

Revitalizing Education for National Development: Issues and Challenges of out of School Children in Sokoto State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper viewed education as the fundamental right for every citizen. It agrees that education is the most important instrument for human and national development. The paper argued that the better the child stay in school, the greater his life chances and the more secure community. The study was limited to Basic Educational Schools in Sokoto Metropolis. A total number of 300 teachers were randomly selected from Basic Educational Schools under sampling via simple random sampling techniques to participate in the study. Two objectives were identified from which two research questions were raised and answered. One instrument titled Out of School Children and National Development Questionnaire (OSCNDQ) was used to collect the data. The data were analyzed using simple statistical (percentage). The findings of the study revealed that out of school children has negative influence on national development and state in particular. Therefore this paper recommended that government and community should monitor the implementation of educational policy i.e education for all.

Keywords: Education, National Development, Out of School Children.

Introduction

In the global perspective, it is an incontestable fact that the progress of the nations is highly dependent on the education of their citizens (Latif, Choudhari & Hammayun, 2015). This is because education is the most important instrument for national development. Every nation irrespective of its economic growth as developed, developing, and underdeveloped engineers her educational programmes towards the provision of mass literacy for the production of quality manpower for human resources and economic growth for national development (Bello & Manga, 2016). Thus, the nation's provide financial resources for the development of human resources that will transform the economy of the country

for betterment. The realization of this made Nigeria to promulgate Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in 1999 to ensure that every child is enrolled in schools. However, one of the objectives of this programme is to inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy in the Nigerian child to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (UNICEF 2014).

The product of these institutions will then be enrolled in tertiary institutions. With aim of provide adequate literacy for the citizens and aid in promoting human and materials resources for human safety and security in the country example raping, kidnapping cultism killing among others. The number of educational institutions established and resources in them are not as important as what is taught in them, where the educational system is based on a well thought out curriculum, the needed manpower for developing the society and destructive conflict will be averted (Bagudo, 2015). The main goal of education is to provide knowledge that could help to eliminatethose factors that threaten national development. Bush and Saltareli(2000) differentiate between positive and negative faces of education; they argued that education becomes an asset when it is organized in a manner that unites the nation.

Education and National Development

Education in a broad sense improves the capabilities of individuals and the capacity of institutions, and becomes a catalyst for the closely interrelated economic, social, cultural, and demographic changes that become defined as national development. Precisely how these changes occur is not fully known, and this problem often frustrates attempts at national policy making and planning (Adam, 200),however, the evidence indicate that schooling and other forms of education like Indigenous education can, in a supporting environment, make major contributions to the complex processes of technology transfer, economic productivity, individual earnings, reduction of poverty, development of healthy families, creation and sharing of values, learning the responsibilities of citizenship, and enhancement of the quality of life.

The quality of education of any nation determines the development status of that particular nation. Participants in the World Conference on “Education for All” in Jomtien (2006) pointed out that education is a fundamental right of all people, women and men of all ages throughout the world. It helps to ensure a safer, healthier, more prosperous and environmentally- sound world. It is an indispensable key for personal and social improvement. UNESCO in Ronke (2010) has however pointed out that the current provision of education is seriously deficient and that it must be made more relevant, qualitatively improve and universally available. In recognition of the inestimable value of education as an

instrument par excellence for effecting national development. Thus, education is viewed as an instrument for building a free a united strong and self-reliant nation and a great and dynamic economy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

Out of School Children

Over the last decade, Nigeria's exponential growth in population has put immense pressure on the country's resources and on already overstretched public services and infrastructure, with children under 15 years of age accounting for about 45 per cent of the country's population, the burden on education and other sectors has become overwhelming, 40% per cent of Nigerian children aged 6-11 do not attend any primary school with the Northern region recording the lowest school attendance rate in the country, particularly for girls. Despite a significant increase in net enrollment rates in recent years, it is estimated that about 4.7 million children of primary school age are still not in school (UNICEP 2015).

Increased enrollment rates have also created challenges in ensuring quality education and satisfactory learning achievement as resources are spread more thinly across a growing number of students. It is not rare to see cases of 100 pupils per teacher or students sitting under trees outside the school building because of the lack of classrooms, this situation is being addressed by current efforts of the Nigerian Government with the implementation of the Basic Education scheme. The compulsory, free Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act was passed into law in 2004 and represents the Government's strategy to fight illiteracy and extend basic education opportunities to all children in the country (UNICEF in Manga, 2013).

Challenge to National Development

According to the report of UNICEP 2015 describe the following as the main challenge of low enrollment in Nigeria School particularly in north:

Many children do not attend school because their labour is needed to either help at home or to bring additional income into the family.

Many families cannot afford the associated costs of sending their children to school such as uniforms and textbooks.

For others, the distance to the nearest school is a major hindrance.

Another cause of low enrolment, especially in the North, is cultural bias. Most parents do not send their children, especially girls, to school and prefer to send them to Qur'anic schools rather than formal schools. Even when children enroll in schools, many do not complete the primary cycle.

Another challenge in Nigeria is the issue of girls' education. In the North particularly, the gender gap remains particularly wide and the proportion of girls to boys in school ranges from 1 girl to 2 boys to 1 to 3 in some States.

According to current data, 30% of pupils drop out of primary school and only 54% transit to Junior Secondary Schools. Reasons for this low completion rate include child labour, economic hardship and early marriage for girls, in the last few years, especially since the launching of the Universal Basic Education Act, much has been achieved in the reconstruction of dilapidated school buildings and construction of new ones, supply of desks and other needed furniture as well as the provision of toilet facilities (UNICEF, 2015).

Conceptual Framework

Education is the action or process of imparting knowledge, skills, to someone especially in a school, college, or university. Education refers to the knowledge, skills, and understanding that pupil/student get from attending a school, college or university. Education is a field of study that deals with the methodology and problems of teaching and learning.

National development is the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens. National development is the capability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of their people for instance by providing social amenities like quality of education, portable water, transportation, infrastructure and medical care. Out of school children simply means the child who never attend school at school age level either formal or non-formal schools. Out of school children refers to children who do not have access to a school in their community for one reason or the other. Out of school children refers to children who do not enroll despite the availability of a school in their community.

Theoretical Framework

This paper was adapted from the "Life Chance Theory." The theory was developed by the German Sociologist, Max Weber to describe the opportunities each individual has to improve his quality of life this can only be achieve when individual are educated. It is a probabilistic theory that predicts how an individuals' life will turn out. The theory has it that the available resources that an individual has, determines whether his life can improve or remains at the position socioeconomically. Going by this theory the probability of improving the position of individual socio-economic status is to be educated. He lists "properties ownership, Education, health care, food, clothing and shelter are the main factors that determine an individuals' life chance." Educationally, the theory implies that

once an individual stay in school and acquire knowledge there is every possibility of improving his life chances and vice versa.

Statement of the Problems

Human and Material resources are the main tools for development of any nation, therefore out of school children has to be considered. Studies suggest that there is need for research in the area of out of school children to study how does it affects the social, economic, and development of a country. For all these reasons, prospects of Nigeria achieving Education for All by 2015 are failing.

In developing countries like Nigeria, out of school children rates are remarkably high, according to UNICEF 2015 report; over 10 million are out of school in Nigeria. Saleh (2015), states that the problem of out of school children is a crisis because it impacts not only individuals and their education, but because of the economic and social costs local communities have to deal with. Communities suffer from lack of productive workers and higher costs associated with incarceration, health care, and other social services. She confirmed that most of the children experience a wide range of job market, earnings, social and income problems that impair their ability to transition to productive career and stable family life. Thus, their life chance had been threatened.

It is disheartening that experience shows that in Sokoto State, people mostly found in criminal cases are illiterate. This paper therefore undertakes to assess prevalence of out of school children in Sokoto state and examines how it affects national development and state in particular.

Research Questions

The research questions for the study are as follows:

How does out of school children in Sokoto State affect the socioeconomic development in the state?

How does out of school children provide a gap in the development of education in Sokoto State?

Objectives of the Study

The study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

Find out how out of school children in Sokoto State affect the socioeconomic development in the state.

Find out how out of school children provide a gap in the development of education in Sokoto State.

Research Methodology

The research is a descriptive survey of co relational type. The study was limited to out of school children in Sokoto State; the study was also limited to Basic Educational Schools (Primary and Junior Secondary Schools) in Sokoto Metropolis. A total number of 300 Teachers were selected from schools under sampling via simple random sampling techniques to participate in the study. Two research questions were raised and answered. One instrument titled Out of School Children and National Development Questionnaire (OSCNDQ)” was used to collect the data. The instrument was validated by team of expert in Educational Administration and Planning from Faculty of Education and Extension Service, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. The researcher and trained field assistant administered the questionnaire to all respondents in their working places. The responses to the questionnaire were collected and the statistical tool used in analyzing the data obtained was simple percentages.

Research Question 1

How does out of school children in Sokoto State affect the socioeconomic development in the state?

This research question was answered and present in table 1

Table 1: Effect of Out of School Children on Socioeconomic Development in the State

S/N	Item Students	Agree	Disagree
1	Out of School Children involve in begging	85%	25%
2	Out of School Children involve in selling activities (Talla)	65%	35%
3	Out of School Children contribute to the wastage of resources	70%	30%
4	Out of School Children involve in disarming security	45%	65%

Item 1 in Table 1 shows that, the majority of participants 85% agreed that Out of School Children involved in begging (Almajiri) in Sokoto state. Item 2 shows that, the majority of the participants 65% agreed that Out of School Children involve selling activities (Talla) in Sokoto state. Item 3 shows that the majority of the participants 70% agreed that, Out of School Children contribute to the wastage of resources in Sokoto state. Item 4 shows that, the majority of the participants 65%

disagreed that, Out of School Children involve in disarming security in Sokoto state.

Research Question 2:

How does out of school children provide a gap in the development of education in Sokoto State? This research question was answered and present in table 2

S/N	Item Students	Agree	Disagree
1	Out of school children may increase the need for adult literacy in future.	70%	30%
2	Out of school children are one of the problems militating against the attainment of educational goals in the state	55%	45%
3	Out of school children contribute to the existing gap in education of the state	55%	45%
4	Out of school children are do contribute to the increase of rate of illiteracy in the state	52%	48%

Item 1 in Table 2 shows that, the majority of participants 70% agreed that, Out of school children may increase the need for adult literacy in future in Sokoto State. Item 2 shows that, the majority of the participants 55% agreed that Out of school children are one of the problems militating against the attainment of educational goals in Sokoto State. Item 3 shows that the majority of the participants 55% agreed that, Out of school children contribute to the existing gap in education of the state. Item 4 shows that, the majority of the participants 52% agreed that, Out of school children are do contribute to the increase of rate of illiteracy in the state.

Summary of Findings

Out of school children has negative effect on socioeconomic development in Sokoto State.

Out of school children contributed to the increase of rate of illiteracy in Sokoto State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of this study found that Out of school children has negative effect on socioeconomic development in Sokoto State. Therefore this affects the socioeconomic development in the state. The findings from this paper agrees with Saleh (2015), states that the problem of out of school children is a crisis because it

impacts not only individuals and their education, but because of the economic and social costs local communities have to deal with. However, the study found that out of school children contributed to the increase of rate of illiteracy in Sokoto State, the findings from this paper agrees with UNICEP report in (2015) It is disheartening that experience shows that in Sokoto state people that were mostly found in criminal cases, they are found to be illiterate people. The findings went contrary to the Yuniko (1997) who found that students in Ghana turn to apprenticeship and microenterprises-for self-employment.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that education is prerequisite in the empowerment of the human beings. It provides to them not only the knowledge but also the skills that will relieve him with fears of human existence and adaptation with situations. The human beings can use their knowledge obtained in schools to initiate, invent, and innovate new things that can make them to self-subsistence and self-employed apart from working under any organization. These empowerment opportunities provided by schools will only benefit those that were retained in schools. Schools can therefore be a catalyst for providing changes.

Recommendation

The paper finally recommends the following:

Government and Community should encourage *Almajiri* Schools and make it compulsory for out of school children.

Community and Government should join hand together in improving the implementation of educational policy which says Basic Education is compulsory for every child.

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