

Stakeholders' Participation in Universal Basic Education (UBE) for Attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study examined stakeholders' participation in Universal Basic Education (UBE) for attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State. The study was guided by two objectives, with a corresponding research questions and null hypotheses. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised of 9,064 academic staff (321 principals and 8,743 teachers) in 321 public junior secondary schools (UBE) in the 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State. A sample size of 906 respondents representing 10% of the entire population were drawn for the study using stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Stakeholders' Participation in Universal Basic Education for the Attainment of Sustainable Developmental Goal Four Questionnaire (SPUBEASDGFQ). The instrument was validated and Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability index of the instrument which yielded 0.87. Mean and Standard Deviation statistics were used to answer two research questions, while z-test statistics was used to test two null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. Findings of the study revealed that the extent of stakeholders like school board members and parents participation in UBE in the area of curriculum development and provision of physical facilities for attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State is low and moderate respectively. Based on this, it was recommended that school board members should make sure that the right curriculum is developed in partnership with other relevant educational stakeholders to ensure that the objectives of UBE programmes are met. Also, parents should not isolate themselves from the affairs of the school, rather they should work hand in glove with school management in the provision of facilities needed for UBE programmes.

Keywords: Stakeholders, Universal Basic Education, Sustainable Development Goal Four

INTRODUCTION

Education occupies the planning decision in Nigeria on account of the important roles it performed in preparing the people to live meaningful in their environment. In fact, greater dimensions for disclosing advancement are formed through education which produces the human capacities, social and economic growth. Correspondingly, Adunola (2011) stated that education is a process of acquiring skills obtaining relevant knowledge and aptitudes in order to survive in this world. Individuals, parents, groups, societies, government and even the international community expend huge sum of money because education is the key to achieving political and other socio-economic goals and objectives of different social groups in the society. This has prompted individuals and even the government to take particular interest in the education sector

as a way of bringing about the needed change and development. This is responsible for different educational reforms and the introduction of various educational programmes over the years in Nigeria.

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 rescue the Nigerian economy from its socio-economic decay. Amuchie et al (2013) 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. 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 sustainable development.

When the level of education acquired makes maximum impact for a long period of time, then the development is said to be sustainable. Sustainable development is development that satisfies the needs of the present populace without jeopardizing the means of livelihood of the future generation. International Institute of Sustainable Development (2013) pointed out that sustainable development is development that strikes a balance between present and future needs of people living in an environment. This kind of development can only be achieved when the citizens are properly educated through an encompassing education such as the Universal Basic Education. Nwankwo (2010) stated that the Rio conference specifically identified four major shoves of education for sustainable development as: “promotion and improvement of basic education, reorienting existing education at all levels to address national development, developing public understanding and awareness of sustainability and training”. This feat can only be achieved when the education system puts all individuals both young and old, boys and girls, present and future into consideration.

The place of Universal Basic Education as a medium for achieving sustainable development depends on the active desire, contribution and participation of various stakeholders to achieve this end. The various educational stakeholders have their 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 these stakeholders will determine the kind of support that they will give towards the sustenance of the programme. The role played by education stakeholders is indispensable for the success of the UBE scheme. Yamma and Izom (2018) revealed that if the UBE programme must succeed, the various stakeholders which include 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 the 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.

There is no exaggeration in saying that the UBE programme is of importance to all educational stakeholders and as such these stakeholders should rise up to the duty of protecting the programme. Students just like other stakeholders have a lot to benefit from the UBE programme. The UBE programme has not only increased students literacy level but has also enabled these students to compete favourably for middle level jobs which has helped to meet their basic needs such as food, housing and clothing. Similarly, certification acquired at this level of education is also vital for students who wish to further their education. The UBE programme has not only slightly increased literacy level (Yusuf, et al., 2013) but has also increased middle level manpower opportunities (Emeka & Vaaseh, 2015). Some of the students who undergo the UBE programme have had the opportunity to attain up to tertiary education thereby providing high level manpower for the general public.

Parents of students benefiting from the UBE programme have also benefitted immensely. There are various non-economic benefits such as prestige and social status which they have acquired as a result of the literacy level of their children (Apebende, et al., 2010). Similarly, basic education provided through the UBE will benefit the community in the form of reduced environmental health hazards and reduced inter-communal conflict. The government on her part has been able to acquire middle level manpower for different sectors of the economy and increased revenue generation prospects. The UBE programme is therefore of utmost importance to all stakeholders and as such should be protected by all and sundry.

The contribution of the UBE programme to the development of Nigeria is an issue that cannot be over accentuated. There is no nation that can achieve meaningful development without a viable and productive education system. The contribution of the UBE scheme to national development cuts across the various sectors or spectrum of the nation. The UBE scheme no doubt has been instrumental to the increase in the literacy level of the Nigerian nation. It is therefore imperative that adequate actions should be taken for the programme to achieve its aim of bringing about sustainable development. This is to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) does not become a failed programme like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires that all the goals must be paid attention to, especially goal number four. Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) talks about inclusive and equitable quality education that promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. It plays a central role in building sustainable, inclusive and resilient societies.

Therefore, it is essential that all hands must be on deck especially among educational stakeholders to ensure that the UBE achieves these important developmental goals (i.e. SDG4) just as it has been witnessed in other countries where the programme has been introduced and sustained magnificently. Consequently, it is on this premise that this study seeks to examine stakeholders' participation in Universal Basic Education (UBE) for attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

The UBE programme in Nigeria as observed by some well-meaning individuals is confronted with the problems of gross underfunding, insufficient skilled manpower, shortage of facilities and equipment, and over-crowded student population. 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 Universal Basic Education no doubt has a lot to contribute to the sustenance of development in the state and nation at large. The sustainable development goals outlined by the United Nations seem unattainable except a viable educational programme is put in place. However, it appears these sustainable development goals especially goal four may not be achieved without adequate participation of all stakeholders to strengthen the UBE programme. The apparent failure of the Universal Basic Education programme can be attributed to the attitude of complacency among the various education stakeholders. Students, teachers, school administrators, school board members, parents, alumni among others have failed to be active participants to ensure that this educational programme achieves its intended objectives towards enhancing the SDG4. The failure of these participants to partake and contribute in enforcing the UBE has led to students’ lopsided performance over the years. There is the problem of inadequate funding and teachers have also not been properly trained to enforce this programme for the actualization of the sustainable development goal four. Also, there appears to be little interest from both parents and students to enroll for the programme. This and many other problems appear to be responsible for the inability of the UBE programme to assist in the attainment of the sustainable development goal four. Thus, it is imperative to find out if stakeholders such as school board members and parents participate in universal basic education through curriculum development and provision of physical facilities for the attainment of the sustainable development goal four in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine stakeholders’ participation in Universal Basic Education (UBE) for attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.
2. Find out the extent to which parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State?
2. To what extent do parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Ho₂. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Stakeholders in Education

A stakeholder is anybody who can affect or is affected by an organization, strategy or project. They can be internal or external and they can be at any level. Some definitions suggest that stakeholders are those who have the power to impact an organization or project in some way. For example: ‘people or small groups with power to respond to, negotiate with, and change the strategic future of the organization’ (Ackermann, 2002). However, Bryson (2004) states this is somewhat restrictive definition because it excludes those who are affected, but who do not have any power to respond or negotiate with an organization. To this end, Bryson (2004) prefers a more inclusive definition which extends to all stakeholders who are affected by a change as it is more compatible with notions of democracy and social justice.

The Singapore Ministry of Education (2017) also identifies stakeholders in education to include a list of people and organizations. These include the students, parents and families, teachers, principals of schools, government, businesses and industries, the alumni association, the school advisory/management committees, etc, who are expected to play their roles effectively in order to create conducive teaching and learning atmosphere to enable children learn better and reach their fullest potential. Also, Aina (2015) opines that the various stakeholders of education include; community leaders, teachers, students/pupils, parents, churches, NGOs, and the government.

Universal Basic Education (UBE)

The Universal Basic Education is a term that cannot be explained since it means different things to different people. However, it is clear that the UBE is an educational programme provided freely and compulsorily to all deserving citizens. It is an educational programme provided to educate all citizens within the specified age limit. Amuchie, et al (2013:1) stated that “Universal Basic Education is the transmission of fundamental knowledge to all facets of the Nigerian society from generation to generation”. The UBE programme as designed by the government is scheduled to provide free education for students for first nine years comprising six years in primary and three years in junior secondary. Furthermore, Amuchie, et al (2013:1) opined that “It has three main components - Universal, Basic and Education. Universal connotes a programme that is meant for all facets of the society - the rich; poor, the physically fit and the disabled, the brilliant fit, the dull the regular students and the dropouts including every other individual that is ready to acquire knowledge”.

Similarly, Amuchie, et al (2013:1-2) revealed that “the term “basic” relates to the base, take off point, fundamental essential, spring board, bottom line, they required and of course expected it therefore shows that basic education is the starting point in the acquisition of knowledge. “Education” connotes transmission of knowledge from general to generation”. The UBE is therefore governments educational intervention scheme provided universally and fundamentally for all deserving students. There are certain objectives which the government expects from the UBE programme. Universal

Basic Education as cited in Edho (2009:184) stated that the objectives of the UBE include:

- Ensuring unaltered access to 9 years of formal basic education;
- Provision of free, universal education for every Nigerian child of school going age;
- Reducing drastically the incidence of dropout from the formal school system through improved relevance, quality and efficiency;
- Ensuring the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulation, communication and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needful for laying a solid foundation form lifelong learning.

Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4)

The initiative of sustainable development goals (SDGs) came at the exit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2015 when world leaders came together at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York to sign a new global partnership for development. The SDGs replaced the MDGs, which in September, 2000 rallied the world around a common 15-year agenda to tackle the indignity of extreme poverty. With the job unfinished for millions of people there is the need to go the extra mile in ending hunger, achieving full gender equality, improving health services and getting every child into school. The target of getting every child to school is enshrined in goal four of the SDGs.

Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) is geared towards all-inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all. The emphasis under this goal has worldwide coverage of quality education from pre-school through at least secondary education, and then on to more advanced, skills training (Sachs, 2015). The ambition of the goal is to build a nation that will facilitate a realization of the full potential of each child in order that he/she can contribute to building a just, tolerant and egalitarian society. The vision of an inclusive quality education reflect on the idea of education for all, principally for those groups who are seen to be vulnerable. Particular emphasis is on equal access to all and lifelong education. It then means that those who lead education in several countries must give attention to all forms of education, both formal and non-formal. In Soni (2012) four characteristics which transform education and training into Lifelong Learning were identified. They includes: the integration of both formal and non-formal/informal learning; self-motivated learning; self-funded learning; and a commitment to universal participation in education and training. Therefore, lifelong learning indicates an inclusive education and learning model that embraces all children, youth and adults, both as learners and as educators (Torres, 2003).

Objectives of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4)

The International Education Framework and the 2030 Agenda, as cited by Global Campaign for Education (2019) SDG4 is embodied with 7 definite targets as seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1:

Objectives of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4)	
Target 1.	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.
Target 2.	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.
Target 3.	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.
Target 4.	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.
Target 5.	By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.
Target 6.	By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.
Target 7.	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Source: Global Campaign for Education (2019).

Clearly, the SDG4 targets have raised the bar for education beyond merely achieving basic education enrolment. Also, education must now be relevant, inclusive irrespective of children’s peculiar circumstances, equip recipients with life coping skills and must be free up to the secondary school level of which UBE (Junior Secondary School) is part of.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate for investigating an existing phenomenon in order to explain the situation in its real form. The population for this study consisted of all the 9,064 academic staff (321 principals and 8,743 teachers) in 321 public junior secondary schools (UBE) in the 23 Local Government Areas of Rivers State. (Source: Rivers State Universal Basic Schools Board, 2022). The sample size of 906 respondents representing 10% of the entire population were drawn for the study using stratified random sampling technique. Kpee (2015) considered such percentage appropriate to serve as an acceptable sample for a population running into thousands. The research instrument for this study was a questionnaire titled: Stakeholders’ Participation in Universal Basic Education for the Attainment of Sustainable Developmental Goal Four Scale (SPUBEASDGFS)”. The instrument has two sections (A and B). Section A elicited demographic information from the respondents, while section B prompted items on research question one and two. The items of the instrument are responded on a 4-point Likert scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE). Data used for this study were sourced primarily by the researcher and with the help of two research assistants. 906 questionnaires were administered to the respondents, after which 884 copies were retrieved and found suitable for analysis resulting in 97% retrieval rate. The instrument was validated and Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics was used to calculate the reliability of instrument, which yielded an index of 0.87. The data generated were organized, analyze and presented in tables. Mean and Standard Deviation scores was used as the statistical tools to answer the research questions. While z-test statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The results of the analysed data for each research questions and its corresponding hypothesis are presented on tables.

Research Question 1: To what extent do school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean (\bar{X}) and Standard Deviation of respondents (principals and teachers) on the extent school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

SN	Items	Teachers N = 855		Principals N = 29		Mean Set	Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂		
1.	Vital information for designing a new curriculum are supplied by board members when needed to facilitate UBE programme and activities.	2.94	0.54	1.78	0.45	2.36	Low Extent
2.	Board members are engaged as members of curriculum assessment committee to ensure that UBE standard are met.	3.01	0.51	1.78	0.45	2.40	Low Extent
3.	Board members are engaged in the planning of the curriculum to ensure that it meets UBE standard.	1.96	0.57	2.05	0.40	2.01	Low Extent
4.	Regular evaluation exercise are carried out by school board members on existing curriculum in UBE schools.	2.74	0.52	1.78	0.45	2.26	Low Extent
5.	School board members discuss with members of the society to incorporate societal needs into the curriculum to meet global practices.	2.06	0.54	2.06	0.38	2.06	Low Extent
Average Mean/Standard Deviation		2.54	0.53	1.89	0.42	2.22	Low Extent

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2022.

Decision Rule: 1.00– 1.79 = Very Low Extent (VLE), 1.80 – 2.49 = Low Extent (LE), 2.50 –3.19 = Moderate Extent (HE), 3.20 – 4.00 = High Extent (HE), 4.00 – 5.00 = Very High Extent (VHE)

From Table 1, data show that all the items (1-5) had a mean score between the range of 1.80 and 2.49 showing a low extent.

In summary, with an average mean of 2.22 (which falls within the range of 1.80 to 2.49), principals and teachers agree that school board members as stakeholders participate in UBE through curriculum development to a low extent for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: To what extent do parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation of respondents (principals and teachers) on the extent parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

SN	Items	Teachers N = 855		Principals N = 29		Mean Set	Decision
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂		
		6.	Donation of textbooks and other writing materials to the school for teaching and learning.	2.74	0.52	2.77	
7.	The construction of classroom blocks and offices for students and teachers to enhance school operation.	2.31	0.44	2.37	0.32	2.34	Low Extent
8.	Equipping of the school laboratory and workshops by parents to aid students practical works.	2.87	0.46	2.90	0.33	2.88	High Extent
9.	ICT facilities are made available by parents to encourage the use of e-learning in schools.	2.67	0.48	2.58	0.35	2.63	High Extent
10.	Sporting/recreational facilities are provided by parents to cater for the social needs of students and teachers.	1.82	0.87	2.09	0.61	1.96	Low Extent
Average Mean/Standard Deviation		2.48	0.55	2.54	0.39	2.51	Moderate Extent

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2022.

Decision Rule: 1.00– 1.79 = Very Low Extent (VLE), 1.80 – 2.49 = Low Extent (LE), 2.50 –3.19 = Moderate Extent (HE), 3.20 – 4.00 = High Extent (HE), 4.00 – 5.00 = Very High Extent (VHE)

From Table 2 above, data reveal that item 6, 8 and 9 had a mean score between the range of 2.50 and 3.19 showing a moderate extent of parents’ participation in UBE through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State. Contrarily, items 7 and 10, had mean scores of between 1.80 and 2.49, showing that, for those respondents, parents participate in UBE through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State to a low extent.

In summary, with an average mean of 2.51 (which falls within the range of 2.50 to 3.19), principals and teachers agree that parents as stakeholders participate in UBE through provision of physical facilities to a high extent for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Test of hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Table 3: z-test Analysis on the difference between the mean rating scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Population	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit.	Remarks
Teachers	855	2.54	0.53	882	8.13	±1.96	Significant Reject Ho, (z-cal. > z-crit.)
Principals	29	1.89	0.42				

Table 3 indicates that teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.54 and 0.53, while principals have mean and standard deviation scores of 1.89 and 0.42

respectively. With a level of flexibility (degree of freedom) of 882 at an alpha noteworthy level of 0.05; the figured z-estimation of 8.13 is higher than the z-critical of 1.96. Along these lines the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, there is significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which school board members as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Table 4: z-test Analysis on the difference between the mean rating scores of principals and teachers on the extent parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Population	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit.	Remarks
Teachers	855	2.48	0.55	882	- 0.80	±1.96	Significant Accept Ho ₂
Principals	29	2.54	0.39				(z-cal. < z-crit.)

Table 4 shows that teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.48 and 0.55, while principals have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.54 and 0.39 respectively. With a level of flexibility (degree of freedom) of 1,643 at an alpha noteworthy level of 0.05; the figured z-estimation of -0.80 is less than the z-critical of -1.96. Along these lines the null hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first finding of this study revealed that school board members as stakeholders participate in UBE through curriculum development to a low extent for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that school board members 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 school board members do not create the opportunity to contribute to the development of the curriculum for the school, it may result to some of default in the curriculum which may not contribute to meeting the Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4). The low participation of school board members 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 school board members. The implication of this is that the developmental goals of the scheme will be difficult to

achieve without the participation of these board members. 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 school board members to ensure that the curriculum is constantly visited to address contemporary societal problems. Educational stakeholders such as the school board members therefore have a role to play in ensuring that the curriculum designed of UBE programmes meets with needs of the society.

However, the low extent of attention given to this aspect of the curriculum influences the UBE scheme, as it can hinder the manpower development needed for national development. According to the findings of the study conducted by Okunbor and Agwubike (2014), implementing educational programmes at the primary level of education including the UBE has been one of the most challenging in the educational system of the nation. Hence, there was a significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which school board members participate in Universal Basic Education through curriculum development for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

Lastly, the second finding of the study revealed that parents as stakeholders participate in UBE through provision of physical facilities to a moderate extent for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public junior secondary schools in Rivers State. This implies that the physical facilities needed for the achievement of the sustainable development goals of the UBE are not adequately provided even though they exist. This no doubt will make it difficult for meaningful teaching and learning activities to take place in these schools which is vital for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals Four (SDG4). This finding of this study was better explained from the finding of the study conducted by Agi and Eremie (2018) where it was pointed that the lack of maintenance culture was one of the reasons why there is shortage of physical facilities in UBE schools. Thus, the study agreed with the findings of this study which pointed out that the UBE schools lack adequate physical facilities and this no doubt will make it difficult for the developmental goals of the UBE to be achieved in Rivers State.

The provision of physical facilities is one aspect where parents of students in the UBE appear to have given considerable attention. The teachers and principals sampled for the study revealed from their responses that there have been donations of books and other writing materials for teaching and learning activities but not to a sufficient extent. The role of parents as PTA members or stakeholders in providing books and other wiring materials is essential for uninterrupted learning activities in the school. However, there is a low extent to which parents have supported to the UBE in the area of providing classroom blocks and other physical facilities for learning. The shortage of classroom blocks other learning facilities can however hinder the convenience that students, teachers and other school users are supposed to enjoy during their learning interaction. This situation is better understood from the findings of the study conducted by Ugwuanyi (2018) who pointed out that facilities in most UBE schools in Nigeria has only been moderately provided and as such has affected the quality of output from the free education programme. The study has also exposed the fact that stakeholders contribute in the area of laboratory and workshops. The interest of parents in this area may not be unconnected to the fact that students and other stakeholders have interest in the development of practical skills among students and this has a great implication on the ability of the students to contribute to the

development of their society. The supports made by these parents in this area therefore have great influence on the ability of students to contribute to the development of their environment.

In addition to this, the respondents revealed that there is a high extent to which parents contribute to the development of the computer laboratory. The development of the school laboratory cannot be ignored in the face of the technological development across the globe. Also, the study has revealed however there is a shortage of attention given to sporting activities by parents. This is in line with the findings of Aduwa-Ogiegbaen (2016) who pointed out that educational resources are inadequately provided in most schools which affect quality of work done. The low extent of provision of sporting facilities for students and teachers use has a negative influence on the psychomotor and social development of beneficiaries of the UBE scheme. When this is the case, this aspect of national development will be exposed to under development as there would be no sufficient human resource to help develop and sustain this aspect of national development. Students therefore require adequate attention in the area of sports especially at the UBE level as this provides adequate opportunity to discover raw talents that can contribute to the development of the society. Hence, there was no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the extent to which parents as stakeholders participate in Universal Basic Education through provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the extent of stakeholders like school board members and parents participation in UBE in the area of curriculum development and provision of physical facilities for attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Rivers State is low and moderate respectively. Thus, the implication of this is that, it would slow down or even hinder the full implementation of UBE programmes for the attainment of the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) if proper action is not taken. Therefore, the following below are recommended in order to address the above situation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings and conclusion of the study:

1. School board members should ensure that the right curriculum is developed in partnership with other relevant educational stakeholders to ensure that the objectives of UBE programmes are met.
2. Parents should not isolate themselves from the affairs of the school, rather they should work hand in glove with school management in the provision of facilities needed for UBE programmes.
3. Government at all levels should step up their game in living up to their roles in a way to ensure the full implementation of UBE programmes, especially in the area of funding for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4).

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