

## **Music and Dance as Playway Methods for Effective Teaching and Learning Among Children of Pre-Primary Schools in Ogun State**

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### **Abstract**

The study examined music and dance as playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprises three (3) local government areas in Ogun State. A random sampling technique was used to select 50 pre-primary school teachers from each of the selected three local governments to make a total of 150 respondents as a sample for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. It was developed on a 2 Likert scale of Agreed and Disagreed. The instrument was moderated by experts who affirmed its validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and standard deviation statistical tools. The research findings revealed that integrating music and dance as playway methods in pre-primary education offers numerous benefits for children's holistic development. It provides a powerful approach to effective teaching and learning. Educators can create a joyful and inclusive learning environment that promotes children's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development by incorporating music and dance into the curriculum. This integration inspires children to explore, create, and connect, laying a solid foundation for their lifelong learning journey. Therefore, teachers should develop different customized learning activities by creating a joyful environment and shall plan the activities ranging from simple to complex. Teachers should be encouraged to participate in professional development programmes incorporating music and dance in pre-primary classrooms. These programmes can provide training on effective teaching strategies, curriculum integration, and the use of music and dance to enhance learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Music and dance, Playway methods, Effective, Teaching and learning, Pre-primary

### **Introduction**

In the method of learning, playing acts as the driving force, as the entire learning method revolves around activity-based learning. It encourages expression and creative skills among children. Play-based learning has long been recognized as a vital approach in pre-primary education, fostering holistic development and enhancing children's engagement and enthusiasm

for learning. The play-way method is a unique learning method and can be customized per the child's interests and requirements. Hence, it may vary from child to child. The play-way method is an educational approach that emphasizes learning through play and hands-on experiences (Anvari, Trainor, Woodside & Levy, 2012).

Playway methods have gained significant recognition and popularity in pre-primary education due to their effectiveness in promoting holistic development and engaging young learners. This teaching method explores the characteristics and benefits of fostering pre-primary children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. The play way method is characterized by its child-centred approach, where learning is facilitated through play and hands-on experiences. It recognizes that children naturally possess an innate curiosity, imagination, and desire to explore their environment (Lynch, 2012). By tapping into these intrinsic motivations, play-way methods harness children's natural inclination to learn and provide them with active engagement and self-directed learning opportunities.

Play-way methods offer numerous benefits in pre-primary education. Firstly, they promote cognitive development by stimulating problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity. Through play, children engage in activities that require them to think, make decisions, and experiment with different solutions. This process enhances their cognitive abilities and helps them develop essential skills such as logical reasoning and spatial awareness (Lynch, 2012). Play-way methods foster social development and promote positive peer interactions. Play-based activities encourage children to collaborate, communicate, and negotiate with their peers, building critical social skills such as empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution. Play also provides a platform for children to explore different roles, engage in imaginative play scenarios, and develop their social understanding (Lynch, 2012).

Furthermore, play-way methods support emotional development by allowing children to express their feelings, develop self-regulation skills, and build self-confidence. Play provides a safe and non-threatening environment where children can explore their emotions, experiment with different roles and scenarios, and learn to manage their feelings in a supportive setting (Lynch, 2012). Among the various forms of play, music and dance hold significant potential as effective teaching and learning methods for young children. Music and dance naturally resonate with children, providing avenues for expression, creativity, and cognitive growth. The importance of music in early childhood education cannot be overstated. Music engages children's minds,

emotions, and bodies, stimulating their cognitive abilities, language skills, and creativity (Anvari et al., 2012; Schellenberg, 2015). The rhythmic patterns, melodies, and lyrics of music captivate children's attention and enhance their memory and concentration. Moreover, music promotes social interaction, as children sing together, share instruments, and participate in collaborative activities (Hallam, 2010). Children can develop a strong foundation in literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking through music.

Music holds immense potential as a playway method in pre-primary education, offering a rich and engaging learning experience for young children. Music plays a significant role in early childhood education due to its unique ability to captivate children's attention and engage their minds, emotions, and bodies. The rhythmic patterns, melodies, and lyrics of music profoundly affect children, stimulating their cognitive abilities and enhancing their language skills (Anvari et al., 2012). Research has shown that music training and exposure are linked to improving cognitive functions, such as attention, memory, and problem-solving skills (Schellenberg, 2015). Musical activities require children to listen, discriminate sounds, and anticipate patterns, strengthening their auditory processing abilities and enhancing their cognitive flexibility.

Incorporating music in pre-primary classrooms can be achieved through various strategies. Singing is fundamental to music-based activities, allowing children to learn and internalize concepts through melodic repetition and rhythmic patterns. Songs can teach vocabulary, concepts, and sequences, making learning more enjoyable and memorable for young learners. Furthermore, using musical instruments provides hands-on experiences and encourages children to explore sounds, rhythms, and melodies. Children develop fine motor skills, coordination, and spatial awareness by providing opportunities for instrument play and experimentation. Music-based activities, such as movement and dance, offer a multi-sensory approach to learning, engaging children's bodies and promoting physical development. Combining music with movement allows children to express themselves, develop their gross motor skills, and strengthen their spatial and kinesthetic intelligence (Hallam, 2010).

Similarly, dance is vital in pre-primary education, offering a unique medium for physical development, motor skills, and coordination. Dance is a dynamic and expressive playway method in pre-primary education, offering a range of benefits for young children's physical, social, and emotional development. Dance is prominent in pre-primary education due to its unique ability to engage children's bodies, promote self-expression, and facilitate social

interaction. Dance allows children to explore movements, rhythms, and space, encouraging physical activity and creative expression (Clark, 2018).

Children develop their gross and fine motor skills, coordination, balance, and spatial awareness through dance. Different movements and dance sequences enhance their physical development and body control. By exploring the possibilities of their bodies through dance, children become more aware of their physical capabilities and gain confidence in their movements (Clark, 2018). Dance also fosters social development by providing cooperation, communication, and collaboration opportunities. Dance-based activities encourage children to work together, follow instructions, and perform in groups. Dance allows children to express themselves non-verbally and connect with others through movement, facilitating positive peer interactions and building social bonds (Clark, 2018). Incorporating dance in pre-primary classrooms can be achieved through various strategies. Creative movement activities encourage children to explore their bodies and express themselves freely. These activities can involve imitating animals, nature movements, or imaginative play, allowing children to develop their creativity, body awareness, and self-confidence.

Dance-based activities, such as dance routines or choreographed movements, provide structure and promote coordination and rhythm. Children can learn simple dance steps, create their movements, or participate in group dances, fostering their ability to follow instructions, synchronize with others, and engage in collaborative experiences (Smithrim&Upitis, 2015). Dance also offers opportunities for cross-curricular connections, as it can be integrated into other subject areas such as storytelling, music, or cultural studies. For example, children can explore dances from different cultures, learn about the history and significance of traditional dances, and create their interpretations.

Integrating music and dance in playway teaching approaches offers a powerful and comprehensive method for enhancing the learning experience of young children. Integrating music and dance in playway teaching provides a holistic approach to learning, encompassing cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. By combining these expressive art forms, educators create a multi-sensory and immersive learning environment that simultaneously engages children's minds and bodies. Integrating music and dance allows for a deeper exploration of concepts and themes. For example, when learning about animals, children can engage in a movement activity where they imitate the movements and sounds of different

animals, accompanied by music that enhances the experience. This integration strengthens children's understanding of the subject matter and creates lasting connections in their memory (Smithrim&Upitis, 2015).

Furthermore, integrating music and dance in playway teaching supports the development of creativity and self-expression. Through dance, children can interpret and respond to different musical genres, rhythms, and melodies, exploring their individuality and enhancing their imagination (Clark, 2018). This integration nurtures children's artistic abilities and allows them to develop their unique creative voices. Integrating music and dance also promotes social interaction and collaboration. Group activities that involve creating and performing dance routines to music encourage teamwork, communication, and cooperation. Children learn to synchronize their movements, listen to each other, and work together towards a common goal, fostering a sense of community and shared achievement (Smithrim&Upitis, 2005).

According to Barrett and Hoffer (2017), the strategies for integrating music and dance in playway teaching can include: setting up stations in the classroom where children can engage in different dance and music activities, aligning music and dance activities with specific themes or topics being covered in the curriculum, organizing opportunities for children to showcase their dance and music skills through small performances or presentations for their peers, parents, or the wider school community, using music and dance to enhance storytelling experiences. Children can create movements and soundscapes to accompany stories, bringing them to life in a more immersive and engaging way. Educators integrating music and dance in playway teaching provide a rich and dynamic learning environment that promotes holistic development, creativity, and social interaction among pre-primary children.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this paper is to examine music and dance as play-way methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State. Based on the study, the research objectives are to:

1. Examine the impact of music and dance as play-way methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State.
2. Examine the strategies for integrating music and dance in play-way methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State.

## Research Questions

- i) What is the impact of music and dance as playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State?
- ii) What are the strategies for integrating music and dance in playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State?

## Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprises all pre-primary school teachers in three local government areas of Ogun State. A random sampling technique was used to select 50 pre-primary school teachers from three (3) selected local government areas in Ogun State to make a total of 150 respondents as a sample for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. It was developed on a 2 Likert scale of Agreed and Disagreed. The instrument was moderated by experts who affirmed its validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage, standard deviation statistical tools.

## Presentation of Data Analysis and Results

**Table 1:** What is the impact of music and dance as playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State?

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED		DISAGREED		Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	S.D
		Freq (N)	Percent (%)	Freq (N)	Percent (%)		
1.	Music offering a rich and engaging learning experience for young children	160	80.0	40	20.0	3.25	0.996
2.	Dance offering a range of benefits for young children's physical, social, and emotional development	160	80.0	40	20.0	3.30	1.008
3.	Integrating music and dance in playway teaching provides a holistic approach to learning	150	75.0	50	25.0	3.13	1.056
4.	Music and dance create a multi-sensory and immersive learning environment that engages children's minds and bodies	140	70.0	60	30.0	3.13	1.147

5.	Music and dance in playway teaching supports the development of creativity and self-expression	165	82.5	35	17.5	3.28	0.924
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**Weighted Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.215 and STD = 1.0261**

Table 4.1 above indicates that music offers a rich and engaging learning experience for young children ( $\bar{x} = 3.25$ ,  $SD = 0.996$ ), dance offers a range of benefits for young children's physical, social, and emotional development ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ,  $SD = 1.008$ ), integrating music and dance in playway teaching provides a holistic approach to learning ( $\bar{x} = 3.13$ ,  $SD = 1.056$ ), music and dance create a multi-sensory and immersive learning environment that engages children's minds and bodies ( $\bar{x} = 3.13$ ,  $SD = 1.147$ ) and music and dance in playway teaching supports the development of creativity and self-expression ( $\bar{x} = 3.48$ ,  $SD = 0.820$ ). From Table 4.7 above, research question 4 has a weighted mean of 3.215, above the benchmark of 2.50. Thus, this shows the impact of music and dance as playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State.

**Table 2:**

What are the strategies for integrating music and dance in playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State?

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED		DISAGREED		Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	S.D
		Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent		
		(N)	%	(N)	%		
1.	Setting up stations in the classroom is a strategy for integrating music and dance in playway methods for effective teaching and learning	150	75.0%	50	25.0%	3.15	1.016
2.	Using music and dance to enhance storytelling experiences	166	83.0%	34	17.0%	3.43	0.954
3.	Organizing opportunities for children to showcase their dance and music skills through small performances	180	90.0%	20	10.0%	3.56	0.819
4.	exploring the music and dance traditions of different cultures during a multicultural unit	148	74.0%	52	26.0%	3.11	1.058



5.	Aligning music and dance activities with specific themes or topics being covered in the curriculum.	160	80.0%	40	20.0%	3.30	1.008
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**Weighted Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 3.308 and STD = 0.971**

Table 2 above shows that setting up stations in the classroom is a strategy for integrating music and dance in playway methods for effective teaching and learning ( $\bar{x} = 3.15$ ,  $SD = 1.016$ ), using music and dance to enhance storytelling experiences ( $\bar{x} = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 0.954$ ), organizing opportunities for children to showcase their dance and music skills through small performances ( $\bar{x} = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 0.819$ ), exploring the music and dance traditions of different cultures during a multicultural unit ( $\bar{x} = 3.11$ ,  $SD = 1.058$ ) and aligning music and dance activities with specific themes or topics being covered in the curriculum ( $\bar{x} = 3.30$ ,  $SD = 1.008$ ). From Table 2 above, research question 2 has a weighted mean of 3.308, above the benchmark of 2.50. It can be concluded that there are many strategies for integrating music and dance in play-way methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State

### **Discussion of Findings**

Table 1 revealed the impact of music and dance as playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State. The findings agreed with Hanna-Pladdy and MacKay (2011), who revealed the positive impact of music and dance on pre-primary school children's cognitive development, language skills, and creativity. Engaging in musical activities, such as playing instruments, has been shown to benefit pre-primary school children's cognitive functioning, including attention, memory, and executive functions. Integrating music and dance in playway teaching provides a holistic approach to learning, encompassing cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. By combining these expressive art forms, educators create a multi-sensory and immersive learning environment that simultaneously engages children's minds and bodies.

Table 2 shows the strategies for integrating music and dance in playway methods for effective teaching and learning among children of pre-primary schools in Ogun State. This finding echoes that of Barrett and Hoffer (2017), who revealed that the strategies for integrating music and dance in play-way teaching could include: setting up stations in the classroom where children can engage in different dance and music activities, aligning music and dance activities with



specific themes or topics being covered in the curriculum, organizing opportunities for children to showcase their dance and music skills through small performances or presentations for their peers, parents, or the wider school community, using music and dance to enhance storytelling experiences. Children can create movements and soundscapes to accompany stories, bringing them to life in a more immersive and engaging way.

## **Conclusion**

Integrating music and dance as playway methods in pre-primary education offers many benefits for children's development and growth. This approach gives a rich and engaging learning environment that enhances cognitive abilities, promotes physical development, fosters social interaction, and nurtures creativity. Music and dance also encourage vocabulary and rhythm through singing and musical activities. Through music and dance, children develop an in-depth understanding of concepts, strengthen their thinking, and build and connect with others. By integrating music and dance into the curriculum, teachers can create a joyful and inclusive learning environment that promotes children's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. This integration inspires children to explore, create, and connect, laying a solid foundation for their future learning engagement.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that;

1. Teachers should develop customized learning activities by creating a joyful environment and planning simple to complex activities.
2. Teachers should be encouraged to participate in professional development programs incorporating music and dance in pre-primary classrooms. These programs can provide training on effective teaching strategies, curriculum integration, and the use of music and dance to enhance learning outcomes.
3. Schools and educational institutions should consider integrating music and dance into the pre-primary curriculum in a structured and intentional manner. This can be achieved by identifying opportunities to infuse music and dance activities across various subjects, such as language arts, science, and mathematics, to create meaningful and engaging learning experiences.

4. Schools should provide access to various musical instruments, recorded music, and dance props to facilitate music and dance activities in the classroom. Collaborations with local musicians, dance instructors, and cultural organizations can further enhance the availability of resources and expertise.
5. Teachers should actively collaborate and share ideas, resources, and best practices for integrating music and dance in pre-primary education. Collaborative platforms, workshops, and conferences can facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences among educators, fostering a supportive professional network.

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