

Out-of-School Boy Child as an Impediment to the Achievement of UBE Enrolment Goal in Jos North LGA

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Abstract. This paper investigated the impact of out-of-school boy-child on the achievement of UBE enrollment goal in Jos North LGA. Three research questions were formulated to facilitate the findings of the study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. The population of this study consisted of consist of 2320 comprising of 223 teachers, 2000 out-school boy-children, 96 Principals and 1 Educational Secretary in Jos North Local Government Area. The sample for the study consisted of 100 respondents consisting of 60 out – of- school boy-children, 29 UBE teachers, 10 principals, 1 education secretaries in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw the sample of the study. Two questionnaire instruments were developed by the researcher. These instruments were Causes of Out-of-school Children Questionnaire (COSQC) and Assessment of Out-of-school Children and UBE Goal Questionnaire (AOSCUGQ). The COSQC was used to collect data from the out-of-school boy-children and the UBE teachers while the AOSCUGQ was used to collect information from the UBEC staff, Principals and Education Secretaries. Descriptive statistics such as mean score and percentages were used in analyzing the data collected in the study. The findings of the study revealed that out-of-school boy-children have great impact on the achievement of UBE enrollment goals in Jos North Local Government Area. The high rate of out-of-school boy-children has negated the achievement of UBE enrollment goals. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that there is need for concise effort on the part of the government on the need to educate and enlighten parents on the need to enroll their school-age children in the UBE programme. Also, vibrant policies should be formulated by the government to assimilate all out-of-school boy children into the UBE programme.

Keywords: Out-of-School, Boy-Child, Achievement, UBE, Enrolment, Goals,

1. Introduction

The most common definition of the out-of-school boy-child is any boy of school age who is not in school for any given reason (James, 2015). Such boys may have not reached adulthood but roam the street for a source of livelihood, and is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults (Isaacs, 2015). The word “out of-school boy child” was further expanded by UNICEF (2004) who describe him as any child of the male gender who is below eighteen years of age and is not currently receiving any form of formal education but should have been in school. According to Mbozi (2012), the out-of-school boy-child include orphans, street children, out-of-school boy-children, nomads, young farmers, young miners, dropouts, out-of-school juvenile delinquents among others. Bamgbade (2013) expanded the context of the out -of -school boy-child to include abandoned male children, foster male children, and runaway male children. What distinguishes these children from other children is their characteristic engagement in “street life,” including menial jobs, begging, gangs, and sleeping in alleyways and trees and also the fact that they are not enrolled in school. In many developing countries, they comprise most of the male orphan population. Their existences represent both a cause and input of national underdevelopment; the street is their home and source of livelihood and thus local economies and street children rely on e other for sustenance. Because they mostly dwell in urban areas, they must contend for resources in an already competitive context. This context puts their skills of survival, negotiation, relationship, and life management under

pressure. They grow up only with the support of each other in largely unpredictable situations.

Mkombozi (2011) categorized “street involved children” into two groups. Part time - Street included boy-children; majority of them return home at the end of the day, and they help a piece of their profit to the financial survival of the family unit. They may be going to class and hold a feeling of having a place with a family or family unit. They might inevitably decide on a changeless life on the street in view of the monetary delicacy of their general public/ family circumstance. Full time-street included male children: This alludes to those “children on the street” who really live on the streets; family ties may exist but frail and keeps up just easily. The majorities of these children have no changeless habitation and move from spot to place and from town to town.

According to Yacub (2009), Nigeria and Plateau State in particular has the problem of out-of-school boy children. He noted that such boys are usually used for child labour and criminal activities. Yacub stated that it is not an unusual sight in Plateau State especially in the rural areas to see school age children working on farms during school hours. Infact, one can easily see some of these children working in mining camps to earn money rather than being in school with their counterparts. Other can be seen in market places carrying loads for traders and buyers of goods, others serve as sales boys in shops while others are into vocational trades such as mechanics, carpentry, painters among others.

The boy-child can also be among the educationally disadvantaged group if he is not enrolled in school. It is not an unusual sight in Plateau State especially in the rural areas to see school age children working on farms and mining camps during school hours to earn money rather than being in school with their counterparts. Others can be seen in market places carrying loads for traders and buyers of goods; others serve as sale-boys in shops while others are into apprenticeship. Unfortunately these boys did not enroll for LD the essential element (education) that makes them good future leaders which the society expects them to be.

The goals of the UBE as stated in the UBE implementation guideline (UBE Act, 2004) is to provide free basic qualitative education for every Nigerian child. This involves providing accessible UBE schools in every community in Nigeria with qualified teachers and adequate instructional facilities to ensure that teaching and learning are effective in the schools, with high rate of retention and

completion. Unfortunately some of supervisors are not provided with basic logistics and support to regularly supervise the schools and most times supervision report are not always implemented. All these challenges mentioned above can militate against the achievement of the UBE enrollment goal in Plateau State (Ayuba, 2014).

According to Federal Government of Nigeria, (2014) UBE implementation guideline states that the UBE programme shall provide basic qualitative education to every Nigerian child. This involves providing accessible UBE schools in every community in Nigeria with qualified teachers and adequate instructional facilities to ensure that teaching and learning are effective in the UBE schools. Many parents do not enroll their children in the programme due to ignorance, lack of awareness of the programme and traditional or cultural misconceptions and socio-economic background of the parents. It is in the light of the foregoing that the present study sets to investigate the out-of-school boy-child and the achievement of Universal Basic Education goals in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

2. Statement of the Problem

The problem of out-of-school boy-children has become an issue of immense concern to the Nigerian society. The Nigerian government made a provision to ensure that every child of school age is enrolled in school in line with National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014) by establishing Universal Basic Education. The UBE was established with some number of goals, among which is ensuring that every child of school age has access to quality education in Nigeria. In spite of this provision and government interventions through media enlightenment and mobilization programmes, it is observed that a lot of school age children are out of school in Plateau state.

The high rate of out-of-school boy children in Plateau State is so alarming that it requires urgent intervention to produce future generation with meaningful education for national development. The boy-children are commonly seen roaming around, at jungles, market square, mining camps and used as sale-boys around Jos during school hours instead of being in school. If these high rate of out of school age children is not urgently addressed, they can be vulnerable to social vices in the society and used as tools in the hands of arm –robbers, cultists, politicians and constitute serious threats to the society in various ways. They can also escalate the level of crime in the society as the dropout children become easy targets for criminal gangs and terrorist

organizations as obtained in Nigeria thus becoming detrimental to the growth and development of Nigeria (Adamaechi, & Romaine, 2010)). It is on the basis of the aforementioned problems that this study is premised and conceived to examine the problem of out-of-school boy-child and achievement of UBE enrolment goal in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

3. Research Questions

- What are the causes of high rate of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State?
- What is the impact of out-of-school boy-children on the achievement of UBE enrolment goal in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State?
- What are the efforts put in place by the government to reduce the high rate of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North Local Government Area

4. Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. The population of this study consisted of consist of 2320 comprising of 223 teachers, 2000 Out-of-school boy-children, 96 Principals and 1 Educational Secretary in Jos North Local Government Area.

The sample for the study consisted of 100 respondents consisting of 60 Out-of-school boy-children, 29 UBE teachers, 10 principals, 1 education secretaries in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State.

Purposive sampling technique was used to draw the sample of the study.

Two questionnaire instruments were developed by the researcher. These instruments were Causes of Out-of-school Children Questionnaire (COSQC) and Assessment of Out-of-school Children and UBE Goal Questionnaire (AOSCUGQ). The COSQC was used to collect data from the Out-of-school boy-children and the UBE teachers while the AOSCUGQ was

used to collect information from the UBEC staff, Principals and Education Secretaries. To ascertain the validity and reliability of the research instruments, they were submitted for peer review by the following experts to establish its content and face validity: Two expert in Educational Administration/ Planning was given the instrument to check whether issues raised are adequate and relevant to the research problem; an expert in English language to check the clarity of expressions and accuracy of language used and the other expert from Research, Measurement and Evaluation checked to ensure appropriateness of the instruments in generating relevant information needed for the study. The instruments were sent to the experts along with the aim and objectives and research questions of the study. The observed corrections were duly effected for successful delivery at the field.

The reliability of the Causes and Solution to Out-of-school Questionnaire (CSOSQ) and Stakeholder Assessment of Out-of-school Children and UBE Goal (AOSCUGQ) instruments were established using test-re-test procedure; the instruments were administered to 50 respondents consisting of teachers, principals, directors and out-of-school children who are not part the real sample selected for the study and were re-administered to the same respondents after a time gap of two weeks. These respondents were selected from Jos East Local Government Area which is not part of the local governments sampled for the main study. Both scores obtained were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to establish the reliability of the instruments. This is meant to find how consistent the scores obtained shall be over time and a reliability index obtained between 0.60 to 0.90 will be considered as reliable (Awotunde and Ugodulunwa, 2004). The outcome of the PPMC analysed for the CSOSQ and AOSCUGQ were found to be 0.76 and 0.79 respectively. This implies that, there is strong linear relationship between the two sets of scores. Hence the instruments were considered adequately reliable for use in the study. Descriptive statistics were used in analyzing the data collected. The descriptive statistics was used to answer the research questions

Research Question One: What are the causes of high rate of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North LGA?

Table 1: Shows the Responses of Respondents towards the Causes of out- of-school boy- children

S/N	Statement	N	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Ignorance of the importance of education by parents	100	22.20	3.28	Agreed
2	Poor mobilization by government and non-governmental agencies	100	15.86	3.54	Agreed
3.	High dropout rate of children from the UBE	100	20.59	3.30	Agreed
4	Poor parental enlightenment by government and non-governmental organizations	100	23.49	3.50	Agreed
5	Cultural factor	100	20.99	3.51	Agreed
6	Poor socio-economic status of parents	100	16.44	3.03	Agreed

Criterion Mean: 3.00

The results of the analysis in Table 1 shows that ignorance of the importance of education by parents, poor mobilization by government and non-governmental agencies, high dropout rate of children from the UBE, poor parental enlightenment by government and non-governmental organisations, cultural factors and poor socio-economic status of parents are all causes of out-of-school children in Jos North LGA of Plateau State.

Research Question Two: What is the impact of out-of-school boy-children on the achievement of UBE enrolment goal in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State?

Table 2: Impact of out-of-school boy-children on the achievement of UBE enrolment goals in Jos North LGA

S/N	Statement	N	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
1	The problem of high rate of out-of-school boy-child has negated the achievement of UBE enrollment goals in Jos North	100	21.22	3.11	Agreed
2	Due to the high rate of Out-of-school boy-children, the UBE enrolment goal has been stagnated in Jos North LGA	100	19.86	3.14	Agreed
3.	Out-of-school boy-child has no effect on the achievement of UBE enrolment goal in Jos North LGA	100	10.59	1.30	Disagreed

Table 2 shows the responses of the respondents on the impact of out-of-school boy-child on the achievement of UBE enrolment goals in Jos North LGA. The statement on whether out-of-school boy-children has negated the achievement of UBE enrollment goals in Jos North LGA was rated with a mean score of 3.11 and was agreed with. The next statement on whether due to the high rate of out-of-school boy-children, the UBE enrolment goal has not been achieved in Jos North LGA was rated with 3.14 and was therefore agreed with. The last statement on whether the out-of-school boy-children has no effect on the achievement of UBE enrolment goal in Jos North LGA was rated with a mean score of 1.30 and was therefore disagreed with.

Research Question Three: To what extent have the efforts of stakeholders reduce incidence of Out-of-school boy-children in Jos North LGA of Plateau State?

Table 3: Showing Responses on the Efforts of Stakeholders towards Reduction of Out-of-School Boy-Children in Jos North LGA

S/N	Efforts of Stakeholders	Extent of achievement					
		High	%	Moderate	%	Low	%
1	Making the UBE programme compulsory for all school age children by law	30	30%	23	23%	47	47%
2	Providing easy access to the UBE schools in rural and urban areas	10	10%	39	39%	51	51%
3	Admitting the out-of-school boy-children into UBE programme	19	19%	21	21%	60	60%

The results of the analysis in table 3 reveal the responses of respondents on the effort of stakeholders towards reducing the rate of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North LGA of Plateau State. From the analysis, 30 respondents representing 30% agreed that the extent to which stakeholders have made the UBE programme compulsory for all school children by law is high, 23 respondents representing 23% said it is at moderate level while 47 respondents representing 47% said it is at low level. From the statement on the extent to which stakeholders have provided easy access to the UBE schools in rural and urban schools, 10 respondents representing 10% said to a high extent, 39 respondents representing 39% said to a moderate extent while 51 respondents representing 51% said to a very low extent. From the statement on the extent to which stakeholders have carried out enlightenment campaign on the admission of Out-of-school boy-children in the UBE programme, 25 respondents representing 25% said to high extent, 22 respondents representing 22% said to a moderate extent while 53 respondents representing 53% said to a very low extent.

5. Discussion

Research question one on the causes of high rate of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State is analysed. From the analysis of data collected, it was discovered that the major causes of students' dropout from the UBE programme include ignorance of the importance of education by parents, poor parental enlightenment by government and non-governmental organisations, cultural factors and socio-economic factors. This finding is consonance with the findings of Abiri (2009) who discovered that cultural and religious factors are responsible for the high rate of out-of-school boy-children in Nigeria.

The results of research question two which sought to establish the impact of out-of-school children on the achievement of UBE enrolment goal in Jos North Local Government Area of Plateau State is analysed. From the analysis of data collected, it was discovered that the out-of-school boy-children has negated the achievement of UBE enrollment goals in Jos North, due to the high rate of out-of-school boy-children, the UBE enrolment goal has not been achieved in Jos North LGA. This finding is in conformity with the findings of Abutu (2015) who discovered that the high rate of out-of-school boy-children in Nigeria has increased the rate of out-of-school children thus militating against the achievement of UBE enrollment goals in Plateau State.

The findings from the analysis of research three on the efforts put in place by the government to reduce the high rate of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North Local Government Area revealed that the effort of government in reducing the rate of out-of-school boy-children include making the UBE programme compulsory for all school age children by law, providing easy access to the UBE schools in rural and urban areas and admitting the out-of-school boy-children into UBE programme. This finding corroborates the findings of Adekunle and Ogbogu (2016) who discovered that government has made effort to curb the rate of out-of-school boy-children through drafting of policies to assimilate them into the UBE programme.

6. Conclusion

From the aforementioned findings, it is obvious that there are still a high number of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North LGA and therefore, the extent of achievement of the UBE enrollment goals is still low despite effort by stakeholders to curb the rate of out-of-school children. Therefore, it is concluded in this study that there is need to put more effort towards curbing the rate of out of out-of-school boy-children in Jos North LGA of Plateau State.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were proffered:

- More UBE schools should be established in Jos North LGA to accommodate the high number of out-of-school girl-children in the LGA
- The UBE programme should be made compulsory for very Nigerian child of school age
- Child marriage should be discouraged in Nigeria and be made punishable by law.
- Enlightenment campaigns should be carried out by government and other stakeholders on the need for enrolment and re-admission for dropouts from the UBE programme
- Vibrant policies should be formulated by the government to assimilate all the school age out-of-school boy-children into the UBE programme.

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