ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES OF CHILDREN FOR UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION IN NJIKOKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the assessment of educational resources of children for universal basic education in Njikoka local government area of Anambra state. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. A sample size of 19 respondents was drawn from a population of 38 primary schools using random sampling technique. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The instrument for data collection was basic school access survey inventory educational instrument. The data for the study were collected from 19 respondents. The collected data were decoded and analysed using mean, percentage mean, standard deviation and Z-test statistics. The result of the study showed that access to universal basic education in terms of educational resources is either haphazardly provided or totally lacking. The hypotheses testing showed that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools in all the variables tested. The researcher therefore recommended that educational resources should not only be made arbitrary available but also sufficiently provided and in functional state to make for practical and purposeful universal basic education for the betterment of not only the individual child but the entire Nigerian nation.

Keywords: Assessment, Educational Resources, Children, Universal Basic Education

Introduction

Many nations of the world have realized that education is an instrument per excellence in any national development and as such made education compulsory at the primary level. In the light of the above, Nigeria launched her Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 1999 to afford every Nigeria child equal access to education irrespective of gender, financial, religious and ethnic affiliations. Before the UBE launch, many Nigeria children were out of school due to their parents' inability to cope with the private cost of education as well as the forgone earnings thereby escalated the rate of social vices in the country. This explains why Nwankwo (2007) described universal basic education as an interventionist programme for promoting unfettered access thereby making sure that children are useful not only to themselves but the entire nation at large. Invariably, government shall supply necessary educational resources and re-training of teachers that will foster the accomplishment of UBE pre-determined goals. These educational

resources constitute the Physical facilities of children to Universal Basic Education. Educational resources help to ease off basic school children's access to the concrete elements of the educational delivery process. This is expressed in terms of classroom size, recommended text books and basic instructional resources. These physical facilities when adequately provided promote enrolment growth, regular school attendance and active participation.

Class size clearly defines the number of pupils per standard classroom. Given that facilities are well provided within the classroom setting. It is truism that smaller class sizes are better for effective teaching, pupil-teacher interaction and teacher individualized attention. In support of the aforementioned opinion, Nkwocha, Onyemerekeya, Iroegbu and Ogwudire (2003) listed classroom accommodation space as one of the problems that inhibit learning among others. The scholars observed that when the classroom is congested, chairs and desks are bound to be in disarray thereby restricting the movement of both the teacher and the pupil, noise making becomes seemingly uncontrollable. It is for this reason that FGN (2014) recommended 35 class sizes for primary schools. In the same vein, Ossat (2001) recommended moderate class sizes for active class participation.

Access to recommended text is an aspect physical access to universal basic education that is very crucial for effective school attendance and participation. In congruence with the above assertion, Aminigo (2003) spotted textbooks among others as necessary facilities to be provided for desirable success of UBE scheme. Similarly, Okeke (2007) stated that functional education is only realistic where there is sufficient provision of educational facilities like textbooks.

Basic instructional material assists the teacher in carrying out the rigorous exercise of teaching. In line with the above view point, Iwu (2010) opined that teaching aids are all that the teacher uses in other to make teaching explicit in terms of making conceptual terms tangible for better understanding, these include various forms of teaching aids like projectors, maps, illustrated classroom walls etc. In the same dimension, Orunaboka (2010) was of the opinion that instructional materials are very vital instruments that make teaching-learning vibrant and interesting.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the researcher is whether the primary section of universal basic education children has adequate access to these educational resources with reference to class size, recommended textbooks, and basic instructional materials. These are the issues bugging the researcher; hence constitute elements of the research problems.

Aim and Objectives

The study aimed at assessing the status of access primary school children have to universal basic education in Njikoka local government of Anambra state. Precisely, the objectives of the study are to:

i. Determine the level of access children have to classroom space in terms of class size.
ii. Investigate children's level of access to recommended textbooks.
iii. Ascertain children's level of access to basic instructional resources.

Research Questions

i. How accessible are classroom space to children in basic schools?
ii. What is the level of access pupils have t recommended textbooks?
iii. What is the level of pupils' access to basic instructional materials?

Research Hypotheses

The researcher tested the following hypotheses in the course of the study at 0.05 significant level.

i. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools in the level of access pupils have to classroom space.
ii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools in the level of access pupils have to recommended textbooks.
iii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools in the level of access pupils' have to basic instructional materials.

Significance of the Study

The study will provide vital facts from the field on the level of access primary school children have to basic education. This information will assist the government to ease the difficulty encountered by the pupils in crowded classroom and proffer solution to it. Within the school, this study will enable the school authorities to provide the necessary school facilities needed for effective school attendance and participation to make the UBE achieve giant strides.

The result will also provide concrete information to the people of Anambra State to ascertain the level of success of the primary school section of basic education to the pupils which hitherto has been a mere hear say. The people could hold unto this study to remonstrance to the government for a better access.

Methodology

Research design used was descriptive survey which was aimed at ascertaining and describing the characteristics of the data collected. The population of the study consists of all the children enrolled in thirty-eight primary schools in Njikoka local government area of Anambra state. The respondents are head teachers of these primary schools totalling thirty-eight. The sample for this study comprised of all the 38 primary school head teachers. The researcher adopted random sampling technique and selected 50% of the entire sample. This gave rise to 19 primary school head teachers in Njikoka local government of Anambra State.

Instrument for Data Collection

The researcher designed the instrument entitled Basic School Access Survey Inventory Educational Instrument (BSASIEI). The instrument was used to elicit basic school accessibility information among primary school children. The instrument has a total of 25 items. The instrument was validated by the experts in educational management department. The suggestions and corrections made by these experts were effected in the final review of the items in the instrument. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, test-retest reliability method was adopted. A simple random sampling technique was employed to draw a sample of 10 respondents who were not part of the sample size to serve as reliability test. Copies of the instrument were administered to this group on two separate occasions within two weeks interval. The initial and retest scores of the participants were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Method. The reliability coefficient obtained was determined and found to be 0.62.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were weighted, coded and analyzed using simple percentage, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the t-test statistics were used to address the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

Results Presentation and Data Analysis

RQ 1. How accessible are classroom space to children in basic schools?

Table 1. Mean and SD of the access children have to classroom space in primary section of basic schools.

S/N	Classes	Experienced head teachers (N=12)		Less experienced head teachers (N=7)	
		Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
2.	Primary 1	32	6.75	30	8 .27
3.	Primary 2	28	6.77	31	8.20
4.	Primary 3	30	8. 27	31	8.20
5.	Primary 4	33	10.29	33	10.29
6.	Primary 5	33	10.29	33	10.29
7.	Primary 6	30	8.27	31	8.20
	Aggregate	**31**	**5.63**	**32**	**5.94**

The data on table 1 showed that access to classroom space by class size from experienced head teachers ranges between 28 to 33 with aggregate mean of 31 while for less experienced head teachers, the class size stood between 30 to 33 with the aggregate mean of 32. The SD gave rise to 5.63 and 5.94 for experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools respectively. This is an indication that primary school children in Njikoka LGA have adequate access to classroom accommodation space judging by class size since the FGN (2014) specified 35 for primary school.

RQ. 2. What is the level of access pupils have to recommended textbooks?

Table 2. Mean and SD of the percentage of access children have to recommended text books in primary schools.

S/N	Item	Experienced head teachers (N=12)		Less experienced head teachers (N=7)	
		Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
8.	Igbo	65.5	43.40	55.08	62.67
9.	English	70	82.33	75	77.05
10.	Maths	40.6	55.23	38.00	65.78
11.	Basic Science	35.45	43.12	43.0	66.90
12.	Computer	30.54	46.04	20.25	65.22
13.	Social Stds	28.22	32.00	25.44	62.06
14.	Basic Tech	43.12	65.00.	38.34	44.70
15.	Agriculture	45.33	55.05	40.35	45.87
16.	French	---------	--------	---------	-------
	Aggregate	**39.86**	**46.91**	**37.27**	**54.47**

Table 2 depicted access children have to recommended textbooks, for experienced head teachers, the percentage mean ranges between 28.22 for social studies to 70 in English language textbooks with the aggregate mean of 39.86 and SD of 46.91. For less experienced head teachers, the percentage mean yielded 20.25 to 75 with aggregate mean of 37.27and SD of 54.47. The result showed that primary school children have inadequate access to recommended textbooks.

RQ.3. What is the level of pupils' access to basic instructional materials?

Table 3. Mean and SD of the level of access pupils have to basic instructional materials

		Experienced head teachers (N=12)		Less experience head teacher (N=7)	
S/N	**Item**	**Mean**	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
17.	Equipped Science/ Nature study	1.75	.86	1.48	.43
18.	Equipped ICT	2.5	.05	2.8	.52
19.	Varieties of teaching aids.	2.7	.56	3.0	0.5
20.	Illustrated classroom wall	3.0	0.55	1.0	.00
21.	Equipped Music studio	1.0	.00	1.0	.00
22	Equipped typing pool	1.0	.00	2.3	.33
23.	Equipped Basic Tech.workshop	1.0	.00	2.5	.05
24.	Equipped Homec. Lab.	1.0	.00	2.8	.52
25.	Equipped Arts studio	1.0	.00	2.2	.023
Aggregate		1.7	0.23	2.5	.05

The above result portrays that the mean and standard deviation on the access children have to basic instructional materials experienced head teachers of primary schools fall within 1.0 and 3.0, SD yielded .00 to56 with the aggregate mean at 1.7 less experienced head teachers of primary school, access to basic instructional material ranges between 1.0 to 3.0 and .00 to .52 for mean and standard deviation while the aggregate mean lies at 1.7 and 2.5 for experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary school correspondingly. The result of the findings above indicated that children have very low access to basic instructional materials from both experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools.

Research Hypotheses

The researcher tested the following hypotheses in course of the study at 0.05 significant level.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools in the level of access pupils have to classroom space.

S/N	Head teachers	N	Mean	SD	t-value	2-tailed	Remark
1.	Experienced	12	31	5.63			
					0.16	1.98	Not Sig.
2.	Less experienced	7	32	5.94			

Evidence given in table 1 above, based on hypothesis one tested, showed that the t-value is less than 2-tailed at 0.05 significant difference, hence the null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the response from the experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools on the access children have to classroom space.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools in the level of access pupils have to recommended textbooks.

S/N	Head teachers	N	Mean	SD	t-value	2-tailed	Remark
1.	Experienced	12	39.86	46.91			
					2.38	1.96	Sig.
2.	Less experienced	7	37.27	54.47			

Table two above showed t-value of 2.38 is greater than 2-tailed of 1.96 at 0.005 level of significance; hence the null hypothesis is rejected. There is significant difference between the mean scores of the experienced and less experienced primary school head teachers on the children's accessibility to recommended textbooks.

3. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced head teachers of primary schools in the level of access pupils' have to basic instructional materials.

S/N	Head teachers	N	Mean	SD	t-value	2-tailed	Remark
1.	Experienced	12	1.7	0.23	9.13	2.00	Sig
2.	Less experienced	7	2.5	.05			

From the data presented in table 3, the t-value of 9.13 is greater than the 2-tailed of 2.00 at 0.05 significant difference, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This showed that there is significant difference between the mean scores of the experienced and less experienced head teachers of public primary schools on the access children have to basic instructional materials.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study showed that the access to classroom space in public primary school section of UBE scheme is adequate as there are 32 and 34 class sizes for experienced and less experienced head teachers respectively as against 35 recommended by the FGN (2014). Furthermore, Iroegbu (1997) in Ogwudire and Iroegbu were of the view that one of the substantial factors that affect learning is the classroom accommodation space. This, the scholar asserted affects effective seats arrangement, free movement hence facilitates effective control of problem behaviour. In the absence of adequate class size, restiveness, noise making, insufficient air and other vices becomes the order of the day. This to a great extent hampers effective teaching and learning as well as poor school attendance.

The second finding of this study evidenced that access to recommended textbooks in the public primary schools in Njikoka LGA is highly inadequate except for English language and Mathematics that were provided by the government to some schools. These set of students without textbooks depended totally on what the teacher could offer in terms of subject knowledge. This hinders effective participation and performance because the pupils would develop poor study habit and lack materials to fall back on at home in case of take home assignments. Both Ossat (2001) and Nwogu (2006) opined that textbooks are crucial in teaching/learning effectiveness.

The last finding discovered that basic instructional materials are not in existence in many schools and in a few schools where some exist, they are hardly put to use due to irregular power supply and possible damage that may occur when put to use. In essence, absence or non usage of these facilities constitutes major barriers to easy understanding, retention, and retrieval of the subject matter. In affirmation to the above exposition, Agabi (2005) contended that basic instructional materials act as 'substratum' for effective school attendance and participation.

Conclusion

Educational resources that is meant to aid accessibility of UBE should not only be provided but has to be sufficient and in functional state failing which all that was proposed will be a hallucination just like other educational policies formerly made.

Recommendations

- Existing public primary schools should be adequately furnished with relevant basic instructional materials like workshops, laboratories and teaching aids for meaningful teaching and learning.
- Government should ensure that books supplied for UBE scheme are evenly distributed and received by pupils. This should be provided to all children in every nook and cranny irrespective of where the school is located to make for equal access to recommended books.
- Basic instructional resources should readily be made available in schools where they are lacking and kept aside for maintenance as they serve as vehicles through which subject matters are conveyed to the learners.

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