



Enrolment and Transition Rate of Upper Basic Social Studies Students between 2010-2014 in Cross River State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the enrolment and transition rate of upper basic Social Studies students between 2010-2014 in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of the study, one research question was raised and answered. The descriptive research design was adopted where an inventory was used for data collection. Data collected were descriptively presented in table revealing the year by year enrolment and transition between 2010/11 and 2013/14 academic sessions. The result obtained indicate that the enrolment and transition trend of upper basic Social Studies students was not a healthy one over the years used for the study. Based on this result, conclusion was made thus; that the phrase “free and compulsory education for all” is a misnomer and does not apply as conceived in the field. Hence, it was recommended that basic education should not be made compulsory as stated in the policy document but children should be allowed to choose and begin their career from their early childhood.

Keywords: Early childhood education, Social Studies, students’ enrolment

INTRODUCTION

The name and the objectives of “Universal Basic Education” in a common sense would suggest that every Nigerian child, should have access to basic education without limitation. It was expected that after the inauguration of UBE in 1999, Nigerian roads would have gotten rid of children hawking on the streets, which can be seen as a form of child abuse. Yet, United Nations in 2013 released a scary statistics of 130 million children in developing countries that do not attend school, Nigeria inclusive. UBE website has the record of eight million children between the age 6 and 11 that are not in school in Nigeria.

This situation prompted Adamu (2003) who warned that every nation that neglects the education of her citizens is at risk and is facing “genuine national crises”. This warning is a call for millennium education best practices for education for global competitiveness. UBE is strictly designed to eradicate all forms of child abuse thus, the FRN (1999) in the constitution spells out all the rights of the child which includes right to education and primary healthcare.

According to Adebola (2007), basic education referred to early childhood education to the first three years of secondary education and basic functional literacy for out-of-school children, youths and adults. The UBE programme therefore promises all round educational provision for all citizens with the programme capitalization on free compulsory and universal primary education. Despite the programme objective to provide free and compulsory basic education to all children of school going age, Nigeria has one of the largest out-of-school populations in the world. United Nation reports that about 10.5 million primary school children are out of school (about 42 per cent of the primary school age population). The report further revealed that the net enrolment rates worsened from 61.3 per cent in 1999 to 57.6 per cent in 2010 (UN, 2013). Similarly, “after an initial improvement from 84.2 per cent to 102.6 per cent, the gross enrolment rate declined to 83.3 percent in 2010” (World Bank 2013;2). The reasons behind this decline are controversial.

Huebler (2006) reported in the web that educational statistics showing attendance of basic students in Nigeria indicate that, Nigeria is a UNICEF's one of the twenty-five priority countries for girl-child education. As of the year 2005, Nigerian population was estimated to be 130 million that made it the most populous African country. 22 million are children of basic school age. The most current statistics on school attendance in Nigeria is from a Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) that was conducted in the year 2003. On this record 60.1% of all children of lower basic age were attending primary schools at the time of the survey. Boys had a higher net attendance rate (NAR) than girls, with 63.7% compared to 56.5% for girls .

Nigeria's plethora out-of-school population and poor learning outcomes most likely do not stem from high drop-out and repetition within school. In fact, almost 90% of out-of-school -age children in Nigeria never attended school (World Bank, 2013). For those who are already in school, the dropout and failure rates are relatively low. Between 2008 and 2009, the highest reported repetition was only 2.8 percent. Similarly, the source reported less than 1% of children dropped out between grades 1 and 5. In the other hand, dropout rates were at 11%, in grade 6. The relatively low rates of repetition are likely due to automatic promotion within each school. On average, Nigeria has only 37 percent of students who finish basic school at the official primary-school-graduating age (World Bank, 2013). This delay in graduation from basic school may be due to late entrance into school, which is a serious issue in Nigerian education system. A general survey indicates that, about 17% of basic school students are above the official age. Above 32% of students admitted in basic 1 are older than the official 6 years starting age. Children in many families do not enrol in school until at the age 10 .

Progression to the next education level according to UN (2013) is also a challenge in Nigerian education system. The source reiterated that, among basic 6 students, only 53 percent transitioned to upper basic school (ie basic 7). The upper basic transition rate is even lower. A high percentage of students enrolled into upper basic never finish and only 29% of those who started school completed secondary school at 17 which is the official graduating age. Even if there is a delay up to age 24, only 75% complete upper basic and the remaining 25% never complete it.

The UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report (2009) reported that Nigeria has more out of school children than any other country in the world at the primary school and the source projections to 2015 shows a gross primary enrolment rate of around 105% and a net enrolment rate of just 70%. Lack of political will, support or commitment by the government is manifesting in the poor implementation of the UBE programme. Nevertheless, effective political commitment, leadership and firm resolution are essential for the success of the programme. The UNESCO- EFA Global Monitoring Report (2009) cited Nigeria as one of the countries battling with the impact of defective governance on the education sub-sector. Defective governance, according to this report, is significantly impeding progress towards EFA and undermining the quality of basic education services (Ejere, 2011).

Just one year to the target year in the achievement of UBE goals which is in line with MDGs, Nigeria still wallows in high level of illiteracy and unprecedented figure of out of school children that may cost Nigeria the dividends of investing in education. Amaka and Laju (2014) tend to support this assertion when they reported that it may take more than 70 years for all Nigerian children have access to primary education. This prediction may come true as UNESCO (2013) had earlier unveiled a report indicating that one in every five Nigerian child is out of school. Similarly, Abdulmalik (2013) unveiled that approximately 10.5 million Nigerian children of school going age are out of school. The source further reiterated that Nigeria accounts for 47 percent of the global out of school population .

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the enrolment and transition rate of Social Studies upper basic students between 2010-2014.

Research question

What is the enrolment and transition rate of Social Studies upper basic students between 2010-2014?

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design was adopted for this study. Descriptive design entails the collection of data to accurately and objectively describe existing phenomena as precisely as possible (Isangedighi,

Joshua, Asim & Ekuri 2004). In this design, the researcher makes a careful observation and a careful record of the situation on ground. The area covered in this study is Cross River State Nigeria. This comprises 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state that are educationally mapped out into three zones. The researcher used a structured checklist and inventories to collect data for this study.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research Question: *What is the enrolment and transition rate of Social Studies upper basic students between 2010-2014?*

In order to answer this research question, students’ enrolment figures and transition rates of the years under study were collected from the Ministry of Education Calabar and data analysis was carried out using simple percentages. The summary of data obtained to answer this research question is as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Inventory of enrolment and transition rate of upper basic Social Studies students in Cross River State

Admitted students	Educational zone	Enrolment Into JSS1	Transition into JSS 2	Transition into JSS 3
2010/2011 Set	Calabar	8,850	7,867	7,849
	Ikom	6,684	4,483	7,158
	Ogoja	5,932	5,831	5,886
	Total	21,466	18,181	*20893
2011/2012 Set	Calabar	8,560	9,231	8,095
	Ikom	6,920	7,793	6,731
	Ogoja	6,003	6,660	5,656
	Total	21483	*23684	20482
2012/2013 Set	Calabar	11,111	8,396	
	Ikom	7,975	7,236	
	Ogoja	6,888	6,719	
	Total	25974	22351	
2013/2014 Set	Calabar	8,401		
	Ikom	7,386		
	Ogoja	6,766		
	Total	*22553		

***Abnormal cases (sudden increase or decrease)**

Source: Opoh’s Field Survey 2014

The summary of data presented in Table 1 shows the year by year enrolment and transition between 2010/11 and 2013/14 academic sessions. Each set begins with enrolment into JSS 1 and then transition into JSS 2 and 3. Abnormal cases are marked asterisk (*) indicating a sudden increase or decrease from the trend. For example, the *20893 is an abnormal departure from the previous transition of 18181. Similarly, *23684 is not a positive increase from 21483 while *27553 was not a healthy fall from the previous enrolment of 25974. These cases show that there is no positive improvement in the enrolment and transition rate of student in upper basic schools in Cross River State as proposed and envisaged in the policy document. Hence, the implementation of UBE policy in terms of enrolment and transition in Cross River State has not been achieved within the years under consideration

The result of the analysis of data collected for this study revealed that the enrolment and transition trend of upper basic Social Studies students is not a healthy one over the years used for the study. There are incidences of abnormal cases indicating a sudden increase or decrease from the trend which did not aligned with the continuous increase in enrolment and transition rate of students. These cases show that there is no positive improvement in the enrolment and transition rate of student in upper basic schools in Cross River State as proposed and envisaged in the policy document rather, any change may be as result

of chance. Hence, the implementation of UBE policy in terms of enrolment and transition in Cross River State has not been achieved within the years under consideration.

The finding of this study is in line with the earlier report with scary statistics by UNESCO (2000) that 130 million children in developing countries do not attend school, Nigeria inclusive. The source also showed a record that eight million children between the ages 6 and 11 are not in school in Nigeria. This figure is not a healthy one for a country preaching “Education For All” and as well pursuing the vision 20-20-20. The finding also supported Abdulmalik (2013) that unveiled that approximately 10.5 million Nigerian children of school going age are out of school. The source further reiterated that Nigeria accounts for 47 percent of the global out of school population. This report on out of school Nigerian children 14 years after the introduction of UBE programme is not a welcome development for a country that is blessed with human and materials resources and brands herself as giant of Africa.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The phrase “free and compulsory education for all” is a misnomer and does not apply as conceived in the field. If this is not reverse urgently, even the vision 20:20:20 will elude Nigeria because, there is no steady increase in enrolment and transition rate of Social Studies students in upper basic between 2010-2014 in Cross River State, Nigeria as envisaged by its founding fathers.

There is no consistency in the enrolment and transition of upper basic Social Studies students in the research area, thereby impeding accurate records keeping and as well the knowledge of the needs of the scheme for efficiency. The inconsistency in the enrolment and transition rate of students in the research area, is impeding accurate records keeping and the knowledge of the needs of the scheme for efficiency. This has bought unprecedented enrolment without corresponding need supply.

Based on the above findings and the conclusions made, recommendation is made thus; that basic education should not be made compulsory as stated in the policy document but children should be allowed to choose and begin their career from their early childhood. This is because; children with technical prowess who were supposed to excel in arts and craft are always drowning in the class as well constituting pressure on the limited human and material resources.

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