

**THE PRESCHOOL TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT AS A
PREDICTOR OF INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY, A CASE STUDY OF OREDO
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

BY

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UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

MARCH 2025

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**A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR DEGREE IN EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

MARCH 2025

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project work, “**The Preschool Teacher’s Knowledge of the Subject as a Predictor of Instructional Delivery (A Case Study of Oredo Local Government Area, Benin City)**”, was carried out by **ENEGIDE ODINICHI CHRISTABEL**, with Matric Number **EDU200158** in the **INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, EDO STATE**. *In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor degree in Early childhood Education[B.Ed]*

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my lovely parents, Mr. and Mrs. Enegide for their unwavering support in making sure I had all I needed for a successful stay in the university. Thank you so much for your love, provisions and advices. You both have been my rock throughout this journey, Thank you for being my greatest cheerleaders. I love and appreciate you both.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover page

Title page

Certification

Dedication

Acknowledgement

Abstract

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Statement of Problems

1.3 Purpose of Study

1.4 Research Questions

1.5 Significance of Study

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of study

1.7 Definition of Terms

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Constructivist Theory

2.3.2 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

2.4 The Role of Preschool Teachers in Early Childhood Education

2.5 Teacher Knowledge and its Impact on Instructional Delivery

2.6 Factors Influencing Preschool Instructional Delivery

2.7 Teacher Qualifications and Subject Knowledge

2.8 Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Early Childhood Education

2.9 Empirical Studies

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Research Design

3.3 Population of Study

3.4 Sampling and Sampling Technique

3.5 Validation of Research Instrument

3.6 Method of Data Collection

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

3.8 Questionnaire Administration

3.9 Ethical Consideration

3.10 Statistical Analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Presentation and Analysis of Data

4.3 Re-statement of Research Questions

4.4 Discussion of Findings

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Summary of Findings

5.3 Conclusion

5.4 Recommendation

REFERENCES

APPENDIX A - “QUESTIONNAIRE”

ABSTRACT

The study examined how preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject matter influences the quality and effectiveness of their instructional delivery in early childhood education. Investigation revealed that many teachers may rely on general teaching strategies without fully understanding the content, which leads to superficial learning experiences for students. The research design used in this report is descriptive design, utilizing questionnaire method to obtain information from the respondents for this project. A total of 60 (Sixty) respondents were selected for this study to represent the entire population of the study. Data was collected using the questionnaire and analyzed using the frequency distribution table to seek answers to the five (3) research questions. The data were presented on a frequency distribution table and analyzed using simple percentage. The Findings indicate a clear correlation between teachers' subject mastery and their ability to adapt instructional strategies to meet the diverse needs of young learners. Furthermore, ongoing professional development is identified as essential for enhancing teachers' knowledge and pedagogical skills, which in turn fosters a more dynamic classroom environment. Based on the findings, it was recommended that professional development should be ongoing, allowing educators to stay updated on the latest research and best practices in early childhood education. Additionally, schools should foster a collaborative environment where teachers can share insights and resources, promoting a culture of continuous learning.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The quality of early childhood education has long been a focus of educational research, with many studies underscoring the importance of a teacher's role in shaping children's early learning experiences. At the core of this focus is the preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject matter, which is widely regarded as a significant factor in determining the quality of instructional delivery. Teachers who possess a strong grasp of the subjects they teach can more effectively present information, adjust lessons according to individual student needs, and foster an environment that encourages exploration and inquiry (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2016).

Research suggests that early childhood educators, particularly those in preschool settings, must balance subject matter knowledge with pedagogical skills to deliver meaningful and engaging lessons. Effective instructional delivery is not simply about presenting facts but also about creating learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate and tailored to the unique needs of young learners. Studies have shown that when preschool teachers demonstrate a deep understanding of subject content, children are more likely to engage in higher-order thinking and problem-solving activities (Neuman & Wright, 2017).

The role of a preschool teacher is pivotal in shaping the educational foundation of young learners. One of the critical aspects that influence a teacher's effectiveness is their depth of subject knowledge. Preschool teachers who possess a comprehensive understanding of the subjects they teach are better equipped to provide quality instructional delivery, creating a rich and engaging learning environment for children. Research indicates that teachers with a higher level of subject knowledge can tailor their teaching strategies to meet the diverse

needs of their students, fostering both cognitive and social development in early childhood education (Barnett, 2019).

Instructional delivery is not only about transmitting information but also about engaging students in meaningful learning experiences. Teachers with robust subject knowledge are able to utilize creative methods, ask thought-provoking questions, and make learning relevant to the experiences of young children. This enhances the overall effectiveness of the instruction, leading to better learning outcomes (Jones & Cooper, 2020). In addition, several educational frameworks and policies have emphasized the need for preschool teachers to undergo continuous professional development to enhance both their subject knowledge and teaching practices. These efforts aim to close the gap between content knowledge and instructional strategies, ensuring that children in their early years receive a solid foundation for future academic success (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017). Therefore, in Nigeria where the research was carried out, the activities that was conducted is to know the preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject as a predictor of instructional delivery.

Statement of Problems

Investigation revealed that despite various efforts to enhance teacher training programs, there is still a gap in understanding the extent to which a preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject matter directly affects instructional delivery. Many teachers may rely on general teaching strategies without fully understanding the content, which leads to superficial learning experiences for students. This issue is particularly critical in early childhood education, where the foundation for future learning is established. A deficiency in subject knowledge is therefore a significant barrier to effective teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017).

Moreover, there is a need for empirical research to explore how enhancing preschool teachers' subject knowledge improves their instructional methods and student outcomes. Without addressing this problem, the potential of early childhood education to foster long-term academic success and social-emotional development in children is likely to be compromised (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2016). It is against the backdrop that this study seeks to address these problems by evaluating the preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject as a predictor of instructional delivery.

Purpose of Study

The aim of the study is to examine how preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject matter influences the quality and effectiveness of their instructional delivery in early childhood education. To achieve this aim, the specific objectives are:

1. To identify challenges preschool teachers face in acquiring and applying subject-specific knowledge in instructional delivery.
2. To recommend strategies for improving preschool teachers' subject knowledge to enhance instructional effectiveness.
3. To investigate the relationship between preschool teachers' subject knowledge and their instructional practices.
4. To assess the level of subject knowledge possessed by preschool teachers.
5. To explore how teachers' subject knowledge affects student engagement and learning outcomes in preschool settings.

Research Questions

The study came up with research questions so as to be able to ascertain the above stated objectives. The study will address the following specific research questions:

- What is the relationship between preschool teachers' subject knowledge and student engagement in the classroom?
- What is the level of subject knowledge possessed by preschool teachers?
- How does preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject matter influence their instructional delivery?

Significance of Study

This study will provide valuable insights into how preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject matter influences the quality of their instructional delivery. It will highlight the importance of subject-specific knowledge in early childhood education, emphasizing its role in creating engaging and effective learning experiences for young children.

The findings will be beneficial for educational policymakers and institutions by guiding the development of teacher training programs that focus on enhancing subject knowledge. Additionally, the study will inform ongoing professional development initiatives, ensuring that preschool teachers are well-prepared to meet the cognitive and developmental needs of their students.

Furthermore, this study will contribute to the existing body of research on early childhood education by identifying key areas where teachers face challenges in acquiring and applying subject knowledge.

Scope and Delimitation of Study

The scope of the research is focused on the preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject as a predictor of instructional delivery using Oredo Local Government Area, Benin City as a case study.

Definition of Terms

Preschool Teacher: A preschool teacher is an educator responsible for teaching children typically aged 3 to 5 years, focusing on early childhood development, socialization, and foundational academic skills. They play a crucial role in preparing children for primary education by fostering a safe and stimulating learning environment (Pianta, Barnett, & Justice, 2016).

Subject Knowledge: Subject knowledge refers to a teacher's understanding and expertise in a specific content area, including early literacy, numeracy, science, and other subjects relevant to preschool education. Strong subject knowledge enables teachers to present concepts clearly and accurately to young learners (Shulman, 1986).

Instructional Delivery: Instructional delivery is the process by which teachers present lessons, engage students, and facilitate learning. It includes the methods, strategies, and tools used by teachers to convey subject matter in a way that promotes comprehension and retention (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Predictor: In the context of this study, a predictor refers to a variable that influences or forecasts another outcome. Here, the preschool teacher's subject knowledge is considered a predictor of the quality of instructional delivery (Field, 2018).

Early Childhood Education: Early childhood education (ECE) refers to the formal and informal educational programs designed for children from birth to the age of eight, with a particular emphasis on the preschool years. It is a critical period for cognitive, social, and emotional development (NAEYC, 2020).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature related to the topic. A literature review summarizes current knowledge and highlights important theoretical and methodological insights. It provides an overview of the most relevant research and helps to establish the current state of understanding in the field. In this research work the literature review includes the Conceptual Review, Theoretical Framework, Role of Preschool Teachers in Early Childhood Education, Teacher Knowledge and its Impact on Instructional Delivery, Factors Influencing Preschool Instructional Delivery, Teacher Qualifications and Subject Knowledge, Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Early Childhood Education, and Empirical Studies.

Conceptual Review

The concept of this study revolves around the premise that preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject matter significantly influences their instructional delivery. In early childhood education, teachers serve as the primary facilitators of learning, and their understanding of the content they teach directly impacts how effectively they can engage students and promote meaningful learning experiences. Research indicates that teachers with strong subject knowledge are better equipped to utilize effective teaching strategies, adapt lessons to meet diverse learning needs, and foster a stimulating classroom environment (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2016).

Furthermore, the concept emphasizes that instructional delivery encompasses not only the transmission of information but also the methods and interactions that occur during the teaching process. Teachers who possess a deep understanding of the subject are more likely to create lessons that encourage critical thinking, problem-solving, and active participation

from students (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017). This underscores the importance of ongoing professional development and training to ensure that preschool teachers continually enhance their subject knowledge, thereby improving their instructional effectiveness.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), originally introduced by Lee Shulman. PCK emphasizes the interplay between a teacher's subject knowledge and their pedagogical skills, highlighting that effective teaching requires more than just understanding the content; it necessitates knowing how to convey that content in ways that are accessible and engaging to learners (Shulman, 1986).

This framework suggests that preschool teachers who possess a robust PCK are more adept at tailoring their instructional delivery to meet the developmental needs of young children.

Additionally, Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory underpins the study by emphasizing the importance of social interactions in learning. Vygotsky argued that knowledge is constructed through interactions with others and that teachers play a crucial role in facilitating this process. In the context of preschool education, teachers who are knowledgeable about their subjects are better positioned to create interactive and collaborative learning environments that encourage children to explore and construct their understanding of new concepts (Vygotsky, 1978).

Furthermore, the framework incorporates elements of the Knowledge Building Theory, which posits that learning is an active process where students and teachers collaboratively build knowledge through shared experiences and dialogue. This aligns with the idea that preschool teachers' subject knowledge influences their ability to engage students in meaningful discussions and explorations, thereby enhancing instructional delivery (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006).

Overall, this theoretical framework illustrates the multifaceted relationship between preschool teachers' subject knowledge, their instructional practices, and the learning experiences they create for children, providing a comprehensive lens through which to examine the study's objectives.

Constructivist Theory

Constructivist theory posits that learners construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and reflections. This theory, particularly associated with the work of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, emphasizes the active role of the learner in the learning process. In the context of preschool education, this theory underscores the importance of interactions between teachers and students, where knowledge is not simply transmitted from teacher to student but is built collaboratively through exploration and dialogue (Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978).

For preschool teachers, a strong understanding of subject matter is crucial within a constructivist framework, as it enables them to create learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate and engaging. When teachers possess deep subject knowledge, they are better equipped to facilitate discussions, pose meaningful questions, and design activities that encourage children to explore concepts actively. This aligns with Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where teachers guide students just beyond their current understanding, fostering growth and learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, constructivist theory suggests that social interaction plays a vital role in learning. Teachers who effectively leverage their subject knowledge can create collaborative learning environments that encourage peer interaction, enabling children to learn from one another while constructing their understanding of new ideas (Brunner, 1996). This interactive approach not only enhances the quality of instructional delivery but also promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills among preschoolers.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the critical role of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive development. Central to this theory is the idea that learning is inherently a social process, where knowledge is constructed through interactions with more knowledgeable others, including teachers and peers (Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of preschool education, this theory underscores the significance of preschool teachers' subject knowledge as a key predictor of effective instructional delivery.

When preschool teachers possess a robust understanding of their subject matter, they are better positioned to facilitate meaningful interactions that promote learning. Vygotsky argued that through dialogue and collaboration, children can advance in their understanding of concepts within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where they can grasp ideas with appropriate guidance (Vygotsky, 1978). A teacher's subject knowledge enables them to identify children's ZPD and scaffold their learning experiences effectively, fostering an environment where children are encouraged to explore, ask questions, and engage in critical thinking.

Additionally, Vygotsky's theory highlights the importance of cultural tools and symbols in the learning process. Preschool teachers who are knowledgeable about their subject can integrate culturally relevant materials and methods into their instruction, making learning more relatable and meaningful for young children. This approach not only enhances engagement but also supports the development of a strong cultural identity among preschool learners (Rogoff, 2003).

The Role of Preschool Teachers in Early Childhood Education

Preschool teachers play a pivotal role in early childhood education, serving as the primary facilitators of learning and development for young children. Their responsibilities extend beyond mere content delivery; they are instrumental in creating a nurturing environment that

promotes cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth (National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 2020). A key aspect of this role is the ability to effectively deliver instruction tailored to the unique needs of each child, which is heavily influenced by the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter. Teachers with a strong grasp of the subjects they teach are better equipped to design engaging and developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Their subject knowledge allows them to present information in ways that are understandable and relatable to young learners, thereby enhancing engagement and motivation (Shulman, 1986). Furthermore, knowledgeable teachers can utilize effective teaching strategies, such as inquiry-based learning and hands-on activities, which are essential for fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills in preschool children (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). In addition to instructional delivery, preschool teachers also serve as role models and guides for social interactions among children. Their subject knowledge informs their ability to facilitate discussions and encourage collaboration, helping children develop essential social skills such as communication, empathy, and teamwork (Pianta *et al.*, 2016). Through these interactions, teachers create a rich learning environment where children feel safe to explore, ask questions, and express their ideas. Moreover, preschool teachers act as advocates for their students, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and needs of the children in their care. Their understanding of subject matter enables them to incorporate culturally relevant content and practices into their teaching, ensuring that all children feel valued and included (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010).

Teacher Knowledge and its Impact on Instructional Delivery

Teacher knowledge, particularly in the context of subject matter, is a crucial determinant of effective instructional delivery in early childhood education. A teacher's deep understanding of the content they are teaching directly influences their ability to engage students, facilitate

meaningful learning experiences, and adapt instructional strategies to meet diverse learning needs (Shulman, 1986).

Research indicates that teachers with strong subject knowledge are more confident in their teaching practices, which translates into higher quality interactions with students. Such confidence enables them to explain concepts clearly, anticipate student misconceptions, and provide timely feedback (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017). In preschool settings, where children are developing foundational skills, the clarity and richness of instruction are essential for fostering cognitive and social development.

Moreover, knowledgeable teachers are better equipped to implement developmentally appropriate practices that align with the unique characteristics of young learners. They can design hands-on, inquiry-based activities that stimulate curiosity and encourage exploration, which are fundamental for effective learning at this stage (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). This pedagogical approach not only enhances engagement but also promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as children learn to interact with their environment and each other.

Additionally, the impact of teacher knowledge extends to creating an inclusive classroom environment. Teachers who are well-versed in their subject matter can incorporate culturally relevant content and diverse perspectives, ensuring that all students feel represented and valued in the learning process (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). This inclusivity fosters a sense of belonging and encourages positive interactions among students, further enhancing the learning experience.

Factors Influencing Preschool Instructional Delivery

Several factors influence preschool instructional delivery, with teacher knowledge of the subject being paramount. Preschool teachers' understanding of the content they teach significantly impacts their ability to engage children effectively and deliver lessons that are developmentally appropriate (Shulman, 1986). Teachers with a strong command of their

subject matter are better positioned to explain concepts clearly, anticipate student needs, and adapt their instructional strategies to suit varying learning styles.

Another critical factor is the classroom environment. A positive and supportive learning environment encourages exploration and interaction among preschoolers, which is essential for effective learning. Teachers who foster a safe and inclusive atmosphere facilitate greater student participation and collaboration, leading to more dynamic instructional delivery (Pianta *et al.*, 2016). This environment also allows teachers to implement various teaching methods that cater to different learning preferences.

Professional development opportunities are also influential in shaping instructional delivery. Ongoing training helps preschool teachers enhance their pedagogical skills and stay updated on best practices in early childhood education. Research indicates that continuous professional development contributes to improved instructional practices, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017).

Additionally, the use of appropriate teaching materials and resources plays a significant role in instructional delivery. Access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate materials allows teachers to create engaging and interactive lessons that captivate young learners' interest (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). Such resources can include hands-on activities, multimedia tools, and culturally relevant content that resonate with students.

Lastly, family and community involvement can also impact instructional delivery. When families are engaged in the educational process, it reinforces learning and fosters a sense of community around the preschool. Collaborative efforts between teachers and families help create a consistent learning experience that extends beyond the classroom (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010).

Teacher Qualifications and Subject Knowledge

Teacher qualifications are crucial determinants of the effectiveness of instructional delivery in preschool education. The level of education and specialized training a teacher possesses directly influences their subject knowledge and, consequently, their teaching practices. Research shows that teachers with higher qualifications, such as a degree in early childhood education, tend to demonstrate a stronger understanding of child development and pedagogical strategies, which enhances their ability to deliver quality instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Subject knowledge is integral to effective teaching, particularly in early childhood settings where foundational skills are developed. Preschool teachers who have a comprehensive understanding of the subjects they teach are more adept at creating engaging and relevant learning experiences. They can draw connections between different concepts, integrate interdisciplinary approaches, and present information in ways that are meaningful to young learners (Shulman, 1986). This depth of knowledge enables teachers to anticipate and address potential misconceptions, thereby facilitating a more effective learning environment.

Moreover, teacher qualifications impact the choice of instructional strategies. Educators who are well-versed in their subject matter can employ a variety of teaching methods tailored to the developmental stages and learning preferences of their students. This adaptability is essential in preschool classrooms, where children exhibit a wide range of abilities and interests (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). For instance, qualified teachers can effectively implement play-based learning, inquiry-based activities, and collaborative projects, fostering an interactive and dynamic classroom atmosphere.

In addition to formal qualifications, ongoing professional development is vital for maintaining and enhancing teachers' subject knowledge. Continuous training and workshops allow preschool educators to stay updated on best practices and emerging trends in early

childhood education, further improving their instructional delivery (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017).

Pedagogical Content Knowledge in Early Childhood Education

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) is a critical concept in the realm of education, particularly in early childhood settings. Coined by Lee Shulman, PCK refers to the interplay between a teacher's understanding of the subject matter and their pedagogical skills how they translate content knowledge into effective teaching practices (Shulman, 1986). In early childhood education, where learners are at a crucial stage of cognitive and social development, the integration of PCK is vital for fostering meaningful learning experiences. Preschool teachers equipped with strong PCK possess a deep understanding of not only what to teach but also how to teach it in a manner that is accessible and engaging for young children. This includes the ability to identify appropriate instructional strategies, adapt content to meet diverse learning needs, and utilize various teaching materials effectively (Hill *et al.*, 2008). For example, a preschool teacher with robust PCK can design activities that leverage play-based learning, enabling children to explore concepts in a hands-on manner that aligns with their developmental stages.

Furthermore, PCK allows teachers to anticipate common misconceptions and difficulties that preschoolers may encounter, enabling them to scaffold instruction appropriately. This proactive approach fosters an environment where children feel supported and encouraged to ask questions, explore ideas, and engage in collaborative learning (National Research Council, 2007).

Additionally, the effectiveness of instructional delivery is enhanced when teachers integrate PCK with an understanding of child development. By recognizing how children learn and develop at different rates, teachers can tailor their instruction to accommodate the varying

abilities and interests of their students, thereby promoting inclusive and differentiated learning experiences (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

Empirical Studies

Numerous empirical studies highlight the significance of preschool teachers' subject knowledge as a predictor of effective instructional delivery. Research conducted by Hill, Rowan, and Ball (2005) demonstrated that teachers with a strong command of content knowledge not only enhance their instructional practices but also positively influence student learning outcomes. Their findings suggest that increased teacher knowledge correlates with higher student achievement, particularly in foundational subjects such as mathematics and literacy.

Another study by Pianta *et al.* (2016) examined the relationship between teachers' subject matter knowledge and their instructional practices in preschool classrooms. The results indicated that teachers who possess in-depth knowledge of the subjects they teach are more adept at implementing developmentally appropriate practices, facilitating meaningful interactions, and adapting their instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students. This adaptability is crucial in early childhood education, where children are at varying stages of development and learning.

Additionally, a longitudinal study by the National Center for Education Statistics (2019) found that preschool teachers who participated in professional development focused on enhancing their subject knowledge showed significant improvements in their instructional delivery. The study underscored the importance of ongoing training in equipping teachers with the tools and strategies necessary for effective teaching, ultimately benefiting children's learning experiences.

Further research by Darling-Hammond *et al.* (2017) emphasized that teacher qualifications, including specialized training in early childhood education, are strongly linked to the quality

of instructional delivery. Their analysis revealed that preschool teachers with formal training are more likely to employ evidence-based instructional practices, leading to improved educational outcomes for young learners.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter data sampling techniques, sampling size, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis and site selection criteria will be discussed. The variables were analyzed by means of percentages and simple table method. This technique permits inferences about observation and are useful for testing the research propositions for generalization the propositions were tested by descriptive statistical terms and detailed percentage was adopted for clear interpretation and presentation.

Research Design

The researcher used descriptive research survey design in building up this research work the choice of this research design was considered appropriate because of its advantages of identifying attributes of a large population from a group of individuals. The design was suitable for the preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject as a predictor of instructional delivery.

Population of Study

Population of a study is a group of persons or aggregate items, things the researcher is interested in getting information to examine how preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject matter influences the quality and effectiveness of their instructional delivery in early childhood education. A total of one hundred (100) respondents formed the population of the study.

Sampling and Sampling Technique

Sample is the set people or items which constitute part of a given population sampling. Due to large size of the target population, the researcher used the Taro Yamani formula to arrive at the sample population of the study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n: describes the sample size.

N: describes total number of population of the area

e: describes maximum variability or margin of Error = 0.05.

1: describes the probability of the event occurring.

$$n = \frac{100}{1 + 100(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{100}{1 + 100(0.0025)}$$

$$n = 100 / (1 + 0.25) = 100 / 1.25 = 80.$$

Validation of Research Instrument

The major research instrument used is the questionnaires. This was appropriately moderated.

The respondents were administered with the questionnaires to complete, without disclosing their identities. The questionnaire was designed to obtain sufficient and relevant information from the respondents.

The primary data contained information extracted from the questionnaires in which the respondents were required to give specific answer to a question by ticking in front of an appropriate answer, the questionnaires were administered to the respondents and contained about 16 structured questions which were divided into sections A and B.

Method of Data Collection

Data were collected from two main sources namely:

Primary source and Secondary source

1. **Primary source:** These are materials of statistical investigation which were collected by the research for a particular purpose. They can be obtained through a survey, observation questionnaire or as experiment; the researcher has adopted the questionnaire method for this study.
2. **Secondary source:** These are data from textbook Journal handset etc. they arise as byproducts of the same other purposes. Example administration, various other unpublished works and write ups were also used.

Method of Data Analysis

Concerning the method of analysis, summary statistics was used to answer the research questions while Chi-Square (χ^2) test of independence and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. All tests were carried out at 0.05 level of significance, the probability level at which we were willing to risk type I error.

The data collected was not an end in itself but it served as a means to an end. The end being the use of the required data to understand the various situations it is with a view to making valuable recommendations and contributions. To this end, the data collected has to be analyzed for any meaningful interpretation to come out with some results. It is for this reason that the following methods were adopted in the research project for the analysis of the data collected.

For a comprehensive analysis of data collected, emphasis was laid on the use of absolute numbers frequencies of responses and percentages. Answers to the research questions were provided through the comparison of the percentage of workers response to each statement in the questionnaire related to any specified question being considered.

Frequency in this study refers to the arrangement of responses in order of magnitude or occurrence while percentage refers to the arrangements of the responses in order of their proportion.

The simple percentage method is believed to be straight forward easy to interpret and understand method. The researcher therefore chooses the simple percentage as the method to use.

The formula for percentage is shown as.

$$\% = f/N \times 100/1$$

Where f = frequency of respondents response

N = Total Number of response of the sample, 100 = Consistency in the percentage of respondents for each item contained in questions.

Questionnaire Administration

Due to resource and time constraint, the research could not entertain large number of people in case studies, in depth interviews and wider focus group discussions. Therefore, questionnaires were used to fill the gap and support the representative sample to address as many individuals as possible to help gather relevant firsthand information. Two different sets of questions were prepared: close-ended and open-ended questions (see Appendix-A). For those respondents who could not understand English, the questionnaire was prepared and translated in to Amharic while asking them, so that the respondents could easily understand. The items of the questionnaires were classified based on the objectives of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

Efforts will be made at this stage to present, analyze and interpret the data collected during the field survey. This presentation will be based on the responses from the completed questionnaires. The result of this exercise will be summarized in tabular forms for easy references and analysis. It will also show answers to questions relating to the research questions for this research study. The researcher employed simple percentage in the analysis.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed in tabular form with simple percentage for easy understanding. A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed and sixty (60) were returned.

Research Question One

What is the level of subject knowledge possessed by preschool teachers?

Table 1: The Level of Subject Knowledge Possessed by Preschool Teachers

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation	Remark
I am confident in my understanding of the key concepts in the preschool curriculum.	3.55	0.62	Agree
I regularly update my knowledge of the subject matter to keep up with new teaching strategies.	3.55	0.57	Agree
I can explain the concepts I teach in a way that is easy for preschool children to understand.	3.50	0.54	Agree
I have adequate knowledge of the subjects I teach, such as literacy,	3.53	0.54	Agree

numeracy, and basic science.

I feel well-prepared to address the questions and concerns of students related to the subject matter. 3.48 0.60 Agree

My knowledge of early childhood education principles supports my teaching practices. 3.35 0.61 Agree

I feel comfortable integrating new concepts into my lessons based on the current curriculum. 3.58 0.56 Agree

I actively seek out professional development opportunities to improve my subject knowledge. 3.35 0.63 Agree

Cluster 27.90 3.13 Agree

Table 1 reveals that preschool teachers express confidence in their understanding of key concepts in the preschool curriculum and regularly update their knowledge to align with new teaching strategies. They can explain concepts in ways that are accessible to young children and feel adequately prepared to teach subjects like literacy, numeracy, and basic science. Additionally, teachers recognize the importance of early childhood education principles in shaping their teaching practices and actively pursue professional development opportunities to further enhance their subject knowledge. The cluster mean of 27.90 suggests that preschool teachers possess a high level of subject knowledge.

Research Question Two

What is the level of learners' engagement in the classroom in preschool classrooms?

Table 2: The Level of Learners' Engagement in the Classroom in Preschool

Classrooms

Statement	Mean	Standard deviation	Remark
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Students show a high level of interest in the lessons I deliver.	3.53	0.62	Agree
Children actively participate in class discussions and activities during my lessons.	3.60	0.53	Agree
My students demonstrate curiosity and eagerness to learn new concepts during lessons.	3.63	0.52	Agree
I observe that students are more engaged in learning when the material is presented clearly and accurately.	3.55	0.57	Agree
The instructional activities I use in the classroom encourage students to ask questions and express their thoughts.	3.70	0.46	Agree
When I use effective instructional methods, students tend to stay focused and motivated throughout the lesson.	3.63	0.49	Agree
I notice that students are more engaged when I use a variety of teaching materials.	3.67	0.48	Agree
Students tend to engage more when I connect the lesson content to their real-life experiences.	3.62	0.52	Agree
Cluster	28.87	2.56	

Table 2 reveals that teachers observe that students show interest in lessons, actively participate in discussions and activities and display curiosity and eagerness to learn new concepts. Engagement increases when lessons are presented clearly, connected to real-life experiences, and supported with a variety of teaching materials. Additionally, effective instructional methods help maintain students' focus and motivation, while activities that encourage questioning and self-expression further enhance engagement. The cluster mean of 28.87 indicates that the level of learners' engagement in preschool classrooms is generally high.

Research Question Three

What is the relationship between preschool teachers' subject knowledge and student engagement in the classroom?

Table 3: Pearson r of the Relationship Between Preschool Teachers' Subject Knowledge and Student Engagement in the Classroom

Variables	N	Pearson r	p-value
Teachers' Subject Knowledge	60	0.271	0.036
Learners' Engagement	60		

The results from Table 3 indicate a positive relationship between preschool teachers' subject knowledge and student engagement in the classroom. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.271$) with a p -value of 0.036 suggests that as teachers' subject knowledge increases, student engagement tends to improve. This relationship is statistically significant, implying that teachers who have a stronger grasp of the subject matter are more likely to create engaging learning experiences for their students.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study underscore the crucial role of preschool teachers' subject knowledge in fostering student engagement. As revealed in Table 1, preschool teachers demonstrate confidence in their understanding of key concepts in the preschool curriculum. Their ability to explain subjects such as literacy, numeracy, and basic science in an age-appropriate manner enhances their effectiveness in the classroom. This aligns with the work of Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), who assert that teachers with strong subject knowledge can scaffold learning more effectively and adapt teaching strategies to meet young learners' developmental needs. Furthermore, the emphasis on continuous professional development suggests a commitment to improving teaching practices, a finding supported by Desimone and Garet (2015), who highlight the positive impact of ongoing teacher training on instructional quality.

Similarly, Table 2 highlights a generally high level of student engagement in preschool classrooms. Students exhibit curiosity, participate actively in lessons, and show enthusiasm when learning is linked to real-life experiences. This aligns with Pianta et al. (2017), who found that engagement is fostered when instructional methods are interactive and responsive to children's interests. Additionally, research by Fredricks, Filsecker, and Lawson (2016) indicates that student engagement is multidimensional, involving behavioral, cognitive, and emotional aspects, all of which are influenced by the quality of teaching and classroom interactions.

The correlation analysis in Table 3 further strengthens the argument that teachers' subject knowledge positively impacts student engagement. The statistically significant correlation ($r = 0.271$, $p = 0.036$) suggests that well-informed teachers are more capable of designing engaging learning experiences. This supports the findings of Blömeke et al. (2016), who

argue that teacher competence is a key predictor of student learning outcomes. Additionally, Hamre and Pianta (2005) emphasize that teachers with strong subject knowledge can create structured yet flexible learning environments that sustain student interest and participation.

Overall, these findings emphasize the need for continuous investment in teacher training and curriculum development to enhance both teacher competence and student engagement. Schools and policymakers should prioritize professional development programs that equip teachers with up-to-date knowledge and effective instructional strategies (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2020). Future research could explore additional factors, such as classroom environment and teacher-student relationships, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of student engagement in preschool education.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

It is important to ascertain that the objective of this study was on the preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject as a predictor of instructional delivery. In the preceding chapter, the relevant data collected for this study were presented, critically analyzed and appropriate interpretation given. In this chapter, certain recommendations made which in the opinion of the researcher will be of benefits in addressing the preschool teacher's knowledge of the subject as a predictor of instructional delivery.

Summary of Findings

The investigation into preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject as a predictor of instructional delivery reveals several key insights. Teachers with strong content knowledge are more effective in creating engaging and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for young children. Research consistently demonstrates that preschoolers taught by knowledgeable educators show higher levels of engagement and achievement underscoring the importance of subject mastery in fostering early learning. Moreover, teachers' ability to adapt instructional methods to meet diverse student needs is enhanced by their understanding of the content. This adaptability allows for the identification and mitigation of misconceptions, promoting an inclusive classroom environment where all learners can thrive. Continuous professional development plays a critical role in enhancing both subject knowledge and pedagogical skills, enabling teachers to implement innovative strategies that enrich the educational experience. Additionally, teachers with robust subject knowledge tend to foster a more dynamic classroom atmosphere, encouraging participation and collaboration among students. This positive environment is essential for effective

learning at the preschool level. Overall, the findings highlight that preschool teachers' knowledge of the subject significantly impacts instructional delivery, contributing to the holistic development of young children and their readiness for future learning.

Conclusion

The knowledge that preschool teachers possess about their subject matter is a critical factor influencing the quality of instructional delivery in early childhood education. This study reinforces the idea that strong content knowledge enables educators to create engaging, developmentally appropriate learning experiences that promote student achievement and foster curiosity. Effective instructional practices are not only rooted in understanding the material but also in the ability to adapt teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of young learners.

Moreover, the findings emphasize the importance of ongoing professional development, which enhances teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogical skills. Continuous training equips educators with innovative strategies that can significantly improve the learning environment, making it more inclusive and dynamic. As preschool teachers become more confident in their subject matter, they cultivate a classroom atmosphere that encourages exploration, collaboration, and critical thinking among students.

In conclusion, investing in preschool teachers' subject knowledge is essential for enhancing instructional delivery and ensuring that young children receive the foundational skills necessary for their future academic success. The implications of this study highlight the need for educational institutions to prioritize teacher training and professional development, thereby supporting the holistic growth of children in their formative years.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, to enhance the effectiveness of instructional delivery in preschool education, institutions should prioritize the development of teachers' subject knowledge. This can be achieved by implementing comprehensive training programs that focus not only on content mastery but also on effective pedagogical strategies tailored for young learners.

1. Professional development should be ongoing, allowing educators to stay updated on the latest research and best practices in early childhood education. Additionally, schools should foster a collaborative environment where teachers can share insights and resources, promoting a culture of continuous learning.
2. Curriculum design for teacher education programs should include a strong emphasis on the integration of subject knowledge with pedagogical skills. This approach will better prepare future educators to create engaging and developmentally appropriate learning experiences.
3. Finally, educational policymakers should recognize the importance of qualified teachers in preschool settings and allocate resources to support professional development initiatives.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

I am Enegide Odinichi Christabel, a 400 Level Student of the Institute of Education, currently surveying the Preschool Teachers' Knowledge of the Subject as a Predictor of Instructional Delivery [A Case Study of Oredo Local Government Area, Benin City] . Kindly find below set of self-explanatory questions that will not take much of your time to answer. Your kind and unbiased response would be valued as it will expressively contribute in the direction of achieving the above-mentioned objective of the study. Please note that your response will be preserved with firmness of confidence, therefore do not put down your name of on the questionnaire.

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher for any request for information about this research.

Thank you.

ENEGIDE ODINICHI CHRISTABEL

Contact: 09060444550

INSTRUCTION

Please tick or fill in where necessary as the case may be.

Section A; Subject Knowledge of Preschool Teachers

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your subject knowledge. Use the following scale to respond;

- **Strongly Disagree**
- **Disagree**
- **Neutral**
- **Agree**
- **Strongly Agree**

S/N	STATEMENT	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1	I am confident in my understanding of the key concepts in the preschool curriculum.					
2	I regularly update my knowledge of the subject matter to keep up with new teaching strategies.					
3	I can explain the concepts I teach in a way that is easy for preschool children to understand.					
4	I have adequate knowledge of the subjects I teach, such as literacy, numeracy, and basic science.					
5	I feel well prepared to address the questions and concerns of students related to the subject matter.					
6	My knowledge of early childhood education principles supports my teaching practices.					

7	I feel comfortable integrating new concepts into my lessons based on the current curriculum.					
8	I actively seek out professional development opportunities to improve my subject knowledge.					

SECTION B; Learners' Engagement in the Classroom

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding learners' engagement in your classroom. Use the following scale to respond;

- **Strongly Disagree**
- **Disagree**
- **Neutral**
- **Agree**
- **Strongly Agree**

S/N	STATEMENT	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1	Students show high level of interest in the lessons I deliver.					
2	Children actively participate in class discussions and activities during my lessons.					
3	My students demonstrate curiosity and					

	eagerness to learn new concepts during lessons.					
4	I observe that students are more engaged in learning when the material is presented clearly and accurately.					
5	The instructional activities I use in the classroom encourage students to ask questions and express their thoughts.					
6	When I use effective instructional methods, students tend to stay focused and motivated throughout the lesson.					
7	I notice that students are more engaged when I use a variety of teaching materials [e.g., visual aids, hands-on activities].					
8	Students tend to engage more when I connect the lesson content to their real-life					

	experiences.					
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