

POLITICAL PROPAGANDA VERSUS PROMOTING STRONG CITIZENRY CONSCIOUSNESS FOR EARLY CHILD EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Education in Nigeria has been on concurrent list since 1951, but up to now the country has no coherent ideology that constitutes the corner stone of its educational programme. Therefore, no practical basis on which the foundation of education could be laid developed and utilized as a vehicle for political socialization and economic progress. To worsen the problem, the management of Basic Education Programme at all levels has been in the control of political appointees, both in the military and civilian administration since 1989. All the top office holders who have the power to execute Basic Education programme right from the local government up to the Federal Government level are seasoned politicians who are appointed as a compensation for their political contribution to the so-called 'election' in a democratic era or support in a dictatorship regime (military). This study examined the effects of politic on promoting strong citizenry consciousness for early child Education in Nigeria. It opened up with a general overview of the topic, objectives of the study, and research hypotheses of the study. The scope and delimitation of the study were also specified. Survey study method was used for this study, covering the six (6) Geopolitical zones in Nigeria and the FCT. The population of the study involved 214 Principals, 370 teachers, 126 PTA officials, 120 SUBEB administrators, 120 MOE officials, 10 FMOE and 10 UBEC officials totaling 1210 respondents. Systematic random sampling technique was used in selecting these samples, out of which 194 Principals, 217 LGEA Administrators, 114 SUBEB officials, 114 MOE officials, 348 Teachers, 120 PTA Officials, 9 UBEC Administrators and 10 FMOE Administrators returned their completed copies of questionnaires, out of 1210 administered on the basis of which the analysis was made. The instrument used for this study was structured questionnaire based on five (5) points like scales, whose validity and reliability were obtained through the aid of experts in statistics and pilot study. The opinions of the respondents were analysed using descriptive analysis and statistical tools such include T-tests and ANOVA which led to retaining the stated hypothesize. It was discovered that all the Basic Education stakeholders used in this study have accepted the fact that political propaganda is a barrier to the successful early child education in Nigeria. Finally, the study recommended that Government should stop politicizing the top leadership of the SUBEBs and LGEAs which are the implementation levels of Early Education in Nigeria and other political interference on the Early Education programme. Career educationists who are capable and committed should be appointed to head such agencies.

Introduction

Nigeria embarked on Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme as a reform measure, which is aimed at addressing inequality in educational opportunity and quality nationwide. Specifically, the programme was introduced by the Federal government in order to remove distortions and inconsistencies in the basic education delivery and to reinforce the implementation of the National Policy on Education. It is one of the first programme initiated by the Obasanjo Administration in 1999, just after four months of inauguration. Basic Education refers to laying foundation for sustainable life-long-learning. Its goals includes free compulsory basic education to all school age children (6-15 years), enhancing strong consciousness in Early Child Education, providing complimentary education services for out of school adults and school dropouts, and provision of quality/relevant basic education to all Nigerians.

Influence of politics refers to 'bringing educational service or programme into political arena' despite the fact that it is a public service, (Encarta, 2009). It also includes making education partisan and or introduction of political agenda into education programme to the detriment of other political groups.

Such may include providing incapable leadership, poor coordination and control, selfish staff development and or recruitments or retirement, poor programme funding, poor interpersonal relationship, selfish school location or expansion, indiscipline, favouritism, poor policy implementation, biased decision or decision making process, poor communication and selfish distribution of human and material resources, and maintenance among others.

Like all other educational innovations, the successful implementation of Early Education programme lies predominantly on the extent to which the management aspects are taken into consideration. There is no doubt that no educational programme can rise above the quality of its management. The implementation of the 6-3-3-4 system of Education in Nigeria is a typical example of laudable programme but poorly executed, (Adesina, 1981). The ultimate aim of educational management is to procure and marshal resources (Man, Money, Materials and Time) to ensure the achievement of educational goals and objectives. All management functions such as planning, organizing, leading, supervising, controlling, motivating, and evaluating should be directed toward achieving such objectives.

Nigeria has toyed with some educational programs, which have only served as conduits to transfer money to the corrupt political leaders and their cronies. For instance, the nation launched the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1976, but as noted, the program failed due to lack of fund and poor management caused by corruption, embezzlements, inadequate human and materials resources, among other factors. Fafunwa (1986) remarked that a decade after the introduction of the UPE the educational outcome showed that the National Educational Objectives were not fully realized due to certain national problems such as political interference, poor funding, insufficient competent teachers, overcrowded classrooms, narrow curriculum content and high rate of drop-outs. Nigeria again launched another mass-oriented education programme; this time branded it the Universal Basic Education (UBE). The President, Olusegun Obasanjo, declared during the launching of the program in Sokoto in September 1999 that the nation "cannot afford to fail this time around."

But one may ask: with the troubling revelations of the shortage and "half-baked" teachers employed to teach in the nation's schools, politics in education and UBE management, how are we certain the current UBE program will be successful? Has the government trained the required number and quality of teachers needed to successfully implement the program? Are the teachers going to be motivated to perform their duties well? Are the classrooms and seats ready, or are the pupils going to sit on bare floor? Are the books and other teaching materials ready? What about the supervision and management? Who will monitor its activities at all stages and how sure are we, they have the ability, skills and dedication needed? Just as Dike, cited by (Igbeneweke, 2009) noted, that to improve the standard of education in Nigeria, the society has to first educate the educators, train the managers, motivate them to perform their duties well and stop and undue political interference in educational issues.

Now the crux of the problem is what would be the result of this intimate relationship between politics and promoting Early Child Education in Nigeria? Can free Early Child Education be promoted under politicized sector as UBE? Can merit be the yard stick in recruitment, deployment, provision, allocation of resources and other administrative issues as it relate to Early Child Education under such circumstances? Prof Iekan Oyediji, the than Chairman of Governing Council of Oyo State College of Education as cited by Gboyega (2009) pointed out that experience over the years have shown that only non politicization of the Early Child Education could pave way for its effective execution and promotion.

Some educational plans were never intended to be implemented, although many politicians still want to buy rhetoric of educational planning. Most educational plans including promotion of Early Child Education are with beautiful words to promise a brighter future but the planning and commitment are not favourable at all. A gigantic programme as promoting Early Child Eduaction needs adequate planning before its implementation. Such planning could entail convening National Conference comprising a wide spectrum of the stakeholders in the education industry, including National Population Commission, relevant NGOs and professional bodies. Such systematic and articulate planning would ensure that adequate logistics must have been put in place before full scale implementation. Absence of these makes one skeptical with regards to government's commitments to the success of the programme. This study examines the effects of politic on the promoting of strong consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective this study is to examine the effects of political interest on the promotion of strong consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference among UBE stakeholder's views that political interest affects the promotion of strong consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria.

Procedures

The study design, population and samples, instruments, instrument's administration and data analysis are explained below

Design of the study

In exploring the effects of politics on the promotion of strong consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria, the Survey Study designed was choosing because phenomenon involved spread over a wide area and for the purpose of getting clearer understanding, control, and subsequent investigation. This design is best be used in the study of correlations, descriptive, direct observational techniques, cross-cultural methods and growth studies (Olafe, 2010). It helps to point out, the extent of the problem and indicate where and how serious and widespread it is. The sample selected represents all states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory Abuja and invariably Local Government Areas (LGA) in all the states.

Population and Samples

Population of the study includes 10 UBEC Officials, 10 FMOE Officials, 120 SUBEB Officials, 120 MOE Officials, 120 LGEA Officials, 214 Principals, 370 Teachers and 126 PTA officials representing all 774 Local Education Authorities in Nigeria, all 36 States Universal Basic Education Boards and Abuja. The targeted UBE programme for this study will cover Early Child Education.

A purposive sample of two states from each geo-political zone was randomly selected and five LGEAs were equally selected from each of the selected state in the geo-political zone. The constituted sample population of this study covers 37 Educational Officials, 47 teachers, and 10 officials totaling 94 respondents per state. Others include 10 Federal Ministry of Education and 10 UBEC Officials, and 10 respondents from the six Area Education Authorities in FCT made of 10 teachers, 6 PTA officials.

Instrumentation and Administration

This Survey Study was carried out using a Questionnaire, titled 'The Effects of Politics on the promotion of strong consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria' Gray (1976) and Olomolaiye (1986) have both supported usage for this type of research. It is also in line with the opinion of Best and Khan (1995) cited by Gray (1976) who posited that questionnaire is used when factual information is desired to gather data and responses.

The pre-test was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the questionnaire before its final administration. While the validity and reliability of this instruments were obtained through the aid of expert in statistics using Pearson product moment correlation

Data Analysis

The data collected was coded, computed, tabulated, analyzed and presented in frequencies, percentage and in tabular form. For the purpose of the analysis of data collected in this study, analytical methods like tables, percentage, T-test and ANOVA was used. SPSS software programme was equally employed in analyzing all the data collected for testing the research hypothesis raised in this study to ensure accuracy of level of significant.

Results

Table1: Distribution and Returned Copies of Questionnaire by States

STATE	QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED	QUESTIONNAIRES RETURN
Katsina	97	97
Kano	97	90
Gombe	97	89
Yobe	97	86
Niger	97	91
Kwara	97	94
Abia	97	90
Anambra	97	88
Lagos	97	91
Ekiti	97	90
Akwa Ibom	97	86
Rivers	97	86
FCT	46	44
	Total 1210	Total 1126

A total of 1126 questionnaires out of 1210 distributed were returned which represent 93% of the administered questionnaires. It was only in Katsina state that the researcher got 100% return (94). But in all the remaining states Kano, Niger, Lagos, Kwara and Rivers states has the least missing questionnaires where 91 were returned out of 94, while Yobe and Akwa Ibom has the highest missing where 86 questionnaires returned out of 94 administered while in FCT only 2 questionnaires were missing, 44 questionnaires returned out of 46 administered. The details indicate 437 Educational Officials returned their questionnaires, which represent 94%. While 585 teachers returned their questionnaires which represent again 94% and a total of 104 PTA officials returned their own questionnaires out of 126 distributed which represent 83%.

The result of Opinions of Early Education Stakeholders on the effects of Political interest on the promoting of Early Child Education in Nigeria are presented in Table 1

Table 2. Result of Analysis on the Effects of politics on the promotion of strong consciousness for Early Education in Nigeria

S/N	O	ITEM STATEMENTS	CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSES						
				STRONGLY AGREED	AGREED	PERCENTAGE AGREED	UNDECIDED	DISAGREED	STRONGLY DISAGREED	PERCENTAGE DISAGREED
1		Politics in management of UBE has brought leaders who are incapable of formulating and implementing policies for effective Early Child Education in Nigeria	PRINCIPALS	70	53	63	29	21	21	21
			LGEA OFFICIALS	92	52	66	36	13	24	17
			SUBEC OFFICIALS	52	31	72	9	11	11	19
			MOE OFFICIALS	43	32	66	18	14	7	18
			TEACHERS	138	92	66	51	31	36	19
			PTA OFFICIALS	43	37	67	19	14	7	18
			FMOE OFFICIALS	3	6	90	1	0	0	0
2		Political propaganda in the management of Early Education in Nigeria has weakened its	UBEC OFFICIALS	4	3	78	1	1	0	11
			PRINCIPALS	67	58	64	40	20	9	15
			LGEA OFFICIALS	94	53	68	38	21	11	15
			SUBEC OFFICIALS	37	36	61	21	13	7	17

	implementation nationwide.	MOE OFFICIALS	37	30	56	25	17	5	18
		TEACHERS	123	97	63	69	38	21	17
		PTA OFFICIALS	39	35	62	28	16	2	15
		FMOE OFFICIALS	6	3	90	1	0	0	0
		UBEC OFFICIALS	4	4	89	0	1	0	11
3	Politicizing the top management of UBE policy formulation and implementation has slow down private investment in to Early Education in Nigeria.	PRINCIPALS	52	49	52	41	36	16	27
		LGEA OFFICIALS	54	47	47	57	36	23	27
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	30	32	52	22	19	11	25
		MOE OFFICIALS	32	20	43	35	20	7	23
		TEACHERS	91	79	49	80	64	34	28
		PTA OFFICIALS	29	29	48	29	22	11	26
		FMOE OFFICIALS	0	7	70	1	2	0	20
		UBEC OFFICIALS	3	3	67	2	1	0	11
4	Political propaganda in policy formulation and implementation of UBE programme has slow down the success of Early Education in Nigeria.	PRINCIPALS	58	31	46	37	55	13	35
		LGEA OFFICIALS	63	39	44	47	42	26	31
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	41	23	53	23	19	8	23
		MOE OFFICIALS	35	19	45	23	25	12	39
		TEACHERS	104	74	51	66	71	33	30
		PTA OFFICIALS	35	22	48	28	27	8	29
		FMOE OFFICIALS	3	4	70	2	1	0	10
		UBEC OFFICIALS	4	2	67	1	1	1	22
5	Political propaganda in the policy implementation of UBE programme has weaken the UBE effort to promote Early Education in Nigeria	PRINCIPALS	53	43	44	34	36	28	33
		LGEA OFFICIALS	67	37	48	46	31	36	31
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	30	27	48	22	20	15	29
		MOE OFFICIALS	25	25	42	25	20	19	33
		TEACHERS	96	70	48	68	54	60	33
		PTA OFFICIALS	34	20	45	18	27	21	17
		FMOE OFFICIALS	0	5	50	3	2	0	20
		UBEC OFFICIALS	5	2	78	0	1	1	22
6	Political propaganda in the policy formulation and implementation has led to the failure of UBE programme to effectively improve stakeholders perception of Early Education in Nigeria	PRINCIPALS	60	47	55	46	25	16	21
		LGEA OFFICIALS	67	53	55	41	35	21	26
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	37	28	54	20	17	12	24
		MOE OFFICIALS	30	27	48	25	22	10	27
		TEACHERS	98	83	52	81	48	38	25
		PTA OFFICIALS	33	27	50	21	22	17	33
		FMOE OFFICIALS	3	6	90	1	0	0	0
		UBEC OFFICIALS	2	3	56	1	1	2	33
7	Politics in the policy formulation and implementation of UBE programme has led to poor maintenance culture and	PRINCIPALS	62	51	58	37	24	19	46
		LGEA OFFICIALS	79	40	55	53	28	17	21
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	42	21	55	22	17	11	34
		MOE OFFICIALS	39	21	53	30	14	10	21

	mis-use of UBE infrastructural facilities for Early Education	TEACHERS	116	85	58	80	39	27	19
		PTA OFFICIALS	36	30	55	21	23	10	28
		FMOE OFFICIALS	2	3	50	4	1	0	10
		UBEC OFFICIALS	2	5	78	0	2	0	22
8	Political propaganda and directives in the policy formulation and implementation have led to mis-management of funds of Early Education in Nigeria.	PRINCIPALS	69	45	59	34	26	20	21
		LGEA OFFICIALS	86	35	56	32	35	29	33
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	38	27	57	23	13	13	22
		MOE OFFICIALS	45	18	55	17	18	16	30
		TEACHERS	124	63	54	55	61	45	33
		PTA OFFICIALS	47	25	60	11	22	15	31
		FMOE OFFICIALS	3	5	80	1	0	1	10
		UBEC OFFICIALS	3	3	67	1	2	0	22
9	Politics in policy formulation and implementation of UBE programme has led to over centralization of Early Education to Urban Centres only	PRINCIPALS	75	32	55	37	31	19	26
		LGEA OFFICIALS	68	55	57	47	23	24	22
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	40	25	57	17	23	9	28
		MOE OFFICIALS	37	26	55	24	15	12	24
		TEACHERS	122	76	57	69	45	36	23
		PTA OFFICIALS	31	35	55	26	18	10	23
		FMOE OFFICIALS	0	8	80	1	0	1	10
		UBEC OFFICIALS	3	2	56	1	2	1	33
10	Politics in policy implementation has prevented effective service delivery structure and mechanism which limit the success of Early Education programme in Nigeria	PRINCIPALS	74	51	64	33	19	17	19
		LGEA OFFICIALS	98	48	60	30	22	19	19
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	40	28	66	24	11	11	18
		MOE OFFICIALS	46	22	64	24	15	7	22
		TEACHERS	150	79	70	55	34	30	10
		PTA OFFICIALS	46	31	78	17	13	13	11
		FMOE OFFICIALS	4	3	54	2	0	1	24
		UBEC OFFICIALS	3	4	57	1	1	0	25
11	Political propaganda in policy formulation and implementation has led to the failure of the UBE to enhance efficient system management through developing managerial skills of all staff for Early Education.	PRINCIPALS	60	44	54	44	22	24	24
		LGEA OFFICIALS	74	50	57	38	38	17	25
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	29	41	61	17	13	14	24
		MOE OFFICIALS	30	29	52	26	21	8	25
		TEACHERS	101	91	55	71	52	33	24
		PTA OFFICIALS	28	32	50	23	29	8	31
		FMOE OFFICIALS	2	6	80	1	1	0	10
		UBEC OFFICIALS	1	7	89	1	0	0	0
12	Politicization of policy formulation and implementation of UBE programme has contributed to the failure of the program to provide strong	PRINCIPALS	62	34	49	39	37	22	30
		LGEA OFFICIALS	59	37	44	46	41	34	35
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	35	11	40	27	20	21	36
		MOE OFFICIALS	28	17	39	24	28	17	39
		TEACHERS	108	65	50	74	61	40	29

	commitment to Early Education in Nigeria	PTA OFFICIALS	30	26	47	22	26	16	35
		FMOE OFFICIALS	3	4	70	0	3	0	30
		UBEC OFFICIALS	3	2	56	1	1	2	33
13	Politicization of policy formulation and implementation of UBE programme has led to strong commitment to Early education in Nigeria	PRINCIPALS	37	16	27	31	60	50	57
		LGEA OFFICIALS	38	21	27	30	64	64	59
		SUBEC OFFICIALS	33	38	62	15	21	7	25
		MOE OFFICIALS	34	36	61	12	22	10	28
		TEACHERS	67	28	27	51	108	94	58
		PTA OFFICIALS	25	11	30	14	34	36	58
		FMOE OFFICIALS	3	6	90	1	0	0	10
	UBEC OFFICIALS	4	3	78	2	0	0	0	

The details of above table revealed the Opinions of Respondents on the effects of politics on the policy formulation and implementation of Early Child Education programme in Nigeria. The table indicates that 89% of UBEC Official, 90% of FMOE Officials, 64% of Principals, 68% of LGEA Officials and 61% of SUBEB Officials have supported that political propaganda has weakened effective policy formulation and implementation of basic education programmes in Nigeria. The details equally show that 6 UBEC Officials Strongly agreed, 3 agreed and the remaining 1 undecided, While 4 FMOE Officials strongly agreed and 4 agreed that politics in Early Child Education management has brought in leaders who are incapable of formulating and implementing policies and programmes for effective Early Child Education in their jurisdiction with only 1 disagreeing. The principals' details responses on this item showed that 74 strongly agreed, 51 agreed, 33 undecided, 19 disagreed and 17 strongly disagreed. The LGEA Officials details responses on this item showed that 98 strongly agreed, 48 agreed, 30 undecided, 22 disagreed and 19 strongly disagreed SUBEB Officials also shows 40 and 28, strongly agreed and agreed respectively while 28 were undecided and 11 each disagreed and strongly disagreed. The details on this table also shows the acceptance of most of the stakeholders involved in this study, indicating that evils of politics is preventing success of promoting strong consciousness of Early Child Education in Nigeria.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference among stakeholder's views that politics affects the promotion of strong consciousness on Early Child Education in Nigeria.

Table 2 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics on differences among the stakeholders on the effects of politics on the promotion of strong consciousness on Early Child Education in Nigeria

Variations	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F ratio	F critical	Sig
Between groups	149.99	2	74.996	.824	2.60	.439
Within groups	102148.0	1123	90.960			
Total	102297.9	1125				

An observation of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics above showed that there is no significant difference among the stakeholders perception on the effects of politics on the promotion of strong citizenry consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria. This is because the calculated F ratio value of .824 is less than the F critical value of 2.60 while calculated sig value .439 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby retained

Discussion

Early Child Education stakeholder's perception on the effects of politics on the promotion of strong citizenry consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria has indicated that politics is preventing the success of this programme. The study has revealed that 89% of UBEC Official, 90% of FMOE Officials, 64% of Principals, 68% of LGEA Officials and 61% of SUBEB Officials have supported that political propaganda has weakened effective policy formulation and implementation of basic education programmes in Nigeria. The details equally show that 6 UBEC Officials Strongly agreed, 3 agreed and the remaining 1 undecided, While 4 FMOE Officials strongly agreed and 4 agreed that politics in Early Child Education management has brought in leaders who are incapable of formulating and implementing policies and programmes for effective Early Child Education in their jurisdiction with only 1 disagreeing. The principals' details responses on this item showed that 74 strongly agreed, 51 agreed, 33 undecided, 19 disagreed and 17 strongly disagreed. The LGEA Officials details responses on this item showed that 98 strongly agreed, 48 agreed, 30 undecided, 22 disagreed and 19 strongly disagreed. SUBEB Officials also shows 40 and 28, strongly agreed and agreed respectively while 28 were undecided and 11 each disagreed and strongly disagreed. The details on this table also shows the acceptance of most of the stakeholders involved in this study, indicating that evils of politics is preventing success of promoting strong consciousness of Early Child Education in Nigeria

The above result has proof the fear of many that politics is doing more harm than good in the implementation of Early Child Education programme. This has also proof the suspicion by Mijinyawa (2009) that "incompetent people are now holding positions that should not be holding in education the education sector right from the level of Chief Executive to classroom teachers" The fact that, this may be so in other sector, is not enough to be a justification, education is the backbone of entire survival as human beings and as a nation.

Conclusion

From the analysis and the results obtained in this study, it could be concluded that the respondents used in this study (educational Officials, Teachers and PTA officials) do not significantly differ in their perception that politics has negative effect on the promotion of strong consciousness for Early Child Education in Nigeria. This led to the retention of the hypothesis formulated for this study. The level of significance in the opinion of the respondents clearly showed that all the respondents have accepted that politics has negative impact on the promotion of Early Child Education in Nigeria. This is reflected in tables 1 and 2 showing the level of significance recorded from the opinion of the respondents across the six geo-political zones. This is evident by the f-calculated in table 1 is below the F critical and P value more than the 0.05 error level.

Therefore this study has concluded that the stakeholders used in this study did not differ in their perceptions that politics in Early Child Education programme in Nigeria is reducing the chances of the programme to attain its goals and objectives.

Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusions of this study, it is pertinent to recommend that:-

1. Government should stop politicizing the top leadership of the SUBEBs and LGEAs which are the UBE implementations levels of Early Child Education in Nigeria to ensure that only career educationist who are capable and committed are appointed for the job.
2. Government should stop interfering in the appointment of teachers and educational administrators in all educational programmes in Nigeria while SUBEB and UBEC should focused on vision and policy not about awarding contract

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