there are high ethical standards for teachers in the Christian schools ECCE programme in Kaduna state | 173 19.14 | 187 20.69 | 272 30.09 | 272 30.09 | 2.29 | 1.091 |
| 4 | there is effective planned process of monitoring the Christian schools ECCE programme in Kaduna state | 178 19.69 | 136 15.04 | 454 50.22 | 136 15.04 | 3.00 | 1.141 |
| 5 | the Christian schools in Kaduna state of Nigeria provides adequate instructional materials in her ECCE programmes | 187 20.69 | 10 1.11 | 252 27.88 | 455 50.33 | 3.05 | 0.727 |
| 6 | National ideals for Quality ECCE programmes are adopted by the Christian schools in Kaduna state | 276 30.53 | 70 7.74 | 202 22.35 | 356 39.38 | 2.22 | 1.253 |

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| 7 | there is regular external supervision of the Christian schools ECCE programme by relevant government agencies in the Kaduna state | 178 19.69 | 94 10.40 | 94 10.40 | 538 59.51 | 1.90 | 1.216 |
| 8 | the Christian schools in Kaduna states of Nigeria adopts minimal measures for continuous professional development of teachers in her ECCE programmes | 272 30.09 | 319 35.29 | 135 14.93 | 178 19.69 | 2.76 | 1.086 |
| 9 | there are clearly defined guidelines to check examination malpractice in the Christian schools ECCE programmes | 331 36.62 | 412 45.58 | 99 10.95 | 62 6.86 | 3.19 | 0.806 |
| 10 | there is high emphasis on record keeping in the Christian schools ECCE programmes in Kaduna state | 417 46.13 | 183 20.24 | 262 28.98 | 42 4.65 | 3.08 | 0.965 |
| Cumulative mean | | | | | | 2.698 | |

Decision mean=2.5000

Table 1 presents data on quality assurance measures put in place by the church. Item 1 addressed the mechanism put in place by Christian schools. The respondent that accepted the stated item were in majority and that resulted to mean score of 2.83. This is an indication that the church is not left out in ECCE.

Items 2, 3, 4, 5 centers on internal supervision of instructions and high ethical standards. Their mean scores are as follows 2.66, 2.29, 3.00 and 3.05 respectively. The respondents agreed that the church is involved in supervising and monitoring the programme but not effectively done as we seen in item 2 and 4. The respondents also disagreed that there are high ethical standards for the teacher which is being monitored by the church. The church should make sure that they provide standard and adequate instructional materials and they are being supervised.

Item 6 deal with whether the churches indicate national ideas for ECCE programmes. The respondents are of the opinion that the church lacks such in their standard. This attract the mean of 2.22 which is less than the agreed mean score of 2.698.

Item 7 focuses on regular supervision of relevant government agencies. The respondents agree that there is no regular supervision by relevant government agencies. This attracts a mean score of 1.99. They agreed that they come once a while but this is not an ideal situation. This implies that the government agencies in charge of schools should visit the school on regular bases to ensure that the curriculum and other things are being put in place.

Items 8, 9 and 10 deals with the church quality measure in professional development of teachers, guideline on examination and record keeping. Their mean score are as follows: - 2.76, 3.19 and 3.08. The respondents agree that the church adopts minimal measures for continuous professional development of the teachers by organizing seminars, workshops and in-service training. The respondents also agree that the church have clearly defined guideline to check examination malpractice and high emphasis are being made on record keeping.

The table above reveals the extent to which quality assurances measures put in- place in early childhood care and education programmes in Kaduna state. The respondents believe that there are clearly defined guidelines to check examination malpractice in the Christian schools ECCE programmes in Kaduna state as this item of statement had the highest mean response of 3.19.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference among teachers, clergy, parents and graduands regarding their opinions on provision of quality Assurance measures for early childhood care and education programme.

This hypothesis was tested with the one-way analysis of variance because of the multiple level of the independent variable of the respondents. Early Childhood Care and Education Quality Assurance Measures in Christian schools of Kaduna State as assessed in Table 1 constituted the dependent variable used in this hypothesis. The summary of the analysis of variance model is presented in table 2.

Table 2: One way Analysis of Variance on the Quality Assurance Measure

| | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | F critical | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|------|------------|------|
| Between Groups | 50.741 | 3 | 16.914 | .668 | 2.60 | .572 |
| Within Groups | 22774.356 | 900 | 25.305 | | | |
| Total | 22825.097 | 903 | | | | |

According to the outcome of the table above, there is no significant difference among teachers, clergy, parents and graduands regarding their opinion on provision of quality Assurance for early childhood care and education programme. Reason being that the calculated p value of 0.668 of the Analysis of Variance statistics was found to be higher than the 0.05 alpha level of significance, while the F value of 0.572 was found to be lower than the 2.60 F critical value. This implies that the respondents irrespective of their status have almost the same level of agreement/response concerning the provision of quality assurances for early childhood education programme. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant differences among teachers, clergy, parents and graduands regarding their opinions on the provision of quality assurance for early childhood care education, is hereby accepted and retained. Table 3 presents the mean scores.

Table 3: Mean Scores on Quality Assurance Measure

| | n | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------|------------|
| Teacher | 173 | 27.3815 | 4.85656 | .36924 |
| Clergy | 140 | 27.6714 | 4.73080 | .39983 |
| Parents | 188 | 26.7074 | 4.96884 | .36239 |
| Graduands | 403 | 27.0074 | 5.21884 | .25997 |

| | | | | |
|-------|-----|---------|---------|--------|
| Total | 904 | 27.1195 | 5.02762 | .16722 |
|-------|-----|---------|---------|--------|

The table shows that respondents from the clergy had the highest mean score of 27.3815 as shown in the table. Next were teacher, graduands and parents respectively. However, a post hoc test was performed on the mean score to determine the group that was significantly different from the other in opinion on Early Childhood Care and Education Quality Assurance Measures in Christian schools of Kaduna State

. The Scheffe procedure was used for this purpose. It is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Result of Scheffe Procedure on Mean Scores on quality assurance measure by different groups

| | (I) status | (J) status | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. |
|---------|------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|------|
| Scheffe | Teacher | Clergy | -.57467 | .65928 | .859 |
| | | Parents | .25916 | .43691 | .950 |
| | | Graduands | .14976 | .49913 | .993 |
| | Clergy | Teacher | .57467 | .65928 | .859 |
| | | Parents | .83383 | .60498 | .594 |
| | | Graduands | .72443 | .65134 | .744 |
| | Parents | Teacher | -.25916 | .43691 | .950 |
| | | Clergy | -.83383 | .60498 | .594 |
| | | Graduands | -.10940 | .42484 | .996 |
| | Graduands | Teacher | -.14976 | .49913 | .993 |
| | | Clergy | -.72443 | .65134 | .744 |
| | | Parents | .10940 | .42484 | .996 |
| LSD | Teacher | Clergy | -.57467 | .65928 | .384 |
| | | Parents | .25916 | .43691 | .553 |
| | | Graduands | .14976 | .49913 | .764 |
| | Clergy | Teacher | .57467 | .65928 | .384 |
| | | Parents | .83383 | .60498 | .168 |
| | | Graduands | .72443 | .65134 | .266 |
| | Parents | Teacher | -.25916 | .43691 | .553 |
| | | Clergy | -.83383 | .60498 | .168 |
| | | Graduands | -.10940 | .42484 | .797 |
| | Graduands | Teacher | -.14976 | .49913 | .764 |
| | | Clergy | -.72443 | .65134 | .266 |
| | | Parents | .10940 | .42484 | .797 |

The Post Hoc multiple test statistics using LSD shows that there were no significant differences among the four groups of respondents on Early Childhood Care and Education Quality Assurance Measures in Christian schools of Kaduna State

Findings

1. There is quality assurance mechanism put in place by Christian schools in her ECCE program in Kaduna state
2. Christian schools provide guidelines to check examination malpractice and record keeping for the ECCE programme.
3. The supervision of Christian schools programme by relevant government agencies in Kaduna State is irregular. This lead to poor enforcement of standard across all the schools.
4. Lack of adequate instructional materials for ECCE Program in Christian schools.
5. National ideas for Quality ECCE Programme are not adopted by the Christian schools.
6. Minimal continuous professional development of human resources on Quality assurance for ECCE programme.

Discussion

This research work observes that significant difference do not exist in the opinion of the respondents on the provision of quality assurance measures for ECCE programme by the Christian schools in Kaduna State. The result also shows that the Church put measures in areas like exam malpractice, book keeping, regular external and internal supervision and ethical standard. This confirms Harrist's (2008) position that, different stakeholders like the parents, local authorities, organization or private sectors, central government have different roles to play in the promotion of high quality in ECCE. Also, some of the interviewees were of the view that the Church and the Government agencies should maintain regular supervision of the schools and monitoring of the ECCE programmes. Fontaine et al., (2004) asserts that, quality provision in child care is an ongoing, complex process which is built and sustained collaboratively and no fixed end point. Quality measure provides social, language, emotional and cognitive development in children and this influence can be seen into adulthood (Korjenevitch & Dunifon, 2010).

Furthermore, quality assurance is one of the quality tools to evaluate early childhood care and education programme. The purpose of it is to raise standards by encouraging providers to assess the quality of their provision, compare it with description of best practice and so identify area for potential improvement (Moreno, 2008; Muntun, 2001). This scheme tends to involve a large degree of self-evaluation with providers gathering evidence that they meet the different requirement and often completing a portfolio. This tends to be accredited by the authority in charge of it as time goes on (Dalhberg, 2008; Olaleye et al., 2009). In quality assurance scheme, providers are usually externally assessed and are require demonstrating that they meet the relevant standards before being awarded their status. This scheme covers aspect of practice, leadership, management and setting – level processes, and procedures (Goddark, 2011). To this end, school-based quality assurance should be a continuously built school – wide culture of progressive programme involving all staff, students and parents in the effort to produce well balanced, high quality pupils from year to year, and all observed weakness need to be collectively addressed before damage is done to the Christian schools system in Kaduna state.

Conclusion

Quality assurance in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is pivotal in ensuring that, children in ECCE programmes have an experience that helps them develop and learn. This includes the quality of the interactions among children, teachers, parents and the quality of the policies, regulations, and resources provided to the ECE programs. Monitoring which is aspect of quality assurance plays an important role in education. Proper supervision of the programme with the help of all the stakeholders will help improve its quality and bring about an optimum result.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were offered:

1. Establish and design mechanism and tools for tracking quality practices which will be regularly monitor by the stakeholders.
2. Building synergies within Christian schools and government to improve the quality of ECCE
3. There should be regular capacity building for the quality assurance officers.
4. Ensure that the school is equitable, inclusive and adequate level of quality across all types of preschools.
5. National ideas for quality ECCE programme should be adopted by the Christian School.

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