

Level Of Participation And Integration Of Nomadic Children In Ngurore-Ribadu, Benue River Bank Into Adamawa State Universal Basic Education Scheme

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Abstract: Nomads are groups of ethnic clans who move from place to place with no permanent domicile. They move about in search for economic ventures. Their constant move makes it rather difficult to avail their children's enrollment in conventional schools. The unpleasant situation calls for determination of the level of participation of nomadic children living around Ngurore-Ribadu, along Benue River Bank into Adamawa State Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme. Simulation research design was adopted. The main instruments used for data collection were questionnaire, observations check-list and focus group discussion. Existing policy documents and facilities were reviewed. This paper proposes Chi-Square test statistic as a measurement tool for the study. The findings suggest that there is a significant relationship between the level of participation and integration of nomadic children living around Ngurore-Ribadu Benue River Bank, of Adamawa State into the UBE Scheme. The study recommends for its sustainability, expansion to enroll more out of school fisher-folk children, replication particularly in nearby communities and the research team to continue monitoring the programme.

Keywords: Nomadic, Participation, Integration, fisher-folk, Benue River

I. INTRODUCTION

Nomads are groups of ethnic clans who move from place to place with no stable abode. They move about in pursuit for economic ventures. Their constant move makes it rather difficult to avail their children's enrollment in conventional schools. Consequently, the children of nomads remain out of school. The major groups of nomads in Nigeria are pastoralists and fisher folk. These groups of population do not have permanent residence. They move based on the dictates of their economic business enterprise. Therefore, children in nomadic communities, hardly attend schools. Efforts were made, and

are still being made, by the Governments and some Non-Governmental Organizations in Nigeria, to sensitize the communities to enroll their children in schools but to no avail. However, the National Commission for Nomadic Education (2021) explained that the aims of Nomadic Education Programme is providing and broadening access to quality basic education for the Nigerian nomads. Thereby, boosting literacy, numeracy and equipping them with skills and competences to enhance their general well-being and participation in the process of nation building. From literature available, still large numbers of nomads do not have access to education. One of such vulnerable nomadic groups is the

fisher-folk. This study seeks to pilot test pragmatic strategy of integrating the nomadic fisher-folk school age children from different communities of Benue River bank into UBE in Adamawa State.

RELATED LITERATURE

River Benue originates in the 'Adamawa mountains' of the Central Cameroon and flows west-ward about 1,400 km meeting Niger River at about 450 km above the delta, near the city of Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria (Baka *et al.*, 2015). During rainy season, the River Benue overflows its banks and inundates the grassy riparian zones. However, during dry season the water level in River Benue recedes considerably to leave a silted river bed with clear shallow water (Eldon and Noek, 2014). However, River Benue passes through Adamawa State Nigeria from Cameroun Republic through Fufore; Yola North, Yola South, Girei, Demsa and Numan Local Government Areas respectively.

Education means effort to train the child's whole being, it is helping his mind, body and personality to grow to the full. The aim of education is therefore to help the child to develop as a whole human being as much as possible: mentally, physically, morally, socially and emotionally. Olugbenga and Yakubu (2021) asserts that in school teachers spend a great deal of time teaching the child facts, which he has to remember, but a truly educated person should develop his thinking faculties so as to think and solve problems for himself. During the orientation given to the recruited teachers, they were motivated to encourage each child in class to think and find the answer by reading books or by making experiments. Having found the answer for himself by thinking and experiment, the child will tend to remember and according to Narvaez Perez (2023) the child finds it much better than if he is just told.

Hence, education deals with developing in the child ability of critical thinking, problem solving and not just gathering knowledge or facts on issues. Narvaez Perez (2023) further asserts that education should develop in the recipient resilience to adapt to change consequently; it deals with the cognitive; affective and psychomotor of the learner. Education develops the whole child: physically; mentally and morally. The education we receive in schools is planned towards transmitting existing values and developing new ones in the beneficiary. In doing so it deals with the child, teacher, learning contents, the facilities and administration. It is only when the above are properly planned and put together that the desired results would be realized.

The Migrant fisher-folk children education commenced during the military regime of General Ibrahim B. Babangida (Rtd) in 1990. National Council on Education (NCE) in 1990, approved a national programme for the education of the children of migrant fisher-folk. The National Commission for Nomadic Education was charged with the responsibility of providing education for this group. It is necessary to point out that it was eight years after the approval of the Migrant Fishermen's Children Education (MFCE) that a Blue Print for the programme was provided in 1998 (Gabriel and Ezekiel-Hart, 2002).

The following are the general Objectives of integrating migrant fisher-folk children into the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme/the Nomadic Education Programme:

- ✓ Expose the migrant fisher-folk/nomadic child to the elementary forms of modern education;
- ✓ Enable the migrant fisher-folk/nomadic child take part in the development of his immediate environment, in particular, and the country in general;
- ✓ Make the migrant fisher-folk/nomadic child self-reliant to improve his living conditions, thus eliminating the hardships and constraints in his/her life;
- ✓ Help him/her modernize his/her techniques of herdsman-ship on animal management, fishing or farming as the case may be;
- ✓ Assist the migrant fisher-folk/nomadic child develop rapidly and fully, both physically and intellectually so as to cope with the demands of the contemporary world (NCNE, 2021).

Strategic integration is the carefully controlled combination of what the student already knows with what he or she has to learn so that the relationship between these two elements is clear and results in new or more complete knowledge. Nigeria has a federal system of government with 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. Within the states, there are 744 Local Government Areas in total. The country is multilingual, and home to more than 250 different ethnic groups. The languages of the three largest groups are Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo. The government has adopted education as a means to the realization of the social, economic, technological and political development. Nigeria's vision of education as an instrument for national development is reflected in the National Policy on Education, which states that "no nation can rise above the quality of its education system." The Government relies on education as a springboard for its development and reform agenda. Thus, five main national objectives have been endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education:

- ✓ To build a free and democratic society;
- ✓ To build a just and egalitarian society;
- ✓ To build a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- ✓ To build a great and dynamic economy;
- ✓ To build a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (Olugbenga and Yakubu, 2021).

According to Ikleel (2014), the National Policy on Education defines the structure of Nigeria's education. The published document of the Policy consists of 13 sections that cover critical issues about the educational sector. As stipulated in the National Policy on Education (2013), basic education covers nine years of formal (compulsory) schooling consisting of six years of primary and three years of Junior Secondary Education. Post-basic education comprises three years of Senior Secondary Education in either an academic or technical stream. In the tertiary level, the system consists of the university, polytechnic and college of education subsectors. Nigeria's National Policy on Education was released in 1977. It was revised in 1981 to ensure that the policy addressed the perceived needs of the Government in power and also to ensure that the education sector was supportive of government development goals. In 1990, the Government once again

acknowledged the need to review and update the policy, following political changes that saw the reintroduction of democracy in the country. The latest edition of the policy was published in 2013.

The Nigerian government in different times have come up with different economic plan that encompasses education. Some of these plans include the Vision 20:2020 which is Nigeria's blueprint for economic transformation. Launched in 2003, it is Nigeria's long-term development agenda aimed at repositioning Nigeria to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020. The National Vision of Nigeria expresses the country's aspiration to improve the quality of life of its people through the development of an information and knowledge-based economy, which the people can use to gain social, economic and educational benefits, and fulfill their potentials. The vision is all-encompassing and recognizes the need to develop not only economically but also for transformation and advancements in the social, political, educational and cultural aspects. To attain the overarching goal of reaching the top 20 economies by year 2020, the Government realized the need to enhance development in key sectors such as education. In education, the goal is to develop a modern and vibrant education system that will give every Nigerian the opportunity and facility to achieve his or her maximum potential and provide the country with adequate and competent manpower (Iklee, 2014).

In 2009, the Federal Ministry of Education published the *Roadmap for the Nigerian Education Sector*. This was developed to address issues in the education sector related to mismanagement and inadequacy of resources commensurate with national needs, population growth and demand. As a result of these challenges, education as a strategic priority of the Government has not been well positioned as a transformational tool and a pillar for socioeconomic empowerment and development. *Roadmap for the Nigerian Education Sector* outlines improvement and turn around strategies for each of the subsectors of education, namely basic, post-basic and tertiary. The plan is to use a representative sample of schools and institutions across the country as demonstration projects (Iklee, 2014).

In 2016, the Federal Ministry of Education prepared the *Ministerial Strategic Plan 2016-2019* (MSP), which is built around the three results areas of access, quality, and systems strengthening; and is comprised of ten pillars, the first of which focuses on out-of-school children. The MSP affirms that the security and stability of the country hinge to a large extent on its ability to provide functional education to its citizens, and that no nation can achieve economic prosperity without a sound and functional education system. The Government's expectations in terms of the MSP's impact are manifold: tackling the issue of out of school children by creating opportunities and providing incentives; bridging the gender gap in enrolment, retention, and completion by addressing the problems of girl-child education; improving pupils' learning achievements, including literacy and numeracy; and, addressing the crisis of inadequate and low quality teachers with training, re-training, and recruitment. In addition, the MSP aims to prepare Nigeria's youth to take competitive advantage of the 21st century knowledge-driven economy within and outside the country; address the issues of

quality and access to higher education and improve the global ranking of Nigeria's tertiary institutions; and, resolve the skills gap by deploying a workable and comprehensive technical and vocational education and training policy. The Ministerial Strategic Plan was aimed to strengthen the education system overall by "improving evidence-based decision making that will assist transparency, governance, accountability, and innovation in education delivery". In short, the Ministerial Strategic Plan is the Government's vision for the education sector as a whole and confirms its commitment to its reform (UNICEF, 2017).

The Ministerial Strategic Plan is a strategy document that defines activities to be implemented by various Federal as well as State-level actors and programmes, notably the UBE programme when it comes to basic education reforms. The Ministerial Strategic Plan was adopted by the National Council on Education, but its national goals have not yet been translated to State-level goals and activities. In addition, costing of foreseen interventions has only been completed for Federal activities and to date, no budgetary allocations have been made towards these activities. The MSP includes several activities, e.g. expansion of school infrastructure, which it tasks UBEC with. However, the Ministerial Strategic Plan also contains some activities that are related to reforming the UBE programme and UBEC's operations. These activities relate to, for example, decreasing the counterpart funding from States, in order to facilitate States' access to the Federal matching grant earmarked for the financing of school infrastructure. The MSP does not, however, fundamentally reassess the UBE programme as a whole and UBEC's achievements to date (UNICEF, 2017). The Nigerian government is known for developing the best policies, programme and plans but implementing it have always been the problem. Planning, supervision and monitoring mechanisms for the entire education system have been very weak. Management problems within the system have been cited often as a factor that impacts negatively on the success of projects that have been supported by international development agencies (Owojori, 2010). According to (UNICEF, 2017), Nigeria is a policy-rich environment but poor in implementation. The capacity and commitment of the government to implement educational policies and processes have been limited due to inadequate resources and political will.

Ogunode and Ahaotu (2020) stated that educational strategic plan refers to a planned educational document containing strategic ways of implementing educational programme. Educational plans or strategic plan action is an organized document for implementation of educational programme. Strategic plan is a tool that provides guidance in fulfilling a mission with maximum efficiency and impact. If it is to be effective and useful, it should articulate specific goals and describe the action steps and resources needed to accomplish them. They viewed strategy as a plan that is intended to achieve a particular purpose. It is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and how it does it with a focus on the future.

Wilkinson (2011) identifies these reasons why organizations must develop plans. It is to set direction and priorities; to get everyone on the same page; to simplify

decision-making; to drive alignment and to communicate the message. Developing a workable strategic plan means dissecting the organization's objectives and strategies and determining which takes precedence. Strategic plan becomes a management tool that serves the purpose of helping an organization to do a better job, because a plan focuses the energy, resources, and time of everyone in the organization in the same direction.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section explains the methods and procedure that was used in carrying out the study. The main components of the section are research design, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, method of data collection and method of data analysis employed. This study seeks to pilot test integrating, that is, enrolling out of school children (OOSC) of the Nomadic fishing folk living along Benue River Bank of Adamawa State Nigeria. The study enrolled 45 children aged 6-9 from three fishing communities namely: Ngurore-Ribadu; Farkumo and Anguwan-Jukun all around Ribadu Fufore Local Government Area (LGA).

RESEARCH DESIGN

Simulation research design was adopted for the study. This devise is chosen because of its potent in pilot testing for future expansion. According to Sambo (2015), it has the strength as a method of demonstrating the viability of the plan. This design gathers material, information, strategies, sample and sampling techniques, to carry out the task. This research is therefore, a practical establishment of a school for the children of fishing communities along River Benue bank of Fufore Local Government Area. It explored, sensitized and mobilized the views of the communities and thereafter blended them into the working documents of the project. To facilitate this, as is common with simulation research designs, other research instruments similar to those of survey research such as structured questionnaire, participant observations check-list, review of existing policy documents and facilities are utilized to obtain the necessary relevant data to boost the project.

AREA OF STUDY

Along the River Bank there are many fishing communities and tribes. In Fufore Local Government Area, the major fishing tribes are the Hausa; Kabawa; Jukun and Bata, whose occupations are mainly fishing and dry season farming. Among communities in Ribadu Fufore Local Government area are Ngurore Ribadu; Anguwan-Jukun; Riko Ribadu; Luggere Ribadu; Anguwan-Dutse Ribadu, Dullu Ribadu and Farkumo. Most of these tribes and communities are Semi Migrant fisher-folk who migrated from different states of the Federation and settled around the Ribadu river bank of Fufore Local Government of Adamawa State. Such are Hausa from Sokoto State; Kabawa from Yawuri Kebbi State, Jukun from Taraba State and Bata indigenes of the state. This simply implies that the two categories of nomads in Nigeria are not only educationally disadvantaged but they

have low access and poor participation in education and national development (Akpan, 2015).

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study adopted stratified random sampling technique to take care of the different strata in the population. The technique of stratification is often employed in the preparation of sample designs because it generally provides increased accuracy in dealing with different segments of the population and increase efficiency of representation. Stratification requires that the population be divided into sub-populations called strata from which samples are extracted independently within each stratum. In this study, stratification was used because the fisher-folk communities around the Benue River bank are many, the researchers selected and sensitized five communities namely: Ngurore-Ribadu, Farkumo, Anguwan-Jukun, Riko and Faro. Three out of the five communities were selected for the first phase. The sampled population are 44 pupils with breakdown of the beneficiaries as Ngurore-25; Farkumo-14; Anguwan-Jukun-5.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Four sets of instruments were used in generating data for the study. Questionnaire, observations check-list, Focus Group Discussion and Semi Structured Interview.

DATA COLLECTION

The main instruments used for data collection were the Questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), observation check list and Semi Structured Interview (SSI). A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed, returned and analyzed as shown in the table below.

Numbers of Questionnaire Distributed Returned and Percentage of Returned

SN	Strata	No. Distributed	No. Returned	% Returned
1	Pupils	30	30	100
2	Parents	18	18	100
3	Teachers	2	2	100
	Total	50	50	100

The team used research assistants to facilitate collection of data. The Questionnaire-Structured interview questions were administered to all categories of pupils, parent and teachers. The perception of community leaders, local education authority officials, members of PTA, NGO officials, philanthropists and other service providers were obtained using interviews with the help of SSI and FGD guides. This approach gives the researchers the opportunity to probe and triangulate the responses to ensure correctness of information. All members of the research team participated in the data collection.

The researchers solicited for the cooperation of the respondents. During the familiarization visits, the instruments were discussed by the participants: pupils, teachers, parents, community leaders, and PTA officials. Also, tentative arrangements were made on the date of actual data collection. The respondents were assured that the data collected would be

used for the purposes of research only. Equally the researchers ensured that adequate numbers of all instruments and other gadgets required for the data collection were supplied to the Research Assistants. Questionnaires were interpreted to the respondents by the Research Assistants. Their responses were ticked by the Research Assistants. That is, by the use of direct administration of Questionnaires.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data varied from one instrument to the other and from the research question depending on the data obtained and the objective/question to be answered. The Likert-type scale was adopted to ascertain the degree of perception of each item on the questionnaire as perceived by respondents. This study generated data that was analyzed using quant-quall technique. Hence means, percentage scores were computed to answer the research questions. While the responses from the FGD and the SSI were discussed qualitatively to supplement and provide additional quantitative analysis.

III. ANALYSIS AND RESULT

HYPOTHESIS: There is no significant relationship between level of participation and integration of nomadic children in Ngurore-Ribadu, Benue River Bank into the UBE Scheme

Observed Value verses Calculated Value

S/N	STATEMENT ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
1	Fisher folk children living along Benue River Bank of Adamawa State do not participate in UBE Scheme	30 (32.75)	24 (27.5)	5 (9.25)	17 (13)	24 (17.5)	100
2	Use of relevant instructional materials would facilitate participation	27 (32.75)	33 (27.5)	10 (9.25)	20 (13)	10 (17.5)	100
3	teachers from within the community would enhance children participation	35 (32.75)	38 (27.5)	12 (9.25)	5 (13)	10 (17.5)	100
4	Employment of teachers from within the community would enhance participation of fisher folk children in the school	39 (32.75)	15 (27.5)	10 (9.25)	10 (13)	26 (17.5)	100
TOTAL		131	110	37	52	70	GT 400

Table 1

FORMULA FOR EXPECTED VALUE

$$E = \frac{RT \times CT}{GT} \tag{1}$$

where

E = Expected Value

RT = Row Total

CT = Column Total

GT = Grand Total

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}} \tag{2}$$

O	E	O-E	$(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2$	$\frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$	$\sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$
30	32.75	-2.75	7.56	0.23	
24	27.5	-3.50	12.25	0.45	
5	9.25	-4.25	18.06	1.95	
17	13	4.00	16.00	1.23	
24	17.5	6.50	42.25	2.41	
27	32.75	-5.75	33.06	1.01	
33	27.5	5.50	30.25	1.10	
10	9.25	0.75	0.56	0.61	
20	13	7.00	49.00	3.77	
10	17.5	-7.50	56.25	3.21	
35	32.75	2.25	5.06	0.15	
38	27.5	10.5	110.25	4.01	
12	9.25	2.75	7.56	0.82	
5	13	-8.00	64.00	4.92	
10	17.5	-7.50	56.25	3.31	
39	32.75	6.25	39.06	1.19	
15	27.5	-12.5	156.25	5.68	
10	9.25	0.75	0.56	0.06	
10	13	-3.00	9.00	0.69	
26	17.5	8.50	72.25	4.13	40.93

Table 2

From equation (2)

Calculated $\chi^2 = 40.93$

df (degrees of freedom) = (r-1)(c-1) when r = 4 and c = 5

df = 3 x 4

df = 12

$\chi^2_{(r-1)(c-1)}(0.05) = \chi^2_{(12)}(0.05) = 21.03$

DECISION RULE: Reject H_0 if $\chi^2_{Calc} \geq \chi^2_{Tab}$, otherwise do not reject the null hypothesis (H_0).

Since the calculated value $\chi^2 = 40.93$ is greater than the critical value $\chi^2 = 21.03$ therefore, the null hypothesis should be rejected. This suggests that there is a significant relationship between level of participation and integration of nomadic children in Ngurore-Ribadu, Benue River Bank into the UBE Scheme.

IV. DISCUSSION ON MAJOR FINDINGS

- ✓ The study pilot tested a pragmatic strategy of integrating the nomadic fisher-folk school age children from Ngurore-Ribadu, Farkumo and Anguwan-Jukun fishing

communities along Benue River bank into UBE in Adamawa State.

- ✓ Nomadic children living around Ngurore-Ribadu, along Benue River bank of Adamawa State hardly participate in Universal Basic Education Programme.
- ✓ There is low school accessibility among the three fisher-folk communities around Ngurore- Ribadu, Fufore LGA of Adamawa State Nigeria.
- ✓ The research team identified strategies and established a Pilot Nomadic Fisher-Folk School for the communities around Ngurore-Ribadu, Fufore LGA.

V. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between level of participation and integration of nomadic children in Ngurore-Ribadu, Benue River Bank into the UBE Scheme. Accordingly, sensitization and mobilization of the communities; selection of Pupils (initially 45 pupils, later increased to 93); location of the school (renovation of classrooms); procurement of teaching and learning materials; recruitment and retraining of teachers and school supervision and monitoring were effected.

Finally, the school took off on 21st of August, 2023 with two classes; 93 pupils; two teachers; two blocks of classrooms (renovated); toilets separated for male and female (renovated); playground and facilities; teaching and learning materials; functional Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and School based management Committee (SBMC).

Official Commissioning/Flagging off and handing over took place on January 17, 2024. The school was handed over to the Community and the Local Education Authority/UBE on 17th January 2024 at a grand occasion. The Fufore LEA supplied furniture (32 number of seats); parents took over payment of teachers' salary with effect from January 2024 and the research team was requested to continue monitoring the school activities

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the under listed recommendations are made:

- ✓ The school should be sustained
- ✓ There is need for its expansion to enroll more out of school fisher-folk children
- ✓ Efforts should be made for its replication particularly in nearby communities and
- ✓ The research team should continue monitoring the programme.

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