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**A Comparative Study on Assessment Practices Between Private and
Public Early Childhood Centres in Kumasi Metropolis, Ghana**



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A Comparative Study on Assessment Practices Between Private and Public Early Childhood Centres in Kumasi Metropolis, Ghana

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Abstract:

Purpose: Despite numerous quantitative studies on teachers' conceptions and practices of assessment, little research exists regarding the unique assessment environment of Kumasi Metropolis, Ghana. This study uses quantitative data to compare how teachers in private and public early childhood centres employ assessment practice in Kumasi Metropolis, Ghana.

Methodology: The study adopted a participant selection model in which quantitative data was analysed to select 232 participants from 149 schools with the use of descriptive survey design.

Results: The findings revealed that both private and public early childhood teachers make use of both formative and summative assessment practices in their classroom settings. Further analysis of the data revealed that both private and public teachers in the early childhood centres employed multiple assessment tools when assessing learning outcomes among children. However, public early childhood teachers have higher level of understanding of assessment practices than their counterparts in the private centres.

Unique Contributions to Theory, Policy and Practices: It is therefore recommended that headteachers in collaboration with the Metro Education Directorate should organise workshop to equip ECE teachers with skills on the use of the various assessment types in the early childhood centres especially those in the private schools. Again, headteachers and circuit supervisors, within Kumasi Metropolis should encourage ECE teachers to continually use multiple assessment tools in assessing learning outcomes. Lastly, more workshops and in-service trainings should be organized by the headteachers, with support from Metro Education Directorate, for private early childhood teachers in the Kumasi Metropolis to equip them with the knowledge on assessment practices, since they seem to have limited knowledge on it.

Keywords: *Comparative, Assessment, Children, Assessment Practices, Early Childhood Centres*

INTRODUCTION:

In the teaching and learning environment, there is a constant need to gauge the outcome or the quality of responsiveness of the teaching and learning process (Adom et al., 2020; Manichander, 2016). This important symbiotic process generally referred to as assessment, does not only occur after teaching but can also be undertaken before teaching is implemented or during the teaching process. More specifically, concepts of assessment and evaluation continue to dominate educational practice around the world. Though several scholars have advanced multiple interpretations, definitions and clarifications to these important educational concepts (Kivunja, 2015), the temptation to misconstrue one construct for the other have been a regular occurrence for student-teachers, educationists and even academics. In other words, these concepts have more often than not been erroneously used synonymously by practitioners to mean the same thing (Lane et al., 2016). As professional educators, this is unacceptable to the extent that our ability to distinguish these concepts and appropriately apply one or more within a given context is an important component of a teacher's professional practice. More so, depending on the nature and stage at which it is conducted, teachers have over the years applied different types of assessments for varied purposes. This study contends that, until classroom teachers have an appropriate appreciation of the nature of assessment, an effective educational assessment will remain a mirage. Thus, this study attempts to provide an overview of assessment and explain the uses of the key concepts in relation to educational practice among Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers withing Kumasi Metropolis.

Assessment is crucial for both policy makers and practitioners. It could be conducted for purposes of accountability which includes establishing how well students have learned, or to inform the design of instruction (how to improve) in educational contexts (UNESCO, 2019). These two purposes sometimes support one another, and sometimes compete or conflict with one another, indicating that assessment is a complex process (Earl, 2003). Assessment for learning (AfL) or formative assessment (FA) focuses both on students' learning and teacher's teaching and these functions are inseparable (Nelson et al., 2014). In other words, the purpose of using FA to assess students' learning and its application to make beneficial changes in instruction creates a tight link with instructional practices (Kuh, Jankowski and Ikenberry, 2014). These assessment purposes reflect both improvement conceptions and pedagogical conceptions (Barnes, Fives and Dacey, 2015). Assessment of learning (AoL) or summative assessment (SA) is a way of looking back or summing up learning (Herrera, Macías and Fernando, 2015). Summative Assessment involves marking and grading which require unified procedures that enable comparability among the results of all students (Harlen, 2005). This assessment type focuses on measuring the extent to which students reach or do not reach required standards (OECD, 2013). It is used as a means to record the nature and level of students' achievement throughout their academic careers (Hill, 2000). Summative Assessment or AoL can be conducted by teachers as well as external agencies. External agencies often use the results for accreditation, accountability and monitoring, selection,

placement and certification, as well as for public reporting (Pereira, et al., and Flores, 2022; European Commission, 2015)

Types of Assessment

Assessment can basically be formative or summative. Formative assessment takes place on a continuous basis. It is conducted by the teacher with the intent of informing the teacher and the student as to the gap between what students know and can do and what they are expected to know and be able to do with immediate, informative feedback (Shavelson, 2006). Classroom formative assessment ranges on a continuum from informal to formal. Where a particular formative assessment practice falls on the continuum, it depends on the amount of planning involved, its formality, the nature and quality of the data sought, and the nature of the feedback given to students by the teacher.

Formative assessment is based on providing instant and specific feedback after each learning step to avoid unnecessary delay of correcting students' errors. For such type of assessment to realize its maximum benefit, it is suggested that assessment should not be a one-off activity. Rather, it must be a continuous act, guiding teaching and learning process through the provision of timely feedback. It is widely acknowledged that the effect of feedback is enhanced if and only if it is immediate and clearly articulated in order to guide the learning process and to rectify possible shortcomings (O'Malley and Pierce, 2009). Arguably, this is why assessment, especially assessment for improving learning, has increasingly been viewed as an integral part of, no longer separate from, teaching (Wiliam, 2010).

Summative assessment refers to the testing of learning that is administered at the end of a lesson, course or programme after a given period of instruction. It occurs when teachers evaluate a final product. It usually takes place at the end of the chapter, a unit of study, a benchmark period, a quarter, a course, a semester, or an academic year (Trumbull and Lash, 2013).

Summative assessment focuses on assessing learning at the end of instructional unit, and comparing and benchmarking it with pre-defined standards. The main purpose of summative assessment is to evaluate learners' achievements with respect to previously defined expected competencies. Therefore, summative assessment is used more from an evaluative purpose rather than a diagnostic one which is the domain of formative assessment. While formative assessment can be used to take corrective measures and monitor progress when learning is still happening, summative assessment is used to determine effectiveness of a program, students' achievements etc. after learning has been completed. No remedial teaching is given after summative assessment (Pereira, et al., and Flores, 2022). The process of certification is done on the basis of the results of summative assessment. For that purpose, summative assessment places more emphasis on accountability with the assignment of a grade (Earl, 2014). This explains why it is also referred as assessment of learning as opposed to formative assessment which is referred to as assessment for

learning. The important tools of summative assessment are achievement test, rating scales, project assessment by experts, interviews, etc.

Assessment is considered as a core responsibility of the classroom teacher (Adu-Mensah, 2018a). In the public schools, summative assessment is often done by teachers who are expected to conduct, for example, end of term exams, class exercises, class tests etc. considering the cognition level of their pupils.

Assessment tools for the young children

In the educational setting, assessment can be carried out using different tools. The selection of an assessment tool depends on what to assess, how to assess and why assessed. It also rests on the teachers' perceptions and practices of classroom assessment. Choosing assessment strategies and tools require that teachers consider the range of classroom situations that students will experience (OECD, 2013).

To measure the psychological traits with validity and reliability, the assessment tool should be far away from the aspects like personal errors, variable errors, constant errors and interpretative errors (Tighe et al., 2015). The important characteristics of a good assessment tool are that, it should be valid, reliable, objective, usable and practicable, comprehensive and precise, easy in administering, economical, easy in scoring and easily available (Angold and Costello, 1995).

A variety of tools and resources may be used to assess young children, whether in a private or public school. These may include observation, anecdotal records, checklist, rating scales and rubrics, portfolio, interviews and conferences (Angelo and Cross, 1993).

Observation

There are certain traits like honesty, punctuality, persistence, truthfulness etc., which can hardly be measured objectively via tests. So here, observation is an important technique of assessment. The observation may be participant observation or non-participant observation for accurate and scientific observation. One may use observation schedule to measure trait under this domain.

Checklist

A checklist consists of a series of items which need response from the respondent. The presence or absence of an item may be indicated by 'Yes' or 'No'. Checklists are popularly employed for appraisal of studies, school buildings, textbooks, outcomes, instructional procedures etc.

Rating scales

Psychological traits are relative concepts so it is very difficult to make watertight compartments between them (Chmielewski and Watson, 2009). Sometimes, the degree of a trait is necessary on the part of the rater. Rating scale is used to assess the personal and social conduct

of the learner. The opinion of teachers or parents or friends on a particular quality or trait of a pupil are taken along a scale. The rating scale may be of 5 points, 7 points, 9 points or 11 points. For example, to assess particular trait, one can use a 5point scale as; very good, good, average, below average and poor. The trait in question is marked by the judges in any one of the categories. Rating scales can be used to assess personality traits, tests, school practices and other school programmes, be it in a public or private school.

Anecdotal records

Anecdotal records are systematically kept notes of specific observations of student behaviours, skills, and attitudes in the classroom that provide cumulative information regarding progress, skills acquired, and directions for further instruction (Hattie, 2012). Anecdotal notes are often written as the result of ongoing observations in a lesson but may also be written in response to a product or performance the student has completed. Systematic collection of anecdotal records on a particular student provides excellent information for evaluating the learning patterns and the consistency of the students' progress. Well-kept anecdotal records provide a valuable, practical, and specific reference about a student.

Rubrics

Rubric could be considered as a road map that tells students and teachers of where to begin, where they should go and how to get there. Rubrics are scoring guides or sets of expectations or criteria used to assess students' level of understanding and allow students to know the expectations and what they need to do in order to be learning at a higher level. Some individuals believe rubrics help teachers and students to focus on what is valued in a subject, activity, topic etc., (Airasian, 2000).

Portfolio

Paulson (2009) defines portfolio as “a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the students' efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas. The collection must include student participation in selecting the contents, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection”. The physical structure of a portfolio refers to the actual arrangement of the work samples and can be organized according to chronology, subject, types of student product, or goal area. The conceptual structure refers to the teachers' goals for student learning. For example, the teacher may have students to self-assess a work sample, then self-reflect, and then set a goal for future learning. The work-sample self-assessment and the goal sheet may be added to the portfolio. Students generally choose the work samples to be placed in the portfolio. The teacher may also choose to have specific work samples placed in the portfolio.

Interview

Interview is a face-to-face interaction between one interviewee and one interviewer or more than one interviewer. There are certain things which an individual may not want to express

or may not have the opportunity to express using a questionnaire and they can only be assessed through interviews. The interview schedules may be used and the interviewer through a better personal support, and in congenial atmosphere, can succeed to bring out the inner feelings of the interviewee through carefully planned interview questions. (Jones, 2002)

Teachers' level of understanding about assessment practices

Everybody wants teachers to be knowledgeable yet there is little agreement on exactly what kinds of knowledge are most important for teachers to possess. Should a teacher have a deep knowledge of the subject matter, gleaned from college study, additional graduate courses, or even research experience? Or is it better if the teacher has an understanding of what students think or knowledge on assessment tools and how to use them? Is there some optimal combination of different types of knowledge? Discussions of such issues, if they make use of data at all, are often based on indirect methods of gauging teacher knowledge. College degrees, courses taken, and grades achieved often serve as proxies for a teacher's Subject Matter Knowledge (SMK). Teachers' awareness of the prior knowledge of students is harder to assess and is often revealed by the choices teachers make in what to cover and how to cover a topic, which requires the time and judgment of a skilled observer to evaluate. Moreover, studies that rigorously investigate the relationship between the different kinds of teacher knowledge and student gains in understanding of a content are rare (Baumert et al., 2010). Nevertheless, the knowledge that teachers must possess to be effective on their job has historically been a topic of scholarly interest. Beliefs about teacher knowledge shape both the policies regulating how teachers are prepared, certified, appointed, and evaluated as well as programs that provide ongoing professional development for practicing teachers.

Throughout the researcher's readings, it was noted that there were some studies which have compared assessment practices between private and public early childhood centres. However, most of these studies were conducted in developed countries with few of these studies conducted in Africa (e.g. Liaqat, 2009; OECD, 2013; Kotor, 2014). In Ghana, it appears that, research works have not been devoted to comparative study on assessment practices among private and public early childhood centres in general and the Kumasi metropolis in particular (Adu-Mensah, 2018a; 2018b; Adom et al., 2020). The differences in educational context between Ghana and the developed countries and other African countries in terms of curriculum design, for instance, make it important to conduct such a comparative study.

Conducting such a study will help us to understand how early childhood practitioners follow the prescription on the assessment practices that are given by curriculum designers. It will also help us to measure equity in relation to assessment practices between private and public early childhood centres. The importance of equity is crucial in the era where Ghana has subscribed to the SDG of which goal 4 requires equity in our educational system.

It is in the light of this that this study seeks to compare the assessment practices of private and public early childhood centres by specifically comparing the assessment type, assessment tool and teachers' level of understanding on assessment practices between the early childhood practitioners in the private and public ECE centres in Kumasi Metropolis of Ghana.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were to;

1. investigate the variations in the assessment types used by ECE teachers in private and public early childhood centres.
2. assess differences existing in the assessment tools used by ECE teachers in assessing children in private and public early childhood centres.
3. examine the level of understanding of ECE teachers about assessment practices in private and public early childhood centres is the same or not.

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis were formulated to guide the study:

Hypothesis 1

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference between the assessment types used in public and private early childhood centres.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference between the assessment types used in public and private early childhood centres.

Hypothesis 2

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference between the assessment tools used in private early childhood centres and public early childhood centres.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference between the assessment tools used in private early childhood centres and public early childhood centres.

Hypothesis 3

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference between the level of understanding on assessment practices of private and public early childhood teachers.

H₁: There is a statistically significant difference between the level of understanding on assessment practices of private and public early childhood teachers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed quantitative research approach based on the positivist paradigm. Bryman (2012) defined quantitative research as, "A research strategy that emphasizes

quantification in the collection and analysis of data.” This research method attempts to investigate the answers to the questions starting with how many, how much, to what extent (Rasinger, 2013). In other words, the method lays emphasis on measuring something or variables existed in the social world. Quantitative research focuses on aspects of social behaviour which can be quantified and patterned rather than just finding out and interpreting the meanings people bring to their own action. The rationale for this approach was to refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participants’ view on the phenomenon in more depth (Yin, 2015; Creswell and Clark, 2017). The design for the research was descriptive and its choice for this study was justifiable because it aims at accurately and systematically describing a population, situation or phenomenon which was also the intent of this study (Rahi, 2017).

Population of the Study

The accessible population was 672 teachers from 298 early childhood centres (Kumasi Metro Education Directorate, 2017/2018 academic year). A total of 149 schools comprising 90 public and 59 private ECE centres were used for the study. A sample size of 232 teachers of which 128 were selected from the public schools and 104 were from the private schools.

Sample and Sampling Technique

To specifically identify the 232-sample size from the accessible population of 672, a table of random numbers was used. Random sampling requires that each member of the sampling frame should have equal opportunity to be sampled from the accessible population (Yin, 2015; Creswell and Clark, 2017). Given that the accessible population was a three-digit number (672), a three-digit number frame was created to ensure fair representation of each respondent. All the respondents were then given three-digit number with the first starting with 001 up to the last which was 672. A starting point was then selected from the table of random numbers and three-digit number frame was created and selected from the starting point until the 232-sample size was realized.

Research Instrument

Questionnaire was the tool used for this study because it supplied the researcher with quantifiable data that were available for statistical analyses. Questionnaire is the most widely used technique for obtaining quantitative information from subjects. Thus, the basic objective of the questionnaire was to obtain facts and opinions about the phenomenon under study from people who were informed on this particular issue. The questionnaire was close-ended type developed using four-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree to strongly disagree”. The calculated reliability co-efficient was 0.827.

Data Collection Procedures

The necessary rapport was established with the head teachers at the selected schools and permission was sought from them for the administration of the questionnaire to the participants.

In order to ensure clarity of how the questionnaire was completed, the purpose of the study and the procedure for responding to the questionnaire were explained to the respondents after identifying them. The respondents were then given some time to respond to the questionnaire. This was after they have given their consent and the issues of confidentiality and anonymity and assurance of the fact that they could decide to discontinue with their participation in the study, have been clearly explained to them.

Data Analysis and Processing

At the end of the data collection exercise, the obtained data was scrutinised to ensure that possible errors, arising from incomplete or wrongly filled questionnaire were taken out. The data were then coded and edited to avoid missing possible value. The data responses of the respondents to each questionnaire were then processed and analyzed with the help of IBM SPSS statistic package version 23. The data collected were coded and entered into this statistical package for the analysis. The research hypotheses were all tested using the Independent Sample t-test.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: To test hypothesis 1, response on the individual assessment types were compared between that of private early childhood teachers and public early childhood teachers using the independent sample t-test on each assessment type. Summary of the findings is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Independent Sample t-test on Assessment types

Assessment Type	Df	Mean		t	P. Value
		Private	Public		
I make use of summative assessment	252.74	28.89	25.51	252.74	0.00
I make use of formative assessment	81.83	24.92	29.75	2.003	0.00

Results from Table 1 shows a statistically significant difference in the assessment types used among Private Early Childhood Centre teachers ($M = 28.89$) and Public Early Childhood Centre teachers ($M = 25.51$); $t(252.74) = 3.56$, $p = .00$ (two tailed). This means that the usage of summative assessment differs between teachers in the public and private early childhood centres.

Similarly, there was a statistically significant difference in the use of formative assessment among Private Early Childhood Centres teachers ($M = 24.92$) and Public Early Childhood Centre teachers ($M = 29.75$); $t(81.83) = 2.003$, $p = .00$.

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistically significant difference between the assessment tools used in private early childhood centres and public early childhood centres. This hypothesis sought to

investigate if early childhood teachers in both public and private centres differ in their use of assessment tools. Summary is presented in Table 2

Table 2 Independent Samples t-test on Assessment tools

Assessment Tools	Df	Mean		t	P- Value
		Private	Public		
I use paper-and-pencil test	230	27.00	26.75	-1.813	0.00
I use observation	230	29.72	29.75	0.98	0.92
Building portfolio	230	26.46	26.52	-0.441	0.66
I use oral questioning	230	27.34	27.53	-1.179	0.24

*Significant at $p \leq .05$ (2-tailed)

Results from Table 2 suggest an insignificant difference between public and private early childhood teachers with regards to the assessment tools employed for assessment and teaching. Teachers in both centres appear not to differ on the following specifics: “Observation of learners” ($t(230) = .98$; $p = .92$), “Building portfolio” ($t(230) = -.441$; $p = .66$), “Oral questioning” ($t(230) = -1.179$; $p = .240$). Conversely, teachers differed in their use of paper and pencil test ($t(230) = -1.813$; $p = .00$; $M = 27.00$ [for private] and 26.75 [for public]). An extrapolation drawn from the result is that teachers in private early childhood centres have a higher tendency of using paper and pencil test than their counterpart in public early childhood centres.

Hypothesis 3: There is no statistically significant difference between private and public early childhood teachers’ level of understanding on assessment practices. The finding of this hypothesis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Independent Samples t-test on Teachers Level of understanding on Assessment

Assessment Type	Df	Mean		t	P. Value
		Private	Public		
Knowledge on assessment practices	230	20.24	25.51	2.93	0.02

Table 3 shows that public early childhood teachers’ level of understanding on assessment is high ($M = 25.51$) as compared to teachers of private early childhood centres ($M = 20.24$). In addition, the results of the independent samples t-test appeared to be significant at 5% level of probability ($t(230) = 2.93$, $p = .02$). The inference drawn from the result is that teachers in public early

childhood centres have a deeper understanding on assessment practices than their counterparts in private early childhood centres.

DISCUSSION

In general, the results from the study revealed that teachers in both public and private early childhood centres in Kumasi metropolis differ in the type of assessment used. This means that teachers differ in their usage of formative and summative types of assessment.

The public early childhood centres used more of the formative assessment than their private counterpart. This is likely due to the greater emphasis on the School Based Assessment Model (SBAM) in the public basic schools which is much inclined to the formative assessments in the lower levels of education in Ghana. With the formative assessment, teachers at the public schools use this type of assessment more frequently possibly due to their educational background of the pupils while in the private school, the teachers have little knowledge about this assessment and hence do not frequently use it during the teaching and learning process. Some of the private school teachers, arguably, do not know how to compose oral questions to assess pupils. However, it is a requirement for all schools both private and public to conduct summative assessment at the end of the academic term (Adu-Mensah, 2018b). It is more likely that the difference among teachers could also take its root from how teachers are trained for both centres. Public early childhood centres make use of professional teachers who are exposed to the dynamics of assessment through their training and off campus teaching experiences (Kotor, 2014). Moreover, it is often difficult for untrained teachers to decide on behaviours, skills or activities to be used when assessing their learners (Gober, 2002). In this case, one could only expect them to make inappropriately use of formative and summative assessment in their centres since they (private teachers) could have inadequate knowledge regarding the basic testing and assessment practices (Stiggins and Chappuis 2005). Furthermore, public early childhood centres making use of both formative and summative assessment than their private counterpart could be due to how the School Based Assessment Model (SBA) is explored in most public basic schools. The SBA guides teachers in public schools on how they should go about their classroom assessment activities (Adu-Mensah, 2018b). Hence, teachers' effort to make effective use of both formative and summative assessment practices.

The result further indicated that public and private teachers in early childhood centres in Kumasi did not differ so much on the assessment tools employed. These findings suggest that tools of assessment as part of the instructional practices among public and private kindergarten teachers did not differ significantly. The finding does not support the assertion that public school teachers make use of multiple assessment tools than their counterparts in private schools (Hausken and Rathbun, 2004; Carbonaro, 2006; Guarino et al., 2006). Similarly, the finding of this study is parallel to Liaqat (2009)'s assertion that quality of teaching is better in private schools as compared to public schools due to assessment tools employed in each school. Conversely, the finding of this study supports Lungu et al. (2021)'s conclusion that teachers use multiple assessment strategies which includes, among others, paper and pencil tests, homework, interview guides, portfolios and

collection of samples. Teachers not relying on a single assessment tool in assessing learning supports the assertion of Knowles and Brown (2000) that teachers explore several assessment tools to discover what students know or can do. Perhaps, teachers' reliance on multiple assessment tasks might help them in measuring some important skills and learning outcomes (Adu-Mensah, 2018b). As a good assessment practice, it helps in identifying misconceptions that students have on a topic taught and assist teachers to find ways of confronting them (Mussawy, 2009). There was, however, a variation between the public and private schools regarding their use of paper and pencil tests. This variation could have its course from the variation in the training received while at the college, emphasis on the School-Based Assessment Model, which is practiced at the public schools or the inadequate knowledge private school teachers may have with this assessment tool.

Further the results show that teachers in public early childhood centres have a deeper understanding on assessment practices than their counterparts in private early childhood centres. This finding supports the assertion that public early childhood centres make use of professionally trained teachers who are exposed to the dynamics of assessment (Kotor, 2014). According to Amoako et al. (2019), teachers in the public schools are trained for either 3-years diploma or 4-years degree, which exposes them to courses on classroom assessment. This presumes that as professionally trained, teachers in public early childhood centres may have a fair understanding on assessment practice and how it impacts on learning. However, this finding does not suggest that once teachers in public early childhood centres have adequate understanding on assessment, it would reflect on their assessment practices. Teachers could choose to replicate some assessment practices they experience or observed within the school setting that may be in conflict with their knowledge on assessment (Anane and Adu-Mensah, 2019). Moreover, multiple factors play critical role in translating what teachers know into their classroom practice. For example, teachers' motivation, attitude, the availability of assessment tools, commitment and supervision could predict teacher's application of assessment knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings from the study it can be settled that private and public early childhood centres in the Kumasi Metropolis were significantly equipped with skills in the usage of formative and summative assessment. Again, from the study, it can be concluded that teachers having such a sensitive responsibility of assessing and making decision concerning students' academic progress are expected to be professional in the process of assessment practices.

Moreover, paper and pencil test was the most frequently used as an assessment tool in private early childhood centres than in the public early childhood centres. This could be as a result of Ghanaian parents being enthused to see a lot of pencil and paper test being undertaken by their children in the private schools. That alone serves their interest and the private early childhood centres that are more business oriented seems to adopt this technique of assessment for the expediency of doing business. In the use of observation, class tests, interview, performance task,

project work, oral questions and class exercises, both private and public early childhood centres engaged in the usage of these assessment tools.

Public early childhood teachers also have higher level of understanding on assessment than their private counterparts. This means that teachers in the public early childhood centres had adequate training in assessment in general and assessment of early childhood pupils in particular.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With respect to the findings resulting from the study, the following recommendations are made to private and public early childhood centres in the Kumasi Metropolis in their quest to employ assessment practices in assessing children:

That headteachers, in collaboration with the Metro Education Directorate, should equip ECE teachers with skills with regards to the use of the various assessment types in the early childhood centres. This can be done through workshops and seminars This is because assessment practices form an integral part of the teaching profession since it is the most widely used as a channel for assessing students in Ghana.

It is also recommended that Ghana Education Service together with headteachers and circuit supervisors in early childhood centres in Kumasi should ensure that teachers adhere to assessment practices as speculated in the Standard Based Curriculum and should be encouraged to continually use multiple assessment tools in assessing learning outcomes.

Lastly, regular workshop and in-service training programmes should be organised by the headteachers for ECE teachers within the Kumasi Metro Education Directorate to equip them with the knowledge on assessment practices.

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