
Intervention Design Framework on Advocacy Promotion for Enhancing Basic Education in Nursery/Primary Schools

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Abstract

The study aimed at developing framework on advocacy needs for enhancing basic education and used research and development (R&D) as the design. The study sampled 144 head teachers and 516 teachers, 108 market union executives, 6 traditional rulers, 114 senior officers from State Ministry of Education, and 15 schools in the six education zones. Percentage was used to find the biographic data; mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the two research questions; t-test was used for testing the hypothesis at .05 level of significance. Content analysis was used for analyzing interview schedules. The challenging needs (baseline data) were used to develop the objectives, proposed intervention, and activities in the framework that will mitigate the identified problems. The major findings showed poor advocacy promotion on some issues concerning basic education. Therefore, the masses should be seriously sensitized to be involved in the children's education.

The success of Basic Education Program depends on the level of Back-to-school campaign with a strong focus on increasing access to education especially for boys in Anambra State of Nigeria. Nwana (2000) defined basic education as fundamental, foundation, bottom-line education upon which every other education whether formal, informal or non-formal can be built and without which any education structures erected will not have chances of success. Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) (2002) in line with the above definition stated that basic education is the foundation for sustainable life-long learning. It also provides reading, writing and numeracy skills.

For children's development in the above skills to be actualized, there are certain expectations within the school environment to enhance quality academic

achievement. Among the expectations is sustainability which is similar to institutionalization, and typically refers to an innovation that endures over time (Billing, Sherry and Havelock; 2002). With sustainability, the innovation typically does not lose its identity. Rather, it becomes valued and supported as part of the culture of the institution (Schneider, Brief, and Guzzo, 1996). Sustainability often involves maintenance or scaling up of the innovation by building constituencies and or resources, creating strong, ending partnerships, generating and leveraging resources, and identifying and securing funding sources that are available over time. Again, institutionalizing addresses the permanent use of the innovation such that it loses its own identity and becomes a normative part of the organization and its culture (Miles, 1983). When a new process or innovation is used in a routine manner and is accepted as something normal that is expected to continue, it is incorporated into the organizational framework and its procedures as a natural pattern (Ekholm and Trier (1987).

Again, Fordham (1992) noted that theories, research evidence and practice suggested investing in the curriculum; learning materials; classroom teaching; community and buildings for improving learning. However, this quality system underscored the significance of intervention on advocacy promotion for enhancing basic education, which this study intends to fill. Advocacy according to UNESCO (1992) consists of the organization of information into argument to be communicated through various interpersonal and media channels with a view to gaining political and social leadership acceptances and preparing a society for a particular development program. Community Tool Box (2000) noted that advocacy is active promotion of a cause or principles; and involves actions that lead to a specific goal.

Raising national awareness in children's education has increased political and financial commitment through advocacy and sensitization of policy makers at all levels, parents, school authorities, other leaders and children themselves. High level of advocacy to policy makers, traditional and religious leaders as well as continuous sensitization and mobilization of communities promote commitment to implementation, ownership and sustainability of education interventions (United Nations Education Fund) (UNICEF) (2007). An intervention in education according to White, White and Matsakis (1998) is a deliberate process by which change is introduced in the system to ameliorate low standards of literacy and numeracy in order to increase the pace of learning and teaching. This change can be done through a framework. Council of International Bureau of Education (2006) stated that framework is designed to be a living document, expected to change over time as the vision, policy, goals, principles, performance measures and outcomes are implemented and evaluated. Birmingham City Council (2006) noted that framework for intervention helps teachers tackle concerns about students' behaviour in schools, using school improvement, staff empowerment and environmental change. The programme goal for this study is to promote advocacy for basic education which is vital in creating a supportive policy environment.

It was recognized according to India (2000) that mobilizing civil society to participate in the program of basic education was essential for achieving the goals of EFA. The major efforts were made to use all means including mass media for advocacy and promotion of EFA activities. Further, in order to reach the common stakeholders, mass campaigns were launched for creating awareness about educational need of children, and helped them to develop proper appreciation of the role of education in improving the quality of life. India (2000) went further to note that program in basic education could be implemented in a mission mode involving the community in an effective manner through mechanisms such as District Literacy Committees, Village Education Committees and Parent-Teacher Association. Literacy campaigns, furthermore, have made big strides in this direction. Recognizing the fragile nature of literacy levels achieved in a campaign made by India, and the need to create a learning society, the National Literacy Mission (NLM) provided for a Post Literacy Campaign where the gains of literacy are consolidated and an effort is made to link learning skills with life skills. Similarly, in order to sustain the learning process in the community, NML supported the establishment of continuing Education centres that provided a package of life-linked services for neo-literates.

Education Sector Support Program in Nigeria's (ESSPIN's) (2008) purpose was to improve the planning, financing and delivery of basic education so as to improve access, equity and quality. As a six-year program, ESSPIN is building up government capacity and providing help to schools and communities as part of its function. It is working with communities, civil society, the media and political representatives to share information, agree on service standards and build up demand for better services. In particular, it is helping School Based Management Committees to have a bigger influence in school management and improvement. ESSPIN is working alongside Partnerships for Accountability and Voice in States (PAVS) to build broad coalitions for reform in the education sector.

World Bank Group (2001) research in 1995 on improving primary education in Kenya tried to estimate the effect of education policies on school performance in industrial countries. Preliminary results showed a large increase in attendance, probably due to the provision of free school uniforms, which effectively lowered the price of schooling. The project was expanded in 1996 to 25 schools that were randomly chosen to receive a large number of textbooks. The children were followed for three more years (1997-99) to assess whether the initial effects endured for several years. The result showed that textbooks had little effect on dropout rates or grade repetition. The World Bank Group (2000) again in 1997 selected 25 schools to receive block grants that could be spent on several options such as: textbooks, other school supplies, or construction of new classrooms. The purpose of the study was to see whether funds were used more effectively when schools were given a choice on how to spend them. The results showed statistically significant effects in reducing dropout rates and increasing repetition rates.

Duro's (2002) study was on "when state policies meet local district context". He focused on how a statewide reform initiative, when envisioned as a professional development opportunity impacted teachers' capacities to become change agents in their classrooms and districts; and how individual district contexts shaped the development of those capacities. The data revealed that teachers' experience changed in their personal literacy practices and views of themselves as learners and felt an increased ability to evident change in a variety of educational contexts, including their classrooms, buildings, and districts. Proper sensitization, awareness and campaign to masses on education issues will go a long way to enhance basic education. This can be done by building coalitions, trade unions to assist the state government in identifying solution to their problems or needs. The approach in this study is that intervention framework in advocacy is an essential ingredient in enhancing basic education in the state.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to

1. identify advocacy need areas for enhancing basic education in nursery/primary schools.
2. develop intervention framework for enhancing basic education in nursery/primary schools.

Research Question

1. What advocacy issues on basic education are needed for enhancing basic education in nursery/primary schools?
2. What are the specific challenges for advocacy intervention framework for basic education in nursery/primary schools?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of veteran headteachers and beginning teachers concerning advocacy issues on basic education needs for enhancing nursery/primary education.

Method

The design of this study is research and development (R&D). The area of the study is Anambra State in the South Eastern Nigeria. The sample consisted of 144 headteachers and 516 teachers from 15 primary schools and the six education zones in the state, made up of Awka (26 headteachers cadre and 94 teachers cadre); Nnewi (33 headteachers cadre and 106 teachers cadre); Onitsha (20 headteachers cadre and 107 teachers cadre); Ogidi (21 headteachers cadre and 86 teachers cadre); Aguata (23headteachers cadre and 67 teachers cadre) and Otuocha (21 headteachers cadre and 56 teachers cadre) education zones. Other subjects were: 6 traditional rulers and 114 senior officers from State Ministry of Education.

The questionnaires designated ‘baseline data tool’ (BDT); ‘Intervention Framework Tool’ (IFT), and Interview Schedule (IS) were employed in data collection. The instruments were subjected to face and content validation. The first questionnaire used to collect baseline data and the interview schedule were validated by five experts in measurement and evaluation, educational psychology, childhood education; and intervention framework tool by seven experts in administration, measurement and evaluation, curriculum, and childhood education. The validators judged the appropriateness of the instrument in measuring what were intended to be measured. The content validation sought to find the extent to which the items of the instruments were representatives of the contents and behaviours being measured. For instance, the validation focused on the relevance of items in the questionnaire based on advocacy needs, intervention framework and interview; adequacy of the content, clarity, and logical sequence of the items. Based on the contributions of the experts, some items and questions were modified. The final scales consisted of 12 items for the BDT which were originally 16; 4 items for framework which were also 6 items, 12 items for interview schedule which were also 16 items originally.

The reliability estimate was established for BDT which was an indication that items in the questionnaire were reliable. To determine the reliability, 30 copies of the questionnaire were administered to 30 headteachers and teachers in three schools each from Asata, Ogui, and New Layout in Enugu State. Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha. Reliability Coefficient was calculated for the main part of the instrument to determine the degree of consistency. The high reliability coefficient (.96) implies that the instrument was highly reliable for the purpose of the study.

The research questions were answered using the mean and standard deviation. The items on the BDT were structured on a five point weighted scale (Likert scale) of Strongly Agree (SA:5), Agree (A:4), Undecided (U:3), Disagree (D:2) and Strongly Disagree (SD:1).

Thus the mean score is $5+4+3+2+1 = 15 = 3.0.$

The mean was taken to be 3.5 which is greater than the lower limit of 4 which corresponds with Agree. With 3.5 as computed mean, it means that any factor or variable with a mean of 3.5 and above was regarded as positive or accepted while the mean below 3.5 was regarded as negative or not accepted for research questions.

The second questionnaire (IFT) was structured on a three point weighted scale of Appropriate (A:3), Undecided (U:2) and Inappropriate (A:1).

Thus, the mean score is $3+2+1 = 6 = 2.$

But the mean was taken to be 2.5 which is greater than the lower limit of 3 that corresponds to agree. Any mean below 2.5 was regarded as negative or not appropriate.

t-test was used at .05 level of significance at 658 degree of freedom in testing the hypothesis. The null hypothesis was not rejected when the result of t-test value for 658 degree of freedom at .05 level of significance is equal or greater than the calculated t value. On the other hand, the null hypothesis was rejected when the result of t-test value for 658 degree of freedom at .05 of significance is less than the calculated t value.

Interview was used to collect data from 114 State Ministry of Education staff on grade level 12 and above; 6 traditional rulers – one from the headquarter of each zone through a face-to-face interview focusing on a specific issue. The interview schedule was based on the research questions.

Results

Research Question 1

What advocacy issues on basic education are needed for enhancing basic education in nursery/primary schools?

Table 1

Means of Responses and Standard Deviation on Advocacy Issues on Basic Education Needs.

N = 660

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1.	Coalition of professionals in education to sensitize the government on retraining of teachers on teaching methodologies for children's acquisition of numeracy, literacy and other social skills.	4.25	.85	Agree
2.	Coalition of trade unions to raise funds to equip primary schools with teaching materials like radios, play equipment, computers, television, projectors etc, for effective teaching and learning.	4.02	1.01	Agree
3.	Coalition of individuals to raise funds to equip primary schools with facilities like enough classrooms, library, toilets, laboratories, farm land, chairs, chalkboard, water and sanitation facilities for effective teaching and learning.	3.90	1.09	Agree
4.	Coalition of professionals to sensitize the government on the issues of periodic curriculum review to meet the learning needs of the pupils and the society.	4.08	.96	Agree
5.	Ministry of Education to sensitize various agencies/bodies to assist Anambra State in implementation of basic education program.	4.08	.96	Agree
6.	Professionals trained in science of curriculum development			

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	to sensitize the government on starting a new cycle of curriculum development.	4.18	.91	Agree
7.	Mobilization of communities to provide nursery/primary schools with one balanced school meal a day and quality curriculum materials.	3.89	1.09	Agree
8.	Creation of awareness through the media or community meetings on communities best application of resources from school.	3.97	1.00	Agree
9.	Sensitization of political parties by the government to fund basic education.	3.76	1.20	Agree
10.	Creation of awareness by the government on the television/ radio to school administrators on continuous feedback on resources and school performance.	4.08	.96	Agree
11.	Sensitization of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) Such as Churches, youth organisations by the government to improve access and retention in schools.	3.75	1.12	Agree
12.	Sensitization of stakeholders for periodic organisation of conferences, seminars, workshops for teacher proficiency in handling school subjects.	3.17	1.08	Agree

Data on table 1 have shown agreement from the respondents on advocacy issues on basic education. This is because the least mean score is 3.75 for item 11 which is sensitization of NGOs such as churches, youth organisations by the government to improve access and retention in schools. This least mean score is higher than 3.5 which is the lower limit of 4 corresponding with agree.

Again, there was consensus opinion on sensitizing the public through Churches, youth organisations, and other clubs on the benefits of basic education. Others suggested sensitization of stakeholders for periodic organisation of conferences, seminars for teachers' proficiency in school subjects. The politicians and trade unions should be involved in funding basic education. There should be re-orientation for traditional rulers; town unions, parents, on the benefits of basic education. There should also be radio, television, daily news, and town crying for sensitization of people on the ills on not sending pupils to school.

Qualitative Analysis on Research Question 1 Results from the Respondents' Interview

Sensitization of stakeholders for participation in nursery/primary education (participatory education). NGOs, Community Based Organisations (CBOs) efforts are needed on sensitization and provision of materials. Awareness should be made through the media and other information units to political and community leaders as well as individuals for funding of basic education.

Research Question 2

What are the specific challenges for intervention framework in enhancing basic education in nursery/primary Schools?

Table 2

Means of Responses and Standard Deviation on Intervention Framework on Advocacy Issues for Enhancing Basic Education in Nursery/Primary Schools

S/N	Challenges / Problems Facing Basic Education	Intervention Objectives	Proposed Intervention Content	Activities	\bar{X}	Sd	Remarks
1.	<p>Advocacy Promotion: Non coalition of professionals in education to sensitize the government on retraining of teachers on teaching methodologies</p>	<p>- Organise the meeting of the professionals to mount pressure on governments on the need to retrain teachers for adequate use of teaching methodologies</p>	<p>- Coalescing professionals through mobilization to sensitize the governments on retraining of teachers on teaching methodologies</p>	<p>- Government to empower State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) officials and other shareholders to mount orientation campaigns to improve in teaching methodologies by professionals and experts in the field through workshops, seminars and conferences.</p>	2.43	98	Inappropriate
2.	<p>Non sensitization of community to aid by devising means of curbing out school drop-out.</p>	<p>- Encourage community members, religious groups, and town unions to fight against school drop-out.</p>	<p>- Sensitizing the stakeholders to help in devising means of curbing school drop-out.</p>	<p>- Professionals to host meetings and discuss the ills in dropping out of children. - Mount radio, television program to educate parents on the dangers of withdrawing their children from school and benefits in completion. - Political aspirants to invest certain amount of money in the school need areas to be eligible to be</p>	2.14	1.07	Inappropriate

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				voted for.			
3.	Non-sensitization of market unions, individuals and various community groups to raise funds to equip schools with quality teaching materials and other facilities.	- Sensitize various union groups and individuals to help equip school with relevant teaching materials and facilities.	- Raising funds to equip schools with teaching materials and adequate facilities.	- Government to use communication media to educate the public and share important information among those who need to know. - Traditional rulers to use enlightenment campaigns through jingles, union meetings, announcements to educate the masses to equip schools. - Government to create a broad public commitment to the goal of "Education for All"	2.86	.38	Appropriate
4	Non-sensitization of the community and NGOs to improve access and retention of pupils.	- Organize (Government) meetings with NGOs and community members at the local government levels to encourage access and retention.	- Sensitizing the communities and NGOs to improve access and retention of the pupils.	- mount radio, TV program by the Government to enlighten the public. - Use both persuasive and coercive methods to get parents to send their children to school. - Enactment of laws by the government on compulsory schooling. - Orientation of parents on the benefits from basic education.	3.0	.00	Appropriate

Key:

\bar{X} = Mean

SD = Standard Deviation.

The first two items showed inappropriateness from the expert responses/certification. Their means are all below 2.5 respectively, which is the lower limit of 3. the remaining 2 items revealed appropriateness with their mean responses as 2.86 and 3.00; and standard deviation as .38 and .00.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Headteachers (HTs) and teachers (Ts) concerning advocacy issues on basic education needs for enhancing basic education in nursery/primary schools.

Table 3

The t – test Summary Examining Differences in Mean Ratings of Head Teachers and Teachers.

Variables	Number of Cases	Mean of Ratings	Standard Deviation	t
Head Teachers	144	4.12	0.89	1.42
Teachers	516	3.95	1.06	

df = 658

$p > 0.05$; $t_{cal(1.42)} < t_{cri(1.96)}$

H_0 upheld

The above table showed that the null hypothesis is accepted, because at the 658 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance the critical/table t value is 1.96 which is greater than the calculated t value of 1.42. Therefore, the head teachers and classroom teachers did not significantly differ in their mean ratings of advocacy issues on basic education needs for enhancing basic education in nursery/primary schools.

Discussion

The results of the findings on advocacy issues indicated that all the respondents agreed on all the issues raised for enhancement of basic education, such as coalition of professionals in education to sensitize government on retraining of teachers on teaching method; periodic review of curriculum; coalition of trade unions, individuals, political parties, other stakeholders, etc. to support basic education. The findings are in consonance with the affirmation by Light (1998) that no intervention can be sustained without people who are actively promoting and nurturing its use. This according to Light (1998) was accomplished through meetings involving key stakeholders' groups such as superintendents, and principals; regular communication; infusion of free resources; and selection of "rising stars" to participate in professional development, coach others, and carry the message.

The findings on advocacy promotion from the framework for intervention revealed serious need for intervention framework as guide to sensitize or generate public awareness and support towards basic education needs. For instance, the result indicated that professionals in the science of curriculum development can sensitize the

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Professionals to host meetings, and discuss the ills in dropping out of children from school. The result also revealed that stakeholders can be sensitized to mount radio and television program to educate parents on the dangers of withdrawing their children from school; and benefits in completion. Also, traditional rulers, when properly sensitized can use enlightenment campaigns through jingles, union meetings, announcements to educate the masses to equip schools with adequate instructional materials. The Government can also use both perspective and coercive methods to get parents to send their children to school; enact laws on compulsory schooling. These findings fall in line with the Center for Learning Resources (CLR) (2005:3-4) that developed the following range of advocacy activities to generate public awareness and support: The CLR has designed primary Mathematics exhibition in Marathi, Hindi and English which depicts the functional mathematics skills that children in primary schools and non-formal educational centres need to learn, and the methods and materials required to teach these skills. They raised awareness about improving rural primary school design and facilities. Both within and outside the educational community, the CLR actively promoted the understanding that children learn best when their schools and classrooms are designed properly, and are provided with adequate indoor and outdoor facilities.

The findings also showed that there was no need of the Government to empower ASUBEB officials and other stakeholders to mount orientation campaigns to improve teachers' proficiency in teaching method through workshops, seminars and conferences. There was inappropriateness in sensitizing stakeholders to help curb school dropouts. These are contrary to the Science and Mathematics Educators (2004) that realized the use of focusing on classroom practice in professional development, illustrating how teacher knowledge of content and pedagogy and the understanding of students' need to come together in the context of instructional decision-making. They developed a number of materials in the database to facilitate the process. Such materials were the use of examples of students' work as vehicles for teachers to deepen their own understanding of Science/Mathematics and sharpen their understanding of how students think about key mathematics and science concepts. Such materials also help teachers reflect on ways to enhance student understanding. Similarly, teachers should be promoted with a meaningful link between their own experiences and the classroom practice (Mokras, 1995).

Conclusion

This study has explored advocacy need areas for intervention framework for enhancing basic education in nursery/primary schools. Understanding the importance of intervention framework on factors affecting nursery/primary school teaching and learning is critical for improving the quality of basic education in the state. An attempt has been made in this work to raise some issues in advocacy promotion on basic education. The nature of coalition, sensitization and incentives given to both private and public sectors and also community members are not seriously considered for

effective advocacy promotion. Coalition of trade unions, political parties, traditional ~~the Inuit~~ other stakeholders should be considered to support education.

Recommendation

In view of the results of the findings of this study, it was recommended, among others, that there should be intervention framework in the following ways:

1. The State Government should develop a project advocating for more effective attention to the causes of low pupils' access to school and drop-out especially the boys.
2. The Government should work with a wide range of organisations including community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), private sector organisations, think tanks, faith-based organisations, media houses and State Assemblies in advocacy projects.
3. The government should organize orientation of both parents and children by the government and other stakeholders on the benefits accruing from basic education through media, religious groups, community meetings, etc in order to increase access, retention and reduce drop-out rate in schools.
4. Ministry of Education should work alongside Local Education Authority to build broad coalitions for reform in the education sector.
5. There should be a broad-based advocacy effort to make elementary education a priority for government and a visible public and political concern.

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