

Community Education Mapping as a Tool for Addressing of Out of School Children in Nigeria: The Role of Adult Education Administrators.

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ABSTRACT

The need to provide education for all Nigerian children has been recognised by all; people, community members, civil society organisation, governments and development partners. The phenomenon of out-of-school children and youths in Nigeria remains one of the serious problems confronting educational sector of the country. It appears that there are conflicting figures about the actual number of these children. And people and scholars blamed the problem to inability to have access to the actual number of out-school-children. This is the reason the author advocates for community mapping as a way out. This paper therefore explored the problems associated with the provision of education to out-of-school children and suggested possible potentials of community mapping in addressing the problems. Lastly, the roles of adult and non-formal education administrators were highlighted.

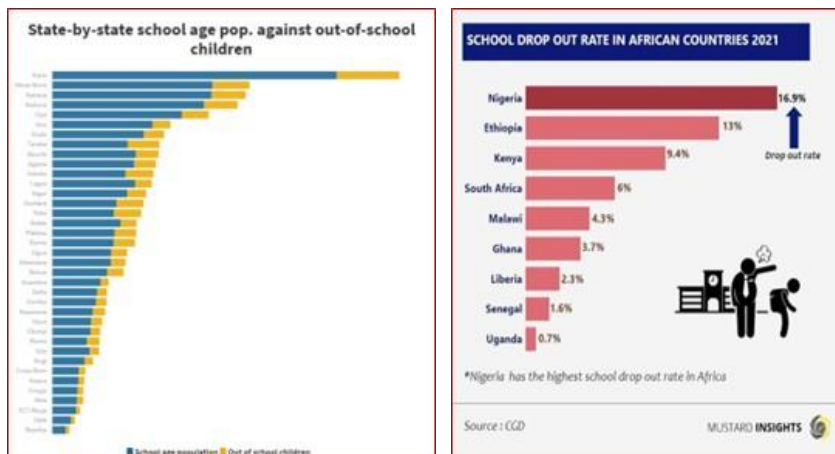
INTRODUCTION

Education plays a very important role in all areas of society, and is most responsible for the development of civilization as we know it. Modern society is built on education, which is visible in several ways. The more educated people are, the better they will understand the world around them, and will be better able to improve their own life and the lives of others. Real progress is particularly noticeable in vulnerable populations where education is the best solution for creating better perspectives and achieving success, both when it comes to individuals, and community as a whole. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UIS 2014), stated that worldwide nearly 58 million children of primary school age were not enrolled in school in 2012, despite global initiatives dedicated to achieving Universal Basic Education (UBE). In Nigeria the Universal Basic Education Programme was introduced in 1999 to ensure the provision of basic education for every Nigerian child; this is an attempt to ensure that no one is left behind and that will eventually do away with out of school children.

However, it seems even after twenty years there are still challenges associated with the provision of access and quality in the provision of basic education. The author believes that issues ranging from population growths, arm conflicts, and general insecurity had become a barrier to education in Nigeria. These challenges continue to elude the country in the area of education provision. Consequently the population of out of school children continues to swell-up. The recent data by UBEC (2022), following its Personnel Audit Report showed that there were more than 13 million children who were not in schools and that sizable proportion of this figure were said to be in the Qur'anic/Tsangaya/ Almajiri schools. This situation calls for concern and efforts must be made to addressing the problem. Nigeria as a country cannot fold its arm and allow the potentials of these children being killed. Hence, efforts must be put in place to provide education that will profit the lives of these children and the larger society. The focus of this paper therefore is to examine the problems associated with provision of education for out-of-school children and whether there are issues associated with the role of adult education administrators in addressing the problems.

OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTHS AND CHILDREN COMPLEXITY IN NIGERIA

Unfortunately in Nigeria many children are out of school. UNICEF Nigeria reported that about 10.5 million of the country’s children aged 5-14 years are not in school. While in 2022 UNESCO report noted that approximately 20 million Nigerian individuals of its approximately 200 million population are not enrolled in school. Also as of November 2021, the Federal Ministry of Education noted that about 924,590 of the previous figure of 10.2 million out-of-school children in Nigeria had been enrolled on the BESDA programme, reported by the Minister of Education. There is a growing concern that the pace of progress towards universal primary education has been slowing over the last several years and that school retention was harder to maintain. Of the 61 million children who were out of school in 2010, 47 per cent are expected to never enter school, 26 per cent have attended but left school, and the remaining 27 per cent are expected to enter school in the future. Girls account for more than half of primary school-age children out of school. They face the greatest barriers in the Northern States, with 61 per cent of the out-of-school population being girls are at the root of such challenges facing out-of-school children. These challenges are linked to many factors, including income poverty, exposure to child labour, conflict and natural disasters, location, migration and displacement, HIV and AIDS, disability, gender, ethnicity, language of instruction, religion and caste and of course lack proper data for effective planning. In Africa Nigeria is leading in the number of out of school youths and children.



Rate of out of school children by states in Nigeria Number of out of school children by African Countries

Because of these disparities, even countries with promising national indicators risk falling short of universal primary education. Multiple disparities often intersect with each other, resulting in complex and mutually reinforcing patterns of disadvantage that erect barriers to schooling and erode educational opportunities. By these indexes one can understand that something is wrong with the ways we are implementing policy on access and equity in education particularly in Nigeria.



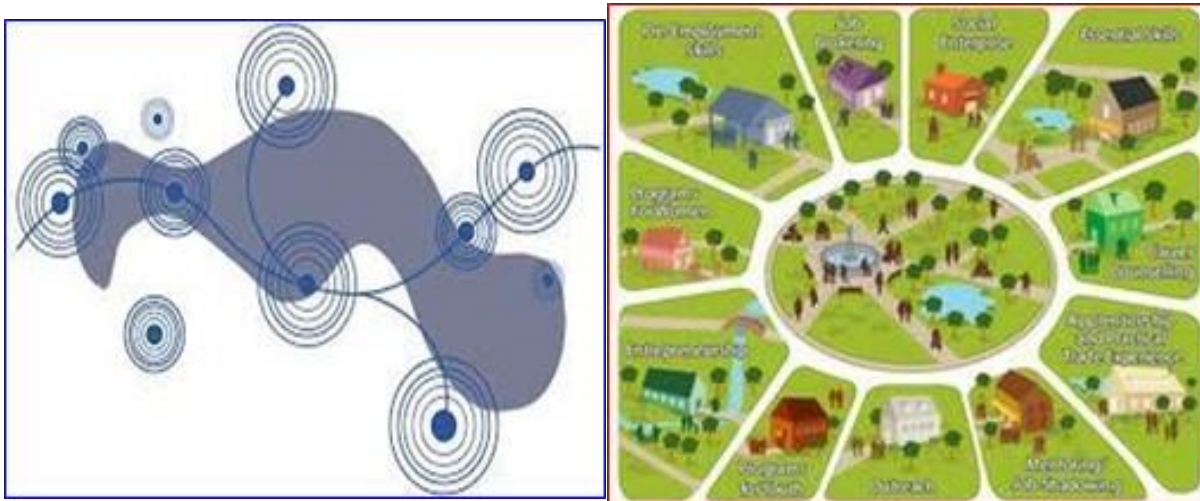
Images of out of school children in Nigeria Out of school children rate by region of Nigeria

Despite the combined efforts of the Nigerian government, international development partners and non-governmental organisations to tackle the pervasive issue of out-of-school children in Nigeria, the country is still struggling to find solutions. Despite dedicated campaigns and collaboration between stakeholders, the number of out-of-school children continues to be a persistent challenge. One of the key challenges is indeed lack of adequate data and information about the actual number of out of school children. This problem is believed to be better addressed through community mapping.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION MAPPING AS A TOOL FOR ADDRESSING OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTHS AND CHILDREN CHALLENGES

Community Education Mapping is defined as a process of identifying the educational needs of a community through investigation and survey exercise in order to locate out of school children and other education facilities.

It is also a set of techniques and procedures used to plan the demand for school or learning centers or places at the community level and to decide at management level.



GIS locations in community mapping

Example of Mapped Community

Community Education mapping is also a process used to identify learning resources that will help out of school youths and children become successful while provision to school is made. Community Education mapping should be an ongoing process, and may be completed by a designated administrators, teachers, or parents with the help of a group of individuals committed to learners success. Even learners can help complete the community resource mapping activity. This is to create, collaborative and useful tool that will support the entire community.

Overall, community education mapping also supports transition planning and work-based learning experiences by locating nearby supports and opportunities to assist learners to have exposure to various employment and education opportunities, as well as agencies and services. Community Education mapping key mandates in Access to Education is to; identify the right locations of out of school youths and children, identify community without schools, community with overcrowded school, age-group of out of school kids, availabilities of educated persons within the community, insecurity areas and the community live-style. Examples of community education mapping conducted in Nigeria



Sample Kano state community mapping result of 4 LGAs Example of 5 communities of Nasarawa LGA of Kano State

THE ROLES OF ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

In Nigeria the Universal Basic Education Program (UBEP) was introduced in 1999 to ensure the provision of basic education for every Nigerian child. However, after twenty years the country is still struggling with the challenges associated with access and quality in the provision of basic education in the country. Nigerian out-of-school children figure has oscillated between 10.5 million and around 15 million for more than a decade, with the situation growing worse due to the degenerating security situation in the country. The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report (2020) indicated that sub-Saharan Africa remains the region with the most children and youth out of school with 98million children and young people excluded from education. It is also the only region where this number is increasing; out-of-school rates are falling more slowly than the rate at which the school-age population is growing.

It is believed that the most needed thing to do in addressing the ever growing out of school youths and children is to have data driving planning in Nigeria. This understanding requires that community education mapping must be conducted in the communities, Local Government Areas and the states. Each Adult and Non-Formal Education Administrator right from Scheme Organizer to State Executive Director should participate in the conduct of community education mapping and have handy the mapping result and use it for any action plan particularly on access and equity indicators. “He who fail to plan, He plan fail”.

Administrators should equally involve in the training of enumerators so that they can proper guide them in the field. Administrators should serve as liaison officers between the enumerators and the community leaders and members. This will ensure security of lives and materials of the mappers.

CONCLUSION

Community Education Mapping is a process of identifying the educational needs of a community through investigation and survey exercise. Normally it is an exercise which is undertaken usually after a survey of all existing facilities, number of out of school youths and children, available building (i.e. availability of classrooms, laboratories, lavatories, drinking water facilities etc.) library, library books, teachers, equipment, consumable stores, availability of schools in habitations/villages, etc. so that the deficiencies are pinpointed for taking corrective measures. Addressing the number of out of school youths and children is core to this discussion, we need to use community education mapping as a tool for effective planning particularly in creating access and equity in adult and Non-Formal Education.

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