

CHALLENGES AND ACCESS TO UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING

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Abstract

The nation's progress in universal basic education is seriously hampered by access to it. The efficacy of the government's numerous measures to achieve the goals has been diminished despite high students' student enrollment and retention rates. By examining the problems plaguing the program, this article sought to shed light on the startling figures of out-of-school children (OSC) in Nigeria in particular the area studied and to offer solutions for reevaluating access to basic education. A total of 120 instructors from nine schools—six primary and three junior secondary Schools in rural Bwari Area Council regions made up the sample for the study. Five research questions served as the study's compass, and a descriptive survey research design was used. Data on the difficulties in obtaining admission to the UBE system were gathered using a questionnaire designed by researchers with twenty items. The gathered data were examined using averages, percentages, and frequency counts. According to the results, the socioeconomic aspects returned the highest challenge, with a mean rating of 3.38. Counseling was used as a service technique that might offer cooperative methods for advancing educational ideals in the community and a shift in

focus toward inclusive educational opportunities. In addition to other suggestions, the government ought to guarantee that the program receives sufficient funding and that the policy instructions and policies outlined in the UBE, Act 2004 are followed.

Keywords: Enrollment, Retention, Access, Challenges, Counselling Implication, and UBE

Introduction

The foundation of peaceful cooperation, nation-building, societal integration, and national unity is education. A society is bereft of values, skills, and human capacity development if it does not have an early intervention plan in place to help its residents utilize education. According to Ikpe (2005), education provides people with the necessary abilities to have a fulfilled life as well as self-awareness, a basic comprehension of their surroundings, and basic information. According to the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014), education is a tool for fostering social transformation, human potential development, and sustainable development. The Nigerian Federal Government developed the concept of Universal Basic Education in 1999, coinciding with the intrinsic ideals of education. It acquired legal support in 2004 with the passage of the UBE Act 2004 (Centre for Public Impact 2017). An outgrowth of both the current Nigerian education system and the long-gone Universal Primary Education, Universal Basic Education was designed to give all children equitable, inclusive, and high-quality access to basic education. It is considered a fundamental human right program for the country's development. In essence, it is the education that lasts for three years in junior secondary school after six years in elementary school (Udo et al, 2022). Obichie (2017) states that the goal of the UBE program was to offer free, universal basic education to children in primary school who were 6 to 11 years old and junior secondary school students who were 12 to 14 years old and older. Though the program has been expanded to include Early Childhood Care and Development Education (ECCDE) for children ages 3-5, as well as initiatives for adults over 15 to acquire functional literacy and numeracy, out-of-school children, nomadic education, education for marginalized groups, and education for the almajiris, all of these efforts are inclusive (Centre for Public Impact 2017). The scope of UBE acknowledges and encompasses a variety of educational categories, such as gender parity, adult literacy, and equitable, inclusive, and high-quality education.

Inferentially, the foundation of the UBE program's concept is its adaptability and inclusivity in guiding people toward the achievement of national objectives and guaranteeing education for all (EFA). According to Abubakar (2017), the program would revitalize the educational system, end poverty, give all children access to inclusive basic education, and provide each person with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead a meaningful life. To guarantee policy assessment and oversight, the Federal Government established the program's goals as follows:

- ◆ cultivate a strong sense of responsibility for education and a strong commitment to its aggressive promotion among all citizens;
- ◆ Provide all Nigerian children of school-age free, universal basic education;
- ◆ dramatically lower the number of students dropping out of the formal education system (by increasing relevance, quality, and efficiency);
- ◆ Provide suitable kinds of supplemental approaches to the delivery and promotion of basic education in order to meet the learning needs of young people who have had to suspend their education for various reasons; and
- ◆ Assure that the necessary civic, moral, and ethical principles are acquired, along with the necessary levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communication, and life skills to provide a solid basis for lifelong learning (FRN, 2014:5)
- ◆ The sixth version of the National Policy of Education handbook, FRN (2014), further outlined the objectives of the UBE on page 6.
- ◆ Give the child a variety of fundamental information and abilities for wealth creation, business, and academic progress;
- ◆ cultivate youth who are patriotic, capable of making a positive impact on society and carrying out their civic duties;
- ◆ instill moral principles and produce morally pure people who can think for themselves and value hard work;
- ◆ Encourage a sense of national awareness and peaceful cohabitation, regardless of variations in resources, faith, race, gender, and economic status.
- ◆ Give the child the chance to acquire the manipulative skills necessary to contribute to society in a way that is appropriate for their developmental stage.

Many children in Nigeria lack access to basic education, despite the UBE's commendable goals and the educational attainment gap it seeks to close. The viewpoint of this paper is access to basic education, which includes the opportunity for all individuals who are eligible to receive it to register and take part in the program through to the end. To put it in another way, education should be provided equally to all students, regardless of their background, age, social class, race, location, gender, or linguistic or geographic groupings. The second decade of the UBE program is ending without addressing the issues of fairness, inclusivity, free and obligatory enrollment, and equal chance for all to advance within the system. Between 2003 and 2005, there were some opportunities for UBE implementation in the outset, particularly with regard to enrollment in junior secondary and primary education (UNESCO, 2015, Centre for Public Impact, 2017; Aluede, 2005). According to Aluede, the primary six completion percentage climbed from 65% in 2001 to 83% in 2002 and 98% in 2003 in Nigeria.

The Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria (EDOREN, 2015) lamented the enormous obstacles to attaining the intended equity and participation in Nigerian basic education,

despite all government initiatives aimed at expanding access to education for girls, the nomadic community, and Muslims. The pace was not maintained. 61% of children aged 6 to 11 attend primary school, compared to just 35.6% of children who registered for early childhood education (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2020). The NBS went on to say that the girl child's school enrollment was still low. According to the data, girls' percentage in the ECCDE between 2015 and 2016 was 49.52%. By 2018, they made up 48.39% of the primary school population, and the percentage of girls who were not in school was predicted to be 37.80%. Low enrollment and retention rates, as well as disparities, were also mentioned in the junior secondary school report. With 52.58% of the enrolled males and 47.42% of the females in 2017, the completion rate for the male and female populations was 50.25% and 49.75%, respectively. It follows that enrollment and retention rates are low for both boys and girls, with a smaller barrier for girls. The number of children who are not attending school has increased from 10.5 million in 2020 to 18.5 million in 2022, according to data released by the United Nations Children's Fund. The number of primary school dropouts increased over time, from 4.6 million in 2000 to 7.5 million in 2010, 9.6 million in 2020, and 13.5 million in 2021, according to World Bank data and a UNICEF study conducted by Akor in 2021. The Education Services Delivery for All (BESDA) was implemented in reaction to this astounding circumstance, yet the number of children who are not in school continues to rise (UNESCO, 2022)

Over 20 million Nigerians, or 20% of the country's total population, are not enrolled in school, according to a 2022 Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report that was published in the Guardian newspaper (UNESCO, 2022). In spite of the fact that they are older than the 6–18 age range that is designated for universal basic education, out-of-school children (OSC) are defined as those who are between the ages of six and eighteen. Nigeria is one of the three countries with the highest percentage of OSC, meaning that the majority of children and youth lack access to basic education.

Nigeria's Universal Basic Education Accessibility Challenges

Numerous problems have made Universal Basic Education less accessible. One major issue ailing the free, universal, and obsessive nature of the UBE program is insufficient finance. According to the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) (2015), one of the biggest obstacles to participation in the UBE program is the underfunding and underutilization of UBE funds.

The underfunding resulted from the inability of state governments to manage funds, bureaucracy in obtaining federal funds, the slow pace at which the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) distributed funds to the states derived from revenue, and the federal government's lack of political will to oversee and modify the disbursement guidelines (Tonwe, 2022). The quality and quantity of adequate infrastructure, learning resources, teacher training programs, and the ease of pressure on low-income students and disadvantaged individuals who can only receive basic education if it is provided for free have all been negatively impacted by this situation. Due to inadequate amenities, a lot of pupils jostle for the limited available spaces, making the classrooms unsightly. There are insufficient educational resources to address all of the needs of pupils, leaving some of them neglected and dependent on their parents to provide for them.

Building the ability of teachers is essential to ensuring that Nigerians have access to basic education. If the quality of the teacher is not upheld by retraining them, the quality of education is compromised. In his study, Ayeni (2020) found a strong relationship between teachers' productivity and capacity building. The Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) must be interpreted and implemented by dynamic, well-prepared instructors who can also create a flexible, conducive learning environment and use enough resources and instructional strategies to meet the needs of students from all categories. The teachers who oversee the curriculum are responsible for its success and maintenance (Musa, 2010). Numerous unqualified teachers in most basic schools necessitate ongoing training and retraining to address the issues of students' subpar performance and lower the number of dropout instances. For teachers to use technology, find electronic resources for instruction, and use multimodal teaching and learning strategies, teachers should also receive ICT training.

The percentage of Nigerian female children who are in school is still lower than that of their male counterparts, despite improvements in the enrolment of girls (the marginalized gender) in schools. This is mostly due to gender differences in access to education. In his research, Enyioko (2021) discovered that the enrolment rate for males and females was 56.9% and 43.1%, respectively, in 2017. He also discovered that the literacy rate for men and women between the ages of 15 and 24 was 70.9% for men and 59.3% for women in 2017. Despite all the efforts of many organizations and agencies, 57 percent of the 77 million children who are not in school are girls, according to UNESCO's 2017 report. UNICEF (2020) linked gender-based violence, underage marriage, and inadequate sanitation as the main causes of out-of-school girls.

Access to basic education in Nigeria has been severely threatened by security concerns, particularly in the northern areas. According to a UNICEF study (2022) as reported by Ogwo (2022), since December 2020, 11,536 schools in Nigeria have been closed due to insecurity. Millions of students who attended the impacted schools are illiterates and social outcasts because they are unable to receive a basic education. Similarly, in an interview with *Punch* on Sunday, September 24, 2023, Attahiru Bafarawa, a prominent member of the Peoples' Democratic Party and a former governor of Sokoto state, affirmed the scenario. He bemoaned the damage on future educational opportunities and claimed that the high volume of bandit and terrorist activities had resulted in the shooting down of numerous schools in the north. Brain drain and a learning poverty rate have resulted from children in some sections of the country withdrawing from school or ceasing to attend regularly due to feelings of dread, frustration, and uncertainty in response to threats from bandits and kidnappers.

The circumstances demand that government programs and funding be increased to address the issues of inclusive education for children, children with disabilities, children who are internally displaced (IDC), and children from marginalized groups. Challenges and access to Basic education in Nigeria is a paper that will examine the value of counseling and other options in reaching the children of all backgrounds who do not receive inclusive, equitable, and high quality education.

Statement of the Problem

Experience has shown that, even after two decades of its launch, the philosophy behind the policy measures that established the UBE in Nigeria and its implementations are not aligning adequately, which is leading to disillusionment with the program's inclusivity and universality of access. In Nigeria, a large number of children are still considered street children and are enlisted into gangs and banditry, which causes all kinds of problems for the nation. It's likely that some children are labeled dropouts because their unique needs aren't catered for in the curriculum. They are not receiving individualized instruction or Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which can draw on their areas of expertise and effectively apply what they learn to their social, cultural, and psychological integration.

The majority of children who are taken away from their original homes because of security concerns don't attend school. Since most of the IDP camps lack schools, children must travel great distances in pursuit of a basic education. The few locations of schools, the condition of the buildings, and the caliber of the instructors do not inspire children to pursue an education. Schools exhibit a lack of resources and deteriorating infrastructure. Pupils are crammed into small spaces to share desks and chairs, which hinders learning and instead evokes sentiments of the past. It is necessary to concentrate on the children's psychological adaptability so they can accept that they are in a circumstance where they need guidance services. In the countryside, there are children lazing around selling goods and engaging in various menial occupations. These children's services are seen as being economically vital to the family's means of subsistence, which explains to them why they are unable to enroll their children in schools.

In keeping with its second goal, the Universal Basic Education is not free in the sense that parents must pay a hefty initial fee, as well as for their children's books, uniforms, and other educational supplies. For extremely impoverished households, its unaffordability can be explained by the fact that it is not completely free. Parents are not supposed to pay a cent if the school is receiving sufficient funding. By this, the researchers are implying that in addition to paying for tuition, the government should also provide uniforms and reading materials.

Additionally, a discrepancy in the number of male and female students enrolled in schools was noted. The fact that there are much more boys than girls in the rural schools indicates that there is still a gap. The number of females who drop out of school will undoubtedly decrease if this practice is curtailed or eliminated.

The fact that the school does not have the specific resources and facilities needed to accommodate the various physical, social, physiological, and psychological deficits of the disabled children leaves them frustrated. As the phrase goes, there is ability in handicap, yet this scenario predisposes individuals to feelings of inadequacy, mockery, apathy, and not being competent.

Value reorientation is necessary in this case in order for the children to receive basic education, as their eagerness to enroll and stay in school to complete their education will be overwhelming if their needs are met. Therefore, the difficulties in obtaining a basic education were examined in this research.

Research Objectives

The study's objectives are to identify the barriers to basic education access and to make recommendations for counseling. The particular Goals are

1. To ascertain if socioeconomic factors provide a barrier to basic education availability in a subset of rural schools within the Bwari Area Council
2. To ascertain whether the Bwari Area Council's selected rural schools' inability to increase their teachers' capability is a barrier to their ability to receive a basic education
3. determine whether unequal enrollment and retention rates between genders in certain rural schools within the Bwari Area Council are impeding students' access to a basic education.
4. to ascertain whether obstacles to basic education in a few chosen rural schools in the Bwari Area Council are a result of national security concerns.
5. to provide the counselling implication in resolving the obstacles to basic education access in a few chosen rural Bwari Area Council schools.

Research Questions

1. To what degree does the socioeconomic aspect present obstacles to receiving a basic education at a few chosen rural schools under the Bwari Area Council?
2. In what ways does the deficiency of teacher-capacity development exacerbate the barriers to basic education that certain rural schools in the Bwari Area Council face?
3. What role does gender inequality play in the barriers to basic education that some specific rural schools in the Bwari Area Council face?
4. In what ways do security concerns impede the ability of certain rural schools in the Bwari Area Council to provide basic education?
5. What is the counselling implication towards resolving issues of access to basic education?

Methodology

The study, which used a descriptive survey research approach, was conducted in nine rural Bwari Area Council schools: six primary schools and three junior secondary schools. All of the primary and junior secondary school teachers in the rural Bwari Area Council make up the study's population. A total of 120 respondents were selected, comprising 96 (80%) teachers from the

primary schools and 24 (20%) teachers from the junior secondary schools, using stratified random sampling. The primary schools have a higher number of teacher to student ratio than the junior secondary schools.

The researchers constructed a 20-item questionnaire as the data collection tool. After a pilot test, the reliability index of 0.76 coefficient of PPMCC was obtained. The questionnaire is divided into two sections: part A asks for personal information from the respondents, and section B asks about the four main obstacles the researchers identified to accessing basic education: socioeconomic factors, teacher capacity building, gender disparity, and insecurity in schools. Using a modified 4-point scale, the respondents scored each challenge item as follows: strongly agree (SA) = 4 points, agree (A) = 3 points, disagree (D) = 2 points, and strongly disagree (SD) = 1 point. A total mean of 3.0 or more denotes a significant obstacle, whereas a mean of 2.5 to 2.9 denotes a moderate challenge and mean scores of 1.0 to 2.4 denote the absence of such an item from the list of challenges associated with access to basic education.

Counselling Implication

As a helping profession, guidance and counseling help people view things differently by concentrating on their thoughts and behaviors in an effort to bring about positive change. According to Hoppin (2011) and the National Career Development Association (NCDA) (2010), counseling is a professional partnership that enables various individuals, families, and groups to achieve their goals for mental health, wellness, education, and careers. Counseling, as part of Nigeria's value reorientation, inevitably has implications for the difficulties in obtaining basic education in that nation.

It is imperative to improve the psychological adaptability of parents and children who have experienced trauma and are living in constant anxiety due to the threat of bandits and kidnappers. According to Hayes (2020), psychological flexibility is the capacity to engage with the current moment while being completely conscious of and accepting of all feelings, sensations, and thoughts—including unfavorable ones—and doing so without recourse. Counseling can help people become more psychologically flexible so they can make decisions based on their ideals rather than the fleeting feelings they are feeling at the time. To put it another way, out-of-school youth who have become fearful due to unstable circumstances may be completely conscious of and committed to the need of education.

Counsellors could work with the government to reach out to underprivileged or rural areas through outreach counseling to raise awareness and push for full access to basic education. According to Hausego (1999 in Enem & Enem, 2020), outreach counseling is the effort undertaken outside of counseling offices or other specified counseling environments to promote service availability and utilization through direct engagement and interaction with the target community. Through advocacy and sensitization programs, the counselors will use either satellite outreach or domiciliary outreach to identify out-of-school children in the community, evaluate their needs, and

recommend to the government how best to provide specialized learning resources so that these children are placed in schools. Outreach counseling fits with the government's goal of "working locally, which is a key dimension of its linked anti-poverty and lifelong learning strategy" and is a means of reaching out to those who cannot voluntarily pursue their education in traditional schools.

Counsellors can assist in preparing instructors to meet the diverse needs of their students. Instructors will discover that identifying and meeting these needs in a compassionate way that avoids passing judgment—instead of using judgment—emotional intelligence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy—will strengthen the bonds between them and their students and foster an environment that facilitates rapid assimilation. To accommodate the varied capacities of the various kid groups and enable their integration into the universal and high-quality education outlined in the UBE objectives, teachers must also be trained in multimodal methods to teaching and learning. Teachers will gain comprehensive knowledge of teaching practices and cutting-edge pedagogical skills through frequent training.

Results

In this segment, the study's findings are discussed.

Research question 1: To what extent is the underfunding of basic education contributing to challenges to its access in some selected rural schools in Bwari Area Council?

Table 1: Respondents on the socio-economic factor challenges to access to basic education.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Low-income parents cannot afford the initial registration fee charged in the schools	61 (50.83%)	61 (35.83%)	11 (9.17%)	5 (4.17%)	3.33
2	Uneducated parents use their children for labour in the families	59 (49.17%)	53 (44.17%)	3 (2.5%)	5 (4.17%)	3.38
3	Low-income parents cannot afford uniforms and learning materials for their children	60 (50%)	55 (45.83%)	3 (2.5%)	2 (1.7%)	3.44
4	Parents who are not exposed do not value education	61 (50.83%)	48 (40%)	7 (5.83%)	4 (3.33%)	3.38
5	Some parents see school enrollment as deprivation from cultural values	55 (45.83%)	57 (47.5%)	4 (3.33%)	4 (3.33%)	3.36
Average Mean						3.38

Table 1 clearly shows that parents in rural areas find it difficult to send their children to receive basic education, with an average mean of 3.38 indicating a significant level of challenge. This table also answers research question 1. Since most of them lack resources, education, and exposure, the only way to motivate them to send their children to school is to provide them with material, moral, and psychological support. The fact that Universal Basic Education is not fully "free" as stated in its goals due to program underfunding is one example. According to FME, 2015 and Tonwe, 2022, there is a correlation between the underfunding and underutilization of UBE funds and the program's inability to achieve requirements for universality and freeness.

Research Question 2: How is Lack of Teacher-Capacity development contributing to challenges to access to basic education in some selected rural schools in Bwari Area Council?

Table 2: Respondents on lack of Teacher-Capacity development challenges to access to basic education.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	There are no specialized teachers in your school to handle children with special needs.	65 (54.16%)	52 (43.33%)	3 (2.5%)	0	3.51
2	Teachers do not adopt multi-modal approaches in the delivery and interpretation of curriculum	38 (31.66%)	40 (31.70%)	20 (16.67%)	22 (18.33%)	2.78
3	Teachers are not motivated through prompt salary and other incentives	39 (32.5%)	50 (41.67%)	15 (12.5%)	16 (13.33)	2.93
4	Teachers do not have regular access to professional development	64 (53.33%)	49 (40.83%)	5 (4.17%)	3 (2.5%)	3.46
5	More than 50% of teachers in your school are not qualified	51 (42.5%)	38 (31.67%)	17 (14.17%)	14 (11.67%)	3.05
Average Mean						3.15

With a rating of 97.49%, Table 2's results demonstrate that specialized teachers who are meant to promote children with special needs and disabilities to enroll in and remain in basic education—are underrepresented in rural schools. This supports the claim made by Ayeni (2020), who found a strong link in his research between teachers' productivity and capacity building. According to another research, Musa (2010), instructors do not employ the multimodal approach in their instruction, they lack motivation, they do not consistently receive training, and most of them are not qualified, with mean ratings of 2.78 and 2.93. 3.46 and 3.05, in that order. With a multimodal approach, teachers will have a variety of ways to interpret the curriculum to encourage students' active engagement. It is the responsibility of qualified instructors to manage certain

approaches, such as scaffolding, personalization, collaborative learning, etc. Musa (2010) also implied that the curriculum's survival and success depend on the teachers who implement it.

Research Question 3: What is the contribution of gender disparity to challenges of access to basic education in some selected rural schools in Bwari Area Council?

Table 3: Respondents on gender-disparity challenges to access to basic education

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Gender-based violence is contributing to girl-child out of school in your school	39 (32.5%)	51 (42.5%)	21 (17.5%)	9 (7.5%)	3.00
2	Some girls do not enroll in your school because most teachers are male	40 (33.33%)	43 (35.83%)	23 (19.17%)	14 (11.67%)	2.91
3	Parents prefer their sons going to school than their daughters	53 (44.17%)	51 (42.5%)	9 (7.5%)	5 (4.17%)	3.23
4	Cultural issue of child marriage is depriving the girl-child from attending school	60 (50%)	49 (40.83%)	5 (4.17%)	6 (5%)	3.35
5	Poor sanitation in schools is depriving the girl-child from enrollment in school	44 (36.67%)	47 (39.17%)	19 (15.83%)	10 (8.33%)	3.04
Average Mean						3.11

All of the items in Table 3's gender disparity presentation of responses are evaluated highly. The mean rating for items 1 through 5 is 3.11, with the corresponding mean ratings of 2.91, 3.23, 3.35, and 3.04, respectively. The conclusion is that some girls in rural regions still do not have access to basic education, despite all the government and non-governmental organizations' efforts through advocacy to boost girl child enrollment in schools. This explains why, according to research by UNESCO (2017) and Enyioko (2021), the enrollment rate for boys appears to be higher than that of girls. The indices utilized to calculate the gender gap supported the findings made by UNICEF (2020), which blamed child marriage, gender-based violence, and inadequate sanitation for the obstacle that keeps girls out of school. In this investigation, the indexes yielded high results.

Research Question 4: How is security issue a challenge to access to basic education in some selected rural schools in Bwari Area Council?

Table 4: Respondents on security challenges to access to basic education.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Close of schools due to insurgence is affecting children enrollment in schools	68 (56.67%)	50 (41.67%)	2 (1.67%)	0	3.55
2	Rampant kidnapping and abduction of children has resulted to cases of out-of-school children	59 (49.17%)	49 (40.83%)	10 (8.33%)	2 (1.67%)	3.37
3	Fear of threats of insecurity has psychological impacts on school children and their parents	44 (36.67%)	48 (40%)	20 (16.67%)	8 (6.67%)	3.06
4	Lack of security measures to safeguard lives is preventing enrollment and retention of children in schools	49 (40.83%)	50 (41.67%)	15 (12.5%)	6 (5%)	3.18
5	Inter-communal clashes are severing normal movement of children to schools.	47 (39.17%)	43 (35.83%)	11 (9.17%)	19 (15.83%)	2.98
Average Mean						3.23

The responses from participants regarding insecurity-related topics are shown in Table 4. The average mean score of 3.23 revealed that security concerns are seriously endangering the availability of basic education in the rural schools under the Bwari Area Council. Every index had a high rating, particularly the one that reflected the experiences of closing some schools, which supports the claims made by Ogwo (2022) and Attahiru (2023). Parents and their children are also afraid of the cases and danger of banditry in the rural parts of Bwari town and its surroundings, which is weakening their psychological resilience and encouraging a lifelong terror in them. This situation calls for counselling services to help them deal with the psychological impact of the fear of being kidnapped and abducted. According to the respondents, there are no security measures in place to deal with the problem, which leads to frequent and covert kidnappings of people.

Conclusion

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) is a commendable initiative with a charming policy and educational goal that might rescue every child from illiteracy and poverty, but the implementation has fallen short of expectations, leaving millions of youngsters without access to an education. This study has uncovered some barriers that children must overcome to receive education. These barriers include socioeconomic problems, inadequate teaching skills, gender

inequality, and security concerns. The findings indicate the need to apply psychological tools such as counselling services to help them deal with fear so that children can engage adequately in their academic work. Access to education will make them to become better citizens.

Recommendations

The study's conclusions led to the formulation of the following recommendations:

1. The UBE's execution is significantly impacted by its underfunding. To guarantee sufficient funding for the program, the federal government should raise the 2% fiscal transfer it gives to the states from the UBE intervention Fund, from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF). They should keep an eye on the state government to make sure that funds are being allocated appropriately to maintain all of the facilities, educational resources, infrastructure, school uniforms, and to feed all primary school students in every state with locally farmed food. This will take care of UBE's second goal, which is to enable low-income parents in rural areas to send their children to school for free.
2. The services of guidance counselors should be acknowledged by all branches of government, and they should be empowered to participate in the reevaluation of basic education in order to fulfill the recommendations made in this article.
3. The government should use the Nigerian army to dismantle the networks of robbers and insurgents, as insecurity is seriously impeding the advancement of education in Nigeria. They ought to use innovative technology to comb the bushes and apprehend the offenders. Every Nigerian believes that if the government so chooses, it can put an end to the banditry and threat posed by Boko Haram.
4. Many girls are still not in school, despite the efforts of non-governmental organizations and the government to reduce gender differences in child enrolment and retention. The shared causes are issues with culture, gender-based violence, and sanitation, which suggests that action must be taken to guarantee good sanitation, cultural sensitivity, and the elimination of gender-based violence.
5. Once security has normalized, the government should also think about restoring some of the schools that the bandits destroyed. This will make it easier for children who live far from school and those who do not attend any school at all to sign up and begin their basic education.
6. Given the significance of educators in the field, it is imperative that teachers in rural areas possess a strong sense of motivation, get a regular pay, and receive additional incentives and allowances. To keep their pedagogical knowledge up to date and to be able to interpret the curriculum in a way that addresses the children's numerous demands, they should regularly attend relevant in-service training.

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