



EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION MATTERS



A book of readings in honour of
**PROFESSOR OSANYIN
FLORENCE AJIKE**

EDITORS

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Book of Readings, *Early Childhood Matters* in honour of
PROF. FLORENCE AJIKE OSANYIN (Mama ECAN)

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PERCEPTION, ATTITUDE AND USE OF YORUBA INDIGENOUS STORIES AMONG YORUBA PARENTS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

In the traditional African societies, indigenous storytelling was a regular practice where children were told stories by their parents and other members of the family and community. Storytelling played an important role in the family and it was a daily activity in the evening. Recently, many Nigerians do not like to speak their indigenous languages with their children and as a result, these children may not know their indigenous stories even though they know lots of foreign stories. This study therefore, investigated parents' perception, attitude and use of Yoruba indigenous stories in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Four research questions were raised and answered. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Two hundred and eighty nine (289) Yoruba parents were purposively selected from both public and private schools in Lagos State. Self- designed questionnaire with reliability index of ($\alpha = 0.84$) was used to collect data for the study. Frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation and t-test were used to analyze the data collected. Findings indicated that parents' perception and attitude to Yoruba indigenous storytelling is positive, however the frequency of use is still below expectation. Parents with children in public schools significantly used indigenous stories better than parents with children in private schools. Based on the findings it was recommended among other things that storytelling in indigenous language should be used at home by parents, also Nigerian authors should be encouraged to write indigenous storybooks for children.

Keywords: *Yoruba Indigenous Storytelling, Parents, Children, Perception, Attitude, Use.*

Introduction

In the traditional African societies, storytelling was a common practice whereby children were told stories by their parents and other members of the family daily. They enjoyed the storytelling sessions and it created opportunities for parents to bond with their children, share their cultural heritage and values which were passed from one generation to another. Champion, Katz, Muldrow and Dial, (1999) describe storytelling is an oral activity where language and gestures are used in creative ways to create scenes in a sequence. Mello, 2001 pointed out that the art of storytelling is one of the oldest ways of communicating ideas and images to people. Daily indigenous storytelling sessions played an important role in Nigerian family life in the traditional settings. Omoleye, (1977) submitted that Yoruba tales were usually told to children in the olden days to invigorate the evening after the day's hard work had been over, there was that need for a relaxation and that Yoruba Folktales had the following seven aims in educating listeners;

“To fear God, the deities and observe the traditions; respect elders; instill fear in the minds of the young not to take laws into their hands; oppose injustice; teach elementary principles of natural and supernatural laws; sharpen the creative sense of visualization and imagination of the young ones and direct the minds of the young to think independently on a given topic, arrive at judicious conclusions on perplexing or confronting matters.”

These stories were also used in the development of character or morals in children. Onyeocha (1996) emphasized that it was a common practice in traditional society for the family to gather to tell stories that illustrated human behaviour and the consequences for good behaviour as well as the penalties for misconduct and moral lessons were often drawn out at the end of each stories.

These days, one doubts if indigenous storytelling is still a common and consistent practice across homes in Nigeria. Several factors such as urbanization, busy lifestyle of parents, the preference of English language to Nigerian languages by some parents especially the elite, television viewing, the preference of foreign stories to Nigerian stories and Video games may have been attributed to the neglect of Nigerian indigenous storytelling across homes and few studies have confirmed this. For instance, The Talk Talk Group, (2011) reported that parents are very busy these days and they no longer have time to tell their children bedtime stories. Also, Paton, (2012) submitted that parents prefer that their children spend their evening watching the television and playing video games instead of listening to stories. Also, Akor, (2013) asserted that most Nigerian children born in the last decade have never been told indigenous stories in their homes. As a result, many children in Nigeria cannot tell a single folktale from their communities of origin but they know a lot about foreign stories and television, video games, computer and the social media have since taken over parenting and bonding among families. Therefore, it is based on this background that this study investigated parents' perception, attitude and use of Yoruba indigenous stories by parents at home in Lagos State Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study answered the following research questions;

1. What is the perception of parents on the relevance of Yoruba indigenous stories to their children?
2. What is the attitude of parents towards Yoruba indigenous storytelling?
3. How often do Parents use Yoruba indigenous stories at home?
4. What are the factors affecting the use of Yoruba indigenous stories at home?

Hypotheses

- Ho₁:** There is no significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in their perception of the relevance of Yoruba indigenous stories to their children.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in their attitude towards Yoruba indigenous storytelling.
- Ho₃:** There is no significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in their use of Yoruba indigenous storytelling at home.

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all parents of school age children in Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample of the study was made up of 289 (two hundred and eighty nine) parents of school age children in both public and private primary schools in Lagos State. The parents were purposively selected from the population based on the criterion that they were Yoruba indigenes. A total number of 289 parents filled and returned the questionnaire. One self-designed instrument titled: "Parent's perception, attitude and use of Yoruba indigenous Stories at Home was used to collect the data.

The questionnaire is a 4-point modified likert-type scale of Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA) weighted 1,2,3,4 respectively. The questionnaire was divided into five sections labeled section A, B, C, D & E. Section A was used to obtain the demographic information of Parents, section B measured parents' perception of the relevance of Yoruba Indigenous Storytelling at home, Section C measured Parents' attitude towards Yoruba indigenous storytelling at home, Section D measured parents' use of Yoruba Indigenous Stories at Home and Section E, measured the factors affecting Parents' Use of Yoruba Indigenous Stories at Home. The face and content validity of the instrument was established by two experts in the field of Early Childhood Education. Crombach Alpha technique was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument and a reliability index of 0.84 was obtained.

Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage, mean and Standard deviation. Inferential Statistics of T-test was also be used to test the null hypotheses.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the perception of parents on the relevance of Yoruba indigenous stories to their children?

Table 1: Parents' Perception of the relevance of Yoruba Indigenous Storytelling to their Children

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Yoruba indigenous story telling at home can help to develop character in my children	25 (8.7%)	107 (37%)	130 (45%)	27 (9.3%)
2.	Yoruba indigenous story telling at home can help children to be creative and imaginative	74 (25.6%)	129 (44.6%)	65 (22.5%)	21 (7.3%)
3.	Yoruba indigenous story telling at home can help children think independently and solve problems	42 (14.5%)	190 (65.7%)	39 (13.5%)	18 (6.2%)
4.	Yoruba indigenous storytelling teaches children natural and supernatural laws	99 (32.2%)	89 (30.8%)	55 (19.0%)	52 (18.0%)
5.	Yoruba indigenous storytelling always end with a moral lesson	131 (45.3%)	95 (32.9%)	41 (14.2%)	22 (7.6%)

Table 1 above shows the result of parents' perception of the relevance of Yoruba indigenous storytelling to their children. Generally, the parents have positive perception about the relevance of Yoruba indigenous storytelling to their children. For instance, 237(83%) of the respondents agreed that Yoruba indigenous storytelling at home can help to develop character in their children while 52(18%) of the respondents disagreed. 203(70.2%) of the respondents agreed that Yoruba indigenous Storytelling at home can help children to be creative and imaginative while 86(29.8%) of the respondents disagreed. 232(80.3%) of the respondents agreed that Yoruba Indigenous storytelling at home could help children think independently and solve problems while 57(19.7%) of the respondents disagreed. 188(63%) of the respondents agreed that Yoruba indigenous story telling could be used to teach the children both natural and supernatural laws while 107(21.8%) of the respondents disagreed. 226(78.2%) of the respondents agreed that

Yoruba indigenous storytelling always end with a moral lesson. From the above, it could be deduced that majority of parents have a positive perception of the relevance of indigenous Yoruba storytelling to their children. This finding could be as a result of the fact that they know the value of storytelling to children and it can be used to develop their character and enhance intellectual development. This is in line with Onyeocha, (1996) who said that one of the most important features of indigenous stories was the development of character in children. These stories were also used to teach children how to be creative and imaginative and to solve problems Omoleye, (1977)

Research Question 2: What is the attitude of parents towards Yoruba indigenous storytelling?

Table 2: Attitude of Parents Towards Yoruba Indigenous Storytelling

S/N	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Children should be told Yoruba indigenous story at home	126 (43.6%)	118 (40.8%)	31 (10.6%)	14 (4.8%)
2.	I enjoy telling my children Yoruba indigenous stories at home	162 (56.1%)	73 (25.3%)	25 (8.7%)	29 (10.0%)
3.	I tell foreign stories to children because they are more superior to Yoruba indigenous story	17 (5.9%)	69 (23.9%)	103 (35.6%)	100 (34.6%)
4.	Telling children Yoruba indigenous story is a waste of time	24 (23.9%)	68 (8.3%)	128 (23.5%)	69 (44.3%)
5.	Yoruba indigenous stories are superstitious and obsolete	60 (20.8%)	55 (19%)	93 (32.2%)	81 (28%)

Table 2 above shows the attitude of parents towards the use Yoruba indigenous storytelling at home. Generally, the parents have positive attitude towards the use of Yoruba indigenous storytelling. For instance, 244(84.4%) of the respondents agreed that children should be told Yoruba indigenous storytelling at home while 45(15.6%) of the respondents disagreed, 235(81.4%) of the respondents agreed that they enjoy telling their children Yoruba indigenous Stories at home while 54(18.7%) of the respondents disagreed, 203(70.2%) of the respondents disagreed that they tell foreign stories to their children because they are more superior than Yoruba Indigenous stories while 86(29.8%) of the respondents agreed, 197(68.2%) of the respondents disagreed that telling children Yoruba indigenous story is a waste of time while 92(31.8%) of the respondents agreed, 174(60.2%) of the respondents also disagreed that Yoruba indigenous stories are superstitious and obsolete.

It could be inferred from the above data that majority of parents have a positive attitude towards the use of indigenous Yoruba storytelling in inculcating good behaviour in their children. This finding could be as a result of the fact that they know that indigenous stories are great tools that can be used to teach children how to behave in the society. This is in line with Onyeocha, (1996) who opined that one of the most important features of indigenous stories was the development of character in children.

Research Question 3: How often do Parents use Yoruba indigenous stories at home?

Figure 1: Bar Chart of Frequency of Yoruba Storytelling at home by Parents

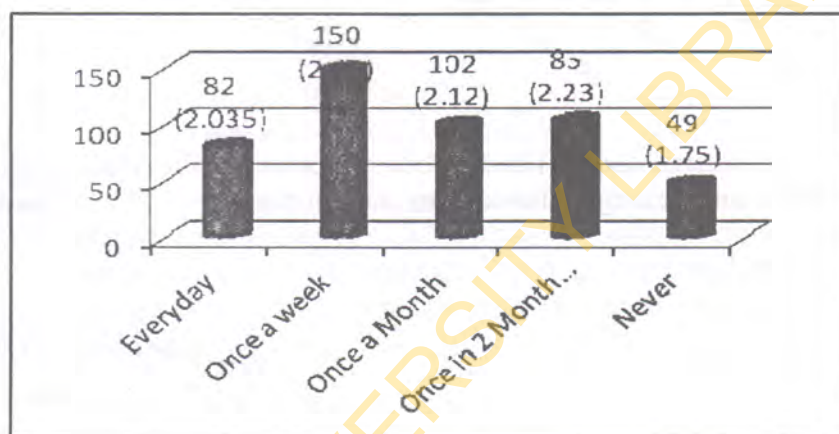


Figure 1 above shows the distribution of frequency of Yoruba storytelling of parents At home. The result indicates that once in a week ranked first with a mean response rate of ($M=2.45$), followed by once in 2 months or more ($M= 2.23$), Once a month ranked 3rd with a mean value of ($M=2.12$), Only 82 respondents ($M=2.035$) reported daily use of indigenous stories at home while only 49 respondents reported to have not used It at all. From the above, it could be inferred that many respondents appeared to have used indigenous Yoruba storytelling at one point or the other, however the frequency of use is still below expectation. This finding could be as a result of the many Nigerians have neglected the use of indigenous at home. This is in line with Akor, 2013 who stated that most Nigerian children born in the last decade have never been told indigenous stories in their homes.

Research Question 4: What are the factors affecting the use of Yoruba indigenous stories at home?

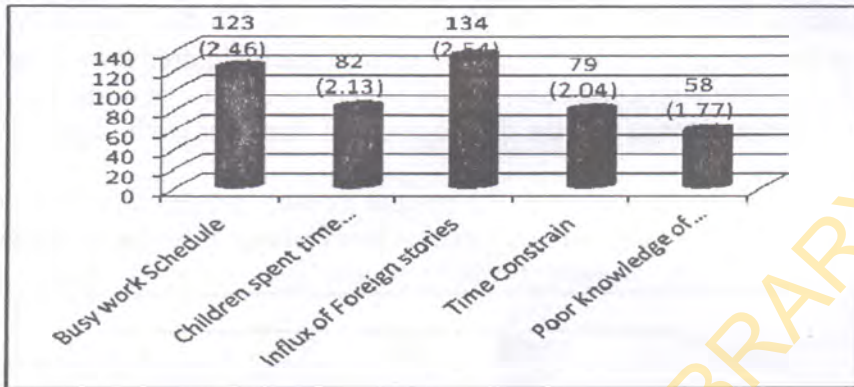
Fig 2: Bar Chart of Factors affecting parents' use of Yoruba indigenous Stories at home

Figure 2 shows the various factors identified by the parents to have hindered the use of indigenous Yoruba storytelling at home. Key among them were the influx of foreign stories through books and mass media ($M=2.54$), busy work schedule of parents ($M=2.46$), Television viewing ($M=2.13$), time constraint ($M=2.04$) as well as poor knowledge of indigenous Yoruba stories by the parents themselves ($M=1.77$).

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in their perception of the relevance of Yoruba indigenous stories to their children.

Table 3: Independent t-test Analysis of Parents' Perception of the Relevance of Yoruba Stories According to the Type of School Their Children Attend

	Type of School	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t-value	p-value
Perception on relevance of Yoruba Stories	Private School	64	2.987	.86032	287	0.318	0.06
	Public School	225	2.957	.60500			

Table 3 shows that there was no significant difference in the perception of parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools. ($t=0.318$, $df=287$, $P>0.05$) therefore hypothesis one is not rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in their attitude towards the use at home.

Table 4: Independent t-test analysis of Parents' Attitude Towards Use of indigenous Yoruba stories of by type of school their children attend

	Type of school	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-value	p-value
Attitude towards Yoruba Stories	Private School	64	2.303	.76511	287	4.55	0.002
	Public School	225	2.685	.53336			

Table 3 shows that there was a significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in their attitude towards the use of Yoruba stories at home. ($t=4.55$, $df=287$, $P<0.05$) Therefore hypotheses two is rejected. The mean scores show that parents with children in public schools have a better attitude towards the use of Yoruba indigenous stories than parents whose children are in private schools. This finding could be as a result of the attitude of many Nigerian parents especially those with children in private schools who believe that the English Language is superior to Yoruba language. This is in line with Alani (1994) who stated that Nigerians want their children to be taught in English language and even measure the standard of education schools give to their children based on the ability to speak English language.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in their use of Yoruba indigenous storytelling at home.

Table 5: Independent t-test analysis of difference in the use of Yoruba Indigenous storytelling by parents of children in private and public school

School	Type of	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	P-value
Use of school Yoruba Indigenous Story	Private	64	1.962	0.4832	3.441	0.001
	Public School	225	2.178	0.4315		

$P<0.05$, $df=287$

Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference between parents with children in private schools and parents with children in public schools in the use of Yoruba stories at home. ($t=3.44$, $df=287$, $P<0.05$) Therefore hypotheses three is rejected. The mean scores shows that parents with children in public schools use Yoruba indigenous stories more than parents whose children are in private schools. This finding could be as a result of the many Yoruba parents especially those with children in private schools who do not encourage the use of Yoruba language at home. This is in line with Balogun, 2013 who opined that parents who are Yoruba speakers take pride in the fact that they communicate with their children in English Language and they buy English storybook for them.

Conclusion

Yoruba indigenous stories are essential in the development of character and in the enhancement of intellectual development in children. Yoruba parents can use it to; inculcate values and social norms in their children, educate their children, transfer the cultural heritage of their communities/families to their children.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

- Parents should give more time to indigenous storytelling at home at least twice a week.
- Parents should speak their indigenous language at home with their children.
- Nigerian authors and illustrators should be encouraged to write indigenous storybooks and picture books for children.
- Private schools should encourage parents to use indigenous stories at home during PTA meetings.
- Indigenous stories can be made into cartoons for children to watch.

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