

TEACHERS' WILLINGNESS AND PUPILS ACQUISITION OF SOCIAL NORMS, IDENTIFICATION OF NUMBERS, LETTERS, COLOURS, SHAPES AND FORMS THROUGH PLAY

Dr. Victoria Victor Peters
Department of Primary Education Studies,
College of Education, Afaha Nsit,
Akwa Ibom State.

And

Dr. Ndifon Friday Ogoni
Department of Early Childhood Care & Education,
College of Education, Akamkpa,
Cross River State.

Abstract

This study investigated teachers' willingness and pupils' acquisition of social norms, identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play in Etinan Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for this study. The research design was a correlational research design. The population of the study consisted of all the Nursery two pupils in all public primary schools in the study area numbering 12,552 pupils. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample for the study. Two researchers' developed instruments entitled Teachers' willingness questionnaire and pupils acquisition of social norms, identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms achievement test, were used to generate data for this study. The instruments were face validated by three experts. The reliabilities of the two instruments were ascertained using Cronbach alpha analytical techniques and they yielded reliability co-efficient of .83 and .84 respectively. The data were analysed using simple regression analysis. The result indicated among others that positive relationship exist between teachers' willingness and pupils acquisition of social norms, identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play. Based on this findings, some recommendations were made amongst them was that, government should ensure that specialists in Early Childhood Education alone should be allowed to teach at this level of education.

The child is an important member of his environment and every society recognizes the worth of the child. Educators on their part see education as “child centred” thus, all efforts and activities in the school should be geared toward a holistic development of the child. Fulfilment, self actualization and happiness in life, depend on the extent to which people can express their potentials, it is also believed that early stimulation is very essential to encouraging a child’s holistic development. For such total development the child demands special attention and competence on the part of the teacher. The business of educating the child at semi-final and for formal setting in pre-primary school has become a necessity to many parents. Ekanem (2007) observed that parents and guardians are equally becoming increasingly concerned about this quality of early education of their wards because of its future implication on the child.

Willingness is the state of being prepared to do something so as to achieve a result. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (2006) the most important characteristic for teachers of early childhood development is enthusiasm and passion for children. These go well beyond enjoying being with children. It means wanting to make a difference to every child that comes your way in the process of discharging your duty as a teacher. Teachers of early childhood education must have the drive to unlock every child’s door to learning and overcome any obstacle that a child may have. Working with your children all day takes huge measures of patience. The nature of their ages makes young children rambunctious, with short attention spans and little self control. Every child is different too, this makes the job even more challenging, after a long tiring day full of challenges, teachers of young children must come back and meet the same challenges the next day. It will take only a patient nature, combined with a sense of humour and willingness in order for the teacher to take the up and downs of every day stride while focusing on the end goal.

Every child comes to school with a unique personality and learning style, to reach each child and teach each child effectively, the teacher must be willing to respect these differences and work with each child’s style rather than trying to force the child to adapt to another style. In our global society today, it will take only early childhood education teachers who are willing and patient to be able to cope with multicultural classroom with many ethnicities, cultures and traditions represented. Again a classroom where these differences are not merely tolerated but are welcomed and embraced creates an open and exciting learning atmosphere. Planning lessons that will engage young children and educate them at the same time takes creativity and also adapting lessons to individual learning styles requires flexibility. Regardless of how organised a teacher is and how well she has planned the day, she needs to remain flexible to handle all the glitches that can throw off the day. She must also be willing to change plans and ideas as needed, using creativity and flexibility to make every day a positive one for her and for the class. A willing teacher must work hard to equip children with the 21st century world. In addition to instilling in pupils the flexibility to readily adapt to changes, willing teachers foster learning environment that encourage critical thinking, creativity,

problem solving, communication, collaboration, global awareness and social responsibility. In order to ensure a holistic development of the child, teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shape and forms through play which is seen in this study to comprise preparing the child for the primary level of education and also the inculcation of social norms which envelop a sense of co-operation and team spirit must be realised in preschoolers in good time.

Almon (2004) reveals that social norms facilitate interaction and communication with others, social rules and relationships are established, communicated and changed in verbal and non verbal ways. As children grow they enjoy playful interaction with other children, learn about team work and competition. As a matter of urgency children also learn to negotiate with different personalities and the feelings associated with winning and losing. They learn to share, wait and be patient, through the use of toys. Language development is put into play when children use toys e.g. describing how they are working or using toys they ask questions and give answer in the process language development of pupils is enhanced.

Early childhood is a crucial period for the development of the mental functions of children. This development include the emergence of the abilities and skills in areas such as language, motor skills, psychomotor, cognitive and learning is now known to be greatly influenced by exogenous factors including the nature of the educational environment to which the child is exposed during the first 6 to 8 years of life (Bowman and Burns, 2001). The learning experiences of the preschool years can influence the rest of a child's life. This early period in development provides a foundation that guides children academically, socially, and emotionally. Having known that, Early Childhood Education is a crucial period for the wholesome development of the child, be it academically, socially, morally and emotionally, how willing are pre-primary school teachers to ensure that the inculcation of social norms to pupils and teaching of the rudiment of number, letter, colours, shapes and forms through play is achieved. In most public pre-primary schools many teachers assigned to teach at that level of education lack the relevant training/and are not willing to teach at that level but in obedience to the head teacher they go there to while away their time. As a result there is no commitment and dedication to the teaching and learning process.

Statement of the Problem

The wholesome development of the child is of great importance to parents, stakeholders in education, teachers and guardians. Preschooler in Etinan Local Government Area lag behind in the acquisition of social norm, identification of letters, numbers, colours, shapes and forms through play. A visit to any public pre-primary school in Etinan reveals these in pupil's mode. As a result pupils get involved in anti-social behaviour such as bullying, fighting, stealing, disrespect, tantrum, disobedience, truancy etc.

Pupils find it difficult to write and identify letters, numbers, colours, shapes and forms such as letter E and F, Q and O, U and V, I and L, numbers like 4 and 7, 6 and 8, 2 and 3; colours like white and black, shapes like circle and oval, forms like cone and cylinder. Millinger (2009) note that lack of teachers' willingness causes deficit in the development of the child.

Therefore, this paper seeks to establish if teachers' willingness relate to pupils acquisition of social norms and teaching the identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play.

Purpose of the Study

The primary objectives of this study is to find out whether there is any correlation between teachers' willingness and pupils' acquisition of social norms, identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play. Other specific objectives include:

1. To determine the relationship between teachers' willingness and the acquisition of social norms by the pupils.
2. To determine the relationship between teachers' willingness and teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play.

Research Questions

The following research questions are put forward to guide the study:

1. How does teachers' willingness relate with the acquisition of social norms by the pupils?
2. Does teachers' willingness relate with the teaching of the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play.

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated for testing at 0.5 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between teachers' willingness and the acquisition of social norms by the pupils.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' willingness and teaching the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and forms through play.

Methodology

A correlational research design was used in conducting the study in Etinan Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The population of the study was 12,552 nursery two pupils and teachers' (SUBEB, 2017). 1,205 nursery two pupils and 32 teachers were systematically sampled for the study from forty five public primary

schools in Etinan Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. This was done to ensure a non-biased sample.

Instruments

Two research instruments namely were Teachers' Willingness Questionnaire (TWQ) and Acquisition of social norms, identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms Achievement Test (ASNINLCSFAT) were used to gather data for the study. The (TWQ) developed by the researchers, contained 10 items which are used to elicit information on teachers' willingness. The TWQ was divided into four options namely A, B, C and D. All the A options attracted 10 marks, B options attracted 8 marks, C options attracted 6 marks and D options attracted 4 marks. Option A-D was given and the teacher had to choose the option that best describes his or her stand. The options were arranged in order of magnitude such that after scoring the highest score obtainable is 100 and the lowest is 40 marks (see Appendix 1).

The second instrument (ASNINLCSFAT) was developed by the researcher with help of five well-informed and experience teachers who have been teaching at the pre-primary level of education for more than four years. The instrument contained 10 items on the two areas of Early Childhood Education Objectives used in this study. Five questions each were on inculcation of social norms and identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and forms through play. The instrument had A, B, C, and D. Options, the correct option attract 1 mark while the wrong option attract 0 (see Appendix 2). The instrument, Teachers' willingness Questionnaire (TWQ) and Acquisition of social norms, identification of numbers, colours, letters, shapes and form Achievement test (ASNINLCSFAT) were face validated by two experts in Early Childhood Education Department College of Education Afaha Nsit and one expert in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation College of Education Afaha Nsit Akwa Ibom State. The resource persons were required to ascertain the appropriateness of items in the instruments in providing correct responses to the test items. All their corrections and comments were incorporated into the final form of the instruments. The instruments had reliability index of .87 and .88 respectively.

Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed based on each research questions and hypotheses. The research questions were answered with R and R² value of simple regression and hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested with simple regression analysis. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1

Does teachers' willingness relate with the acquisition of social norms by the pupils? R-value and R² value of simple regression was used for answering the research question.

The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The Result of R and R² Value of the Relationship Between Teachers' Willingness and the Acquisition of Social Norms by the Pupils (N=1237)

Variable	R	R ²
Teachers' willingness	.713	.508
Acquisition of social norms		

The result presented in Table 1 reveals that the R-value of 0.713 is the strength of the relationship between teachers' willingness and the acquisition of social norms by the pupils while the R²-value of .508 indicates that 50.8% variation in the acquisition of social norms is explained or predicted by teachers' willingness. This result implies that teachers' willingness relate with the acquisition of social norms by the pupils.

Research Question 2

Does teachers' willingness relate with teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and forms through play?

R-value and R² value of simple regression was used for answering the research question. The result of the analysis is presented in table 2.

Table 2: The Result of R and R² Value of the Relationship Between Teachers' Willingness and Teaching the Rudiments of Numbers, Letters, Colours, Shapes, and Forms Through Play (N=1237)

Variable	R	R ²
Teachers' willingness	.773	.598
Teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play.		

The result in table 2 revealed that the R-value of .773 is the strength of the relationship between teachers' willingness and teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and form through play while R²-value of .598 indicates that only 59.8%, variation in teaching the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play explained or predicted by teachers' willingness. This result implies that teachers' willingness relate with teaching the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and forms through play.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between teachers' willingness and the acquisition of social norms by the pupils.

Simple regression analysis was adopted to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Result of Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between Teachers' Willingness and the Acquisition of Social Norms by the Pupils (N=1237)

Model	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	F-crit
Regression	1954.48	1	1954.48	94.51	3.85
Residual	90,992	1235	20.68		
Total	92,946.48	1236			

*Significant at .05 alpha level; df1 and 1236 $R=.713 R^2 = .508$

The result in Table 3 reveals that the calculated F-ratio of 94.51 is greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.85 at .05 level of significance with 1 and 1236 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that say there is no significant relationship between teachers' willingness and the acquisition of social norms by the pupils was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between teachers' willingness and the acquisition of social norms by the pupils.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between teachers' willingness and teaching the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and form through play.

Simple regression analysis was adopted to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Result of Simple Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between Teachers' Willingness and Teaching the Rudiment of Numbers, Letters, Colours, Shapes and Forms Through Play (N=1237)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	F-crit
Regression	1256.31	1	1256.31	63.23	3.85
Residual	87.384	1235	19.86		
Total	8864.31	1236			

*Significant at .05 alpha level; dfI and 1236 $R=.773 R^2 = .598$

The result in Table 4 reveals that the calculated F-ratio of 63.23 is greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.85 at .05 level of significance with 1 and 1236 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between teachers' willingness and teaching the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and forms through play was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between teachers' willingness and teaching of the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study shows that, there is high positive significant relationship between teachers' willingness and the acquisition of social norms by the pupils. The finding is consistent with the opinion of James (2011) who revealed that willingness of a teacher brings about positive learning which is aimed at helping individual or group to develop the intellectual personal and social resources that will enable them to participate as active citizens, contribute to economic development and flourish as individual in a diverse and challenging society. Many reasons could be advanced for the finding of this study. When a teacher is willing teaching becomes a choice and not coercion. Therefore the possibility of imparting positive knowledge upon the pupils will surely be a reality. Pupils who are taught by willing teachers are likely to be encouraged and motivated to work harder in the teaching/learning process. This is as a result of patience, tolerance and love shown to pupils by a willing teacher. Also a teacher who is willing will always take pains in providing learners with activities that will help them develop their innate potentials with ease. Hence the achievement of social norms and identification of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play will be guaranteed.

This finding confirms the earlier positive of Pollard (2010) that willing teachers encourage learners and help them build relationship and communication with others for learning purposes, to assist the mutual construction of knowledge and enhance the achievement of individuals and groups. Pollard added that willing teachers provide activities and structures of intellectual, social and emotional supports to help learners to move forward in their learning so that when the support is removed the learning is scared. The finding is also in consonance with Hamilton (2013) who opines that, willing teachers encourage pupils or students to reflect on social reality and empowers them to transform the existing condition that shape their lives. Also the teacher engages learners in dialogue and manages through dialogue to achieve genuine learning because when pupils and teachers engage in shared critical dialogue, they mutually create and construct knowledge instead of passively transmitting it, since they can share their experiences, reflect upon them and finally make critical evaluation regarding the way they themselves have obtained that knowledge and those experiences.

Akiri (2013) opines that willing teachers' produce better performing pupils than the unwilling teachers. In addition he added that, willingness is a factor in academic performance of pupils. There are quite a number of reasons that could be advanced for this present study, pupils taught by willing teachers always have the opportunity of trying a particular thing over and over again knowing too well that the teacher will be patient with them thereby helping pupils to achieve their objectives with ease. The enthusiasm a willing teacher displays will always help the learners learn how to write numbers, letters, identify colours, shapes and forms without considering it a burden to him or her. Again the finding is in harmony with Buang and Bahari (2011) who maintains that teachers should have proper knowledge of mastering learning, teaching approach, because it will help the teacher to achieve maximally. In addition the finding agrees with Abdulrahman (2013) who put it that teachers' willingness helps individual pupils in classroom with disabilities by potentially increasing cognizance regarding contact with them. If individual with similar experiences and background interact, the resulting factor could be a more positive and helpful behaviour towards disabilities.

Conclusion

Based on the finding it is concluded that teachers' willingness relate positively with pupils acquisition of social norms, teaching the rudiment of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, and forms respectively.

Recommendations

From the result obtained, the following recommendations are made:

1. Pre-primary school teachers should ensure that, they are adequately ready in terms of willingness from the heart so as to achieve the desired result. This is because their willingness correlates positively with pupils achievement.
2. Parents and guardians should encourage their ward's teacher by making available necessary learning materials on time such as exercise books, pencil, eraser and sharpeners. This will reduce the unpracticing teachers and make them more willing to perform their job.
3. Curriculum planners should incorporate the result of finding of researchers on appropriate ways of running a smooth early childhood education programme in public pre-primary school. This will make the application to be in uniform both in rural and urban schools. Early childhood education teachers will not segregate between the urban and rural schools because location of school also has link with teachers' willingness.

References

- Abdulrahman, A. (2013). Elementary School Teachers' Attitude towards willingness to teach student with ADHD in their Classroom in Riyadh City. An unpublished Ph.D Thesis Kent State University Saudi Arabia.

- Akiri, A. A. (2013). Effect of Teachers' effectiveness on students academic performance is public school. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 2 (3): 105-107.
- Almond, J. (2004). The vital role of play in early childhood education. In Okonkwo, O. U and Koye, R. (Eds). *The Learning Environment of the Nigerian Child*. Awka: Erudition Publisher, pp.76-80.
- Baung, A. & Bahari, M. (2011). Conceptualizing Teachers' Readiness: What is there for Mastery Learning. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 6 (5): 361-367.
- Bowan, S., Donovan, F. & Burns, A. (2001). Preparing Early Childhood Teachers. In Bernard S. Olivia N. (Eds), (2001). *Yearbook in Early Childhood Education*. New York: New York Teachers College Press, pp 48-52.
- Ekanem, A. E. (2007). *Psychomotor Development in Pupils*. American School Board Journals 134 (2) 10-14.
- Hamilton, J. T. (2013). Conceptual Framework of Teachers' Competence in Relation to Students' Academic Achievement. *International Journal of Networks and Systems*, 2(3): 15-20
- James, M. (2011). Principles for Teaching and Learning. *International Journal of Special Education*, 26 (2): 149-151.
- Mellinger, B. B. (2009). Qualities of a Good Teacher in Early Childhood Development. <http://work.chron.com/qualities-good-teacher-early-childhood-development-8694.html> Retrieved on 24th April, 2015
- National Association for the Education of Young Child (2006). Family and Community Partnership. <https://www.naeyc.org/academy/primary/standardsintro> Retrieved on 24th April, 2015
- Pollard, A. (2010). Teaching Effectiveness in Classroom. *American Journal of Education*, 22(3): 75-83.

Appendix 1
TEACHERS' WILLINGNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Sex: Female Male

Please answer the following questions the best way it describes you, there is no correct or wrong answer. Please circle the one that best describes your answers.

- (1) (A) I willingly opted to read education
(B) I was offered education when I could not make the profession of my choice
(C) I am a teacher by chance
(D) If I could, I would not have be a teacher
- (2) If you have another job offered outside teaching
(A) I will turn down the offer
(B) I will reconsider the offer
(C) I will check if the salary is better
(D) I will immediately accept the offer
- (3) When your salaries are delayed, how do you do your job?
(A) I still try to discharge my duties effectively
(B) I reduce my effectiveness level
(C) I go to school at my own time
(D) I stop going to school
- (4) How will you manage a hyperactive child who disturbs the class
(A) I will give the child attention
(B) I will ask the class assistant to monitor the child
(C) I will refer the child to the school head
(D) I will punish the child anytime he/she disturbs
- (5) What will you do while in class, if a child messes up himself or herself with excreta?
(A) I will wash up the child and return him/her to class
(B) I will ask the class assistant to attend to the child
(C) I will give the child water to wash him/herself while I supervised.
(D) I will ask the child to stay outside the class until I can attend to him/her.
- (6) What will you do to a child who deliberately refuses to do his or her home work for one full week?
(A) I will try to find out why he has not done his or her homework and encourage him or her to do it.

Academic Scholarship

- (B) I will call the attention of his or her parent
(C) I will discipline the child
(D) I will ignore the child for a while
- (7) What will you do if you notice a child in your class who suddenly becomes feverish towards closing hours?
(A) I will take the child home
(B) I will ask the class assistant to attend to the child
(C) I will ask another pupil to accompany the child home
(D) I will ask the child to go home
- (8) As a preschool teacher
(A) I write daily note of lesson
(B) I depend on their textbooks
(C) I go to class and teach them without notes after all they are children
(D) Teaching this class is easy with or without notes.
- (9) (A) I will encourage all my children to be teachers
(B) I will encourage some to be teachers
(C) At least one of my children must belong to the teaching profession
(D) I will never allow any of my children to be a teacher
- (10) What will you do, as a preschool teacher, if you notice a child of four years in your class who cannot write A – Z?
(A) I will give extra attention to the child
(B) I will ensure the class assistant pays attention to the child
(C) I will encourage the parent to have a home teacher for the child
(D) I will advise that, the child be taken to nursery one

Appendix II

ACQUISITION OF SOCIAL NORMS AND IDENTIFICATION OF NUMBERS, LETTERS, COLOURS, SHAPES AND FORMS ACHIEVEMENT TEST (ASNINLCSFAT)

Answer the following questions

INCULCATION OF SOCIAL NORMS

1. How do you greet your mummy when you wake up in the morning?

2. When you come to school in the morning and see your class teacher how will you greet him or her?

3. What will you say to your friend if you mistakenly step on him or her during play?

4. Give either a pencil, eraser or balloon to a pupils and listen to his or her expected response (Thank you)

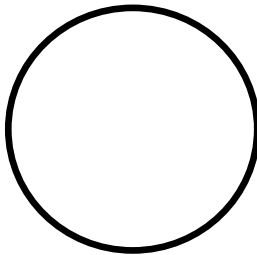
5. At the end of the day, when the school is over, what do you say to your friends before going home?

6.	1	2	3	4	5	
7	_____		9	10	11	_____
13		_____	15	16	17	_____
19		20				_____

7.	A	_____	C	_____	E	
G	_____	H	I	_____	K	_____
M		N	O			

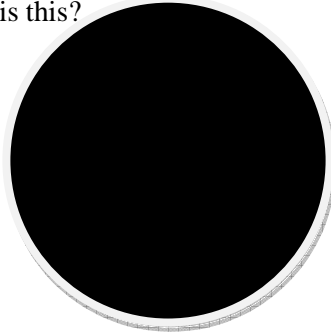
8. What shape is this?

- (A) Square
- (B) Oval
- (C) Triangle
- (D) Circle



9. What colour is this?

- (A) Yellow
- (B) White
- (C) Black
- (D) Red



10. What shape is this?

- (A) Square
- (B) Sphere
- (C) Cube
- (D) Cone

