

**Stakeholders' Participation In The Funding And Curriculum Development
In The Attainment Of Sustainable Development Goals Of Universal Basic
Education In Rivers State**

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Abstract

The study examined stakeholders' participation in the funding and curriculum development in the attainment of sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State. Two objectives, research questions and hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive design. The study population comprised 29,937 junior secondary schools (UBE) stakeholders in Rivers State of which 3,011 stakeholders were eventually sampled for the work. A stratified sampling method was adopted. A 10-item questionnaire titled "Stakeholders Participation the funding and curriculum development in the attainment of sustainable development goals questionnaire." (SPFCDasGQ) was used to extract data. The research instrument was properly validated by researchers' supervisors and two experts in measurement and evaluation from Department of Psychology, Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education, Uniport. Cronbach Alpha statistic was utilized to determine reliability of questionnaire while Mean, standard deviation and the z-test were used to answer relevant questions and hypotheses respectively at 0.05 significance level. The research findings showed that stakeholders participated to a low extent in the area of funding and curriculum development. The study concluded that stakeholders' participation in attaining sustainable development goals of UBE in Rivers State is low. It eventually was recommended that stakeholders must be more committed to funding of UBE scheme for attaining sustainable development goals.

KEY WORDS: STAKEHOLDERS', PARTICIPATION, FUNDING, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION

Introduction

Education is an indispensable tool for individual and societal development. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) as contained in the national policy on education pointed out that education is an instrument per excellence for achieving national development. There is no sector of the economy where education either in its formal or informal form is not required. The emergence of free and compulsory education can be traced to 1976 when the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme was introduced by the government to various educational stakeholders. However, Salihu and Jamil (2015) pointed out that universal primary education actually started in Western Nigeria in 1955 and spread to Eastern Nigeria in 1957 before being generally distributed across the country in 1976.

Ogunsanmi and Ibimiluyi (2014) stated that between 1976 and 1980, the UPE programme recorded huge success with enrollment increasing from six million to twelve million. This was because students, parents and members of the community had interest in the programme and the turnout was very huge. The collapse of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in the 80's gave birth to the

emergence of the Universal Basic Education. The UPE programme was acclaimed to have failed because enrollment level increased beyond the anticipation of the government and the commitment of the government towards the programme also began to dwindle thereby resulting in the failure of the programme.

The end of the UPE programme therefore provided the basis for the emergence of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme. The UBE programme is another free and compulsory education programme that different stakeholders believed could salvage the Nigerian economy from its socio-economic decline. Amuchie, Asotibe and Audu (2013:1) pointed out that the members of the public were happy to welcome the UBE because they had earlier been “unhappy that the 6-3-3-4 system which replaced the 6- 5-2-3 system and the earlier introduced universal primary education programmes. (UPE), (of the past regimes) was no better than the earlier introduced programmes”. The acceptance of this educational programme was due to the fact that it had a wider coverage and is fundamental and as such must be available to individuals who are willing and able to access it. This provides the opportunity for more individuals to attain their various aspirations and experience the needed growth and development.

The place of Universal Basic Education as a medium for achieving sustainable development depends on the active desire and participation of the various stakeholders to achieve this end. The various educational stakeholders have their various expectations from the implementation of the Universal Basic Education programmes. The expectations of the different stakeholders differ depending on their perceived benefits from the programme. It is therefore appropriate to state that the expectations of the various stakeholders will determine the kind of support that they will give towards the sustenance of the programme. The contribution of stakeholders in the success of the UBE scheme is an issue that cannot be overemphasized.

Yamma and Izom (2018) revealed that if the UBE programme must succeed, the various stakeholders which includes government, principals, parents, teachers and even the students must play their role effectively. The community must also make their contributions for the programme to succeed. The success or failure of the scheme depends actively on the role played by them various stakeholders. Stakeholders who are affected by the outcome of the Universal Basic Education are therefore expected to perform their various duties more effectively to contribute to the success of the educational programme.

The government of Nigeria at the federal, state and local level has aligned with the government of other developed countries that believe that the UBE is very important for the nation to achieve the recent sustainable development goals. These goals have been carefully designed to contribute to the development of individuals and societies and also to assist in the emancipation of individuals and the entire society from a state of underdevelopment. It is therefore important that all hands must be on deck especially among educational stakeholders to ensure that the UBE achieves these important developmental goals.

Funding is one of the key issues confronting the education system in Nigeria today. Government at all levels has shown very little financial commitment to the success of education in the country including the UBE scheme. Similarly, the scheme has received very little financial support from other stakeholders. The government supports the funding of the UBE by providing intervention funds from time to time (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2017). Funds are required for the sustenance of the UBE scheme. Similarly, with the allocation to the education sector nose-diving from time to time, the goals of the UBE scheme remain a mirage. This is because adequate funding is needed for the procurement of the needed human and material resources for the success of the scheme. The government must therefore take her responsibility of funding the education sector seriously for the actualization of the sustainable development goals of the UBE.

Stakeholders including parents, government or school administrators have the duty of supporting the educational system financially. The contribution of stakeholders to the success of the UBE

programme especially in the area of funding is an issue that cannot be overemphasized (Tyoakaa, 2014). There are parents who have supported the school where their children attend in cash and in kind. This social responsibility is important not just for the child or his school but for the entire society. Parents have the responsibility of providing financial, social and moral support for their ward and the school. This will go a long way in ensuring that the school is able to achieve her goals and objectives in the long run. Similarly, international institutions and organizations are major supporters of global education around the world (Education for Development, 2015). There are countries that lack the financial capacity to meet the educational needs of their citizens. These international organizations therefore provide financial assistance to cushion the meager budgetary allocation in most developing countries. There are Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) abroad and even developed countries that have supported basic education across different states in Nigeria over the years. According to Utuk (2014), financial support from NGOs especially in low income countries have helped to improved literacy level and this is important for the development of any nation.

One of the key areas that have limited the UBE scheme from achieving its sustainable development goals is the problem of lopsidedness in formation and implementation of the curriculum (Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015). There are various educational programmes that have been designed by the government before and after independence. The type and duration of educational programmed designed for students is determined by the government. The government therefore has a role to play in determining the type and duration of the educational programmes developed for students. The government should be able to determine the impact of the intended educational programmes whether it will be cognitive, psychomotor or affective in nature. The curriculum designed by the government and curriculum developers must have the capacity to achieve the sustainable development goals.

The government needs to formulate policies that will help curriculum developers to design educational curriculum that will contribute to sustainable development. Educational policies are important for the coordination and management of educational programmes designed by the government. The development of educational policies and programmes in Nigeria is the sole responsibility of the government at the local, state or federal level (Centre for Public Impact, 2017). These policies help to give direction and clearly define the responsibility of the various educational stakeholders. The government must therefore ensure that proper rules and regulations are put in place that will create accessibility and all-inclusiveness in the educational programme designed. This will contribute to the achievement of the goal of the government of ensuring that all children of school age enjoy the free education scheme for the first nine years without any child being left behind. Similarly, it will prepare students to make meaningful contributions towards the development of the society.

Statement of the Problem

Education at all levels has been seen as an instrument for both personal and societal development. The introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Nigeria was one of the educational programmes designed and expected to salvage the education system from rot and decay. The UBE programme received wide acceptance and jubilation when it was introduced because different educational stakeholders saw the programme as one that is well intended to meet the educational needs of Nigerians. The programme indeed was designed in good faith, however, many years after the introduction of this programme very little success seems to have been recorded so far.

The failure of the Universal Basic Education programme can be attributed to the attitude of complacency among the various education stakeholders. Students, teachers, school administrators, government among others have failed to be active participants to ensure that this educational programme achieve its intended objectives towards enhancing the sustainable development goals. The failure of these participants to participate in enforcing the UBE has led to students' lopsided performance over the years.

It is therefore important to find out if stakeholders participate in curriculum development and in UBE schools for the attainment of the sustainable development goals in Rivers State and Nigeria in general.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the research was to examine stakeholders' participation in the funding and curriculum development in the attainment of sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the extent to which stakeholders participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.
2. Examine the extent to which stakeholders participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. What is the extent to which stakeholders participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State?
2. What is the extent to which stakeholders participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders (school personnel and parents) on the extent to which they participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders (school personnel and parents) on the extent to which they participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.

Method

A descriptive survey design was used for this study. The population of this study comprised of 247 junior secondary school principals, 8,743 teachers and 20,947 parents in the 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The population of the study was therefore 29,937 junior secondary schools (UBE) stakeholders in Rivers State (Source: Rivers State Post Primary Schools Board, 2018). The sampling technique that was used for the study was the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A questionnaire titled "Stakeholders Participation the funding and curriculum development in the attainment of sustainable development goals questionnaire." (SPFCDASGQ)) was used to generate data for the study. The instrument for data collection in this research was subjected to reliability test. The instrument was administered to twenty (20) respondents (five principals five teachers and ten parents) outside the sample selected for this research. Cronbach Alpha statistic was used to determine the reliability index of each of the sections of the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient obtained for each of the sections were 0.62 and 0.75 respectively. The average reliability index was 0.69. The data for this research was collected from primary and secondary sources. The research questions for this study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses for the research were tested using z-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question One: What is the extent to which stakeholders participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of the extent to which stakeholders participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State

S/No	Extent to which stakeholders participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State	School Personnel n=1,000		Parents n=2011		Average Mean	Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Public Private Partnership is provided to fund basic education	2.32	0.61	2.17	0.45	2.25	Low Extent
2	Financial donations are provided for completing school projects and programmes	1.84	0.57	1.76	0.42	1.80	Low Extent
3	Stakeholders are involved in fund raising for the UBE programme	1.69	0.39	1.63	0.29	1.66	Low Extent
4	Launching programmes are organized where stakeholders contribute to the educational programme	1.69	0.37	1.61	0.27	1.65	Low Extent
5	Scholarships, grants and other financial aids are given to deserving students from time to time	1.79	0.63	1.91	0.43	1.85	Low Extent
Grand Mean		1.87		1.82		1.84	Low Extent

Table 4.3 indicates that items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 as responded to by the school personnel showed mean values of 2.32, 1.84, 1.69, 1.69 and 1.79 respectively. The various items responded to by the school personnel sampled for the study were below the criterion mean of 2.50 and as such showed a low extent to the questions raised. The average mean of school personnel was 1.87. This result implies that the school personnel believe that stakeholders participate to a very low extent in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of the UBE in Rivers State.

The responses of the parents to items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 produced mean score of 2.17, 1.76, 1.63, 1.61 and 1.91 respectively. Similarly, the various items responded to by the parents were below the criterion mean of 2.50 and as such showed a low extent. Furthermore, the average mean score of parents was 1.82. This value implies that parents also believe that stakeholders participate to a very low extent in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of the UBE in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which stakeholders participate in curriculum development

for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the extent to which stakeholders participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State

S/No	Extent to which stakeholders participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State	School Personnel n=1,000		Parents n=2011		Average Mean	Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
6	Vital information for designing a new curriculum are supplied by stakeholders when needed	2.94	0.54	1.78	0.45	2.36	Low Extent
7	Stakeholders are engaged as members of curriculum assessment committee	3.01	0.51	1.78	0.45	2.40	Low Extent
8	Stakeholders are engaged in the planning of the curriculum	1.96	0.57	2.05	0.40	2.01	Low Extent
9	Regular evaluation exercise are carried out by stakeholders on existing curriculum in UBE schools	2.74	0.52	1.78	0.45	2.26	Low Extent
10	Stakeholders discuss with members of the society to incorporate societal needs into the curriculum	2.06	0.54	2.06	0.38	2.06	Low Extent
Grand Mean		2.54		1.89		2.22	Low Extent

Table 2 shows that the responses of the school personnel used for the study produced mean scores of 2.94, 3.01, 1.96, 2.74 and 2.06 to items 6-10. Items 6, 7 and 8 from the school personnel’s responses had mean scores of 2.94, 3.01 and 2.74 which showed high extent for being above the criterion mean score of 2.50 while all other items from the school personnel showed low extent to the items raised since their values were below 2.50. The average mean of school personnel was 2.54. This value indicated that the school personnel sampled for the study believed that stakeholders participate to a high extent to the development of the curriculum for the attainment of the sustainable development goal of the Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.

However, items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 as responded to by the parents sampled for the study showed mean values of 1.78, 1.78, 2.05, 1.78 and 2.06. All these items as responded to by the parents sampled for the study were below the criterion mean and as such depicting low extent to the items raised. The average mean score of parents was 1.89. This average mean score indicated that parents believe that stakeholders participate in curriculum development to a low extent for the actualization of the sustainable development goals of the Universal Basic Education.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders (school personnel and parents) on the extent to which they participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.s

Table 3: z-test analysis of the significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders (school personnel and parents) on the extent to which they participate in

educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
School Personnel	1,000	1.87	0.51	3,009	2.78	1.96	0.05	H ₀ was rejected
Parents	2,011	1.82	0.37					

Table 4.9 revealed that the value of z-cal. was 2.78 while the value of z-crit. was 1.96. Since the value of z-cal. of 2.78 was more than the value of z-crit. of 1.96, we rejected the null hypothesis thereby implying that there was a significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders on the extent to which stakeholders participate in educational funding for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders (school personnel and parents) on the extent to which they participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.

Table 4s: z-test analysis of the significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders (school personnel and parents) on the extent to which they participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
School Personnel	1,000	2.54	0.54	3,009	20.66	1.96	0.05	H ₀ was rejected
Parents	2,011	1.89	0.43					

Table 4.10 showed that the value of z-cal. is 10.66 while the value of z-crit. was 1.96. Since the value of z-cal. of 10.66 was more than the value of z-crit. of 1.96, the null hypothesis was rejected thereby implying that there was a significant difference between the mean opinion scores of stakeholders on the extent to which stakeholders participate in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Stakeholders Participation in Educational Funding for the Attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State

It was revealed from the findings of the study that the stakeholders in the Universal Basic Education programme participated to a low extent in the funding of the educational programme for the

attainment of the sustainable development goals of the Universal Basic Education programme in Rivers State. This result implies that funding is not adequately provided by stakeholders for meeting the sustainable development goals of the UBE in Rivers State. The inadequacy of funding for the UBE scheme has great implications as it will limit the quality and quantity of educational resources that can be provided for the programme. This will affect the achievement of the developmental goals of the UBE programme in Rivers State. This position relates with the findings from the study conducted by Onele and Aja-Okorie (2013) where it was revealed that the government, donor agencies as well as private individuals contributed insignificantly to the UBE scheme and this is why the goals of the education scheme appear unrealistic. The lack of funding from stakeholders therefore affects the UBE scheme negatively and makes it difficult for the developmental goals of the scheme to be achieved in Rivers State. This situation is complicated by the lack of budgetary commitment from the government to the education sector across all levels of education.

Stakeholders Participation in Curriculum Development for the Attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals of Universal Basic Education in Rivers State

The findings of the study showed a low extent of stakeholders' participation in curriculum development for the attainment of the sustainable development goals of the Universal Basic Education in Rivers State. This implies that stakeholders contribute very little to the development of the curriculum for the UBE scheme and this is not a healthy practice for any type of education that will contribute to national development. When stakeholders are not given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the curriculum for the school, it may result to some of them withdrawing from making such contribution even when they have a lot to contribute to the process.

The lack of participation of stakeholders in curriculum development will make it difficult for the sustainable development goals of the UBE to be achieved. This finding will be better understood from the position of the findings of the study conducted by Udchukwu (2012) where it was revealed that the curriculum of the UBE is unbalanced because of the lack of involvement of the stakeholders. The implication of this is that the developmental goals of the scheme will be difficult to achieve without the participation of these stakeholders.

The curriculum is an essential educational resource which cannot be ignored at any level of education. Similarly, the curriculum can be seen as an essential input that determines what comes out as educational output. It is therefore the responsibility of all educational stakeholders to ensure that the curriculum is constantly visited to address contemporary societal problems. Educational stakeholders at the UBE level of education therefore have a role to play in ensuring that the curriculum designed meets with needs of the society.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that sustainable development goals of the Universal Basic Education have not been achieved due to poor funding and faulty curriculum of the scheme.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made

1. The private sector as well as international organizations should beef up their financial commitment to the education sector to assist in the achievement of the goals and objectives of basic education in Rivers State. The funds provided should also be properly utilized so as to ensure that the sustainable goals of the Universal Basic Education are actualized.

2. There is need for a comprehensive reformation of the education system to be more development oriented. The government should ensure that basic education is channeled towards equipping students with the right skills and knowledge needed for the development of their immediate environment.

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