

EVALUATION OF LANGUAGE PROVISIONS: LEVEL OF AWARENESS AND IMPLEMENTATION BY BASIC EDUCATION TEACHERS

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Abstract

Language is conceptualized as a vehicle for thought and communication of the curriculum contents and schools are constitutionally entrusted to actualize the national policy on education and desired development. The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the language provisions of the National Policy on Education (NPE) and to examine the level of awareness and implementation of the policy by Basic Education teachers in Aba education zone. The study also attempted to explore the challenges of implementation of the policy. Descriptive survey design was employed and stratified random sampling technique was used to select 224 teachers from public, private, and mission schools. Mother Tongue Based Instruction Questionnaire (MTBIQ) was used for data collection. Twenty-item Likert type instrument was validated and Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of .96 was yielded. The study attempted to answer three research questions using descriptive statistics and test three null hypotheses using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The results indicated a significant difference in the level of awareness and implementation of the language provisions as stipulated in NPE by Basic Education teachers. Findings further revealed that multilingual nature of urban schools and lack of teaching materials in MT are some of the challenges of implementing MTBI. Based on the findings, recommendations were made that government, among others, should monitor the implementation of the language policy and provide teaching materials in Nigerian languages.

Keywords: Language Provisions, Mother Tongue Based Instruction, Awareness, Implementation.

Introduction:

Language, according to Hornby (2010), is the system of communication, speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country. Adejmolola (2010) stated that language, as instrument of communication, sustains social, cultural, economic, educational, industrial and technological development in any society or nation, especially in an ultra-multilingual nation. Emphasizing the role of language in education, Adejmolola stressed that it is a vehicle for thought and communication of curriculum contents. Language, indeed, is essential to the identity of groups and individuals; it constitutes a strategic factor of progress towards sustainable development and a harmonious relationship between the global and local context. Language is of utmost importance in achieving the educational goals as stated in the National Policy on Education (NPE) and schools are constitutionally entrusted to its actualization.

Over the years, there has been advocacy for use of Nigerian languages for education, government, mass media and so on (Aziza, 2015). As factors of social integration, Nigerian languages can be used as supports for literacy, learning, life skills and for achieving the Universal Basic Education (UBE) (Ateeque, 2010). Furthermore they can play effective role in the eradication of hunger and poverty and utilized as media of enlightenment on HIV/AIDS, and other diseases. The achievement of all these are intrinsically linked to the indigenous languages, the languages of the population concerned. The National Policy on Education (NPE) is a legal document that expresses the mind of the government on various education matters of the nation (Ojetunde, 2012). It contains the government statement on the planned course of action. The meaningfulness of the NPE includes a policy on language or languages that would serve as a medium of instruction in schools, in order to achieve the desired goal.

Language Provisions

Language provisions, as stipulated in NPE for pre-primary education states that “... every child shall be taught in the mother tongue or language of the immediate community for the first four years of basic education; in addition, it is expected that every child shall learn one Nigerian Language.” (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2013:2). Pre-primary education is education given in an education institution to children aged 3 to 5+ years, prior to their entering the primary school which will ensure a smooth transition from home to school; and prepare the child for primary level of education (FRN, 2013).

There is a particular recognition given to the goals and objectives of pre-primary education and to achieve the objectives, it was stated further in the NPE that “government will ensure that the medium of instruction will be principally the mother tongue or language of the immediate community and to this end will:

- develop the orthography of many Nigerian languages and
- produce textbooks on Nigerian languages” [FRN, 2013:6].

Language provision of the NPE for primary education is very similar to that of pre-primary education and states that “the medium of instruction in primary schools shall be the language of the immediate environment for the first three years in mono-lingual communities; during this period, English shall be taught as a subject” [FRN, 2013:8]. Interpreting the policy statements, The Mother Tongue (MT) and the Language of the Immediate Community (LIC) are encouraged as language of instruction at the pre-primary and primary levels while English is taught as a subject only in Primaries 1 – 3. Collaborating with the policy statement, scholars such as Bamgbose (1979), Afolayan (1988) and Fafunwa (1982) cited in Ojetunde (2012) asserted that MT ought to be the medium of instruction of children at the early stages of their lives. Agreeing to this, Akindele and Adegbite (2005) contended that using the mother tongue at nursery school will complement children’s acquisition of the language at home and this helps them to further learn their environments’ socio-cultural norms.

It is noteworthy that the NPE in 1977, 1981, 1998, 2004 and 2008 respectively emphasized the use of MT as medium of instruction in pre-primary education and MT and/or LIC in primaries 1 – 3. A close observation of practices in our school indicates that the language provisions in the NPE over the years are far from implementation. This study therefore, evaluates the language provisions

in the NPE, the level of awareness among pre-primary and primaries 1 – 3 teachers and the challenges in implementation of MTBI.

Theoretical Framework

Spolsky's (2011:1) theory of Language policy postulates that "the goal of a theory of language policy is to account for the choices made by individual speakers on the basis of rule-governed patterns recognized by the speech community or communities of which they are member". The three assumptions of the theory are as follows:

- language policy is a social phenomenon constructed in a variety of domains, including homes and schools;
- language policy portrays three separate but interrelated components: beliefs, practices, and management and
- the influence of internal and external forces on language choice may come from within or outside of the domain and may be language-related or not.

The components of language policy are as shown in Figure 1.

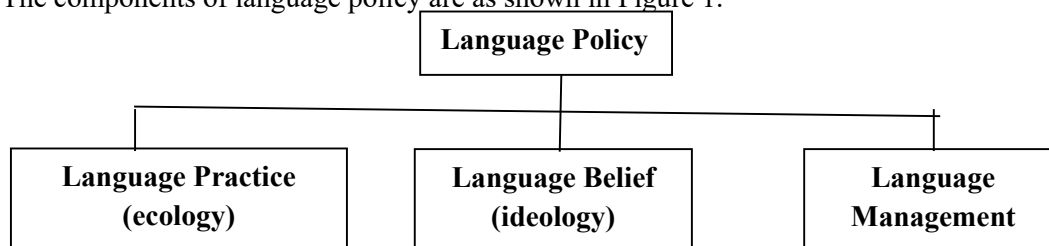


Figure 1. *The components of language policy*
[Source: Spolsky, 2011]

An overview of the components of the language policy reveals language belief, practice and management. Belief, also referred to as ideology, explains the values held by members of a speech community. The belief a group of people hold about language determines the practice, in other words, the choice made within a community. Language practices (ecology) have to do with language selections that people actually make. This is often described in terms of the sound, word, and grammatical choices made within a community as well as the societal rules about when and where different varieties of language should be used. These practices are shaped by the complex ecology of language, or in other words, the interaction between language and social environment (Spolsky, 2004). Language management deals with any effort made to influence the practices. Language practice also known as language planning emphasizes the direct intervention aimed at shaping the way in which a policy is enacted (Spolsky, 2004). Language managers include any person or entity that attempts to affect the language choice of other people whereas management in this context is commonly associated with individuals or documents possessing legal authority like the NPE.

The present study sought to evaluate language provisions in the NPE in line with teachers' practices in schools, that is, choice of language of instruction and the commitment of the government, the language manager, to influence the teachers on the choice of language instrument thereby monitoring the implementation of the language policy.

Mother Tongue Based Instruction (MTBI)

Hornby (2010) defines mother tongue as the language that one first learns to speak as a child; one's native language. To Aziza (2015:6) mother tongue is "the language a child learns effortlessly from both at home with which the parents introduce him to the world and in which he learns to interact and socialize early in life". It is also the language of a child's home, society and culture; it gives the child an identity that he carries wherever he goes. The characteristics of MT as can be seen in the definition qualify it, as a great asset, as a medium of instruction in pre-primary and primaries 1– 3, as provided in the NPE.

There is a growing trend around the world to support MTBI in the early years of the child's education and studies have long subscribed to the utilization of MT as the language of instruction. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report on the use of vernacular as a medium of instruction stated as follows:

It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium (UNESCO, 1953:11).

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), appreciating the importance of MTBI, commented as follows:

There is ample research showing that students are quicker to learn to read and acquire other academic skills when first taught in the mother tongue. They also learn a second language more quickly than those initially taught to read in an unfamiliar language (UNICEF, 1999:41).

There is evidence in most empirical research on literacy outcome related to MTBI. Cummins (2000) in his study indicated that English or other second language literacy skills develop more easily and efficiently when they are based on a child's understanding of their first language. He therefore, concluded that education in MT serves the purpose of gaining literacy in additional language. This finding is in line with Mallozzi and Malloy (2007) who found that strong first language abilities advance cognitive development in children and allow them to more easily negotiate subject matter. Lending credence to these research findings, Burton (2013) in her study, which aimed at comparing teachers' and parents' knowledge, beliefs, and practices on Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the context of the Philippines national policy statements, revealed that teachers' and parents' were overwhelmingly satisfied with the increase in students' understanding while they express concern about future implications of learning in MT rather than in English. She concluded that the problem of acceptance and proper implementation of the policy revolve around the way in which language policy is managed by policy makers.

Demonstrating how MT provides a platform for proficiency in second language, a study carried out in Ife, Nigeria, indicated that students who learned in their MT for six years showed higher overall academic achievement gains than students who only learned in their first language for three years. The first group showed no difference in English proficiency from the second group despite

having had fewer years in English as the medium of instruction (Fafunwa, Macauley & Sokoya, 1989 cited in Burton, 2013). Other benefits of MTBI include improved academic skill and development of critical thinking skill (Brock-Utne, 2006; Walter & Dekkar, 2011) and increased access to education and strong classroom participation (Benson, 2000; Benson, 2004c).

In spite of the benefits of language in general and MT as the optional language medium policy for effective and meaningful education, Alexander (2003) contended that it is not always possible to use the mother tongue in schools and even when possible, some factors may impede its effective utilization. One of such impediments can be traced to the set of beliefs about language articulated by users as a justification of perceived language structure and utilization. Beliefs or ideologies are affected by a group's consensus of which language is appropriate for which speaker to use when addressing which listeners and for which purpose (Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000). The ideologies of stakeholders in education create natural resistance to MTBI. Teachers prefer to teach in English and most parents want their children to be instructed in English (Burton, 2013). Schroeder (2004) in his study found that community members are convinced of the importance of English language in education and believe that mastery in official language is essential for education and economic opportunity. They therefore, assume that the best way to develop such mastery is to teach in English language in school.

Ohiri – Aniche (2002a) identified problems impeding the implementation of MTBI as follows:

- multilingual states find it difficult to cater for numerous languages;
- in urban areas, classes contain a mixture of children from different ethno-linguist groups;
- apart from the three main Nigerian languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, most of the other Nigerian languages lack orthographies, textbooks, approved curriculum and trained teachers;
- there is generally a negative attitude to indigenous languages by parents, pupils, students and school authorities alike and
- indigenous languages suffer poor funding and lack overall support from the government.

Trudell (2007) explained that strong values for English are founded in the long term advantage perceived by parents, teachers and stakeholders. In line with Trudell, Iyamu and Ogiegbaen (2007) investigated into teachers and parents' perceptions of MT instruction and found that teachers and parents' resistance is a major constraint to implementation of MTBI. Based on this, they advocated for orientation of parents, teachers and in fact, the society at large on the policy and the potential outcomes. Stone (2012) asserts that MTB-MLE professional development approaches can improve teachers' attitudes towards the policy.

Policies like language policy are made in positions of authority but implementation is not guaranteed. Owing to the importance and benefits associated with MTBI, it will be rarely contested at pedagogical grounds but structural challenges can impede proper implementation of the programme (Burton, 2013). MTBI is ultimately ineffective when there is a lack of materials, poor teacher training and inadequate language development. Ambatchew (2010:208) argued that "unless a rich environment of books, posters, televisions and radio programs are created in the medium or media of instruction, the students are doomed for failure". This observation is evident in Nigeria in that National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) which has the mandate to develop

orthography in Nigerian languages and text books to support the MTBI at pre-basic and basic education level is yet to be adequately funded to live up to her mandate (Ateequ, 2010).

Another challenge that conditions the implementation of the language policy provisions is lack of awareness. Teachers are the implementers of the curriculum which is based on the NPE. One will observe that there is dilution of the policy statement as it flows from the policy makers to the teachers who are the implementers of the education policies. It has been observed that policies concerning education take some time before it reaches the classroom teacher, on whom the success of the change depends (Hayes, 2000). Teachers are particular stakeholders that are of interest in this study being responsible for the implementation or appropriation of national policy directives and because of their relationship between the children affected by the policy.

Teachers are described as central agents of implementation, when it comes to language policy (Silver & Skuja – Steel, 2005). This is because they reside at the classroom level where the implementation happens. Therefore, language policy may fail if the policy makers do not gain the necessary commitment from those who directly interact with and influence children (Lipsky 1980 cited in Burton, 2013). Fullan (2003) and Chapman (2009) in their separate studies suggested variables that can influence teachers' willingness to support reform like language policy, such as improved working condition, reasonable workload and continued support and training. This indicates that the role of the teacher in the success of language policy should be given much attention since their actions in the classroom are contextualized and adapted according to their own language ideologies (Johnson & Freeman, 2010). Lending credence to the foregoing, Creese (2010:34) commented that:

Individually and collectively teachers within their school communities will operate policy according to their local contexts, experiences and values even where there is strong element of statutory compliance. They will interact with policy not in one-to-one reading of what is required, but in an interactive frame which involves their own interpretation within their own localized communities.

Therefore assumptions that practice across contexts are uniform simply because of a single policy statement might be misleading.

Statement of Problem

The language provisions of the NPE which over the years, stated that the medium of instruction in pre-primary up to primary 3 should be MT or LIC is yet to be actualized. Thus, the studies seek to investigate the Basic Education teachers' awareness of the language provisions and factors that impede its effective implementation relative to their schools' proprietorship.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the Basic Education teachers' levels of awareness of the language provisions of the NPE based on school proprietorship?
2. What is the level of implementation of language provisions of the NPE by Basic Education teachers based on school proprietorship?
3. What challenges impede the implementation of language provisions of the NPE as perceived by Basic Education teachers based on school proprietorship?

Null Hypotheses

The null hypotheses that guided the study are:

1. The Basic Education teachers' awareness of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.
2. The level of implementation of language provisions of the NPE does differ significantly based on school proprietorship.
3. The Basic Education teachers' perception of the challenges that impede the implementations of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

Methodology

Design: The research design is a descriptive survey. It is a descriptive survey because the study described a sample of Basic Education teachers' level of awareness, level of implementation and perception of the challenges that impede implementation of language provisions of NPE.

Participants: The population comprises the entire Basic Education teachers in Aba Education Zone who teach pre-primary and primaries 1 to 3. The primary schools were stratified along proprietorship of schools. A total of 62, 125, and 37 teachers from public, private, and mission schools respectively were randomly selected from each stratum, giving a sample size of 224.

Instrument: The instrument was a structured Likert type questionnaire with items adapted from Burton (2013). It consists of closed ended items that targeted the Basic Education teachers' awareness of language provision of NPE, level of implementation of MTBI and challenges in implementation of MTBI. The first part of the questionnaire elicited information on demographic data while the second part was on a five-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Undecided (U) as response format. Respondents were required to tick their various options as regards MTBI as appropriate. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the instrument was .96. The value was adjudged suitable for use of the instrument for the study.

Analysis: The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20). The data analysis comprised descriptive statistics used in answering the research questions and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for testing the hypothesis. The response for items of the questionnaire were weighted SA (4), A (3), D (2), SD (1) U (0). The boundaries of each response in the 5-point Likert scale were calculated by dividing the serial width (4) by the number of responses (5) and were found to be 0.8. (Topkaya, 2010) This value was used to interpret the mean values. Depending on this calculation the accepted boundaries for each response are presented below:

0 =	$0.0 + 0.8 = 0.8;$	0.0 – 0.8	Undecided
1 =	$0.8 + 0.8 = 1.6$	0.9 – 1.6	Strongly Disagree
2 =	$1.6 + 0.8 = \mathbf{2.4}$	1.7 – 2.4	Disagree
3 =	$2.4 + 0.8 = 3.2$	2.5 – 3.2	Agree
4 =	$3.2 + 0.8 = 4.0$	3.3 – 4.0	Strongly Agree

Therefore, based on the calculations, a mean score of 2.4 on the scale was considered the indication of moderate presence of the issue raised; a mean above 2.4 is a high mean and any mean score below 2.4 was taken as an indicator of low presence of the issue raised.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the Basic Education teachers' levels of awareness of the language provisions of NPE?

Table 1 *Percentage response on the basic teacher awareness of MTBI*

	Yes	No
Are you aware of the MTBI as stipulated in the NPE?	186 (83.0%)	38 (17.0%)

Table 1 revealed that 186 (83.0%) teachers were aware of MTBI and 38 (17.0%).

Research Question 2: What is the level of implementation of MTBI by Basic Education teachers?

Table 2: *Percentage response on teachers' use of MTBI*

	MT	English	MT/English
What language do you use for classroom instruction?	0 (0.0%)	49 (21.9%)	175 (78.1%)

Whereas no teacher uses MT only in instruction, 49 (21.9%) use English and 175 (78.1%) mix MT and English for pre-primary and primary education.

Research Question 3: What challenges impede the implementation of language provisions of the NPE by basic education teachers?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of challenges of implementation of MTBI

S/N	Statement	Sample size	Mean	Std. deviation	Decision
1	It is difficult to adopt MTBI because of the multilingual nature of urban school	32	3.44	1.11	Strongly Agree
2	I am prepared to adopt the policy of MTBI because it will make instruction a lot easier	32	2.53	1.48	Agree
3	Adopting MTBI will require a lot of extra work	32	2.56	1.13	Agree
4	The method I am using now is similar to MTBI	32	2.78	1.21	Agree
5	Basic education teachers are prepared in Colleges of education to teach using MT	32	2.09	1.38	Disagree
6	All teaching materials are written in English	32	2.72	1.02	Agree
7	There are no facilities for language learning	32	2.50	1.41	Agree
	Overall Mean	32	2.66	1.25	Agree

Table 3 shows that the mean score of participants on the challenges of implementing MTBI ranges from 2.09 to 3.44. The result indicates that the mean responses to all the items are above 2.40 bench mark except for item number 5. The overall mean for the whole items is 2.66 and standard deviation of 1.26. This indicates that Basic Education teachers agree to the challenges of implementing MTBI as represented by the items except for item number 5.

Hypothesis 1: The Basic Education teachers' awareness of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

Table 4 *ANOVA of teachers' awareness of language provisions based on school proprietorship*

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F
Between group	2.528	2	1.264	9.625*
Within group	29.025	221	.131	
Total	31.554	223		

*Significant at 0.05, F critical = 3.04

Table 4 revealed that the calculated F-ratio (9.625) is greater than the critical F-ratio (3.04) at degree of freedom of 2 & 221 and .05 alpha level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected showing the awareness of Basic Education teachers of the language provisions of the NPE differ significantly based on school proprietorship. The significance of F-ratio was further analyzed using Scheffe Post Hoc multiple comparison test to determine the pair-wise mean differences among the groups. The result is as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: *Scheffe Post Hoc Test for Hypothesis 1*

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Level of Awareness						
(I) Proprietorship	(J) Proprietorship	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Public (1)	2.00	-.22400*	.05629	.000	-.3627	-.0853
	3.00	-.27027*	.07529	.002	-.4558	-.0847
Private (2)	1.00	.22400*	.05629	.000	.0853	.3627
	3.00	-.04627	.06783	.793	-.2134	.1209
Mission (3)	1.00	.27027*	.07529	.002	.0847	.4558
	2.00	.04627	.06783	.793	-.1209	.2134

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5 shows that the mean difference public and private, public and mission, private and mission are .22400, .27027, and .04627 respectively. Given the relative mean score differences, the result suggests a significant mean difference between public and private schools and between public and mission schools. This implies that the level of awareness of MTBI is greater in public schools than in private and mission schools.

Hypothesis 2: The level of implementation of language provisions of the NPE does differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

Table 6: *ANOVA of teachers' level of implementation of language provisions based on school proprietorship*

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
Between Groups	4.217	2	2.108	13.679
Within Groups	34.064	221	.154	
Total	38.281	223		

*Significant at 0.05, F critical = 3.04

Table 6 indicated that the calculated F-ratio (13.679) is greater than the critical F-ratio (3.04) at degree of freedom of 2 & 221 and .05 alpha level. Based on the result the null hypothesis is rejected showing that the Basic Education teachers' level of implementation of the language provisions of the NPE differ significantly based on school proprietorship. Post Hoc test of the significant F-ratio is as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: *Scheffe Post Hoc Test for Hypothesis 2*

Multiple Comparisons							
Dependent Variable: Level of Implementation							
(I) Proprietorship	(J) proprietorship	Mean (I-J)	Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Public(1.00)	2.00	.28800*		.06099	.000	.1377	.4383
	3.00	.35135*		.08156	.000	.1504	.5523
Private(2.00)	1.00	-.28800*		.06099	.000	-.4383	-.1377
	3.00	.06335		.07348	.690	-.1177	.2444
Mission(3.00)	1.00	-.35135*		.08156	.000	-.5523	-.1504
	2.00	-.06335		.07348	.690	-.2444	.1177

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 7 reveals that the mean difference public and private, public and mission, private and mission are .28800, .35135, and .06335 respectively. The relative mean score differences shows that there is a significant mean difference between public and private schools and between public and mission schools. This implies that the level of implementation of MTBI is greater in public schools than in private and mission schools.

Hypothesis 3: The Basic Education teachers' perception of the challenges that impede the implementations of the language provisions of the NPE do not differ significantly based on school proprietorship.

Table 8: *ANOVA of the teachers' perception of the challenges that impede implementation of MTBI*

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	df	Mean square	F
Between group	138.906	2	69.453	5.760*
Within group	2664.590	221	12.057	
Total	2803.496	223		

*Significant at 0.05, F-critical = 3.04

Table 8 showed that F-calculated value (5.760) is greater than F-critical value (3.04) at degree of freedom 2, 221 and .05 alpha levels. Based on the result there is a significant difference in the teachers' perception of the challenges that impede implementation of the language provision of NPE based on school proprietorship. Since calculated F-ratio is significant, it is further analyzed using Post Hoc multiple comparison test shown on Table 9.

Table 9: *Scheffe Post Hoc Test for Hypothesis 3***Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Challenges of Implementation						
(I) Proprietorship	(J) Proprietorship	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Public(1.00)	2.00	1.79561*	.53937	.004	.4664	3.1249
	3.00	1.61378	.72134	.084	-.1639	3.3915
Private(2.00)	1.00	-1.79561*	.53937	.004	-3.1249	-.4664
	3.00	-.18184	.64986	.962	-1.7834	1.4197
Mission(3.00)	1.00	-1.61378	.72134	.084	-3.3915	.1639
	2.00	.18184	.64986	.962	-1.4197	1.7834

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 9 indicates that the mean difference between public and private, public and mission, private and mission are 1.79561, 1.61378, and .18184 respectively. The relative mean score difference suggests that there is a significant mean difference between public and private schools. This implies that the perception of teachers on the challenges that impede the implementation of MTBI is greater in public schools than in private schools.

Discussion

The result of the analysis presented in Table 1 revealed that basic education teachers are aware of the language provisions of use of MT in classroom instruction at pre-primary and primaries 1 - 3. Testing of Table 4 indicated a significant difference in the teachers' awareness of the language provisions of the NPE in relation to school proprietorship. Post Hoc Test in Table 5 shows that teachers in public schools are more aware of the language provisions than those in private and mission schools. The result is an indication that teachers from public schools are aware of the language provisions and other schools to a certain extent. This observation is in agreement with the findings of Spolsky (2004); Ojetunde (2012); Burton (2013) who in the independent studies found that the managers of the policy are not making concerted effort to monitor the implementation and to influence the practices in schools.

The result as shown in Table 2 indicated that Basic Education teachers do not strictly use MT as medium of instruction rather they prefer combining MT and English in classroom instruction. The result in Table 6 showed that there is significant difference in the teachers' level of implementation of MTBI in relation to school proprietorship. Further analysis indicated that whereas no school used only MT in instruction but mixture of MT and English Language, private schools use more of English Language in instruction than any other type of school. This result is expected because parents are resistant to the use of MT and private schools would want to maintain parents' patronage by using English Language in instruction. These findings collaborate with Schroeder (2004); Trudell (2007); Burton (2013) who in their separate studies found that parents, teachers and stakeholders have strong values for English Language having been convinced of its importance in education. Hence, they believe that mastery in official language is essential for education and economic development.

The result in Table 8 revealed a significant difference in teachers' perception of the challenges of implementation of language provision in the NPE based on school proprietorship. Post Hoc test in Table 9 further revealed that perception of challenges that impede the implementation of MTBI is more in Public schools. The finding is in line with Burton (2013) who found that teachers think

that it is difficult to adopt MTBI especially in multilingual urban schools where its adoption will entail a lot of extra work. Collaborating with the findings are studies of Ohiri-Aniche (2002a) and Ambatchew (2010) that identified multilingualism, lack of teaching material, general negative attitude toward MT, poor funding and lack of overall support of the government as impediments to implementation of MTBI. This finding is not surprising because teachers who are central to implementation of MTBI suffer poor working condition, excess work load, lack of support and training. There is also no commitment from the policy managers in monitoring the implementation of the language provisions of the NPE.

Conclusion

It has been established from the findings of the study that teachers of pre-primary and primaries 1 – 3 are all aware of the language provisions of the NPE irrespective of the proprietorship of their schools. The importance and would-be outcome of MTBI are appreciated; however the policy is yet to be fully implemented. This calls for orientation of stakeholders in education, especially teachers, to the policy and the potential outcome.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made.

1. Government should be alive to the language provisions of the NPE and constantly monitor schools to ensure implementation of the policy
2. Government should adequately fund National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) and train more Nigerian Language teachers.
3. Training in use of MT for instruction should be integrated in the teacher education programme.
4. There should be improved working conditions for teacher, reasonable workload and training.
5. Textbooks in Nigerian Languages and other relevant materials should be made available to schools by the government.

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