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Participatory Educational Planning For Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery In Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined participatory educational planning and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlational survey design. The population of the study was 5254 education stakeholders which comprised (Ministry officials- 363, principals- 207, Teachers- 4015, parents 462 and community development committee chairpersons- 207). A sample size of 545 comprising (Ministry Officials- 85, Principals- 40, Teachers- 80, Parents-320 and community development committee chairpersons- 20) was drawn from the total population using the stratified and multi stage sampling technique. The instruments of the study were the validated researcher – made Participatory Educational Planning Scale (PEPS) and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery Scale (SSEDS) with a reliability indices of 0.66 and 0.74 respectively, obtained using Cronbach Alpha procedure. Simple regression was used to answer research questions while t-test associated with simple regression was used to test hypotheses. The result of the study showed among others that stakeholders’ participation in policy formulation has a high level of relationship with sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study also revealed that there is a significant relationship between the level of stakeholders’ participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa state, Nigeria. The findings also showed that there is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholders’ participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The study concluded that stakeholders’ participation in policy formulation is significantly related to sustainable secondary education delivery while stakeholders’ participation in goals and objectives formulation is not significantly related to sustainable secondary education delivery. Based on this, it was recommended among others that government should establish stakeholders’ engagement framework for policy formulation that will guarantee representative participation of all critical stakeholders.

INTRODUCTION

The world over, education has been used as a veritable instrument for human capacity building and societal development as it functions as a means of transferring worthwhile knowledge, skills and attitude from one generation to another. In the course of developing the society, a country depends on the educational institutions to equip her citizens with the required knowledge and skills that are needed to foster growth and development. This has motivated developed countries to invest substantially in the education sector in order to effectively and efficiently carry out its role of human capital development.

Seeing the positive impact this investment in education has brought to the advanced nations, the developing countries borrowed a leaf by prioritizing investment in the sector in order to compete favourably in the current knowledge economy. Hence, educational policies and programmes in the developing countries are being formulated and implemented to achieve the purpose of growing its economy as well as to meet the overall developmental aspirations of the country. However, planning is carried out in different ways in relation to the views and aspirations of the people or stakeholders who have the responsibility of deciding the policy direction of the nation. In other words, their actions are shaped by what they hope to achieve (needs) which are the offshoots of the prevailing ideals cum value system among the people or organization. It is therefore worthy of note that the purpose of planning, the process and the context within which the plans are formulated and subsequently implemented have a significant effect on the outcome of the plan. Hence, it is imperative to state that the planning process should be meticulously carried out in order to achieve the envisaged goals and objectives.

Education is the process of developing in an individual the right attitude, skills and knowledge required for the survival of the individual and that of the society. Ake in Asuka (2013) presented education as all the undertakings by which we develop our potentialities. According to Dhaka (2016), education is the process of facilitating learning knowledge, skills, values, and habits of a group of people are transferred to other people, through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training or research. It is evident from the foregoing that education increases capacity building, leading to an improved potential of an educated individual. This is made possible through a process of teaching and learning with the help of a teacher based on the required lessons that are relevant to the needs of the society. Also, irrespective of how and where education is acquired as long as it is an undertaking that would lead to an improved human capacity in line with societal expectations, it is safe then to say that such education is relevant. More importantly, educational plans are expected to mirror the needs of the people which are by their nature value-driven or something of worth. In other words, the educational system must be relevant to the aspirations of the economic and socio-cultural milieu wherein it is located.

The benefits of education to the individual and society cannot be overemphasized. Its value is highly significant as it sets the path of a person and community in an upward trajectory. Thus, education as earlier defined has the effect of creating in the recipient(s) worthwhile skills, attitudes, character, knowledge that would make him/her to be useful to self and society in general. In specific terms, anything that fosters a positive improvement in an individual in the aforementioned ways in addition to the other activities that would lead to the growth and development of the individual and society falls within the scope of education benefits. However, this work is specific to secondary education.

Secondary education on its part is the form of education which children receive automatically after primary education. It constitutes post primary education and sometimes serves as a link between primary and university education, (Ogbonoia in Kings, 2024). Basically, it is that level of schooling that comes immediately after the primary level and before the tertiary level of education. It is usually comprised of two stages of junior and senior secondary albeit the duration differs from one country to another due to their peculiarities resulting in the formulation and implementation of variegated educational policy. To this end the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014, p.14) in her National Policy on Education, outlined the objectives of secondary education as follows:

- a. Provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic backgrounds;
- b. Offer diversified curriculum to cater for differences in talents, opportunity and future roles;
- c. Provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub professional grade, among others.

However, to ensure the realization of educational aims and objectives, the system must be sustainable. Education for sustainability is defined as a transformative learning process that equips students, teachers, and school systems with the new knowledge and ways of thinking needed to achieve economic prosperity and responsible citizenship while restoring the health of the living systems upon which our lives depend

(UNESCO in Albert, 2022). Additionally, Education for Sustainability (EFS) according to Australian Association for Environmental Education, in Afangideh and Mengue (2020) is an education approach that aims to develop students, schools and communities with the values and motivation to take actions, for sustainability in their personal lives, with their community and also global scale, now and in the future. Thus, sustainable education encompasses the knowledge, skills, values that equip current and future learners and teachers and the overall school system with new ways of thinking that are required to achieve buoyant economy as well as develop responsible citizenship and at the same time restoring and preserving the health of the eco system that our lives depend on. To guarantee the effective and efficient delivery of education at any level, planning is very crucial.

Planning as advanced by Agabi in Adiele, Obasi and Ohia (2017:2) is a “process of making decisions in advance about specific actions to be taken with a view to optimizing the use of limited organization resources geared towards goal attainment”. To Okumamiri et al in Bayefa (2020, p.2) the term planning could be seen as the preparation of a series of decisions which are future oriented with proper and most effective utilization of scarce resources for achieving objectives. Similarly, BYJU’S (2014) asserted that Planning is ascertaining prior to what to do and how to do. It is one of the primary managerial duties. Before carrying out a task, the manager must form an opinion on the mode of operation. In the light of the foregoing, planning according to Taxmann (2022) is deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it and who is to do it. It bridges the gap from where we are to where we want to go. It can be inferred from the foregoing that planning is a process of preparing a set of action towards meeting future needs of an individual or organization within specific time and also the prudent or efficient utilization of resources towards achieving predetermined goals and objectives. In summary, planning is futuristic in nature, which is aimed at goal attainment, it is time bound and ensures the efficient utilization of scarce resources.

On the other hand, “educational planning is a process of preparing a set of decisions for future actions pertaining to education” (Anderson & Bowman in Mbipom, 2000, p.221). Likewise, Dangi cited in Mbipom (2000, p. 223) stated that “educational planning involves the formulation of educational policies and objectives, the co-ordination of various educational costing and budgeting, establishment of new schools and expansion of existing ones.” Obasi, (2020:294) asserted that “educational planning is futuristic, and it critically examines the prevailing situation of education, relative to the needs of both the individual and the society from both the local and global perspectives, and then formulate goals and objectives and strategies and programmes for their realization”. In the same vein, Nte cited in Ohia, (2020) asserted that the nature of educational planning is a rational systematic analysis of the process of educational development in order to make education more effective and efficient in response to the needs and goals of the students and the society. Thus, the fundamental objectives of educational planning as advanced by Agabi; Adepoju in Ayeni and Babalola (2009) include among others: to establish educational goals, objectives and activities for achieving them, to determine space, personnel and materials required to achieve educational goals, to harmonize interest and demands of stakeholders (students, parents, employers of labour, government and institutions of learning). It is apparent from the above submissions that without educational planning, the system would be in a chaotic state which could result to the non-realization of educational goals and objectives. However, one essential ingredient of planning is the active participation of the critical stakeholders. This is known as the principle of participatory planning. Studocu University Ranking (2022) while writing on the principle of participatory planning asserted that, development should be seen more as a change from the bottom-up than from the top to down. The statement further stressed that, the development process should be managed naturally rather than mechanically, i.e. unduly focused on plans, goals, objectives, targets and schedules (Studocu, 2022). On the other hand, Participatory Planning is a process which allows stakeholders to exert some influence over their work and conditions under which they work (Emmanuel & Zipporah, 2016). To this end, Innes and Booher (2005), identified the following as reasons for participation. These are: to find out what the public preferences are so that they can play a part in decisions, to improve decisions by incorporating citizen’s local knowledge into the calculus, advancing fairness and justice, getting legitimacy for public decisions, and to fulfill the requirements of law. It is worthy of note that decisions

reached in an organization through a participatory process reflects the collective effort of all stakeholders within its fold irrespective of perceived differences in status, as this will engender a greater sense of belonging and ownership of the outcome among the varying members.

Interestingly, participatory planning in education as it relates to sustainable service delivery dwells more on how the principle of participatory planning can be applied to education development to bring about the desired outcome in education. In other words, participatory planning in education is more interested with the inclusivity drive by various stakeholders' within the education system which when well harnessed would usher in the desired outcome.

Service delivery encompasses relevance, timeliness, quantity, cost and accountability procedures inherent in goal achievement. Thus, Participatory planning when well-articulated, packaged and developed is expected to make the outcome of the educational system more relevant as it take into cognizance the collective educational aspirations of a given society. Participatory planning also engenders a transparent process which in turn guarantees greater accountability among participants.

Statement of the Problem

Stakeholders' have continued to express their misgivings on most issues concerning the public secondary education especially in decision making. This could be inferred from the various complaints bordering on the relevance of the public secondary schools sited in their communities. There are also apparent cases of disconnect of views between government officials and community members on the best way(s) to manage the secondary school system. More so, the disadvantaged sections of the society complain of their interests not well reflected in the policy document. There are also complaints of educational aims and objectives running at cross purpose with the socio-economic and cultural peculiarities where these schools are located. Could this be related to the lack of or the inadequate participation of the stakeholders in the planning process? These concerns necessitated the researcher to conduct this study.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine participatory educational planning for sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa state, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives sought to:

1. determine the level of relationship between stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria
2. ascertain the level of relationship between stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of relationship between stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of relationship between stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was a correlational survey design. The correlational design was considered adequate as it is used to determine the level of relationship between variables of participatory educational planning such as policy, goals and objective formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery. The population of the study comprised of 5,254 stakeholders. They include (Principals – 207, public, Teachers – 4015, senior staff of the Ministry of Education – 363, Parents – 462, and Community Development Committee (CDC) chairperson - 207). The sample of the study comprised 545 critical

stakeholders drawn from the public secondary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. These were (80 teachers, 40 principals, 320 parents, 20 CDC chairpersons and 85 ministry of education officials). These numbers represent 10.37% of the total population. They were drawn using the stratified and multi-stage sampling technique. This involved dividing large populations into stages to make the sampling processes more practical (Vedantu.com 2025).The study utilized two sets of questionnaire as the instrument for data collection these were the participatory educational planning scale (PEPS) and sustainable secondary education delivery scale (SSEDS). The PEPS was patterned after the four-point Likert scale of very high level (VHL), high level (HL), low level (LL) and very low level (VLL), while the response format of SSEDS was strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). The instruments were validated by two experts in Test and Measurement, Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt. Their observations and contributions were incorporated to guarantee that the instrument have both face and content. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha method of reliability. The researcher administered 50 copies of the instrument to a pilot group that was not part of the sample. For the Participatory Educational Planning Scale (PEPS), the researcher carried out sectional reliability and the following sectional indices were realized for sub-section I and 2: 0.66, 0.74 respectively. Also, a reliability index for Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery Scale (SSEDS) was 0.83.All these indices showed that both instruments are highly reliable thus justified their use for the study.The researcher with the aid of four research assistants administered the instruments to the various respondents in their respective schools, offices and communities. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions. Similarly, t-test associated with simple regression was used to analyze hypotheses, while adopting statistical package of social science (SPSS).

RESULTS

Data Presentation

Research question 1: *What is the level of relationship between stakeholders’ participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?*

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis of the Level of Relationship Between Stakeholders’ Participation in Policy Formulation and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.268	.067	.062

Source: Field work, 2024

Scale of measurement

0.00 – 0.25% very low level

0.26 – 0.50% low level

0.51% – 0.75% High level

0.76% – 1.00% Very high level

Table 1 presents the summary of simple regression on the level of stakeholders’ participation in policy formulation as it relates with sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. With the model as 1, the regression score value came out as 0.268, the regression square coefficient is 0.067 while the adjusted R square resulted in 0.062% and the co-efficient of determination at 0.67%. When referenced is made to the scale of measurement, 0.6% falls between 0.51-0.75 (High level). Hence, the level of relationship between stakeholders’ participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria is to a high level.

Research question 2: *What is the level of relationship between stakeholders’ participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria?*

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis of the Level of Relationship between Stakeholders' Participation in Goals and Objectives Formulation and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.090	.008	.006

Source: Field work, 2024

The scale of measurement for Table 1 applies

Table 2 presents the summary of simple regression on the level of stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation as it relates with sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. With the model as 1, the regression score value came out as 0.090, the regression square coefficient is 0.008 while the adjusted R square resulted in 0.006 and the co-efficient of determination at 0.08%. When reference is made to the scale of measurement, 0.08% falls between 0.00-0.25 (very low level). Hence, the level of relationship between stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria is to a very low level.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Table 3 t-test Associated with Simple Regression on the Relationship Between Stakeholders' Participation in Policy Formulation and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Result
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	51.087	1.652		30.916	.000	Significant
Policy. Formulation	.129	.083	.068	1.563	.013	

Source: Field work, 2024

Data on Table 3 presents the t-values associated with the regression analysis on the relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The t-observed value calculated for testing the hypothesis resulted in 1.563 while the significant value resulted in 0.013 at 0.05 alpha level. At 0.05 alpha level and 1.56 t-observed, the significant value of 0.013 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This means that there is a significant relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses 2: There is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Table 4 t-test Associated with Simple Regression on the Relationship Between Stakeholders' Participation in Goals and Objectives Formulation and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t.	Sig.	Result
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	48.942	1.598		30.621	.000	
Goals. Objectives	.240	.079	.090	3.017	.093	Not significant

Source: Field work, 2024

Data on Table 4 presents the t-values associated with the regression analysis on the relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The t-observed value calculated for testing the hypothesis resulted in 3.017 while the significant value resulted in 0.093 at 0.05 alpha level. At 0.05 alpha level and 3.017 t-observed, the significant value of 0.093 is higher than the alpha value of 0.05. This shows that there is no significant relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Participatory Policy Formulation and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery.

Level of Relationship Between Stakeholders' Participation in Policy Formulation and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

The finding revealed that there is high level of relationship existing between stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable education delivery. The corresponding hypothesis has also revealed a significant relationship between stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable education delivery. The findings of the study are in line with Buthelezi and Ajani (2023) whose study on transforming school management system using participative management approach. Their findings indicated that, stakeholders expressed strong level of agreement regarding the need for school administrators to facilitate the involvement of staff members in decision making. Also implementing stakeholders' participation model in school is germane. They also highlighted the need for stakeholders to subordinate their personal objectives for that of the organization to achieve the collective aspiration of all. Participatory decision making aid the effective and efficient outcome of educational policy as everyone concern is given the opportunity to express their views. This process of social construction of knowledge facilitates the cross fertilization of ideas leading to the realization of shared educational policy decision in secondary education resulting to a more sustainable outcome. Also, Heikka et al., (2022) indicated a significant influence on stakeholders' participation in education process and outcome. Its findings also established that the level of participation varied between plans for variegated activities. Thus encouraging stakeholders' participation in education decision especially in policy issues entrench justice and equity as participants freely exchange concerns aimed at achieving a sustainable education.

Involving stakeholders who include teachers, parents, students, community members etc. in the policy-making process over time has certainly led to effective and sustainable education outcomes. The implication of the findings is that stakeholders' participation will contribute to policies that are more responsive to the needs of the education system and its users, and sustainable education delivery is more likely when stakeholders have a voice in shaping policies that affect them. Again, the findings implies that collaborative policy-making leads to more inclusive and context-specific solutions, stakeholders' expertise and perspectives help create policies that address real-world challenges and ownership and commitment to policies increase when stakeholders are involved in their development. Finally, the implication of this to educational planning is that education policy-makers and stakeholders will and should get involved in the policy formulation process as failure for that may make it impossible to create more effective and sustainable policies.

Level of Relationship Between Stakeholders' Participation in Goals and Objectives Formulation and Sustainable Secondary Education Delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

The analysis revealed that there is a very low level of relationship between stakeholders' participation in goals and objective setting and sustainable education delivery. In line with the research question findings, the corresponding hypothesis also confirmed that there is no significant relationship between stakeholders' participation in goals and objective setting and sustainable education delivery. The findings of the study is however different from that reported by Njoroge and Kathuri (2017), whose scholarly contributions showed that team work, delegation of responsibilities, school culture and corporate social responsibility have significant positive correlation with school performance. This is indicative of the fact that when stakeholders in school are engaged in the decision making process in school, it usually lead to

positive outcome as such outcome stemmed from the collective harnessing of ideas among stakeholders. Similarly, De Suosa (2021), whose scholarly study also noted that including a participatory approach in teaching and learning in education for sustainable development enables stakeholders to utilize the different perspectives when reasoning to participate collaboratively to work towards resolving environmental issues. This brings to the fore the power of collective reasoning that is aimed at facilitating the seamless formulation of relevant education decisions. Thus the decision to formulate education goals and objectives must take into account the varied narratives of education stakeholders who would be impacted by such decisions as doing this would result to a more favourable outcome that is accepted by everyone involved in the decision-making process.

The reason for the current findings is that other factors beyond stakeholder participation in goals and objective setting, contribute more significantly to sustainable education delivery. This outcome was made possible because of the “tokenistic participation” meaning that stakeholders were involved in goals and objective setting, but their input is not genuinely considered or implemented. The findings also come because of lack of representation as key stakeholders were not adequately represented in the goals and objective setting process. It was also as a result of ineffective communication or as a result of dominant voices where powerful stakeholders dominated the goals and objective setting process, overshadowing others' perspectives. On the other hand, the finding was made possible as a result of external factors like funding, policy changes which could outweigh the impact of stakeholder participation. The implication of the findings here is that there should be more involvement of stakeholders in setting educational goals and objectives and not just this but also following up to ensures it is transformed to more sustainable education outcomes. It also means that stakeholders should be more focused while formulating goals and objectives as that which may have been formulated may not meet up the demands towards sustainable educational delivery.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is a high level and significant relationship between the level of stakeholders' participation in policy formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery. The study also concluded that there is a very low level relationship between stakeholders' participation in goals and objectives formulation and sustainable secondary education delivery, and the relationship is not significant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Government should established stakeholders' engagement frameworks for policy development that will guarantee representative participation of all critical stakeholders.
2. Policy makers should ensure the re-evaluation of goals and objectives formulation processes to ensure stakeholders' input.

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