

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST CHILDREN'S RETENTION, COMPLETION AND TRANSITION RATES IN BASIC EDUCATION IN ENUGU STATE NIGERIA

V.N. Ogakwu, Ph.D and Theresa Chima Isife

Abstract

Education drives development and without basic education children will not be exposed to socio-economic development.. This study looked at some factors that affect children's retention, completion and transition rates in basic education in Enugu State. The study used cross sectional survey design. The population of the primary school pupil was 8000, the sample size using Eboh (2009) at $\pm 7\%$ precision was 229. Questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The results showed that Socio-economic, culture and environment were some selected factors studied and noted as challenges that cause children in Enugu state not to transit, and complete their basic education therefore increasing the number of out of school children. The paper recommended that children from poor economic background should be encouraged by giving their parents some amount of money to send their children to schools by some philanthropists. Public-private partnership should be incorporated in educational system in order to allow the underprivileged children to complete their education.

National government over time has tried to give attention in the provision of education to her population especially in the basic and secondary education. In line with this Nigerian Government has supported the participation of the private sector in engaging in the education provision in all the level. Education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic group, and that education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, relevant and functional to the needs of the society. This is in line with the philosophy of Nigerian education to the development of individuals into sound and effective citizens of the nation (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). This provision has not stop the challenge of retaining students within the education system especially in the primary school education. Primary school education has been experiencing drop out not minding the huge benefits in schooling especially at the primary school education. It has been reported that these children leave schools to engage in several types of socio-economic activities to earn their living (Okeke and Okaforcha, 2019). This issue has been worrisome and poses very serious problems to education planners, researchers and concerned parents. When children do

not complete their enrolled education, it is said that they do not complete their education program. Hence, not completing the enrolled education is a situation where the children on regular school terms withdraw or drop out from school for some reasons other than death or that the student has transferred to other schools before graduation or completion of a programme registered to study (Abolo and Nwokonko, 2020).

In this paper the drop outs are considered to be students who do not change or transfer to other schools. These groups of students are most of the time considered as not being satisfied with the school or not being able to provide fund required to continue their stay in school (Oke, Ajagbe, Ogbari and Adeyeye, 2016). It can also be the inability of the students to adapt to the school environment. Studies show that there are combination of factors that could influence students from not transiting into the next class to achieve educational graduation (Bosco (2018, Toryila, Tseah, Adai, 2019).

It is believed that children from poor backgrounds are seen to have high drop-out tendencies when compared to those from wealthy background (Toryila, Tseah, Adai, 2019). When the intelligence is considered, it is noted that children whose parents are more less educated are the most affected in the issue of not completing the education. This is related to the fact that children get more advice from their parents and encouragement and expects them to complete and be someone in the society. With this there is parental great influence that affects the completion of the registered education programme.

The number of children who do not complete their education is on the increase. They have various challenges that bring about their not transiting to the next class thus completing their school (Okeke and Okaforcha, 2019). This group of people constitutes societal challenges especially with the issues of delinquency. These groups of people end up being unemployed and tend to have criminal and dubious involvements that are not good for any developing country.

However, education provision is one of the cardinal objectives of the development practice. many countries have tried to find an optimal level of providing education to the citizen (Tsafe, 2013). The key goal of the Sustainable Development Goals is to achieve universal basic education in developing countries (Nwankwo, 2010; Sharon, 2013). This has led to expedited actions in many countries in basic education provision. Bosco (2018) asserts that education is the key to national development because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people, empowers and equip individuals in society to participate in and benefits in their national economy. It facilitates economic development and provides the basis for transformation (Tsafe, 2013). It is the essential tool for sustainability. The present global economic crisis suggests that the entire world is struggling for qualitative education (UNICEF, 2012). Okon and Friday (2015), notes that the government has the primary responsibility to provide public good (education) to her citizens ensuring universality, access, equity education to all but that was not to be in reality due to hidden cost of education that has affected retention, completion and transition rates in Basic Education in Enugu State. While access to education is traditionally expected from government to her citizens, they alone may not be able to perform this enormous task.

Statement of the problem

According to Mapple (2011), education has been in crisis with much of the difficulty deriving from poor funding. Dissatisfied with the quality of education given in public schools, affluent parents have sent their children to private schools while the less affluent have sent their children to schools where low tuition fees are charged. This has given rise to many private schools in Enugu State. The parents who cannot afford the high cost of school fees send their children to the public school, while some parents send their children to school but these children do not transit nor complete their studies in the school. Such children end up moving into the society without gathering basic education which will enhance their existence as a total man. Children without basic education cannot support effective sustainable development. This will equally affect their health in terms of what they eat, do and how they respond to societal issues. They assist in increasing the illiteracy level in the nation. They consider some criminal activities as ways to survive in the society thereby breaking some rules and regulations in the society.

Ayodele (2017), recorded that the education system in Nigeria has failed to meet the expectations of the citizens. The height the educational development of any state attains depends on the functions and attentions given to it by the government and the stakeholders (Okoro, 2013). Unfortunately education in Enugu State has not been given adequate attention. From available records the amount budgeted towards education averaged 19 percent which is far below the UNESCO recommended 26 percent (Enugu State Accountant General Report, 2011-2016). At the Federal level, the situation is worse as the total amount budgeted towards education averaged 9 percent (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2014).

There is no gain saying the fact that huge investments in education has a long run positive impact on the socio-economic and technological development of a nation. Some third world countries like Malaysia and Thailand have understood this and have excelled tremendously because of their huge investment in the development of their human capital base through education. It is against this background that the researcher feels that financial space with consideration on some factors should be made available to all categories of children to improve their retention, transition and completion rates in basic education.

There are students who do not take up duties to bring about their achievement in education and even in the society as a total man. Such persons when enrolled in school tends not to complete their school programme (Bosco, 2018). These types of students had been traced to have either personal history or from home challenges. Hence, there are several factors that had been seen to be responsible ranging from institutional factors like leadership, the poor availability of facilities from the school, such as illnesses, poor academic performance, and dismissal from school or even the parent's inability to finance the education of their children or some other personal conditions.

There are some Factors Militating against Children's Completion and Transition Rates in Basic Education. These Include:

Cultural Constraints: In most traditional communities, it is believed that the place of the girl child is in the kitchen and as such, the girl child is socialized into accepting her traditional roles to maintain the welfare of the family, rearing and bearing of children, she acts as a care giver to her aged grandparents and siblings (Yinusa and Basil, 2008). The outcome is her lukewarm attitude towards education. These usually make their completion of education impossible while the boys are seen to be the people that will retain the invested resources in their family. This notions brings about great disparity in investing in both male and female children' education (Daily Independent, 2012). Marriage is one of such obnoxious cultural practices that affects children's completion rate in school (Akinbi, and Akinbi, 2015).

Parents in low socio-economic strata plagued by poverty sent their children purely for economic reasons (Aiyede, Ezegwu, Ewemooje, 2011). The global economic reason in the world and in Enugu State in particular has recently heightened the economic crunch. This has reduced the value of education to a point where parents withdraw their girls from school to be married for a good bride price and for the boys to learn trade that will yield return quickly. This partly explains why it has been difficult for children's retention, completion and transition in basic education in Enugu State.

Environmental Factor: For security reasons and sexual safety, some parents would rather keep their children at home than sent them to school especially distant ones (Yinusa and Basil, 2008). These children are engaged in child labour, such as trading, hawking and in the process of hawking, the girls amongst them are exposed to sexual harassment and abuse which is in itself an infringement on the right of the girl child to secure a decent life (Onwuameze, 2013).

Funding: The importance of finance cannot be over emphasized as it is the engine that drives everything in education. funds should be made available to provide infrastructure, facilities and equipment as well as teaching aids, payment of teachers' salaries and organization of seminars and workshops. Maintenance of existing infrastructure once fund is not made available will affect the retention, transition and completion rate of the children because even the academic environment will be conducive.

Policy Formulation: Policies are hurriedly jumped into without adequate planning thereby making it difficult for it to be monitored and supervised. Policy inconsistency could be a problem due to incessant regime change like the era of Obiageli Ezekwesili as the minister of Education. There were articulation and de-articulation of schools and causes a lot of conflict, disharmony within and outside schools.

Political Will: The height the academic/ education development of a state or nation attains depends on the function and the attention to it by the government and other educational stakeholders. Political office holders are not interested in education because it yields low return. Unfortunately, the amount budgeted towards education for 2012 to 2016 averaged 19 percent which is far below the UNESCO recommendation of 26 percent.

Objectives

The major goal of this study was to examine the influence of finance on children's retention, completion and transition rates in basic education in Enugu State. Specifically the study was:

1. To identify the socio-economic effect on retention and completion of children in universal basic education in Enugu state.
2. To establish the influence of culture on retention, completion and transition rate of children in basic education in Enugu state.
3. To examine the effect of environment on children's retention, completion and transition in basic education in Enugu state.

Research questions

1. How will socio-economic factor affect the children's retention, completion and transition rate in Universal basic education in Enugu state?
2. In what ways do culture affect the children's retention, completion and transition in universal basic education in Enugu state?
3. In what ways do environmental factors affect children's retention, completion and transition in universal basic education in Enugu state?

Methodology

The study used cross sectional research design. The population of the male and female pupils from the public primary schools from 6 educational zone in Enugu state were 8000. Using Eboh (2009), population of 8000 at $\pm 7\%$ precision gives sample size of 229. Male and female pupils were randomly selected from the public primary schools from each of the education zone by listing their names in each class and randomly picking the thoroughly mixed folded paper without looking. This enabled the researchers to select the required number of the respondents from the population without replacement to enable the population to have equal chance of being selected (Kothari and Garg, 2014). 112 male were selected from the population of 3,000 and 117 female from 5,000 giving the total of 229 samples. Questionnaire was the instrument used to gather data with 25 items. The questionnaire used 4-point Likert scale. The weightings were Strongly Agreed(SA) = 4, Agreed (A) = 3; Disagreed (D)= 2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD)= 1. The instrument was validated by three Experts in the Institute for Development Studies, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus. The data from the questionnaire were analyzed using mean and standard deviation(SD).The acceptance point for the items was a mean of 2.5.

Results

Table 1: Socio-economic factors that contribute to drop out of school

SN	Items	Male		Female		Remarks
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Needed to do some work to help the family	3.40	0.64	3.50	0.64	Accepted
2	Parents do not have money to pay school fees	3.20	0.42	3.40	0.63	Accepted
3	Needed to help to clean the house, fetch water and other domestic chores	3.10	0.41	3.50	0.64	Accepted
4	Needed to go to farm to help the family before going to school	2.92	0.65	3.20	0.46	Accepted
5	Needed to help my guardian in the shop before going to school	2.92	0.58	3.10	0.41	Accepted
6	Dropped out of school because our parents cannot feed us	3.60	0.62	3.5	0.64	Accepted
7	Dropped out because our parents have no means of lively hood	3.50	0.61	3.20	0.42	Accepted
8	Dropped out because children in rich background intimidate children from poor background	3.50	0.61	3.10	0.41	Accepted
9	Dropped out because of high cost of School fees	3.45	0.4	3.60	0.64	Accepted
10	Dropped out because of high cost of books and stationeries	2.92	0.68	3.10	0.41	Accepted
11	Dropped out because of transportation costs	3.00	0.61	3.00	0.61	Accepted
12	Dropped out because of PTA Levies	2.90	0.70	3.45	0.40	Accepted
13	Dropped out because of high cost of transportation	3.00	0.71	3.00	0.71	Accepted

Source: (Author's Field Work,2019)

From table 1, all the factors are contributing to the out-of school from the respondents. These factors such as needed to do some work to get money to support the family, parents not having money to pay the school fees, helping in cleaning the house, fetching water and other

Analysis of Selected Factors Militating Against Children's Retention, Completion and Transition Rates in Basic Education in Enugu State Nigeria

domestic chores, helping guardian in the shop, cost of school fees, transportation, books, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) levies, are all above the mean value of 2.5. Therefore they are seen to be contributing to socio-economic factors the affect non completion of the schooling program by both male and female respondents.

Table 2: Cultural Factors that contribute to drop out of school

SN	Items	Male		Female		Remarks
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
14	My parents died early and I had to support my family	2.90	0.60	3.45	0.40	Accepted
15	My parents engage me in doing house work	2.92	0.68	3.60	0.64	Accepted
16	My parents engage me hawking	3.00	0.61	3.36	0.41	Accepted
17	My guardian engaged me in care giving in the family	1.10	0.65	3.60	0.64	Male Not Accepted, Female Accepted
18	Early exposure to child labour by my parents made me to prefer trading to schooling	3.00	0.74	3.43	0.50	Accepted
19	Early marriage to help my family	1.52	0.54	3.36	0.64	Male Not Accepted, Female Accepted

Source: (Author's Field Work,2019)

From table 2 cultural factors that the respondents submitted as affecting the out-of school and non completions of school program were early death of parents, engaging in the house work, hawking, care giving and early marriage for female respondents only(mean below 2.5 for male respondents), early exposure to child labour were some cultural factor the respondent showed to contribute to out-of school. this is because these mean were above 2.5.

Table 3: Environmental Factors that Contribute to Drop Out of School

SN	Items	Male		Female		Remarks
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
20	Dropped out due to long distance to school	3.45	0.40	3.45	0.40	Accepted
21	Drooped out due to the fact that we are cut off by natural disaster -erosion	2.90	0.60	3.00	0.61	Accepted
22	Drooped out due to the fact that we are cut off by natural disaster -erosion	2.90	0.60	3.00	0.61	Accepted
23	Dropped out due to lack of facilities and space in school	3.00	0.61	3.12	0.43	Accepted
24	Dropped out due to dilapidated structures in the school	3.45	0.40	3.00	0.41	Accepted
25	Dropped out due to poor teacher attendance in the school	1.52	0.54	3.36	0.54	Male Not Accepted, Female Accepted

Source: (Author's Field Work,2019)

From table 3, environmental factors according to respondents were long distance to school, being cut off by natural disaster such as erosion, lack of facilities and space, dilapidated structures in the school as well as poor teacher attendance (according to the female respondents) with mean values above 2.5. While only male respondents with mean value less than 2.5 stating that dropping out due to poor teacher attendance in school was not an environmental factor since the mean value is below 2.5.

Discussion

The results show that Nigerian children find it difficult to complete their education after enrollment due to various factors. The socio-economic factors have a serious contribution to the drop- out rate of the children. When the family cannot take care of the requirements needed from the school authorities, the children will be out of school. It also includes inability to pay for the transportation costs, PTA levy, books and stationeries as well as the cost of school uniform. This finding collaborates with the study of Obunadike (2011). This is in line with the study of Maple (2011) and Schultz (2002), that asserts that education sector is bedeviled with myriads of problems of which is derived from poor funding. Poor funding affects both the teachers and the learners (Sachs, 2015). Poor funding brings about inadequate supply of teaching materials and poor environment for learning. The need for proper funding in the education system cannot be over emphasized since fund that is managed effectively brings about conducive learning atmosphere among other things.

Analysis of Selected Factors Militating Against Children's Retention, Completion and Transition Rates in Basic Education in Enugu State Nigeria

The poverty factor is not only in inadequate supply of fund but include that hunger is a contributory factor to out -of school children. This makes the children to engage in some economic activities to provide food for the family. This could lead to child abuse. This finding is in line with the study of (Okon and Friday, 2015).

Early marriage is a serious cultural factor that affects the girl child. This happens when the parents are not able to support the girl child to education. It is common with parents with low income to sustain their family, hence they give out the girl child to have less children to take care of in the family(Sachs, 2015). There is need to train girl child since training a woman leads to training a nation. This training of girl child comes with some other health benefits for the family as well as for the nation (Isife, 2013). The children of the educated women are likely to grow up healthier, better nourished, and have much greater chance of making progress in school. Investing in girl's education is also used in breaking the intergenerational vicious cycle of poverty (Isife, 2013). The practice of early marriage and keeping the girl child out of school is not helping in inclusive education and achievement of sustainable development. This cultural practice of early marriage need to be changed for girls to stay in school and graduate to bring the social change in gender inequality in education and health.

Natural disaster from the result as well as the physical environment contributes to the out-of school children. These are challenges that affect school children. The long distance to the school from home and lack of transportation cost will affect the children not to school. This can frustrate them and keep them away from school. The finding is in line with the study of Toryila; et al; (2019).

According to OECD (2010), public-private partnership which could have salvaged a lot of children from low income homes. Poor completion and retention of children in basic schools are linked with exploitative practices, income inequality and corruption that deters innovation and entrepreneurship. Dissatisfied with the quality of education from the public school, parents who are wealthy have sent their children to private schools on account of transition while the less affluent have sent their children to schools that charge low tuition fees or some kept their children at home to teach them. These are in line with the study of Hands (2009); Obunadike (2011) and Glavin (2017). This practice widens the gap between the rich and the poor children in having access to basic education in Nigeria. This inequality in education is not supporting the aim of inclusive education as the sustainable development goal has stipulated.

Conclusion

There are various factors as established from the study that affect retention, transition and completion of universal basic education in Enugu state. These include socio-economic factors. These include background of parents, poverty, hidden costs of education, funding; cultural and environmental factors. These are challenges that cause children in Enugu state not to transits, and complete their basic education therefore increasing the number of out of school children.

Recommendations

Children from poor economic background should be encouraged by giving their parents some amount of money to send their children to schools by some philanthropists.

Public private partnership should be incorporated in educational system in order to allow the underprivileged children to complete their education.

Government should remove all deterrents that hinder retention, transition and completion of basic education that is to fight against hidden costs of education.

Government should provide Finance for procurement of infrastructure, facilities and equipment to make schooling attractive.

Conducive academic environment should be made available for the progress of educational development and academic growth by the Stakeholders.

References

Abolo, E.V. and Nwokonko, R. N. (2020). Selection process, Teachers' welfare and attrition rate of teachers in District II, Lagos State, *Journal of Humanities*, 5(4); 79-93.

Aiyede, R. Ezegwu, N. Ewemooje, O. (2011). Keeping boys in school in Anambra state: The way forward in time financial crisis, SSRN electronic Journal, <http://Issrn/om/abstract=1762243>.

Akinbi, J. and Akinbi, Y. (2015). Gender disparity in enrolment into basic formal education in Nigeria: Implications for national multidisplinary. *Journal of Ethiopa* ,9(3)11-13.

Ayodele F.O. (2017). Achieving the sustainable Development Goals in Africa in the Context of complex Global Development Cooperation, CESDEV Monograph Series.

Bosco, G. (2015). Quality education and sustainable Development. *Journal of Resource Fullness and Distinction*, 1(2); 92-97.

Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin 2014.

Daily Independent (2012). High male dropouts: A nightmare for East governors, <https://dailyindependenting.com.2012/07/high-male-dropouts-a-nightmare-for-seast-governors/>.

Eboh, E.C. (2009). *Social and economic research principles and Methods*, Enugu: African Institute for Applied Economics.

Enugu State Government(2012-2016). Accountant General's reports and statement of accounts , Enugu State.

Analysis of Selected Factors Militating Against Children's Retention, Completion and Transition Rates in Basic Education in Enugu State Nigeria

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National Policy on Education* 6th Edition,NERDC.

Glavin, Chris (2017). Education in Nigeria,K12 Academics Retrieved from www.k12academics.com on 24th May 2020.

Hands, C.(2012). Why collaborate? The differing reasons for secondary school educators? Establishment of school-community partnership. *Journal of school effectiveness and school improvement*, 21(2) ;189-207.

Isife, C.T., (2013), The Impact of Women Education and Empowerment on National Development. *Journal of Qualitative Education*, 9(1),90-95.

Kothari, C.R and Garg, G. (2014).Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques. New Delhi: New Age International (p) Limited, Publishers.

Maple, E. (2011). Educational financial in P. Egbule, J.E. Tabotndip and D.A. Aboho (eds) *Refocusing education in Nigeria in the 21st Century*. Kano: West and Solomon Publishing Com. Ltd.

Nwankwo, O. C. (2010). Universal Basic education as a basis for Sustainable development in Nigeria, *Journal of research in Education and Society*, 1(1): 114-128.

OECD (2010). Education at a glance 2010. OECD Indicators Geneva OECD.

Obunadike, J.C. (2011). Towards effective school community Relationship/ Participation in the Management of secondary schools in the 21st Century in S. Oludadewo, E. Onwuka and D. Ajaegbo (eds)*Issues and challenges in Nigerian Education in the 21st Century*. Lagos: West & Solomon Publishing Company Ltd.

Oke, A.O. Ajagbe, M.A.,Ogbari, M.E. and Adeyeye, J.O. (2016). Teacher Retention and Attrition: A Review of the literature, *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* , 7(2), 371-378.

Okeke, N.I. and Okaforcha, C. (2019). Attrition and Strategies for teacher retention in secondary schools in Anambra State, *Global Journal of Education, Humanities and Management Sciences*, 1(1), 148-156.

Okon, F. and Friday, U. (2015).Entrepreneurial Education: A panacea for youth unemployment in Nigeria. *International Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Research*, 3(5); 11-22.

- Okoro, A. (2013). Government spending and economic growth in Nigeria (1980-2011). *Singaporean Journal of business economics and management studies* ,2(5) 263-279.
- Onwuameze, N.(2013). Educational opportunity and inequality in Nigeria: Assessing social background, gender and regional effects. *Thesis and Dissertations*, University of Iowa Research Online p16.
- Sachs, J.D.(2015). *The age of Sustainable Development*, Columbia: Columbia University press.
- Schultz, T.P. (2002). Why Governments should Invest More to Educate Girls *World Development*, 30(2); 207 – 225.
- Sharon, I. (2013). Prospects of Nigeria achieving "Education for all" by 2015, <http://studyinnigeria.wordpress.com/2013/04/25/prospect-of-nigeria-achieving-education-for-all-by2015>.
- Toryila, S.B. ,Tseah, A.T. Adai, E. (2019). Perceived impact of students' attrition on administration of secondary schools in Benue State. Retrieved from <https://www.bsum.edu.ng/w3/files/jem/vol1n1/article19.pdf> on 26th November,2021.
- Tsafe, A.K. (2013). A critical analysis of universal basic education in its implementation so far. *Scientific Journal of pure and applied Science*, 2(1) 2-24.
- UNICEF, (2012). *Global Initiatives on out of school*, Nigeria country study conducted within the conceptual and methodology framework (CMF), :9
- Yinusa, M. and Basil, A. (2008). Socio-economic factors influencing students' academic performance in Nigeria. Some explanation from a local survey. *Pakistan Journal of Socio-Sciences*, 5(4)319-323.