

## Participation of Organizations and Local Communities in Access to Universal Basic Education in South-West Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study investigates the participation of organizations and local communities in access to Universal Basic Education in South-West, Nigeria. Two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive research of survey type was used. The population comprised all primary school teachers in South-West, Nigeria. The sample comprised 1,920 teachers selected from the States of Lagos, Ogun and Oyo. Fee-free Policy Impact of Universal Basic Education Descriptive Questionnaire (FPIUBEDQ) was adopted for data collection. Simple Linear Regression Analysis was used to analyze the data gathered. The obtained results reveal that the participation of non-governmental organizations and local communities had a significant positive impact on access to Universal to Universal Basic Education and the provision of materials had a significant positive impact on Universal Basic Education. It was therefore recommended that government should form a realistic view of the collaborative/partnership approach adopted to complement the funding of Universal Basic Education.

**Keywords:** Fee-free policy, participation, non-governmental organization (NGO), local community, access, universal basic education.

### 1. Introduction

The Nigerian National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) indicates that the financing of education is a joint responsibility of the Federal, State, and Local Governments. In other words, education at the primary and junior secondary schools for the purpose of universal basic education should be jointly funded, and the program should have concurrent legislative jurisdiction for funding to actualize its objectives. In developing countries, public funding for educational development is usually insufficient. Thus, government resources are often complemented by development partner funding, household and community contributions, and public-private partnership. Now pledged that funding will be assured from Regular (improved budgetary provisions by all tiers of government); Supplementary resources from the Education Tax Fund; Contributions from a wide variety of stakeholders (Obanya, 2000).

Noted that in the present circumstances, funds and facilities are very much limited and the school administrator is being asked to achieve maximum results with this limitation (Nakpodia, 2011). There is increasing demand by the people for more and better

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education and the problem of rising costs. The researcher concluded that there was a crisis in the education system. He, therefore, posits that the way out of the financial malaise is to seek supplementary sources of funds. Stated that in Nigeria, the government has declared that education is no more a private enterprise, but a huge government venture, and prescribed that the school system and consequently their management and day-to-day administration should grow out of the community which they serve (Atughonu, 2001). It has often been said that the provision of education for all is the responsibility of all. Therefore, communities, as one of the stakeholders, are expected to play significant roles in ensuring that the request for the provision of adequate facilities is achieved.

Oduwaiye, Bakwai, and Yisa (2016) concluded that the roles the School-Based Management Committee plays in the development of basic education in Northern Nigeria are so much that basic schools cannot do away with it. These roles could be more felt in the basic schools if SBMC strategies are improved and modified. The authors now recommended that SBMC even though voluntary, should not be made open to people who are completely illiterate and ignorant of the aims and goals of the SBMC program.

In the same vein, Bakwai, Yusuf, and Sarkin-Kebbi (2016) identified ignorance and poverty among community members, community attitude to education, and lack of community cooperation as the challenges affecting the operation of School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) towards promoting integrity, accountability, and development in basic schools. The authors recommended that SBMC should double their efforts on sensitization to educate their community on the need for their participation and involvement in the affairs of their children's education.

A number of non-governmental groups participate in the funding of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. They include business enterprises, particularly oil companies. Others include the parents-teachers association, alumni, and community development committees (Nakpodia, 2011). He further added that the Nigerian government is categorical on a wide range of participation by government and non-governmental bodies in financing education. Thus, education is an expensive social service and requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for the successful implementation of educational programs. In this connection, the government welcomes and encourages the participation of local communities, individuals, and other organizations.

In line with the above, Gbadamosi (2005) recommended various means of generating revenue through the endowment, charges for using school facilities, sale of farm products, contributions by PTA, alumni associations, donations from groups, associations, and individuals in the society to augment educational funding. Besides Parent-Teacher Association, there are other stakeholders, they include organizations (e.g., social and philanthropic organizations such as Rotary Club, Lions Club, Inner Wheel, cultural groups, religious organizations, village development associations, Old Students' Association), the local communities, philanthropists, eminent personalities, and well-meaning individuals. All these stakeholders have an important role to play in financing primary education.

Adeyemi (2011) is not at variance with Gbadamosi (2005) and Fielmua et al. (2012) when he states that the Universal Basic Education scheme has adopted the collaborative/partnership approach, considering the enormity of facilities that are needed for the effective performance of Nigerian schools. Similarly, when an Old Students' Association has notable and successful individuals in its fold, it attracts a lot of goodwill for the institution. Old Students' Associations are also known to assist their alma mater in the provision of essential facilities and in further projecting the image of their former schools.

Moreover, companies could supplement government funding of education by paying the education tax. This is necessary because the business enterprises are also beneficiaries of the education acquired. In addition, community groups need to contribute because they also benefit from the education system. The community development committees as well as alumni of the primary and secondary schools who are gainfully employed can supplement government funding thereby promoting educational development in the area (Nakpodia, 2011).

In line with the above, Adeyemi (2011) reiterates that communities, as one of the stakeholders, are expected to play significant roles in ensuring that the quest for the provision of adequate facilities is achieved. He maintains that local communities should initiate and execute specific projects and activities with the framework of the scheme in their localities to provide logistic support and enable the environment for the execution of the scheme in the localities, provide relevant human and material resources for the successful implementation of the scheme, ensure safety and maintenance of the scheme infrastructure and UBE implementation resources and materials in their localities, and organize and ensure the support and effective participation of the entire community in the scheme.

Community participation in the delivery of basic education programs simply means the active involvement and participation of the members of the communities where schools are located in the management and implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program as envisaged by the government. The essence of this participation and involvement is to elicit the spirit of commitment and ensure project sustainability and eventual ownership of the project and school.

A non-governmental organization called the Resource Centre for Human Rights and Civil Education (CHRICED) has launched an innovative data-driven project to track funds earmarked for the provision of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Kaduna State. The project aims to provide a platform for communities in Kaduna State to track and report on spending by the relevant agencies, especially, the State Universal Basic Education Board. The organization deliberately focused on basic education delivery because it is the bedrock of education in Nigeria (Amoo, 2017).

A study on community participation in UBE conducted by Nwobi et al. (2019) revealed that the level of community participation in the implementation of the UBE program in Ondo State is below expectation, there are some factors militating against community participation in the UBE program. They stated strategies that could be adopted to enhance community participation for effective implementation of the UBE program which includes encouraging the operation of the school-based management committee in the UBE schools, organization of communities' sensitization workshops and seminars, and involving community leaders. They recommended that government and State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) should encourage the operation of school-based management committees in the schools and there should be an organization of community sensitization workshops and seminars to create an enabling environment for community participation in the effective implementation of the UBE program.

A survey of many schools in the country made by Ajibade (2005) especially those owned by the governments shows a gross decline in the provision of basic requirements. There are cases of students having to stand in the classroom to receive lectures, sitting on the windows or bare floor, or teachers conducting classes under a tree for lack of space. It is a common thing to find pupils carrying tables and chairs from home to school daily or see parents assisting their younger children who are not strong enough to carry theirs. Also, it was a common practice for teachers to bring chalk and dusters from their homes to schools to carry out their duties efficiently. Students sometimes have to contribute money to buy basic things that were supposed to be provided by the government, like reagents used in the laboratories and materials for the general cleaning of the school premises.

The dearth of instructional materials was reflected in a class where the geography of Nigeria was being taught without the map of Nigeria. There were more such instances in other subject areas. These could not but affect education, especially teaching and learning.

Abdulkareem (2000) and Edun (2005) claim in their various research findings that educational facilities especially instructional materials in Nigerian public primary schools are grossly inadequate despite the immense benefits of such materials to users. While acknowledging the recent efforts by the government through the Universal Basic Education Program to provide infrastructural facilities to public primary schools, Edun (2005) further claims that such efforts are still a far cry from reality on the ground.

Obasola (2009) reports the Chief Executive Officer of Amazing Grace Foundation as saying that overhauling the education sector should not be about the provision of infrastructural facilities alone but should include the provision of basic needs of pupils to make learning fun for them. The foundation donated 1,000 school uniforms to pupils in Ajeromi/Ifelodun Local Government Council of Lagos State. He further reports that many pupils go to school without meals, while some others go to school in rags or patched uniforms because their parents cannot afford any better. She said she had met many pupils, some of whom also went to school barefooted, and had realized that infrastructural facilities alone did not make a good pupil.

There are basic materials that are essential for the daily operations of the school system. Among these are students' desks and tables, chalkboard and chalk, and teachers' and pupils' writing materials. The latter is very necessary for instructional purposes (Ajibade, 2005). Olanrewaju et al. (2011) reiterate that the availability of teaching materials goes a long way in promoting effective teaching and learning. Inadequate teaching aids, poor or uncondusive environment, and lack of manpower needed can impede effective teaching.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

The Nigerian government adopted a public/private partnership approach in the implementation of Universal Basic Education to elicit the spirit of commitment. Public funding for educational development is usually insufficient in developing countries and as a result, the approach allows contributions of a variety of stakeholders since the provision of education for all is the responsibility of all. This study now investigated the impact of the participation of NGOs and the local community in access to Universal Basic Education in South-West, Nigeria.

## **3. Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design for the investigation. The population comprised all teachers in all the public primary schools in South-West, Nigeria. A sample of 1,920 respondents including male and female teachers were selected using multi-stage and simple random sampling techniques. 3 States were selected from the 6 States in South-West, Nigeria which resulted in Lagos, Ogun, and Oyo. 30% of the Local Government Areas of the 3 States were selected. This gave us 24 Local Government Areas and from each, 4 public primary schools were selected. From the resulting 96 schools, 20 public primary school teachers were selected. What informed the choice of teachers is that teachers are parents who belong to one NGO or the other and live in the communities where schools are located.

The instrument, Fee-free Policy Impact of Universal Basic Education Descriptive Questionnaire (FPIUBEDQ) was adopted from Akinloye (2017) for use. Section G of the instrument contains items addressing the participation of NGOs and the local community in the provision of school facilities, money, and materials and how they affect access to Universal Basic Education. The items were

scored on a four-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA)- 4 points, Agree (A)- 3 points, Disagree (D)- 2 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1 point. The validity and reliability coefficient of the instrument was found to be high.

The researcher engaged the services of three trained research assistants for the administration of the instrument of the study. The researcher and the research assistants visited various schools of participants and sought permission from the authorities for their involvement in the study. The administration of the instrument was carried out within a period of six weeks on one thousand, nine hundred and twenty (1920) teachers in the sampled schools but only one-thousand-seven hundred and sixty-seven (1767) were adequately filled and returned. Simple Linear Regression Analysis was used to analyze data gathered using teacher ratings for the two research hypotheses.

### 3.1. Hypothesis

Two research hypotheses were formulated in the study:

**Ho1:** There is no significant impact of fee-free policy on the participation of non-governmental organizations and local communities in access to Universal Basic Education.

**Ho2:** There is no significant impact of fee-free policy on the contribution of material provision to Universal Basic Education.

### 3.2. Results and analysis

Hypothesis One

There is no significant impact of fee-free policy on the participation of non-governmental organizations and local communities in access to Universal Basic Education.

**Table 1. Model Summary of the Linear Regression Analysis for the Participation of NGOs and Local Community in the Prediction of Access to Universal Basic Education**

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3486.978	1	3486.978	293.749	.000
Residual	20951.600	1765	11.871		
Total	24438.578	1766			
Model Summary	R = .378 R Square = .060 Adjusted R Square = .040				

- a. Dependent Variable: Access to Universal Basic Education.
- b. Predictors: (Constant), NGO and the local community.

The results in Table 1 indicated that the contribution of NGOs and communities significantly predicted access to Universal Basic Education ( $R = .378$ ;  $R^2 = .060$ ;  $\text{Adj } R^2 = .040$ ;  $F(1,1765) = 293.749$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Contribution of NGOs and community accounted for only 4 percent of the variance in access to Universal Basic Education. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant

impact of the contribution of the local community and NGOs on access to Universal Basic Education was by this finding rejected. By implication, the contributions of NGOs and communities have a significant impact on access to Universal Basic Education.

### **Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant impact of fee-free policy on the contribution of materials provision to Universal Basic Education.

**Table 2. Model Summary of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the Contribution of Materials Provision to the Prediction of Fee-free Policy on Universal Basic Education**

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3816.508	1	3816.508	260.126	.000
Residual	25895.649	1765	14.672		
Total	29712.157	1766			
Model Summary	R = .358 R Square = .060 Adjusted R Square = .040				

- a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Universal Basic Education.
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Materials.

The results in Table 2 indicated that materials provision significantly predicted the quality of Universal Basic Education ( $R = .358$ ;  $R^2 = .060$ ;  $Adj R^2 = .040$ ;  $F(1,1765) = 260.126$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Materials provision accounted for only 4 percent of the variance in the quality of Universal Basic Education. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant contribution of materials provided to Universal Basic Education was therefore rejected by this finding. By implication, materials provision will have a significant impact on Universal Basic Education.

### **3.6. Discussion**

Hypothesis one states that there is no significant impact of fee-free policy on the participation of non-governmental organizations and local communities in access to Universal Basic Education. The results indicate that the participation of NGOs and local communities had a significant positive impact on access to Universal Basic Education. Therefore, by the finding of this study, the null hypothesis was rejected. That is NGOs and local communities are strong predictors of access, therefore adding to the empirical knowledge of fee-free policy of Universal Basic Education literature. Hence, the study suggests that public funding for educational development is usually insufficient thus, government resources are often complemented by development partner funding, household and community contributions, and public-private partnership.

In line with this finding, Adeyemi (2011), Atughonu (2001), Edun (2006), Gbadamosi (2005), and Nakpodia (2011) submitted that education is an expensive social service and requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for a successful implementation of the educational programs. In this connection, the government welcomes and encourages the participation of local communities, individuals, and other organizations.

Fielmua et al. (2012), as well as Gbadamosi (2005), posit that government has a major role to play in the delivery of social service, education inclusive. They maintain that recognizing, however, that its resources are inadequate there is an obvious need to complement this with resources from the private sector, NGOs, and other arms of civil society. Commenting on the community role in universal basic education, Adeyemi (2011) is not at variance with Gbadamosi (2005) and Fielmua et al. (2012) when he

stated that the universal basic education scheme has adopted the collaborative/partnership approach, considering the enormity of facilities that is needed for the effective performance of Nigerian school.

Hypothesis two states that there is no significant impact of fee-free policy on the contribution of materials provision to Universal Basic Education. The study reveals that the provision of materials had a significant positive impact on Universal Basic Education. Therefore, by the finding of this study, the null hypothesis was rejected. The finding implies that the provision of materials will have a positive influence on the teaching-learning process. The finding of the study agrees with Peretomode (2001) who believes that where physical and teaching facilities are provided and are particularly adequate, teaching and learning are expected to be faster and more permanent because of the feeling of satisfaction the conducive learning atmosphere here provides (Peretomode, 2001).

In a similar view, Ajayi identified the inadequate provision of facilities as a reason for the poor academic performance of pupils in schools. In the same vein, there are basic materials that are essential for the daily operations in the school system (Ajayi, 1998). Among these are students' desks and tables, chalkboards and chalk, and teachers' and pupils' writing materials (Ajibade, 2005). This author asserts that the latter are very necessary for instructional purposes. In this connection, therefore, this finding provided substantial evidence that the availability of materials goes a long way in promoting effective teaching and learning. Inadequate teaching aids, poor or unconducive environment, and lack of manpower needed can impede effective teaching (Olanrewaju et al., 2011). The advantage of this result is that it provided the much-needed guide on the provision of materials as a sine qua non for effective teaching and learning in the school system. It is also a fact that no school can function properly without adequate facilities (Adeniji, 2005).

Abdulkareem (2000) and Edun (2005) claim in their various research findings that educational facilities especially instructional materials in Nigerian public primary schools are grossly inadequate in spite of the immense benefit of such materials to users. While acknowledging the recent effort by the government through the Universal Basic Education program to provide infrastructural facilities to public primary schools, Edun further claims that such efforts are still a far cry from the reality on the ground.

Therefore, for a successful Universal Basic Education program, there must be adequate provision of instructional materials in quantity and in quality. This demands an integrated approach involving the government, the school (through sourcing efforts), the teachers (through improvisation, demanding creative and innovative efforts), and the pupils (by bringing materials available in the local environment not necessarily obtained at any financial cost to them).

#### **4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The findings of the study submitted that NGOs and local communities' contributions predicted access to Universal Basic Education. Therefore, since education for all is the business of all, the findings indicate that public/private partnership should be encouraged in the funding of Universal Basic Education as funding for educational development is usually insufficient thus, government resources are often complemented by development partner funding. Adequate materials should be provided for the effective functioning of our schools.

The findings from this study have implications for policy formulation and implementation. To this end the following recommendations were made:

Understanding that public funding for educational development is usually insufficient, the government should form a realistic view of the collaborative/partnership approach adopted to further complement the funding of Universal Basic Education.

Recognizing that the government's resources are inadequate, there is an obvious need to complement this with resources from the private sector, NGOs, local community, and other arms of the civil society.

Campaigns involving religious and community leaders should be organized to enlighten the people on the importance of education. Efforts should be made to locate out-of-school children and technical aids should be provided to facilitate their enrolment. For a successful Universal Basic Education program, there must be the provision of instructional materials in quality and quantum which demand an integrated approach involving the government, the school (through sourcing efforts), the teacher (through improvisation demanding creative and innovative efforts) and the pupil (by bringing materials available in the local area).

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