

Teachers' Perceptions on Oral Questioning as a Method of Assessment of Holistic Development among Kenyan Lower Primary Schools Learners

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to establish Teachers' Perception on Oral Questioning as a Method of Assessment of Holistic Development among lower public primary school learners in Kisumu Central Sub-County, Kenya. The Humanistic holistic development of Abrahams Maslow's theory guided the study. The research design employed was concurrent triangulation design. The target population for the study was 234 lower primary school teachers, 90 ECDE teachers and 30 head-teachers, and a sample size of 184 participants was used. Simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to select study participants. The instruments used in the study were questionnaires and interview schedules. Validity of the instruments was ensured by expert judgment of the university lecturers while the reliability was ensured by internal consistency and a reliability coefficient of 0.892 was reported. Trustworthiness of qualitative data was also ensured. Quantitative data was descriptively analysed by the use of percentages, frequencies and means while Qualitative data was analysed using Thematic Analysis. The study found that oral questioning was perceived to be effective in assessing emotional, cognitive, social and personality development. However, it was also reported that oral questioning was not effective in assessment of aspects such as physical growth and development, spiritual development, moral development which are crucial forms of holistic development among early childhood learners. The study recommended that the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should come up with clear policies regarding assessment of ECDE learners so that the holistic development of the learners is taken into account during the assessment process.

Keywords: Teachers, Perception, Oral Questioning, Assessment, Holistic Development Kenyan, Early Childhood Learners

1. Introduction

Holistic education is a philosophy or world view that seeks to address the problem of fragmentation in education. The focus here is on helping students see things in terms of the whole instead of discrete parts (Miller, 2008). Assessment on the other hand is the process of collecting and analyzing information about a student's development and progress towards desired learning outcome (Yu, ChongHo, 2005). Holistic education aims at helping learners be the most that they can. Abraham Maslow (1968) referred to this as 'self-actualization.' According to Maslow human beings are motivated by primary needs and drives that make them behave in a certain way in order to fulfil these needs. The needs differ from one culture to another and from one environment to another. Punitive and harsh parents and teachers reduce children's motivation in a learning environment. Education with holistic perspective is concerned with the development of every person's intellectual emotional, social, physical, moral and spiritual potentials. In describing the general philosophy of holistic development education, (Robin and Forbes 2006) divide their discussion into two categories, the idea of ultimacy and sagacious competence. Ultimacy is used to mean religious, becoming enlightened spiritually as an important component in holistic education and sagacious competence to mean freedom in psychological sense. Holistic approach to child development seeks to simultaneously address the physical, emotional, intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects of

a child's life. The child's whole context, the physical surroundings, the emotional context, relationship with others, the child's immediate needs at any moment will affect and modify how a particular experience contributes to the child's development. This integrated view of learning sees the child as a person who wants to learn, sees the task as a meaningful whole, and sees the whole as greater than the sum of its individual task or experiences.

Children are curious, active and learn spontaneously through play. The teacher should therefore apply approaches that are child centered, motivating and sustain interest. Children learn best through participatory activities and manipulation of play materials (Frost, 2010). The teachers/caregivers role is to provide relevant, adequate, safe and age appropriate play materials as well as a conducive learning environment that will enhance heuristic learning. Through play and use of their senses children discover new knowledge and expand their ideas as they explore and experiment with resources in their environment. This enhances holistic development. In considering curriculum using a holistic approach, one must address the question of what children need to learn. With the goal of educating the whole child, holistic education promotes several strategies to address the question of how to teach and how people learn (Whitebread, 2010). The idea of holism advocates a transformative approach to learning, rather than seeing education as a process of transmission and transaction. The idea of connections is emphasized as opposed to the fragmentation that is often seen in mainstream education. This fragmentation may include the dividing of individual subjects and dividing students into grades. Holism sees the various aspects of life and living as integrated and connected, therefore education should not isolate learning into several different components. Martin (2008) illustrates this point further by stating that, 'many alternative educators argue instead that who the learners are, what they know, how they know it and how they act in the world are not separate elements, but reflect the interdependencies between our world and ourselves'.

One of the key imperatives of the new curriculum in South Africa is the implementation of an effective assessment system for providing relevant and timeous information to all roleplayers for use in improving learning in schools. In particular, the development of a national assessment system for meeting the needs of policy makers and teachers was a key priority (DoE, 2007). However, current assessment systems and/or practices for addressing the learning needs of children have been found to be inadequate (Kanjee, 2009; Ramsuran, 2006; Sokopo, 2004; Vandeyar & Killen, 2007). No specific method of assessing ECDE learner's development and learning have been identified in South Africa.

In Uganda, ECD provision is mainly sector based. Different service types operate in different settings; provide different type of services and programs to different age groups (Vergis, 2012). More so, the current arrangements for setting, regulating implementation, assessing and monitoring quality of existing services related to ECD are fragmented and complicated. Consequently there are apparent diversities across and within the different sectors contributing to ECD. These are indicated by overlaps, gaps and inconsistencies in implementation processes, targeting approaches, coverage as well as the service packaging across and within the various programs. As an example, the learning framework is in place as a curriculum reference but is no way mandatory. Providers of pre-school education use a wide range of curriculum frameworks and guidelines that vary in terms of the age ranges covered as well as in the conceptual underpinnings.

In Kenya a lot of emphasis is given on the reduction of child mortality by many international organizations and government in the various child-protection programs; but little attention is placed on the healthy development and general welfare of the survivors of that mortality (Sinyei, Mwonga & Wanyama, 2012). The Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) make a positive contribution to a child's long term development and learning. It facilitates an enabling and stimulating environment in these foundation stages of lifelong learning. Therefore, a shaky foundation subsequently affects the child's opportunity for holistic learning and growth. ECD is under the County Government in Kenya under the devolved constitution 2010. However there are private actors and NGOs, FBOS that run ECD centres. However by law, the GoK is duty bound to inspect them under the Basic Education Act, 2013. It consists of the following major services: Nursery School, Pre-Unit Class, Kindergarten, Day Nursery, Playgroup, Madrassa and Home-Based Care Centers. The individual institutions are mandated to prepare their own curriculum, which should be aimed at all areas of development – social, emotional and cognitive but unfortunately more emphasis is put on the academic preparation for primary school. What most pre-school owners in Kenya have failed to understand is that, for optimal development of a child to occur, there is need to create a planned curriculum, encompassing developmentally appropriate knowledge and skills, with flexibility for contextualization.

One great concern is the government's inability to regulate and control the establishment and operations of ECDE in the country whose total effect is the maladjustment on the child not only in terms of cognitive but both psychological and psycho-motor wise. Ultimately, the maladjustments have a long term effect on Kenya's development as a whole. In a bid to force formal learning and competition at this early age, most ECDE institutions use a punitive kind of assessment. The children are assessed through exams and assignments and are punished when they fail to meet the threshold (Shitubi and Wanyama, 2012). These punitive methods deny a child the opportunity to develop holistically. The ideal

assessment of the children at this early age should be formative and continuous from the experiences planned in a curriculum. This implies documenting the development of the child, by interpreting the day to day experiences of the child with the purpose of recognizing and encouraging strengths and addressing developmental gaps.

The Kenyan Constitution provides that every child has a right to free and compulsory basic education inclusive of ECDE, which entails quality services, and access to educational institutions and facilities for all persons including those with disabilities. Similarly, the Kenya Vision 2030 also recognizes that education and training of all Kenyans is fundamental to the success of the vision. The KICD syllabus indicates that early childhood education should provide education geared towards development of the child's mental and physical capabilities, foster the child's exploration skills, creativity, self-expression and discovery, foster the spiritual and moral growth of the child and develop the child's aesthetic and artistic skills (Sue, 2012). It was because of this that the study sought to establish Teachers' Perception on Oral Questioning as a Method of Assessment of Holistic Development among lower public primary school learners in Kisumu Central Sub-County, Kenya.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Abrahams Maslow's humanistic holistic learning theory, proposed by Carl Rogers & Abraham Maslow(1968-1969). Humanistic holistic learning is based on the premise that all humans have a natural tendency to grow, to learn and to develop fully. Carl Rogers described this as an instinctive inner core that moves people towards reaching their full potential (Rogers, 1969). Abraham Maslow (1968) used the term "self-actualization" to describe humans' innate, natural progression to their highest state. The goal of human education then is to create educational experiences that align with these natural desires. When students learn naturally, they learn more, they learn joyously, and they learn more deeply. However, when students are coerced into learning through external motivation they learn less and they learn not to like learning.

Humanistic holistic learning theory was found appropriate for this study because it emphasizes learning by creating a structured environment with differentiated instruction where learners have the chance to explore activities of interest to them, learn in ways that are more natural (active learning, social interaction, real life problem solving and activities) and learn at their own pace. The theories of child development main question therefore, is not whether tests should be administered or not, but there is a general consensus that, when administered in useful ways, tests can offer useful information about learners progress and curriculum implementation, as well as offering formative uses for learners. The real issue, then, is whether testing practices as currently implemented can provide these services for educators and this study will enrich this theory with a view to improving the learning environment of ECDE learners (Bagnato, 2005).

2.2 Literature Review

An oral assessment is a direct means of assessing students' learning outcomes by questioning them. Unlike interviews which usually have a structured question list, oral assessment does not usually have a structured list of questions; assessors ask questions and request responses depending on the circumstances (Chan, 2008). Studies have been done on assessment methods among learners at different levels and different subjects.

For example, a study was conducted in Malaysia by Majid, (2011) on concern of English teachers on school-based assessment. Questionnaires were used to collect data for the study. Findings from the study indicated that the respondents were concerned about the innovation and their concerns were multidimensional regardless of their experiences in the innovation. The findings were not only enlightening to the Malaysian English teachers themselves but also their professional development. The findings further revealed that teachers held the opinion that school based assessment develops learner's social emotional and physical development of young learners. Thus informed decisions could be made while planning for the in-service teacher training on the school based assessment. The above reviewed study investigated the concern of English teachers on school based assessment but not on concern of teachers' on assessment methods of holistic development. Another study in USA by Gao(2007) investigated assessment approaches preferred by teachers of young learners and used 180 teachers as the participants. Experimental research design was used in the study while data was collected through document analysis approach. Inferential statistics were used to analyze the collected data. The study findings revealed that many teachers preferred authentic assessment approaches over more traditional assessment methods. The study also revealed that there was positive relationship between the use of oral assessment practices and social emotional development of a child learning outcomes.

In Turkey, Ozdemir&Sibel (2013) studied the perception of primary school teachers regarding new science and technology curriculum of Turkey in terms of teaching and assessment methods, used 4th and 5th grade public schools. The research designs included survey and qualitative research in nature which were non-experimental research methods. The quantitative part of the study included questionnaire administration and qualitative parts of the included interviews. The findings revealed that primary school teachers have various perceptions to apply in teaching and assessment methods related experience students'parents administrators resources opportunities time and science books. The study revealed that most teachers believed that assessing science skills orally develop the cognitive and physical domain but not spiritual domain. The abovereviewed study focused on the teaching and assessment of science and technology in primary schools but not on holistic development of learners. Another case study conducted in America by Robinson (2008) on oral assessment, suggested that because there are so many aspects to knowing a language, assessing the language proficiency of an English language learner is a highly complex task. The study revealed that, oral assessment assess many skills like the cognitive, social and even language skill, but with written test, it is difficult to be sure a test items assesses what it proposes to assess. Perhaps when a student is answering written listening comprehension questions, it is her reading ability that is actually being tested. The above reviewed study investigated the assessment of English skills but not on assessment of holistic development, therefore, the present study focused on assessment methods of holistic development of ECDE learners thereby filling gap in literature.

A study conducted in Kenya by Gacheri and Ndege (2014) on science process skills application in practical assessment in Trans Mara district. The target population comprised of schools and students body. The findings revealed that most of schools do not adequately test students in science process skills in biology practical examination. Analysis of biology KCSE practical examination showed that drawing and measurement skills are not adequately tested. Students are also rarely given practical tests. There were no enough facilities in the laboratories for use during practical tests. The above reviewed study was conducted to assess science skills tested in secondary schools but not on assessment methods of holistic development of ECDE learners in pre-school and lower primary schools thereby filling the gap in literature. In USA, Selman (2012) studied the assessment of personality development used ex post facto design. University students were the main respondents in the study. The findings of the study revealed that oral interview only favored the students whose personality is developed. Moreover, Makvana (2012) investigated effects of self-confidence among school students in India. Two level types of institutions were considered in the group of urban and rural school students and two level types of sex were considered in the group of male and female school students. The findings revealed that the students of urban area are more developed compared to students of rural areas in relation to self-confidence. The self confidence among the male students was found higher compared to female school students. Finally, another study conducted in Korea by Hyesook (2012) on the relationship between learners' anxiety self-confidence and oral performance. The participants were 132 Korean college students who enrolled in the English conversation classes. Factor analysis indicated that communication anxiety, criticism anxiety and examination anxiety were the main components of anxiety while situational confidence, communication confidence, language potential confidence and language ability confidence were the components of self-confidence for Korean learners of English. The result showed that there were significant effects of anxiety and self-confidence on learner's oral performance

From the reviewed studies, most of them were carried out in contexts that were different from the early childhood level contexts. Moreover, in majority of studies, the approaches used were either qualitative or quantitative. The present study filled in gaps in literature by focusing on holistic development among learners in child hood level.

2.3 Goal of the Study

The study sought to examine Teachers' perception on oral questioning as a method of assessment of holistic development of Kenyan Early Childhood Learners.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted concurrent triangulation design. The purpose of this design was to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic. The intent in using this design was to bring together the differing strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses of quantitative methods with those of qualitative methods (Creswell 2004). The design was found appropriate for this study because the researcher wanted to directly compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings or to validate or expand quantitative results with qualitative data. It is an efficient design in which

both types of data are collected during one phase of the research at roughly the same time.

3.2 *Study Participants*

The target population for the study was 354. That is, 234 lower primary school teachers, 90 ECDE teachers and 30 head-teachers in Kisumu Central Sub-county, Kisumu County Kenya. From the target population, a sample size of 184 respondents were involved in the study (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). That is, 122 lower primary teachers, 47 ECDE teachers and 15 primary school Head teachers.

The 122 lower primary school teachers and 47 ECDE teachers were selected using the simple random sampling technique, while 15 primary school Head teachers were selected using purposive sampling technique.

3.3 *Research Instruments*

Both Questionnaire and Interviews were used to collect data. A Questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire were administered to both lower primary and ECDE teachers since they are directly involved in assessment of ECDE learners. Likert's scale was used where the respondents were asked to make a choice based on their opinion whether they Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree based on the question asked. The questionnaires had two parts; the first with closed questions which sought to gather demographic information, and the second with closed questions which sought to establish opinions from respondents and gather more of the quantitative data about the perception of teachers on assessment methods of holistic development of the learners. In addition, semi structured interviews were used for the study and they were conducted among head teachers. This is because the number sampled under these two were manageable. The interview schedule was appropriate for the study as it provided in-depth information and a detailed understanding of the issue under research. The information on the interview schedule was tape recorded.

The researcher ensured validity of questionnaires through expert judgment that is with the help of lectures from Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University. Moreover, the items in the questionnaire were made clearer and also arranged from simple to complex. Reliability of the instrument was tested using internal consistency and a reliability coefficient of 0.892 was reported. According to Pavot, Diener, Colvin and Sandvik (1991), the questionnaires has good internal consistency, since the Cronbach alpha coefficient reported is greater than the recommended value of 0.85.

3.4 *Data Collection Procedures*

Data collection procedure began after the proposal had been accepted and approved by the university supervisors. An introductory letter was acquired from Board of post graduate studies of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University. Permission to proceed to the field and collect data was sought from the National Council of Science and Technology, then permission from the Kisumu Sub-County Education office was also sought. Data collection was through questionnaires which were be administered to lower primary teachers and preschool teachers and interview schedules were administered to the head teachers and DICECE officers. With permission from the head teachers and the consent of lower primary and ECDE teachers, the questionnaires were distributed to the lower primary teachers and preschool teachers from the sampled schools. Completed questionnaires were collected as per the date of agreement with the respondents. Interviews were carried out among selected head teachers and each took an approximate time of 30 minutes. The responses were tape recorded.

Ethical considerations were also ensured in the research. According to Wolverton (2009), the researcher has to be careful to avoid causing physical or psychological harm to respondents by asking irrelevant questions, threatening language or making respondents nervous. The appropriateness and acceptability of our behavior as a researcher will be affected by broader social norms of behavior, (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhills, 2008). Some of the key ethical issues relating to research process according to Saunders, Lewis and Thorn hills (2008) are; privacy of possible and actual participants, voluntary nature of participation, consent and possible deception of participation and maintenance of confidentiality of data provided. Hence consent and confidentiality factors were valued during the entire study process.

3.5 *Data Analysis*

Data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data obtained from questionnaires was analysed by using descriptive statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. According to

Wolverto (2009), descriptive analysis involves a process of transforming a mass of raw data into tables, charts, with frequency distribution and percentages. Qualitative data was analysed using the thematic framework. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), it is a method for identifying analyzing and patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes data set in details. Furthermore, thematic analysis interprets various aspects of research. Thematic analysis was found appropriate for this study because it is not grounded in any particular theoretical and epistemological framework and can therefore be applied across a wide range of qualitative research approaches, making it flexible.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

The purpose of the study was to find out teachers' perception on oral questioning as a method of assessing holistic development of ECDE learners in public primary schools in Kisumu Central Sub-county. An oral questioning as a method of assessment is a direct means of assessing students' learning outcomes by questioning them orally. To do this, the researcher developed a questionnaire designed to evaluate their views on oral questioning as a method of assessing holistic development of ECDE learners. In exploring teachers' perceptions, items were drawn relating to oral questioning as a method of assessing holistic development of the learners. They were twelve Likert-scaled items type of statements, in which respondents chose from 4-point score; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The respondents were asked to rate the statements in relation to their views on oral questioning method of assessing ECDE learners.

The study findings showed that oral questioning is suitable for use when the area of concern or interest does not necessarily require written aspect. The researcher computed percentage frequencies of the responses from the teachers and tabulated it as shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Percentage frequency response on oral method of assessment

Item	SA	A	D	SD
Oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess physical development of ECDE learners.	9.46	43.92	37.16	9.46
Oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess emotional development of ECDE learners.	18.92	68.24	0.00	12.84
Intellectual development of ECDE learners is effectively assessed by oral questioning method of assessment.	10.14	55.41	25.00	9.46
Moral development of ECDE learners is effectively assessed by oral questioning method of assessment	0.68	87.84	11.49	0.00
Oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess the social development of ECDE learners.	33.78	45.95	20.27	0.00
Oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess the spiritual development of ECDE learners.	33.78	62.84	0.00	3.38
It is true to say that physical development of ECDE learners can be well assessed through oral questioning method of assessment.	0.68	45.27	34.46	19.59
At school, learners' emotional development is assessed well when teachers assess them orally	9.46	77.70	3.38	9.46
Assessment by oral questioning method of assessment is the best when teachers want to assess the intellectual development of ECDE learners.	18.24	52.03	29.73	0.00
To assess moral development of ECDE learners, teachers should assess them orally.	0.00	37.84	62.16	0.00
The most accurate method of assessment when assessing social development of ECDE learners is oral questioning method.	8.11	54.73	37.16	0.00
Spiritual development of ECDE learners is assessed well when they are assessed orally through oral questioning technique.	9.46	44.59	36.49	9.46

Just like other methods of assessments, majority of the respondents had a perception that oral assessment could be used to measure holistic growth and development of an ECDE learner. 87.16% of the respondents believed that at school, learners' emotional development is assessed well when teachers assess them orally but 9.46% refuted the claim. However, another big proportion (strongly agree: 18.92%; agree 68.24%) of the ECDE teachers who participated in the study held a view that oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess emotional development of ECDE learners, only 12.84% of the ECDE teachers' participant in the study thought otherwise.

The study also revealed that majority of the respondents had a perception that holistic development of a learner especially ECDE child can be assessed using oral questioning. 70.27% of them believed that oral questioning method of assessment is the best when teachers want to assess the intellectual development of an ECDE learner, only 29.73% of them held a divergent opinion. In fact, despite the fact that 9.46% of the teachers who participated in the study did agree that intellectual development of ECDE learners is effectively assessed by oral questioning method of assessment, majority (66.55%) of them were in agreement that oral questioning is very effecting in assessing learners' intellectual growth and development.

Consistent with the generally held opinion that social aspect of a person can only be gauged when a person is engaged in oral discussion and communication; the findings of this study showed that many teachers who participated in the study held the same opinion. Majority (74.73%) of them agreed that oral questioning method of assessment effectively assess the social development of ECDE learners, only a fifth (20.27%) of them somehow disagreed with that opinion. Despite all that, only 37.16% held a different opinion, but most (62.84%) of the respondents held the view that the most accurate method of assessment when assessing social development of ECDE learners is oral questioning method. It also emerged from the study that oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess moral development of ECDE learners, opinion held by more than half (53.36%) of the respondents.

In support of that view, 87.84% of the respondents affirmed that moral growth and development of ECDE learners is effectively assessed by oral questioning method of assessment, which was quite overwhelming compared 11.49% of the teachers who refuted the claim. On measure of spiritual growth and development, majority (54.05%) of the respondents held the view that spiritual development of ECDE learners is assessed well when they are assessed orally through oral questioning technique, only 9.46% of the respondent held a contrary opinion. In fact, with exception of only 3.38% of the respondents, nearly all (96.62%) of the ECDE teachers who participated in this study confirmed that oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess the spiritual development of ECDE learners. Holistic growth and development cannot be in totality without the aspect of physical growth and development. However, this is an area that elicited great divergent opinions from the respondents. Whereas the majority (54.05%) of the respondents held the view that oral assessment is not suitable method for gauging physical growth and development among the ECDE learners and added that observation would most suited method of assessment, 45.27% of the respondents said that physical development of ECDE learners can as well be assessed through oral questioning method of assessment.

Qualitative data was also obtained on the extent to which Oral Questioning Method of Assessment assess Holistic Development of ECDE Learners. Most of the respondents reported that oral questioning method of assessment was very critical in assessing only certain aspects holistic development of ECDE learners. The participants reported that oral questioning effectively assesses language development, cognitive development, social development, and personality development of the learners.

Cognitive development is the development of the thinking and organizing systems of the mind. Most of the respondents reported that oral questioning method of assessment effectively assesses the cognitive development of ECDE learners. Three Respondents reported that,

"Oral questioning to a great extent assess the cognitive domain as there is a direct feedback on a child's comprehension ability of the question being asked" (Head teacher, 7)

"Oral questioning method of assessment is most appropriate for the development of the cognitive domain because it makes the child think immediately" (Head teacher, 2)

"Oral questioning method involves speech work and therefore the brain must co-ordinate what is in the mind with what is spoken out" (Head teacher, 1)

This means that the respondent believed that oral questioning method of assessment was a very effective way of assessing the cognitive development of ECDE learners.

Social development can be defined as prioritizing human needs in the growth and progression of society. That is, the social development also governs the norms and conventions that govern human interaction. Some respondents reported that social development of a learner can effectively be assessed through oral questioning. Two respondents reported that,

"When learners are assessed orally, they freely interact with the teacher hence enhance their social competence" (Head teacher, 5)

"Oral questions help the learners to express themselves during play" (Head teacher, 3)

This means that the respondents felt that oral questioning method of assessment can effectively assess the social development of ECDE learners.

Personality development can be defined as the relatively enduring patterns of thoughts feelings and behaviour that distinguish individuals from one another. Some respondents reported that oral questioning method of assessment effectively assesses the personality of individual learner. For example some respondents reported that,

"A teacher asking oral questions and a learner responding means that the learner has developed some good personality" (Head teacher, 4)

"Oral questioning method of assessment is good because it implicates the personality of the learner" (Head teacher, 6)

This means that the respondents believed that oral questioning method of assessment effectively assess the personality of the learner. From the interview results, it was evident that oral questioning is critical in the assessment of personality development of ECDE learners.

5. Discussion

The study findings revealed that most participants held a view that oral questioning methods of assessment effectively assess emotional development of ECDE learners. This finding is in agreement with Gao (2007) in USA whose study revealed that there was positive relationship between the use of oral assessment practices and social emotional development of a child learning outcomes. Moreover, the study also reported that intellectual development of ECDE learners was effectively assessed by oral questioning method of assessment. This finding is supported by Robinson (2008) whose study revealed that, oral assessment assess many skills like the cognitive, social and even language skill, but with written test, it is difficult to be sure a test items assesses what it proposes to assess. Perhaps when a student is answering written listening comprehension questions, it is her reading ability that is actually being tested. Or it may be that the same item assesses different respondents' vocabulary, knowledge in one student and inference ability in another.

In addition, most respondents also reported that the most accurate method of assessment when assessing social development of ECDE learners is oral questioning method. This finding is supported by Robinson (2008) whose study revealed that, oral assessment assess many skills like the cognitive, social and even language skill, but with written test, it is difficult to be sure a test items assesses what it proposes to assess. Other findings were also that the respondents believed that oral questioning method of assessment effectively assessed the personality of the learner. From the interview results, it was evident that oral questioning is critical in the assessment of personality development of ECDE learners. The finding is supported by Selman (2012) in USA whose study revealed that oral interview only favoured the students whose personality is developed. Finally, majority of the respondents held the view that oral assessment is not suitable method for gauging physical growth and development among the ECDE learners and added that observation would most suited method of assessment. This finding is agreement with Majid (2011) whose study revealed that teachers held the opinion that school based oral assessment develops learners' social emotional, moral and physical domains.

6. Concluding Remarks

The study investigated Teachers' perception on oral questioning as a method of assessment of holistic development of Kenyan Early Childhood Learners. The study found that oral questioning was perceived to be effective in assessing emotional, cognitive, social and personality development. However, it was also reported that oral questioning was not effective in assessment of aspects such as physical growth and development, spiritual development, moral development which are crucial forms of holistic development among early child hood learners. Therefore the oral questioning alone when used by teachers may not effectively assess the development of learners holistically.

Based on the findings of the study there are various implications: First, Guidance and counseling teachers should be encouraged to roll their services down to ECDE learners to enable the learners grow emotionally, spiritually and morally upright. In addition, the ECDE teachers who should take the initiative of building and boosting self-esteem of the learners so that they can always believe in themselves. Moreover, the ECDE teachers and school administrators should be encouraged to embrace oral questioning method of assessment to ensure personality development of ECDE learners is captured during the assessment process. Finally, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should develop a policy that encourages the curriculum implementers (teachers) to embrace oral assessment method in ECDE settings.

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