



ASSESSMENT ON THE STATUS OF STUDENTS' POPULATION AND ITS IMPACT ON BASIC EDUCATION DELIVERY IN MISAU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The study is sought to assess the status of students' population and its impact on Basic Education delivery in Misau Local Government area of Bauchi state, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Survey design was employed to conduct the study. The population of the study comprised 1069 respondents which involved Principals, Head Teachers and Classroom teachers. A sample of 214 was selected through stratified sampling technique. A self-developed questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The reliability coefficient for pilot study was 0.70. The data was collected and analyzed by use of descriptive mean and standard deviation and t-test statistics at (0.05) level of significance. The major findings of the study indicated that the status of students' population is high and has a negative impact on basic education delivery in Misau local Government Area. Based on these findings, it was recommended among other things that Government should provide adequate facilities, schools and classes and enough trained teachers to correspond with the students' population to ensure effective basic education delivery.

Keywords: *Assessment, Status, Students' Population, Basic Education, Delivery*

Introduction

Basic education is the foundation of any educational system. If this foundation is not strong enough, the whole system may collapse. Basic education is a

crucial stage of instructions, as it serves as a springboard on which the rest of the educational systems are built. Basic education shall be of 9 years duration comprising 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. It shall be free and compulsory (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2013). The above mentioned policy on education has a tremendous effect on parent's efforts in Misau Local Government for enrolment of their children in the basic education schools. The upsurge in students' population may perhaps be due to the fact that the burden of students' population in basic education is being shouldered by the government. Consequently, the above brought about a tremendous population of students in basic education schools in Misau Local Government.

Misau Local Government has expanded access to basic education but the building of new schools often not kept pace with the increase in student's population. As school population increases, class size also increases. It was stipulated in the National Policy on Education that, in primary and secondary schools, there shall not be more than 35 and 40 pupils respectively to a class (FRN, 2013). Despite the above mentioned policy, the problem of enrolment in schools of Misau Local Government is still increase where most of the basic schools have exceeded the pupil-teacher ratio of 1:35 in primary and 1:40 in secondary. According to Bauchi State Ministry of Education (2019) the pupil-teacher ratio of public primary school stood at 1:55 with Zaki LGA having the highest pupil-teacher ratio of 1:118. High ratio with a large number of students supported by only a single teacher leads to over burden the teacher and thus affecting the students' academic achievement. Pupil-classroom ratio on the other hand, "is the ratio of obtaining by dividing the total enrolment by the total number of classes" (Afolabi, 2007, p. 25). The pupil-classroom ratio for pre-primary and primary schools stood at 1:103 and for JSS stood at 1:84 in Bauchi state (Bauchi State Ministry of Education, 2019). This implies that the number of usable classrooms in basic education schools in Misau Local Government are limited compared to the total population of students.

However, in Nigeria, the act of financing education is a joint responsibility of the federal, states and local governments as well as the private sectors (FRN, 2013). Similarly, Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC, 2013) has explained that the financing of basic education is the responsibility of states and local governments while the federal government is intervening in the provision

of basic education with 2% of its Consolidated Revenue Fund. But local government areas play a vital role in financing and managing the basic education through the responsibility given to the local government education authority (L.G.E.A) which encompasses the provision of learning, teaching materials, maintenance of educational facilities as well as the other activities required for basic education delivery. In Misau Local Government, public basic education school's population has continued to increase without a corresponding increase in school facilities and equipment for effective teaching and learning, thus affecting basic education delivery. In his study, Remilekum (2006) observed that there were more pupils than the available school facilities in primary school.

Statement of the Problem

The introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Nigeria makes the Basic Education free and compulsory to every child; this perhaps brought about a tremendous students' population in Basic Education schools of Misau Local Government which eventually resulted to classrooms congestion and inadequate provision of educational facilities. It is obvious that most of the Basic Education schools in Misau Local Government area are in abnormal condition in such a way that most of the pupils/students study in overcrowded classrooms which makes effective Basic Education delivery less effective. Inadequate teaching staff, non-availability or insufficient provision of teaching and learning resources like schools building, equipment, and instructional materials that will match with the students' population have continued to reduced effective Basic Education delivery. Other problems associated with students' population in schools include difficulty of learning by the students, lack of capacity of a classrooms teacher to cope with a large class size which leads to poor Basic Education delivery.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the status of students' population and its impact on Basic Education delivery. Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1 To examine the status of students' population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government area.

- 2 To find out the impact of students' population in basic education delivery in Misau Local Government area.

Research Questions

The following research questions formulated guided the study.

- 1 What is the status of students' population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government area?
- 2 What is the impact of students' population in basic education delivery in Misau Local Government area?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- 1 There is no significant difference in the opinions of school Heads and Classroom teachers on the status of students' population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government area.
- 2 There is no significant difference in the opinions of school Heads and Classroom teachers on the impact of students' population in basic education delivery in Misau Local Government area.

Concept of Basic Education

Basic Education according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 1999) is the type of education that is given at the foundational level of education. Basic Education comprises the two stages, primary education and junior secondary education. Each country interpreted the term in different ways. In other countries, where there is no break between primary and junior secondary education, Basic Education covers the entire compulsory school period (Wikipedia, 2018). In Nigeria, Basic Education shall be of 9-year duration comprising 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary education. It shall be free and compulsory (FRN, 2013). According to (Fajonyomi, 2006), "Basic Education is referred to as minimum learning need or requirement for survival in a dynamic society" (p. 5). Basic Education is the education for sustainable life-long learning which provides basic skills for reading, writing and numeracy skills. It comprises a wide variety of formal and non-formal educational activities and programmes designed to enable learners

to acquire functional literacy. It aims at equipping individuals with such knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to live meaningful and fulfilling lives; to contribute to the development of the society; derive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from the society; and discharge their civil obligations competently (Federal Government of Nigeria [FGN], 2000). Basic Education means the type of education in quality and content, that is given in the first level of education. In Nigeria, the Basic Education was equated with six years of primary schooling at first but now it covers the three years of junior secondary school as well (Mgbodile, 2000).

Status of Students' Population in Basic Education in Bauchi State

According to Bauchi State Ministry of Education (2019) on 2018/2019 school census report, the total of public pre-primary and primary schools' enrolments in the state stood at 84,815 and 1,036,918. The combined public pre-primary and primary schools' enrolments stood at 1,121,733. The total enrolments in private pre-primary and primary schools was 50,110 and 141,568. The combined public and private pre-primary and primary schools' enrolments stood at 134,925 and 1,178,486 respectively. On the other hand, the total of public Junior Secondary Schools enrolments was 192,037. While the total of private Junior Secondary Schools enrolments was 34,804. The combined public and private Junior Secondary Schools enrolments was 222,841. Finally, the public Science and Technical JSS enrolments was 2,610 and total Integrated Qur'anic school enrolments stood at 63,306.

Status of Students' Population in Basic Education in North East Zone

According to UBEC (2010A) the pupil enrolment in basic education schools in North East zone, Bauchi state has the highest gross and net enrolments with 34,592 and 30,193 while Taraba state has the lowest gross and net enrolments with 9,214 and 7,542 in ECD. In primary, Bauchi state has the highest gross and net enrolments with 612,589 and 543,484 while Gombe state has the least gross and net enrolments with 366,041 and 328,466. The gross enrolment in junior secondary schools shows that Adamawa state has the highest figure of 113,352 while Taraba state has 70,163 as the least. Adamawa state also ranks the highest net enrolment with 76,567 while Gombe state is the lowest with 49,583.

Status of Students' Population in Basic Education in National and Regional

According to UBEC (2010B) South West zone has the highest number of gross and net enrolments with 442,582 and 381,015 while North East zone has the least enrolments with 112,421 and 95,910 in ECD. Outstanding numbers of gross and net enrolments in primary schools are recorded for North West zone with 6,496,699 and 5,722,597 while South East zone has the least enrolments with 1,981,475 and 1,827,647. North West zone has the highest number of gross and net enrolments with 997,652 and 737,393 while North East zone has the least enrolments with 515,779 and 367,451 in JSS.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 1069 respondents which included 894 classroom teachers (532 from primary and 362 from junior secondary schools), 146 Head teachers and 29 Principals. A sample of 214 was selected for the study. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample size. The main instrument adopted for the collection of data was a 10-items structured questionnaire titled assessment of students' population and its impacts on Basic Education delivery questionnaire (ASPIBEDQ). The questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Administration and Planning and Tests and Measurement of the faculty of Education, University of Jos. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the responses of 1 Head teacher, 1 Principal and 8 Classroom teachers and 0.70 reliability coefficient was obtained. The mean and standard deviation was used in analyzing the responses of the research questions and responses were weighted using the modified four point likert type of rating scale. The hypotheses were tested using t-test of independent sample at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question one: What is the status of students' population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government area?

Table 1

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Responses of School Heads and Classroom Teachers on the Status of Student's Population in Basic Education Schools.

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	RESPONDENTS	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std Dev	Decision
1.	The population size in basic education schools is more than 50 pupils in a single classroom.	S/HEADS	16	10	7	2	3.14	.944	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	96	67	14	2	3.44	.687	Agreed
2.	The Gross enrolment in basic education schools is very high.	S/HEADS	9	11	13	2	2.77	.910	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	31	73	67	8	2.71	.803	Agreed
3.	The Net enrolment in basic education schools is very high.	S/HEADS	6	10	18	1	2.60	.812	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	28	98	51	2	2.85	.683	Agreed
4.	The number of students per class in basic education schools is more than the normal student-teacher ratio of 30 students to one teacher.	S/HEADS	15	11	7	2	3.11	.932	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	88	46	29	16	3.15	.997	Agreed
5.	There is a steady increase in entry rate of students in basic education schools.	S/HEADS	14	10	7	4	2.97	.043	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	92	61	19	7	3.33	.820	Agreed
	Cumulative mean					3.13	.793	Agreed	

S/heads mean =3.17

C/teachers mean =3.09

Table 1 revealed that the cumulative mean of 3.13 in the cluster is above the cutoff point of 2.50. (that is, $3.13 > 2.50$). This implies that most of the respondents have shown that the status of students' population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government is high.

Research Question two: What is the impact of students' population in basic education delivery in Misau Local Government area?

Table 2
Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Responses of School Heads and Classroom Teachers on the Impact of Students' Population on basic Education Delivery.

S/N	ITEM STATEMENT	RESPONDENTS	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std Dev	Decision
1.	Students' increase population has a negative impact on the provision of instructional materials	S/HEADS	16	10	9	0	3.20	.833	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	78	55	29	17	3.08	.988	Agreed

	in basic education schools.								
2.	Increase in students' population in basic education schools lower quality of education.	S/HEADS	17	12	4	2	3.26	.886	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	82	79	15	3	3.34	.704	Agreed
3.	School facilities will not be sufficient in the area due to increase population in basic education schools.	S/HEADS	18	9	7	1	3.26	.886	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	91	48	24	16	3.20	.983	Agreed
4.	There is adequate teaching staff in basic education schools.	S/HEADS	0	0	7	28	1.20	.406	Disagreed
		C/TEACHERS	0	5	58	116	1.38	.541	Disagreed
5.	Students' increase population has a negative impact on the utilization of educational facilities in basic education schools.	S/HEADS	16	11	6	2	3.17	.923	Agreed
		C/TEACHERS	76	92	8	3	3.35	.647	Agreed
	Cumulative mean					2.84	.722	Agreed	

S/heads mean =2.82

C/teachers mean =2.87

Table 2 revealed that the cumulative mean of 2.84 in the cluster is greater than the bench – mark which is 2.50 (that is, $2.84 > 2.50$). This implies that most of the respondents have shown that the students' population has a negative impact on basic education delivery.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the opinions of school Heads and Classroom teachers on the status of students' population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government area.

Table 3

Summary t-test Result on Difference between Head Teachers and Classroom

Teachers’ Opinion on Status of Students’ Population

Group	N	X	SD	df	t	Pvalue
Decision						
Class Teachers	179	3.09	.747	212	-.543	.588
School Heads	35	3.17	.839			

The t-test for independent sample was used to test if a significant difference exists in the opinion of school heads and classroom teachers on the status of students’ population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government area. The result on table 3 yielded $t(212) = -.54$, $P > 0.05$, since the P value of .588 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was retained, since the data did not provide evidence for rejection of the null hypothesis. It was concluded that there is no significant difference in the opinion of school heads and classroom teachers on the status of students’ population in basic education schools in Misau Local Government area.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the opinions of school Heads and Classroom teachers on the impact of students’ population in basic education delivery in Misau Local Government area.

Table 4

Summary t-test Result on Opinion of School Heads and Classroom Teachers on Impact of Students’ Population on Basic Education Delivery

Group	N	X	SD	df	t	Pvalue
Decision						
Class Teachers	179	2.87	.716	212	.39	.695
School Heads	35	2.82	.728			

The t-test for independent sample was used to determine the significant difference in the opinion of school heads and classroom teachers on impact of students’ population in basic education delivery in Misau Local Government area. The result on table 4 yielded $t(212) = .39$, $P > 0.05$, since the P value of 0.695 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was retained.

It was concluded that there is no significant difference in the opinion of school heads and classroom teachers on the impact of students' population in basic education delivery in Misau Local Government area.

Discussion

The discussion of the main findings of the study is organized around the research questions and hypotheses for ease of reading and comprehension. The two null hypotheses postulated and tested were all accepted and the alternate hypotheses rejected.

The first finding of this study revealed that the status of students' population is high in basic education schools. The result showed that a greater number of respondents agreed that the gross and net enrolment is very high and with a steady increase in students' enrolment and more than the normal teacher ratio of 30 students to one teacher. This confirmed Chacha and Zani (2015) in the research conducted to find out the impact of free primary education on pupil-teacher ratio. The study established that enrolment in schools increased by more than 30% in 2003 and pupil-teacher ratio increased from 42:1 in 1998 to 53:1 in 2003 and rose again to 60:1 in 2006 and remain the same until 2008.

The second finding of this study revealed that student's population impacts negatively on basic education delivery. In this finding, the school heads and classroom teachers agreed that students' population has a negative impact on the provision of instructional materials and on the utilization of educational facilities in basic education schools. The respondents also agreed that the students' population in basic education schools lower quality of education. This proved that school facilities were not sufficient in the area due to students' population in basic education schools. This finding is in agreement with Mukhanji, et al. (2016) that there was no commensurate development and improvement of teaching facilities to match the increase enrolment which has compromised instructional effectiveness and quality of education.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it has been established that students' population in Misau Local Government is high and its significantly affect effective basic education delivery.

Recommendations

Base on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Government should provide adequate facilities, school and classes and enough trained teachers to correspond with the students' population in Basic Education schools.
- Bauchi State Universal Basic Education Board in collaboration with Local Government Education Authority and School Based Management Committee should organize a monitoring committee for visiting their respective basic education schools to ascertain the level of student's population and educational facilities in order to ensure effective basic education delivery in the schools.

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