

EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION ON EFFICACY OF NATIVE LANGUAGE USAGE ON LEARNERS' MENTAL ALERTNESS IN LITERACY PROGRAMME, SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract: The implementation of literacy programme is besieging with the instructional medium of using English Language. Thus, necessitated the conduct of this study. Descriptive research survey design was used. The study population comprised, programme participants of literacy programme in South West, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was One hundred and eighty (180) respondents. From each of the six states in South West, Nigeria (Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Osun, Lagos and Ekiti) thirty (30) participants were selected through a simple random sampling technique from each of the Literacy programmes centre that had the highest number or numerical strength of participant. Two research questions were raised for the study. A self-developed research instrument titled, "Rating Scale on Empirical Investigation on Efficacy of Native Language usage on Learners Mental Alertness in literacy programme in South-West, Nigeria". It was fashioned on four likert rating scale on Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) to collect data, quantitatively. It was complemented with Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The research instruments were validated by two experts in test and measurement while the reliability of the quantitative instrument was determined through test and retest method and 0.66 coefficient reliability was obtained. Data collected on research questions was analyzed, using descriptive statistics (frequency, counts, simple percentages and mean), while that of quantitative data was collected and transcribed, qualitatively. Based on the findings of the study, conclusion were made that the use of local or native language could enhance clientele learning effectiveness and facilitation instructional delivery competence. Based on the conclusions recommendations were therefore made that native language along with English language should be used, facilities and teachers should be encouraged also, on the use of native language in the teaching of literacy skills in literacy programme in South West, Nigeria.

Keywords: Efficacy, Native language, Mental alertness, Literacy programme.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Globally, illiteracy has been recognized as a bane to human and nations' development, There is a strong relationship between illiteracy and under development, poverty and social ills, such as; ignorance, diseases etc. In any human society, development cannot be achieved if people are illiterates. Nigeria is a member of E-9 i-e countries where majority of people are illiterates. Other nations in this category are: Egypt, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, India and China. These countries almost stands for over half of world's population and 70% of the worlds' illiterate adults (Sarumi, 2001). How to combat and reduce illiteracy level in Nigeria is one of the contending issues which Nigeria and Nigerians are facing with. As at 2018, Nigeria literacy rate stood at 62.02%, a 10.94% increase as stated by 2008 (World, Bank, 2008)

Nielsen (2021), reports that "Education is the bedrock of any country development and any country that fails to educate its populace is bound to fail". Niezen (2021). further opines that Nigeria has a lower than expected level of educational attainment (Niesen,2021).

"Nigeria ranks 161 out of 189 countries in the UNs Human Development Index. This paper puts Nigeria well below the democratic of Congo and Ethiopia and below the average for countries in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Further, IT WAS reported that 10.5 million of the country's children aged 5-14 are not in school. According to 2008 Global Monitoring Report, the most recent data for Nigeria shows an adult literacy rate of 69% (78% for man and 60%) for woman. The high level of illiteracy in Nigeria has negative implication on individuals and national development.

There is no doubt that many crimes and problems facing Nigeria have a direct link with a high level of illiteracy in the country. Not only does it allow social vices to fester, but it also impedes people from contributing to the nation's growth positively (Oduoye, 2019).

People who are illiterates are far more likely to live with poverty, facing a life time marred by poor health and social vulnerability. Economically, the impact of illiteracy are also noticeable on job productivity. Unemployment rate is also traceable to illiteracy. In a nutshell, illiteracy has adverse impacts at both an individuals and the society. A lot of social-vices rocketing the nations, Nigeria to deny cannot be divorced from illiteracy. It people are literates, they will be able to know discern good from bad or bad from good.

The realization of the negative effects of illiteracy on individuals and the country has necessitated the various interventional efforts of government and others stakeholders in literacy crusade. This includes; (Religious organization, Non-Government Organizations NGOs, International Organizations, philanthropists or donors). Anyanwo (1998), states that the great importance and relevance of literacy as a requisite to social and economic development remain an ever present phenomenon or policy in Nigeria.

Mass literacy campaign could be traced back pre-colonial era, specially, the missionaries' activities. According Fafunwa (1974).

The period between 1842 and 1882 was marked by intensive missionary activity and missionary expansion in Southern Nigeria. During this time, the church missionary society, the Roman Catholic Mission, the united pres-byterian church of Scotland, the Qua-Ibo mission, the primitive Methodist missionary society and the Basal mission finally established themselves in this area.

The Colonial masters as at this period had no attention to the educational needs of Nigerian, it was a sole business of the missions. Evening classes and schools were established to teach people on how to read and write. After independence several programmes had been implemented to reduce illiteracy level by the government in Nigeria such as, National Commission for Mass Literacy (NCML), National Teachers Institute, (NTI) Universal Basic Education (UBE) and so on. It needs to be recalled that in 1982, the government of Shehu Shagari launched a ten year mass literacy campaign which included ; establishment of state agencies whose main objective was to combat illiteracy in Nigeria. However, the implementation of the programme been marred with several challenges such as learning environment, lack of resources, language and literacy problems, poor monitoring and implementation, poor funding, logistics and so on. In recent time,

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language of instruction in educational settings in Nigeria is a major problem has been identified by some scholars. Nigeria is a multi-lingual nation which necessitates the adoption of English language as instructional usage in Nigeria.

Kyeyeme (2010), reports that English Language as a medium of instruction sometimes frustrates students' learning efforts instead of enhancing their learning capacities. This however negates what seems to be a general opinion that in a multiethnic nation like Nigeria, the adoption of L2 (English language) as the case of Nigeria is the best. The contention between adoption of English language and native language in teaching and learning situation has always been a good source of topic for the researchers, specifically in language education from the existing literature on the appropriateness of language to be adopted in literacy programme, specifically in Nigeria much of the studies had been verbal self-represented. It was against this backdrop this study was carried out on the empirical investigation on efficacy of native language usage on learners' mental alertness in literacy programme in South-West, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The realization of negative impact of the high level of illiteracy to individuals and the nation, Nigeria informed programmes implementation on Literacy programme to curb the unsavory trend. However, the challenge of instructional medium has been a major set-back of the programme because of the ethnic composition of the country, Nigeria, which favours the adoption of English language as a medium of instruction. The adoption of English language as medium of instructional delivery had been applauded by some scholars, while it has also been well criticized by some scholars.. Since, the use of English language has also been subjected to a serious critic. This study, therefore, was conducted on empirical investigation on efficacy of native language on learners' mental alertness in literacy programme in South-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Two research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study.

1. Will the use of native language enhance learning effectiveness among the clientele of literacy programmes in South-West, Nigeria?
2. Do facilitators' instructional delivery competence improve using native language literacy programmes in South-West, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the programme was on empirical investigation on efficacy on native language usage on learners' mental alertness in literacy programmes in South-West, Nigeria. Specifically, the purposes of the study were to:

1. investigation the impact of native language usage on learning effectiveness among the clientele of literacy programme in South-West, Nigeria and
2. ascertain the influence of native language usage on facilitators instructional delivery competent in literacy program in South-West, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The finding of the research will be significant in the following ways,

Firstly, the results of the study will enable the curriculum planners to have a base line data on the investigation of adoption of native language as a medium of instrument in non-formal and formal system of education, considering the language pluralism in Nigeria.

Also, the findings of the study will enable the providers of literacy programmes to know, whether the adoption of native language could result into achieving the programme objectives or not.

Lastly, the study will add to the existing literature within the confine of the study, they becomes a good source of reference materials to researchers in future. The study will be made accessible by the public by making it available through open educational resources (OER).

2. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. This was because, it was not possible to cover all the subjects of the study. Therefore, result obtained from the sample size of the study was generalized on the entire study population. The study population comprised the participants of literacy programme in South-West, Nigeria. The sample size was one hundred and eighty (180) respondents. Thirty (30) literacy programme participants were selected through a simple random sampling technique. From each of the six states (Ogun, Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti and Lagos) in South West, Nigeria, a literacy centre with the highest numerical strength of participants on clientele was selected.

Two research questionnaire raised for the study. A self-developed research instruments, titled, “An empirical investigation on Efficacy of native language usage on learners’ mental alertness in literacy programme in south-west, Nigeria:., fashioned on four likert rating scale; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagree (D) was used as the quantitative research instrument. It was complemented by Focus Discussion Groups (FGDs). Both the quantitative and qualitative research instrument were validate by two experts in test and measurement, while the validity of the former was done through test and retest methods at two weeks interval and 0.66 coefficient reliability was obtained .

Data generated on the research question was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency counts), simple percentages and mean), while data collected through FGDS was collated and transcribed quantitatively.

Presentation of Findings and Discussion of Results

Presentation of Findings

Research Questions One: Will the use of native language enhance learning effectiveness among the clientele enhance learning effectiveness in literacy programme in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 1: Showing frequency counts, simple percentages (%) and mean (x) on will the use of native language English learning effectiveness among the clientele of literacy programmes in south-west, Nigeria.

s/n	Items	Sd	D	A	SA	Mean	Decision
1	The use of native language as medium of delivery instruction motivates me towards learning	7 3.88	15 8.33	32 17.77	126 70	3.5	Accepted
2	I often discourage towards learning with the use of native language as a mediums of instructional delivery	128 71.11	25 15.55	15 8.33	9 5	1.47	Accepted
3	Using native language makes me to have a deep understanding of the topics taught	6 3.33	14 7.77	35 19.44	125 69.44	3.33	Accepted
4	The use of native language makes topics taught very abstract to me	133 73.88	24 13.33	16 8.88	7 3.88	1.42	Rejected
5	Native language usage makes explanations by facilitators very clear to me	10 5.55	19 10.55	11 6.11	14 77.77	3.56	Accepted
6	Native language usage do make explanations by the facilitators very clear to me	123 68.33	23 12.79	28 15.55	6 3.33	1.53	Rejected
	Total	407 37.68	123 11.38	137 12.68	413 38.24	2.50	Accepted

Table 1 presents the findings on research questions one (1) responses obtained and 126 (90), 32 (17.74), 15 (8.33) and 7 (3.88) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly agreed on item (2), 9(5), 15 (8.33), 28n (15.55) and 128(71.11) were obtained as responses for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, and strongly disagreed. On item (3) , 125 (69.44) 35 (19.44) 14 (7.77) and 6 (.33) responses for strongly agreed, agreed , disagreed and strongly disagreed was obtained.

On item (4), responses obtained indicate 7(3.88), 16 (8.88) 24 (13.33) and 133 (73.88) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. on items responses obtained indicate; 6(3,33), 28 (15.55), 23 (12.77) and 123 (68.33) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively.

Generally, speaking the result reveals that native language, usage has positive impact on clientele learning effectiveness at literacy programme in south-west, Nigeria. Since, the average of four rating scale of four (x=2.5) is not less them the mean of average rating scale for (x=2.5).

Research Question Two: Will qualitative instructional delivery competence improve, using native language in literacy programme in South-West, Nigeria

Table 2: showing frequently counts, simple percentage (%) and mean (x) on do facilitators’ instructional delivery competence improve, using native language in literacy programme in South West Nigeria.

s/n	Items	Sd	D	A	SA	Mean	Decision
7	Facilitators presentation of topic is always sequential using native language during letter writing lessons	12 6.66	11 6.11	19 10.55	138 76.66	3.5	Accepted
8	There are distortions in the presentation of topics on letter by facilitators using native language	142 78.88	21 11.66	8 4.44	9 5	1.35	Rejected
9	Native language has a positive impact on the facilitators communication effectiveness using native language	6 3.33	5 2.74	25 13.88	144 80	3.70	Accepted
10	Facilitators communications effectiveness is offered using native language	129 71.66	32 17.77	14 7.77	5 2.77	1.41	Rejected
11	By teaching reading skills using native language enhanced facilitators oratory ability	8 4.44	12 6.66	13 7.22	147 81.66	3.66	Accepted
12	By using native language effect the oratory process of facilitators negatively during the teaching of reading skills	141 78.33	19 10.55	12 6.66	8 4.44	1.37	Rejected

Table 2 presents the findings on research question two as follows: on item (7), the following responses were got; 138 (76.66), 19 (10.55), 11 (6.11) and 12 (6.66) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On items (8), 9 (5), 8 (4.44), 21 (11.66) and 142 (78.88) responses were obtained for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On item (9) responses obtained indicate (144 (80), 25 (13.88), 5(2.77) and 6 3.33) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On items (10) 5 (2.77), 14 (7.77), 32 (17.77) and 129 (71.66) responses were obtained for strongly disagreed. On item (11), 147 (81.66), 13 (7.22) , 12 (6.66) and 8 (4.44) responses were obtained for strongly disagreed , agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Finally, on item (12), the following responses were obtained; 8 (4.44), 12 (6.66) 9 (10.55) and 141 (78.33), respectively were obtained.

The result however revealed that the average a rating scale of four ($x = 2,50$) is lesser than the mean of average of rating scale of four ($x=2.51$), thus indicates that native language usage as medium of instruction could positively improve facilitators instructional delivery competence in literacy programme in South-West Nigeria.

3. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The result on research question on table (1), indicates that using native language could enhance clientele’ learning effectiveness thus result aligns with the submission of USAID (2020) , that developing strong reading skills is essential to learners academic success and inter life outcomes learning to read in a language that thy us and understand. Further, in was stated that this language which learners understand enable them to develop a strong reading skills. The submission was also buttressed by the respondents during the FGDs.

A respondent had this to say;

Teaching reading skills by facilitators using vocal language to make examples of letters make it very easy for me to understand.

A male respondent during FGDs in Literacy programme Ondo State, Nigeria.

In the same vein, another respondent state using native language either during the teaching of writing or reading skills do motivate me not just to learn but to learn at a high rate.

A male respondent during FGDs in Literary programme of Osun State, Nigeria.

Table (2) also shows in finding on research question two that have was a positive impact of using native language on instructional delivery on facilitators instructional delivery competence in south west, Nigeria. The result is in consonance with the opinion of Mahboob and Lin (2014), thus despite growing interest in the use of English language as a medium of instructional. Globally, the impact of using local language cannot but be overemphasized. The convenient is along the line that local or native language enable a thorough explanation by the teachers and understanding as well, by the learners. Also, that native language usage to not make topics taught to be abstracts. The submission is buttressed by some respondents' responses during the FGDs.

A respondents say that:

Facilitators are teaching with easy whenever, they are using native language during arithmetic skills.

A female respondents during FGDs in Literary programme of Lagos State, Nigeria.

Similarly, another participants responded that explanations of facilitators while teaching arithmetic concepts are more understandable than using English language.

A male respondents during FGDs Literary programme in Ogun State, Nigeria.**4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the study, conclusions were made that the adoption or use of native language as a medium of instruction could positively impact on clientele effective learning and facilitators' instructional delivery competence.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions of the study the following recommendation were made;

1. The use of local language should be made compulsory to complement, English language usage in literacy programme is South West, Nigeria.
2. In curriculum planning and development, there is need to emphasize on local language usage as a strategy to teach literacy skills.
3. Facilitators or teachers should be encouraged to be using native language in the teaching of literacy skills.
4. Primers using native language should be written and make available at literacy programmes centres in Nigeria.

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