
**HIGHER EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
GOALS: WHICH WAY NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR
EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION**

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Abstract

This study investigated Higher Education and sustainable Developmental Goals. Implication for Educational Evaluation. The theoretical framework used for the study was a Resource Dependency Theory. A survey research design was employed. While the population of the study were made up of all lecturers and legal officers plying their trade in Rivers State. Cluster sampling technique that was used. The sample of the respondents were five hundred (500). The instrument used to collect data was titled “Higher Education and Sustainable Developmental Goals Questionnaire (HESDGQ) it had fifteen items measuring respondents opinion on the issue of Higher Education and Sustainable Developmental Goals. The variables were gender and stakeholders in their profession (lecturers and Legal Officers). The instrument has a criterion reference of 2.5 the basis for accepting and rejecting the items. Face and content validity were the parameter for the validity. Two experts who are vast in psychometric carried review.

Their observations and comments which were used to correct the final version before production. The reliability co-efficient in estimating its internal consistency was 0.81. One research question and two hypotheses guided the study. Research showed that there was concord among the respondent. While the hypotheses showed that the two of them all showed no significant difference. Based on these conclusion was drawn and recommendations made.

Keys Words: Sustainable Development, Goals Uneso, International Association of University

Education is perceived as a powerful tool and of the intelligent mind to fight ignorance and its attending ills. It is a weapon which serves to liberate the individual's mind from the restraint of limitation of ignorance and dependency. As such, it is designed to increase the learner's physical and mental freedom to increase and control himself and the society. Education liberates the individual, environment and also aids national development.

It is in the light of the above standpoint that the researchers identified three vital variables that is very remarkable (i) the individual (ii) the society and (iii) the environment. Education in other words exposes individuals on how to maintain themselves and also ensures that the society moves on in asymmetric order. It also helps to keep the environment in check hence we have the issues of afforestation, deforestation, and desert encroachment. Moreso the challenge of global warming is stirring educational industry on the face for solution. The need for collaboration thus becomes inevitable. The importance of education in the entire globe is very crucial Esu and Junaid (2000) averred that education is a tool for social transformation, growth and sustainable development of the nation such as Nigeria. This stand was corroborated by the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) which stated, that education is an instrument par excellence for effecting national development amongst others.

Sequel to this, education was recognized in the 3rd tier as a powerful tool in promoting sustainable development, this gave birth to the axiom education for sustainable development Brundtland report (1987) saw this as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. International Association of Universities (IAU) was bent at encouraging universities to promote sustainable development, thus leading to the policy statement of the Kyoto Declaration on Sustainable Development. The International Association of Universities has continuously maintained that sustainable development as one of its key action areas and has developed an online portal on higher education for sustainable development in order to encourage higher education institutions around

the world to network and showcase their activities through the portal UNESCO, UNEP and International Association of Universities (2002).

Sustainable Developmental Goals

The second segment of this work is hinged on sustainable development goals otherwise known as Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda is a set of seventeen aspirational global goals with 169 targets between them. The United Nations led this dream to be achieved through deliberative process involving all the member states, civil society, organisational and others stakeholders. The resolution was a broader intergovernmental agreement that, while acting as the post 2015 development Agenda builds on the principle agreed upon under Resolution A/RES/66/288 popularly known as the future we want. (Wikipedia 2016).

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon opined that “There can be no plan B, because there is no planet B” in view of this, UN General Assembly (2014) open workgroup on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and forward a proposal for SDGs to the General Assembly. This proposal contained 17 goals with 169 targets covering a broad range of sustainable development issues. Amongst others to halt “poverty, hunger, improving health, education and making environments more sustainable, combating climate change, protecting oceans surge and deforestation. By 5th December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly accepted the report of secretary General’s report which stated that the agenda for the post-2015 SDG be based on open working group proposals. After the Negotiation on the post 2015 Development Agenda, a final document was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit September 2015 in United States of America. The Title of the agenda was to be known as “Transforming Our World the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developmental Goals”

Theoretical Framework: Resource Dependency Theory (RDT)

The importance of resources in any venture cannot be over emphasized. Its successes and failures are determined by the availability of resources to run education. Higher education here refers to the third tier institution (Universities, Polytechnics and Monotechnics) these institutions depend on resources for survival, therefore depriving them of critical resources causes uncertainty and threatens the existence of institution. According to Pfeffer & Salancik (1978); Pfeffer 2005 Rhoades & Stanghter, 2004; Jaeger & Thornton, (2005) cited in Namalefe, (2015) avers that in order to survive, institutions must ensure a continuous flow of resources, in the same vein institutional’s administrators should attempt to maximally utilize and maintain key resource sources to keep the institutions afloat.

- The assumption of this study is as follows
1. There are no educational programs in the institution that can swiftly accomplish its programs without adequate resource funding.

2. Every manpower development or training programs has to do with finance (resource) to be accomplished. Today lectures in Nigeria can travel to any part of the world for conferences on Tetfund sponsorship. More than 70% of these conferees here are on Tetfund sponsorship.

3. Most industrial actions of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) are as a result of inadequate funding of the public universities.

In view of the factors above, it is imperative that resources are inevitable to keep the universities afloat and in the right shape to deliver. Hence the resource dependency theory as applied in this study.

Jaeger & Thornton, (2005) maintained that for countries and continents to benefit from investing in human capital, they must have adequate resources to guarantee quality and rigorous training of human capital. To these institutions facing challenges and vulnerability when resources becomes scarce, then have to be sourced from diverse alternatives sources. The task of higher education is mainly to develop and exposes potential manpower to Man various segments of the society. To articulate the task according to the United Nations (UN) and UNESCO requires strong and polished personnel that can deliberate on global issues and make the planet earth habitable with little or no difficulties.

In the same vein, to achieve sustainable developmental goals, resource dependency theory has to be brought to bear on these targets. The United Nations needs enough funds to finance these programs. The counterpart funding for member nations are very important. On 25th September 2015, the one hundred and ninety three countries of the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Development Agenda titled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Developmental Goals”. Following the adoption, United Nations agencies under the umbrella of the United Nations Development Group decided to support a campaign by several independent entities among them were corporate institutions and international organizations (Wikipedia, 2016).

The successes of these novel programs are absolutely dependent on the availability of resource. That is why weaker Nations are supporting the deal to be relevant, in this period of global economic recessions

Purpose/Objectives

The purpose/Objective of this study is to investigate Higher Education and sustainable developmental goals in Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study would include:

- (i) To examine the role of higher education in attaining sustainable developmental goals.
- (ii) To find out the benefits of becoming part of the trend
- (iii) To determine how these goals and components can be achieved before 2030.

Research Question

The following research question were postulated to guide the study

- (i) What are the impacts of Higher Education on sustainable development goals in Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses was postulated to guide the study

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the opinions for male and female lecturers and legal officers on the impact of Higher education on sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between lecturers and legal officers in their opinion of Higher education and sustainable developmental goals.

Methods

The study was an exploratory one which adopted a survey design. This design was considered ideal because only a part of the population was studied and findings generalized on the entire population. Ukwuije and Obowu-Adutchay (2012). The population was made up of legal officers and lecturers with a doctoral degree in Rivers State. Cluster sampling technique was employed to select five hundred (500) legal officers and lecturers with a (Ph.D) qualification based on gender. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire tagged “Higher Education and Sustainable Developmental Goals Questionnaire (HESDQ)”. It was self-structured instrument with fifteen (15) items. The instrument was anticipated to be rated on a four modified point likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA)=4 points, Agree (A)=3 points Strongly Disagreed (SA)=2 points and Disagree(1)=1 points. The instrument was validated by three psychometricians who are vast in measurement and evaluation. These professionals concorded with the items which were relevant for the study. The reliability of the instrument was also established using Cronbach alpha this resulted to .86 which was deemed convenient for the instrument to be used for the study.

Results

Research Question 1:

What is the impact of Higher education and sustainable developmental goals in Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondent’s Opinion of Higher Education and Sustainable Developmental Goals in Nigeria

S/N	Statements	N	\bar{X}	SD	Criterion X	Remark
1	Higher education a powerful tool for sustainable development goal.	500	2.49	0.20	2.5	Accept
2	The pact of higher education can enhance sustainable developmental goals.	500	2.42	0.27	2.5	Accept
3	The quest for higher education can be diversified and not for general development.	500	2.34	0.87	2.5	Accept
4	Higher education liberates the mind for greater challenges.	500	2.37	0.74	2.5	Accept
5	Higher education is a yard stick for positive development.	500	2.40	0.80	2.5	Accept
6	Gender inequality play a large role in the perpetuation of poverty.	500	2.33	0.74	2.5	Accept
7	Extreme poverty leads people to live in less than \$1.25 per day.	500	2.45	0.72	2.5	Accept
8	Zero hunger could lead to sustainable agriculture.	500	2.32	0.98	2.5	Accept
9.	Good health can enhance sustainable development and promote good health for all ages.	500	2.55	0.77	2.5	Reject
10.	Preservation of resources is not attainable.	500	2.60	0.65	2.5	Reject
11.	Poor economy is a result of ignorance against sustainable development.	500	2.24	0.58	2.5	Accept
12.	Public enlightenment can lead to sustainable goals.	500	2.36	0.63	2.5	Accept
13.	Poor funding of the agencies can frustrate viable developmental goals.	500	2.48	0.84	2.5	Accept
14.	The solid integration of the affiliate bodies to the United nations can encourage desired sustainable goals.	500	2.16	0.38	2.5	Accept
15.	Inclusive and equitable quality education can seldomly can be realized.	500	3.12	0.63	2.5	Reject

The analysis in table 1 above revealed that the mean of thirteen (13) items whose means were below 2.5 were all accepted as per the set criterion only two (2) items 10 and 15 had their means above 2.5. All the items which measured Higher

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education, sustainable developmental goals and general issue were absolute indicators that higher education and sustainable developmental goals are achievable. This implies that the opinions were in agreement with the research question.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the opinions between male and female lecturers and legal officers towards Higher education and sustainable development al goals in Nigeria.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of Mean Difference in Male and Female Lecturers and Legal Officers Opinions toward Higher Education and Sustainable Developmental Goals

Gender of Lecturers and Legal Officers	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-value	Remark
Male	260	3.42	8.16				No. of significant
Female	240	3.12	7.62	4.98	1.48	1.96	

Table two shows the mean score of male and female lecturers and legal officers towards higher education on sustainable developmental goals. The two sexes had 3.42 and 3.12 respective, being subjected to t-test statistics in order to discover whether there was any significant difference between the ratings of the males and females. Its outcome indicated that t-calculated obtained was 1.48 which was lesser than the t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 4.98. In view of this development the null hypothesis stands accepted that there was no significant difference in the manner, the male and female lecturers and legal officers expressed their opinions by rating the instrument.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between lecturers and legal officers in their opinion of Higher education on sustainable development goals

Table 3: T-test Analysis of Opinions of Lecturers and Legal Officers towards Higher Education and Sustainable Developmental Goals.

Occupational Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-value	Remark
Lecturers	2.55	3.56	12.62				
Legal Officers	2.45	3.42	11.70	4.98	0.78	1.96	Accept

Table 3 reveals that mean scores of lecturers resulted to 3.56 while that of legal officers were 3.42. The data were subjected to t-test scrutiny so as to really discover whether there was a significant difference or not between the ratings of the two occupational groups, lecturers and legal officers. The result of the outcomes shows that the t-calculated was 0.78 which was lesser than the critical t-value of 1.96 level of significance with a degree of freedom of 4.98 meaning that, there was no significant difference that existed in the opinions of lecturers and legal officers towards higher education and sustainable development goals.

Discussion

The analysis of the research question revealed that the mean of thirteen (13) items whose means were below 2.5 were all accepted as per the set criterion only two (2) items had their means above 2.5. All the items which measured Higher education, sustainable developmental goals and general issue were absolute indicators that higher education and sustainable developmental goals are achievable. The opinion of these expert respondents were quite commendable for the study.

Again hypothesis one showed no significant difference existed in the opinion of male and female lecturers and legal officers towards higher education and sustainable developmental goals in Nigeria. The X score for the males were 3.42 with a standard deviation of 8.16 while that of females were 3.12 and standard deviation of 7.62 with degree of freedom df of 4.98. It was further observed that the calculated value of 1.48 was lesser than the t-critical of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there was no significant difference in the opinion of both sexes who are lectures and legal officers towards higher education and sustainable developmental goals in Nigeria.

Furthermore, result of hypothesis two shows that no significant difference existed in the opinions of Lecturers and Legal Officers towards Higher Education and Sustainable Developmental goals in Nigeria. The X scores for the lecturers were 3.56 with a standard deviation of 12.62 while that of legal officers were 3.42 with a standard deviation of 11.70. The two occupations had a degree of freedom of 4.98. The t-calculated was 0.78 and the t-value 1.96 implying that the t-calculated was lesser than the t-value meaning that there was no significant difference in the study. This study is

in line with the study of Reisherger (2003) examined the essence of Higher Education and Sustainable developmental goals in Copernicus Alliance in Europe and Arusa in Latin America and the Caribbean, settled for order to build capacity, share experiences and expand the influence of education for sustainable development.

Conclusion

From the result of the study, the following conclusions were reached:

- (1) People should be encouraged to obtain higher education so as to enhance the need for sustainable development.
- (2) Awareness strategy should be emphasized to maintain the sustainable developmental goals.
- (3) Ignorance can destroy the sustainable developmental goals thus government intervention is essential so as maintain the stability of the sustainable goals.
- (4) Significant difference existed in the opinions of male and female towards sustainable developmental goals.
- (5) No significant difference existed in the opinions of lecturers and legal officers towards higher education and sustainable developmental goals in Nigeria.

Implication for Educational Evaluation

To stabilize our sustainable developmental goals, there should be consistent evaluation of the resources. Evaluation is the final decision for our set goals achievement it is a parameter of deciding whether the set goals have been achieved or not. However based on the empirical evidence in this study, it is said that these targets can be achievable, sustainable and result oriented. If the necessary needs are provided at the appropriate time.

Recommendations

In view of the finding arrived at in this study, the following recommendations were made

- (1) Serious enlightenment campaign should be carried out in order not to destroy resources that enhanced developmental goal.
- (2) The appropriate agencies should be mobilized in order to meet up their various obligations.
- (3) Transformation of our world is a project that we cannot afford to embrace it so in order to achieve the expected desired goals.
- (4) Conducive environment can promote longitivity and sustainable healthy environment hence it should be encouraged.

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Note

1. The reason for using legal officers is based on the assumption that they are more conversant with developmental goals.
2. The use of lecturers and legal officers is also based on the assumption that this sect of people are very much conversant with the issues in discuss.