INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL AND TEACHER VARIABLES ON YORUBA LANGUAGE POSITION IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIAN BASIC SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The primary objective of this research was to investigate the role of teacher and school variables in the implementation of the Yoruba policy in basic schools in Southwestern Nigeria. The study examined the position of the Yoruba language policy as a medium at the lower level and a subject at the middle Basic schools, based on the influence of teacher qualifications and school type. The total population for this study comprised 705 primary school teachers who were purposively sampled from three (3) states in South-western Nigeria. A mixed-methods approach was employed to collect data from teachers using questionnaires, focus group discussions, and an observation checklist. Four (4) hypotheses were tested using the t-test and chi-square. Hypotheses (i) and (ii) measure differences in the position of Yorùbá language in Lower Basic and Middle Basic, based on teacher qualifications. Hypotheses (iii) and (iv) measure differences in the position of Yorùbá language in Lower Basic and Middle Basic, based on school type. The results showed that teacher qualifications and school type had significant influences on the implementation of the Yoruba language policy. Therefore, it was suggested that teachers who would teach primary school pupils must have educational qualifications in the pupils' mother tongue, and private and public schools in urban and rural areas should be required to implement the mother-tongue policy as it was stipulated in the National Policy on Education.

Keywords: Gender, medium of instruction, mother tongue, qualification, school variables

Introduction

The formulation of any language policy in education is not an end in itself but a means to achieve clearly defined pedagogical and sociocultural goals. Central among these goals is the development of learners who are both confident in their linguistic identity and competent in their communicative and cognitive abilities. Language, as the principal medium of instruction, plays a decisive role in shaping not only how information is transferred but also how it is internalised, construed, and applied. Consequently, the objective of a language policy is to establish relevant instructional practices and perspectives that must be situated within the broader framework of effective teaching,

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meaningful learning, and cultural continuity (Babangida & Hussaini, 2025). In the National Policy on Education, the Yorùbá language is stipulated to be: (a) the medium of teaching at lower basic schools (1-3) in South-western Nigeria. Then, the English language shall be taught as a subject. (b) Also, at middle basic schools (primary 4-6), Yorùbá would become a subject in the curriculum (FRN, 2013).

In many multilingual societies, particularly in contexts such as Nigeria, the implementation of language policy has historically been fraught with inconsistencies between policy formulation and classroom realities. While policies often advocate using the mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment in the early years of education, practical challenges such as inadequate teacher preparation, a lack of instructional materials, and sociolinguistic attitudes toward indigenous languages frequently undermine these intentions. This disconnect highlights a critical issue; more so, the success of any language policy depends not merely on its philosophical soundness but on the feasibility and clarity of its implementation strategies (Bayim, Oru & Bassey, 2025).

Likewise, Githinji (2014) discovered that the extent of the language policy execution was influenced by the type of school (private and public) and teacher qualification. This study showed that private and public primary schools from rural and urban settings had made varied selections in the language of education. So, the private primary schools' teachers appear not to be fully controlled by the Ministry of Education regulations. The urban private and public primary school teachers have an impression that excellent education is provided in English, right from pre-basic through basic schools. Hence, teachers and parents in rural private and urban public primary schools also influenced the language policy and were agitating for the English language as a teaching medium rather than using the mother tongue. Therefore, it is ascertained that the influence of the school and teacher variables is a determining factor for language policy implementation in Nigerian Southwestern basic schools. Hence, the teacher qualifications and school variables (school type) were considered in line with the language policy implementation to ascertain the status of the mother tongue (Yoruba) at Southwestern Nigerian basic schools. The findings should help improve policies and practices to support the teaching and employment of the Yoruba as a medium of teaching, which is essential for preserving an important part of Nigeria's cultural identity.

Research Problem

In view of the above background, the present study was designed to find out:

A. If there is any difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in Lower Basic Schools, based on teacher qualifications.
B. If there is any difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a subject in Middle Basic Schools, based on teacher qualifications.
C. If there is any difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in Lower Basic Schools, based on school type.
D. If there is any difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a subject in Middle Basic Schools, based on school type.

Research Questions

These research questions were raised to guide the study.

A. Is there any difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in Lower Basic Schools, based on teacher qualifications?
B. What is the difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a subject in Middle Basic Schools, based on teacher qualifications?
C. Is there any difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in Lower Basic Schools, based on school type?
D. What is the difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a subject in Middle Basic Schools, based on school type?

Research Hypotheses

In the course of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested.

Ho_1: There will be no significant difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in Lower Basic Schools, based on teacher qualifications.
Ho_2: There will be no significant difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a subject in Middle Basic Schools, based on teacher qualifications.
Ho_3: No significant difference exists in the position of Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in Lower Basic public and private schools.
Ho_4: No significant difference exists in the position of Yorùbá language as a subject in Middle Basic public and private schools.

Literature Review

Influence of School Type on the Yorùbá Language Policy Implementation in Basic Schools

The role of language in early childhood education has long been recognised as foundational to both cognitive development and social integration. In the formative years of schooling, pupils learn most effectively when instruction is delivered in a language that is already familiar to them, typically their mother tongue or the language of their immediate environment. This is because language is not merely a tool for communication but also a carrier of thought, culture, and identity. When children are taught through a language they understand intuitively, both in private and public schools, they are better able to grasp new concepts, participate actively in classroom interactions, and develop critical thinking skills without the additional burden of decoding an unfamiliar linguistic system (Babangida & Hussaini, 2025).

Adeyemi (2025) affirmed that teaching through the mother tongue at the lower basic school (public and private) will supplement children's language acquisition, and this practice will aid them in learning the socio-cultural norms of their environments. Language is not only about getting something done, but it carries cultural loads and histories and directs how people think and understand the environment, especially when the learners' cultural language is taught. Confidence in learning is often fostered when learners are taught in a language they understand and can relate to, while competence emerges through sustained engagement, practice, and reinforcement within meaningful communicative contexts. Thus, the perspectives embedded in language policy must not

only recognise linguistic diversity but also harness it as a resource for cognitive and academic development. In essence, the effectiveness of a language policy lies in the synergy between its objectives and its implementation.

Meanwhile, Ogunniran, Badru, Owaseye and Segun (2024) addressed the issue of the implementation of the Yorùbá language policy in basic education as a critical component of Nigeria's broader commitment to promoting indigenous languages as effective media of instruction in the early years of schooling. The researchers stressed that within this framework, the use of Yorùbá is expected to enhance learners' comprehension, support cognitive development, and foster cultural identity. However, the extent to which this policy is realized in practice is not uniform across all educational settings. Variations in institutional structures, administrative orientations, and resource availability often shape how language policies are interpreted and applied within schools.

However, the mother tongue policy is not exclusively implemented in Nigeria; it exists only on paper as the government finds the enforcement of mother tongue instruction difficult, especially in the private and urban public schools. One of the most significant factors influencing this variation is school type, particularly the distinction between public and private basic schools. Public schools are generally fairly aligned with government policy directives, while private schools prioritise parental expectations and market-driven preferences, which often favour the use of English as the dominant medium of instruction. On the contrary, what occurs in the classroom is not the same as what is stated in the policy statement. Some private primary schools use English as the medium of instruction and downgrade the teaching of Yorùbá in their schools. It is worth noting that, because such institutions are privately owned, the government finds it hard to control the language of instruction at this level (Ojetunde, 2012).

Egwuogu (2014) observed that the children of elite parents attend private primary schools. The proprietors of these institutions and the parents want the English language to be employed as a medium of instruction. In Nigeria today, the issue of private primary schools for the elites only is not acceptable anymore, because the poor people, farmers, and illiterates are also sending their children to the private primary schools where they will come out as 'half-baked' citizens. Hence, there are two categories of private schools: mushroom and standard. The point is that the notion of parents regarding the pronouncement of the MT in lower basic schools leads them to seek levels of 'English medium private schools'. Thus, parents pay exorbitantly to send their children to privately owned primary schools where English is used as a medium of education, despite the pronouncement of the language policy in education.

Likewise, Ssentanda and Nakayiza (2015) examined the language policy implementation in the private, public, rural, and urban primary schools in Uganda; they found that the Ugandan private schools disregarded language policy. They reported that teachers in the elementary classes did not conform to the language policy. English was introduced to learners as a medium of teaching; immediately, pupils appeared in schools. Hence, children spoke the indigenous language at home, and they were expected to become fluent in English and learn through it. Uganda's Ministry of Education had stated a language policy that the learners' mother tongue should be a standard medium of education at the elementary level, and English would be taught as a subject. Meanwhile, English would

start to become the language of teaching in the fourth year of primary school. Then, in the fifth year, it would be the only language of schooling.

Similarly, in Nigeria, the private schools exempted themselves from the mother tongue language policy, complaining that their pupils came from complex and multilingual backgrounds. However, they concentrate on English as a medium of teaching, writing of lesson notes, doing assignments, and writing examinations, though the mother tongue is taught as a subject. It was noted that the public schools could have complied with the language policy system, but they were hindered and incapacitated due to inadequate resources, poor infrastructure, and a lack of workforce. So, they could not implement the language policy successfully, in addition to the fact that the teachers wanted to compete with their private-school counterparts.

The Relevance of Teacher Qualifications in the Implementation of Yoruba Language Policy in Basic Schools

Teachers are indispensable agents in teaching and learning activities, and they cannot be replaced by any programmed materials such as computers or visual aids. Teachers are regarded as managers, facilitators, monitors, reflectors, planners, counsellors, narrators, assessors, contributors, diagnosticians, and even language resources for personalising and clarifying the language of instruction. A teacher is the one who consolidates and corrects learners' language. Teachers are mostly looked upon for implementing the language policy at primary schools. The teaching of the national language (Yorùbá); to preserve the language from extinction and for the preservation of Yorùbá cultural heritage, can be carried out by teachers (Ayílárá, 2015).

Therefore, the teacher factor on qualification is considered with the language policy implementation to ascertain the position of the Yorùbá language at Southwestern basic schools. Teacher qualifications significantly influence their perceptions of the position of the Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in lower primary schools in South-western Nigeria within the framework of the National Policy on Education. This suggests that professionally qualified teachers demonstrated greater support for the implementation of the language policy than their unqualified counterparts. The implication is that teacher qualifications play an important role in promoting the effective use of the Yorùbá language for instructional purposes at the lower basic schools.

Abídogun (2012) had earlier discovered that teachers' educational qualifications significantly influenced the implementation of language policy in Nigeria. The study further noted a shortage of competent mother-tongue teachers capable of effectively handling various school subjects, a situation that contributed to the unsuccessful implementation of multilingual education policies. In the same vein, Ewétán and Ewétán (2015) had affirmed that teacher qualifications significantly affect learners' academic achievement and that teachers implementing language policy must possess adequate competence in the target language. It can therefore be concluded that teacher qualifications are significant factors in determining the status and effective use of the Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in lower primary schools in South-western Nigeria under the National Policy on Education.

In contrast, on the basis of teaching Yorùbá as a subject in Middle Basic Schools, both qualified and unqualified teachers agreed that Yorùbá was actively taught at the upper primary school level. Classroom observation further confirmed that teachers, irrespective of qualification status, participated in the teaching of the Yorùbá language. It is indicated that Yorùbá was generally taught as a subject in primary schools regardless of teacher qualifications. It could be mentioned that teacher qualifications play a significant role in language policy implementation in basic schools, especially as a medium of instruction. It means a teacher who wants to execute the language policy needs to be competent in the target language: communicative skills, linguistic phonology, adequate knowledge of the grammatical aspect of the language, and the ability to write a standard orthography. It indicates that a qualified teacher would implement the mother-tongue policy in basic schools better than an unqualified one.

Methodology

This study was a descriptive study of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in gathering and analysing data on the status of the Yorùbá language in primary schools in the context of the National Policy on Education. Hale (2011) described descriptive research as a method of collecting data to get a detailed description of current practices and the subject's status. Therefore, a descriptive survey research type was appropriate for this study because it enabled the researcher to gather and analyse data on the status of the Yorùbá language in South-western basic schools.

A researcher-designed questionnaire, classroom observation checklist, and focus group discussion schedule were used to collect data from the respondents for this research work. The questionnaire was titled ‘Questionnaire on the position of Yorùbá Language Policy in Basic Schools’ (QPYLPBS), based on the variables of teachers and schools, and was used to elicit data from teachers; this permitted the researcher to make inferences on the position of the Yorùbá language in primary schools in the context of the National Policy on Education. The respondents picked from each of the items on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Not at All” (1.00-1.49) to ‘Great Extent’ (4.50-5.00) to indicate the range of other subjects that were taught in the lower Basic school curriculum through Yorùbá or other possible languages. Likewise, “Yes or No” were picked to indicate whether the Yoruba was taught or not.

Based on the instrument's validity, it was subjected to face and content validity by giving it to experts in the Department of Arts Education and Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin. To establish the instrument's (questionnaire) reliability, the researcher employed a test-retest reliability technique by administering the questionnaire to 30 Yorùbá language subject teachers who were not part of the sample. Then, the two sets of scores obtained were correlated using Pearson’s Product-Moment Coefficient (PPMC) statistics where a value of 0.74 was obtained.

An open-ended questionnaire was another part of the questionnaire, with the open-ended items in a qualitative approach; the researcher did not offer options for the respondents, but the respondents answered questions on the status (as a medium and subject) of the Yorùbá language at Basic schools based on their personal opinion. This method provided greater freedom to the respondents to express themselves on the subject.

The second data collection method employed in this study is the classroom observation checklist. The lesson observation schedule assisted the researcher in identifying language use as a medium of teaching at the lower Basic school level based on teacher and school variables. The classroom observation checklist was employed to check the possible language of instruction at the lower Basic level, and languages taught as subjects at both levels of primary education.

The third data collection method employed is the focus group discussion schedule. The researcher had conversations with seven (7) teachers who were purposively sampled as the focus group discussion among Yoruba teachers in Ọyọ́ State, and these captured teachers from private and public schools in urban and rural areas. The researcher used a focus group discussion schedule to guide the Yorùbá language subject teachers on matters relating to the Yorùbá language in Basic school levels. This schedule involved nine (9) semi-structured questions that were centred on the status of Yorùbá as a medium at the lower primary school level and a subject at the upper primary school level. It also required information on whether parents and school administrators encouraged teachers to use and teach the Yorùbá language at both levels of Basic education.

The total population for this study involved all Yorùbá subject teachers in all Basic Schools in the South-western geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The target population was Yorùbá language subject teachers in all Basic Schools in Lagos, Òndó and Ọ̀yọ́ States. The researcher employed the use of the purposive sampling technique to sample three states from the six states in the geopolitical zone based on the Eastern (Òndó, Èkìtì), Central (Ọ̀yọ́, Òṣun), and Western (Lagos, Ògùn) divisions of the South-western geopolitical zone. The three oldest states Lagos, Òndó and Ọ̀yọ́ were sampled to ensure representativeness. This indicates that the states and respondents were sampled purposively, and schools were proportionately sampled because the number of those schools substantially differed. Therefore, the total population for this study involved 705 teachers based on teacher qualifications and school variables.

A questionnaire was administered to the teachers to collect data on how the teacher qualifications and school variables of school type influence the implementation of the language policy in the Basic schools. The classroom observation and focus group discussion were organised and conducted by the researcher and research assistants to assess teachers' activities during instruction.

Data Analysis and Results

The data collected for this study were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Percentages were used to describe the demographic data of the respondents. The Research Questions with their corresponding Hypotheses were answered and tested using the t-test and Chi-Square (χ^2) respectively. For instance, Research Hypotheses 1 and 3 were tested using an independent t-test statistical technique. Also, Chi-Square (χ^2) was employed to test Research Hypotheses 2 and 4, all at 0.05 level of significance**.** Qualitative data obtained through classroom observation and focus group discussion were analysed thematically.

The results of the influence of the teacher qualifications on the implementation of the Yoruba language policy as a medium of instruction in the Nigerian South-Western Lower Basic School were analysed and presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1 shows the result of teacher qualifications on the implementation of the Yoruba language as a medium of instruction at the lower class.

Table1:

Yorùbá Language Instruction in Lower Basic Schools, Based on Teachers' Qualifications

Qualifications	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	Cal. t-Value	Sig.	Inference
Qualified Teachers	659	135.282	25.815				
				703	3.514	0.00	S
Unqualified Teachers	46	129.285	28.279				

@ 0.05.
Source: Investigator's research report.

Table 1 reveals the result of the independent t-test ($F_{(703)} = 3.514$; $p < 0.05$), and its calculated significant value (p-value) is 0.000 at a 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated significant value (p-value) is less than the chosen 0.05 level of significance ($0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, a significant difference existed in the status of Yorùbá as a medium of teaching at the lower basic school level in the context of the National Policy on Education, based on teacher qualifications. The difference is in favour of the qualified teachers with a mean score of 135.282, higher than the mean score of 129.285 for the unqualified teachers. The implication of this is that the qualified teachers viewed the use of Yorùbá as a medium of education to a very little extent, differently from their unqualified counterparts.

Table 2 reveals the results of teacher qualifications on the implementation of the Yoruba language as a subject in the middle class.

Table 2:

Yorùbá Language as a Subject Middle Basic Level, Based on Teacher Qualifications

Classes	Qualifications		No	Yes	Total	Df	X^2	Sig.	Inference
Primary 4	Unqualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	3 (3.8)	43 (42.2)	46 (46.0)	1	.219	.640	NS
	Qualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	56 (55.2)	603 (603.8)	659 (650.0)				
Primary 5	Unqualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	7 (3.1)	39 (42.9)	46 (46.0)	1	5.783	.016	NS
	Qualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	40 (43.9)	619 (615.1)	659 (659.0)				
Primary 6	Unqualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	4 (3.4)	42 (42.6)	46 (46.0)				
	Qualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	48 (48.6)	611 (610.4)	659 (659.0)	1	.125	.723	NS
Composite	Unqualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	5 (3.5)	41 (42.5)	46 (46.0)	1	.795	.373	NS
	Qualified Teachers	Count (Expected)	48 (49.5)	611 (609.5)	659 (659.0)				

@ 0.05.
Source: Investigator's research report.

Table 2 shows the result of chi-square ($X^2_{(1)} = 0.795$; $p > 0.05$), and the calculated significant value (p-value) is 0.373 at a 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated significant value (p-value) is greater than the chosen 0.05 level of significance (0.373 > 0.05). Therefore, no significant difference existed in the status of Yorùbá language as a subject in Southwestern Nigerian middle basic school levels in the context of the National Policy on Education, based on teachers' qualifications. This result indicates that both qualified and unqualified teachers agreed that Yorùbá was a subject at middle basic school levels.

Table 3 shows the result of the influence of public and private schools on the implementation of the Yoruba language as a medium of instruction in the lower class.

Table 3:

Yorùbá Language Instruction in Lower Public and Private Basic Schools

School Types	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	Cal. t-Value	Sig.	Inference
Public	354	139.647	20.578				
				703	11.071	0.000	S
Private	351	119.621	27.038				

@ 0.05.
Source: Investigator's research report.

Table 3 shows the results of the independent t-test ($F_{(703)} = 11.071$; $p < 0.05$), and the composite output reveals that the calculated p-value is 0.000 at the 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated significant value (p-value) is less than the chosen 0.05 level of significance (0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, a significant difference occurred in the position of the Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction in the Southwest Nigerian lower public and private basic schools, according to the stipulations of the National Policy on Education. The difference is in favour of teachers in public basic schools, with a mean score of 139.647, higher than the mean score (119.621) of their counterparts in private lower basic schools. It indicates that public basic school teachers viewed the use of Yorùbá as a means of instruction to a very little extent, differently from teachers in private basic schools.

Table 4 shows the result of the influence of public and private schools on the implementation of the Yoruba language as a subject in middle basic schools.

Table 4:

Yorùbá Language as a Subject in Middle Public and Private Basic Schools

Classes	School Types		No	Yes	Total	Df	X^2	Sig.	Inference
Primary 4	Public	Count	28	326	354				
		(Expected)	(29.6)	(324.4)	(354.0)				
	Private	Count	31	320	351	1	.196	.658	NS
		(Expected)	(29.4)	(321.6)	(351.0)				
Primary 5	Public	Count	23	331	354				
		(Expected)	(23.6)	(330.4)	(354.0)				
	Private	Count	24	327	351	1	.033	.856	NS
		(Expected)	(23.4)	(327.6)	(351.0)				
Primary 6	Public	Count	25	329	354				
		(Expected)	(25.6)	(328.4)	(354.0)				
	Private	Count	26	325	351	1	.031	.860	NS
		(Expected)	(25.4)	(325.6)	(351.0)				
Composite	Public	Count	25	328	353		.089	.765	NS
		(Expected)	(26.0)	(327.0)	(353.0)				
	Private	Count	27	325	352	1			
		(Expected)	(26.0)	(326.0)	(352.0)				

@ 0.05.
Source: Investigator's research report.

Table 4 reveals the result of chi-square ($X^2_{(1)} = 0.089$; $p > 0.05$), and the calculated significant value (p-value) is 0.765 at a 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated significant value (p-value) is greater than the chosen 0.05 level of significance (0.765 > 0.05). Therefore, no significant difference existed in the status of Yorùbá language as a

subject in the middle public and private primary schools in South-western Nigeria in the context of the National Policy on Education. The result indicates that both middle public and private primary school teachers agreed that Yorùbá was a subject in the curriculum.

Discussion

Teachers and school variables influencing Yorùbá as a language of teaching and subject in Southwestern Nigerian lower and middle schools were examined, and discussions were based on the findings.

For instance, Research Hypotheses 1 and 2 tested the differences in the usage of Yorùbá as a means of teaching, and as a subject at the lower and middle basic schools, respectively, based on teacher qualifications. The results showed that teacher qualifications as a variable had a significant influence on the use of Yorùbá as a means of teaching at the Lower Basic Schools in Southwestern Nigeria, indicating that qualified teachers affirmed the implementation of this aspect of the language policy to a very little extent more than their unqualified counterparts. The findings of this study authenticate the submissions of Ewétán and Ewétán. (2015); Ibrahim and Gwandu (2016) that teacher qualifications had a significant influence on the implementation of the Yorùbá language policy as a means of teaching. On the other hand, the teacher qualifications had no substantial influence on the status of Yorùbá language at the Middle Basic Schools in South-western Nigeria, implying that both qualified and unqualified teachers taught Yorùbá as expected. The findings negate those of Ewétán and Ewétán. (2015), and also the finding stated earlier; however, this finding is in agreement with the submission of Adéyẹmí and Ajíbádé (2014) that Yorùbá was taught at the primary school level in South-western Nigeria, irrespective of the teachers' educational qualification. It was deduced that Basic school teachers find it easier to teach their mother tongue rather than teaching through it.

Research Hypotheses 3 and 4 tested the influence of private and public schools on the use of Yorùbá language as a medium of instruction and subject in Southwestern Nigerian lower and middle basic schools, respectively. The results revealed that there was a significant difference in the position of Yorùbá language as a means of teaching at the private and public lower basic schools. This means that the teachers in the public primary school taught the lower basic pupils through Yorùbá to a very little extent than their private counterparts. The result aligns with Ọjẹtúndé (2012) and Githinji's (2014) findings that the mother tongue was used as a medium of instruction in public schools more than their private counterparts. It can thus be concluded that there was a substantial difference in the status of Yorùbá language as a medium of teaching at public and private lower basic schools in Southwest Nigeria. On the other hand, there was no significant difference in the status of Yoruba as a subject in public and private middle schools in Southwestern Nigeria, indicating that both public and private schools taught Yoruba at this level. Some studies corroborated this finding. For instance, Ògúndèyí and Ọmọdélé (2018) reported that the subject was taught at both government and private upper primary schools in South-western Nigeria.

Based on the classroom observation and focus group discussion, the findings revealed that very few teachers were conversant with the language policy, and the majority heard it for

the first time at the group discussion. So, it appears that the information on the language policy was not adequately disseminated. Therefore, the teachers used the language of their preference for teaching lower basic pupils, however, it was also discovered through the discussion and observation that the teachers' gender does not influence the execution of the mother tongue as a means of teaching but the qualification of teachers, school type and location influence the use of the pupils' language in teaching other subjects. However, it was discussed that the Yoruba language was enthusiastically taught based on teacher qualifications and school variables.

Conclusions

The conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study that teacher qualifications significantly influenced Yorùbá usage at the Lower Basic Schools but not at the Middle Level. Also, based on the school variable, the public school teachers used Yorùbá as a medium of instruction to a very little extent than private school teachers, though at both levels Yorùbá was taught similarly as a subject. Overall, Yorùbá was marginally used as a teaching medium but actively taught as a subject in Basic Schools.

The recommendations were offered based on the findings that for the effective implementation of Nigeria's language policy, the government must provide in-service training to equip teachers in learners' mother tongues, particularly Yorùbá. Colleges and faculties of education should prioritise the production of such competent educators, while the government should provide regular in-service training to enhance their skills and motivation. Additionally, both public and private schools in the urban and rural areas must be mandated to adhere strictly to the language policy.

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