

Influence of Gender Inequality on Pre - Primary School Children's Literacy Skills Development in Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos State

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Abstract : Gender inequality is seen as persistent discrimination of one group of people based gender, and it manifests itself differently according to race, culture, politics, country and economic situation. Multiple explanations have been offered for gender differences in literacy skill development. Three prominent explanations that precipitated the gender differences are; biological, where the assumption is that differential brain structures and hemispheric activation patterns cause the sexes to be hardwired differently for reading, with girls developing the cognitive skills associated with reading before boys. Secondly, schooling favour girls and 'girly' behaviour, and that boys are, as a result, lagging behind on several behavioural, social and academic measures and thirdly, cultural influences, where literacy is defined as a feminine characteristic - propagated by an overrepresentation of female teachers - and that modern culture steers boys towards activities such as sport and computers. Therefore the study investigated the influence of gender inequality on pre - primary school children literacy skills development in Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. 100 pre-primary school teachers were involved in the study. A self-designed instrument was used for data collection titled 'Influence of Gender Inequality on Literacy Skill Development in Children Questionnaire (IGILSDCQ)'. The instrument was validated and tested for reliability. The reliability index for IGILSDCQ ($\alpha = 0.79$). Five research questions were answered using descriptive (frequency count, simple percentage, mean and standard deviation). The findings showed that that gender inequality to some extent influence children phonemic awareness (WA=1.76), the extent to which gender inequality influence children awareness of print is high (WA=2.8), gender inequality to some extent influence children vocabulary development (WA = 2.4), the extent to which gender inequality influence children speaking skill development is high (WA = 2.5) and lastly, the extent to which gender inequality influence children comprehension ability is high (WA = 2.5). It was recommended among others that effort by the school administrators is necessary in the provision of reading materials and literacy skill development packages that are both male-oriented and female-oriented.

Keywords : pre-primart, literacy, awareness, phonemic, gender

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