NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

COURSE CODE: ECE 413

COURSE TITLE: COMPARATIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

COURSE GUIDE

ECE 413 COMPARATIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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A GUIDE THROUGH THE COURSE

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course introduces teacher-education students to comparative early childhood education. It exposes students to a cross-national analysis of early childhood education. The aim is to reveal similarities and differences both in terms of its history and provision of childcare services. The profile also includes descriptions of national childcare and policies. It is expected that with information gathered across nations, teacher-education students can better appreciate policies and services for children in their country and the experiences in other nations. Significantly, such efforts could enhance better policies and services for children and families in countries throughout the world.

COURSE AIM FOR ECE 413: COMPARATIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

The course aims to provide the student with a cross-national analysis of early childhood education. It aims to reveal similarities and differences in terms of historical development, philosophies, policies, practices and current provision of child care and educational services. Also, the dynamic reforms and developments of early childhood education across nations are highlighted.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

There are objectives to be achieved in each study unit of the course. You should read them before studying each unit. On completion of this course, you should be able to:

- give a historical account of the practice of early childhood education.

- enumerate the different features of early childhood educational practices in the historical periods of development.

- identify different schools of thought and their theories for early childcare and practice.

- express the various definitions of early childhood education.

- examine the usage of these concepts of early childhood education across societies.

- state national policies and objectives in establishing preschool and education.

- distinguish amongst various patterns of early childhood education services.

- apply knowledge of comparative education to case studies.

- describe early childhood education in Nigeria.

- make case studies of early child care and education across nations.

- examine cause for and effects of reforms in early childhood education.

- describe some innovations, changes and challenges in childhood education.

COURSE SUMMARY

Module 1 makes a cross-national analysis of early childcare and education. Module 2 gives a general overview of comparative education. Module 3 examines the current delivery of early childhood education and reforms in early childhood education and reforms in early childcare and education. On the whole there are eleven Study Units in this course. Each study unit consists of one week's work and should take you about three hours to complete. It includes specific objectives, guidance for study, reading material, and Self Assessment Exercises. It also has Tutor – Marked assignments. All of these exercises will assist you in achieving the stated learning objectives of the individual Study Units and of the course.

STUDY PLAN

This table is a presentation of the course and how long it should take you to complete each study unit and the accompanying assignments.

Unit	Title of Study Unit	Weeks/ Activity	Assignment
	Course Guide	1	

Module 1 A cross analysis of early childcare and education.

1	A Historical Development of Early childhood.	2	Assignment
2	A Philosophical perspective of early childhood education.	3	Assignment
3	Early childhood education and care.	4	Assignment
4	Patterns of early childhood education services.	5	TMA 1 to be submitted

Module 2 A general Overview of Comparative Education

1	Comparative Education: Concept, purpose scope and methodology.	6	Assignment
2	National Education Systems.	7	Assignment
3	Origin and Nature of early childhood education techniques.	8	Assignment
4	Structure of education/schools.	9	Assignment
5	Organisations and initiatives of early childhood education.	10	TMA 3 to be submitted

Module 3 Current Delivery of Early Childhood education and Reforms in Early Childhood Care and Education

1	The case of early childcare and education in Nigeria.	11	Assignment
2	Case studies of early childcare and education across nations	12	Assignment
3	Reforms in early childhood care and education.	13	Assignment
4	Teaching Young learners in a technological age	14	Assignment
5	Coping with today's diverse Learners	15	TMA 5 to be submitted
	Revision	16	
	Examination	17	
	Total	18	

* Now use this overview to plan your personal timetable.

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ECE 413: COMPARATIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (2 CREDITS)

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ECE 413: COMPARATIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (2 CREDITS)

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Unit 2 A Philosophical Perspective of Early Childhood Education.

Unit 3 Early Childhood Education and Care.

Unit 4 Patterns of Early Childhood Education Services.

Unit 5 Current Delivery of Early Childhood Education.

UNIT 1   A HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

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1.0   INTRODCUTION

Let us take our minds back to the focus in this programme. Remember? It is on early Childhood care and the educational theories and practices. However in this particular course, we will take time to compare early childhood education across nations and cultures. Basically, we will be looking at how nations serve their children through education.

Why do we need to compare early childhood education across nations? Importantly, as future teachers, there is need to take cognisance of the nature, quality, policies, and curricula of early childhood education in other countries. The idea is that when we have a general knowledge of early child care and educational services in other societal context, we can better appreciate that of our own country. It gives us an advantage to see what lessons we can draw to help improve on our own childcare educational policies and practices. More of this will be discussed as we go on in this course.

In Module 1, we have five Units. Beginning with Unit 1, we will firstly trace the historical developments of early childhood education. When and where did the concept and practice of early childhood education begin, and the development thereafter. This general historical overview will be done in the major periods of man's development. The first will take us to ancient times, with old Greece and the Old Roman Empire. From there, we will move on to the modern ages where the focus will be on early childhood educational ideals in the Renaissance era and the Enlightenment Period. Finally our historical trace will take us to early childhood education in contemporary times till date.

Significantly, there is also emphasis on child rearing practices in traditional African societies. I hope that such a historical background to early childhood education will expose you to the origin of childcare and education. What are we saying here? Simply put, what we see today as the concept and practice of early childhood education did not begin in this present times. A comparative history of early childhood education from one age to another gives a clearer picture of what we had in the past, helps us appreciate what we have presently. Importantly too, it provides us with a better context for future development in early childcare and education.

2.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Recount a brief history of the practice of early childhood education;

- identify the various practices of early childhood education in the different ages of man's development;

- compare and contrast early childhood educational practices in the different ages of development;

- describe childrearing practice in traditional African education;

- enumerate the different features of early childhood educational practices in each of the periods of development.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Beginnings of early childcare and education.

Do you know that every society, even the most primitive one pays some attention to the proper training of her young ones? If we go back to the origin of Mankind, we will discover that man

has long realised the need to transmit knowledge, skills and culture to the younger generation. As soon as the child is born, he is taught to conform to the cultural norms of human society.

The question as to what period of learning should be termed Early Childhood Education, as we have today may not have been the focus in the early beginnings. But what is clear is that from time, most societies have always recognised the need to educate the younger ones, no matter how informal. A review of this historical account will begin with Old Greece and Roman Empire.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 1.

Is it true that early childhood education has always been in existence since the origin of man? How?

3.1.1 Early Childhood Education in Old Greece.

Do you know that many of our educational practices today can be traced to Greek origin? Among such practices is early childhood education. Generally, education and schooling can be traced to about 500 BC in old Greece.

Old Greece as the pioneer of civilization had many city states. But prominent amongst these were Athens and Sparta. History reveals that early training of the Spartan Child was not only done at home with the mother of the child as teacher, but infant education was a state concern. This is in the sense that at infancy, the child was carefully examined by elders to see if his physical and psychological posture would suit the aim of this predominantly militaristic state. Where the child was found physically weak he was immediately got rid of. As Boyd and King

(1975:12) have noted, "every detail of the Spartan child's life was directly controlled by the state. The local elders examined the new-born child, and if found weak, he was either left to die of exposure or given over to the healots". The implication is that among the Spartans, only healthy children were raised to become citizens.

The Athenians may not have paid particular attention to early childhood education in the beginning, but history tells us that with the coming of Athenian Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, cognisance was given to the need for early childhood education from birth till about age seven. This period, (birth to 7years) in their views should actually be devoted as the first stage of "proper" elementary schooling. The philosophical ideals of Plato and Aristotle will be carefully discussed in Unit 2 of this module.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 2.

Now can you briefly highlight what is significant in the early childhood educational practices in both Sparta and Athens?

3.1.2 Early Childhood Education in Old Roman Empire.

We are still looking at the origin of early childhood educational practices from the beginning. We have discussed what obtained in Old Greece. Can you make a comparison of the practices in both Sparta and Athens? Now we are going to discuss what early childhood care and educational practice was like in the Old Roman Empire. I also want you to know that the Old Roman Empire came into being shortly after the collapse of Old Greece.

Having conquered Greece, the Romans adopted the Greek system of education. Before then, education for the Roman child was mostly a home affair. Right from birth, the father of the newborn child actually determined his survival. How? The newborn child was laid at his father's feet. If the father lifted him that meant that he acknowledged and accepted responsibility for him. But if the father turned away, the reverse was a death penalty for the child. This also meant that before the influence of the Greeks, the Romans never had a set standard on formal schooling for the young child. Their idea of preschool education was learning the father's trade. The mother on the other hand took care of the child's moral training.

The influence of Greek education brought about a new experience in the Roman ideal for education. This new Graeco-Roman educational system introduced the Ludus or elementary education amongst other stages of learning. The Ludus was the first stage of learning which took care of preschool education all through to elementary school. Specifically the Ludus preschool curriculum content had Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, using the play method.

Generally in the matter of early childhood education in the old Roman Empire, one cannot underestimate the contributions of Quintilian. He was an education theorist of Roman parentage. He took cognisance of the child as a learner who needed the right type of education. Quintilian has so much concern for the child, and parental responsibility towards his normal and effective growth. He advocated early childhood education contrary to the Roman entry school age of seven years. His emphasis on early childhood education centres on the argument that the elements of learning solely depends on memory. This also exists in young children, especially in their formative years of between zero to seven years. Generally Quintilian's contribution to early

childhood educational theory and practice was quite significant to educational development in the old Roman Empire.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 3.

1. How was early childhood education practised in the old Roman Empire before the Greek influence? What was early childhood educational practice in the new Graeco-Roman educational system?

2. What are the major contributions of Quintilian to early childhood educational theory and practice in the old Roman Empire?

3.2 Early Childhood Education in the Middle Ages.

Historically, in the trend of development of the practice of early childhood care, what obtained in the middle ages follow closely what we just discussed as the origin. That is, early childhood educational practices beginning from old Greece with Sparta and Athens, as the case or the most prominent. Following the collapse of Old Greece was the Roman Empire. Significantly the Greek influence in the general life style of the Romans is also recorded in the educational system. Can you remember the Graeco-Roman influence on early childhood educational practice in Rome? Do you still remember the 'Ludus'? This was a major outcome of the Graeco-Roman influence.

Unfortunately, the middle ages did not pay much attention to early childhood education. There were hardly educational theorist of the quality of Plato, Aristotle and Quintilian who would help promote such ideals. Nevertheless, the proposal of Pierre Dubois for Headstart education is quite useful. He suggested age four as the entry age for the first stage of school. The idea being that at four, the child was considered a rational human being who can be educated.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 4.

Following the trend in the historical development of early childhood education, we may say not much was contributed in the middle ages. However there was this significant proposal made by Pierre Dubois. What is it?

3.2 Early Childhood Education in the Renaissance Period.

Unlike the Middle Ages, the Renaissance period witnessed the birth of new ideas and knowledge of ancient Greek learning. A historical analysis of this period reveals that there were some notable scholars who contributed immensely to educational world view. Such scholars include Vittorrino da Feltre (1378 – 1446), Desdirus Erasmus, (1446 – 1536), Juan Luis Vives (1495 – 1553). All of them worked on a theory of early childhood education. Vittorrino da Feltre developed his idea of early childhood education along the line of Quintilian. He named his school for preschoolers, "The House of Joy".

In Erasmus' theory and Practice of education, he recommended that education should begin with the first stage or pre-school stage. His belief for such recommendation is that at this early stage of learning, the child's mind can easily acquire the seeds of piety which will make him accustomed to the rudiments of good behaviour. He also suggested that at this young age, subjects would be better learnt through games and stories. Erasmus also stressed the need for mothers to participate fully in the early education of the child, while fathers taught moral and scriptural instructions. Generally Erasmus' emphasis on infant education suggested the right training and method of Instruction.

Also in the generation of Erasmus was Juan Luis Vives. His contribution to the development of early childhood education in this age centred on helping the child imbibe goodness and right knowledge beginning at infancy. He also recommended that teaching at the early childhood stage could firstly be done in the child's mother-tongue. Above all, learning should come through play and practical activities.

So far we have been looking at the ideas and contributions of early childhood educators in the Renaissance era. The trend is not far from what we have been seeing in other ages. Essentially, there is the emphasis on early childhood education as the first stage of learning and the foundation on which other stages of learning are built. This also means that great care must be taken at this first stage of learning. Another important trend through the ages is the importance placed on play and practical activities as methods of learning. This no doubt has to do with stimulation to learn, especially when the age and level of maturity is considered.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 5.

Enumerate the contributions of early childhood educators of this Era to the development of the theory and Practice in Early childhood education.

3.4 Early Childhood Education in the Enlightenment Period.

The Enlightenment Period came after the Renaissance. Generally, it witnessed a re-shaping and re-directing of society with education as the instrument to achieve it. It marked an age when great thinkers through rational arguments made men see reason to change and improve on human behaviour and attitude.

Do you know that in the history of man's development, the Enlightenment period was actually a movement borne out of destruction and revolution, but later grew to become an age of great constructive ideals. Do you know that is why the Enlightenment Period is also called the 'Age of Reason'. It was also in the light of this reasoning that great early childhood educators made valuable contributions to the theory and practice of early childhood education.

Comenius (1592 – 1670) took time to analyse early childhood education. He recommended that training the child at this stage is actually aimed at implanting in him, the rudiments of all such knowledge that prepares him for more serious learning in elementary school. Comenius also took keen interest in the methods of instruction and nature of the child at infancy. The idea is that a meaningful educational programme should be drawn for this formative stage of learning. Education for Comenius is a tool for developing individual capabilities. He sees in every child potential seeds that may not fully develop if not given the right, fertile soil. In other words, the child's potentials can only manifest if given the adequate curriculum content in an appropriate educational programme. He was also of the opinion that the best teaching strategies for early childhood learning is the playway method.

John Locke (1712 – 1778) who came after Comenius looked at the function of education. In relating this to early childhood learning, Locke believed that the inborn faculties and powers possessed by all can be exercised early enough if the child is exposed to education in the early stages of his life. Even though Locke advocates education from the early stages of the child's life, he rejects the idea of schools as institutions of learning. In his opinion, oftentimes, schools

tend to sacrifice virtue for learning. His ultimate goal for early childhood learning is to imbibe in the young learner virtue and wisdom.

Next in this 'age of reasoning' is Jean Jacques Rousseau. He was one of the earliest advocates of the child centred education. Rousseau recommended that the first stage of learning should be the infant stage, from about birth to two years. He saw this as a period when nature's education centres on acquainting the child with the functions of his body and with unavoidable inconveniences that the body must endure. He however disapproved the idea of formal school at this stage of learning. He believed that more learning can take place at home or in a purely informal setting. However, between ages two to twelve, which he actually termed the childhood stage, the child may be exposed to proper reasoning in a formal school setting. He still insists on the playway method even at this level of learning.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 6.
1. Why do you think the Enlightenment Period is also called the 'Age of Reason'?
2. Enumerate the contributions of early childhood educators of the Enlightenment Period to the theory and Practice in Early childhood education.

3.5 Early Childhood Education in the Contemporary times.

Do you know that much of what we have today as theory and practice of early childhood education are the contributions and ideals of contemporary practitioners of early childhood

education? These include Jean Heinrich Pestalozzi, (1941 – 1827), Johannes Friedrich Herbart, (1776 – 1841), Friedrich Frobel, (1782 – 1852), Maria Montessori (1870 – 1952) and John Dewey, (1859 – 1952).

Central to Pestalozzi's belief for early childhood education is respect for the individual child. In his view, every child has within him, his own pattern of development. This being the case, the child should be allowed to grow naturally so that he can unfold his potentials. His actual plea is for child-centred education. The emphasis is on an educational process that will benefit the young learner.

Hebart built his educational ideals on the importance of environmental factors especially in the very early stages of learning. He was of the view that learning potentials will naturally unfold depending too on the learner's environment. For him the child's mind at birth is 'tabula rasa'. The implication here is that all ideas and knowledge acquired are largely due to the environment. Therefore in the case of the young learner, the teaching methods must be exciting and the curriculum content, logical. The curriculum content should also come from the child's immediate environment.

Frobel is one great early childhood educator who has made immense contribution. You want to know why? He was actually the first to coin the word, 'kindergarten'. The kindergarten in his view could be likened to a child's garden where emphasis is placed on the social development of

the young learners. He had great concern for the type of learning that should take place in early childhood education. His focus was mostly on helping the child to learn through creativity. He was also of the view that in this first stage of learning, the child should enjoy some freedom of self-activity and self-determination as he seeks knowledge. He believed strongly that force as a way of directing young learners is wrong. The teacher's methodology must express love, patience and guidance. This is one reason why he recommended women as better nursery school teachers. On the whole, Frobel advocates child-centred early childhood education.

Today we hear of Montessori Nursery or Kindergarten schools. Do you know where this comes from? It is actually the ideals and contribution of Madame Maria Montessori to the theory and practice of early childhood. Her idea of freedom for the young learner is basically biological. In effect, she was of the opinion that freedom is better expressed when the child grows up normally, without interference by way of physical, mental or emotional disabilities. It is on this basis that Montessori recommended what she termed "auto – education" as quite ideal and practical for the early stages of learning. The emphasis in this kind of education is that while the child is yet young he can grow up normally if development is centred on the child's senses and the training of the muscles. Like all other early childhood educators she believed that the best method of learning is through play. She also emphasized that much learning can be achieved if the child has enough colourful toys to play with. In such individual or group play, the child is opportuned to experiment, discover and experience. In so doing he develops the senses and his muscles.

Another contemporary early childhood practitioner was John Dewey. He was quite pragmatic in his orientation for a child-centred education. Do you know what the term 'pragmatic' means? It is actually concerned with practical results and values. That is treating things in matter-of-fact or practical way. Dewey's interest in kindergarten education was quite pragmatic. His idea of teaching and learning for that stage is developing curricula based on actual happening and events in the child's everyday life, not on purely academic disciplines. He also recommended that teachers who teach these young ones must use localised curriculum, and involve children in projects so as to encourage critical thinking. He also emphasised learning by doing. Finally, Dewey believed that a good kindergarten education, especially as it is the first steps to learning, must be properly organised. In other words, the whole of the school's goals and methods, moral, physical and intellectual activities can be best attained if the child is opportuned to learn individually and at his own pace. Importantly too, Dewey summed up the kindergarten stage of learning as a period of play. He termed it so because it is the period when the child leaves home for the first time, and makes his first social interaction with the world beyond his own. Also, by virtue of his age and maturity, the kindergarten child can best achieve learning through play.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 7.

1. Who was the first to coin the term "Kindergarten"? What does it actually mean?

2. What is the emphasis of Montessori's 'auto-education'?

3. Highlight the significant roles played by the early childhood advocates of the contemporary age.

3.6   Child Rearing Practices in Traditional African Education.

So far, we have explored the evolution and development of early childhood education in the Western world. Now what does this same concept mean in the typical traditional African context? How is childrearing practised in the traditional African Educational system? In traditional African society, education was quite functional and aimed at training the child to acquire knowledge and skills and imbibe the customs and norms of the people. The African child is born into a family or society where he looks up to his ancestors and elders for support. The younger children look up to the older siblings as characters to emulate. Thus the traditional family with their communal living provided an anchorage for the younger ones in all aspects of their training. In this society, the extended family system, no matter how distant, was seen as a member of the immediate home, and played a role in the upbringing of the child. But today, with modernisation and increasing economic problems, it is becoming difficult to look beyond the immediate family. Essentially at a very early age, once the child was weaned, he was taught to accept some moral responsibilities. The traditional agencies of socialisation include the family, kin-group, social group and age groups. Even though today, these agencies are still crucial to the early education of the child, they are quite modified with lesser roles. In other words, the cohesiveness of traditional African society is today weakened with the emphasis on child individualism as advocated by Rousseau and other child-centred pragmatists.

Basically though, the African child in the traditional setting just like the kindergarten school child in modern society was taught in the most practical way. He was made to learn from older people, especially from his mother. He learnt through initiation, recitation and demonstration. He

participated in recreational exercises like dancing and singing, wrestling, drumming and other physical displays that suited his age. He was also taught elementary practical skills. Finally, he imbibed intellectual training from story – telling, stories from local history of his people, poetry, proverbs and riddles. He was also taught through play, the names of plants, animals, birds and the local geography of his area.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 8.

The African child in the traditional setting just like the kindergarten child in contemporary society was taught in the most practical way. How?

4.0   CONCLUSION

So far the discussion has been a historical account of the concept and practice of early childhood education. The review dates back to old Greece and Rome, all through the Middle Ages to the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods. Also we looked at what we have as early childhood education in contemporary or modern day in comparison to the child rearing practice in traditional African educational system.

Generally across historical times, what seems peculiar is the need to educate the child right from the early years; even though there may not be named particular age range. What is therefore clear is that from historical analysis, all through man's development, there have always been thoughts and practices in early childhood learning. This is further expressed in the ideals and contributions by early childhood advocates at various times. Significantly too, it was also discovered that the young in the African setting, just like his counterpart in contemporary society was taught in the

most practical way. Also, through play, the African child imbibed knowledge, skills and right attitudes. Generally, the idea of a historical perspective of this nature is to reveal pertinent issues and the essence of early childhood education over the ages.

4.0   SUMMARY

In this unit you learnt about the historical development of early childhood educational theories and practices across ages and times. You also learnt the similarities and differences in early childhood educational practices in these different ages. The contributions and ideals of early childhood advocates were also highlighted. Specifically, you learnt that even the African childrearing practices can compare favourably with what we have in modern times. In the next unit we will be looking at the philosophical perspective of early childhood Education.

6.0   TUTUOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What do you know now about the historical development of the theory and practice of early childhood education that you did not know before you studied this unit?

2. Are there any significant contributions made by advocates of early childhood education? Can you enumerate such contributions and advocates?

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UNIT 2 A PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

CONTENTS
1.0   **Introduction**
2.0   **Objectives**
3.0   **Main Content**
      3.1   **A philosophical analysis of Early Childhood Education.**
      3.2   **An Idealistic approach to Early Childhood Education.**
      3.3   **Progressivism and pragmatic early childhood education.**
      3.4   **The Experimentalist approach to Early Childhood Learning.**
      3.5   **The Humanistic ideal of Early Childhood Education.**
4.0   **Conclusion**
5.0   **Summary**
6.0   **Tutor-Marked Assignment**
7.0   **References / Further Readings**

1.0   INTRODCUTION

In the last unit we explored a background of the concept or theory and Practice of early childhood education. The historical overview took us from the beginning, with old Greece and Roman Empires as the focus, all through the other ages in man's history to present day. In this unit, some basic schools of thought (Philosophies) and their corresponding early childhood educational theories will be reviewed. In other words, each of the philosophical theories will be looked at in the light of their prescribed curriculum content and methods of teaching younger children. Four major schools o f thought and their views for early childhood education will be looked at. These include the Idealist, Progressivism, Experimentalism, and the Humanistic schools of thought.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Identify the different schools of thought and their views on early childhood education;

- State the specific views each of these schools of thought hold for early childhood

  Educational practice;

- compare and contrast the different theories and practices for early childhood education;

- explain in general, the variations in the different views for early childhood learning.

3.1   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   A philosophical analysis of Early Childhood Education.

What we have today as early childhood education is in many ways a redefinition of Plato's philosophy of childhood education. He was about the first to see the need and importance of what is today known as early childhood education. He took time to analyse the childhood education in stages. He recommended for the firsts stage, nursery schools for children between the ages of three and to six years. In his opinion, nursery education was intended to help the child appreciate the world through his intellect, also, to develop his muscles through games. He prescribed the play method as quite adequate in teaching the child at this stage.

Aristotle another great philosopher believed in early childhood education. In his opinion, the child's mind is quite impressionable at birth and the influence of instruction can bring out the

best in the child. Still on the various philosophical nature of pre-school experience, Comenius described education as that powerful tool for achieving one's potentials, which needs to be tapped early enough. He therefore recommended the formative years of the child as crucial to education. In other words, the child should begin learning right from his early years. He recommended that curriculum for nursery education should build in the young ones a good sense of memory and imaginative skills and abilities.

In Pestalozzi's philosophy of early childhood education, the child in his early stages of life should be given time and opportunity to unfold his potentials and hidden talent. The role of the educator in this case is simply to help to direct the child's growth, while providing the proper intellectual nourishment and guidance. Pestalozzi's ideal for childhood education also lays emphasis on the role of the home in the education of the child. In his opinion, the home should provide trust, warmth and affection for the child, while the school provides learning opportunities and discipline. His expectation is that when the home and the school complement each other, the child gets a better early start in life.

Montessori's philosophy of childcare and education centres on special care in the development of the child's senses and muscles. Her belief is based on the fact that rapid and sure progress can always be achieved if the child is allowed his freedom in a "functional" educational setting. It is also on this basis of functional teaching and learning in early childhood education that the likes of Dewey, Pestalozzi, Frobel and Piaget have focused their theories and practices of early childhood learning.

I am sure all the advocates of philosophy of early childhood education mentioned so far are quite familiar. We saw them in unit 1 when we were tracing the historical background of early childhood education. Essentially in this unit, we are again highlighting their philosophical views. This is simply to establish too that early childhood education has always had a philosophical origin. It is also against this background that a general view of the various schools of thought and their theories and practices for early childhood education will be looked at. I want us to always remember that when we use the term 'philosophy' we are actually talking about the individual's world views or beliefs, theories and practices on particular issues. In this case, our focus is on early childhood education. Also when we talk of schools of thought, we also mean different philosophical beliefs held by group(s).

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 1

In unit 1 we traced a historical background of early childhood education. What do you think the aim is in this unit?

3.2   An Idealistic approach to Early Childhood Education.

Do you know why the Idealist is so called? They believe that an idea is not real until it is made 'the Ideal'. The Ideal in the understanding of the Idealist comes with man's ability to reason. They are also of the opinion that the mind is very important as the facilitator of reasoning and knowledge. More importantly, man must reason effectively, there has to be a sound interaction between the body and mind: This is actually the basis of the Idealist education. Consequently, the Idealist philosophy of early childhood education is helping the child develop knowledge early enough in life. A typical Idealist early childhood educational programme will therefore

suggest that early child care should begin from birth to about six years of age. This is important

so as to develop in the child health habits, right morals, and physical exercises. All of these will

be done through games, plays and songs. In so – doing, it is also expected that the right interest

talents and abilities of the child would naturally unfold after a period of time.

Idealists have also noted that children of Kindergarten of early childhood school age are young,

innocent and the purest expression of nature. Thus, they need special care in helping them learn.

In this case therefore, whatever is passed on to them by way of knowledge must be genuine and

of truth. This helps to build in the children, right from an early age self – discipline and good

moral habits. This also makes the role of the nursery school teacher a moral disciplinarian in the

gentlest way. The teacher manages his role so well that he easily cultivates in the young learner a

habit of doing the right thing at the right time. This view highlights the Idealist view of habit

formation in bringing up the child morally, and as a virtuous person. The idea here of the Idealist

is that the basis for integrity is actually laid in childhood. The Idealists also hold the view that

imparting appropriate morals at this stage of learning is not solely achieved through school. Most

learning at this age comes through action, and the young learner can equally develop his

personality in a good home environment. Generally, one can say that the issue of moral and

discipline is very important in the Idealist theory of early childhood learning. A child, who

develops positive behaviours and attitudes in early learning, would learn to act in accordance to

societal norms as he grows. It is also important to note that the Idealists believe that whatever

behaviour or disposition a child displays is a reflection of adult habits, thoughts, quality of mind

and norms of his society. In this wise therefore, they are of the view that the quality of adult

behaviour in the child's environment is quite important, because it has its ultimate influence on the child.

Still on the Idealist's curriculum for early childhood education, they believe that all that goes on by way of educational concept and practice should firstly be seen as a symbolic activity. The implication here is that symbols are the medium through which the mind acquires knowledge. The Idealist would argue that symbols as a medium of learning and expression is quick and important in helping the young learner acquire knowledge. The explanation is that the use of symbols in childhood teaching creates a suitable teaching – learning environment. Do you know what these symbols are in early childhood learning? They are all such learning materials like colourful pictures, toys, and other play objects. These help to stimulate the thoughts and feelings of the young learner. Like most early childhood Philosophers, the Idealists also prescribe the play method as the best known way of exciting the learner to attain the goals of early childhood education programme.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 2

1. What age range does the Idealist prescribe as the period of learning in early childhood education?
2. Name the Idealist recommended subjects for early childhood learning.
3. Why does the Idealist emphasise the importance of moral training in early childhood education?
4. What do symbols represent in the early childhood curriculum?

3.3   Progressivism and Pragmatic Early Childhood Education.

We have taken time to look critically at the Idealist theory and practice of early childhood education. Some other Philosophers see the Idealist theory as rather too traditional, rigid and quite a subject – centred education. This school of thought has also been criticized as oftentimes teacher – centred, as such not giving the child enough opportunity to express himself. This is in the sense that the teacher directs him and leads him in what he should do, not so much what interest the child. Most of these critiques came from Philosophers known as Pragmatists. They promote the philosophy of progressivism and pragmatism. They came into the scene about the 19th century. Their major aim for education generally was to revitalise the aims of education as well as the teaching methods. Importantly, their goal was to make education suitable to meet the growing need of a technologically advancing world. This new practicality in education was also applied to their beliefs and practice for early childhood education.

Progressivism in education centres on the philosophy of pragmatism and practicality. Thus for early childhood education, the Pragmatists have suggested that learning can begin early, at birth or infancy. They recommended this as the first stage of education. They note that education given in the first five or six years of the child's life is crucial to all other stages of learning. Rousseau, one of such early childhood pragmatists, has described this first stage of learning as truly positive. He maintained that a truly progressive education should take cognisance of the child's own special needs, as a being that exists in his own rights. He holds the view that nature wants children to be children before being men. The emphasis is that childhood has its own way of seeing, thinking and feeling, so the child should not be treated as a miniature adult. It is also against this background that most pragmatists advocate child-centred education. In relating this

view to childhood education, Pestalozzi, another pragmatist is of the opinion that if the child is allowed to be himself and grow naturally, he is likely to be less problematic in preparing himself for maturity. In other words, a child can safely pass on to his next stage of development if he has fully mastered the experiences and characteristics of the preceding stage. Significantly, every child in the Pragmatist philosophy has natural God-given potential. These potentials will unfold only if it has the appropriate environment in which to grow. The focus here is that when the child is opportuned to be at the centre of education, there is no rigidity in the way he learns and acquires knowledge. Rousseau emphasizes a degree of freedom for the child to romp and play to his heart's content, to work or play when he feels, and not to be perpetually imposed upon and frustrated by adults. In this regard too, Rousseau saw early childhood as one that should depart from bookish learning. Instead it should help the child develop his senses to appreciate contact with his physical world. In this process of 'trial and error', the child naturally goes through an experiential process as medium of facts rather than words. Thus, for the Pragmatist, education at infancy should concentrate on the development of the child's senses through free activities and informal learning situations.

Concerning the best methods of teaching, the Pragmatist should not be engaged with discussions he cannot understand or descriptions that make no meaning to him. Instead, he should be presented with appropriate objects. In teaching the young learner with such learning objects, the teacher should take him in progression from the level of the known to the level of the unknown. A pragmatic teacher should be able to create scenes and experiences that would excite the child to want to learn. Importantly too, the Pragmatist prescribes that the early childhood curriculum and the teaching method should be governed to a large extent by the nature of the child rather

than what the syllabus dictates. In other words they believe that the curriculum is made for the child and not the child for the curriculum. Still on the methods of teaching, in the Progressives' philosophy, Pestalozzi, a notable Pragmatist has recommended what he termed "object lesson". This term is derived from his philosophy which says every teaching process ought to involve the presentation of physical objects to the learners. The use of such concrete objects used for illustration enhances learning. In the case of Kindergarten school child appropriate teaching method can be found in the use of toys, abacus, coloured building blocks etc.

Another important aspect of the Pragmatist early childhood education is the emphasis on play. In the opinion of Froebel, the teacher's duty in not to bend, shape or mould the child to suit a purpose, but to excite him to grow through play. He noted that by virtue of the child's age, play is the best method that can entice him to learn. Froebel does not see play as mere distractions, but a most spontaneous activity that helps in the total development of the child. Play allows the child exercise harmoniously all his physical, emotional and intellectual qualities. He is also of the opinion that in play, the young child combines attention with relaxation, purpose with independence and rule with freedom. In simple terms, the young child learns effortlessly through play. In this play way method, the child is provided the opportunity to experiment, create and experience his world.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 3

1. What is the pragmatist's major aim of early childhood education as against the Idealist philosophy of early childhood theory and practice?

2. Concerning the Pragmatist's method of teaching young learners, explain Pestalozzi's "Object lessons".

3. What is the concept of "play" in the Pragmatist philosophy of early childhood education?

3.4   The Experimentalist approach to Early Childhood Learning.

Another look at the philosophical ideals for early childhood education shows that about the first decade of the 20th century, another group of philosophers came to the scene. The Experimentalist is another group which also advocated a democratic child-centred philosophy for education. The Experimentalist came with more ideas to add to the philosophical thoughts of notable pragmatists like Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel. This new group came with a more refined understanding of the psychological needs and problems of the child. Notable amongst the Experimentalist are the likes of John Dewey and Madame Maria Montessori. They contributed immensely to matters concerning early childhood education. Essentially, the theme of the experimentalist philosophy was democracy in teaching and learning. The experimentalist noted that early childhood learning is quite critical as the beginning of school age. Thus, the child or learner should be allowed to express himself especially through play. The teacher on the other hand must recognise the need for this expressive freedom on the part of the child. It is this experimentalist commitment to democratic principles in early childhood teaching and learning process that makes them quite unique.

The Experimentalist philosophy of early childhood education has a peculiar approach to learning which may not be described as just child – centred or subject – centred, but more of a problem centred approach. This is achieved through intelligent experiencing and experimenting where the

young learners and subject matter to learn are brought together in meaningful real life situations. To fully achieve this, the experimentalists have recommended a democratic classroom where children are given a chance to experience democracy, by living democratically. In this case, the teacher is not seen as the 'boss' and 'master of the game', but a friend, confidant, guide and counsellor. They also emphasize team spirit by working co-operatively in resolving mutual problems between teachers and learners, and amongst learners themselves.

John Dewey, a well known experimentalist has his philosophic ideal for early childhood education expressed in democratic principles, with scientific method of instruction. His idea of a kindergarten curriculum is one based on the experiences in the lives of the child and not totally on academic disciplines. In other words, Dewey believes that early childhood learning can be more pragmatic if the child's zeal to experience his world is recognised. He also holds the view that there should be a relationship between the child's experiences at home, with that in school. This helps the teacher prepare the child to take his roles in the larger society. On the whole, Dewey's theory and Practice of early childhood education is a further enhancement of child-centeredness. However, in trying to relate and seek a balance in the psychology of child learning and his development, Dewey has advanced beyond the Pestalozzian, Froebelian and Rousseau's principles of child-centred education. What therefore has evolved from the Deweyan idea of child-centeredness is the experience-centred education; one based on the principles and practice of democracy in teaching and learning.

Madam Maria Montessori is another early childhood educator who is also described as an experimentalist. Montessori like Dewey has also left an indelible mark on the theory and practice

of early childhood education. She recognises early childhood educational development of the individual. Early childhood stage of learning for her is the foundation on which other educational stages are built. Like all other pragmatists, she also advocates child-centred education. But beyond this she was quite convinced that freedom for the child in learning makes more worthwhile any educational process. Her emphasis is on what she termed "auto – education", which lays special stress on sense and muscle training for the preschool learner. She experimented with mentally retarded children and was quite convinced that education, rather than physical or mental treatment was more appropriate for their ailment.

Essentially, the Montessorian Philosophy like that of Dewey is based on practical education. Her prescribed teaching method provides the young learner with adequate facts designed to help him explore materials and learn at his own pace. Montessori's strategy of teaching encourages muscle training. This is also aimed at encouraging the young learner, whom she described as a self-activated learner, to work in an already prepared environment of programmed materials. Essentially, the emphasis on the Montessorian method of teaching is its reliance on self – teaching, self – discipline and self – expression. This method is actually aimed at helping the kindergarten school child acquire learning through the use of didactic materials. Montessori is of the view that a series of learning games or the use of didactic materials places the child in direct contact with the teaching content, thereby easing off to a good extent, the subservience that comes through direct teaching by an adult. The implication here is that if the child is allowed some freedom, it will help him discover his environment and develop knowledge. Such pace – learning and self – development allows the child express himself, free from the strains of competition and rivalry on the one hand, and from false incentives of reward and anxiety –

punishment, on the other. Basically Montessori's theory and practice of education is quite typical of a child – centred approach, and does not emphasize the conventional teacher – pupil relationship. Thus, for the Montessori school, the relationship is that between the child and his learning materials. It is more or less a motor – education, which is so systematically structured for the learner to attain a high degree of efficiency and coordination of his movement. This makes freedom of movement the cornerstone of Montessori's motor education. Importantly, the Montessorian pedagogy of motor education emphasizes sensory exercise which comes with the child's ability to firstly master practical life exercises. Once the child is able to master practical exercise, like walking, gymnastics, rhythmic games, good posture and proper speech, sensory education can be imbibed. Montessori has also recommended learning materials that promote sensory discrimination, skills and concept. Such concrete educational teaching aids provide the young learners opportunity to exercise their freedom to touch, feel and manipulate. Montessori has suggested beautiful and coloured sensory teaching aids to represent simple methods of reading, word construction and basic mathematical concepts.

Generally, an analysis of Montessori's philosophy for early childhood education would reveal that its approach to teaching demands a high degree of competency on the part of the teacher, if she must promote this democratic and individualised learning. Importantly, the teacher should not limit his actions to one of a mere observer. He must partake in the practical class activities. A Montessori teacher must be able to establish a climate of emotional support, helpfulness and consideration. The teacher should serve more as a resource person.

I want to believe that by now you have a clearer picture of a typical Montessori school, and why it is emphasized even in our Nigerian Society.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 4

1. What is the experimentalist emphasis on a more democratic child – centred education?

2. Highlight the major difference in Dewey's idea of child – centred early childhood education from that of other pragmatists.

3. What is significant about Montessori's philosophy of early childhood learning?

3.5   The Humanistic ideal of Early Childhood Education.

The term "Guidance" is a major concept in Humanistic education. For the Humanist, guidance is an important aspect of education. It plays a major role in helping the young learn. It also helps to develop in the learner, a more positive view of the self. In relating this to the young child, the humanist theory has asserted that right from his tender years, when the child is still too young to appreciate his weaknesses and inadequacies, through careful guidance of the nursery school teacher, the child is taught to appreciate the worth in himself. Essentially the Humanistic position in early childhood education is reflected in the Humanist recommendation for affective learning. They believe that the affective factor is an invaluable component of human behaviour. The concern of the early childhood educator in this instance is to create an educative environment that is typical of a humanistic approach to learning. An educational environment where the teacher attempts to achieve a climate of personal trust. Such an affective growth in the child is fostered through a unity of cognitive developmental strategies. The humanists have

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argued that the traditional emphasis on a rigid learning style, marked by memorisation, and the school's preoccupation with enforcement of inflexible rules destroys the child's eagerness to learn, as well as the desire for imaginative creativity. To this end, the humanists insist that the affective domain should be nurtured through the expression of the children's emotion.

What then is the place of the Humanist theory in early childhood learning? A well structured humanist theory of early childhood education favours learning by discovery. In other words, if the child is provided with learning aids and materials, through play he will naturally come to develop the self. Brunner, a typical Humanist was quite convinced that a sound theory of teaching young ones is helping them learn through discovery, the problem – solving and exploratory learning. In other words, when the young child is provided with a conducive learning situation, his curiosity will naturally be aroused.

The presence of the humanistic teacher is another crucial aspect of the humanistic theory of early childhood learning. The teacher should be a careful guide for this young learner. His presence as guide would help to minimise the risk involved while the learner is busy exploring his world. The humanistic teacher is one who also respects the integrity of the child, so he is able to accept the child's thoughts and feelings no matter how immature they may be. The teacher also stands out as a facilitator of learning. He should be one capable of creating a modest conducive learning environment. An environment that is real and open. A place where the child right form a tender age learns to trust, because he is accepted by an emphatic, understanding teacher. Significantly, in helping the learner acquire knowledge, the humanistic teacher leads the learner to participate fully at every stage, with less stress and tension. A situation where learning is done with less

stress and knowledge acquired with less threat. Indeed, the aim of Humanistic education seeks to achieve a balance of emotion and reason. The child should be able to express his feelings while acquiring knowledge.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 5

1. The term 'guidance' is a major concept in early childhood education, how?
2. What methodology of learning is favoured by the humanist?

4.0 CONCLUSION

A course on comparative early childhood education may be incomplete if, having traced a historical development of childcare and educational practices; it fails to articulate the need for early childhood education as perceived by great thinkers or philosophers of the different ages. In other words, this unit takes has reviewed of what some schools of thought hold as philosophers of early childhood education. A comparative review of this nature helps to project the philosophies inherent in what is taught and what ought to be taught to young learners.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has introduced you to the various schools of thought or philosophical views for early childhood educational practices. Notable among what you learnt in this unit include:

- A broad view of the philosophical theory and practice of early childhood education;
- The Idealist recommendations for early childhood education;

- What it takes to have a more pragmatic or practice – based early childhood education which highlights child – centeredness;

- The Pragmatists method of teaching and their emphasis on 'play';

- The Experimentalist's democratic, child – centred theory and practice;

- The importance of 'guidance' in the humanist philosophy of early childhood education;

- The views of notable philosophers in the various schools of thought.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Using two named schools of thoughts, compare and contrast their theories and practices in early childhood learning.

2. What is significant in a Montessori school? Highlight the difference between the conventional school and the Montessori school.

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UNIT 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the last two units we first took time to discuss the historical development of the early childhood education, after which we looked at philosophical belief and world views on childcare and educational practices. I am sure we can still remember the contributions of great early childhood educators like Froebel, Pestalozzi and Madame Maria Montessori. Essentially from their various philosophical views we are made aware that when we talk of acquisition of knowledge for the kindergarten child, learning goes beyond coincidental, spontaneous or unplanned education. Even though before kindergarten age, the child learns at home, such learning is largely informal. It is needed for more formal learning, most desirably done in a specialised educational establishment or school that has brought to bear the notion and practice of early childhood education. In this case, there is a prescribed early childhood education programme which provides knowledge taught by specialist, and not left to chance techniques of informal education. This may have answered the question, what is early childhood education.

But let us go further to explore the concept of early childhood education, especially as used in different societies. From there, we may begin to appraise childcare and education practices.

1.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- express the various definitions of early childhood education;

- identify the usage of these concepts across societies;

- explain what is involved in childcare educational practices;

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Concept of Early Childhood Education

For various reasons, some historical, others political and ideological, the term used to describe social and educational programmes for young children is quite diverse. However in the western world the most commonly used term to describe services for childcare and education for children between 0 to about age 8 is "early childhood education".

The term 'early childhood education', which actually originated from Europe between the 16th and 19th centuries has with time spread to other parts of the world. Early childhood education encompasses all forms of education that pertain to rearing of children between age 2 to five or six years. In other words, it involves schooling for young children beginning at age three and intended to prepare them for primary or elementary school. In the Western world, there is no one universal definition for this concept. For most Historians and Sociologists of education, the term early childhood education is more of a social invention. It therefore follows that all societies

have specific aims about raising and educating their children right from nursery school age. In effect too, most, if not all societies care about early childhood education. However, every society has its individual arrangements for such childcare and education that tend to be culturally and historically specific and quite varied. For instance in Belgium, nurseries (crèches) are institutions registered and subsidized by the Oeuvre Nationale de l'Enface (ONE) that care for children from birth up to the age of 3 years. While 'ecoles maternelles' or nursery schools patterned along the line of Froebel's philosophy are meant to prepare children to succeed in primary instruction. In the same vein, in Kenya, there are various forms of care and education for children under age 6. Childcare for those aged 0 – 2 years is usually in homes by paid "ayahs" or childminders. Oftentimes, these childminders are not quite (formally) trained. The prescribed entry school age for children in Kenya is 3 years. They attend nursery school or kindergarten until 6 years.

Generally, the term 'early childhood education' could be used to describe the care and education of children from birth to about seven years of age. It is in light of this that Caldwell (1989:404) coined the term "educare", to help widen the scope described. The new expansion of childhood now includes childminding centres for infants, kindergarten and nursery schools. Let us take our minds back to the word, 'Kindergarten'. Can you remember? We first saw that word in our discussion on the historical background on the concept and practice of early childhood. Then we saw the word was actually coined by the German educator, Friedrich Froebel. In his conception, "kindergarten" literally means. "Child's garden". Internationally, "educare" or childcare in a group setting could be offered in a crèche, day-care or childcare centres, nursery and kindergarten schools. However, as previously noted, the usage of these terms varies from country to country, depending too on their philosophical inclination for the custodial nature of monitorial

infant education. Importantly, early childhood education especially kindergarten or nursery goes beyond mere provision of childhood services; it also improves the general welfare of the child. It also improves the general welfare of the child. It is also in line with this that we will in this unit look at the place of child welfare in early childhood education, as well as parental role.

Notably, the emphasis in early childhood learning, especially as it pertains to nursery and kindergarten education is on its formal and explicit educational agenda. Basically it has a major aim of giving children an academic Headstart. In 1965, the United States instituted a federal sponsored programme known as "Headstart". The programme was actually intended to provide preschool education for children. Also within this framework of the Headstart programme, children receive educational, psychological, medical nutritional and social services. By 1987, the Headstart programme had spread throughout the United States. Today, many of these Headstart centres operate more than six hours a day serving as day-care facilities. Essentially the main intent of an academic headstart is to equip the child, at an early age with linguistic, prosocial and numerical abilities. It also prepares the child for primary education.

Early childhood education in most nations is also offered in day care centres, nursery and kindergarten schools. Until recently, with increasing modernity, there were two types of nursery schools in Nigeria. These are the "Akara" school and the traditional Western-type nursery and day care centres. The first was typical of low-income families. The "Akara' school was usually poorly organised and often run by unqualified teachers. However, in more recent times, it is fast disappearing, even though there are yet in existence, sub-standard nursery schools. Formal education for the Nigerian child actually begins in nursery school or kindergarten. Formal

nursery education is described by the Nigerian National Policy on Education, (NPE, 1998:11), as that school-like activity given in an institution for children aged three to five. This is with an aim to promoting school readiness. Basically, the programmes of Nigerian early childhood education could be said to provide socialisation and custodial roles, and, as most parents believe, they actually aim at giving the child a head-start in formal school, the expectation is a smooth transition to the primary stage of learning. Generally, early childhood education or pre-education in the Nigerian context includes the crèche, the nursery and the kindergarten.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 1

1. In a more general sense, how would you describe the term "early childhood education"?

2. How does the Nigerian National Policy on Education (1998) describe early childhood education?

3.2   Child Welfare

The term, 'child welfare' is used to refer to a broad range of social programmes that contribute to the well being of children. In the United States, child-welfare programmes are adapted to meet the needs of children of whose families do not have the means or inclination to take care of them. This recognition of children's special needs in the United States was firstly established under the United States children's bureau in 1912. This actually marked the beginning of child welfare programme and public recognition of children's special needs. In 1959, the United Nations adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the child. This also affirmed the rights the child everywhere in the world with regard to adequate care from his parents and community. In 1989,

the UN Convention on the Rights of the child was adopted. It was basically an attempt to consolidate International laws on the basic rights of children to survival, education and Protection from abuse and exploitation.

Following this trend in most developed and sometimes, developing nations, the welfare of the child may begin from birth until the end of schooling. In some other cases, even before birth, at pregnancy, the rights and welfare of the child is already recognised and made aware. For instance, in Austria, there is a Social Policy and Legislation which entitles any adult with permanent residency to a monthly family allowance for children's maintenance. Children born to such family, from birth to about 25 years, and in the case of handicapped children, age 27, enjoyed government welfare support. Still in Austria, female residents receive maternity allowance, allowance on birth of the child, and further allowances when the child turned one or two years. However, the mother of the child was only entitled to these allowances on presentation of "mother-child Pass" or a certification that mother and child have had all the necessary medical examinations. This was introduced in the 1970s to ensure the reduction of infant mortality. Till date in Austria, there are other legislative measures introduced to protect and safe guard the health of expectant mothers though the provision of pre and post natal leave, maternity leave and pay etc. Besides government welfare support, other forms of social welfare services in Austria, which directly or indirectly affect early childcare and education, come from private and religious organisations and agencies. These organisations provide facilities like kindergarten schools, special educational Institutions, home nursing services etc. Notable of these is the SOS Children's Village scheme, an idea that is fast being embraced by most nations in the world.

In Hong Kong, although there is no single overall policy governing childcare and education, there are still certain legislative measures adopted that relate to the protection, rights and obligations to Hong Kong children. Even though this welfare service may not begin before birth like the case in Austria, pregnant women in Hong Kong are ensured pre-natal care, subsidized by their employer in addition to free medical services provided in government hospitals.

In the United States, a variety of child welfare services are conducted under public and private auspices. These can be categorised as support services, supplementary programmes or substitute care. There are others like family service agencies, guidance clinic and agencies that furnish protection to children that are considered support services. Such services attempt to sustain a child within a family that is undergoing stress, unemployment, divorce or presence of only one parent. In other industrialized nations, child welfare is generally comprehensive. For instance, there are financial grants for every family, such as subsidized medical care, numerous day care centres and communal foster care.

In third world countries, the United Nations Children's fund and the World Health Organisation are working with governments of such nations to reduce high mortality rates. Through the assistance of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and UNICEF, by 1985, virtually all the children in Antigua and Barbuda had been immunized against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus (UNICEF, 1990). It is also noteworthy that in India, amongst major organisations working for the improvement of Early Childhood education in India are the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the Home Science Colleges and Indian Association for

Presidential Education (IAPE), with UNICEF playing a key role in supporting the governmental and Voluntary efforts. For instance, with the financial aid from UNICEF, NCERT successfully launched the Early Childhood Education and Children's Media Laboratory Project (ECE/CML) in about ten states in India. Evidently much progress has been made in respect of UN assistance in child welfare globally, even though some developing countries still record malnutrition and childhood diseases as cause of infant mortality.

UNICEF which was founded by the United Nations in 1946, has made remarkable impact in terms of child welfare worldwide. The Organisation's, mission in this respect is three-fold as follows (i) To ensure that the basic nutrition, health and education needs are met; (ii) To afford children the opportunity to expand their potentials; To create an International ethical standard of behaviour toward children. Essentially too, UNICEF has provided immunization to millions of children against potentially fatal diseases. This is with an aim to promoting basic health care delivery system and treatment. In the long run, UNICEF is making its contribution to the dramatic reduction of child mortality.

3.2.1   Special Education for young Children

Generally in most countries, day care centres and even kindergarten and nursery schools are oftentimes privately owned. These Institutions are supervised by the Ministries of Education and Health, as well as the social welfare department. This is to ensure that the educational needs as well as the child's general welfare needs are met. In Ghana, two legal instruments which set minimum standards for day nurseries are the Supreme Military Council Decree (1978) and the Day Care Regulation (1979). The emphasis in the decree and regulation are:

(i) A proprietor or proprietress must apply to the Director of Social Welfare for inspection of premises and approval before a day care centre begins operation;

(ii) Parents are encouraged to immunize their children; children will not be admitted into a day care centre until they have been immunized for smallpox, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, tuberculosis and measles.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 2

1. Describe the term, "child welfare".

2. How does the United Nations organisations contribute to global child welfare

3.2.1   Special Education for young Children

When we modify our teaching to serve children with special needs we provide special education. Special education is for various types of exceptional persons, whose educational needs deviate from the normal or conventional, due to impairment, disability, handicapped, or on the other hand, giftedness and talent. It is in this vein that Nigeria's National Policy on Education has defended special education as that formal educational training given to people (children and adults) with special needs. People with such special needs include the physically challenged, the emotionally disturbed and those with learning disabilities. There are also such children form disadvantaged homes, race and so on. Another area in the field of special education is that concerned with the instruction of children who have exceptionally high abilities. The United States Department of Education describes "giftedness" as exceptionally advanced performance

or the performance or the potential for outstanding performance in intellectual, creative, leadership, artistic or specific academic field. Children who demonstrate such outstanding talents come from all societies, culture and economic groups. Generally, educators believe that gifted children require special educational services because their learning methods differ significantly from those of the general population. Thus special educational services and facilities for gifted children tend to enhance their abilities.

On the whole, most societies take cognisance of the need for special education programmes, so that all can have access to education. As far back as 1970, Great Britain came out with the Handicapped Children's Act (1970). Importantly, this Act recognised that no "child is ineducable". In Kenya, special education caters for children with hearing, visual, mental, physical and multiple handicaps. The Kenyan special education programmes are an integral part of each cycle of formal education. The government of Kenya provides various services to the disabled through the Ministries of Education, Health, Culture and Social Services. Findings revealed that in 1987, special education programmes within the Ministry of Education served about 8,000 children in 56 special schools and 46 integrated programmes. In addition, the Ministry of Culture and Social Services also provides training in vocational rehabilitation centres. (Source: Ministry of Education, 1977). The case in Nigeria is not quite different. The government places much emphasis on special education needs for disadvantaged, disabled as well as gifted children. The federal Ministry of Education is solely responsible for coordinating special education activities. It does this in collaboration with relevant ministries, non – governmental organisations, and International agencies like UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO etc.

In Finland, one of the goals of the childcare system is to screen children for developmental delays or other problems that may require intervention. In this context, where a child requires special care and attention, childcare experts work with the child's parents and day care staff. They work out a rehabilitation plan for the child. (Ojala and Kinkka, 1992: 199).

In more recent times, there is a growing awareness on the need for collective learning activities for all children. The term 'Inclusion' has become widespread. Inclusion is now commonly used to apply to special education because it connotes access to and opportunity by all children to full participation in regular class activities irrespective of disability, race or other characteristics. This was the same view of the South African government in reference to the education of impaired children in her White Paper on the Provision of Education in South Africa (1993). This was also recalled in 1987 when it was specified that equal education was opportuned to all children of school age, which includes the impaired. Importantly too, that any form of discrimination based on race, culture, language, creed, sex, impairment, or social status is unacceptable (HSRC, 1987:14). Essentially, inclusion involves providing a variety of activities and experiences, so that all children can participate, and be successful in the regular classroom. Oftentimes, educators use the word inclusion in place of mainstreaming or integration. The idea is specially designed activities that engage all children as learners collectively. In America, the Disabilities Act of 1990 has recognised that separating children with disabilities from those without tends to constitute unequal opportunities to education. It is also in this awareness on the need for inclusion that many International documents have come to refute special education that connotes exclusion. These documents include the Canadian Committee on Emotional and Learning

Disorders Report of 1970, the 1978 Warrock Report in England, and the 1984 Report by the Ministry of Education in Australia, amongst others.

So far, we have come to recognise the place of special education in early childhood learning. It is noted that across nations, there is also this drift from that special education that connotes exclusion, to a more inclusive special education. The idea is to see and teach these young learners as a collective whole, not as individuals with special needs.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 3

1. How would you define special education?

2. Is there any difference in the emphasis on special education for young learners across the nations?

3. What does the term 'Inclusion' connote in Special education?

3.3   Parental Role in Early Childhood Education.

Parental involvement is a key element of early childhood education. Research findings have shown that if Parents became involved with their children's school work especially while they are still young, the children are more likely to remain academically motivated in their later school years. Educational Sociologists tell us that the family plays crucial roles in the socialisation process of the child at whatever stage of learning. They also recognise that even though learning begins at home (informally), the first formal learning and the child's first contact with the outside world, beyond the home is the school, the kindergarten or nursery school. It is also generally accepted that in this early stage of learning, the nursery school as well as the

teachers play custodial roles. It is also important for these schools to encourage Parents to be part of what goes on academically in the child's life.

In looking at the roles of parents in childcare and education, two things are actually involved. Firstly is the parents' participation in the education of their young ones, and the other is parental education. That is, parents as learners themselves, so as to gain better understanding on how to manage their children as learners.

In France, early childhood education is considered a most crucial aspect of the Child's academic life. In this regard, childcare and education is thought ideally as a joint effort between the home and school. The idea of this parent-school partnership in France is one where parents are expected to co-operate with educational authorities, as well as participate in school matters. Parents are represented in school association and councils. The case is same in Britain. As early as 1967, the Plowden Report (1967: 37) recognised the importance of parental participation in the education of their children. The report emphasized a close "partnership between the two parties (home and school) in every child's education". Following this trend, the Taylor Report (1997) and the Warnock Report (1978) were also in response to the view that parents have the right to be involved in the management of their children's education. All of this legislation culminated in the 1988 Education Act, which ensured a greater involvement of Parents in the management of schools and in children's learning. It is now mandatory in Great Britain to have parental representatives in each school's governing body.

Besides parental participation in school governing bodies, several studies (Donachy, W. 1979; Tizard, B. and Huges, M, 1984; Tizard, B, Mortimor, J and Birchell, B, 1981) have also shown that collaboration between the home and school have had a great beneficial effect on children's learning.

The most widespread of parent involvement in Britain at the early childhood learning stage, is through the preschool playgroups movement. Notably, playgroups have provided both education and support for parents and their children. Involvement in playgroups on the part of parents has created opportunity for a better understanding on the needs of their children, as well as provide for them.

The 1988 Education Act in Malta takes cognisance of parents' role in the lives of the young learner. The Act recommended that parent members elected by parents themselves as teacher members should constitute members of school councils. Also in Malta, most state schools have Parent – Teachers – Associations all of which fall under a Parent – Teachers Federation. Importantly, the PTA is a recognised body in schools. Schools organise official Parents day, Prize days, Exhibitions and Concerts, and other open days where parents get to see the activities of their children. Most schools also use schools Newsletters and Bulletins to keep parents informed of school activities. Parents in Malta are also encouraged to participate actively in practical class activities in kindergartens and nursery centres, class celebrations and children's – out – of – school activities. In Kenya since the 1980s early childhood education programmes became the responsibility of the country's Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, with private bodies like the Parents – Teachers – Associations are mostly financial and material

resource partners. In such situations, it could be said that parental involvement may not be purely for academic gains.

The other common role of parents in early childhood education is basically one of parent and family education. In this aspect most countries have come up with recognised parent support and education programmes. Parental education in children's school learning activities actually gained grounds in Britain in the late 1970s and the 1980s. In the opinion of (Pringle, 1980), parenthood, and particularly motherhood has been undervalued for too long. It was therefore suggested that Parental education should be a deliberate chosen role in which the community as a whole should invest time and resources. It is in recognition of the importance of parent education that (Pugh and De'Ath, 1984: 8) have defined it as "a wide range of education and supportive measures which help parents and prospective parents to understand themselves and their children, and enhance the relationship between them". As (Pugh, Kidd and Torkington, 1982) have noted, this new initiative saw organisations in Britain like the Marriage Guidance Council establishing educational projects at different stages in human life cycle. Three of such projects dealt with groups of mothers with preschool children. Presently in Britain, most large cities boast of education centres that are involved in parental education schemes.

Looking at the case in Japan, the Ministry of Health and Welfare in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture are all involved in Parental education. These Ministries through organs like the Child Guidance Centres, Welfare offices, Public Health Care centres, Boards of Education, in various ways offer direct support to parents on child health. They also offer basic knowledge of child development, and the role of home education.

Specifically, Child Guidance Centres provide assistance to parents who are not capable of taking care of children with physical, intellectual, emotional or behavioural problems. Also, the nursery schools and day-care centres in Japan offer opportunities for parents to study more about the daily activities of child learning. Through Parent – teachers' forum, especially when planned, lectures and educational programmes are organised, where parents are taught childcare and education. Importantly too, the Media, through the Television and Radio, run regular Parent education programmes.

In South Africa, most parental education and support programmes are organised as private initiatives, and maintained by private organisations. It is also noted that most of these parental support programmes originated from very specific needs, for instance Parents of autistic, cerebral palsy, deaf or blind children; also, single parent families. The underlying goal of these support groups is for child protection and the promotion of a healthy family life.

Nigeria, like in most developing nations, have government policies and laws on population management that are weakly enforced. Policies on parental education and support are almost non-existent. There is not much emphasis on educating couples for parenting. The case may not be quite different in Ghana. Even though organs like the Ministry of Health and the Department of Social Welfare strive to give parental enlightenment on issues like population control, as is the case in Nigeria. However, the child rearing philosophy and practices of the traditional African is oftentimes an obstacle to change and adopting new ideas.

Generally, an overview of parental role in early childhood education cannot be over-emphasized. No wonder, it is gaining some grounds across cultures. However there are yet some nations who believe all that there is to parental involvement is the Parents – Teachers – Association. Even at that, the PTA is seen more in terms as an association that aids school development in terms of material and financial gains. In the same vein, the idea of parent educational programmes and support still suffers acceptance especially in developing nations. That nonetheless, most nations acknowledge the importance of parent's role in the care and education of their young ones.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 4

1. In what ways can parents be involved in the education of their young ones?

2. Make a distinction between Parental Involvement and Parent Education and Support.

4.0 CONCLUSION

There is no gainsaying that every society pays attention to the need for early childcare and education, irrespective of the varied philosophies of early childhood learning. In other words, across nations, there is a shared belief and understanding in terms of care, welfare and special education for children with special needs. Importantly too, we have seen that when parents are involved in the education of their young learners, opportunities are created for parents on a better understanding of their children. On the whole, there are great academic gains when some partnership is established between the home and the school.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit took you through the concept of early childhood education. You have also seen that Child Welfare is a crucial aspect of childcare and education. This you must have also seen in case studies cited. This unit also exposed you to an aspect of child welfare, which is special education. You have learnt that special education serves children or young learners with special needs. Such special needs are also varied.

Finally, this unit exposed you to the importance of parents in the education of their young learners. You also learnt that parents can play roles through participation as members of school councils, PTA and other avenues. Importantly too, you also learnt that Parent education and support is another way parents can effectively play roles in the lives of their children. You were told that parent education programmes expose parents to acquiring more knowledge on child care, practices and education.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Give various definitions of early childhood education. Are there similarities and differences in these definitions? Highlight them.
2. Using the case of a named country studied, discuss the practices of Child Welfare and Special education in early child care in this country.

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UNIT 4 PATTERNS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of the various patterns of early childhood care and education services is very crucial to a course like comparative early childhood education. In other words, in carrying out a comparative study of early childhood educational practices, across cultures, we must first equip ourselves with facts on firstly, national policies guiding early childcare and education. Also, we should have a broad knowledge of how early childhood education programmes are generally structured and organised. In the case of national policy, our concern is on the types of early childhood education programmes available in the country or countries under study, the aims and objectives of the varied programmes, and the educational activities carried out in these programmes, alongside the teaching method(s) employed. In the aspect of the organisation and

structure of school(s), the focus is on financing, supervision and control of school. Importantly too, there is the need to have an idea of the training programmes available for teachers of these young learners. When you put all these together, you will likely get patterns of early childhood education services across nations.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- state the essence of national policies and objectives in establishing preschool education;
- identify the different types of early childcare educational programmes;
- discuss educational activities engaged in at the early childhood education stage;
- identify the various methods of teaching peculiar with this stage of learning;
- discuss how early childhood education programmes are organised;
- describe teacher training programmes for young learners;
- distinguish amongst various patterns of early childhood education services.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1   National Policy on Early Childhood Education

There is no single overall policy governing child care and education across nations. A series of differing kinds of national social Policy Support and provide aid for early childhood education. However what we find prevalent is that every nation adopts its policies, laws and certain legislations that govern directly or indirectly, the child's rights to education. Importantly, government policies in early childhood education seek to license child care and educational programmes, and enact laws that govern the establishment of preschools.

Generally though, national childcare and educational policy include financial assistance for care and education provided by the government and other agencies. Significantly too are preventive medical check up and all such policies concerning the general welfare of children and the family. In Finland for instance, in addition to the maternity allowance for mothers, there is also Child Benefit system which serves as compensation of the long-term cost borne by a family with the birth of a child (Finland Government Family Policy Report, 1980). In this regard, Child benefits are paid to families with children under the age of 17. Finland also grants child's support payments to ensure the maintenance of children whose parents are unable to meet family responsibility. In Portugal, as a way of social security, the government gives families grants per child, on a monthly basis. Outside this financial support the law also provides medical assistance and vaccination to children. Government policy on early childhood education, this time in Botswana is quite emphatic on licensing childcare programmes, as well as ensuring regulatory standards. This is done to protect the health, safety and general welfare of children in such programmes.

Most developing nations are also quite concerned about the general welfare and Health of the young ones and the family. However, this may not come by financial assistance as is the case in most developed nations. Oftentimes, to support Health and Welfare policies, the government ensures that families benefit through regular campaigns and insistence on medical cares like vaccination. In Nigeria, the government offers no direct financial support to parents for their young ones in school. However in the nation's policy on early childhood education, the government is quite responsible for aspects like training programmes for teachers of early childhood education. The government also contributes to the development of the curriculum;

supervise the establishment of preschools while ensuring quality. Like is the case in Nigeria and most developing nations, in Kenya, there is quite some concern for early childcare and education. But financial constraints on the part of the government does not allow for full participation. Most day nurseries and kindergarten schools are in the hands of private proprietors. In Kenya, before 1980 preschool education was under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. However, in 1984 to further exercise a supervisory role the government established the National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NCECE). This served as a professional body to implement government policies on early childhood education.

Generally, what we see from the above across nations is national governments' recognition of the importance of childcare and education. While some countries may have constraints in terms of financial support, there is yet these strive to ensure that an ideal basic foundation is laid for the young ones. Yet for some buoyant nation's financial commitment to the care and education of the child even before birth all through to adolescence, such nations have family policies that carter not only for the intellectual development of the child, but are concerned with welfare and medical support. Generally, one thing seems clear. Countries that care about early childhood education emphasize the total development of the child, especially at the formative stage.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 1

Can you identify some common features in National child care and educational policies?

3.1.1 Types of Early Child care and Educational Programmes

Childcare and educational services for young and their families have a longer history in the European and Asian countries than in the United States and other parts of the world. Early childcare and educational programmes are of different types, and they come in phases of the child's early stages of development. Generally though, early childcare and educational services can best be described as some kind of outside – the – home care for children; a service which is a little more than baby – sitting. Importantly too, early childhood educational programmes have options for intellectual and social advances.

The first phase of childcare programme can be put at three months to about three years. The care services that cater for children at this stage are mostly called day care centres. There are other variations such as day nursery, infant school and crèche. The term actually varies with the country. For instance crèche (crib) is a term popularly used in French-speaking countries, in the Scandinavian, the United Kingdom, Poland, Russia and Israel. Essentially, the idea of day care centres was first muted in France, about 1840. By 1869, the French government had recognised Societe des crèches. This was the first general acceptance of crèche as crucial too, to early childhood education. Till date in France, children between three months and age 3 attend day care centres or crèches. Generally, in Belgium, children who are under three years and not in parental care at home are cared for in day care options like day nursery or crèche. In some cases, day nurseries are annexed as sections of nursery or kindergarten schools.

Another form of day care is childminders. There is the registered (staff) childminders. These are usually private childminders who are registered and attached to a nursery. In organised settings,

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public establishments can employ a childminder to take care of workers' children while they (parents) are at work. Also, there are independent childminders, who look after children from 0 – 7 years, in private homes. In most developed countries, the government ensures that these private childminders do not have more than five children to care for at the same time. This is to ensure that all children get proper care and attention. In Nigeria, day care is quite popular as child care options for children between 0 – 3 years. In recent times too, most nursery schools and kindergartens have day care or day nursery annexed to them.

The second phase of early childhood education is that usually from about 3 – 6 or 7 years. It is generally called the maternal school or 'ecole' maternelle. Typically, and what obtains in the Western world, the maternal school precedes the kindergarten (ages 4 – 6). But in some countries like Italy, a child goes from the maternal school directly to the primary school. But in a country like Germany, in addition to the kindergarten, there is a "Schulkindergarten" (school kindergarten) which is for children of school age, but not considered matured. Thus, the school kindergarten is considered a part of primary education.

Looking at maternal school across countries, various terms are used, and this actually depends on the country. However, irrespective of the term used, maternal school refers to the second phase of early childhood education. It is also seen as a preparatory stage for primary education. In Malaysia, education for children between 4 – 6 years is popularly known as 'Tadika' or Kindergartens. Kindergartens in Malaysia are conducted separately from nursery schools. The latter serves children from birth to age 4.

In Belgium, preschool is the term used for this second phase of childcare and education. Preschool education in Belgium dates back to the 13th century. It actually began as "Dame Schools". In about 1827, a new term was again introduced, as "Infant Schools". The first Infant Schools started in Brussels (Elsena). By the half of the 19th century and influenced by Froebel's concept of "Kindergarten", the Belgians adopted the use of kindergarten for this (second) phase of childcare and education. It was also noted that the objectives of Froebel's kindergarten, differed only slightly from their "Infant School". By the end of the World War I, the Belgians were beginning to have a re-think. This time, they favoured Madam Maria Montessori's method of teaching as quite ideal for preschool education. In more recent times, the Belgian ideal of preschool education is the Experiential Preschool education. In their opinion, this kind of education gives a clearer meaning to childhood educational practices, especially as the child is seen as an experiencing being, which is given ample freedom to discover the self. For the Germans, they prefer to base their nursery or kindergarten education on both the Frobelian and Montessorian ideals. German nursery schools are opened for children between 3 to 6 years.

Generally, the variations in the usage of terms for this second phase of childhood education notwithstanding, there seem to be a general consensus around the world as a stage of learning.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Early childhood care and education has been identified to come in two phases. What are the phases?

2. Comparatively and using countries as case studies, tell the differences and similarities in the terms used to describe the two main phases in early childcare and education.

3.1.2 General Aims and Objectives of Early Child Care and Education

General aims of early childhood education differ from country to country. Essentially, day care and crèches provide supervision and care for infants and young ones during the day time so that their parents can hold their jobs. This first phase of childcare and education is from birth or 3 months to 3 years. The first idea of day care centres were warm, safe environments where children could be cared for. It was also aimed at creating opportunities for these young toddlers to interact. In other words, besides the custodial roles played by day care centres and day nursery, there has been increasing evidence that young children in such centres can benefit substantially from involvement in some form of playful learning activities.

In France, the 1974 Decree regulating crèche also made specific the roles of crèches in fostering children's cognitive and physical development. This is outside the expected custodial roles. In the same vein, the aim of childcare from birth till 3 years in Argentina centres on social and psycho-emotional development.

On the other hand, Nursery schools or kindergarten actually known as Maternal Schools are designed to promote intellectual and social experiences for children. Like it is with the case in day care or day nursery, the objectives of nursery school also emphasizes social skills and at other times, there is focus on intellectual development. Significantly, for Nursery schools that follow the Montessorian ideal, the objective is to employ a carefully designed set of materials, so as to create an environment that fosters sensory, motor and language development. In a comparative investigation carried out by (Tobui, Wu and Davidson, 1989) on the aim of

preschool in China, Japan and the U.S have agreed that parents in China see it mainly as giving children a good academic start. The case in Japan is primarily as a means of giving young children the experience of being a member of a group. In contrast, parents in the United States see preschool education as a way of making children more independent, even though obtaining a good academic start and group experience are also important.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Would you say the objectives of day care, and that of preschool, across nations tend to share same features? How? Cite examples.

3.1.3 Educational activities and Methods of Teaching Young Children

One major concern in any giving country's educational policy is the quality of curriculum content and the method of teaching such content. In this case our focus is on early childhood education. Beginning with activities in day care or day nursery, the activities should be quite playful, aimed too at developing prosocial attitudes. On the other hand, even though preschool or kindergarten teaching is yet through play and other constructive activities, the teaching content begins to attempt development in emotional, social, intellectual and psychomotor domains.

It is in this context that The Nigerian National Policy on early childhood education has prescribed that the main method of teaching at this stage shall be through play, so as to retain children's interest. The educational activities include habit formation, the rudiments of letters, colours, shapes, forms and other activities, with physical exercise, music, exploration with toys and other artistic creativity. In Kenya, the method of teaching young ones also centres on

enjoying living and learning through play. Generally, childhood education programmes in Kenya takes cognisance of physical development, social-emotional development and mental development. In Belgium, there is no clear-cut curriculum content for preschool education. However emphasis is on activities like religious education, socio-emotional and cultural reality, language and intellectual development, forms of artistic expression and stimulation of motor skills. The Belgians favour the Montessori method of teaching the preschool child, because of the emphasis on activities and the principle of individuality which affords the young learners, some measure of freedom.

Generally, across nations, there seem to be a general consensus on the play way method and other constructive activities as the known method of teaching young learners. Significantly too, the early childhood education curriculum is typically guided by the principles of child-centeredness, and learning by doing.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

What is the known method of teaching in early childhood education?

3.2 Structure and Organisation of Early Childhood Education Programme.

In a course of this nature, where systems of childcare and educational practices are compared across nations, it is also imperative to ascertain how these countries structure and organise educational programmes. There is no gain saying that organisational scheme, for early childhood programmes vary, although some features maybe common. For instance, while some countries operate their childcare and educational system as a Federal or State concern, some countries

leave such school control in the hands of private proprietors. Yet in some other countries there are State preschools as well as those owned and run privately. Still on the organisation of early childhood education, another crucial aspect is the supervision of the programmes and the curriculum content. Importantly too, there is the supervision of operations and activities in childcare centres and preschools. Finally, the issue of who should actually teach preschoolers is quite important. In this context too, there is need to assess the kind of training programmes that are most appropriate for teachers of young learners.

Generally, if you are knowledgeable in how early childhood education is structured and organised, you become quite familiar with the fundamentals of all such issues like financing and control of school, school governance, supervision, and teacher education programmes for young learners. Significantly too, your effectiveness as a preschool teacher is better articulated if you are able to identify the varied differences and similarities in the organisation of early childhood education practices. It also puts you in a better position to appreciate what goes on in your country in comparison to others.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

As a teacher – in – training, of what benefit is your knowledge of the organisation and structure of early childhood education across nations?

3.2.1 Control, Financing and Supervision of Early Childhood Education Programmes.

Indeed, the success of any educational programme actually lies in its Control, administration and adequacy in its finding. In the organisation of early childcare and education programmes, educators are generally concerned about its control. This may not be far from the view that this

stage of education is actually the foundation on which others are built. In other words, if education at this stage is not well structured and organised, it could pose a problem for its recipients. In this case one is concerned about who actually controls the educational programmes, who finances and who supervises all such education activities that go on in early childhood education programmes.

In Nigeria, early childhood education is mostly in the hands of private proprietors. Even at that, the government is still concerned. In its National Policy on Education (2004), the government has prescribed that even with early childhood education under private control; the government shall remain responsible for its supervision. This is to ensure that early childhood care Institutions are of quality. It is in this same regard that the government has also recommended that government, Communities and the Parent – Teachers Association shall remain key players in the maintenance of early childhood education facilities. In the same vein, in Kenya, according to Godia, (1992), over 70% of preschools in Kenya were founded, and continue to be operated by local Parent Associations. Oftentimes, these associations are responsible for providing and maintaining physical facilities. This includes provision of land, construction of building, provision of furnishings and materials, training of teachers, teachers' salaries, and general administration of care centres and preschools. Also, Churches Firms, Co-operatives and other non-governmental organisations and agencies have established preschools and day care centres in Kenya, especially in the urban areas. In essence, it could be also said that, like it is with the case in Nigeria, most preschools and day nurseries in Kenya are privately run. It is also important to note that the quality of education in these institutions to a large extent depends on the sponsors, and the availability of resources.

In most developed nations, childcare and educational services are mostly funded and run as both public and (State) and private Institutions. Nursery schools in Italy are divided into state institutions (run directly by a Ministry or agency of the national government) and non-state Institutions (run by other kinds of governmental bodies or by private organisations). Significantly though, both state and non-state nursery schools are placed under the authority of the Ministry of Education. In this case, State schools are run directly by Ministry of Education, through the Local School board officials. Also, in terms of financing, State nursery schools are fully financed by the local government, while locally run schools are partially funded by the national government, on a yearly basis, if the Institution so demands. When such requests are presented, the school board supervisors must inspect the school, and personally ascertain the school's real financial needs.

In Belgium, the Ministry of Education is the central administrative body responsible for planning the programmes and for regulating the establishment and functioning of schools. Belgium has three organisation of nursery school: There is the State school, which is completely subsidized by the Ministry of Education. There is also the local or provincial nursery school, which is partially funded by the State but organised by local authority. Finally, there is the organised private institution. This is also funded by the State.

On the whole, in terms of control, financing and supervision of childcare and educational Institutions, there are variations. However there seem to be a general pattern in most nations,

even when schools are privately owned the government still plays crucial supervisory roles. This is to ensure quality control in day nurseries as well as preschools.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Using countries as case studies, examine the issues of control and supervision of childcare and education.

3.2.2 Training Programmes for Teachers of Young Children.

The success of any educational programme depends on the competencies, motivation and experiences of those who are responsible for its planning and implementation. Teacher – training is in this context, a crucial aspect of early childcare and education. In other words, the question as to who teaches our young ones is very important in any country's early childhood education programme. The quality of specialist educators in this field of specialist is the major focus. It is against this background that the National Policy on Education (2004) has specified in its section on Early Childhood Education that the government shall make provision in teacher – education programmes for specialist in early childhood education. It was also in recognition of the importance of specialist teachers for Nigerian young learners that government maintained that the curriculum of such teacher – training programmes should emphasize play as the main method of teaching in nursery education. Importantly too, even when early childhood education is mostly entrusted to the private sector, one major form of government participation is being responsible for the training of teachers for preschool education. In the later part of the 1980s into the early 1990s, the more popular training of nursery school teachers was the Associateship Certificate in Education (ACE). This programme was run in the Universities and earned the recipients

certificates in Nursery Education. Also in existence in this same period were teacher training colleges. In more recent times, Colleges of Education (both State and Federal owned) are expected to train and produce certificate holders of early childhood education. Ideally recipients of such certificates are supposed to serve Nursery and Primary schools. Recently, there is a growing trend where faculties of Education in Nigeria have specialist degree based programmes in early childhood education.

In Ghana, two main agencies namely, the Ghana Education Service (GES) and the Department of social Welfare are the recognised training agencies for preschool teachers. These agencies also organise in – service and refresher courses to update and improve the performance of preschool teachers. Significantly too, the department of Social Welfare in Ghana operates a National day care Centre aimed at training centre Supervisors and Attendants. The Centre also offers professional development courses for working teachers. In Chile, since 1981, the government passed a law that teacher training generally, is not solely exclusively undertaken in the University. Teacher training can also be undertaken in private or fiscal academies or Institutes. Since 1982, most private universities in Chile have specialist training in preschool teaching.

Training programmes for nursery school teachers in Cyprus follows the same principles as primary teacher training programmes. Most subjects like general education and psychology feature in both groups. Approximately, a quarter of both programmes is devoted to general education and three quarters to professional studies. So far, we have discovered that generally, countries are concerned about the quality of teachers that teach their young ones. In this same

regard, most governments place much emphasis on teachers training programmes for early childhood education.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Discuss the place of teacher – training for early childcare and education in a nation's teacher – education programme. Cite examples from Countries.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we discussed patterns of early childcare and educational services. It is important to note that a nation's policy on early childhood education actually builds the framework for which the specified goals for education are implemented. Specifically in terms of the methods of teaching young learners, playway method was highlighted. If you remember, we had seen this in previous units. In the structure of early childhood education, we also saw the emphasis on control of school and supervision of programmes. Importantly too, is the quality of training programmes for teachers of young children.

5.0 SUMMARY

Generally in this unit you learnt about the patterns of early childhood education services across nations. You also learnt the similarities and differences in these patterns in the different countries.

6.0 TUTUOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Using a country as case study, highlight the patterns of early childcare and educational services.

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READINGS

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MODULE 2   A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF COMPARATIVE EDUCATION

Unit 1   **A Comparative Education: Concept, Purpose, Scope and Methodology.**

Unit 2   **National Educational Systems.**

Unit 3   **Origin and Nature of Early Childhood Educational Techniques**

Unit 4   **Structure of Education/Schools.**

Unit 5   **Organizations and Initiatives of Early Childhood Education**

UNIT 1   COMPARATIVE EDUCATION: CONCEPT, PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

CONTENTS

1.0 **Introduction**
2.0 **Objectives**
3.0   **Main Content**
     3.1   **The Concept, Purpose and Scope of Comparative Education.**
     3.2   **Methodology of Comparative Education.**
          3.2.1   **The Area study approach**
          3.2.2   **The Problem approach.**
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          3.2.4   **The Philosophical approach.**
          3.2.5   **The Social Science approach.**
          3.2.6   **The Global approach.**
4.0   **Conclusion**
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6.0   **Tutor-Marked Assignment**
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

A clear definition of the concept, purpose and scope of comparative education is very important

in guiding teachers to understand the essence of a course of this nature. Let us take our minds

back to the last unit of Module one. In discussing early childhood education, we actually cited examples and case studies across Countries and Cultures. For instance, in matters pertaining to policies and practices in early childhood care and learning we drew examples from various countries to compare similarities and differences. We may want to say we were actually comparing educational systems. However in this module, we want to take a general overview of the meaning and essence of comparative education, the methodology we can adopt when comparing educational practices and more importantly, the purpose of comparative education to the teacher.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- relate the purpose of education with the concept of education;

- give a clear definition of Comparative education;

- identify the various aims of comparative education;

- tell the scope of comparative education;

- identify the various methods of comparing education.

3.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   The Concept, Purpose and Scope of Comparative Education.

To get a clear definition and meaning of Comparative Education, we must firstly understand the purpose of education. In a most simple expression, education ought to reflect a people's way of life. This is in the sense that every culture tries to perpetuate itself through deliberate transmission of that which is considered most worthwhile knowledge, beliefs, skills and

attitudes. In other words, education is a process of socialisation; it is a learning experience that affords the learner opportunity to equip himself, so as to play his role as a contributing member of his society. In non – literate societies, education takes place informally while in literate, complex society, much of cultural transmission takes place within the confines of specially arranged environs. This process of cultural transmission of socialisation may be called schooling. Specially, the aim and purpose of education is a form of enculturation. It is important at this point to also emphasize that education cannot be separated from a people's guiding principle or world view. Thus, in making a comparison of education across cultures, cognisance must be taken of this fact. In other words, every society organises its education within the confines of her values, thoughts and beliefs. The implication to note here is that there is no one universally accepted definition of Comparative education. Why? There is no one single aim of education. Every society defines education in its unique way. It is also in this context that education is described as a social force. This is in the sense that an educational system must reflect closely, the code of values by which a group or society lives. Still on the purpose of education, one can also say it is an instrument for conserving, transmitting and renewing culture. Culture in this context, is the capability that makes man a contributory and conforming member of society. Education also helps to nurture the individual's personal growth. In essence, education plays a dual role of developing the individual in his personal growth, as well as making him an active member of a dully constituted society. So, through education, every society tries to foster a common identity by developing in its populace, a common identity of ideas, desires and ambitions. The goal here is towards achieving a national identity. We can therefore say that education as a social force promotes national unity and cultural growth. This actually acts as the stabilizing force in a nation.

The emphasis on the purpose simply says that every nation, even the most primitive must have a system of education peculiar to it. Therefore in studying and analysing educational systems, there is every tendency that each society's ideals judging from their cultural milieu would also be revealed in their educational policies and practices. As previously highlighted one cannot discuss a nation's education outside its social-cultural context. It is also in this vein that comparative education is a field of study whose major concern is one of a systematic approach to examining educational theories and practices across cultures. The idea in such a comparative analysis is to elicit similarities and differences and where possible suggest reforms. Below are some definitions of Comparative Education.

- I.L. Kandel, (1933) – A Comparative Education approach means a comparison of variant philosophies of education based not on theories, but on the actual practice which prevails.

- V. Mallinson (1975) - A Comparative Education is a systematic examination of other cultures and other systems of education deriving from those cultures, in order to discover resemblance and differences. Also, variant solutions that have been attempted to problems common to all.

- A. Anderson, (1961) – It is a cross-cultural comparison of the structure, operation, aims, methods and achievements of various educational systems, and the societal correlates of these educational systems and their elements.

- G.Z.F. Bereday, (1964) - Comparative Education seeks to make sense out of the similarities and differences among educational systems. It catalogues educational methods across national frontiers. In this catalogues, each country

appears as one variant of the total score of mankind's educational experience. If well set off, the like and the contrasting colours of the world perspective will make each country a potential beneficiary of the lesson thus received.

- W. Brickman, (1969) – The careful analysis of educational systems, issues and problems in two or more countries within the context of historical, social – economic, political, cultural, religious and other influential factors is a serious study in Comparative Education. It enables one to see a problem in regional or global perspective, as well as comprehend the school system and issues in his own country in broad perspective.

Generally, what seem central to all of the above definitions are issues pertaining to differences and similarities of education across cultures and nations. In essence, one can say that Comparative Education centres on systematic analysis of variant educational systems with regard to educational structure, aims and goals, operations, methods, achievements and possible reforms. All of these are viewed against the historical background, economy, politics, geographical conditions, religion and societal forces of the particular country or countries being investigated. In other words, comparative educators begin by analysing specific issues cross – culturally, and then relating them to the educational systems from the historical, political, economic, geographical, cultural and religious perspectives.

It is also against this background that Bereday, (1964) has described Comparative Education "as a political geography of schools, whose tasks, with the aid of methods of other fields of study, is to search for lessons that can be deduced from the variations in educational practices in different societies".

What then is the purpose of comparative education. Bereday (1958) has said that knowledge of comparative education should first of all be seen as everyday equipment for every teacher. It prepares teachers and educators generally, to cope with the growing International responsibilities of education. In other words, our knowledge of comparative education gives clarity to our understanding of our own education and culture, in relation to that of other nations. In effect one major purpose of comparative education is in its usefulness in the improvement of school systems and therefore the transformation of human society. This is one reason why the improvement of one's educational system is an integral part of comparative education. A study of comparative education informs the teacher about the growth and development of a nation's educational system. Information of this nature tends to provide likely answers or methods for recurrent problems and hope or reforms. Finally, knowledge of comparative education provides the individual with the relevant data about the situation in various nations. Once the individual has this fact, he can easily make the distinction that every society has its peculiar problems. Important to the teacher too, in his study of comparative education is clarity in the scope of comparative Education. The nature of the course tells us immediately that it is a comprehensive field of study. Specifically Comparative education is concerned with the growth, development and dynamic nature of the educational trend of any nation. This makes matters pertaining to Comparative education quite detailed, emanating from a people's philosophy and their general social life, and as these relate to their educational theories and practice.

In essence, the scope of comparative education is more of a comparative insight into the educational situation of any nation. Suggested areas of such education focus include traditional,

colonial and contemporary systems of education, culture and education, history, religion and education and nationalism in education. Others include, social mobility, philosophy of education, policy formulation and implementation, planning in education, educational administration and organisation, control and supervision of schools, budget and finance for education and examination and standards. The scope of comparative education also takes cognisance of the different stages of education or learning, and other educational issues such as expansion, enrolment and other academic attrition, girl-child education, and so on. Indeed, the list is almost endless. The scope covers all such matters that pertain to a nation's education, and even across nations.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

1. What is the relationship between the purpose of Education and the concept of Comparative Education?
2. Can you identify some common features in the given definitions of Comparative Education?
3. List at least five topical issues in the scope of comparative education.

3.2   Methodology of Comparative Education.

Having identified the comprehensive nature of the scope of comparative education lets us now examine how we can compare educational systems, to encompass this scope. There are quite a handful of methodological approaches that could be employed in comparative education studies. It is however important to note that these methodologies tend to complement one another. The methodological approaches are as follows: The Area Study approach, the Problem approach, the

Historical approach, the Philosophical approach, the Social Science approach and the Global approach.

3.2.1 The Area Study approach

An approach of this nature affords the researcher opportunity to gather descriptive details of an educational system of one geographical area at a time. It is more or less like a world view or an investigation of practically everything that is observed of the educational system in a particular area.

3.2.2 The Problem Study approach

This approach is an attempt to compare education or make a comparative analysis. This can be made possible through a careful analysis of problems and social patterns of a people. An approach of this nature also enables the use of materials drawn directly from familiar experiences and environment.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What is peculiar about the Problem study approach?

3.2.3 The Historical approach

This approach centres on the fact that in the study of any society and its educational system, historical facts are involved. In essence, we cannot talk about a nation's educational system and endeavours without looking at the historical and cultural context out of which such an education grew. This approach seeks to express comparative education as a history of education from the

past into the present, while making projections for the future. In this context, the historical approach to comparative education seeks to find the general principles governing the history of educational theories and practices to the present. In doing this, too, there is the tendency to articulate a nation's aspirations.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

The Historical approach to comparative education study seeks to express Comparative Education as a history of education from the past into the present. How?

3.2.4 The Philosophical approach

This approach employs a critical analysis and reasoning to man's general experiences as the basis of all systems of education. In other words, the philosophical approach to comparative study takes cognisance of some philosophical factors as crucial to a people's educational policies and practices. For instance it is considered that the historical background, geographical location, occupation, social life, beliefs, customs and tradition, language and thought of a people should be considered and critically analysed, as they all have bearing on educational principles and practices.

SELF ASSSEMENT EXERCISE 5

Briefly discuss the philosophical approach to comparative education study.

3.2.5 The Social Science approach

This approach in comparing educational systems recognises that there are societal differences, which could also manifest in different and distinctive areas to the educational concerns of a nation. In this regard too, it could also be said that there may be, in the strictest sense a general practice and system of education across nations. Every Society formulates educational policies within its social context, economy, political inclination etc.

SELF ASSSEMENT EXERCISE 6

Why is the issue of societal differences considered crucial in the Social Science approach to comparing educational systems?

3.2.6 The Global approach

This approach recognises the global nature of education as both national and International. An approach of this kind may make the comparison in terms of world norms, from where a clearer picture of the individual nation's system will be viewed in relation to the rest of the world. This approach is quite significant because it creates a wider opportunity for comparison. The idea here is to elicit current trends, development and the need for reforms.

SELF ASSSEMENT EXERCISE 7

What is peculiar about the Global approach in a comparative education study?

Generally, one finds that these methodologies tend to complement each other. The methodologies take cognisance of education in a cultural milieu or social structure and culture;

thus, the actual task of a comparative educator, irrespective of the methodology employed is to examine the ideological procedures and practice of education on the one hand, and social differences in culture and organisation (Anderson, 1959)

4.0. CONCLUSION

Indeed in a comparative education course, there is need to firstly have an in-depth knowledge on the concept and purpose of comparative education. Again when one is equipped with the various methodologies in a comparative education study, he can go ahead to apply them in practical situations. This has actually being the focus of this unit.

5.0 SUMMARY

So far, you have learnt that the definition of comparative education makes more sense if one understands clearly, the aims and purposes of education. In effect, there is an established relationship between the purpose of education and the concept of comparative education. This also brings to bear the importance of Comparative Education to the teacher. You have also learnt that the scope of comparative education is quite wide and comprehensive. Finally, we tried to identify some methodologies one can employ in a comparative education study. The whole idea in this unit is to prepare the teacher for the actual practise of comparing educational systems. The case in this context is comparing early child care and educational theories and practices.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. An understanding of the purpose of education is quite important in defining the concept of Comparative Education. How?

2.	Why is there no universally accepted definition of comparative education?

3.	Name the known methods of comparative education.

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UNIT 2   NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we identified that the purpose of education was one of a transmission of

knowledge, values and attitudes in a socialisation process by the older – ones to the succeeding

generation. We also saw that the education of a nation cannot be discussed outside its social

context. This was identified as quite important in the sense that every group or society ensures a

deliberate task of fostering among its members a shared identity of interest. This is important so

as to attain a common purpose with communal effort. This commonality displayed by a social

group or nation is what is central to national character. In effect, each society has a unique

national character that can be easily identified in the people's pattern of behaviour. Importantly

too, it is commonplace to find national characteristics being expressed in a nation's educational

goals. These educational goals are in turn concretised and used to strengthen and perpetuate the

nation's character and outlook. In essence, one cannot compare a nation's education outside the people.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the term, 'national character';

- explain the relationship between education and national character;

- identify the various determinants of national character;

- illustrate how the determinants of national character shape educational patterns of a people.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Education and National Character.

Before we can talk about a national character, there has to firstly be in existence, a nation. The question now is what makes a nation? A nation goes beyond same racial group. For instance, in Western Europe there are the major different races – Celtic, Nordic and Alpine. Yet, these three different races make up a nation. In the same vein, difference in languages or multilingualism is not an issue when it comes to considering what it takes to have a nation. Switzerland has four official languages, Belgium has three, and Nigeria is multilingual with one official language. Even at that, all of these states are called nations. Since attaining independence, the Republic of Cameroon has experienced problems with the choice of national language. Maybe the government decided to pay lip service to it in view of its sensitive nature, or for the sake of peaceful co –existence and national unity. In other words, a multilingual situation may not stop a nation from being in existence. In the same way, the number of geographical regions, and

multiplicity of cultures may not also stop the existence of a nation. The Republic of Uganda, can be described as a country of many contrasts. The contrasts among the various people of Uganda are reflected in the variety of surroundings, and demonstrated in the multiplicity of cultures and lifestyles. Indeed, Uganda as a nation is a creation out of diverse ethnic people with different traditions and ways of life inherited from their ancestors.

Now let us try to define a nation. A nation can be defined as a large community of people associated with a particular territory usually having a character of political aspirations. Sometimes too, the people who make up a nation share same language, or speak an official language or more. Specifically too, a nation is made up of a group of people who feel held together in common acceptance of particular values that they cherish and find worthy of preserving. This also means that people of a nation share a common history, cultural ideal and national unity of purpose that has evolved overtime.

The strength of a nation therefore, irrespective of diversity in religion, geographical location, race and language is in the national consciousness. In other words, the people have come to accept as a whole, cherished values. Importantly, a nation fosters unity in her prime values, and from there develop national consciousness. How then does a nation inculcate and perpetuate this national consciousness to her succeeding generations? That is where education comes in. Oftentimes, a nation's values, integrity and consciousness are integrated in her educational policies and philosophy. This is further transmitted to the citizenry using the schools as instruments. In the Nigerian National Policy on Education (2004, 7) to achieve the nation's goals, the educational system was geared towards self realization, better human relationships,

individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity, as well as socio – cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress.

Still on education and national character, the average Frenchman from France believes in clarity and intelligence. For them, intelligence and logical reasoning based on a sound humanistic culture is the pride of the Frenchman, and the pride and strength of France as a nation. The Frenchman sees his own culture as an inestimable value and a thing of pride. They attach much value to their cultural heritage. In contemporary France, as part of the overall educational goals, value for time and proportion, and respect for traditional cultural heritage is emphasized. For the Belgians, their national character is reflected in their philosophy of individualism and of life with a purpose. The Belgian is quick to defend private rights and liberties. This same philosophy of individualism is central to their beliefs for education. In its general objectives for early child care and education, the Belgian idea is to protect children from the evil influences that could endanger their physical, moral or intellectual development, and to accustom them to order, regularity, work and hygiene.

Generally, we can describe national character in terms of total attitude to thoughts, feelings and behaviour peculiar to a people. This is further manifested and perpetuated in the education of their young ones.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

A people's national character is manifested and perpetuated in their education. How?

3.2 The Determinants of National Character

What are the determinants of a national character? Simply put, these are the conditions people have, the peculiar conception of life and living that make a people singularly alike in their group character. Basically it is the process that brings a people together to express a particular culture and general way of life. For the sake of clarity one can identify two things as quite basic to a people's behaviour. These are the physical surrounding they occupy and their social conditions. When sub-divided, the following could be seen as factors that determine national character. These are geographical, economic, historical, religious and social. Importantly too, in this technological age, one cannot rule out the technological influence on the named factors or determinants.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Can you identify the two major things that are basic to a people's disposition and attitudes?

3.2.1 Geographical and Economic Factors

It is common to find that people who live in the same physical and natural geographical environment tend to share same economy. Geographical and economic conditions tend to have its influence on the social life and environment of the people. This in turn modifies a nation's character. The physical geographical features like rivers, hills and mountains impart special features to the people of a nation. For instance a nation that has several rivers and lakes may make some economic gains from fishing. In the same way, the educational system of a country adapts to the configuration of the country and to the physical conditions of the climate.

If we take the case of Northern Norway, we will find that the climate is quite unique. When it is winter, the weather is very cold with the temperature falling absolutely low to about 20° below zero. In a place like this, it is just natural that the land or soil for farming would yield little because of the weather condition. The resultant effect would be that a larger part of the economy may come for the industrial sector. Subsequently, a greater part of the working class would be industrial workers. It will be such that even the rural areas would be populated with Industrial workers.

This kind of climate not only affects agriculture or the architectural structure of homes and schools, but even the people's thought and practice of education. For instance, because of the harsh weather, the child is kept at home until he is seven years. The most part of early childhood education is done on the mother's knees. The home becomes the focal point of activity, since most times, the weather conditions keep the family indoors. It is also of note that this closeness shared by the family makes the idea of boarding schools in Northern Norway almost unthinkable. This warm affection from home also extends to the school. The school is as warm and friendly as the home. Generally, one finds that the Northern Norwegian is friendly, neighbourly and tolerant. In the case of Switzerland, the geographical configuration led to a confederation of about 25 autonomous states. One significant thing about these autonomous states is their educational concerns. This they (individual states) tend to guard jealously. The average Swiss man has great regard for education. Even when a man is not opportuned to be educated, he can boast of good education for his children. Significantly too, it is this urge for good education for the Swiss that has brought about same good measure of political stability overtime. Also the Swiss, irrespective of his individual educational background is conscious of

his own value to his community. The implication here is that the Swiss attaches so much importance to the dignity of skilled labour. This is reflected in the growing of technical colleges in Switzerland. As a result, the Swiss workman and artisan are well grounded in the instruction of his trade and perfects in his skills. Thus, he is as satisfied as his counterpart who has a white – collar job.

From the above case studies, we find that the effect of geographical and economic factors, tend to determine to a good extent, the outlook and educational thoughts and patterns of people in that area.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Look at the two case studies given again. Can you briefly explain in your own words how geographical and economic factors determine a people's national character, and in turn their educational thoughts and patterns.

3.2.2 Historical, Religious and Political factors

In comparative matters one cannot find separate the historical development of any nation from its religious and political issues. They all complement each other. In the history of a people, education and national character naturally stem from political circumstances, religious/historical antecedents.

Taking the case of Western Europe as a whole, one finds that at the close of the Renaissance period, the religious challenge of Martin Luther on the supremacy of the Catholic Church identified with the growing idea of nationalism. This had its repercussion on the historical, political and social conditions of the people. A specific instance can be cited of France. This

period witnessed religious conflict between the Protestants and the Roman Catholic Church. The Jesuits (Catholic Scholars) finally succeeded and asserted authority. What evolved from this was an absolute monarchical system of government, with the church in control of education. In other words, this period in France witnessed the Catholic Church in agreement with the state playing a great role in education, as well as ensuring political stability. It was the same pattern in most Catholic countries like Belgium, Italy and Southern Germany.

Importantly, this church-state relationship was one way in which most countries sought their political stability. Oftentimes too, the kind of relationship as above, dictated the kind of education given to the people. For instance, in Norway, schools are under the administration of the church and the Education sector. But in France, even though Catholicism is highly upheld, instruction in religion is not quite highlighted in the school curricula. It is left to parents at home. So, whether the child is in a state school or church – control school, he is made to understand the importance of religion through instructions at home. However in school, he is given instructions in ethics and civics as well as other intellectual aspects.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

How does the history, religion and politics of a nation determine her national character as well as her educational policy and practice?

3.2.3 Social Factor

Basically, it is expected that schools ought to be a close reflection of the Social life, and beliefs of a people. It is also important to note too that the social pattern of any nation is actively borne

out of reforms. In the same way as a people change, so also they experience reforms in their education; their educational aims and system change alongside. Thus, in a comparative study of nation(s) we must begin with the social life, and development of the people from the past or traditional times, into the present. In such a social race, we are able to highlight what was characteristic of their life style and ideas in indigenous times, and their present social outlook. All of these help to explain their views for education, at every point of development.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Education ought to be a close reflection of the social life, beliefs and ideas of a nation or people. How?

4.0 CONCLUSION

Generally, a nation's educational system is a reflection of her national character. The national character is borne out of such values, beliefs and thought that pull a people together. This national consciousness is further manifested and perpetuated in that nation's education. Also, beyond these shared beliefs and values are some other factors that determine a people's national character. These are the geographical, economic, historical, political, religious and social factors. Importantly, all of these have their ultimate effect on the educational policies and practices of such nations. This actually forms the focus is this unit. That is, a nation's educational system actually stems from her beliefs, values and all other physical factors that determine the nation's character.

5.0 SUMMARY

From this unit you have learnt that a nation's educational system is actually determined partly by the people themselves, and on the other hand by some conditions they have come to find themselves. While the former are basically beliefs and values that culminates into a people's national consciousness. The latter are physical conditions like geographical location, historical background, social factors etc. You have also learnt that is common place for every nation to try to perpetuate shared identity of interest in her educational system. This in itself actually forms the core of a nation's system of education. This is of utmost importance to the teacher, so that she can apply when there is cause to actually compare systems of education.

6.0 TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT

How does a nation evolve or develop her system of education?

6.0 REREENCES / FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 3   **ORIGIN AND NATURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIONAL TECHNIQUES.**

CONTENTS

4.0   INTRODCUTION

The concern in this unit is an examination of the origin and the nature of the techniques of early childhood education. There is no doubt that techniques of raring young children did not begin today. Even the most primitive societies had organised custodial techniques. Take your mind back to module 1. In unit one of that module, we took a historical development of early childhood education, beginning with Old Greece. So you can see that techniques of child care and education has always been in existence. However, we must not too that as society changes, so also man's changes along. Thus, his views thoughts and practices ought to align with such changes. It is in this context that an examination of the techniques of child care and education takes us from traditional times to new directions in a fast growing contemporary age.

5.0   OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- identify the techniques of childrearing in traditional times.

- tell how children were cared for and raised in traditional times.

- relate techniques of early childhood education in traditional times to contemporary day techniques.

- compare and contrast techniques in traditional times and modern day techniques.

- apply these educational techniques to existing cultural patterns

6.0   MAIN CONTENT

3.1   Origin and nature of early childhood educational techniques

In the last unit (unit 2) we were made to understand that education is a process which is also transitional, from one generation to another. We also saw that the education of a people cannot be discussed outside their social context. This is in the sense that every society makes it a deliberate task to ensure shared identity as well as continuity of a unique national character. It is also in this context that this unit critically examines how a people reared their young ones in traditional times. Also, following the trend of continuity of a shared identity, how were thee (traditional) techniques sustained especially with the challenges of a fast developing world. Significantly, the crux here is to examine how various nations draw up early child care and educational techniques to dovetail into their existing national cultural patterns.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 1.

Do you think there are lessons on early child care techniques in traditional times that may be useful in contemporary times?

3.2   Rearing Techniques in traditional times.

Before now, the traditional system of early childhood education was mostly concerned with the development of young children in their immediate needs and desires. The educational aim was more of a continuity of development. Children were seen as mindless creatures who were incapable of feeling or knowing anything. Thus ideas about early childhood education followed this pattern. There was reluctance spending money on formal childhood education, especially when children can immediately learn from adults. Significantly too, adults roles as supposed teachers were limited to meeting the basic needs of the child.

Some other traditional views saw children as having adults characteristics however, lacking only knowledge and experience. It was such that if the child failed to learn, his failure was attributed more to his laziness and not his intellect. Yet from some other historical perspective, children were seen as not having any personality of their own. They needed to be modelled (maybe as it is done with clay) by adults, to give them a personality. It is in this context that early practitioners of kindergarten saw children as "lumps of clay" that do not possess their own unique personalities. Instead, children must be appropriately guided by adults who have the magic wand to turn children to good citizens. It is against this background that traditional educational techniques were planned and delivered by adults, with the adults as models that children must emulate.

Do you know that early childhood education begun as a philanthropic idea, and for a long period in the history and development of early child care survived as such? Notably, when kindergarten was first introduced into the United States, it survived as a philanthropy long before it was accepted as an organic member of the educational system (Hill 1941). This was a long probation period in the U.S. Missionary Institution, Churches and Philanthropic organisations saw it as an opportunity for social regeneration. This period also witnessed the entrance of kindergarten schools. It came on the scene just on time to enjoy the philanthropy of these organisations. this period of probation in the U.S saw the American society turning to the young ones as the one hope to bring forth social regeneration. Kindergartens were opened in all nooks and crannies. In the opinion of Hill (1941), "no neighbourhood was too criminal, no family too degenerate, no child too bad. Into little Italy, little Egypt and Ghettos they, went, offering daily care to humanity in its early years".

The case was not different in Europe preschools were mostly established by mission and philanthropic organisations to meet the needs of abandoned and maltreated children. According to Kurtz (1976) in the 1770s, a notable protestant Pastor, Jean-Frederic Oberlin recruited young women to take care of children and to teach them Bible stories and knitting. It is in this same vein that in 1774, Henrich Pestalozzi (you remember we saw him in module 1, as one of the foremost innovators of early childhood education) opened industrial schools for destitute children. He did this to rescue children from poverty and abandonment.

Now let us look at the situation in Africa. What was the case? Generally, before the coming of the missionaries, training of children was basically the responsibility of the family. The family

took care of the basic needs of the child. Specifically, in preliterate Nigerian society, education was purely informal. There were no designated places or time for learning. Children learnt anywhere and anytime, they were taught by parents and older siblings. Every child looked up to the older ones as models to emulate.

Just like in most African nations, formal efforts to provide education for young children in Ghana dates back to about 1843. It was also a missionary effort, ending up, too with a philanthropic goal. The traditional childrearing system in Kenya saw every child as a potential to the family and the community. Children were seen as great help on the farm, herd family livestock, and later in life provide security for their parents and younger ones.

Generally, what can be deduced from the foregoing as traditional techniques in early childhood education evolved from the beliefs, thoughts and practices of a people in a period or time of their lives. It was a period when the expectation was that every child looked up to the teacher to carve out his own identity. It was typically a teacher-centred approach with the teacher bestowed with the responsibility of moulding the young minds. Only the teacher can successfully mould the child to produce in him abilities and attitudes. More importantly, early childhood education was not clearly defined as every young learner had to strive to be the 'carbon copy' of his adult teacher.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 2.

In what ways do you think the traditional early childhood education technique was typically a teacher-centred approach?

3.3   New directions in early childhood Education techniques.

Let us now examine what we have as modern techniques in early childhood education. Do not forget, in matters concerning a people or nation, their identity remains, what may change is their efforts to align with innovations. For instance Nigerians in preliterate Nigerian society have the identity intact even in modern times. The change is on his ideals, philosophies and practice.

Today's ideas about how young children develop and should be taught and cared for actually have their roots in custodial patterns and techniques of the past. In the new direction for kindergarten practices the primary concern is for a total development of the young learner. In line with this, academic programmes are so designed to reflect the needs and interest of the child. Essentially too, the modern trend in early childhood education techniques takes cognisance of the development of the whole child.

The new technique recognisances the child as an active partner and collaborators in learning. This is quite different from the Old dispensation where the young learner is more or less passive and dependent on teachers. Children were recipients of teacher's teaching. Play was crucial in this technique as a condition for learning. The children are encouraged to be constructive and problem solvers, with thinking as a way of learning. This new approach to early childhood learning sees the young ones as theory builders and negotiators. In the new directions, the early childhood education curriculum is one of the integrated subjects. Do you know what it means? It actually means that the subjects in the curriculum are not separated, but all inter woven as an integrated whole. Also, the Instructional focus here is on teaching concepts, skills, processes and attitudes. Assessing the young ones in this case is an ongoing process. The goal is to achieve all-

round learning. Generally assessment in this regard focuses not on what the child already knows, but on how the child learns, and on what he "can do". Beyond the use of workbooks, this new technique to teaching young children employs the use of concrete materials and a variety of resource materials. This gives the child ample opportunity to express himself.

On the whole in this new approach, the expectation is that the school adapts to the child and his needs, and not vice versa. The challenge in this play-based curriculum is that children are taught skills and attitudes that will help him not only in his transition to primary school, but later in life. Citing the case in Japan, learning in kindergarten is geared towards the sensory and manipulative development of the child. Such learning is also meant to develop the linguistic ability of the child. Essentially too, the play way method of learning is emphasized. In Malaysia, early childhood education is geared towards strengthening the acquisition of basic skills. Importantly too, the child is imbibed with prosocial attitudes and personality development. Kindergarten in Malaysia also prepares the child for primary school.

The ecoles maternelles or nursery school in France can be comparable with the regular nursery schools in Anglophone countries. The ecoles maternelles may not be compulsory but considered essential in preparing the young child for primary school. In Spain, early childhood education is also not compulsory, but encouraged. It is designed to introduce children to the social environment of school. The curriculum focuses on the basic skills of co-ordination, encourages the development of self-awareness, as well as provides the child an avenue to express group activities.

Early childhood education in Germany centres on stimulating the child's social learning, building in them a sense of responsibility and leading the young learners to be creative through various play activities. The present techniques employed in early childhood education programme in Nigeria is not a far departure from what obtains across most cultures. However what seems prevalent in all of these techniques is the recognition of the playway method. The young learner is also seen as a collaborator and, an active participant in the teaching – learning process. The curriculum also takes cognisance of the development of the total child. Notably, various nations draw up their childhood education techniques to dovetail into the existing national cultural pattern.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERCISE 3.

What is peculiar about instructional method in the new approach to early childhood education.

4.0 CONCLUSION

So far we have been examining the origin and nature of early childhood education techniques. Remember what we did? We began with a remainder that techniques of rearing young children has always been in existence. Even the most primitive societies find a way of bringing up their young ones. Such techniques may not be quite clearly defined, organised and structured. However one thing is clear, that is the concern and care for young ones. Importantly too, no society designs an educational patterns outside their existing cultural patterns, belief and thoughts. This is same even when new directions are considered in early childhood education techniques. What may be novel in the new technique is the need to work alongside contemporary

times. In this case new ways are adopted in caring and educating the young ones, yet within the context of what the people or nation uphold as values in child rearing ideals and practices.

5.0 SUMMARY

From this unit you have learnt that nations, dating back from the past have always thought of ways of bringing up young children. Thus, education techniques for children has always been in existence. However, with changes and innovations in the world, nations become more aware and seek new techniques to care and educate young children.

6.0 TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Compare and contrast rearing techniques in traditional times with techniques in contemporary times in a named African country.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 4   STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION/SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

1.0 **Introduction**

2.0 **Objectives**

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   3.1   **Variant aims of Education.**

   3.2   **Administration of Education.**

   3.3   **Stages of Education**

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7.0   **References/Further Readings**

1.0   INTRODUCTION

Specifically, as we have seen so far, this module is concerned with the whole idea, concept and practice of comparative education. This is quite important for the teacher, bearing in mind too, the comprehensive nature of Education. Thus, if a teacher must embark on the actual practice of a comparative study, he must begin with a good knowledge of the structure of education. This provides the framework from where one can easily make a comparative analysis. This unit takes cognisance of the major aspects of an educational structure. These include the aims of education, administration of education, and the different levels of learning or stages of education. The idea here is to deal with these aspects on their individual basis, and then link them together as a

comprehensive whole (of education). No doubt, an examination of this nature is quite useful to anyone who engages in a comparative study on education.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the aims of education;

- identify variant aims of education;

- discuss administration in education;

- list the different levels of education;

- explain these different levels of education.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Variant aims of Education

By now you should be familiar with the fact that every nation aims to have some education, for many reasons.

- Education helps to lift the mind

- Education is the transmission of life from one generation to another

- Education is for development and advancement

- Education is the highest goal every nation aims to attain

Having recognised these facts, it becomes imperative to find out the different methods, approaches and ways adopted in solving the educational problems that are peculiar to all nations. Such problems range from inequality in educational opportunity, educational administration,

educational planning and financing to all such problems concerning the education of a society. In achieving this, it is important to acknowledge that educational aims differ from place to place. In essence, a country tries to shape its national outlook, as well as transfer knowledge to succeeding generations in various ways.

For instance, the French aim for education is education for its own sake and the intellectual discipline it affords. For the Americans, the aim of education is resourcefulness and initiative qualities. This is such that the individual mind is quite flexible and can adapt to changing circumstances and situations. For the typical English man, the focus, with regard to the aim of education is on character training of the personality. This nonetheless, both countries aim to promote the fullest development of the individual. Basically, the implication is that every country seeks to develop its citizenry. However the manner in which they go about it is the variance. Such variance in aims of education usually comes by way of:

- Administration in Education

- Teacher – education programmes

- School Structure

    i   Pre-School/Early child care and Education

    ii   Primary School

    iii   Secondary School

    iv   Technical, Tertiary and further Education

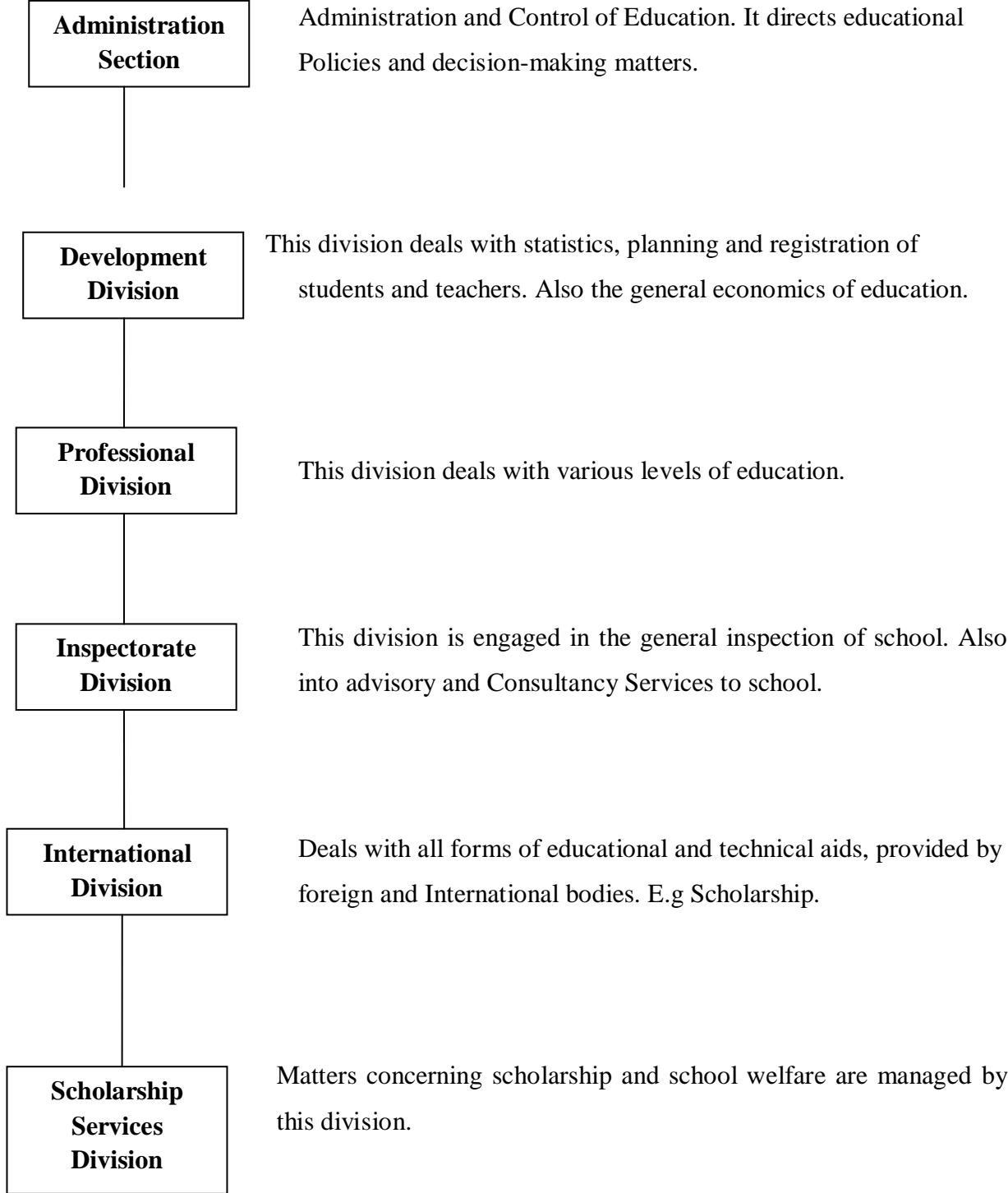**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

i.   List some general aims of education.

ii. List the variance in aims of Education.

3.2 Administration of Education

Oftentimes, we find that it is from a nation's policy that its aims for education emanate. In other words, every nation through her policies defines clearly, the purpose for education that actually determines the type of administration, which best suits the attainment of educated citizens, the nation wishes to produce.

In the administration of schools, some states might want to share educational responsibilities with other organisations. In this context, there might be public as privately run schools. Basically, most Countries organise education in such a way that there is a Minister for Education at the national level, a Commissioner for education at the state level, and other heads to manage education at the local education authority, and the Inspectorate division. A diagrammatic representation of a typical education/school administration is seen below.

Administration Section	Administration and Control of Education. It directs educational Policies and decision-making matters.
Development Division	This division deals with statistics, planning and registration of students and teachers. Also the general economics of education.
Professional Division	This division deals with various levels of education.
Inspectorate Division	This division is engaged in the general inspection of school. Also into advisory and Consultancy Services to school.
International Division	Deals with all forms of educational and technical aids, provided by foreign and International bodies. E.g Scholarship.
Scholarship Services Division	Matters concerning scholarship and school welfare are managed by this division.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

How does the aim of education determine the type of educational administration adopted?

3.3 Stages of Education

The stages of education are also very crucial to the entire structure of education. In a comparative study, what obtains at every stage of learning is a determinant factor in the entire educational system. It is against this background that the different stages of education will be examined.

3.3.1 Teacher – education / Teacher training

Much of the educational policies of a nation will not be attained, if attention is not given to the training of teachers or teacher – education programmes. Teacher-education colleges are established and run by state or organisation depending on the nation's educational policies. Basically, teacher training programmes at every stage of learning include such aspects as:

i.   Type of Training Institution

ii.   Admission Requirement

iii.   Length of Training

iv.   Nature of Training

v.   Graduation Requirement

The Nigerian Government like most other nations has recognised that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. In this regard therefore, emphasis is placed on teacher – education programmes in all educational planning and development. In Nigeria, Teacher – education programmes come at the tertiary stage of education. It is a post – secondary education

programme offered in the University, College of Education, Polytechnics etc. The National Policy on Education (2004) has recommended that the following institutions, among others shall provide the required professional training. They are,

i   Colleges of Education

ii   Faculties of Education

iii   Institutes of Education

iv   National Teachers' Institutes

v   Schools of Education in Polytechnics

vi   National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN)

vii   National Mathematics Centre (NMC)

The Nigerian Government has also recommended that the manimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE).

The South African government has also recognised that although adequate classrooms management is essential to the learning effectiveness, the quality of content and dissemination of knowledge will always be a reflection of the teachers' educational background. The need to enhance the quality of teachers prompted the South African administration to upgrade teacher education colleges by affiliating them to Universities.

In – service training programmes were also encouraged to update teachers' knowledge and skills in the art of teaching. This new scheme in South Africa is a radical departure from the past when less qualified and untrained teachers populated the rural as well as urban slums. Generally, because the task of efficient school management lies squarely on teachers and school

administrators, the need to train, and retrain teachers for better performance has become a cardinal focus of the South African government.

Still on the importance of teacher – education programmes, in the 1990s, the Democratic Republic of Congo witnessed an enrolment of 862, 900 in teacher education programmes. (Microsoft Encarta 2002). In Ghana, as far back as 1967, the Educational Review Committee was put in place, to look generally at all educational concerns in Ghana. In terms of Teacher – education programmes, the committee noted the importance of quality and trained teachers as well as an increase in the number of teachers needed to instruct the expected number of school – age children. In its recommendation therefore, the Committee came up with a recommendation in 1971, urging the government to raise the academic and professional levels of teacher education, as well as offer the teachers' conditions of service that compare very favourably with other types of employment. Following this trend in 1991, the Ghanaian government launched an education reform in tertiary education. The focus was on a redefinition of higher education to include universities, polytechnics and teacher training colleges. The major aim included expanding access, improving the quality of teaching and learning, as well as providing the needed infrastructural base of accelerated manpower development. As at 1991, Ghana had about thirty – eight teacher training colleges.

In Kenya, every stage of learning has its specialized teachers. The aim is to produce qualified teachers to achieve the set goals for each cycle of learning. For the preschool level, Kenya's National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) works in collaboration with the District Centres for Early Childhood Education (DICECE) to train preschool teachers and

develop the curriculum and the syllabi for teachers' courses. Programmes for preschool teachers run for two years after which recipients are awarded teacher's certificates. Prerequisite entry for this teacher education programme is Kenya's Certificate for Secondary Examination (KSCE). The Kenyan government also has in-service training opportunities for teachers who may want to improve on their status. The intention of the government is to completely phase out untrained teachers in all learning cycles.

Teacher education programmes for primary school teachers and mostly in-service courses are oftentimes organised by the Ministry of Education with grants – in – aids from the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, UNICEF and the Aga Khan Foundation. The training of these teachers is for two years at the end of which candidates are expected to acquire skills and techniques in the teaching of various subjects, as well as acquire academic proficiency in subjects taught. Teacher education programmes for secondary school teachers in Kenya are carried out at two levels. There are teacher training colleges where candidates earn a diploma in education in two years. There is also training at the Universities where students earn Bachelor's degree in education. For some other graduates who are non-professionals in education, they take a one – year postgraduate diploma course in education.

Generally, from the above cases cited, what we find is that most nations are quite concerned about who teaches their learners at all levels, and the quality of such teacher preparation programmes. It is commonplace therefore to find that most nations development plan for education pay much attention to the teacher education programmes.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. What is the place of teacher education programmes in the attainment of a nation's educational policies?

2. That Nigerian National Policy on Education has recommended some Institutions for Teacher Education Programmes. Name them.

3.2.2 Pre – School Education

Specifically, Pre-school education is the premier stage of formal learning. In most countries, pre-school education encompasses childcare services as well as Nursery and Kindergarten schools. In Nigeria, Early childhood / Pre-primary education is that education given in an educational Institution to children before primary school age. This includes the crèche, the nursery and the kindergarten.

The aims of Pre-school are as follows:

- play custodial roles

- effect transition of the child from home to school

- prepare the child for primary education

- imbibe in the young child, prosocial norms

- inculcate in the child, the spirit of enquiry and creativity

- develop in the child a sense of co-operation and team spirit

- inculcate in him good moral habits and right health habits

- teach him the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms etc.

Play is basically the prescribed method of teaching the pre-school child in Nigeria. Besides Nursery and Kindergarten schools, there are also crèches, day nursery or day care centres as part

of Pre-school education in Nigeria. Oftentimes such child-minding centres are attached to kindergarten and primary schools. The reforms in the 1970s in Ghana's educational system gave more recognition to pre-school education. Nursery education was encouraged by the reform, in which eighteen to twenty-four months of nursery education was considered not only a good idea but quite crucial in preparing children for entry to primary school. In 1997, the legal basis for organising and operating pre-school education was established. Generally, pre-school education in Ghana is encouraged, though not compulsory.

In the Sultanate of Oman, Early childhood education can be divided into three distinct systems, each quite unconnected with the other. These are the Pre-school system which are essentially day care and play centres, the kindergarten and the lower primary class, where actual formal school system begins. The day care and play centres take care of children between age six months to four years. The major aim of such service is basically custodial. However, the centres also seek to stimulate and socialize children. This actually begins when the child is about two years. Through play, children are taught recitation of the Quaran, singing, drawing, numbers and alphabet. Other training includes toileting, right moral and health habits.

Kindergarten schools in Oman are of a two year duration for children between ages 3½ to 5 ½. Learning in kindergarten is broken into two levels. The first level is the "rawdha" (done in Arabic), while the second level is the "tanhidi". Generally, the objectives of kindergarten in Oman include teaching of numbers, concepts and experiences (e.g concepts of cleanliness, safety and family). Others include cognitive concepts like time, weight, size, shapes, relationships differences and matching. All of these are taught through playful activities like drawing,

colouring, story-telling, discussions and sharing experiences. Importantly, in the Sultanate of Oman, the philosophy of early childhood education is child-centred education. The curriculum content is also portrayed as such. The objective of the curriculum is to attain a balance among the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (Ministry of Education and Youth, Muscat, 1988). Generally across nations, preschool Education is a crucial and foundation stage of formal learning, even though, pre-school education is primarily one of custodial roles. Through play, it imparts in the young learner basic rudiment of learning. It is in the kindergarten that development begins in prosocial attitudes, good health and moral habits etc. There is no doubt that early childcare and education is a stage in learning that should be taken with great care and concern. Do you share this view?

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Why do you think that Pre-school education or early child care and education is a crucial stage in learning?

3.2.3 Primary Education

In formal learning system, this is oftentimes described as the first stage of learning where serious learning takes place. In essence, Pre-school education actually prepares the young child for serous academic business in Primary education. The Nigerian National Policy on Education (2004) describes primary education as that education given in institutions for children aged 6 to 11 plus. It is seen as a crucial stage, since the rest of the educational system is built upon it. The

NPE specifies that the duration of primary education shall be six years. The goals of the Nigerian primary education include,

- teaching to achieve permanent literacy, numeracy and ability to communicate;

- laying a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;

- moulding in the child sound character and right morals;

- developing in him the ability to adapt to a changing environment;

- developing opportunities for creative and manipulative skills;

- providing the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, which also includes preparation for trades and crafts in his immediate locality.

In Ivory Coast or Cote d' Ivoire, primary education programme is one of a six-year duration. The entry school age remains at seven or eight years. Primary education in Ivory Coast is made up of three main stages namely the Preparatory, the Intermediate and the Elementary. At the end of schooling in Primary education, the recipients receive a certificate (Certificate d'etude primaries elementaries or CEPE). Generally, the curriculum in Ivorien primary schools tends to be modified in favour of intellectual development, and as a necessary prerequisite for entering the secondary school.

The objective of primary education in Tanzania may not be quite different from that of most countries. It emphasises acquisition in literacy, numeracy and manipulative skills. Also it teaches discipline, respect for dignity in labour, appreciation of cultural heritage and values, and so on. But above all, the Tanzanian educational opportunities are quite emphatic on developing in the child, the zeal to be self-reliant, as well as being a productive member of the society. To achieve these objectives, the primary education curriculum provides Tanzanian children with intellectual

and practical skills that are useful for both living in both rural and urban areas. Significantly, it also meets the needs of the majority of children who may not have the opportunity to go beyond primary education. Thus, the seven years of primary education equips the child in a variety of developmental tasks.

Generally, most Nations take primary education quite seriously. Unlike preschool, which to a great extent depends on parental choice, Primary education is compulsory in most nations. It is officially, the first stage of formal schooling, that is why most governments strive to provide primary education for their children; and at all times too, it is made free. In Uganda, the government's zeal to provide primary education for the children became quite evident in 1989. As at this period, the government's estimate of pupils who had enrolled for primary education was put at 2.4 million. This figure nearly doubled the 1.3 million pupils who enrolled in 1980 (Uganda Information Resource, 1990). Following this trend, in 1999, the Uganda government had recorded 6 million pupils receiving primary education. This increase in enrolment may have been boosted by the introduction of the UPE scheme launched in 1997. Specifically under this programme free primary education was made available for four children per family at any public school at the government's expense (http://www/myuganda.co.ug/edu/).

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

In comparison to Preschool Education, what is significant about Primary education as a stage or phase in schooling?

3.2.4 Secondary Education

Generally, secondary education is that which comes after primary education, and before the tertiary stage of learning. In terms of broad goals, secondary education equips the individual with skills that prepare him for useful living in his society, and as a contributing member of his society. Specifically too, secondary education prepares the individual for higher education. In terms of specific goals, most nations draw up goals that have relevance to their cultural context as well as for academic gains. Oftentimes most secondary school education comes in two stages or cycles, with a total duration of six to seven years.

In Nigeria, secondary education is of six years duration, given in two stages of three years duration each. The first stage is the Junior Secondary School which actually prepares the learner in the basic subjects that enable pupils acquire further knowledge and skills. The senior secondary school is quite comprehensive with a core-curriculum designed to broaden the learner's knowledge and outlook. At the end of each of the two stages, the students sit for national examinations. For the junior secondary school examination he is awarded a Junior School Certificate (JSC) while at the senior school level, it is the Senior School Certificate (SSC).

The education system in Uganda allows for continuity in education from to secondary education. Secondary education in Ugandan is made up of two levels. First is the four years of lower secondary education otherwise called the ordinary level that leads to the Ugandan Certificate of Education (UCE). Having qualified, students then proceed for two more years upper secondary education or the Advanced (A) level. At the end of education at this level of learning, the

students sit for another National Examination to qualify for the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE). This certificate gives the recipient the option of going into the world of work or proceeding into tertiary level of learning. Importantly across nations, secondary education is expected to prepare the learner for tertiary education in a chosen field of study otherwise, equip enough for the world of work.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

How would you describe secondary education?

3.2.5 Technical Education and Further Education

As the world is gradually becoming a global village, most nations' education systems are also appreciating the importance of technical and technological education in the curriculum. In Nigeria, Science, Technical and Vocational Education have been redefined and emphasized as crucial to the technological growth of any nation. While Science education emphasizes the teaching and learning of science processes and principles, technical education emphasises the study of technologies and science related fields of study. In Nigeria, the Sciences have attracted a lot of students. This may not be far from the fact science related fields of study tend to provide lucrative jobs. However, technical and vocational studies are still trying to gain an image. This may not be quite far from its recipients ending up in blue – collar jobs. But with technology attaining some measure of status in this age, technical and vocational studies are gradually gaining some recognition in Nigeria. This is also the case in the Ivory Coast. Midlevel manpower is available in Colleges of agriculture, Commerce and technology. But training in

these areas does not attract many young people because they offer little income and prestige. Young people are mostly interested in white – collar jobs.

In Ghana, besides secondary and teacher training education, the Government's Review Committee (1967) recognized the need to emphasize technical education. It suggested that at that period of the nation's development, there was need to pay some attention to technical and commercial training to serve as midlevel education. Before then, it had been noted that the education system in Ghana was quite lopsided because of the emphasis given to secondary and grammar schools at the expense of technical and vocational education. The suggestion was for a reorientation of the importance of technical education in an advancing nation. Specifically, an adequate supply of technician and skilled craftsmen meant great productivity in the economic sector. Higher education and tertiary education cater for secondary school leavers; Also, education at the higher and tertiary levels offers education and additional training for those who have acquired some certificates and diplomas in colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics and other long – distance training. Specifically, the aims of tertiary education includes

- manpower training for national development.
- inculcate in the individuals values for individual as well as societal survival.
- development if the individual's intellectual ability, so that he can have in-depth understanding of his immediate and external environment.
- acquisition of physical and intellectual skills that will make him a self-reliant individual, and a contributing member of his society.
- a general promotion of scholarship in community service.

- fostering education for national unity.

- promoting national and international understanding and interaction.

In Uganda, higher education, Universities and related institutions run various courses and programmes in the Sciences, Social Sciences, the Arts and Humanities, and other professional courses. Oftentimes, the course duration varies from three to four years or more, depending on the course of study. The qualifications earned at the end of training include certificates, diplomas and degrees (Bachelors, Masters and PhDs). Uganda, has a number of Universities and higher institutions of learning, the major one being the first University which is the same age as Nigeria's University of Ibadan or Ghana's Legon is Makerere University in Kampala. The Ministry of Education report of 2005 in Uganda, indicated that as at that period, Uganda could boast of about four public universities and twenty-seven licensed private Universities. This expansion of universities in Uganda may have also resulted from the ever-increasing demand for higher education in recent times.

Until recently, in Tanzania, university enrolment suffered some setbacks. In the seventies, educational policy in Tanzania favoured the growth of primary schools at the expense of secondary education. Ultimately, there was a decline in the number of qualified candidates for tertiary learning. Thus, between 1976 until about 1984, not much can be said about growth of universities in Tanzania. There was more or less a lull in university enrolment. However beginning from 1984 into 1993 and in more recent times, increased enrolment in Tanzania's universities has been recorded. So far with this, one can say Sub-Saharan African countries in the growth of universities and the advancement of tertiary learning.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7

Using Nigeria as a case study, discuss the aims and objectives of tertiary education.

3.2.6 Adult and Non-formal Education

Adult and non-formal education has a major goal of giving educational opportunity to all. In other words, Adult and Non-formal education seeks to achieve mass literacy. It ensures all types of functional education given to youths and adults outside the formal school system. Basically, adult and non-formal education encourages functional literacy, remedial and vocational education. In Nigeria, adult and non-formal education is opened to nomads, migrant families, the disabled, disadvantaged gender and all such people in these categories or groups. The government of Nigeria believes that if all such disadvantaged people get some measure of education, illiteracy may be eradicated in the shortest possible time.

Tanzania's premier president, Julius Nyerere, throughout his years ensured the incorporation of many adult education principles and methods in his development strategy for Tanzania. He believed in the philosophy of self-reliance for education which in turn had some connection between learning and development: In this context, Nyerere believed that a nation and the individual can best realise self-reliance if everyone gets some education. This made him a firm advocate of literacy and adult learning, and was able to pioneer Tanzania in that direction. This singular drive has till date given education in Tanzania a more meaningful status. His idea of formal and non-formal education expanded the citizens' access to basic primary education. This has accounted for the rapid growth in literacy rates even among adults. Nyerere's campaign for

mass literacy won him the UNESCO literacy award. Also, as a key player in adult education, he was a close associate of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE). This led him to host the first ever ICAE world Assembly in 1975 in the capital city of Tanzania, Dar es Salam. Today, the Institute of Adult Education in the University of Dar es Salam is one of the main instruments for the training of adult educators in Tanzania. The Institute also caters for the development and implementation of modern adult education programmes and methods throughout Tanzania. On the whole, it could be said that President Nyerere of Tanzania implemented his mass literacy campaign to raise the literacy rate among adults as well as emphasize formal and non-formal education.

It is in like manner (as in Tanzania) that the Kenyan government as far back as 1966 laid its own foundation for Adult and Non-Formal Education. In the same year, a Board of Adult Education was established. The aim of the board was to coordinate the various agencies involved in the adult literacy campaign. In 1967, with the help of UNESCO experts the renewed literacy campaign began in Kenya. The major objective was to prevent the isolation of older people who did not have the same advantage of education that their children had. The programme was described as one of Kenya's most outstanding efforts. Today, Kenya has not relaxed in her bid to provide educational and literacy opportunities to all. Kenya has distant learning education programmes at various levels, as well as other non-formal education centres. Notably, instruction in these programmes is mostly administered by the University of Nairobi and the Jomo Kenyetta University. Generally nations who have programmes in Adult and Non-formal education seek to afford educational opportunities to every citizen, so as to attain mass literacy and adult and non-formal education.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

1. What would you consider as the main objective(s) of Adult and Non-formal education?

2. Using the case studies of Tanzania and Kenya, highlight the efforts put in to promote mass literacy, adult and non-formal education in these countries.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We started this unit by examining the variant aims of education. From there we looked at the administration of education and schools. We found out that once a nation, through her policies has defined her goals for education in clear terms, what follows is an administrative lay-out on how to deliver education. We also found out that administration of education goes beyond the local administrative operations in schools. There is a whole range of indices to be considered, ranging from school control, prescribed curriculum, and supervision of all schools and other educational services. Finally, this unit looked at the general structure, forms and types of education. Importantly, it was discovered in a study of comparative education, all such details are quite to the variance in the aims of education in any nation. They tell the different styles and manner of thinking amongst nations. Invariably too, it suggests that there are different methods and approach adopted towards problems that are common to nations, as well as general problems concerning the relation of education to society. This is one fact every student of comparative Education should know.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit you have learnt what an education structure entails. You have seen that every nation has its broad goals for education, as well as specific aims for each stage of learning or form of education. From the different cases cited you have been able to see that across nations, there are similarities and differences in terms of aims and goals of education, organisation and structure of schools, control and financing of education etc. In the next module we are going to be more specific. This time we will go back to our focus in this course that is comparative education in early child care and education. We will examine current delivery of early childhood education, noting also recent reforms. Specifically, we will take the case of early childhood education in Nigeria, as well as cases from other nations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What do you know about the structure of Education that you did not know before you studied this Unit?

2. Looking at the different sub-units in the main content of this unit, can you make a case of early childhood education in a named country?

7.0   REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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UNIT 5   ORGANISATIONS AND INITIATIVES ON EARLY CHILDHOOD
              EDUCATION.

CONTENTS
1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
       3.1   International Organisations on child care and Education.
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              Education.
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0   INTRODCUTION

Take your minds back to the past Modules and Units of this course, what has been our focus?

Yes, our concern has been on care, welfare and education of young children across nations and

cultures. Nations are quite concerned about how young children learn and develop. Specifically

we noted Fredrich Froebel also called the "father of the kindergarten" as the first to coin the

word "kindergarten" or the 'child's garden'. There is no gainsaying that educating young

learners is a great concern. This tremendous growth of interest of children in terms of their

development spans beyond Psychologist, educators generally, to interest groups. These include

International organisations, organisations and child-initiatives and groups at the national and

local levels of countries across the globe. So you now know that the concern for children is not

just the Parents-Teachers' Association (PTA) that we are familiar with. Significantly, the goal in

all of these groups and initiatives is the strive towards quality and adequate care and education of

young children who are not quite ready for primary education. In other words, the nursery,

kindergarten otherwise called early childhood education is the foundation that prepares the child for smooth transition to primary school.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- identify basic orientations of early child hood care and education organisations, associations and initiatives;

- tell the aims and goals of these early childhood education organisations;

- identify the contributions of these groups to the growth and development of early childhood education across nations;

- cite contributions of these groups to individual country's childcare and education systems.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 International Organisations on Child care and education

These are international organisations that care about policies guiding early childhood education practices. In this course we will take three of such major organisations. These are OMEP, UNICEF and UNESCO. As we examine their roles and organisations, we will cite case studies where such international organisations have made their marks.

OMEP otherwise known as the World Organisation of Early Childhood Education or Organisation Modaiale pourl' Education Presccolaire is a known and the only world-wide non-governmental organisation (NGO) that focuses on young children between ages 0-8. OMEP

actually begun as a humanitarian group of educators basically concerned with the welfare, care and education of young children. It actually started in 1946 with the initiative of Lady Allen of Hurtwood (UK) and Alva Myrdal (Sweden) and some other interested individuals from France, Denmark and Norway. The major initiative here was for a creation of a world organisation or umbrella that would cater for childhood education. The idea was to bring people from all over the world, without criteria other than an objective to share information and initiate actions to benefit young children everywhere.

Essentially, the major aims of OMEP can be summarised as follows:

i.   to use every possible means to provide the optimum condition for the well-being of all children.

ii. assist the child in their development and happiness, within their families. Institutions and society.

iii. assist in improving early childhood education.

iv. support scientific research that could lead to improving early childhood education.

v.   educate members of the public on the issues pertaining to early childhood education.

Notably, OMWP has a National Committee in over 60 countries around the world. This organisation works closely with UNICEF, UNESCO and the Council of Europe. Specifically, in U.S.A. OMEP focuses on furthering the rights and welfare of the child as well as partnering with professional organisations to make these dreams real. These professional organisations include IPA (International Play Organisation), ACEI (Association for Childhood Education

International), NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) and the World forum foundation.

The first world conference on Early Childhood education organised by OMEP was in Prague in 1948. It was at this conference that OMEP was actually born, and Alava Mydral elected as its first World President. It was at this gathering that this organisation was firstly, publicly recognised, as the principal mechanism of bringing people with thought for early childhood education together. The second World Assembly of OMEP was in 1914, and it drew representatives from 33 countries. The 3rd was in 1950, and was for the first time attended by observers from the major intergovernmental agencies with related interest. These agencies included UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO. Since then, OMEP has made its meeting more of a triennial assembly. The proposed to be held in Gothenberg, Sweden, August 10 – 13, 2010. The proposed World congress theme being, "Children – Citizen in the challenging World".

The two other International organisations that also contribute to the growth of early childhood education across the globe are UNICEF (The United Nation's Children Emergency Fund) and UNESCO (United Nation Education and Scientific Organisation). These are basically United Nations agencies. Specifically, the prime objectives of UNICEF are to improve international understanding of issues relating to children's rights and to help facilitate the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in both industrialised and developing countries. Recently, UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre came up with the Innocenti Report Card 8 (2008) to propose international applicable benchmarks for early childhood care and education. the card centred on the opportunities and risks involved in child

care transition. It also set minimum standards for protecting the rights of children in their most vulnerable and formative years.

Importantly, UNICEF and UNESCO have assisted early child care and education in various ways. They have helped in the construction of physical facilities and in the provision of materials for Crèches, preschool services, nursery and kindergarten schools, especially in rural areas. These organisations have also provided grants, funds food and equipment to impoverished children in the world, especially in developing nations.

In Botswana, much of the written fact about early childhood education exist in the form of workshops and consultancy report. These are basically UNICEF programmes and plans. In India, UNICEF has also played a key role in supporting government and voluntary efforts in the directions of early childhood education. India has also benefitted through financial aid from UNICEF. When India launched her Early Childhood Education and Children's Media Laboratory project (ECE/CML), UNICEF, through India's National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) supported, financially. In Kenya, UNICEF gave grants to support in-service courses for pre-school teachers. It also provided materials and equipment for training such teachers. In terms of child health and welfare, UNICEF has supported Kenya through funds, as well as through awareness programmes to rural communities. UNICEF also provides vehicles to reach district centres for early childhood education.

About the mid-80s in Liberia, the Ministry of Education, through the division of Pre-primary Education opened a day care centre for market women. The centre was co-sponsored by

UNICEF, the Ministry of Education in Liberia, and the Ministries of Health and Social Welfare. In Malaysia, it is commonplace to find preschool seminars, research and workshops organised and funded by UNICEF. In its bid to ensure qualified and adequate teachers for early childhood education, UNICEF in the early 1980s supported the professional training of nursery school teachers in Sudan. In 1983, UNICEF assisted the country's Ministry of Social Welfare to open a centre for the training of nursery school teachers.

Generally in Africa, United Nations agencies and their affiliates have largely been responsible for external aids to African countries. Such aids helped in the promotion of education in Africa. For instance, the Science Education Programme for Africa (SEPA) has helped to research, compute data and publish studies on the African Child and his environment. In the same vein, UNICEF and UNESCO have organised successful nursery school schemes in Ghana, Tanzania, Cote D' ivoire and other African nations. These organisations have also sponsored workshops on the development of indigenous play and learning Materials (toys, games, pictorial books) in Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Lesotho and Ethiopia.

Just like UNICEF and UNESCO have made their impact in world early childhood education policies and programmes, so has OMEP. In the late 1960s and early 70s, several events advanced the development of preschool services in Brazil. In 1968, under the sponsorship of OMEP, Brazil hosted the first Inter-American meeting for preschool protection. As far back as 1956, the Chilean branch of OMEP was formed. Since its inception, Chile's branch of OMEP has participated in various OMEP efforts. They have organised seminars and workshops,

disseminated specialized text books for young children, and generally helped to improve preschool education in Chile.

If you have been following closely, you must have noticed the efforts put in by International organisations to improve and sustain early childhood education across the world. Can you think of some of the inputs of these named international organisations to the development of early childhood education in Nigeria?

SELF ASSESMENT EXERCISE 1

1   What is OMEP and when was it founded?

2   What are the major goals of UNICEF for early childhood education?

3.3 National Organisations on Early Childhood Education

Do you know that there are organisations and initiatives on early childhood education in every nation? Just like International organisations, organisations that serve early childhood education. Specifically, such associations promote the education, welfare and other needs for young children in that nation.

In the United States, as early as the 1910s, the need for nursery schools to cater for the education needs of the American Child was muted by the United States Nursery School education movement. This movement was influenced by the philosophies of John Dewey, Sigmund Freud and Madame Maria Montessori. The ideas of these advocates of early childcare and education

were put together as a progressive programme. By the 1920s the movement had introduced three types of nursery schools in America. These nurseries according to White and Burka (1987) are:

i   The family – oriented nursery

ii   Child – Welfare – oriented nursery

iii Research – oriented nursery.

The family – oriented nursery was actually an out – growth of the parental growth. The aim of this kind of nursery was to provide group experiences for children, and parental skills for mothers. On the other hand, the child – welfare oriented nursery centred on programmes in health, nutrition and parental education.

By 1925, the nursery school movement had grown into a National Committee on Nursery education. Today, that same group is known as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). This association till date is the largest and most important in the whole of the United States. Significantly, the NAEYC is known for its "Developmentally appropriate" practice in early childhood education. It serves the care and education of young children from birth through age 8. The association noted that during the 1980s educational practices for young children did not follow any consistent pattern. Oftentimes it was a situation where young children were exposed to rigid academic programmes with minimal guidance. On the other hand, it was a situation where children were taught how to read in free settings without structure or guidance.

Both extremes were considered developmentally inappropriate by NAEYC. Against this background, the association came up with a publication entitled, "Developmentally Appropriate

Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8" (1987). The book provides guidelines on appropriate curriculum, and Instructional practice. The idea is to ensure that the content of the early childhood education curriculum is taught appropriately, and covers adequately. The ideal in this recommendation takes cognisance of the child's natural abilities, interest and enthusiasm for learning. Generally NAEYC promotes improvements in professional practice and working conditions in family childcare homes, early childhood programmes and early childhood education centres.

Another National child care and education association is the CWLA or the Child Welfare League of America. It is the nation's oldest and largest organisation devoted to the wellbeing of children. It provides a wide range of services to support and strengthen for children.

In South Africa, before the 20th century, the "kindergarten" was an unfamiliar Institution, and did not quite appeal to the Afrikaneer (Vester, F.L. 1989: 279). However in 1934 a large national conference on education was sponsored by the New Education Fellowship (NEF). This also saw the official launching of the Nursery School Movement. The result of this was the birth of a Nursery School Association of South Africa (NSASA) in 1939. The main objective of this association was to promote the idea of preschool education for all. All South African children were encouraged access to nursery school education, irrespective of race, class politics or creed.

The NSASA put in continued efforts, and in 1969, the State officially recognised nursery school as part of the new National Educational Act. The Act required all nursery schools to be registered with the appropriate Provincial department of Education.

In 1974, the NSASA changed its name to South African Association of Early Childhood Education (SAAECE). The association is also a member of the world association of Early Childhood education (OMEP). Generally the NSASA/SAAECE have contributed immensely to early child care and development in South Africa. Some their efforts and initiatives include:

- increase in governmental recognition, and financial support of nursery education;

- set minimum standards for nursery schools. The standard became the criteria upon which the provincial education departments also based the payment of subsidies;

- the production of several publications in the promotion of preschool. The first of such publication is "The Nursery School Handbook" of 1942, which has since then been reviewed several times.

Another National Association in the promotion of early childhood education in South Africa is the Transvaal Society for Pre-primary Education (TVKO). It was first established in 1944. The society initially begun as an Afrikaan's Women Organisation. The aim then was to provide nursery education to disadvantaged Afrikaans children. Today, TVKO has developed as a professional organisation. The society works with the SAAECE to promote early childhood education in South Africa. The TVKO and SAAECE jointly hold workshops, seminars, conferences and symposia to discuss new directions in early child care and education in South Africa. They also support early childhood education in terms of finance, maintaining standards, and teacher training programmes.

Still on national associations and initiatives on early childhood education across nations, India has also shown great concern for the education and welfare of her young ones. India's Independence in 1947 witnessed a growing awareness for early childhood education. One of the largest sponsors of early childhood programmes in India was the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). By 1975, the ICDS had become a major support of India's Ministry of Social Welfare to expand early childhood education. Besides the expansion of physical projects in urban, rural and tribal areas, ICDS offered other services. These include ensuring health and nutrition needs, and the developmental needs of children below 6 years. Significantly, the aim was to improve social and educational needs of the young learner. Still in India, there is the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT). It has three other major agencies working with it for the improvement of the early childhood education in India. Significantly, NERCT has its focus on a child-centred approach to early childhood education. The agencies are as follows:

- The National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCED) – This Institute undertakes the monitoring of the early childhood education components of the ICDS programmes. It also plans and develops preschool curricula; and provides materials for the training of preschool teachers.

- The Homes Science Colleges – This improve the quality of early childhood education through personnel training. They are also involved in the evaluation of early childhood education teacher – training programmes.

- Indian Association for Preschool Education (IAPE). This is a professional body of early childhood education workers at all levels. The major aim of early child care and education in India.

In Kenya, the National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) bases on the Institute of Education was actually established as the professional body to implement government policy on early childhood education. NACECE works closely with District Centres for early childhood education (DICECE). DICECE serve as facilitators and trainers for early childhood education programmes. NACECE and DICECE work as partners in collaboration with foreign organisations like the Bernard Van Leer Foundation, UNICEF, and Aga Kahn Foundation. They all work as a team to promote early childhood education in Kenya. Significantly, the foreign foundations support Kenya through grants, in – service courses for preschool teachers, provision of materials and equipment for preschools.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Highlight NAEYC's contribution to early childhood education in U.S

3.3 Local and School Organisations on Child care, Welfare and Education

Support for early childcare and education are also found at the local and school levels. Besides the most popular which is the Parents – teachers association, we also find some other organisations and associations who believe in preschool education as the foundation on which other stages of learning are built. Notably and overtime, educators have come to appreciate the power of parents in educational concerns. In this context, too are teachers. Thus, associations like the Parents – teachers associations and Teachers' organisations cannot be underestimated. In the Islamic Republic of the Iran, the regular Parents – teachers association is affiliated with the Ministry of Education. This forum provides opportunities for school and parents to discuss

academic and other welfare needs of the children. Iran's PTA also organizes classes for parents, and other programmes to support parental education.

In Kenya, Parents' association, Welfare organisations and some other private individuals support early childhood education. These groups help to establish and maintain preschools Institutions and their programmes. They also see to the health, nutrition and general care of the young learners. These groups also support early childhood education through provision of teacher's salaries and other school projects.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Visit three Nursery/kindergarten schools in your area where they have active Parent –Teachers Association (PTA). Gather information on the individual school's PTA compare their contributions and the impact in the development of the schools from its inception till date.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Having gone through this unit you can better appreciate the roles of organisations and initiatives in their support and advancement for early childhood learning. Do you remember the major International bodies or organisations on child care and education? Indeed OMEP, UNICEF and UNESCO too have played key roles in the present status of early childhood education. These organisations concern on how young children learn and develop cannot be underestimated. We also found out too that these organisations are not only concerned with the care and welfare of the learners but the quality of the one who teaches them. Thus, they support the training of preschool teachers. Besides International Organisations, we also saw initiatives and groups at

both the national and local levels. We also saw case studies from various countries. The conclusion from all of these is that nations have come to realise that early childhood education is a stage of learning that is crucial and so should not be overlooked.

5.0 SUMMARY

In a course of this nature, it may be incomplete if we do not examine the contributions that are in support of early childcare and education. It is the initiatives of these groups that makes the world appreciate the relevance of this stage of learning. Do you remember the major aims of OMEP and UNICEF to the development of early childhood education? What about their contributions to various nations? We also saw the concern for early child care and education at the national and even the local levels. When we make a comparative analysis of the contributions across nations, we are left in no doubt that only an organised preschool education can sufficiently and adequately prepare the young learner for smooth transition to primary schooling.

6.0 TUTOR-MAKED ASSIGNMENT

- Highlight the contribution of UNICEF to early child care and education in a named African country.

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MODULE 3 CURRENT DELIVERY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND REFORMS IN EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION

Unit 1   **The Case of Early child care and Education in Nigeria.**

Unit 2   **Case Studies of Early child care and Education across Nations.**

Unit 3   **Reforms in Early child care and Education.**

Unit 4   **Teaching Young learners in a Technological age.**

Unit 5   **Coping with today's diverse Learners.**

UNIT 1   **THE CASE OF EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION IN NIGERIA.**

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1.0   Introduction
2.0   Objectives
3.0   Main Content
    3.1   A Historical Background of Early Child Care and Education in Nigeria.
    3.2   Current state of Early Childhood Education in Nigeria.
    3.3   Educational Activities and Methods.
    3.2   Early Childhood Education in the Middle Ages.
    3.4   Training Programmes for Teachers of Young Children.
    3.5   Reforms in the Nigerian early childcare and Education.
4.0   Conclusion
5.0   Summary
6.0   Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

In the last two modules we made a cross-national analysis of early childcare and education. From

there we examined the concept of comparative education and methods of comparing educational

systems. Having being exposed to the nature of early childhood educational practice and knowledge of comparative study, the intent in this module is to actually study cases of childcare and educational practices, across nations. In this particular unit, our case study is on the current delivery of early childhood education in Nigeria. We will begin with a brief historical background on early childhood education in Nigeria. From there we will examine present status. The aim is to give what is more or less like a geography of early childhood education in Nigeria.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- recount a brief history of early childhood educational practice in Nigeria;

- describe the current state and practice of early childhood education in Nigeria;

- describe the educational activities and methods in the Nigerian pre-school education;

- explain what obtains in the Nigerian teacher-education programmes for young children;

- highlight differences and similarities in the Nigerian early childhood education with some others;

- Highlight some current issues and on-going reforms in the Nigerian early childhood education.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Historical Background of Early Childhood Education in Nigeria.

Like all other traditional African societies, the need to educate the child from pre-school age, no matter how informal, dates back to pre-colonial era in Nigeria. In effect, pre-school education

had always existed in Nigeria even before the advent of western civilization and formal education practice.

Generally indigenous education in Nigeria is aimed at providing the physical, cognitive and psychosocial development of the child. Also, moral, aesthetic, social and vocational development. Right from a very early age, the child was taught informally by his parents and older siblings. The child was imbibed with some facts on how to live within the norms of his society. Such knowledge was transmitted orally. The method of instruction in the traditional system of education consisted of role-playing, discovery, observation and imitation. The activities were centred on games, problem-solving, storytelling, learning by doing and so on.

Thus, one can say that before the coming of Western education, Nigerians had their own educational practices and systems, aimed at bringing up young ones in the way of life of the people. The educational system was such that the children acquired skills, knowledge, patterns of thought and attitudes which the communities recommended for effective living. Basically, early childhood training included toilet, health and meal habits. The child was also taught respect for elders and simple gestures while exchanging greetings. The child learns hospitality through friendliness and the need to accommodate people. The child was also taught simple household chores by parents and older siblings. At about age three, the little girl practised sweeping and running little errands for the mother. Even when parents knew that the little child would play almost all the way on such major errands, they were still encouraged to do it all the same. Significantly the child was taught to appreciate work even through play. When the child was about three to five years of age, he was allowed to join his older ones and other children to evening moonlight plays and storytelling sessions. In the indigenous early childhood educational

system, the mother and other older siblings are most times the teachers. Specifically the mother plays a great role in the intellectual, social and emotional development of the child. The traditional Nigerian woman is quite sympathetic and understanding, helping her young child to develop emotional and social stability, while learning.

In 1842, Reverend Thomas Freeman a Methodist Missionary established what he termed the nursery of the Infant Church at Badagry. Contrary to what the term implied, it was not a nursery school, but more of a primary stage of learning. Moreover, the kind of education introduced by the missionaries at this period was one actually aimed at propagating Christianity and getting Nigerians to abandon their traditional beliefs and practices. In effect, the idea was not to get Nigerian children educated per se, but to prepare them to imbibe the word of God. Maturity for this first stage of learning was attained once the child's hand could go over his head to touch the opposite ear. A physical feat usually achieved once the child is about seven to eight years. That being the criterion for school readiness, it therefore followed that pre-schoolers of ages two to six were not considered for learning. In essence, there was actually no place for pre-school education at this period.

But in the 1950s when Nigerians became more politically active, also in preparation for her independence, the zeal for educational advancement was also in top gear. Thus, between 1955 – 1958 the whole idea of Universal Primary Education (U.P.E) scheme evolved in the then Western and Eastern regions of Nigeria. It was also at this time that the establishment of formal and organised pre-school and childcare education came into being. The idea of pre-school was meant to meet the demands of working mothers who needed conducive places to keep their

children while at work. Thus one could also say that pre-school education at this period was mostly for children of the elite class. Significantly too, pre-school and child care centres were mostly in the hands of private proprietors. This also meant that government hardly interfered in the running of such schools.

This non-interference of government in pre-primary education continued until the 1969 Curriculum Conference. At the end of the conference, the committee recommended a Head – Start programme for toddlers and children. The nursery and kindergarten schools were to accommodate children between the ages of three and five years. It was suggested that the pre-school programme would help to bring about a smooth transition from home to school. Also, to prepare the child for primary education. The pre-school programme was also expected to provide adequate care and supervision for children of working class parents. It was also recommended that Schools should be in private hands.

Later in the 1970s, there was the call for government to make more definite policies on the preparatory role of pre-school institutions. In response to this, the Federal Government, in her first major National Policy on Education in 1981, had a full section on pre-primary education. In that section, pre-primary education was referred to as, "the education given in an educational Institution to children aged three to five years".

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. In traditional Nigeria, was there any form of early childhood education? If there is, how was it organised?

2. About what period in Nigerian history of education were there signs of organised and formal early childhood education?

3.2 Current State of Early Childhood Education in Nigeria

Early childhood Education or pre-school education in Nigeria is referred to as that education given in an educational institution to children prior to their entering the primary school. Pre-school education in Nigeria includes the crèches, the nursery and the kindergarten. Besides the custodial role preschool plays, it is also aimed at instilling in the child the spirit of inquiry and creativity, by exploring the environment. It also aims to teach the child cooperation, and to build in him, team spirit. The National Policy on Education has also prescribed that the preschooler should be taught the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms etc, all to be learnt through play. Finally, preschool education aims at developing in the child right health and moral habits.

Early childhood education in Nigeria today is largely in the hands of private owners with the government playing peripheral roles. However, the Federal Ministry of Education (2004) in its guidelines for pre-primary education expressed its desire to improve standards, while encouraging genuine private participation in providing adequate care and supervision for children.

Preschoolers in Nigeria are most times attached to primary schools in the same compound. Learning activities in preschools include elementary reading and writing, drawing, storytelling, dancing, singing, physical Exercise, and generally exploring with toys. The children are also

taught the basic rudiments of numbers, alphabets, letters, shapes, sizes, colours, forms and other learning activities that could help sustain their interest, as well as build their curiosity. Nigerian preschoolers are also engaged in free play activities, both indoors and outdoors. The children are taught to communicate freely with one another, to build for them prosocial attitudes. Importantly too, the National Policy on Education prescribed mother tongue or the language of the immediate environment as the medium of instruction; English language still remains the favoured and dominant means of communication.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Highlight some specific objectives of early childhood education in Nigeria.

3.3 Educational Activities and Methods

Essentially, activities in Nigerian preschool stem from the goals of the curriculum which are expected to develop children's physical, social, behavioural and intellectual skills. In this context, the preschool activities include skills in motor abilities, communication and written expression and arts. Oftentimes, children's activities in nursery schools are teacher-directed in other words, the methods employed by teachers of preschool are not quite unique. However, the National Policy on Education emphasizes the main method of teaching at this level ought to be through play. The child is given freedom to explore the real world from which he is expected to find meaning. In this same vein, it is also expected that preschools would provide stimulating environment with colourful toys and delightful learning accessories. Onibokun (1981) has expressed that stimulation through toys and other learning devices engages the young learner

freely in various activities in the process of exploration, discovery and experimentation. In effect, the teaching approach or teaching methods for the Nigerian preschool child, though teacher-directed, emphasizes play and playful activities which is also non-restrictive.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. Explain briefly the teaching methods employed in by the Nigerian preschool teacher.
2. What are the expected Educational activities in Nigerian Preschool education?

3.4 Training Programmes for Teachers of Young Children

The Nigerian Government, by way of ensuring quality preschool education for its citizenry made provision in teacher education programmes for specialization in early childhood education. Importantly too, it recommended that the teacher-education programme for preschool education will emphasize play as the main method of teaching at this level. The curriculum of teacher education is expected to achieve this. So even though pre-school education is mostly in the hands of private proprietors, the government is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring quality teachers, thorough its recommendations for teacher-education programmes.

In the past, preschool teachers were mostly grades 2 and 3 teachers and at other times school certificate holders. However, with time, the Nigerian government recommended professionals and specialists trained teachers. These were found in graduates of the Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) which is post secondary teacher-education. There was also the Associateship Certificate of Education (ACE). This is University programme in certificate teacher-education. In recent times however, the Associateship Certificate of Education 9ACE) programme has been

phased out, and gradually being replaced by specialized degree programme in Early Childhood Education and Development. This bachelor's degree programme is already gaining grounds and acceptance in most Faculties of Education in Nigerian Universities. It is hoped that recipients of a teacher – education programme of this nature will just fit in as specialist teachers of early childhood education programmes. Some colleges of Education are also running NPE programmes also.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

What teacher – education programmes have been put in place for Nigerian teachers of preschool education?

3.5 Reforms in Nigerian Early Child Care and Education.

If education as a primary instrument of change must thrive, it must become the primary concern of a nation. Most nations strive to bring reforms by way of innovations into their educational system. In recent times in Nigeria, preschool educators have promoted the use of African toys and play objects to reflect the cultural environment of the children. Teachers are also encouraged to take their pupils on out-door physical sighting of objects like plants and animals. Another noticeable feature in contemporary Nigerian pre-school teaching is the gradual departure from excessive use of foreign literature to more meaningful Nigerian folk songs and folklores. These have been found to have great relevance for the Nigerian child. Such literature books help to preserve and popularise Nigerian songs, rhymes, poems and games. Generally, by way of reforms Nigerian preschool programmes have acquired considerable sophistication with the introduction of some Montessori activities in regular nursery school. Some schools have even

gone ahead with highly organised Montessori sections in their Nursery schools. Such sections have also been found to be well equipped with the teaching, following the ideals of Madame Maria Montessori.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Are there any other reforms and innovations in the Nigerian Preschool education that you want to include?

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Nigerian educational system also takes cognisance of early childcare and education. In this unit, we did a critical examination of what obtains in our preschool system. Like what happens in other nations the Nigerian preschool programme is quite structured and organised with specific goals and objectives. The Nigerian government also cares about who teaches her young ones. So even when preschool education is mostly a private sector concern, the government takes control of the teacher education programmes. These programmes are carefully structured to carry out effectively the goals of preschool education. Finally, there is no gainsaying that Nigeria is a developing country. Even at that, she strives for reforms and innovations in her early child care and educational programmes.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this Unit, you have learnt more about Preschool education in Nigeria. You have followed the historical development of early childhood from traditional times till contemporary day. You may have noticed some changes and development in the goals, methods of teaching and even the

types of preschools. You have also learnt that even though preschool education has most times been a private concern, the government is concerned about who teaches them. Finally, the Nigerian preschool education has enjoyed some reforms and innovations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Highlight the differences in the aims and objectives of the traditional child rearing practices and the modern preschool education in Nigeria.

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UNIT 2 CASE STUDIES OF EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATIONAL PATTERNS.

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

I am sure you must have gained some more knowledge from your examination and study of early child care and educational practices in Nigeria from the previous unit. Did you notice how we highlighted the facts of early childhood education in Nigeria? Did you see the frame work on which we built the case of Nigerian childhood education? Notably, we began with a trace of early childcare and education from indigenous Nigerian child rearing thoughts and practices to contemporary Preschool education. In all of these we highlighted crucial issues such as the aims and goals of preschool education, control of school, educational activities and methods of teaching the young learners. Also, we looked at teacher – education programmes for this level of learning, and reforms in preschool education in the case under study.

As a follow up from the above, we will be taking cases across nations. The aim is to articulate that all societies have their special ways of raising and educating their young ones. In other words, what we generally term early childhood education today vary with nations. This diversity in child care and education that has also evolved from a people's indigenous forms of childrearing is central to a study of comparative early childhood education. When we study and examine case studies, we are afforded the opportunity to make critical judgements through deductions, while highlighting similarities and differences. Specifically, in this unit, we will draw cases from Africa, Europe, Asia and America.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- describe a nation's early childcare and educational practices;

- give details on what to highlight in comparing early childhood educational practices;

- trace the historical development of a nation's early child care and education;

- highlight reforms, changes and challenges in nation's preschool patterns across nations;

- build up a case of early child care and educational practices of any named nation.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Case Studies from Africa

Africa is one of the continents in the world. Most nations in this continent tend to have a developing status. This may not be far from the slow pace of development in some African

countries. It can also be traced to the slow changes of education in this continent. Specifically, most of the problems facing the growth and development of education in Africa today may have stemmed from funding, policy formulation and implementation, control of school, adequacy and appropriateness of curricular and so on. However like the case in most other continents, nations in Africa have come to realise these challenges and appreciate the need to strive for changes and reforms. Specifically though, while appraising education generally in these nations, the focus in this unit is on early child care and education. In this regard, we will concentrate on issues of early childcare and education patterns in Africa. We will take the cases of two Sub-Saharan African nations, namely Ghana and Uganda .

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give one significant reason why nations in Africa tend to be developing at a rather slow pace.

3.1.1 Early Childhood Education in Ghana

Ghana is officially known as the Republic of Ghana. It is situated on the Gulf of Guinea a few degrees north of the equator. Ghana's population in 2005 was estimated at 22,113,000. Ghana is predominantly a black African State. English is the official language, with several other local languages. The Republic of Ghana actually began as the Gold Coast. It was one the first black African countries to attain Independence from the United Kingdom on March 6, 1957. It became a republic on July 1, 1960. Accra is Ghana's capital and largest city.

In ancient Ghana, communities were small and largely rural, but self-sufficient. Education was quite informal and unspecialized. Traditional education in Ghana existed until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Like in other African systems of education, indigenous education in

Ghana had a focus and clearly defined goals. Education, though informal, was aimed at producing persons to be useful members of society. Children at a very young age were trained to be good citizens, endowed with character training, and taught to acquire skills that would make them productive members of society. Parents and other older siblings and the community at large were teachers and custodians of knowledge. They transmitted knowledge to young learners in a variety of instructional medium, orally. Children learnt through songs, proverbs, riddles, folklores, myths and legends. Body language and other forms of communication enhanced teaching and learning. Significantly, the home played the most vital role as an educational agency, with the family as the main agent of socialisation. The expectation was that the family would play the role of imparting proper values in children.

Formal education began in the Gold Coast as far back as 1752 with the arrival of Reverend Thomas Thompson who was one of the early missionaries from America. His effort to give education priority was the establishment of a school for the children of the Cape Coast in 1788. Notably though in the early period of educational development in Ghana, the emphasis was on primary and secondary education.

However in 1843, Preschool education in Gold Coast was first noticed with the establishment of a kindergarten by the Basel Missionaries. Notably though, government participation in early childhood education can be traced to 1951. The involvement of government was borne out of the need to provide custodial care for children while their parents were away to the farms, the market, or work. The government through its department of Social Welfare and Community development established nurseries and day care centres. The pioneer nurseries were situated in

large urban centres like Cape Coat, Accra, Sekondi, and near markets. The nursery schools were run by private individuals and voluntary organisations, with the government playing supervisory roles.

In 1965, nursery education was separated from other early child care programmes like crèche and day care centres. The Ministry of Education was responsible for nursery education, while the department of Social Welfare continued its supervisory role in running crèches and day care centres. Generally, preschool education in Ghana is encouraged, though not compulsory. A good percentage of Ghanaian children are in nursery and kindergarten schools in Ghana. The nursery schools in Ghana are mostly owned by private individuals, groups, communities, churches, non-governmental organisations etc. However, in more recent times, there have been a few model nursery schools in the districts and region that are owned and run by Ghana Education Services. Like is the case of most preschool teaching and learning, the teachers employ the playway method, using colourful toys and books to teach the young learners.

Teacher training programmes for early childhood education in Ghana are the concern of Government. Two main government agencies, the Ghana Education Services and the Department of Social Welfare take charge of the training of preschool teachers. Specifically, the Ghana Education Services organizes in-service and refresher course to update childhood teaching and improve on teacher's performance. The Department of Social Welfare operates day care training and demonstration centres to train centre supervisors handlers and teachers of pre-schools and day care centres. They also offer professional courses for working preschool teachers. The aim of such teacher training centres is the concern for professional teachers to take the place of people without pre-service training. Such people are mostly retired primary school teachers who are not

actually qualified to handle preschool learners. Generally in Ghana today, most nursery schools can boast of teachers who are graduates of the Ghana Education Services (GES) sponsored training colleges.

As previously said in the introduction of this unit, there is this general strive among nations for reforms and changes in their educational systems. Looking the case of preschool education in Ghana, the general education reforms of the 1970s in Ghana, gave more recognition to preschool education. Nursery education was encouraged by reform, and eighteen to twenty-four months was recommended as duration, one quite crucial to preparing children for entry to primary school. Another noticeable reform in Ghana's preschool education was in 1979. In this year, the legal basis for organising and operating preschool was established.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Highlight the differences and similarities in Preschool education patterns in Nigeria and Ghana.

2. What reforms can be noted in early childhood education in Ghana?

3.1.2 Early Childhood Education in Uganda

The Republic of Uganda can be described as a country of many contrasts. The contrasts among the various people of Uganda are reflected in the variety of surroundings and demonstrated in the multiplicity of cultures, traditions, and lifestyles. Uganda is a creation out of diverse ethnic people with different traditions, customs, and ways of life inherited from their ancestors. Uganda is a landlocked country in the heart of Africa.

Uganda is divided into four administrative regions, and further subdivided into thirty-three districts. Kampala is the capital and largest city in Uganda. As of the year 2000 estimate, the population of Uganda was put at 24.4 million. The official national language in Uganda is English. It is spoken by most educated Ugandans. It is also taught as a subject in schools, and used as the language of instruction. Another language of importance is 'Ganda' or 'Luganda', which is widely spoken and preferred for native language publication. It is sometimes used as the language of instruction and taught in schools. In recent times, Swahili, which is the East African lingua franca, has gained ground as a trade language. In September 2005, the Uganda government recognised it as an official national language. Luganda, which is widely spoken in central Uganda, remains the official vernacular language in education. In 1961, the first step toward internal self-government was granted Uganda by Britain. By October 1962, Uganda had gained full independence.

In the indigenous education system, the child was taught that the home was an integral part of the entire community. He was taught by older siblings at home, and also by members of the larger society. Parents and older siblings ensured that training in relevant productive activities were incorporated in the child-rearing process. In traditional Uganda, stories, songs, riddles, and proverbs were some means of transmitting knowledge to the young. Such stories and songs have underlying morals meant to teach the children. On the whole, the child growing up in traditional Ugandan society would generally acquire knowledge from stories, myths, legends, songs, lullabies, riddles, proverbs, dances and religion, all embedded in their early education at home. These instilled in him spiritual values, respect for elders, family, institution, and the social

hierarchy. Also, he learned wisdom, morals, and all such norms that are appropriate for displaying positive behaviour. All of these form the basis of indigenous education in the traditional Uganda society. Such traditional education was not limited to Uganda alone, but cuts across most East and Southern Africa in view of their ancestral origin in the region.

The first signs of formal education in Uganda occurred about the early 18th century during the inter-ethnic war period. Formal education was first introduced in Uganda by volunteer missionary organisations who were mostly Protestants. They came to Uganda about 1877 and were followed two years later by the Catholic Mission. The aim of education for these groups was basically evangelism. But even at that they made their impact as the first to introduce formal education to Uganda. Basically, the mission groups had tailored the content of education primarily to their primary goal of evangelism with the curriculum as a way of achieving this.

This zeal for education continued in Uganda even till the 19th century till date. Positive changes were carefully planned and implemented in Uganda, until the military coup of January 1971. The new government in its educational plan began by calling on its own curriculum development centre to revise the then – existing curriculum for a new one. The new structure of formal education in Uganda often referred to as the 7-4-2-3 system was put in place. Even though pre-primary school is not one of the above systems, it was recognised as a crucial stage of learning. In other words, preschool education in Uganda is not compulsory, but encouraged.

Preschool education in Uganda is basically a private enterprise. Most nursery and kindergarten schools in Uganda are located in urban areas. Children in the rural areas tend to wait for primary

education, and may end up entering primary school with little or no preparation for the intellectual task it requires. Others just come from homes where parents have no formal exposure to formal education nor does the home environment provide exposure to reading materials to prepare them for elementary reading and writing. However, in recent times, since 2005, the Ugandan government has come out with a draft proposal on creating public awareness in early childhood education as well as strengthening the demand for it. The focus is on an education programme that would articulate proper nutrition, healthcare, and intellectual stimulation during the early years of the child's life. This ultimately would improve learning and other abilities. In recognising early childhood development as an integral part of basic education, the working group on early childhood development (UGED) was created in 1997 with UNICEF as the lead agency. This group had its first lead conference on early childhood education in 1999 in Kampala, Uganda. The forum provided opportunity for Ugandans to appreciate the need and importance of early childhood education.

The early childhood development programme in Uganda also emphasized the training of local women in health and child development strategies that enhance early development in the child. Essentially, the early childhood education programme was designed as a follow-up of the country's Education for All (EFA) at its commencement in the year 2000. One outcome of the EFA in Uganda was the recognition of the need for early childhood education, an expansion of its programme, and the development of its activities in nursery education. Thus, with regard to this, Uganda's government was concerned with enrolment in early childhood education. Before then, statistics showed that the percentage of Uganda's children who attend organised nursery education before primary school was quite low and needed improvement.

Basically, the aims of early childhood education programme in Uganda can be summed up as follows:

- to develop mental capabilities, health, and the physical growth of the child through play activities;

- to inculcate moral values in the young learner;

- to help the child appreciate his cultural background and customs;

- to enrich the child's experiences, by developing his imaginative sense, a sense of self reliance, thinking power; and

- to develop language and communication skills including that of his mother tongue.

By way of achieving the goals of early childhood education in Uganda, the government redesigned plans for teachers of young children, primarily preschool teachers. The Primary Teachers' College (PTC) had the mandate to train early childhood education teachers, hoping that a good number would be trained to meet the specified manpower needs. Specifically, all such PTC teachers-in-training would get basic training in early childhood methods and specialisation. To this end, a comprehensive scheme to ensure standards and control was worked out. Another important aspect of this training was the focus on the child's learning needs, which incorporates a holistic development of the child's life skills, health and physical growth, good social habits, values, and imaginative skills. Others include an appreciation of self-reliance, thinking power, language and communication skills. The successful implementation of the teacher-education programme was a collaborative effort of Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports (Inspectorate Division), Commissioners of pre-primary and primary education and every district and local council in the nation.

By way of reforms in Uganda's childcare and education programmes, since 1997, the government through its Ministry of Education and Sports has come up with policies concerning Early Childhood Development (ECD). Amongst such was ensuring that all private preschools are licensed, with their activities continually monitored by the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education. Another vital aspect of reforms was the emphasis on the instructional methods of teaching in preschool, as well as enduring quality in the content of preschool teachers-in-training. Indeed with all such efforts to advance the growth and development of early childhood education, report has it that the enrolment of pupils in preschools of the age group two to five years old (in lower baby class to top class) had increased to 41,775 as at 2005 (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2005).

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. Can you highlight some peculiarities in the goals/aims and objectives of early childhood education in Uganda?
2. Point out some similarities and differences in the early childhood education patterns between Uganda and Ghana. Are there lessons to be learnt from each of these countries?

3.2 Case Studies from Europe

The term "Early Childhood Education" actually originated from Europe between the 16th and 19th centuries. It has with time spread to other parts of the world. In a most simple sense, early

childhood education is said to encompass all forms of education pertaining to the rearing of children from birth till about five or six years. This conception may not be said to be quite universal, thus the patterns of care and education of young children of that age range cannot be generalised even among European nations. In other words, there are variations in the usage of the term as well as in the practice of child care and education. Notably though, the spread of early childhood education throughout the world is mostly borne out of colonisation of most part of the world by European power, as well as the spread of Industrialisation. Another significant issue on early childhood education in Europe is that preschool education developed its institutional forms in the late18th and 19th centuries. This came as some form of response to custodial needs of children, who hitherto suffered neglect and abandonment while their parents were away at work in factories, offices. To fully appreciate early childhood care and education in the European world, we will examine the case of France and Italy.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

The term 'Early Childhood Education' may have originated from Europe but even at that the concept and practice of childcare and education among European nations vary. Discuss.

3.2.1 Early Childhood Education in France

Historical and political events may have shaped the French national outlook. It is from here that their educational goals have also evolved. The French believe that the society owes her young

ones education for its own sake (as a future French citizen), than for the advantages he will reap from that education. In this regard therefore, they see the school system as performing two major tasks, namely integration and making citizens for individual responsibility. Integration in this context is the maintenance of the moral and intellectual homogeneity of the whole nation.

It was not until towards the need of the 18th century that France paid particular attention to the care of its young. Before then, France had recorded so much infant mortality that it had been a source of concern to physicians, philosophers and educators. The concern was for the health and security of French children. By the late 19th century a remedy was sought in the employment of "nurses" for children. Such nurses were not medical nurses per se, but women who cared for children. The first seemingly signs of preschools in France were termed "knitting schools". This school was started by Jean-Frederic Oberlin in 1770. His aim was to "save" children from the poor social conditions that prevailed in France at that period. The overall goal of the knitting school was to care for, and educate children between age four to seven. The curriculum included training in spinning, knitting, shredding linen making, paper and picture cutting, alphabet reading, calligraphy, songs, recitation, mental counting, colour naming, natural history and bible study.

About 1862, and following the English model of monitored education, large day care centres were opened in cities in France. It was opened to children between age two to six, who were not quite ready for primary education, and needed custodial services. The idea of day care was quite welcomed, but the curriculum was rather advanced. There were subjects like religious instruction, reading, writing linear drawing, manual work, songs and Physical Education.

However with time, these monitorial day care centres were largely replaced with maternal school (ecole maternelle). This time, the goals were revised to focus on respect for the young child, as well as learning through play, and not rigorous exercises. Maternal schools also sought the need of professional teachers to manage the children. By 1940, teachers of maternal schools were required to possess a Bachelor's degree in early childhood Education. To further make popular maternal schools, a French initiative, World Organization for Preschool Education (L'organisation mondiale pour l'education preschoolaire) OMEP was put in place. One of the foremost goals of OMEP was to educate the world on the importance of Preschool in the education of young ones.

Do you remember the word crèches? We saw it at the beginning of this course in Module I. Crèche in France actually started since 1921. They were meant for children under age three. However since 1960, crèche in France has been redefined as specialized temporary child care centre. There are also family crèches and Parent – run crèches. All of these crèches in France, including the government run crèches are regulated and administered by the Caisses Nationales d'allocations familiales (CNAF) and the Ministry of Health in 1974, a decree was issued to regulate crèches in their roles in fostering children's cognitive and physical development. Till date, crèches have continued to exist in France. They are seen as maternal assistants to working mothers for children less than three years.

Generally, the French school system begins with maternal school to elementary, before the secondary and tertiary stages of learning. Altogether, compulsory schooling in France lasts until age 16. Lets us take our minds back to the term early childhood education. If you remember too,

we have child minding centres otherwise called the day care, and the nursery or kindergarten schools. The usage of terms we have also seen, vary with countries. In France, the preschool is called ecole maternelle or maternal school. It is open to children between age two to five. Unlike the primary or elementary stage of learning which deals primarily with the development of cognitive skills and intellectual performance, in preparation for secondary education; the maternal school covers a wider spectrum of activities. This is with an aim to achieving the following goals:

- to foster social and emotional behaviours;

- to develop intellectual learning;

- to develop the child's physical skills.

Activities in maternal school include,

- learning positive attitudes and behaviours e.g control of self-care, trying out new tasks, willingness to share, standing up to rights especially when unfairly challenged.

- developing motor abilities through functional physical exercises and other forms of socialisation and interactions in and outside class.

- Communication and written expression. This begins with reading and exploring written languages. Others include nursery rhymes, songs, stories, games and the use of picture books.

- Painting and Arts. This is aimed at developing creativity, control of gestures and motor activities, developing manual skills, coordination and balance. Also, helping young learners appreciate beauty.

- Science and Technical activities. This was introduced in France since January 30, 1986. It is aimed at leading children to explore, discover and build. It also encourages children to develop a critical mind in order to understand the world.

The teaching method employed in maternal school in child-centred. This gives the child opportunity to think logically, solve problems, make judgements and communicate effectively. All of these are achieved through playful activities. In terms of challenges in early childhood education, the French government has come to appreciate the need for a multicultural curricular. Such a curricular is aimed at making preschools more adaptive, and culturally, more open.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Is the organisation or pattern of the French maternal school (ecole maternelle) different from any other preschool pattern in Africa that we have studied?

3.2.2 Early Childhood Education in Italy

After the Industrial revolution, Italians began to appreciate the need for preschool facilities for Italian children of working class parents. Religious groups and institutions, and municipalities started this care and teaching of young children. About the end of the 19th century there was already in existence, 'asili' (asylums) of Ferrante Aporti and the maternal school (scuola maternal) of the Agazi Sisters. In 1906, Madame Maria Montessori founded the Casa dei Bambini (children's home) for children of preschool age from poor families.

Italians gave preschool education a serious thought in 1968. This came with the passage of a Bill. The legislation provided for government control and management of preschool settings. Specifically, the concern here was for the educational process and psychological development of

the child in a protective environment. The legislation also put enrolment age for preschool education at three years. It also prescribed standards for teachers' qualification. As at late 1960s there were many day care centres and preschools in Italy. While some were semi-private others run by local authorities and municipalities.

Just like the French crèches, Italians have Asilo-Nido or Infant day care centres. They also have maternal schools or Scuola Materna. While the day care was opened for children between six months to three years, the maternal school was for children of three to six years. Day care centres are managed and financially supported by municipalities and private and religious bodies. But these infant care centres must be licensed. Maternal schools are mostly controlled by the State through the Ministry of Public Instruction. However maternal schools can also come under private control but must follow government guidelines, as well as hire quality teachers.

Teacher education programme for maternal school teachers is a special diploma programme post secondary education. It is of a three-year duration. Infant caretakers and Assistant caretakers are to undergo a five year special diploma programme. Lately, specialised degree programmes in early childhood education have also been put in place.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

1. Compare the Italian maternal school (Scuola maternal) with the French ecole maternelle.

2. What is the French term of Italy's Asilo-Nido?

3.3 Case Studies from Asia and India

So far, we have examined early child care and educational patterns in Africa and Europe. We will now examine what obtains in India and the Asian world. Let's take the case of India and Yemen Republic.

3.3.1 Early Childhood Education in India

Issues pertaining to education generally in India cannot be fully examined outside matters like the economic and social life of the people. These tend to pose some challenges for education. India is quite a vast country in terms of size. It is as well highly populated. Also with regard to the population, a greater number are rural dwellers, and continue to remain deprived and fairly unorganised, while the urban areas record a lesser population and are quite organised with availability of facilities for health, education, communication etc.

It is also on record that India suffers general economic deprivation. The estimate as at 1988 puts one-third of India's population below poverty line. The resultant effect of this is an estimated 40 million child labourers in India in that period (UNICEF, 1988). This has serious implication for education as these child labourers cannot use the educational opportunities afforded them. Another of such issues that poses a challenge to education is gender disparity. In India the gender issue is characteristic of the society. There is a glaring disparity between males and female access to educational opportunity. Often times, the roles of women are recognised in the economic sector, not much can be said of her in terms of educational attainment or opportunity. Even with the equal facilities for education available to both boys and girls, school attendance by girls is yet lower than that of their male counterpart. Another crucial challenge to the

development of education in India is the expanding population, which actually started since the 1950s. The rapid expansion in population has created some problems in meeting the educational needs of the people.

Now let us look at the specific issue of preschool education. India was not quite involved with preschool education until the end of the 19th century. Like what we saw in most case studies, the first thought and idea of establishing preschool education was by the European missionaries. If you remember, we saw this in most of the African nations examined. Notably, in the 1920s in India, an organisation known as Nutal Bal Shikshan Sangh was set up in Maharashtra to work for the cause of children's education. A further boost in the zeal for early childhood education came with the visit of Madame Maria Montessori to India in the 1930s. Significantly, her visit saw the establishment of preschools in various parts of India. Following this trend of development in early childcare and Education, Mahatma, Ghandi's philosophy for basic education, which also extended to preschool years (pre-basic education) made some remarkable contributions. Her ideals resulted in the establishment of rural early education centres known as "balwadis". Women were also trained to work in such centres.

In 1945, Tarabia Modak was inspired by Montessori's philosophy for childhood education. She began with a preschool teacher training Institute, after which she went into creating early childhood centres which she termed 'anganwadi' or courtyard centres. The aim of such centres was to take pre-schooling education to rural areas of different Indian ethnic groups and tribes. Today, anganwadi is an acceptable term, used describe the early childhood centres operated by

the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). This is one of the largest government sponsored early child care and educational programmes in India.

Significantly, since India's Independence in 1947, there has been a growing awareness in the crucial place of early childhood education. Following this appreciation, in the 1950s a central Social Welfare Board was set up to formally initiate preschool programmes namely;

- The Board-sponsored programme, and

- The grants-in-aid scheme for voluntary organisations.

This saw the expansion of early childhood education programmes.

In 1959, the child Welfare arm of the board came up with an integrated approach to preschool education. This bothered on preventive health, nutrition, recreation and developmental needs of children below age 6. To further achieve this objective, a child welfare worker's (Balsevika) training programme was also initiated. Following this trend, and in pursuance of early child care and education, the National Policy for Children (1974) made quite some remarkable concerns for children. It noted that children are valuable human resources that call for government careful nurture. It this wise, in 1986, India's National Policy on Education reviewed the concept of preschool education. This time, it was seen to encompass early child care and education. Significantly too, the policy emphasized the following:

- The urgent need to invest in the development of the young child using an integrated programme aimed at achieving the whole child.

- Emphasis on play in early child care and education, as against learning the three Rs – Reading, Writing and arithmetic.

- The crucial importance of early child care and education as feeder services to elementary or primary education.

- The need for day care centres. This will allow young girls attend schools instead of baby-sitting their younger siblings.

Generally, preschool education in India is not compulsory but encouraged. However, early child care and education yet remains a concern rather than a total responsibility of the Indian government. It is also in this context that most preschools and child care centres and institutions are privately sponsored.

Specifically, there are two major early childhood education programmes in India. They are crèche and preschool for children from birth to age six. These programmes are further categorised into four groups. They are;

- Integrated Children development services.

- Early childhood centres, balwadis and day care centres. These are mostly run by voluntary agencies, but with government assistance.

- Preschools run by the State government municipal corporations and other government agencies.

- Commercial fee-charging preschools run by private agencies.

Generally preschool education in India is quite child-centred, also employing the playway method of learning. The following are the objectives of preschool education, as prescribed by the National Council of Education, Research and Training (NCERT, 1989).

- to develop in the child a good physique, adequate muscular coordination, and basic motor skills;

- to develop in the child good health habits and basic skills necessary for personal adjustment.

- to develop desirable social attitudes and manners, to encourage healthy group participation and to make the child sensitive to the rights and privileges of others;

- to develop emotional maturity by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control his feelings and emotions;

- to encourage aesthetic appreciation;

- to stimulate intellectual curiosity and help him understand the world around him, and encourage new interests by providing opportunities to explore, investigate and experiment;

- to encourage Independence and creativity and

- to develop the child's ability to express thoughts and feelings in fluent, current and clear speech.

In the same vein, the integrated child development services aim as follows:

- to improve the nutrition and health status of children;

- lay foundation for proper physical and social development;

- reduce the incidences of mortality and malnutrition;

- achieve effective coordination of policy and implementation among various departments to promote child development;

- enhance the capability of mothers to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through health and nutrition education.

Generally, India is fast advancing in her ideals and practice of early childhood education. This has been further boosted with efforts from major organisations as follows:

- National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT). This organisation with financial assistance from UNICEF launched the children's Media Laboratory Programme (CML) in many states in India.

- The National Institute of Public cooperation and Child development (NIPCCD) plans and develops curriculum for early child care and education. They also train personnel for child development.

- Home Science Colleges are involved in the quality of early childhood education programmes thorough personnel training.

- The Indian Association for Preschool Education (IAPE) is a professional body of early childhood education workers. This body organizes regular in-service training and workshops for the improvement of quality early childhood education.

Indians, like we have seen in most nations care about who teaches their young ones. Teacher training programmes for early childhood education of various types as seen below:

- Anganwadi Workers training programme has duration of three months.

- Nursery teachers' training is for one year.

- There is the integrated two-year course in preschool teacher-education programme.

- Two-year Nursery teachers' training programme.

- Eleven months Balsevika training of Indian Council for children's welfare.

- Special one-year Montessori training in Preschool education.

- Postgraduate diploma in early childhood education, with a duration of one-year.

- On-the-Job apprentice training for a minimum of two years, in integrated day care, at mobile crèches. Even with all the above in place, India still faces some challenges in her early childhood education programmes. In this regard therefore, she strives towards

changes and innovations. For instance, under the early childhood Education/children's Media laboratory programme, sponsored by UNICEF in collaboration with NCERT, is working on the following projects.

- Home based programme, which involves training of mothers to function better as educators of their children while at home.

- Child-to-child programme which teaches older siblings basic skills as to assist their younger ones. Such skills include health habits, hygiene, nutrition and other forms of stimulations through songs, games and other playful activities.

- School readiness programme. This is done in areas without preschool. It actually prepares children for the primary stage of learning. So, even without regular preschools, the children are prepared informally for primary school.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7

1. Highlight the aims of preschool education in India.
2. Enumerate the Teacher-education programmes for early child care and education n India.

3.3.2 Early Childhood Education in the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR)

The Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) replaced the monarchical system of government in 1962. Since then, it has gone through government and political changes. In this vein too, the people have come to appreciate the importance of education in the development of a nation. In the UNFPA Report of 1988, the population census estimate has it that 75.8% males of the total population were illiterates and 98% of the female population illiterates. Also, the Yemen Ministry of Education notes that between 1975 to 1986, the average family size increased from

5.19% to 5.7%. Notably in that same period for educational planning, 20% of the total population are under age five, with nearly 50% under age fourteen. The implication being that a good percentage of children and youths in Yemen are yet in dire need of educational services.

Another serious implication for educational planning is the geographical topography of Yemen Arab Republic. It is characterised by rugged landscape, valleys, mountains, semi-deserts etc. All of these tend to pose inaccessibility in terms of transportation and communication. This oftentimes results in unwilling disposition of parents to send their children to schools. Also in terms of administrative distribution, Yemen has more rural settlements than urban. However, the growth in school enrolment has recorded quite some improvement, especially beginning form 1987 to 1988. Significantly, preparatory schools have recorded 174,000 and over one million in primary schools. (Education Statistics 1987/88, Ministry of Education, Yemen Arab Republic).

In more recent times, the Arab world as a whole have come to recognise the importance of preschool education, as a crucial aspect of basic education for children. It is in this context that (Al-Ebrahin, 1987) has argued that children's programme in the Arab world are in accordance with the International Declaration of Child Rights issued by the United Nations in 1959. This he said ensures a well-developed child. This is significant of a good society with positive gaols. It is also in this regard that efforts have also been made in Yemen to place the education of children within national development plan. In 1987, the Arab committee for childhood education and Development, a non-governmental organisation was established. The main goal was to support Arab children's development, through the provision of knowledge and services. It is also in line with this that the Yemen Arab Republic gave preschool education a new focus. The government also came up with the following goals for early childhood education:

- Provision of necessary services. For example health care for early childhood education;

- To impart social and cultural values;

- To impart valuable knowledge;

- Provision of custodial roles for working mothers.

Basically, in Yemen early childhood education termed Preschool provides care for all Yemen children from birth until age six. Preschools are of two main types namely.

- Nursery day care – provides care for children from birth to three years.

- Kindergarten schools – educational programme for children from age three to six. This programme also focus on activities that lead to health and all-rounded development. Specific goals of kindergarten education as prescribed by the Ministry of Education Curriculum Department (1990) include

- to enable the child to acquire morals and values, including those of Islam;

- to help the child to be responsible and independent;

- to help the child achieve a well developed personality socially, ethnically, mentally, hygienically and emotionally.

- to develop in the child basic skills;

- to provide the child with time for play activities to encourage using his or her abilities and expanding his or her interests; and

- to help the child to adjust to a school environment and to prepare him or her for primary school.

In accordance with Yemen Private Education Decree of 1981, there are three types of kindergarten. These are,

- Government kindergarten established by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Education.

- Private kindergarten established by individuals in a community, non-governmental organisations and voluntary organisations.

- Private kindergarten for foreign children usually established by some foreign embassies or committees.

As at mid 1990s there were twenty-seven kindergartens, both private and public in the Yemen Arab Republic.

Preschools in Yemen are not free. However fees paid differ from one kindergarten to another, in accordance to the sponsors. For instance, tuition paid in government sponsored schools is relatively cheaper than that paid in private kindergarten. Specifically, government kindergarten depends on registration fee, tuition fee and grants from the government and International organisations to cover cost.

Curriculum in Yemen kindergarten is both formal and informal. Children are exposed to text books as well as outside classroom experiences. Activities include alphabet learning, letter and number naming, writing and drawing. Others include language, religion, science and ethics. The children are also engaged in extra-curricular activities like plays, music, songs, fieldtrips, parties and all other forms of social interactions. The teaching method employed is often a blend of Teacher-directed, as well as Child-Centred. The teacher directs the children through rote work, as well as play, guided discovery and so on.

From the report on the evaluation of private and public kindergarten in the Yemen Arab Republic, (1989) it was quite obvious that teacher-education programmes for preschool education suffer some lack. It was specified in that report that even though all kindergartens are

established according to the Ministry of Education legislation, there was actually no reference made to the qualification required for teaching in kindergarten schools. What was specified by the legislation is that the teaching and administration of kindergarten should be assigned to persons who meet the "education conditions". It does not specify precisely, the said conditions. However, in that same report, by way of reforms, the report states that, there is an urgent need for training courses for kindergarten schools. The report also recommended that the objectivs of kindergarten schools can only be fully achieved if training courses are provided for teachers in both private and public kindergartens. In this regard therefore it can be said that there are on-going proposals on the need for training programmes for kindergarten teachers.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

Compare the early child care and educational patterns in India and the Yemen Arab republic. Highlight the similarities and differences.

3.4 The Case of Early Childhood Education in the United States of America.

Finally let us examine the case of United States. The emphasis on early childhood education in the United States actually came to focus in the late 19th century. Before then, the actual purpose of early childhood education was to prepare young children for religious teachings. The curriculum at this period was based on the bible and the catechetical ideals of the Calvinists. Their ideals had no place for play or play objects. Such activities were seen as disruptions to acquiring religious knowledge.

The 1830s saw the establishment of an Infant school movement patterned along the English model. The Infant School idea was based on the teachings of James Buchannan and Samuel Widerspine. The method of learning here was basically rote. The Infant school took the stage until U.S embraced the kindergarten ideal of Froebel. By 1855, the first kindergarten in the U.S was established. Between 1870 to 1900, the kindergarten movement spread rapidly in the Unites States. Notably however, between the 1870s to 1880s, the educational concern for American children (especially those from poor homes) witnessed the entry of a new Movement. The Charity kindergarten Movement came with an aim to providing the Frobelian kindergarten education, as well as other social needs like food, clothing and shelter. Generally, the 1990s saw the Institution of the kindergarten gaining grounds in the U.S. The emphasis in such kindergartens as an Institution is centred on learning as joyous activity.

Essentially, in growth and historical development of early childhood education in the U.S; along the line, Nursery school movement also came to being. By this time kindergartens were already fully embraced and attached to school. Kindergarten had also assumed an educational status, while maintaining the playway method. The Nursery school movement focussed on programmes in health, nutrition and parental education. In 1925, a Committee on Nursery education was put in place. This association has in more recent times grown into the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It is today the largest and most important early childhood association in the U.S. Importantly, the U.S Nursery Movement worked in line with the philosophical ideals of Dewey, Freud and Montessori. Specifically, the goals of the U.S nursery movement, is to produce the whole child. (Biber, 1977:47) has summarised their curriculum principles thus:

- Play as basic mode for thinking in early childhood;

- Noted that an important aspect of the teacher's role is to exploit the ongoing daily encounters, physical and social, as material for stimulating thinking processes;

- The cognitive search for relationships should be stimulated through provision of varied multiple opportunities for the children's direct, active contact with the people and the processes of their environment.

It is also important to note that by the 1990s, the government of the United States recognised that child care and early childhood education should be looked at jointly, as one that renders services to young children as well as develop them academically.

Still on the issue of child development and education, by 1964, the U.S witnessed the development of another child education project. The HeadStart programme has since then remained one of the most remarkable early childhood education programmes, since the Froebelian input. The Headstart programme was founded as a community action programme under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The major aims were as follows:

- to improve children's physical health and physical skills;

- enhance their emotional and social development;

- improve their cognitive skills, especially the use of language and concept;

- establish attitudes an d expectations that would lead to success in future learning.

- help children relate more positively to their families and vice versa;

- help children and their families, develop responsible attitudes toward society and also encourage society to help its poor; and

- enhance the self-respect and sense of dignity of the child and family (White and Burka, 1987).

In 1991, the U.S Congress passed a bill to expand funding of the Headstart, so as to promote the programme and services it renders. Generally, the headstart programme has made its mark in early childhood education in the following areas:

- it has made Early childhood education the focus of a national concern;

- has taken time to increase research on child development and early education;

- has gone far in building a consensus that early education is beneficial for all children, and crucial for those from impoverished families; and

- it effectively uses a comprehensive, family – centred approach, which has greatly influenced early childhood education generally, and further involved parents in early education.

In terms of the curriculum for early childhood education, there have been suggested curriculum models in the U.S overtime. Oftentimes most of these curricular have been faulted as not being developmentally appropriate to early childhood education needs. However, in recent times, the National Association for the Education of the Young Children (NAEYC) has come out with broad guidelines on what it perceives as "developmentally appropriate" practice for early childhood education. These include,

- age appropriateness, which is defined as universal, and predictable sequences of growth, and changes that occur in the first 9 years of the child's life;

- individual appropriateness. That is when teachers respond sensitively to the uniqueness of each child;

- recommends play as the primary vehicle for child development;

- an integrated curriculum, rather than a focused curriculum on narrow goals;

- a curriculum with opportunities for active exploration on the part of the child; and

- a curriculum that considers not only individual differences, but one sensitive to child's family and his cultural background.

Generally, by way of innovation, the U.S government has come to appreciate the place of developmentally appropriate practice in early child care and education. In this vein therefore, the government is presently funding all ongoing developmental researches.

All states in the U.S may not be operating same teacher training programmes for early childhood education. Each state sets its own standards for pre-service training, training and other certification programmes. But what is important is that the US recognises the importance of trained teachers for this foremost stage of learning. Most states in the U.S emphasize specific early childhood education certification for teachers of young children. Significantly though, the Child Development Association (CDA) programme is an important avenue in the U.S for the training of preschool teachers. It was established in the early 1970s. Before the early 1990s, it was formally associated with the NAEYC. But today, it is now operated by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition (Phillips, 1970). The programme trains teachers to appreciate the "whole child". Essentially, in the course of training, the teachers-in-training are afforded opportunity to demonstrate skills acquired with children. This prepares them for an effective world of work.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 9

Are there areas in early childhood education in the U.S you wish the Nigerian system should adopt? Which area(s) and why?

4.0 CONCLUSION

No doubt this unit has been a long journey through the continents. We have come to appreciate the fact that, over the years, and through nations, there has been great concern on the need to care for young children, as well as prepare them academically for the primary stage of learning. Case studies are inexhaustible. In other words, we can always draw cases of childcare and education patterns across the globe. I expect you will draw more cases form the continents. A good exercise would be taking time to compare your cited cases with others. More importantly, you can compare with your own country. When we make all such comparisons, we are able to highlight the differences and similarities, and articulate lessons a country can learn. Is that not the essence of a comparative study? I hope you still remember that. You want to refresh your memory? Then go back to Unit 1 of Module 2.

5.0 SUMMARY

So far you have learnt about what obtains as early childcare and education in other continents. Even in Africa, and specifically, sub-Saharan Africa where Nigeria is also located, you have seen other early childhood education patterns. The essence of examinations of this study as you have learnt now is to compare systems, while highlighting the similarities and differences. Can you build case studies for yourself? Try a named country from any continent? Why not make an attempt?

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Highlight the aims of early childhood in one named European country or an Asian country studied.

2. What is unique about the U.S developmentally appropriate curriculum?

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UNIT 3 REFORMS IN EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION.

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2.0   Objectives
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Let us begin discussion in this unit with the wise adage which says, "nothing endures but change". Does this mean anything to you and your (teaching) profession? Maybe when we examine this adage within the context of this unit, reforms in early childhood education it will elicit more meaning. Take your minds back to the nursery and primary schools you attended even the secondary schools, are you sure nothing has changed since you left or graduated from these schools? Obviously, there may have been changes no matter how insignificant or small. Changes are also characteristic of the teaching profession. To be a successful teacher you should be ready to adapt to changes, challenges and innovations in education. Generally, in education, and specifically here in early childhood education, there is no doubt that it is oftentimes difficult to forecast the precise nature of future change, but it is quite helpful to begin thinking about them. Essentially, reforms in early childhood education have their impact on education

innovation. From here, a teacher can gain insights into the changes he will face in the years ahead.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify cause for and the effects of reforms in early childhood education;

- describe some innovations, changes and challenges (e.g curricular, methods of teaching, patterns of early childcare and education, etc) in early childhood education;

- analyze the significance of global reforms in early childcare and education;

- reflect on what your life as a teacher of young children (learners) may be like in the future.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Why Reforms in early childcare and education?

Generally, when we talk about reforms the aim is to make or make better by removing or putting right what is bad or wrong. Also characteristic of reforms are challenges and changes made in order to remove imperfections. In this same vein, reforms in early childhood education are aimed at changes and innovations in child care and education. If we go back into history, what we have today as child care and education actually originated in Europe between the 16th and 19th centuries. But overtime even the first innovation of an institutional form of early childhood education first circulated in the 16th and 19th centuries have been modified by various social reformers. Why? So that at every turn in life and times, especially in an ever changing world, things, events and people ought to change alongside. Importantly, the introduction of new ideas

into various societies resulted in different local histories of early childhood education and varied contemporary practices, a reflection of local modifications of the original models.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Why do we need reforms in early childcare and education?

3.2 A brief on early childhood education reforms

When we examined case studies in the previous unit you may have noticed some legislations, Acts, decrees, policies etc. Let us remind ourselves of a few of such. In the case of Nigeria, we talked about the National Policy on Education, where section two of that policy focused on the goals of early childhood education in Nigeria, as well as Government role and participation. In the Yemen Arab Republic, we came across Decree No. 37 concerning the organisation of Private Education in that country. Finally in the US we saw that the HeadStart was initiated as a community action program under the Economic Opportunity Act. All of the above are basically reform legislations in early childhood education. These are also quite important to you because they actually help to shape the world where you will teach. There is no doubt that the teacher – education programme you are presently undergoing will ultimately enhance your status as a teacher. But more importantly the educational reforms and challenges that educators grapple with make a better future for your profession as a teacher, and a better world for your young learners.

Essentially reforms in early childhood education are trends from the past, shaping tomorrow's childcare and educational patterns. Reforms in this context take a global history of the evolution

of universal and diverse views of early childhood education with a goal towards innovations. While some teachers may favour the more traditional theories and practice of the past, futurist as teachers predict increasing globalisation in early childhood education in the decades to come. Thus, taking a global view of early child care and education is actually responding to the need to educate children for the world they are entering, rather than the world they are leaving behind. Although we often make mistakes in forecasting the future, most societies are becoming more involved in thinking about and planning for tomorrow's early child care and education. More than ever, teachers will always have the opportunity to clarify their visions and exercise their influence, by accepting challenges and innovations. Do you not think with this that you should count yourself lucky being a future teacher of young learners? You may ask why. I tell you, changes, challenges reforms and innovations promise a different tomorrow for children. As a teacher, it behoves on you to guide your young learners, as they explore a new curriculum, and help them to create a society beyond our imagination.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCIES 2

Precisely what are reforms in early childhood education set out to achieve?

3.3 Global trends and Innovations in early child care and education

In our case studies, we discovered that most African nations did not embrace early childhood education especially as an Institution, until about the late 20th century. Taking the case of Ghana, then Gold Coast, even though the missionaries introduced preschool education as far back as 1943, the government participation only came in 1951. In the case of Uganda, when the missionaries came with the idea of preschools, only children in the urban areas seemed to have

benefited from it. Children in rural areas hardly had access to such opportunity, so had to wait for primary education. It is only recently in 2005, that the Ugandan government came out with a draft proposal for creating public awareness in early childhood education as well as strengthening the demand for it.

In the 1950s when Nigeria became more politically active, in preparation for her Independence, the zeal for educational advancement was also in top gear. It was also in this regard that the establishment of formal and organised preschools and childcare centres came to being. But it was not until after the 1969 Curriculum Conference that the need for government involvement and participation was suggested. In 1981, by way of response to the call, the Federal government, in her National Policy on Education defined preschool education, as well as made policies pertaining to it.

Finally, let us take our minds back to early childcare and education in Yemen Arab Republic. We saw that the establishment of kindergartens started in that country in 1972. It was only in 1981 that the government came up with legislation to identify the goals and philosophy for kindergarten education. What we are saying here is that we must appreciate that our environments and horizons are not static. Indeed, they change dramatically with every passing day. Little wonder that our world is today being addressed as a "global village". Importantly, the zeal for man to change, accommodate challenges, and strive towards reforms and innovations is being embraced by all.

It is also in tune with the zeal for reforms that early childhood educators attempt to construct more contemporary teaching methods. There is a gradual drift from the traditional teacher-centred education to a more child-entered and teacher directed approach. Across nations, we see the emphasis on play as the appreciated method in child learning. If we go back to our Units on the history and philosophy of early childhood education we will discover that this emphasis on the playway method actually dates back to Plato and his philosophy of Idealism. Overtime, in the history of early childcare and education, most educators in that field have repeatedly favoured play, and child-centred education. Froebel, who actually coined the word 'kindergarten' or the 'child's garden' recommended that play should not be seen as mere distraction. He based his argument on the fact that by virtue of the preschooler's age, he is most times obsessed with play. This being the case learning will be best attained through play. It is in the same vein Madame Maria Montessori also suggested imaginative plays and stories as one sure avenue of achieving learning.

Furthermore, today's young children tend to have new and broader horizons to acquire knowledge from. In other words, most contemporary curricular for early childhood learning affords the young learner wider opportunities. In the U.S there are known varied curriculum models. There is the High/Scope Cognitive Oriented Curriculum. It was developed from Perry preschool project of Ypsilanti, Michigan in 1962. This curriculum model was actually developed to help poor African-American children become successful in public schools. The curriculum recognises children as active initiators of their own learning experience.

Also in the U.S, there is the Bank Street Model. This is quite integrative, and aimed at educating the "whole child". Like the High/Scope model, this curriculum model also recognises children as active initiators who learn best through their own playful exploration of the world. Till date there are yet emerging curricular in early childhood education. One significant thing in the whole of these curricular is the emphasis on play as the known vehicle for child development. Generally in terms of all that pertains to early child care and education, changes and reforms are inexhaustible. As previously emphasised with growing awareness on the need to change, with challenges that would make one a part of the global world come innovations in early child care and education.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Examine some named changes and challenges in early childhood education that have brought about significant innovations.

4.0 CONCLUSION

From our discussions in this unit, we have come to appreciate the need for reforms in early childhood education. We have also seen that if we must work with time and be part of the global world, then our children must be educated to adjust to any situation or society that they find themself. Indeed, a teacher who is opened to changes, challenges and innovations in early childhood education is making his contribution not only to the growth and development of early child care and education, but more importantly educating children for the world they are entering rather than the one they are leaving behind.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit exposed you to reforms in education. You have learnt that there is always need for changes and innovations in education. In our specific case, early childhood education, from what seemed like a global history, you learnt that what we had as the early beginnings of childcare and education about the 16th century in Europe has overtime gone through a lot of transformation. It is this transformation we call reforms. Significantly, for one who is making a comparative study, you must always seek for reforms. This is one way of saying, overtime, the nation under study has embraced changes and challenges and aiming at globalization in early childcare and education.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Cite examples of reforms in the early childhood education programme of a named African Country.

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UNIT 4   TEACHING YOUNG LEARNERS IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODCUTION

I hope we still remember that our focus in this course is the young learner. Most educators describe them as preschool learners. That is children who learn through play. Play in this context is serious business as it prepares the child for transition to primary school. We had also in previous modules and units talked about the preschool learner as very active and willing to explore. This makes early childhood a period of significant discovery and development. Significantly as children explore that environment, they also develop their senses. It is also important to note that the design of an environment could have its impact on the development of the child. For instance, an equipped and stimulating environment could make learning more interesting and successful.

We often hear this present age described as computer age, an age of technological advancement and innovation. We also find that some of the learning objects and toys used by young learners have also been technologically modelled. Television which used to be a regular instructional

classroom feature is being used alongside computers and other electronic innovations. What seem more prevalent now is a situation where educators are making increased use of technology to support instruction at all stages of learning. It is also in this changing world of innovations that computers and other technological innovations found their way to the early childhood education curriculum and the learners' classroom.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Point out some key differences between earlier innovations for teaching young learners, and the electronic innovation.

- identify some effect of today's technological instructional innovations in teaching young learners;

- tell some implications for educators of the present emphasis on the effective utilisation of the new technology in early childhood learning;

- analyze the impact of computers and other technologies on the future of early childhood education.

- cite examples and cases (countries) where technology is already being integrated in early childhood education classrooms.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Integrating Computers and technological innovations in early childhood classroom

Following the trend in technological advancement one finds that global education also offers new curriculum possibilities. In other words new frontiers are brought to teaching and learning at

all levels of learning. Notably, with the advent of computer technology, revolutionary changes are recorded in education. Before now, children learnt, using instructional media like the television. However, in this contemporary age of computers, there are innovations in schools curriculum, teaching materials etc while not making the role of the teacher obsolete.

The development of computer technology has also found its way into early childhood education as well child care services. The trend in technology is actually centred on "catching them young". Thus the earlier these young ones are introduced to the use of computers, the better exposed they are. This prepares them to cope with the demands of a large society, and a growing technological awareness. Do you know that in this rapidly changing zeal for technology, most workplaces demand skills in computers as crucial? If we can therefore help our young learners to captivate interest in computers in their early years, later in life, they may have little problems with using the facility. Significantly, children should be prepared for access to technology and gain skills for life.

Generally, while some researchers have argued that computers and computer games may not effectively match young children's learning style. This is in the sense that these active learners learn through their bodies; that is, their eyes, ears, mouth, hands and legs. But in the argument of Haughland, (1999), there may be some truth in the above argument, but it is also important to note that using computers with young children is in itself a process of exploration and discovery. In other words, computers should not be relied upon as the sole means of learning for children since they are not actually meant to replace experiential and hands – on learning. In an earlier study carried out by Haughland in 1992, he came out with findings that three and four – year –

old children who use computers with supporting activities tend to display greater developmental gains when compared to children without computer experiences. In the former situation, the children tend to display some gains in academics like in non-verbal skills, structural knowledge, long term memory, manual dexterity, verbal skills, problem solving, abstractions and conceptual skills (Haughland, 1997). His argument therefore is that most early childhood educators should recognise that children between three and four years of age are developmentally ready to explore computers. Educators should see the computer centre in any school setting as a valuable activity centre for learning.

Significantly too, when children are engaged in computers, they are actively engaged in fun and meaningful activities. this itself is meaningful play which occupies a central role in early learning. As opined by Long-Breipoh (2004), learning through computer is creative play that supports the foundation of later lateral thinking and a creative approach to scientific and cultural concepts. While noting the importance of integrating computers in early learners, Papert (1999) warns that it is not easy to implement a totally new tool for learning. Thus, if computers must be used successfully, teachers must be open to learning too. How? Teachers are expected to reinforce the constructive use of computers and computer games in the early childhood classrooms. Generally, on the part of educators, the appropriate model for instruction on the use of computers to monitor a child's progress should be well spelt out. Specifically, computer games should not be used as substitute to the child's ability to think critically. In other words, teachers should lead learners to employ critical thinking skills, and use the computer as a tool. What do you think? Is the computer not essentially a tool? Can it rally take the place of critical thinking? There is no gain saying that the computer is a valuable learning tool. But it is not all to

learning, the young learner should also be given the opportunity to express his thinking abilities. It is in this context that Davis and Shade (1994) have said that it is only when computers are integrated into the curriculum as a vital element for instruction and are applied to real problems for a real purpose, will children gain the most valuable computer skill – the ability to use computers as natural tools for learning.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Computers should not be relied upon as the sole means of learning for children. Why?

3.2 Towards Young active learners in a technological age

So far, we have examined the need to integrate computers in young learners' classroom. We have also noted that one must not rely solely on computers because it is like any other teaching or learning tool. Thus, if the young learner must be a future active individual in a technological age, he must be able to use his critical thinking skills. However one thing remains clear, knowledge of computers prepares the young learners for a contemporary age, which is fast growing in technological awareness.

There is no doubt that technology plays a significant role in all endeavours of our lives today, and this will definitely increase in the future. It is against this background that educators want to tap early enough the potential gains it holds for young learners. It is also in this regard that the NAEYC, (you remember this association?) has recommended that the use of technology gains ground, there should be more early childhood software that could make technology easier for children. In this vein too early childhood educators have a responsibility to critically examine the

impact of technology to the benefits of the children. While not underestimating the importance of technology to young learners, Shade and Watson (1990) are quick to warn that it is only when technology and computers are used in developmentally appropriate ways that they can be beneficial to the young learners. This is borne out of the recognition that computers just like any other tool can be misused.

NAEYC's (1996) position on the above issue is that every developmentally appropriate software should offer opportunities for collaborative play, learning and creation. Significantly too, appropriate use of computer software and the cost – benefits of the learning materials should be such that, the child's cognitive abilities are enhanced. NAEYC is also of the opinion that beyond classroom usage of computers, if well grounded in the skills, the child can become an active participant in a technological world. The teachers on their part must be computer – literate to teach the children as well as be part of the growing technological age. This prepares both teachers and their learners to make decisions on technology, and support its effective use in learning environments, communication and in all other social endeavours.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Briefly, what is NAEYC's position on developmentally appropriate computer software?

4.0 CONCLUSION

As societies are getting more technologically aware, children cannot be left behind. Like it is often said, one should "catch the young". If computer technology is integrated into early

childhood education curriculum and their classrooms, we will no doubt be preparing active learners in a technological age.

5.0 SUMMARY

In summary, do you know that with computer technology education is being transformed? As Heppel (2006) puts it, computers have revolutionised the way that adults and children learn. In essence, "education and games are literally starting to speak the same language". There is no gainsaying that computers have made their way into early childhood classrooms. However, care should be taken to include developmentally appropriate computer software to support and enhance the child's regular development. On the whole, in preparing children as active participants in a technological age, teachers and educators must help them think critically, interact socially and experience technology by providing opportunities for hands-on-training and creativity.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Describe a scenario typical of early childhood education classroom in a technological age. Describe the classroom technologies and the role of the teacher in employing them as to cause the young learners to learn and be computer literate and technologically active.

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UNIT 5   COPING WITH TODAY'S DIVERSE LEARNERS.

1.0   INTRODCUTION

In this unit our focus is on the diverse nature of learners, especially in this contemporary age. Across cultures, race and societies, children are not same. Specifically among today's young learners there are same characteristic that have their peculiarities. In this unit, we will be examining such peculiarities as the homes and families of the learners, care and education of young learners with disabilities. We are also particular about the rampart problem of abused and neglected young learners that is gradually finding its way into the society's fabrics. That is unlike in traditional times where family hood is well respected, and the child, highly cherished, today, it is common place to hear of the abused and neglected child. All of the above will form the central themes in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- highlight the diversity in family patterns;

- identify the categories of learners in preschool;

- describe some implications for our practice as teachers that result from our having a wide variety of young learners in our classrooms;

- recognise signs that a member of the preschool classroom has been abused or neglected;

- point out the variations in early childhood education classrooms.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1.1 Some Characteristics of today's Learners

We always want to make generalisations, that all children are the same all over the world. But is it actually so? No, not quite. Nursery school children may be in the same age range and they may be either male or female children. In a particular culture, the nursery school children may tend to have same features peculiar their people, but as we go across cultures features may change. There are yet some characteristics of these young learners that may be peculiar to individual children.

In comparing early childhood education systems, cognisance needs to be taken of the diverse characteristics of these young learners. These characteristics include the home or family of the learner, learners with disabilities and the abused or neglected child. In today's growing awareness, most educators are faced with challenges on the need to recognise and respond to these peculiar characteristics of young children.

3.1.1   Families of Learners

Generally, family patterns vary. However, the expected or the idea is the two-parent family system. In this type, parents live together to see to the welfare of their children. The usual pattern was one where the father worked while the mother cared for the children at home. This may not fully represent today's norms. With growing urbanisation and pressing economic needs, we often find situations where young learners come from homes with two parents, but both work to meet the basic needs of their children. It is also not uncommon to find children with single parenthood, and of the working class status. There are yet children who come from divorce or separated families, and find themselves torn-apart in between two worlds. Also typical of African homes is the polygamous family system.

Importantly, what seems crucial in this changing demographics of family patterns is the increasing need for parents to pay more attention and care to the education and welfare of their young learners. This has also propelled the need for more children admitted into early childcare and education programmes. There is no doubt that as the education programmes continue to grow, so also the needs of the children they serve, as well as the roles of the teachers become increased. It becomes imperative for childhood educators to take cognisance of the following:

- if parents must struggle to meet the economic and basic needs of the home, parental time for their young ones may be reduced;
- the increasing employment among mothers, as well as the increase in one-parent families has also brought about a decline in parental availability to care and attention for children at home;

- in polygamous families, children may also suffer parental care and attention;

- divorce no doubt has its negative effect especially in terms of love and affection from both parents.

From the foregoing, it may be out of place to argue that children in regular family arrangements tend to have an edge over others. In terms of nutrition, love, health, parental attention and educational needs, children in regular family patterns may not lack. All of such cares ultimately have their effects on the child's academic achievement and social relationships. In other words, where families with good income can afford resources and education experiences outside the regular schooling for their young ones, children from poor homes may just depend solely on the experiences they get from the early childhood education programmes. There is no gainsaying that children from the latter family type may develop faster.

It is in recognition of the above that the American Headstart program has also added to its preschool education activities, a more comprehensive package. In this program the children are offered nutritional health and social services. This gave children from disadvantaged homes the opportunities they may have lost out. Also, by way of reforms, the welfare system in the American early childhood education programs came up with reviewed child came policies designed to respond to the differing needs of children, taking into consideration, the diverse nature of homes. Furthermore, through regular researches and other forms of policies the U.S government is beginning to address the value of childcare and education to families and the society at large. The government is

also emphasising her role in fostering and the funding of quality childcare and Education for the youngest members of the American Society.

In the early 1960s all through to the 1970s the movement of Argentinean women had increased rapidly the entry of women into the labour force. This in return saw a decline of mothers at home rendering care and supervision of their younger ones. However, the government of Argentina may have sort rescue to this with the establishment of more early child care and education centres. Even at this children from poor homes could hardly afford access to educational. Against this background, and beginning from the 1980s, the Argentinean government revisited policies on family and social welfare. Strategies were then created to provide access to education and welfare to all Argentinean children, irrespective of parental social economic status.

In more recent times in Africa, greater economic demands and urbanisation has brought a change in life style and family patterns. The nuclear family system may not be quite prevalent. There are more cases of single parents, young parents, separated families and polygamous families. So also we find commonplace homes where both parents work, and in single parenthood, the individual is working to sustain the children and strive to bring them up well. Most of these kids are often malnourished, and at times end up as victims of abuse, neglect and other environmental hazards. In Kenya, as at the 1980s, the government recognised that need to pay more attention to child welfare and maternal and infant care. In this regard, mother employed in the government sector were granted maternity leave with pay. More women were also employed in government. The idea was to help them be part of the sustenance of their homes. In the case of single parenthood, such workers are able to meet the nutritional and educational needs of their young ones.

Generally, the role of the family, and the home from which the young learners comes from has its effect on the child's general welfare, and educational attention.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

A comparative study on early childhood education should also take cognisance of learners with disabilities. It is important to note that not all children are able. There are some disabled young learners who must not be denied access to early childhood education. Who are these disabled children we may want to ask? The disabled or handicapped child is one who has learning disability, behavioural or emotional problems that makes normal classroom instruction not quite effective for him. In this regard, he may need special classes, teachers, and other techniques that will be used to supplement or substitute teaching.

Generally, these children may appropriately be seen as challenged in the area in which they are otherwise disabled. Such children include blind children, deafmutes, mentally and physically challenged. The expectation among educators is that societies and Nations should put in place special programmes to help these young ones express themselves in their own ways. In the past, learners with disabilities were often kept away from other children in school. Then, it was justified by the claim that such children could not be in regular classrooms as they needed special teaching. But in today's early childhood education programme all of these may have changed in the U.S. as far back as 1975, there an Education for Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94 – 142) was enacted. This Law remained in existence until 1990, when it was reviewed. This time, the Act required Schools to take in learners with disabilities in the traditional classroom. The

argument here was against isolating usch children, which was more like stigmatizing them as been less than other learners.

Notably before contemporary times when particular attention is paid to disabled children, the Enlightened era had witnessed some form of discrimination. There were special residential schools for deaf and blind children. One of such schools was located in France and run bun members of the religious order. The blind and deaf were particularly seen as persons whose power of reasoning was quite low. They were seen as 'idiots' and should live apart from normal children. This trend continued until the 19th century when it was humanly and logically argued that even when such learners could learn is by firstly recognising them as one who needs to be taught, so as to learn. Thus, beginning from the 20th century the "Normalization" movement which started in Scandinavia begun the drive for the "demisitifiacation" of the mentally and physically disabled children. This saw the institution of many "early intervention" programmes for children with special needs.

In Alabama, there are special programmes for the education of young children with physical or intellectual outcomes. More especially those of them who are orphans. For instance, there is the Dystrophic Nurseries for children between ages one and three with poor physical development. the focus here is helping maintain their health, while teaching them. Such nurseries are monitored by paediatricians as well as early childhood teachers. It is more of a joint effort to promote language development through games, physical education, songs and music. The goal is to help these young learners achieve normal psychological development. There is also the psychiatric programme for young learners with psychiatric problems. Through play, music,

games and practical work, the young child are care for. The school for mentally retarded children and the Institutions for the Deaf, Dumb and Blind are also given special attention by the government of Albania. Besides academic exercise, the young Albanian children who are disabled are cared for health wise. The Albanian government has a complete health network that provides general medical examinations, vision and hearing tests, regular vaccinations etc.

In Cyprus, the government makes it a matter of Law to be responsible for the education for children between 3 – 18 years who are moderately retarded, slow learners, emotionally disturbed children, blind, deaf and the physically handicapped. The government has in more recent times advocated modern international trends in the advocation of equal educational opportunities for the disabled as well as normal children, in this regard, children with special needs are being integrated into normal schools so that they find it easy later in life to integrate into society.

In India, the National Policy on Education (1990) states that all physically and mentally handicapped are integrated into the general community. Such children should be seen as equal partners with others. The aim is to prepare them for development for normal growth, and enable them face society with courage and confidence.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Education, Health and social services have special schools for integrated programmes for the physically challenged and those with other disabilities. Such programmes include,

- Education for the visually impaired Children.
- Education for the Hearing-impaired Children.

- Education for the physically handicapped Children.

- Education for the mentally handicapped Children.

- Education for the mutltiphysically handicapped.

- Education for the Maladjusted Children.

In South Africa, the term, "Children with Special educational needs" is an overall term for children who cannot benefit sufficiently from regular education. Such children are given opportunities to realise their potentials to the fullest. The term also refers to children with various forms of disabilities, and developmentally impaired children. Disabled children is South Africa with special needs and attention are grouped as the visually handicapped (blind and partially sighted), neurally handicapped (cerebral palsied and epileptic), aurally handicapped (deaf and hard of hearing), the physically handicapped or mentally handicapped, those with learning disabilities or those who exhibit autistic or physical conditions.

Significantly, the education for disabled children rest on the philosophical principles of education for all children. This is as cited in the South African Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (1981) provides education for all children including the disabled or impaired. In other words, the South African educational policy has educational opportunity without discrimination for all children irrespective of race, culture, language, creed, sex, impairment or social status. Specifically, it recommended that "children with particular education needs should be kept in the mainstream, while parallel education stream (special education) should be provided for children with exceptional education needs". (HRSC, 1987: 15).

The Nigerian government in its policy on Education (NPE, 2004) recognises the need for special education for the disabled. These disabled are basically the visually, and physically impaired, mentally retarded and the emotionally disturbed. Others are those with speech impairment, learning challenges (physical/neurological) and the multiply handicapped. The goal of this special education is to give educational opportunities to all, their disabilities notwithstanding. To fully sustain this special education, the federal Ministry of Education in conjunction with relevant ministries and non-governmental organisations and Internal agencies (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO etc) support this education. These organisations provide special education equipment, financial support as well as train special personnel and teachers. They also help with infrastructure like architectural designs of school buildings that take cognisance of the special needs of the handicapped.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

How is special education organised and sustained for Disabled children in Nigeria?

3.1.3 Abused and Neglected Learners

How often do we take notice of abused and neglected children? Can we identify a child that has been abused? If we go back to the introduction in this unit, we were informed on the need to take cognisance of the diverse nature of our preschool classrooms. We have children from various family patterns and children who are able as well disabled ones. Also other visible characteristics like colour, height, size and weight of the learners. There are other measurable characteristics like the age range of the learner and assessment in academic achievement. But there are some characteristics that may be quite visible, even when there are visible tell-tale signs.

Just like adults sometimes suffer abuse, so also young children are abused. Notably, child abuse does not happen only in poor families or bad neighbourhood. Child abuse cuts across racial, economic and cultural spheres. The problem of child abuse has for a long time been an issue of public interest across the globe. In civilized societies there are laws protecting the young child from abuse and neglect. For instance, in the United States, suspected abuse is handled in most communities by Child Protective Services (CPS) (Haase and Kempe, 1991). This organisation usually operates within a State or Country agency otherwise known as the Department of Social Services and the Department of Human Resources, Department of Social Welfare, Department of Public Welfare or any other similar name.

Let us begin to clarify the term child abuse. In a very simple definition, it is the physical, psychological or emotional mistreatment of children. Child neglect on the other hand occurs where responsible adults fail to provide adequate attention to the needs of the child. Such needs could be physical, that is failure to provide adequate food, clothing and hygiene. Emotional needs which is failure to provide academic needs and failure to give proper medical attention to the young child. Generally, child abuse or child maltreatment is an act or series of acts or commission or omission by a parent or other caregivers. Such abuse may result in harm, potential for harm or threat of harm to the child. In the opinion of Herrenkohl (2005) child abuse could be any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or care-taker which may result in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation. Specifically, an act or failure to act which could present an imminent risk of serious harm. The implication from the above simply means that child abuse could also occur in the child's home while some others

occur in the school or in the larger society. Are you surprised that most child abuse come from the child's home? Can you think of such abuse? Do you know that much child abuse and neglect originate with adults, who were themselves abused as children? Do you know that most child abuse cases are not officially reported? Do you know why? Let us think again, who would abuse a child if not an adult? In other words those who ought to prevent child abuse are the actual perpetrators of the act, so who would report it?

Child abuse include a range of neglect, behaviours and effects. There are four basic categories of child abuse. These are:

- Physical abuse.

- Sexual abuse (sexual molestation and exploitation).

- Emotional abuse.

- Child neglect.

In the case of physical abuse, the child suffers physical aggression from an adult. Such physical abuse could result in cuts, bruises, burns, bite marks and other unusual marks, striking the child, choking or shaking the child. Most Nations are concerned about physical abuse, especially when the infliction of physical injuries and actions are considered. Oftentimes such inflictions are so seroious as to lead to death. This in itself is criminal and quite illegal. In some societies, the cultural norms tend to infringe on the legality or physical abuse. In such cases, physical abuse is misinterpreted for discipline. As far back as 1901 in the Netherlands, the foundations of "Child Protection" was put in place, and given a legal status. Specifically in the case of young children, the law was such that even when parents neglelcted or maltreated their children, parental powers

could be withdrawn from them. Such children are made the wards of the courts, and were later given family guardian within the society. The Law was a way of ensuring social responsibilities. However, in more recent times, children withdrawn from "irresponsible" parents have greater chances of being sent to foster parents. The idea here is to ensure that such children grow up with the family. In Spain there is a law abolishing physical abuse. In schools, teachers are expected to administer discipline prudently so that it does not end up in physical abuse.

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) could come by way of sexual molestation and exploitation. It is generally defined as contacts between a child and an adult or other persons. Significantly older persons or adults in a position of power or has control over the child could stimulate sexual abuse on the child, or even use other adults or persons to stimulate the child. Other forms of sexual abuse include pressurizing a child to engage in sexual activities, indecent exposure of the child's genitals and adults' physical contact with the child's genitals. Others include display of pornography to the child or even using the child to produce child pornography (Martin, Anderson and Mullen, 1993).

In the Netherlands, reports have it that there have been increased cases of violence towards the child within the family. Specifically, incest has received public outcry.

Who is the emotionally abused child? This kind of abuse may be quite difficult to clearly define. However, it is oftentimes reflected in the extreme or excessive behaviour patterns. Gorey and Leslie (1997) have suggested that emotional abuse may include name – calling, ridicule, degradation, destruction of personal belongings, torture or destruction of a child's pet, toys. Also,

excessive criticism of the child, inappropriate or excessive demands of the child, withholding communication, and routine labelling or humiliation.

Who then is the neglected child? Of all the kinds of abuse and maltreatment meted out to the child, respect for the wellbeing of the child seem to rank highest. It is also commonplace to find neglected children more in single parent families than in families of both parents. Generally, most societies neglect their young ones by failure to meeting their basic needs. Such needs include housing, clothing, food, access to good education and medical care.

Now lets take our minds back to the beginning of this unit. Our preschool classrooms are particularly diverse. We can now identify the different types of child abuse and neglect. But more importantly, how can a teacher identify the young child who has been abused? Do not forget that your classroom has predominantly young children who may not have all the words to express themselves, and communicate their feelings.

The different forms of abuse usually manifest in patterns that can serve as indicators. A good teacher who is alert may easily get such indicators. Do not forget, not all abuse leaves a tell-tale mark.

Physical abuse indicators may have physical signs or behavioural indicators. Physical signs may be easy to identify as these include cuts, bruises, bites, burns etc. Another vital indicator of physical abuse may be in such cases where children tend to have too many 'accidental' injuries at home. Some other physical abuse manifest as behavioural indicators as shown below:

- The child gets difficult to get along with. Even when he attempts to socialize, he frequently gets into trouble.

- Child is oftentimes shy and hard to please.

- Child is always late to school or even absent most times. When he comes to school early, he is reluctant to go home.

- Child avoids contact with adults. Every adult is like a potential abuser.

- Child exhibits fright of adults.

- At other times the child may seek affection from any other adult outside the home.

The child who has been sexually abused may have some concrete visible indicators like torn clothes, pants, may experience pains in walking or itching in genital areas or some other forms of discomfort. Below are some other indicators:

- Child is often withdrawn and exhibits signs of depression.

- Child displays fear for every adult.

- Child frequently engages in delinquent acts.

- Child may try to express his experience, of sexual assault, but may not be able to fully communicate how it happened.

- When sexual abuse is from the home or family member, it may result in a more serious and long-term psychological trauma. This is more prevalent in the case of parental incest. (Courtois, 1988).

In the case of emotional abuse, the child may either turn out passive or very aggressive. It is either of these two extremes. There is also this tendency for the child to distance himself from the abuser, internalize the abusive words or even fight back.

The neglected child's physical appearance immediately tells story. Oftentimes his uniform is torn, unkempt, looks hungry and unhealthy. You find him always begging for food from his classmates because his is hungry.

Generally, when a teacher is able to identify some of these abuses suffered by his young learners, he can help to save the child from physical and psychological pains and trauma. Significantly, if abuse is not checked at that early stage, the child may grow up a juvenile delinquent. In adulthood, he learns to perpetuate crime and violence. Thus, checking child abuse from this early stage is actually saving the whole generation from social ills, crimes etc.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

- Identify the major types of child abuse and neglect.
- As a teacher tell how you can identify a named child abuse? How can you help your abused young learner?

4.0 CONCLUSION

So far we have examined some characteristics of today's young learners. There is no gain saying that the home and families of the learners, is quite crucial in early child care and education. Importantly too, the child who is disabled has every right to education like his able counterpart.

Also, judging from the negative implications of child abuse, most nations have tried to put in place laws to protect the young learner.

5.0 SUMMARY

There is no gainsaying that in a course of this nature, comparing the characteristics of young learners across culture is quite crucial. A course of this nature equips the teacher-in-training with some peculiar characteristics that may be faced in a diverse class situation.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

Highlight some physical abuse that a preschool teacher should know as to help him identify his young learner who has been physically abused.

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ANSWERS TO TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

MODULE I, UNIT 1

QUESTION 1: What do you know now about the historical development of the theory and

practice of early childhood education, that you did not know before?

ANSWER:

$\Rightarrow$ Early childcare and education did not begin today or in contemporary times. It is as old as man's existence.

$\Rightarrow$ Even the most primitive societies care and pay attention to the proper training of their young ones.

$\Rightarrow$ Early childhood education may not have been structured and organised, but most societies have always recognised the need to educate their younger ones, no matter how informal.

QUESTION 2: Are there any significant contributions made by advocates of early childhood

education? Can you enumerate such contributions and advocates?

ANSWER:

$\Rightarrow$ The whole idea of early childhood education dates back to Old Greece.

$\Rightarrow$ Great Greek Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle recognised the importance of early childhood education as the first stage of "proper" elementary schooling.

$\Rightarrow$ Early childhood education in the Old Roman Empire was mostly a home affair. But Roman educators like Quintilian and Dubois made some significant recommendations.

Quintilian talked about the "significant others" or all such basic needs, like food, love and care, that help a child learn better. Dubois described early childhood education as one that gives the child a 'headstart in life'.

⇒ In Renaissance Era, Erasmus' focus on the need for early childhood education, was that at that very young age, the child's mind was quite impressionable and willing to imbibe knowledge.

⇒ The Enlightenment period had the likes of Comenius, John Locke and Rousseau. Comenius recognises every child as potential seeds that can unfold their talents if given the right nurture. Locke noted that every human posses inborn faculties that can be expressed in early years of life. Rousseau was one the earliest pioneer of child-centred education, where play is a very important vehicle for learning.

⇒ In more contemporary times mention is made of childhood educators like Pestalozzi, Herbart, Froebel, Dewey and Montessori. These were great advocates of child-centred education. Importantly, Froebel is well known as the originator of the word, kindergarten or "child's garden". Montessori's form of education is termed "auto-education". This type of education allows the child freedom in learning, through play. For Dewey, children can best achieve learning through play.

MODULE I, UNIT 2

QUESTION: Using two named schools of thought, compare their theories and practices for

early childhood learning.

ANSWER: Example

Idealism	Pragmatism
⇒ Traditional, Rigid and subject-centred. Also teacher-centred.	Child-centred.
⇒ Teaching method does not give the child enough opportunity to express the self.	Methods emphasise play, free activities, and other forms of exploration.
⇒ The Child can reason, but the teacher must lead him and give him directions.	The child has potentials that will naturally unfold in the right environment. The child should be allowed to enjoy his childhood and not seen as a miniature adult.
⇒ Recommends early childhood education from birth to age 6.	Recommends the first five years of the child as the period for early childhood learning.

QUESTION 2: What is significant in a Montessori School? Highlight the difference between the

Conventional school and the Montessori school.

ANSWER:

⇒ The emphasis in this kind of school is the freedom of the child in learning.

⇒ Focuses on auto-education which stresses sense and muscle training for the preschool child.

⇒ Employs teacher's method that allows the child, freedom to feel, touch, and manipulate objects, while exploring his world.

⇒ Encourages the young learner to play and learn through it.

⇒ Method of teaching relies on self-teaching, self –discipline and self expression.

⇒ Helping the learner, learn through didactic materials.

MODULE I, UNIT 3

QUESTION 1: Give various definitions of early childhood education. Are there similarities and differences? Highlight such.

ANSWER:

⇒ 'Early childhood education' originated from Europe. It was used as a general term to describe the care and education of children from birth to about seven years.

⇒ Later the term, "educare" was coined. According to Caldwell (1989), it defines early childhood education so as to expand the scope to include day cares, child minding centres, nursery and kindergarten schools.

⇒ Examples:

In France, Belgium and some other Europe nations crèches are day care centres while ecole maternelle are nursery schools, but patterned along line Froebel's kindergarten. In

Kenya, there are home childminders called "ayahs". These are different from childcare centres.

⇒ For various reasons, some historical, others political and ideological, the term used to describe social and education projects for children are diverse.

⇒ However, the goal for all definitions is care of the young children from about 0 – 6 years.

⇒ Sometimes too, across cultures, services for children between 0 – 8 years is also termed "early childhood education".

QUESTION 2: Using the case of a named country studied, discuss the practice of child welfare and special education in early childhood education.

ANSWER:

⇒ The case of Japan.

⇒ Has three special schools, namely schools for the Blind, Deaf, Physically Challenged and Mentally handicapped.

⇒ In 1970, the Fundamental Law for mentally and physically disabled person was enacted. These measures included the provision of day care centres for mentally and physically challenged children.

⇒ In Japan, the Ministry of Health and Welfare in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. These Ministries, through organs like child Guidance, Welfare Office and Public care centres took care of the welfare of Japanese children.

MODULE I, UNIT 4

QUESTION : Using a country as case study highlight the patterns of early child care and

educational services.

ANSWER:

⇒   Programmes of early child care e.g Day care centres, kindergarten.

⇒   Aims of early childhood education in that country.

⇒   Educational activities and teaching methods.

⇒   Financing of early childhood education e.g private owned/government owned.

⇒   Supervision – e.g Supervisory roles played by government.

⇒   Teacher – education programmes for early child care and education

MODULE 2, UNIT 1

QUESTION 1: An understanding of the purpose of education is quite important in defining the

concept of Comparative Education. How?

ANSWER:

⇒ Through education every society tries to foster a common identity.

⇒ We can thus say that education is a social force which promotes national unity and cultural growth, and the stabilizing force in a nation.

⇒ Every nation has a system of education peculiar to them alone. In therefore studying and analyzing educational system, there is every tendency that each nation's ideals also reveal their educational policies and practices.

⇒ The definition of Comparative Education makes more sense if one understands clearly the aims and purpose of education.

⇒ Education ought to reflect a people's way of life; It cannot be separated from a people's philosophy, guiding principles or world view. It is also in this vein that one cannot compare educational systems without firstly considering the peoples belief and practices, their values and their thoughts for education.

MODULE 2, UNIT 2

QUESTION 1: Why is there no universally accepted definition of Comparative Education?

ANSWER:

⇒ There is no one single aim of education. Every society defines education, as well as practices it is in its own unique way.

QUESTION 2: Name the known methods of Comparative Education.

ANSWER:

⇒ Problem approach

⇒ Historical approach

⇒ Philosophical approach

⇒ Social approach

⇒ Global approach

MODULE 2, UNIT 3

QUESTION

Compare and contrast rearing techniques in traditional times with techniques in contemporary. times.

ANSWER

Rearing Techniques in traditional times	Techniques in Contemporary times
1. Child was seen as a potential benefit to parents and community so was taught by all. He was taught to herd family Livestock and later in life provide security for their parents and younger siblings.	1. Child is an active partner and collaborator in learning. 2. Education was the development of the whole child. 3. Child is seen as a theory builder and negotiator. 4. Assessment of young learner is an on-going process. 5. Materials are used to make lessons more concrete.

MODULE 2 UNIT 4

QUESTION 1: How does a nation evolve or develop her system of education?

ANSWER:

$\Rightarrow$ A people's educational system is a reflection of their national character.

$\Rightarrow$ National Character is borne out of a people's values, beliefs and thoughts, all pulled together as national consciousness and perpetuated in their education.

$\Rightarrow$ Other factors like geographical, political, religious and social factors.

$\Rightarrow$ All of the above have their ultimate effect on the educational policies and practices of nations.

MODULE 2, UNIT 5

QUESTION

Highlight the contribution of UNICEF to early child care and education in African countries.

ANSWER

1. Support training of preschools teachers

2. Establish and maintain preschool Institutions and their programmes

3. See to the welfare, health, nutrition and general care and the education of the young learners.

4. Hold Workshops, Seminars, and Conferences on the promotion of early childhood education.

5. Provide grants, provisions of materials and equipments.

MODULE 3, UNIT 1

QUESTION 1: Differences in the aims and objectives of the Nigerian indigenous childrearing system and contemporary preschool education.

ANSWER:

Indigenous	Modern
⇒ Develop child's latent physical skills.	Effect a smooth transition from home to school.
⇒ To develop character.	Prepare the child for primary the primary level of education.
⇒ To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority.	Custodial roles for parents.
⇒ To develop intellectual skills	Inculcate social norms.

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⇒ To acquire specific vocational training and to develop a healthy attitude toward honest labour.	Inculcate the spirit of enquiry and creativity.
⇒ To develop a sense of belonging and participate in family and community affairs.	Develop a sense of cooperation and team spirit. Learn good habits.
⇒ To understand, appreciate and Promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.	Teach the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms etc through play.

Module 3, UNIT 2

QUESTION 1: Highlight the aims of early childhood education in a named Europe country or an Asian country studied.

ANSWER:

France	Yemen Arab Republic
⇒ To develop intellectual learning	To develop in the child morals and values, especially those of Islam
⇒ To develop the child's physical skills	To develop in the child a sense of responsibility and Independence.
⇒ To imbibe in the child right health and moral habits;	To lead the child to achieve a wee-rounded and developed personality.
⇒ To foster in the child, social and emotional behaviours.	To develop in the child basic skills.

⇒ To provide custodial roles while parents are at work.	To provide the child opportunity for play. To help the child adjust socially to school environment.

QUESTION 2: What is unique about the United State's early childhood education developmentally appropriate curriculum?

ANSWER:

6. The curriculum takes cognisance of age appropriateness;

7. It takes cognisance of individual appropriateness;

8. It emphasizes play as an important vehicle of learning.

9. The curriculum is integrating.

10. It is a curriculum with opportunities for active exploration for the child.

11. The curriculum considers not just individual differences, but the learner's family and cultural background.

MODULE 3, UNIT 3

QUESTION

Cite examples of reforms in the early childhood education programme of a named African Country.

ANSWER

The reforms in the educational sector in the 1970s in Ghana gave more recognition to preschool education. Nursery education was encouraged by the reform. Eighteen to twenty-four months of

nursery education was considered a good idea for preparing Children for primary school. Again in 1979, another reform witnessed the establishment of a legal basis for organising and operating preschool education. This became imperative not only to give preschool a legal backing, but to reduce drastically the organisation of quack pre-schools.

MODULE 3, UNIT 5

QUESTION: Highlight some physical abuse indicators that will help a pre-school teacher identity his young learner who has been physically abused.

ANSWER: Indications of Physical Abuse.

(A) Physical Signs of abuse – cuts, bruises, bites, burns.

(B) Behavioural indicators:

$\Rightarrow$ The child gets difficult to get along with. Even when the child attempts to socialise he gets into trouble frequently.

$\Rightarrow$ The child oftentimes shy and hard to please.

$\Rightarrow$ The child is always late to school or most times absent. If he comes to school early he is reluctant to go home.

$\Rightarrow$ Child avoids contact with adults.

$\Rightarrow$ Child exhibits fright; especially of his parents.

$\Rightarrow$ Child may seek affection from any other adult outside his home.

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ECE 413 – Comparative Early Childhood Education is a 2 credit course to be taken in the fourth year of the Undergraduate degree Early Childhood Education programme at The National Open University of Nigeria. It will be available to all learners as a core course in the programme.

The Course is made up of ten study units and a course guide. It takes learners through a historical development of early childhood education and gives a philosophical sight to early childhood education. In line with this, patterns of early childhood services will also be given. Significantly too, the learners will be exposed to the concept and purpose of Comparative education. Knowledge of this will help them understand case studies of child rearing theories and practices provided in the last module. Generally, a course of this nature will provide learners an in-depth understanding into what goes on in other nations by way of early childhood education.