

Research Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47434/JEREDA.4.3.2023.231> eISSN: 2735-9107

GENDER AND SPATIAL INCLUSION TECHNIQUES DURING CLASSROOM INTERACTION AND PRIMARY PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENT IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY

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Received: 19th February, 2023; **Revised:** 20th April, 2023; **Accepted:** 24th August, 2023

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Teachers prepare the curriculum, prepare contents to be taught, teach the pupils with various teaching aids and methodology, assess the pupils, and sometimes make updates in tune with the current realities and the needs of the society. Classroom interaction is a practice that enhances the development of the two very important language skills which are speaking and listening among the learners

Purpose: This study examined the effect of the application of gender and spatial inclusion techniques during classroom interaction on primary pupils' achievement.

Methodology: Quasi-experimental design using the pre and post-test experimental approach was adopted. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 100 teachers divided into two groups (experimental and control), 386 students. Three (3) instruments: an Observation Schedule and two Achievement Tests with high reliability values were used for the study. Data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Independent T-test.

Results: The result among others showed that there was significant difference in the classroom interaction pattern of teachers exposed to the treatment from teachers that were not exposed to the treatment in terms of gender inclusion, teaching aids, and teachers' preparation. However, there was no significant difference in terms of spatial inclusion.

Conclusion and Recommendation: It is thus recommended that more efforts should be geared towards the improvement in the classroom interaction pattern of primary school teachers.

Keywords: Gender Inclusion, Spatial Inclusion, Classroom Interaction, Students' engagement



Cite paper as:

Dagunduro, O. M., & Onakoya, S. O. (2023). Gender and spatial inclusion techniques during classroom interaction and primary pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy. *Journal of Educational Research in Developing Areas*, 4 (3), 231 - 241. <https://doi.org/10.47434/JEREDA.4.3.2023.231>.



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PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The report of this study is of immense benefit to the Lagos State Ministry of Education as it shows the effect of continuous training of teachers on the performances of primary pupils. The study will also be of great benefit to teachers and school administrators who are interested in improving the achievement of primary school pupils as the result of this study has shown that gender inclusion skills is a great tool when used alongside teaching aids and good lesson preparation.

INTRODUCTION

Primary education is very important in the Nigerian education system. It is the oldest system in Nigeria, dating back to 174 years ago, precisely 1842. It is 17 years older than secondary education, about 90 years above the Higher College, Yaba, and at least 100 years older than pre-primary education. Also, no other level comes close to primary education in terms of clientele. Primary education is the only link between pre-primary education and secondary education systems. It takes in successful beneficiaries of the former and supplies entrants into the latter. But more importantly, it is generally regarded as the very foundation upon which the other strata of the educational edifice are built. Primary education is the first level of the nation's 6-3-3-4 education system i.e., 6, 3, 3, and 4 years of primary education, junior secondary education, senior secondary education, and university education, respectively (Oni, 2009).

One of the major functions of primary or basic education is to inculcate effective communication skills that will enable the pupils to be up-to-date to the social-economic developmental strides of the nation. This important function is aimed at providing a literate and educated population and to lay down the basics for further education in terms of secondary and higher education. Similarly, in a world where competition thrives, human beings are constantly in a struggle for limitedly available resources at every opportunity they can afford. Etor, Mbon and Ekanem (2013) opines that primary education plays an important role by laying the academic and moral foundation for creating better avenues for young people; ensuring that they have necessary foundational skills in reading and writing that they will need in the society. These subjects are necessary in other for

Nigerian children to be successful at the upper levels of education.

Sharmila (2019) when explaining the importance of teachers education opines that teachers are very significant to the overall quality of education in any given society and cannot be over emphasized. Teachers prepare the curriculum, break it down into teaching scheme of work, prepare the contents to be taught, teach the pupils from simple to complex using various teaching aids and methodology, assess the pupils to ascertain content mastery and evaluation and repeat the process all over every time and tide and at sometimes make updates in tune to the current realities and the needs of the society. This is a herculean task and that is the more reason why the National Policy on Education (2004) states the obvious that no nation can rise above the quality of her teachers.

Classroom interaction are planned and organized behaviors that the teacher tries to exhibit as he or she passes on the subject matter content to learners. It is the relationship between the teacher, the students and the learning materials during the teaching learning process. Classroom interaction is a practice that enhances the development of the two very important language skills which are speaking and listening among the learners (Falaye, 2007). This device helps the learner to be competent enough to think critically and share their views among their peers. An ideal Classroom interaction have the following objectives: Helps the learners to identify their own learning methods; Guide the learners to communicate with their peers easily and will give them an exposure to the vase genres of language learning; Help the learner to come face to face with the various types of interaction that can take place inside the classroom; Classroom interaction aims at meaningful communication among the students in

their target language; It also aims at probing into the learner's prior learning ability and his way of conceptualizing facts and ideas; This practice will help the teacher to have a detailed study of the nature and the frequency of student interaction inside the classroom. (Wenjia, 2023).

The application of generic skills during classroom teaching by teachers is one of the key drivers of competitive classroom management practices. The knowledge and skills generated through theoretical education in schools can be classified in various ways. A distinction can be made between pure subject knowledge on the one hand and what is sometimes referred to as 'generic skills' on the other. Kamsah (2004) in his work on developing generic skills in a classroom environment opines that teachers' knowledge of subject matter is the first skills that is probably the most obvious in the classroom. The study observes that teachers' knowledge of mathematics, elementary science, social studies, and so forth can be improved by studying these subjects. Nonetheless, pupils learn a great deal more than that through their studies. While acquiring subject knowledge, they also develop new intellectual abilities which depend less on the content of the discipline and more on its theoretical, rational, and logical nature. For example, during the course of a study programme, students practice the art of thinking in an abstract and systematic way, solving problems independently, considering a phenomenon from different perspectives, analyzing it using a thoroughly considered theory or method, reading and understanding texts with advanced content (in their first language or in a foreign language), searching for and evaluating information with the aim of answering a question and formulating and clarifying their arguments in speech and in writing. These generic skills help to solidify the acquisition of pure subject knowledge (Kamsah, 2004).

In line with Education Sector Support Programme Standard (ESSPIN, 2008) teachers are expected to have an adequate knowledge of subject matter in the various subjects, and in addition, apply spatial and gender inclusion generic

skills in the classroom. These skills help to adequately manage the classroom teaching and learning process and also make sure the pupils are adequately made to be active during the lesson periods. Spatial Inclusion refers to the ability of the teacher to engage with at least one pupil from four different areas of the classroom during a lesson. This means that the teacher is to make sure that every pupil in every angle of the classroom is called to participate during the lesson. This leaves no hidden place for any pupil. Gender Inclusion refers to teachers' engagement with "boys and girls proportionally to their presence in the classroom within a 10% margin" ESSPIN (2008). This means that if, for example, 20 students are in a class made up of 12 girls and 8 boys, that is ratio 3:2, the teacher is to make sure that is five questions is to be asked during the lesson, three questions are to be answered by girls while two questions will be answered by boys.

Hussain, Jamil, Ameen, and Bakhsh (2011) investigated the effects of classroom interaction on students' academic achievement at secondary school level with the main objective of checking the students' academic achievement with and without classroom interaction. The study was significant because it tells about the effects of classroom interaction at the secondary school level. The study was experimental, and pre-test, post-test were used for the collection of data. The experimental group was taught the classroom interaction and the control group without the classroom interaction method. Mean Standard deviation, variance and the difference between means t-statistics were used for the analysis of data. The result showed that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group on the post-test. It was thus recommended that teachers should adopt interactive learning style in their classrooms because it actively engages students in the learning process.

A school is one of the social institutes established to achieve specific goals of bringing changes in the behaviour, knowledge and character of the students. The teacher is not mere a transmitter of knowledge, he is rather

supposed to play quite a significant role in modifying the modes of thinking and acquiring among students. In this regard instructions towards purposeful direction are quite necessary for the success and fecundity of the learning process. This modified role of the teacher requires that instruction should be an active process rather than passive one. It should be a two way communication and both the parties (students and teachers) should be actively engaged for its best accomplishment. Wenjia (2023) opines that an effective teaching learning process requires conscious efforts by the teacher and the teacher. The above-desired situation is achieved when a substantive interaction between the students and teachers is established. This sort of interaction requires that students should be tempted to participate actively in the process by the teacher. It should be acknowledged that the effectiveness of school education much depends upon the development of a sound relationship between the teacher and his pupils who become more active partners in the education process.

Literature reviewed have shown that the education system in the primary schools especially in the lower basic level depicts an opposite and undesirable situation, whereas the classroom environment is particularly rather concerning. The teaching learning process is extremely weak (Falaye, 2007) and it is totally based on rote learning (Okilagwe, 2011). The teacher seems to be in a very dominant role in the class while the students are given very less time for active participation and interaction. Siddiqui (2005) opines that interaction between pupils and teachers is an essential part of teaching learning process. It promotes involvement, enhances learning and motivates the students. It promotes a shift from teacher centred to a student centred environment while maintaining a teacher led activity considering the low attention span of pupils in lower basic level of primary school.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of knowledge of subject matter in Literacy and

Numeracy of lower primary school teachers?

2. What are the description of the classroom interaction observation of teachers in both experimental and control group.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference of gender inclusion pattern on pupils' achievement.
2. There is no significant difference of spatial inclusion on pupils' achievement.
3. There is no significant difference of Teaching Aid Usage on pupils' achievement.
4. There is no significant difference of Lesson Plan Preparation on pupils' achievement.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The study adopted quasi-experimental design using the pre and posttest approach because of the training intervention which was serves as treatment in the study.

Population and Sample

All public primary schools teachers in Epe Local Government of Lagos State formed the population for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select one hundred (100) primary four teachers based on their involvement in the Education Sector Support Program in Nigeria. The teachers were divided into two groups named experimental and control group of fifty teachers each.

Instruments of Data Collection

Teachers' Competency Classroom Observation Schedule, Primary School Teachers Achievement Test and Primary Pupils Achievement Test with adequate face and content validity by experts in instrument construction and validation. For reliability index, the researcher used Scot Pi tool to calculate the inter-rater reliability for the Observation Schedule and the value is 0.76. For the Achievement Tests, the researcher used Kuder Richardson statistical tool for the pilot test data. The value is 0.69 and 0.81.

Procedure for Data Collection

All the 100 teachers used were subjected to classroom observation before the application of treatment. The teachers were observed alongside the administration of the teachers' achievement test to get the pre-test scores. Thereafter, the treatment (practical teaching on implementation of gender and spatial inclusion) was administered to the experimental group through a one week training and thereafter, all the teachers were observed again to get the post test scores of both observation schedule and teachers achievement test. The students'

achievement test were then administered on the students.

Method of Data Analysis

The data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Independent T-test with the help of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the level of knowledge of subject matter in literacy and numeracy of lower primary school teachers?

Table 1a: Summary of level of Teachers' Knowledge of Subject Matter (Numeracy)

	Teachers' Knowledge of Mathematics						Total Freq
	Low Freq	%	Average Freq	%	High Freq	%	
Trained	-	Nil	15	30	35	70	50
Non Trained	24	48	21	42	5	10	50

Table 1b: Summary of level of Teachers' Knowledge of Subject Matter (Literacy)

	Teachers' Knowledge of Literacy						Total Freq
	Low Freq	%	Average Freq	%	High Freq	%	
Trained	15	30	22	44	13	26	50
Non Trained	19	38	24	48	7	14	50

The table 1a and 1b shows the level of how much of the subject matter of literacy and numeracy being taught by the teachers do they possess. The teachers were tested while teaching was going on concurrently to avoid embarrassment to the teachers. They were asked to solve the questions on the board and as well teach the students how to solve the questions. The data above depicts that all the teachers tested in the trained group are above average while about 70% of them are very high in the knowledge of

numeracy. This was not so in control group as just a bit above half of the sample tested performs averagely. As regards their performance in subject matter of literacy in Experiment group, just 26% of the teachers performed very high while just about 14% of the teachers performed same in Control group. Majority of the teachers in both groups performed averagely with 30% performing very low in trained group and 38% in control respectively. This shows that teachers in the trained grouped performed on the

average above the teachers in the control group. Even though there was no new knowledge content introduced during the training or any revision whatsoever apart from examples used while training the teachers of demonstration of the gender and spatial inclusion techniques, and these examples were not picked from literacy or numeracy subject to avoid prior knowledge, possible reasons to this could be that the teachers having been informed

of possible observation after the training might have gone ahead to make possible revision on this subject contents before the classroom observations.

Research Question 2: What is the descriptive explanation of the classroom observation of teachers in both experimental and control group.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Observational Schedule

S/N	Variables	Experiment Group Teachers				Control Group Teachers			
		3	2	1	0	3	2	1	0
1	Teaching Aids and Support materials	15 (33.3)	24 (53.3)	6 (13.3)	0	2 (5)	15 (37.5)	20 (50)	3 (7.5)
2	Teachers Preparation	25 (55.6)	15 (33.3)	5 (11.1)	0	10 (25)	25 (62.5)	5 (12.5)	0
3	Gender Inclusion	5 (11.1)	4 (8.89)	25 (55.6)	11 (24.4)	0	0	9 (22.5)	31 (77.5)
4	Spatial Inclusion	6 (13.3)	7 (15.6)	26 (57.8)	6 (13.3)	0	0	5 (12.5)	35 (87.5)

The sampled teachers were also observed while teaching the students on their dexterity in displaying the ideal classroom strategies and more importantly the ESSPIN spatial and gender inclusion teaching pattern which the teachers were exposed to during their trainings. The data above shows that teachers in the experiment group have enough teaching aids and support materials to work with, the materials were brought to the class for use and were actually used, in addition, the teachers have very high classroom arraignment with physical comfort. In addition, more than 89% of the sampled teachers prepared lesson notes for use before going to the classroom. As regards the practicality and demonstration of spatial and gender inclusion by the teachers, the data shows that few of the sampled

teachers, about 20% on gender inclusion and 30% on spatial inclusion have the good grasp of the display of the methods taught. The teachers were still used to sampling responses from the pupils based on their convenience, closeness and gender preferability. The situation in the control group is a bit appalling. Pupils' engagement is very low, about 88% of sampled teachers performed very low on this, also, more than half of the sampled teachers do not have teaching aids for use. Although, more than three-quarter of the sampled schools have good classroom arraignment and monitors physical comforts of the pupils.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference of gender inclusion pattern on pupils' achievement.

Table 3: Independent Sample T-Test

Variables	States	N	Mean	Mean Difference	DF	F	T	Sig
Gender Inclusion	Experiment	45	3.3333	1.48	83	0.84	6.64	.000*
	Control	40	1.8500				65.8	

*Significant at $p < 0.05$; NS = Not significant

The table 3 above shows that there is a significant difference in the classroom interaction pattern of teachers in the experimental group from the control group teachers in terms of application of gender inclusion ($t=6.64$, $df=83$, $p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in spatial inclusion on pupils' achievement.

Table 4: Independent Sample T-Test

Variables	States	N	Mean	Mean Difference	DF	F	T	Sig
Spatial Inclusion	Experiment	45	3.6222	2.09	83	2.19	19.4	.142 (NS)
	Control	40	1.5250				81.2	

*Significant at $p < 0.05$; NS = Not significant

The table 4 above shows that there is no significant difference in the classroom interaction pattern of teachers in the experimental group from the control group teachers in the application of spatial inclusion ($t=19.4$, $df=83$, $p > 0.05$).

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference of usage of teaching aids on pupils' achievement.

Table 5: Independent Sample T-Test

Variables	States	N	Mean	Mean Difference	DF	F	T	Sig
Teaching Aids	Experiment	45	3.5111	1.01	83	21.2	6.2	.000*
	Control	40	2.5000				57.5	

*Significant at $p < 0.05$; NS = Not significant

The table 5 above shows that there is no significant difference in the classroom interaction pattern of teachers in the experimental group from the control group teachers in the usage of teaching aids ($t=6.2$, $df=83$, $p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in lesson plan preparation on pupils' achievement.

Table 6: Independent Sample T-Test

Variables	States	N	Mean	Mean Difference	DF	F	T	Sig
Teacher	Experiment	45	3.4889	1.16	83	13.6	6.6	.000*
Preparation	Control	40	2.3250			54.7		

*Significant at $p < 0.05$; NS = Not significant

The table 6 above shows that there is no significant difference in the classroom interaction pattern of teachers in the experimental group from the control group teachers in terms of lesson plan preparation by the teachers ($t=6.6$, $df=83$, $p < 0.05$);

DISCUSSIONS

Classroom interactions are planned and organized behaviours that the teacher tries to exhibit as he or she passes on the subject matter content to learners. It is the relationship between the teacher, the students, and the learning materials during the teaching-learning process. On this premise, the logframe standard for ESSPIN further expatiated the characteristics that can be used to define the competence of a teacher in the program. These are knowledge of English or Mathematics curriculum; Use of at least one teaching aid during lesson observation (not blackboard); Greater use of praise than reprimands during lesson observation; In terms of class organization, such teacher assigns individual or group tasks at least twice during lesson observation (or for two contiguous five-minute blocks); adequately run a classroom interaction on a spatial radius of one student in each corner of the classroom and on gender interaction, deal with each gender on 10% proportionate to the number present in each class and last but not the least, has a score of at least 50% in both an English literacy and a numeracy test. From the data analyzed above, the teachers in the experimental group could be said to meet up with five of the seven (5/7 or 71%) highlighted competency scale.

This finding from this study shows that the application of gender interaction classroom teaching technique by the experimental group teachers shows a difference in the achievement of the pupils

and the difference is significant. This means that teachers paying attention to deal with students on their gender presence on the proportionate level to presence has a significant effect on the focus and attention of the pupils in the classroom. The teachers are seen not to favour one gender above the other and as such pick adequate interest in what the teacher is teaching and thus help recollection in the assessment. The finding from this study is in line with Falaye (2007) and Okwilagwe (2011) submission that in a typical classroom interaction setting, the teachers' style of communication is expected to be a two-way process, teacher-learner, and learner-teacher. The experimental group teachers made the pupils to be vigorously engaged in hands-on activities in the classroom. The individual pupil was seen to be important by allowing him or her to engage in relevant activities that can arouse interest and promote learning. The study also is in line with the submission of Olanloye (2018) which opines that the classroom interaction pattern of beneficiaries of UBEC TDP in southwest was better than that of the non-beneficiaries in the area of pedagogical moves such as illustration, emphasis, and administrative tasks), instructor/student interaction such as peer interaction, display of questions by instructors, and student's response) and promotion of self-concept in learners (such as student interaction and communication and conveyance of genuine concern for students).

The sampled teachers in the control group could only meet up the logframe standard in one out of seven (1/5 or 20%). Observation on gender and spatial interaction techniques, though not trained, shows that the teachers approaches the student based on convenience. Some teachers pick only the

pupils who have been known to be brilliant at responding to questions. More often, female teachers focus mainly on female pupils in the classroom. At other times, the class is teacher-centered. The pupils only respond intermittently and often in chorus answers. This finding is in tandem with the observation of Samuel (2011) in a geography class, the teacher was the dominant activity initiator and actor. During such interaction, explanation was the dominant activity that the teacher engaged in and pupils had minimal interaction. The use of learning materials was very poor just as the use of examples while teaching was very low. Pupils-initiated talks was very low and feedback on information from the teacher to pupils was minimal. In addition, Adetayo and Okwilagwe (2011) also discovered that most primary school social studies teachers dominated classroom activities and learning of content at the expense of pupils' active participation in the lesson.

In the submission of Omar, Ahmad, Hassan, & Roslan (2018), who researched into the importance of teachers' competency vis a vis students' perception in correlation to parental involvement and motivation with students' achievement, it was observed that teachers competency has an influence on all the variable highlighted and such should be taken critically into consideration. In another similar study, Niwas (2018) observed that there is a positive relationship between teaching competency, classroom interaction and the attitude of teachers on training toward their creative teaching. He posited further that the teaching competency of trainee teachers is foundational and very significant toward their pedagogical orientations especially in science-related subjects more than the humanities. This finding also corroborates the work of Oyinlola (2014) who found out that NTI/PGDE graduate teachers interacted very well with their students in the class when they were observed.

CONCLUSION

This paper wishes to conclude that the pattern of classroom interaction of teachers as established by this research and many others reviewed, have a great

influence on the achievement of pupils. More important is the kind of collectiveness and inclusiveness that gender interaction consciousness brings to the classroom. The study also shows and confirms the age-long belief established by research that adequate lesson preparation by teachers and usage of good teaching aids help proper assimilation and improve the learning and achievement of pupils.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result of this study, it is thus recommended:

1. More training on effective classroom interaction especially gender inclusion in the classroom should be organized continuously for teachers;
2. Primary School Teachers should endeavor to always go to class with adequate teaching aids for effective classroom interaction.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Author's BioNote

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Authorship and Levels of Contributions

Dr. Dagunduro O.M wrote the Background to the study, formatted the manuscript and adjusted the reference

Onakoya S.O wrote the original draft, worked on the methodology, instrument construction and validation, data gathering and curation and also did the formal data analysis and referencing.

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