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Government Involvement In The Funding Of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme For The Attainment Of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) In Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the extent of government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in Delta state, Nigeria. two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. the design used for the study was a descriptive research design. the population of the study was 806 respondents which comprised of 474 principals and 332 UBE officials in the 25 local government area of Delta State. A sample size of 237 principals and 166 UBE officials were drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique. Document analysis and a self-structured questionnaire titled “Government Involvement in the Funding of UBE programme for the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Delta State (GIFUBEPASDG4). Reliability index of 0.83 was obtained through the use of Cronbach Alpha statistics. The research questions were answered with mean and standard deviation while Z-test was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed amongst others that, Delta state government was able to access to a high extent the Federal Government matching grants disbursed from 2005-2023 and also, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of principals and UBE officials on the extent of government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 in Delta State, Nigeria. It was recommended among others that, federal government should set up a monitory and supervisory body to oversee how the funds accessed are utilized in the state.

Keywords: Funding, Universal Basic Education (UBE), Sustainable Development Goal 4.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development goals (SDGs) are made of 17 goals to be achieved, of which goal four (4) addresses quality education. Education is a vital tool for all round development of a nation. Education is the key that opens the door for the achievement of other sustainable development goals because greater dimensions for advancing the achievement of other goals are formed through education. Sustainable development goal four (4) specified the need for inclusive and equitable quality education and the promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all. The achievement of this goal is indispensable for the

elimination of poverty, illiteracy and reduction of inequalities as well as fostering economic growth and development.

In order to achieve the sustainable development goal four, the Nigerian government incorporated the Universal Basic Education (UBE) for implementation. The UBE program is a program that is aimed at achieving free and compulsory education for all. The advent of free and compulsory education can be traced to 1976 when the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme was introduced by the government to various educational stakeholders

For the successful implementation of any educational program, financial resources must be committed to it. Hence, for the attainment of sustainable Development Goal Four (4) through Universal Basic Education, there must be adequate funding of the program. Obayan cited in Onuoha (2019) stated that providing quality education for citizenry is a must, yet there cannot be quality education without funding. Finance act as the life wire of any educational program. For proper funding of educational program, there is need for stakeholders to complement the funding of education by government. This was made clear in the motto of the UBE which states that the provision of education for all is the responsibility of all. Therefore, the government which is one of the stakeholders' education is expected to play a significant role in the funding of the program.

The contribution of the UBE programme to the development of Nigeria is an issue that cannot be over accentuated. There is no nation that can achieve meaningful development without a viable and productive education system. The contribution of the UBE scheme to national development cuts across the various sectors or spectrum of the nation. The UBE scheme no doubt has been instrumental to the increase in the literacy level of the Nigerian nation. Similarly, no nation can be said to have developed when there is no change in the attitude of the citizens. There are different subjects enshrined in the UBE scheme that are designed to equip the citizens with civic values. This has in no measure enhanced the developmental mindset of the citizens.

The UBE scheme seems to have meaningfully contributed to development in Nigeria and Delta State in particular. This is because so many factors have hindered the prospects of the programme just like many other educational programmes in Nigeria. There is no doubt that the inadequacy of human, financial and material resources in its various forms has been an interference to the developmental drive of this programme right from inauguration. It is therefore imperative that adequate actions should be taken for the programme to achieve its aim of bringing about sustainable development goal four (4). This is to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals four (SDG4) does not become a failed programme like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). All hands must therefore be on deck for the UBE scheme to be able to achieve its sustainable development goals in the long run just as it has done in other countries where the programme has been introduced and sustained magnificently.

The Nigeria government at the federal, state and local level has aligned with the government of other developed countries that believe that the UBE is very beneficial for the nation to achieve Sustainable Development Goal Four. These goals have been carefully designed to contribute to the development of persons and societies and also to assist in the liberation of individuals and the entire society from a state of economic crunch and underdevelopment. Consequently, it is essential that all hands must be on deck in funding the programme to ensure that the UBE achieves quality and education that is accessible to all. It is based on this premise that this study seeks to examine stakeholders' involvement in the funding of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) for attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Delta State.

Statement of the problem

Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was set up to meet the educational needs of citizen as well as ensuring that quality and equitable education opportunities is given to all. This is the main focus of the sustainable development goal four. The UBE was well intended for the citizens through the focal objectives that was set to be achieved and this has made a lot of people to believe that the programme will be successful compare the millennium development goal that collapsed after its introduction. But seems

that the goals and objectives that were set to be achieved are just a mirage as what is on ground is far below expectation.

Diverts problems are hindering the actualization of these goal and objectives. Some of the problems are overcrowded classrooms, insufficient skilled manpower, inadequate funding, lack of learning facilities and equipment. The key problem of the UBE is funding. This is because when the fund available is insufficient, every other resources needed for the successful implement of the programme in Delta Sate will also be insufficient. This implies that quality education which is the focus of sustainable development goal four cannot be achieved.

From the present state of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Delta State, could it be that the state government is not acceasing the federal government UBE matching grant? or the state government is not actively involved in the funding of the programme for the attainment of sustainable development goal four in Delta State? These are questions the paper seeks to answer.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate the extent of Government's involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Find out the extent to which Delta State access the UBE matching grants of federal government from 2005-2023 for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Delta State, Nigeria.
2. examine the extent of State government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does the Delta State government access the UBE matching grants of federal government from 2005-2023 for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four in Delta State, Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of State government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho₁. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and UBE officials on the extent of State government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Delta State, Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Universal Basic Education (UBE)

Universal Basic Education is an educational program provided by the government which is free and compulsory for all citizens that are within the age bracket of 6-15 years. It is an educational program that was aimed at eliminating illiteracy, poverty and ignorant. There are three components in the Universal Basic Education which are Universal, Basic and lastly Education (Amuchie et al, 2023). According to him, Universal connotes a program that is design for all categories or group of individuals in the society. This was supported by Aluede in Paul (2021) when he asserted that universal implies the whole people without exception. It covers the education for both the rich or poor, dull or brilliant, physically fit or disabled and every other individual that were initially excluded from learning in the regular formal school setting due to their geographical, economic and other conditions.

The term basic implies the lowest point, takeoff point, bottom line or fundamental point. This means basic education is the beginning point of knowledge acquisition, that is, the starting point of education on which all other levels of education are built on or from which other parts or levels get support. (Aluede in Paul, 2021). In line with this, Obanya cited in Oyelade et al (2023) described basic education as the level,

type and form of learning that will help to build learning from the roots for someone to acquire literacy and numeracy skills to inculcate basic life skills e.t.c. Basic education in Nigeria is universal. It is meant for everybody (all). There is no exclusion to the categories of people to acquire this education. This can be seen as the UBE program incorporate the different levels or types of education like adult education, nomadic education, migrant education and other forms of non-formal education.

The last term according to Amuchie et al (2023) is education. He sees education as the transfer of knowledge from one generation to another. Therefore, he stressed that universal basic education is the transmission of fundamental knowledge to all facets of the Nigerian society from one generation to another. In addition, Paul, (2021) opined that education is the act of bringing up or training of a child through instruction and in the process bring the strength and power of his body and mind so as to understand his culture. Similarly, Enoh and Okpede in Paul (2021) asserted that Universal Basic Education as a form of education which must equip an individual with necessary skills to survive in his environment. Thus, it should be practical and functional.

Furthermore, Dadare in Nysiete (2015) views universal basic education as a base level of education that is meant to satisfy at least the minimum learning needs of people. He noted that this type of education is the foundation life-long learning, literacy and numerical skills. The definition above is more comprehensive as it clearly indicates more of what sustainable development goal 4 seeks to achieve through the UBE program. The definition of Osahom and Osahom in Ntsiemi (2023) is not far from this, as it is seen as a foundation of sustainable life-long learning.

The Universal Basic Education in Nigeria was incorporated to take care of education of children from primary to secondary school (junior). With the introduction of the 934 system of education, the basic education covers the first nine years of schooling which comprises of 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary, making a total of nine years.

There are certain objectives which the government expects from the UBE programme. Universal Basic Education as cited in Edho (2019:184) stated that the objectives of the UBE include:

- (a) Ensuring unaltered access to 9 years of formal basic education;
- (b) Provision of free, universal education for every Nigerian child of school going age;
- (c) Reducing drastically the incidence of dropout from the formal school system through improved relevance, quality and efficiency;
- (d) Ensuring the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulation, communication and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needful for laying a solid foundation form lifelong learning.

Conditions for assessing the UBE matching grant

There are certain conditions that are set by the federal government which every state must fulfill before the UBE matching grants that is been disbursed by federal government can be assessed. Igbenebia (2016) identified the following as conditions that must be meant by the states before they can assess the matching grant:

- Enactment of the state universal basic education law in compliance with section 12 (1) of the UBE Act, 2004.
- Establishment of state universal Basic Education (SUBEB) in compliance with section 12 (1) of the UBE Act, 2004.
- Opening a different bank account with the central bank of Nigeria titled 'UBE matching grant account'.
- Development and submission of a State Action Plan to UBE Commission for proposal in compliance with the requirement set by the federal executive council (Igenegbai, 2016).

The UBE programme is been funded by the three tiers of government. But each has their specific quota to contribute towards the program. The Federal Government quota of 2% consolidated fund has always been allocated to the Universal Basic Education Commission. It seems the state government has not been consistent in the contribution of their quota towards the programme, this has made it impossible for them to access the UBE fund provided by the federal government. David (2015) stressed that there is a

constitutional gap since the federal government is not able to enforce the state government to give adequate fund to the scheme. He pointed further that states are not willing to provide counterpart funding as a pre-condition for accessing the UBE fund as there is tendency of governors to divert UBE funds to other projects.

Assessing the UBE Matching Grant by State Government.

Certain conditions were set for the different state to fulfill before the matching grant can be release to them. One of such conditions is the counterpart funding that was introduced by the federal government. Paul (2021) asserted that counterpart funding is agreement between two groups or people, association or government stating how funds will be raised to implement a project or a program that has be plan. He went further by saying that the government of Nigeria knew that states through the State Universal Education Boards (SUBEBS) and the Local government through the help of the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) cannot fund UBE, hence the introduction of counterpart funding agreement. This was vehemently stressed by Ibrahim cited in Paul (2021) that no single stakeholder can provide all the necessary and needed resources for the successful implementation of UBE program.

The 36 states and the federal capital territory are expected to provide the matching grants which will be seen in its appropriate account before the money will be release. This was pointed out also by Paul (2021) that if the commission confirmed the counterpart fund has been provided by the state, the state through the SUBEB and the federal government agency will share it at the rate of 50% of the matching grant which will be spent on the provision of infrastructure such as classrooms, furniture, toilet, workshops, libraries, equipment and others. According to a report by ThisDay, (2024) that about 27 states in the federation failed to access the sum of #54.9 billion which was disbursed for basic education by the Universal Basic Education Commission.

This indicate that without the provision of the counterpart fund by the state, the Universal Basic Education Commission fund will not be given to the state. Onuoha (2019) cried out that, school administrators working the umbrella of Universal Basic Education are complaining of inadequate funding to implement projects while the matching grant from the federal government is in the central bank of Nigeria as idle fund waiting to be assessed for the development of education in those state. This is to say, there are some states where the Universal Basic Education program is wallowing in poverty while in the midst of wealth (the UBEC matching grant disbursed by the federal government agency). This is as a result of the state governors not be able to make the counterpart fund available so as to assess it. The inability of a lots of state to meet up with the funding arrangement has resulted to setbacks in the educational sectors in those states. It was made clear by Victor and Amadiaoha (2020) that some states that accessed the UBEC matching grant are still experiencing setback in the UBE programme as a result of misappropriation of the UBE fund or the diversion of the fund to other projects in the state.

It was indicated by Idoko in Igbenebia (2016) that some state government failed to utilized the previous fund that was allocated to them for the purpose it was meet for despite the strict warning from UBEC. He further added that in the time past, some state government will pay the contributive fund and when the fund is disturbed to their account, the funds are then diverted to other purposes. Similarly, Victor and Amadiaoha (2020) asserted that in time past, some state governors have been accused of taking loans from bank so as to be able to access the matching grant fund for their states. It is glaring that banks attach an interest to the loan issued out. The states' fund available for the UBE program is nothing to write home about after the deduction of the interest from the federal government contribution.

Moreover, Anibueze and Okwo in Igbenebia (2016), pointed out some reasons responsible for some states not accessing the fund as: lack of political will to raise the counterpart fund; the ability of the states to retire the initial grant from the federal government; poor inspection by the federal government on the utilization of the UBE fund; lack of involvement of other stakeholders such as parent teacher association, towns, organisations, other parties, private individuals and organization. In concord to this, it was vehemently said that, no educational institution can achieve its aim and objectives without been supported

by various stakeholders (Ubi & Egwu, 2022). This implies that for sustainable goal four to be achieved through the UBE program, all stakeholders must participate fully in its funding.

The funding of UBE program for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal four (SDG4)

Funding is an indispensable aspect in economics of education. Funding is an economic concept that explains the various sources of revenue (money) which could be in monetary (cash) and non-monetary (kind) available to education, how the money will be spent on execution of the different aspect on education in order to achieve the aim and objectives of education. Educational funding is the act of looking at the various sources of funding available to education as well as knowing how the money disbursed to the education sector are been used for the achievement of educational goals. According to Adeyemi in Onuoha (2019) educational funding deals with the sources of funding and how money allocated for education is spend especially in areas such as buying of goods and services of men and materials. Funding is also seen as money which is saved or the amount of money available for implementing a program.it serves as a means of making payment and settling of bills for proper implementation of a particular program. Oyelade et al (2023) describe funding as the financial management of how a project, plan or program intends to raise funds for the actualization of its goals and objectives. It also revealed how to source for the revenue the different means of getting the fund and the areas the fund will be spent on.

From the various views above, funding of UBE entails the money are raised or made available for the UBE programme so as to achieve its goals and objectives. This is because funding is a key factor that determine the attainment of any educational goals. This was succinctly put by Daldons and Zwalchir (2016) that funding is one of the most vital elements which serves as a base to all other indices of efficiency and effectiveness in the education industry. Funding any educational system should not be ignored rather it should be adequately and qualitatively provided to achieve the goals that was set in order to make a difference. This was vehemently noted by Ozigi in Nwabueze and Nwabueze (2016) that no parastatal can move forward proficiently without satisfactory monetary resources at its disposal.

The National Policy on Education cited in Oyedele et al (2023) indicated that the funding of education is a collaborative responsibility of the federal, state and local government. This means that the basic education which covers nine (9), that is, six years in primary school and three years in junior secondary school should be funded by both the federal, state and local government. Worthy of note is Analaba and Jack who reiterates that funding of education may not be in the form of financial or cash support only like payment of school fees, buying of books, school uniforms and other learning materials but should include contribution in non- monetary form which include the following:

- Funding of laws and policies formulation and implementation in education
- Funding of monitoring of educational policy and program implementation.
- Funding of educational instructional development
- Recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff and payment of their salaries.
- Payment of school fees by parents/guardian.
- Provision of facilities such as library, books, ICT facilities, school buses e.t.c.
- Funding of capacity building.
- Providing school with good nutrition.
- Extra-moral lesson by local community.
- Provision of counselling services in the schools (NTI, NERDC, FRN, cited in Analaba & Jack, 2023)

Government has been the major financier of education though with some complementary efforts from school fees, Parents Teachers Association, alumni etc. the fund from the government is mainly gotten from the sale of crude oil which seems to be the main source of revenue generation in the economy. Government funding on education has not been adequate. That is, it is below the 26% recommended by UNESCO. Hence education has not been given adequate attention for over two decades. This was as a

result of the competing demand from other sectors like health, transportation and other service areas in the economy (Akaranta in Nwafor et al, 2015).

Due to the problem of inadequate financial resources for inhibiting the proper implementation of education program, the federal government came up with a way of funding the UBE program for its successful implementation which was done through the enactment of the UBE Act of 2004. This UBE Act of 2004 clearly specified how the UBE program will be funded in Nigeria which are stated below

- Not less than 2% of the consolidated revenue fund (CRF) of the federal government as an intervention on the implementation of the UBE program which is the requirement for its usage in the states and federal capital as pre-school education (5%); primary (6%) and secondary education (35%).
- Funds / contribution in form of federal government credits or loans
- Local/international donor grants (UBE in Paul, 2023)

However, there are certain formula for the sharing of the 2% consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) to the different states of the federation. It was enshrined in the act that the fund will be distributed in the following proportion

- 50% as matching grant. This implies the fund contributed equally by both the federal and state government.

The non-matching fund include:

- 14% fund to states to address educational imbalance in basic education development among and within states.
- 10.5% incentives to states for good performances
- 2% funds for the education of those children who are mentally and physically challenged.
- 2% funds for monitoring of UBE programmes
- 10% for teachers' development
- 15% funds for instructional materials.

The intervention fund which is given to state government are used for payment of teachers' salaries and other overhead expenses rather they are meant for the expansion of access, quality improvement and ensuring fairness in basic education.

Conclusively, it seems the funding of the UBE programme has not been able to achieve its purpose as many states have not been able to meet up with the matching fund needed from them in order to access the intervention fund of the federal government. This was revealed in Paul (2016) when he stated that 36 states and the federal capital territory have not accessed over ₦84 billion earmarked by the commission for primary education since 2015. Though, the government has specified how it will fund the UBE program but it is worthy of note that funding does not only involve money or cash alone but also the non-monetary aspect in the form of provision of facilities, construction of school buildings etc. Hence, stakeholders play an indispensable role in the funding of the UBE program in Delta State in order to achieve quality education.

Government Involvement in the Funding of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) for the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4)

The funding of free Universal Basic Education (UBE) is a responsibility that is shared between the three tiers of government (federal, state and local). The federal government is the brain behind the existence of the universal basic education as such much is expected from them in the aspect of fund provision. The state government also has its own role to play when it comes to funding of the Universal Basic Education program. This indicates that the funding of UBE is a collaborative efforts between the tiers of government. Adamechi and Romaine cited in Anibueze opined that the federal government should provide a minimum of about 65% of the total fund that is needed for the proper implementation of the UBE programme while the state and local government will provide the remaining 35%. The primary school education which is from basic 1-6 is the responsibility of the federal government while the junior secondary education is the responsibility of both the state and federal government. Other aspect of UBE

like adult literacy are funded by federal, state and local government. Nomadic education is the responsibility by the federal government only (Ordu & Wosu, 2019).

Government plays an important role as stakeholder, because of their particular and long-term links to specific geo-physical environments and because of threats to their living and future (Blasé, 2022). They are in both active and passive sense, but more especially represent a fund of knowledge in balancing the use and preservation of education. The transfer of knowledge from generation to generation gives government a role in informing the wider debate and offering detailed insights into practices of the management of human survival and development (Blasé, 2022). The government through her Media agencies are key in promoting the broad public awareness and ownership without which education will remain the concern of a few enthusiasts and be confine to the walls of educational institutions.

More so, Short and Greer (2022) opined that government at all levels plays a very significant impact in the development of education for the attainment of sustainable development goal four. According to them, no any educational system survives without government intervention. The government gets involved in the funding of education either in cash or kind in the following ways in ensuring that educational objectives as stipulated in its National Policy of Education is been achieved.

- i. Policy-making and framework-setting
- ii. promoting public consultation and input
- iii. National and international public campaigns
- iv. Provision of schools' structures.
- v. Employment of teaching and non-teaching staff and payment of their salaries
- vi. Provision of books and library equipment
- vii. Provision of fund for day -to-day running of schools
- viii. Provision of funds for sports and health facilities
- ix. Funding capacity building.
- x. Awarding scholarship to students that excel in their academics

These are some aspects of any educational programme like the UBE that the government can adequately fund either in cash or non-monetary term so as to attain quality education. Furthermore, Ndifon et al (2021) stated that the government as a stakeholder gets involved in the implementation of the UBE programme through the following means; employment of teachers, funding of schools, provision of adequate infrastructures, regular payment of salary, monitoring and supervision, motivation and teachers (promotion), training and retraining of teachers and implementation of educational policies. However, Hoover-Dempsey and Kathleen (2021) identified government as one of the most important educational stakeholders who are closely involved in the overall operations of schools. They argued that schools should not relent to advocate for significant participation of government in order to be successful.

Another way the government participate in UBE is the empowerment of teachers. Teacher empowerment by government provide teachers with a significant role in decisions making, control over their work environment and conditions, and opportunities to serve in a range of professional roles (Short & Greer, 2022). The primary objective of the government is to ensure that every child receive quality education, which will enable them lead productive rewarding lives in future. The government through the employment of parents of students, help to provide students with their school needs, and influence their behaviors with regard to time management and study habits, eating practices, and their personal safety and general welfare.

Olatunji (2021) argued that the place of government funding of UBE for the attainment of sustainable development goal four cannot be over emphasized, they provide: scholarships, books and stationeries, repair and maintenance of school buildings, students training and development, instructional materials, hostel accommodations for students, internet facilities and provision of school buildings and many more. Furthermore, Peter (2019) carried out a study on the contributions of government as a stakeholder in Kogi North, and the findings of the study showed that out of the twenty public secondary schools sampled, government as a stakeholder in education participated in providing infrastructures such as: pipe borne

water, libraries, hostel accommodations, instructional materials, scholarship schemes, books and internet facilities and so on.

Furthermore, Oguche and Rabah cited in Mahmad & Obom (2022) revealed that government is renovating schools and putting in place new infrastructural facilities particularly in primary schools through Education Tax Fund (ETF), World Bank Assistance and the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC). Furthermore, the study of Kwashabaw and Oduwaye in Ezema (2021) revealed that government participate to high extent in the financial provision for infrastructural development of basic education but he indicated that the areas of support was on the supply of labour and materials.

Ehaighe et al (2023) supporting the point above, aver that government supported adequately the secondary schools in Benin City through the provision of classrooms, teaching aids, science laboratory.

On the contrary, Okunami in Madmud and Obom (2022) stated that government has been failing in most of the states to pay salaries and allowances for teachers regularly and in the provision of adequate instructional materials and laboratory equipment. Similarly, Abba cited in Nwite et al (2016) accused government of poor funding policy when he stated that government pay lip services to education sector. He further stressed that government has never meet the 26% annual budgetary allocation as recommended by UNESCO. There was also an outcry that most of the secondary schools that are government owned showed a decline in the provision of basic requirement. There were cases where students stand in classroom to receive lectures (Oyelade, 2023). This was buttressed by Olayemi (2019) that lack of infrastructural facilities in most of the schools in Nigeria are as a result of poor funding of the system by the government.

From the above, government involvement in the funding of any educational programme especially the UBE is indispensable since they are the major stakeholders funding the scheme but been complimented by other stakeholders in education. This indicated that the more the government is involved in the provision of fund, the easier attainment of sustainable development goal four.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of this study consisted of 806 respondents which comprised of 474 principals and 332 UBE officials, of which the sample size of 403 respondents (237 principals and 166 UBE officials) were drawn representing 50% of the population. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used for the study. The instruments for data collection was document analysis and structured questionnaire titled "Government Involvement in the Funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme for the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 (GIFUBEPASDG4). The questionnaire items were structured on the Likert modified Four Points rating scale of Very High Extent =4, High Extent=3, Low Extent=2, Very Low Extent=1. The face and content validity of the instruments were ascertained by the researcher's supervisors and other two research experts from the department of Educational Measurement and Evaluation. The corrections from the experts were fully effected to ensure effectiveness of the instruments. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which an index of 0.83. 30 copies of the instruments were administered to the respondents who were outside the sample. 403 copies of the instruments were administered to the respondents with the help of two research assistants who were well briefed on the administration of the instrument all the copies were retrieved. Data collected were analyzed with percentage, mean and standard deviation while Z-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research question 1: *To what extent does the Delta State government access the UBE matching grants of federal government from 2005-2023 for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four in Delta State.*

Table 1: Document analysis on the disbursement of matching grants and un-accessed matching grants to Delta State [in naira] from 2005-2023.

S/N	Years	Amount Disbursed (₦)	Amount accessed (₦)	Amount accessed (₦) Billion	Percentage un-accessed	Percentage Accessed
1	2005-2013	6,411,340,578.18	6,411,340,576.8	1.38	2%	98%
2	2014	952,297,297.30	952,297,297.30	0.00	0%	100%
3	2015	8,767,567,56.70	8,767,567,56.70	0.00	0%	100%
4	2016	1,042,027,027.03	1,042,027,027.03	0.00	0%	100%
5	2017	1,286,343,183.55	1,286,343,183.55	0.00	0%	100%
6	2018	1,473,832,845.20	1,473,832,845.19	0.01	0.1%	99.9%
7	2019	1,519,884,078.86	1,519,884,078.86	0.00	0%	100%
8	2020	715,074,135.14	715,074,135.14	0.00	0%	100%
9	2021	946,646,664.48	946,646,664.48	0.00	0%	100%
10	2022	1,204,452,353.76	1,204,452,353.76	0.00	0%	100%
11	2023	1,395,784,959.15	1,395,784,959.14	0.01	0.1%	99.9%
	Total	17,824,439,878.40	16,873,094,877.95	1.40	5%	95%

Source: Adapted from ubeonline.com, 2024.

From table 1 above, over 6 billion naira was disbursed for 9 years (2005-2013) making it the least grant disbursed for education till date. However, the amount increased as the year progressed, and declined by year 2020, which can be attributed to COVID year (lock down). The highest amount disbursed, which was completely used for its purpose was in 2023. This implies that Delta State government was able to accessed the UBE matching grants from 2005-2023 for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four to high extent with 95% of the fund accessed, as shown in the above table. Moreover, the percentage un-accessed grant was 5% as recorded between 2005 to 2023.

Research Question 2: *What is the extent of State government's involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State?*

Table 2: Mean (\bar{X}) and Standard Deviation (SD) on the Responses of Principals and UBE Officials on the extent of government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State

S/N	Items	Principals N=237		UBE Officials N= 166		Weighted Mean	Remark
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
1	Government provides funds for payment of staff salaries and allowances regularly to aid in the attainment of SDG4.	3.16	0.72	2.87	0.80	3.02	High Extent
2	Government provides funds for development of new structures for UBE which helps the attainment of SDG4.	3.14	0.69	2.77	0.83	2.96	High Extent
3	Government provides funds for library and laboratory equipment for the attainment of Sustainable Goal 4	3.12	0.76	2.87	0.65	3.00	High Extent
4	Government provides funds for the maintenance and repair of building, equipment and furniture for the implementation of UBE programmes.	3.22	0.65	2.99	0.69	3.11	High Extent
5	Government provides funds for the day to day running of schools for the achievement of SDG4.	1.87	0.62	1.85	0.51	1.86	High Extent
6	Government provides funds for sports and health facilities for the UBE to achieve SDG4	3.18	0.75	3.00	0.73	3.09	High Extent
7	Government provides funds for building and equipping school libraries.	3.06	0.75	2.91	0.86	2.99	High Extent
Average		2.96	0.71	2.75	0.72	2.86	

Data on Table 2 shows that most of the items had weighted mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were seen to a high extent government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State. In summary, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.86 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that government provides funds for payment of staff salaries and allowances regularly to aid in the attainment of SDG4; government provides funds for development of new structures for UBE which helps the attainment of SDG4; government provides funds for library and laboratory equipment for the attainment of Sustainable Goal 4; government provides funds for the maintenance and repair of building, equipment and furniture for the implementation of UBE programmes; government provides

funds for sports and health facilities for the UBE to achieve SDG4; government provides funds for building and equipping school libraries.

Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and UBE officials on the extent of government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State.

Table 3: Z-test Analysis on the difference of Principals and UBE officials on the extent of government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State

Respondent	N	\bar{X}	SD	Level of sig	Df	z-cal	z-critical	Decision
Principals	237	2.96	0.71	0.05	401	2.91	1.96	Significant (Reject Ho ₁)
UBE Officials	166	2.75	0.72					

Data on the Table 4 above revealed the summaries of Subject, mean, standard deviation and t-test of difference between the mean scores of Principals and UBE officials on the extent of government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State. The calculated t-test value used in testing hypothesis stood at 2.91, while t-critical value stood at 1.96 using 401 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance.

At 0.05 level of significance and 401 degrees of freedom, the calculated z-value of 2.91 is greater than the z-critical value of 1.96. Hence there is a significant difference between the responses of the respondents. Consequently, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis, and concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of principals and UBE officials on the extent of government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the study, it was revealed that Government involvement in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) in Delta State was to a great extent. Also, the survey participants agreed that government provides funds for payment of staff salaries and allowances regularly to aid in the attainment of SDG4; government provides funds for development of new structures for UBE which helps the attainment of SDG4; government provides funds for library and laboratory equipment for the attainment of Sustainable Goal 4; government provides funds for the maintenance and repair of building, equipment and furniture for the implementation of UBE programmes; government provides funds for sports and health facilities for the UBE to achieve SDG4; government provides funds for building and equipping school libraries.

Ambe *et al* (2021) did an empirical work on evaluation of the extent of funding and supervision in the implementation of the universal basic education program in schools of Cross Rivers State, Nigeria. The result of the findings revealed that the universal basic education program is been funded but not adequately and the state is owing in its counterpart funding for the consecutive years. The finding of this study partly agrees with the outcome of the present research because, the previous study discovered partial funding by government, while in the present study, government funding was significant. This implies that when UBE programmes are constantly monitored by government, it will increase their participation, by providing adequate funding for development of UBE programmes.

Similarly, Jaiyeoba (2021) investigated the effectiveness of basic education to eradicate or reduce level of illiteracy as well as enhance development. The findings revealed a remarkable departure from the former UPE programme in the present UBE programme, provision of infrastructure though not adequate at

present and devotion of adequate fund by the government though with no transparency in the disbursement of such UBE fund among others. This shows the active participation of government towards UBE programmes and agrees with the finding of the present study. This implies that regular funding and support from government towards development of UBE programmes in public schools will bring about attainment of sustainable development goals. Also, building and consolidating on the implementation of UBE, and provision of adequate essential facilities by government, like libraries, laboratories and play materials (in the early years) can make the UBE programme to adequately contribute to national development.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that Delta State government was able to access matching grants of the federal government and to high extent were involved in the funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme for attainment of sustainable development goal four in Delta State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Government should set a monitory and supervisory body to oversee how the fund accessed are been utilized in the state.
2. The state government should form a realistic collaborative funding framework with other stakeholders in education so as to achieve quality education.

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