

Managing education for the attainment of Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria: Issues and policy options

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Abstract

In 2000, world leaders joined the United Nations in committing to meet eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015: the second of which was “to achieve universal primary education”. In 2015, world leaders further adopted a post 2015 development agenda namely the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The actualization of Goal 4 in the low income countries remains a problem. The objective of this study is to examine possible linkage between educational management and the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4. The study draws from qualitative data from a field survey with 594 respondents drawn randomly from Civil Society Organizations (144), Students (160) and educational managers/administrators (290). Major findings suggest that there are problems of educational dichotomy on the basis of gender, poverty, inequality and poor educational management for the attainment of sustainable development in Nigeria. Alternatively, the study made some policy recommendations.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Goal 4, Sustainable Development, Educational Management.

Introduction

There is recent scholarly and research interest on education for sustainable development (UNESCO, 2017; Albareda-Tiana, Vidal-Raméntol & Fernández-Morilla, 2018; Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2019). The clamor for strategic overhaul of Nigeria’s educational system has attracted recent scholarly attention following the adoption of the MDGs in 2000. Essentially, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) resulted in much effort to mobilize resources for inclusive education and mitigate discrimination in poor countries (UN, 2009). This initiative in our views partly failed because

MDGs did not directly involve the relevant stakeholders. The Millennium Project Report (2005) was optimistic that the Goals of the MDGs would be achieved by the 2015 target date if high-income countries increased official development assistance from 0.25% of donor Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2003 to 0.44% in 2006 and 0.54% in 2015, delivering approximately US \$120 billion each year of aid (Sachs & McArthur, 2005).

Despite tremendous influx of resources, many resource-poor countries continue to be unable to reach the Goals, contrary to previous projections (UN, 2009). About 1 billion people remained in extreme poverty in 2015, as the

number of people who live on less than \$1 a day was high (UN, 2009).

More than 1 out of every 10 school-aged children in the world remains out of school, such that the target of achieving universal primary education is unlikely to be met. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has the lowest primary school completion rates of any world region (Bruns, Mingat, Rakotomala, 2003; Lloyd & Hewett, 2009). Five years after the target date for eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, marked disparities persisted (Bruns, *et al*, 2003). Estimated child mortality is twice the target rate, and maternal mortality is four times the target rate (UNESCO, 2008).

It is commonly thought that the major reason why countries cannot achieve inclusive education is that they are too poor: poverty traps communities into a vicious cycle of inadequate capital to build schools and businesses, and such communities never have enough money to fund sustainable services needed for health, education, or other basic community infrastructure, which in turn is needed to have healthy workers and business development that would produce capital (UN, 2009; Sachs & McArthur, 2004; Sachs & McArthur, 2005).

As most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were not achieved in the world's poorest countries, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted as a post 2015 development agenda. Setting Goals and Targets and financing is not enough to achieve desired results and expected outcome. Recent trends suggest that the attainment of SDGs is beyond that, rather collaborative involvement, as well as ability of stakeholders to understand, identify and address the basis for the SDGs within the school and out of school settings remain a key challenge to the attainment of SDGs. This has made educational management, coordination and administration central to the overall attainment of the SDGs and SDG4 in particular.

Specifically, the present study is concerned with the attainment of Goal 4; *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all and how effective educational management could strengthen the attainment of the Goal*. The argument is framed in line with debates that provide commemorative insights on educational management as the foundational basis for educational development (Newman & Clarke, 1994: 29; Samier, 2002).

Managing education for sustainable development has recently been linked to UNESCO's key educational objectives. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) practitioners are those whose practices are intentionally geared towards the realization of the UNESCO agenda for sustainable development. Educational management according to Bush (1995) is a field of study and practice concerned with the operation of educational organizations. The argument is that educational management should constitute the purpose or aim of education. Thus, educational management should seek to address the underlying aim or objectives of education which as Bush (1999) argued, gives education a sense of direction.

Educational management involves organizing, coordinating and administering fundamental educational needs of the learner and wider institutional and environmental apparatuses that make teaching and learning possible. Thus, implementing inclusive delivery of education and in particular, directing education to meet the educational needs of the learner could be beneficial to the poor countries that are in need of harmonized educational system and 'lifelong learning opportunities'.

Traditional approaches to providing development assistance for education have not been able to address both prevalent and emergent educational management challenges, which must be met should Goal 4 of the SDGs be attained. These challenges demand sustained policy response and intervention through a coordinated educational approach. Managing education is key to the attainment of all round educational objectives within organizational and non-organizational contexts. This suggests that educational management could be useful in the attainment of Goal 4.

Thus, the thinking of decision-makers in global education and development has been less infused with managing education for sustainability- the view that education continuum will drive the overall sustainable development process and in particular stimulates the attainment of Goal 4 has been poorly studied. Emphases on the MDGs were largely on injection of capital to the poor societies, and with the notion; "help people help themselves". These expressions markedly accounted for the failure of the MDGs as it was largely aid based and gave less cogitation to indigenous knowledge production and how to manage same in the context of educational management and capacity building.

With the recent SDGs agenda and persistent decline in educational development particularly primary and secondary school enrollment in most developing societies, it appears that some of the core foundations of the sustainable development namely inclusive education remain a problem. Such problems have led to recent academic interest focusing on possibilities of strengthening the educational sector as integral to the attainment of the SDGs in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation and leading economy. Many of these responses, however, have tended to overlook the longer-term significance and role of educational management in actualizing Sustainable Development Goals and institutionalization of inclusive education in Nigeria. —a gap that extends to the dominant theorizations of sustainable development and educational policy implementation.

This paper provides alternative perspective, which demonstrates the importance of educational management by highlighting its significance to the attainment of inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Nigeria's educational management policy has been an important pedagogical tool for strengthening educational development. However much emphasis has not been laid on the possible linkages between educational management and SDGs in the context of meeting educational needs of the people and

more importantly in the context of attainment of 'inclusive and equitable quality education'.

The paper draws attention to both in and out of school theorization of educational management as dominant arguments, which conceive educational management largely as entirely school setting affair. Alternatively, the paper demonstrates that educational management is a practice, activity and approach towards the advancement of teaching and learning.

Since it is systematic and prioritizes aims and objectives of effective coordination of education, our emphasizes in this study is both practical and policy driven and in particular, builds on the role of educational management in the construction and maintenance of sustainable development. It demonstrates that effective educational management is integral to the attainment of overall SDGs and Goal 4 in particular. This emphasis on the relevance of educational management to SDGs not only underscores some neglected aspects of sustainable development agenda but also properly accounts for the specific contexts post 2015 development trajectories could be attained by identifying the importance of inclusive and bottom-up educational policy, which dominant sustainable development discourses and policies have overlooked. Put differently, the assumption that educational management has been at the margins of sustainable development agenda in Nigeria will be sufficiently examined.

Our argument reinforces several studies, which have emphasized the need for a more inclusive and participatory educational policy and programme (Osokoya, 2002; National Policy on Education, 2004; Connolly, James & Fertig, 2017), particularly among the poor societies and educationally less privileged groups. Some of the most key debates on the importance of educational management highlight the role of educational managers as key apparatus of educational development (Ogunnu, 2000; Akinwumi & Jayeoba, 2004), this reflects multiplicity in the process by which developing societies could achieve their respective educational needs following the SDGs and its goals and targets.

Further, many accounts of SDGs have been criticized for shortcomings in their engagement with issues of educational inequality and imbalance arising from scant attention to inclusive educational management in the low income societies of the global South, as well as their failure to address the role of educational management policy in the attainment of goal 4, which have undermined and, in some cases, constricted "equality in education in the global south" (UNESCO, 2008). These are some of the gaps the present study seeks to fill.

Against this backdrop, this study provides an appraisal of how educational management could play relevant roles in the attainment to goal 4 of the SDGs. The study is built around the following objectives, to;

- i. identify the extent inclusive education has been institutionalized in Nigeria's educational management system.

- ii. explore the patterns and dynamics of equality in the context of gender and rural/urban dichotomy in educational management and practice Nigeria
- iii. examine the quality of education and its linkages with educational management in Nigeria.
- iv. ascertain how lifelong learning opportunities are promoted in relation to educational management in Nigeria.
- v. identify specific educational management policies that are driving the actualization of Goal 4 in Nigeria's educational system.

This in effect implies addressing important research gaps in the literature. The study draws on some of the prevailing view points on educational management and in specific context, shares their perspectives on the centrality of educational management for the attainment of SDGs. However, by focusing on possible linkages between educational management and SDGs, the study aims to make a distinct contribution to this field of inquiry which is essential to both the understanding of the specific educational issues concerned with achieving Goal 4 of the SDGs and the relevance of educational management in this regard—managing education to meet the core educational goals and in particularly in line with dominant institutional frameworks that could strengthen inclusive and equitable education development.

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows; materials and methods, review of the literature - educational management: some conceptual issues, how educational management can strengthen the attainment of Goal 4 of the SDGs, data presentation, results, discussion of findings and conclusion.

Materials and Methods

This study is a qualitative research, which adopts a cross sectorial survey. Our survey involved 594 respondents drawn randomly from civil society organizations (CSOs) (144), students (160) and educational managers/administrators (290). The field data was directly collected between March 2017 and June, 2019. Cross sectorial survey provides field analysis, which helps to question the processes of knowledge construction and further situates the learner within the context of managing education for development. The inclusive education perspective reinforces the understanding of the failure of educational systems to meet sustainable education needs as embedded in SDG 4; 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all and how effective educational management could strengthen the attainment of the Goal'.

Further, content analysis technique was adopted to review relevant qualitative data. The aim is to review some of the existing view points on educational management and creates possible linkages with the attainment of Goal 4 of the SDGs.

Major publications that demonstrate the need for inclusive education within the period 2000 to 2019 were reviewed. The materials considered most suitable are the

SDGs policy documents, UNESCO periodic reports, SDG bulletins and existing scholarly publications such as journal articles dealing with issues of educational management, the periodic SDG reports, the World Bank reports on SDGs and similar documents that explore the broad fields of educational management and sustainable development. Particular attention was given to studies linking SDG 4 to educational management. This multiple set of documents was critically evaluated to identify in sufficient details how SDG 4 has substantially impacted educational management in Nigeria and fill identified gaps.

The study builds on inclusive education theory. Hornby (2014) posits that inclusive education is the education that meets the educational needs of all. This includes the needs of the educationally marginalized such as the physically challenged, disabled persons, the girl child etc. Bush (2003) argues that theory serves to provide a rationale for decision-making. Educational managerial activity is enhanced by an explicit awareness of the theoretical framework underpinning practice in educational institutions. Proponents of educational management argue that there are a number of reasons for educational managers to adhere to theory in dealing with management issues linked to education. Glaser and Strauss (1967) put forward three distinctive arguments justifying the basis for educational management. The first is that reliance on facts as the sole guide to action is unsatisfactory because all evidence requires interpretation. Secondly that dependence on personal experience in interpreting facts and making decisions is narrow because it discards the knowledge of others and thirdly that experience may be particularly unhelpful as the sole guide to action when the practitioner begins to operate in a different context.

Leithwood, *et al*, (1999:75) further buttressed this fact stressing that theory provides mental models to help in understanding the nature and effects of practice. Thus, since educational institutions are organizations where educational management primarily takes place we build on inclusive framework to examine the possible linkages between educational management and the attainment of Goal 4 of the SDGs. The suitability of this framework as Leithwood *et al*, (1999:75) highlighted is that 'organizational variables may mean that practice in one school or college has little relevance in the new environment. A broader awareness of theory and practice may be valuable as the manager attempts to interpret behavior in the fresh situation'. It follows that a theoretical explanation could be viable in providing the nexus between attainment of Goal 4 of the SDGs and educational management.

Further to this, Bush (2003) posits that theory is useful only so long as it has relevance to practice in education. Similarly, Hoyle (1986) reinforces this position by distinguishing theory-for-understanding from theory-for-practice stressing that "while both are potentially valuable, that the latter is more significant for managers in education.

Review of the Literature

The term 'management' is often used in organizational contexts encompassing structural positions of hierarchy, including those occupying higher and lower positions (Connolly, James & Fertig, 2017). There are several theoretical perspectives and approaches to educational management (Adesina, 1990; Okoroma, 2000; Okah, 2005; Nwaoku, 2005). Management as Shelley Umana (1972) contends implies an orderly way of thinking. It describes in operational terms what is to be done, how it is to be done, and how we know when we have done.

There are raging conceptual and theoretical debates on educational management which helps to stimulate scholarly understanding of the subject matter of educational management (Bush, 2003; Taylor, 2008; Okwori, 2011; Peretomode, 2012). Newman and Clarke (1994) provided conceptual clarity on efficiency in educational management as they argue that the pursuit of efficiency could form mission statement in educational management. However the objectives of such efficiency might be complex. Akpan (2001) provides conceptual insights regarding some efficient strategies for sustainable management including physical facilities of schools in the 21st century. This is perhaps informed by increasing concern with sustainability. Newman and Clarke (1994:29) posit that "management possesses no super-ordinate goals or values of its own". Theorists of "school organization" identify strands of micro-politics within the school setting (Ball, 1987) such 'micro-politics' have been an integral part of human social interaction.

There are conceptual postulations differentiating "educational management from educational administration" (Bush, 1999). The argument is that administration is an element of management; the notion is that while educational management is concerned with coordination. Educational administration involves the dynamic side of education it focuses on educational practices and aimed at the attainment or fulfillment of set educational objectives. It plays supervisory and regulatory roles. Again, there are efforts to distinguish educational management from leadership as both are not synonymous (Connolly, James & Fertig, 2017). Educational management is not only about coordination especially in terms of internationalizing the process of managing human and material resource to enhance teaching and learning process—but also relate to a distinct understanding of the basis for quality of education and educational environment as legitimate and essential feature of education. Leadership is the assumption of authoritative roles particularly in organizational capacity. It entails influencing or directing the conduct of others. Connolly (*etal*,2017:6) posit that the term 'educational leadership' is mainly used in two ways; to describe those who have senior positions in an organizational hierarchy in an educational institution and to describe the practice of leading.

Educational management examines the linkages between administration and outcome; this includes the quality of personnel in line with requisite skills and pedagogy of teaching and learning. The term managing education for results is core in recent scholarship to examine how the

processes of educational management are in line with the stated leaning objectives and outcomes. There are studies linking education and sustainable development (Lotz-Sisitka 2010 UNESCO, 2017; Albareda-Tiana, 2018; Edet & Beyin, 2018). Specifically, Edet and Beyin (2018) highlight the need for education for Sustainable Development both in Nigeria and Other developing nations; they found that the basis for education for sustainable development is to strengthen the development of the developing nations.

Whilst the attainment of Goals 4 of the SDGs is complex and, in some respects, contestable in practical terms towards inclusive and equitable development, it also has historically demonstrated a consistency in advancing educational development support for the poor and developing countries (UNESCO, 2003) — a key element of the universal but differentiated development concerns. It is this “universal embrace” evident in the SDGs that constitutes its defining feature as a “strategic development initiative”. Albareda-Tiana, Vidal-Raméntol & Fernández-Morilla (2018) posit that implementing the sustainable development goals is essential at the University level. This implies that there is increasing need to promote education for SDGs.

In this regard, what this study seeks to address is a key policy gap namely the need to put the core ideals of educational management at the centre of the attainment of Goal 4. Among the developed societies of the North and the developing societies of the South, however it explores the Nigeria experience and argues that the attainment of the SDGs is essential and should be more penetrable among all human societies. This provides it with an inclusive dynamic that offers an alternative to the questions regarding “development for results”. The study of the linkages between educational management and Goal 4 of the SDGs appears not to have been substantially discussed in the literature. Although a number of theoretical perspectives have sought to theorize the connections between education and sustainable development (Dividson, 2003; DiGiulio, 2006; Bedawy, 2014; Ahenkan & Osei-Kojo, 2014). The present study makes such contributions with specific reference to educational management and sustainable development goals and, in particular, the linkages between educational management and the attainment of SDG 4.

Despite the several prospects of education in Nigeria particularly since the adoption of the national policy on education, it has become more important to understand how the management of the educational system is central to the success of the SDGs. Perhaps more importantly, dominant studies in educational management have rarely drawn from the importance of educational management to sustainable development goals.

Our focus in the present study is on educational management and SDGs and how the management of education could help meet Goal 4. The argument in the present study points out that prevailing educational system does not prepare Nigeria adequately to meet the basic educational needs by 2030. Okoji and Agbo (2017) argued that although the SDG is a post 2015 agenda, the attainment of the basic educational needs of the developing societies remains at issue, arguably one of the most influential

explanations of the distinct challenge of educational management and SDGs is reinforced in UNESCO (2016) report which emphasized the need for education for sustainable development. Similarly, Edet and Beyin (2018) provided theoretical account of both the prospects and challenges of education and why it is necessary to manage education for the attainment of the SDGs. Thus, managing education to meet sustainable development goals is a new research agenda, which seeks to transform the knowledge economy and link Goal 4 of the SDGs to a wider educational discourse specifically in inclusive and equitable education contexts.

The structural interconnections between the attainment of the SDGs and educational management in the developing societies and Nigeria in particular, makes managing education for sustainability a trending concept and transformative. This notion has provided further empirical and theoretical substance to the general developmental stance of education beyond the classroom by explicating “the underlying principles of education” which shape the manner of managing the educational sector, formation of relevant educational policies and implementation of same to meet national education objectives and in particular, stimulate the attainment of SDGs. The basis is for transformation and sustainable development. Thus, while demonstrating the ways in which educational management can contribute to meeting the present and future educational needs of the learner and at the same time preserving the structural system where teaching and learning takes place. Such fusion of relationship legitimizes the social and development purpose of educational management.

Based on these reasons, it is worth exploring the importance and linkages between educational management and the attainment of the Goal 4 of the SDGs. And importantly, provide influential account and its critical relevance to the development of Nigeria’s educational system and attainment of SDGs.

Whilst Goal 4 of the SDGs is important in strengthening educational development of both the developed and the developing societies in many ways, the reviewed literature suggest that there is scant studies linking educational management to sustainable development goals, particularly SDG 4. Thus, substantial policy discourse regarding strategies to attain to the goals and targets have been elusive in the context of educational management. Both educational practitioners and development policy makers say little about the place of educational management in the attainment of the SDGs in their respective accounts and discourses (Nnokam & Sule, 2017). There are important policy implications to fill these gaps. More importantly, the present study has been emphasizing the need for inclusive educational system where the core educational needs of the learner could be met and in particular to strengthen indigenous educational system- a bottom top approach, which understands the core educational needs of the learner,

Prevailing studies seem largely superficial in the sense of examining the role of educational management in terms of its contribution to the understanding of the

interconnections between Goal 4 of the SDGs and inclusive education. In this regard, dominant approaches appear to understudy the strategic positioning of educational management as essential to the overall educational development of Nigeria. In contrast, we theorize educational management as an integral and constitutive element relevant to the workings and actualization of Goal 4 of the SDGs agenda.

As constitutive element, educational management serves as a development apparatus and points out how the various goals and targets could be linked to practical knowledge with specific emphasis on implementation and attainment of the goals and targets against the narrow and superficial strands of the SDGs' normative foundations. Such narrow focus which is scholarly gap restricts the methodology of implementation and undermines openings for inclusiveness.

Our study therefore stresses the critical importance of educational management in the attainment of the SDGs. It is the democratic character of education that makes it an all-inclusive affair where the learner could freely be granted his or her right to education. In managing for sustainable development, there is need to redirect the curriculum to meet the SDGs. This will create more awareness in the goals and targets of the SDGs. These are some of the ongoing concerns which justify the need for educational management in line with the SDGs to meet the core teaching and learning needs of the developing societies in tandem with the actualization of Goal 4 of the SDGs.

Table 1: SDG 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goals and targets (from the 2030 Agenda)		Indicators	
4.1	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	4.1.1	Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
4.2	By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	4.2.1	Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex
		4.2.2	Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
4.3	By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	4.3.1	Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex
4.4	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	4.4.1	Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill
4.5	By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	4.5.1	Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated
4.6	By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	4.6.1	Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex
4.7	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development	4.7.1	Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment
4.a	Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all		4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic hand washing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)
4.b	By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment		4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study

	in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries		
4.c	By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States		Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country

Source: Report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (E/CN.3/2016/2/Rev.1)

Table 1 above provides the SDG 4; 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. The table outlines the Goals and Targets (from the 2030 Agenda) as well as the indicators.

opportunities for all. The questions and responses are provided in a tabular form as follows;

Data Presentation

Our survey involved 594 respondents drawn randomly from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) (144), Students (160), educational managers/administrators (290). The analysis and discussions aim to determine whether educational management has been tailored to foster inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning

Results

Our survey involved 594 respondents drawn randomly from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) (144), Students (160), educational managers/administrators (290). The analysis and discussions aim to determine whether educational management has been tailored to foster inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The questions and responses are provided in a tabular form as follows;

Table 2: To identify the extent inclusive education has been institutionalized in Nigeria's educational management system

Q1	Respondents	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
There are minimal evidence of institutionalization of inclusive education in Nigeria's educational management	Civil Society Organizations(CSOs)	120	7	17	144
	Students	140	3	17	160
	Educational managers/administrators	200	60	30	290
	Total	460 (97%)	70(11.795)	64(10.77%)	594(100%)

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 2 above provides identification of the extent inclusive education has been institutionalized in Nigeria's educational management system from civil society organizations (CSOs), students and educational managers/administrators. This follows by the exploration patterns and dynamics of equality in the context of gender and rural/urban dichotomy in educational management and practice Nigeria was presented in Table 3. In Table 4, an examination of the quality of education and its linkages with inclusive educational management in Nigeria was presented while present facts on how lifelong learning opportunities are promoted in relation to educational management in Nigeria. Lastly, the identification of specific educational management

policies that could drive the actualization of Goal 4 in Nigeria's educational system was presented in Table 6.

Table 3: To explore the patterns and dynamics of equality in the context of gender and rural/urban dichotomy in educational management and practice Nigeria

Q2	Respondents	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
Gender inequality gap and rural/urban dichotomy in education have not been bridged in educational management in Nigeria	Civil Society Organizations(CSOs)	102	6	36	144
	Students	144	4	12	160
	Educational managers/administrators	210	40	40	290
	Total	456(76.77%)	50(8.42)	88(14.87)	594(1005)

Source: Field Survey, (2019)

Table 4: To examine the quality of education and its linkages with inclusive educational management in Nigeria

Q3	Respondents	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
There is minimal inclusive and quality education in the educational management of Nigeria	Civil Society Organizations(CSOs)	99	15	30	144
	Students	151	3	6	160
	Educational managers/administrators	220	30	40	290
	Total	470(79.12%)	48(8.08%)	76(12.80%)	594(100%)

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 5: To ascertain how lifelong learning opportunities are promoted in relation to educational management in Nigeria

Q4	Respondents	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
Lifelong learning opportunities have not been adequately promoted in relation to educational management in Nigeria	Civil Society Organizations(CSOs)	70	40		144
	Students	135	10		160
	Educational managers/administrators	225	20	45	290
	Total	430(72.40%)	70(11.78%)	94(15.82%)	594(100%)

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 6: To identify specific educational management policies that is driving the actualization of Goal 4 in Nigeria's educational system

Q5	Respondents	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
There is absence of specific educational management policies driving the actualization of Goal 4 in Nigeria's educational system	Civil Society Organizations(CSOs)	65	45	34	144
	Students	139	10	13	160
	Educational managers/administrators	227	15	48	290
	Total	429(72.22%)	70(11.79%)	95(15.99%)	594(100%)

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 7: Chi Square statistical analysis

Fo	Fe	Fo-fe	(fo-fe) ²	$\frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$
65	104	-39	1,521	14.62
45	16.96	28.04	786.24	46.35
34	23.03	10.97	120.34	5.22
137	115.55	21.45	460.10	3.98
10	18.85	-8.85	78.32	4.15
13	25.58	-12.58	158.25	6.18
227	209.44	17.56	308.35	1.47
15	34.17	-19.17	367.48	10.75
48	46.38	1.62	2.62	0.05
				X ² 92.77

Source: Field, 2019

Interpretation of formula

Formula: $\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$

where;

fo = observed frequency

Fe = expected frequency

Σ = summation

Df = 4

Significance level = 0.05

Table value = 9.488

Decision Rule: when chi square calculated is greater than the table value, reject null hypothesis.

Discussion of findings

The major findings from our field survey and related qualitative data show that educational management system in Nigeria has not adequately ensured inclusive and equitable quality education nor promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Thus, there is gap on policy initiatives on managing education for the attainment of SDG 4.

From table 2 the responses on minimal evidence of institutionalization of inclusive education in Nigeria's educational management show that 77.44% affirm that the institutionalization of inclusive education in Nigeria's educational management has been minimal, 11.79% had a negative view while 10.77% were not sure.

Responses from Table 3 above show that 76.77% of the respondents affirmed that gender inequality gaps and rural/urban dichotomy in education have not been bridged in educational management in Nigeria, 8.42% had a negative view while 14.81% were not sure.

Table 4 shows that 79.12% of the respondents accepted that, there is minimal inclusive and quality education in the educational management of Nigeria, while 8.08% had a contrary opinion and 12.80% were not sure.

The result from table 5 reveals that 72.40% of the respondents agree that, lifelong learning opportunities have not been adequately promoted in relation to educational management in Nigeria, 11.78% had a negative view while 15.82% were not sure.

The responses from table 6 show that 72.22% of the respondents are of the opinion that there is absence of specific educational management policies driving the actualization of SDG 4 in Nigeria's educational system, 11.79% of the respondents hold a contrary view while 15.99% were not sure.

Following the result of the chi square calculation, 92.77 are greater than the table value of 9.488. This implies that the hypothesis that educational management has significantly impacted SDG 4 is hereby rejected. In the alternative, the study draws a conclusion that there are problems of educational dichotomy on the basis of gender, poverty, inequality and poor educational management at all levels of education in Nigeria. The result is consistent with a number of recent studies which suggest educational gaps and decline in the quality of education (Adesina, 1990; Duignan & Macpherson, 1992).

The aim of sustainable education among others is to check decline in the quality of education and in particular to make education affordable to the poor and marginalized sections of the society including women, the girl child and the physically challenged. Following our findings, this study has provided a number of empirical evidence to justify the fact that there is minimal commitment by the federal government to inclusive educational management at all levels of education. In particular, this has implications for the quality of education in Nigeria and the attainment of SDG 4. This calls for institutional overhaul and transformation of the education sector. As our results show, there is need for policy response to improve education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The drive towards educational management facilitates grounding of SDGs and accounts for the learners' ability to freely participate in the learning process and more so, to achieve the SDGs. Essentially, unprecedented results in terms of attainment of education for all by 2030, could be optimistic where the tendency for effective educational management is prioritized. Further, there is increasing

problem of educational disparity and inequality on the basis of gender and geographical constraints of rural and urban settings. The girl child and her educational needs should be prioritized.

This study emphasizes that the willingness to establish strategies that could strengthen the SDGs could go a long way in meeting the core educational needs of the girl child as such policy drives that remove all forms of educational obstacles such as discrimination on the basis of gender is sought. This implies that gender equality has often been identified as both an end and a means. The increasing concern on the role of educational management towards the attainment of Goal 4 provides an explicit “learner centered analogy” in exploring the basis for educational management: to an extent such an endeavor largely determines the specific character of both the learner and the teacher in line with institutional apparatus for managing education.

Particularly significant has been the prevailing political institution and the challenge of being “open” and “reciprocal” in character in terms of responding to the objectives, goals and relevant targets of the SDGs. Because the management of education in Nigeria has been less consensual, cooperative, and integrative in terms of responding to international policies and initiatives such as the SDGs than it has been with national policies, there remains a reoccurring concern on educational transformation in Nigeria. This notwithstanding, the attainment of the SDGs specifically, shares some broad affinities with core educational needs of the poor societies and emphasizes the more consensual aspects of education embedded in the specific socioeconomic characteristics of Nigeria’s educational system. For instance, UNESCO (2008) argued that the universal basic primary education is essential as should form part of national policy on education emphasizing education of the girl child. Similarly this could be achieved through the formation of a new institutional apparatus concomitant to the attainment of Goal 4 of the SDGs such as grassroots educational movements.

Again, with increasing level of mass illiteracy, drop outs and educationally less advantaged evidenced in the poor rural societies, there is need to evolve a homegrown educational policy that could be framed in line with the learner’s educational needs. The omission of some of these growing educational concerns in SDGs analysis and poor strategic approaches not only weakens the prospects for the attainment of the sustainable development Goals and Targets but also serves to undermine the involvement of the poor societies in the global agenda for educational advancement propagated by the SDGs and the challenge of sustainable educational development in particular. This conceptual and policy lacuna stems in part from the postulation of the SDGs, which tends to narrow the options and involvement of the poor in its analysis despite the claim of universality of the sustainable development agenda.

Policy Options

From our findings it is important to draw up some policy recommendations regarding how educational management can strengthen the attainment of Goal 4 of the SDGs as follows;

- 1) **Adequate management and coordination of education:** Nigeria’s educational system is a colonial invention. Educational management combines human and material resources to lead, supervise, plan, strategize, and implement expected educational programmes to achieve laid down results (Foskett & Jacky, 2003). The human Resource include: (i) students (ii) parents, (iii) teachers, and (iv) society. Nigeria’s educational system is a colonial invention, this largely accounts for educational imbalance and inequality (Fafunwa, 1974). New evidence suggest that adequate management and coordination of education will help to create a sustained educational achievement (Adesina,1990;Ajayi & Ayodele,2001; Didier. et al. 2009).This includes long term educational development and how consistent ‘educative leadership’ could be a practical policy guide for new administrators and managers (Duignan & Macpherson, 1992). Similarly, UNESCO (2008) demonstrates that the world was not on course for achieving the international development target of universal primary education by 2015.While this failed, it is important to explore the need to adopt educational management tools for the SDGs. Thus, educational management is a comprehensive effort, which emphasizes educational practices. It underscores the flexible and dynamic component of education.
- 2) **Institutional educational Development:** Educational management is directly concerned with issues related to educational institutions at all levels from crèche, nursery, kindergarten, primary, secondary and tertiary schools. Educational management is concerned with issues of both human and material resources in the process of teaching and learning. Following the understanding and application of the constituents of educational management it is evident that educational management can strengthen the attainment of Goal 4.The constituents of educational management are the key components or operational tool of institutional educational management. In this context educational management is understood as a process and activity of educational managers to achieve desired results. The key constituents of institutional educational management include;
 - i. Educational Planning
 - ii. Educational Organization
 - iii. Educational Controlling
 - iv. Educational Supervision

Central to educational management is planning of the educational process. This answers the question of how and why in terms of educational objectives and their pursuits. Planning takes various forms including analysis of how to pursue educational

project. Such planning can lay emphasis on inclusive educational system. For instance dominant educational system has been largely elitist which a colonial legacy is. The constitution of the “Western educational system particularly in post-colonial contexts have been largely elitist only the children of the rich attend good schools. This is an attribute of commodification of education, thus with high financial premium placed on education, the poor and in particular the girl child is deprived of free and equal educational opportunities which limit their chances of becoming better individuals in future. Educational managers are challenged with this state of affairs as they argue that education should be inclusive and in particular must meet the basic educational needs of the learner (UNESCO,2008).This gave rise to the adoption of the universal basic education(UNESCO,2008).

Educational organization looks at various systemic ways the educational goals and objectives could be arranged to achieve expected goals. In organizations where round pegs are fixed in round holes are unraveled to fully maximize efficiency. Organizing education for the attainment of goal 4 should look at various programs of action and policies and how such policies are structured to facilitate the attainment of the Goal. Distinctively, educational organization goes beyond “adoption” or identification phases of the SDGs. Rather provide some insights into arrangements that are suitable for the actualization of the Goal.it emphasizes who does what and how it could be done.

Educational control emphasizes how certain concerns in educations should be guided. This could take the forms of monitoring or evaluation or providing educational schemes where programmes could be regulated or adjusted. Thus, regulatory policies and schemes for the attainment of Goal 4 are needed. Educational management in essence challenges the extent institutional apparatus necessary for effective teaching and learning are provided and tailored to meet the educational needs of the leaner.

- 3) **People based educational model is necessary:** Considering the sustainability basis of education and viewed from a long term perspective, the various connections between educational management and inclusive education as well as the complex challenges could be identified. While the MDG partly failed due to some level ambivalent relationship between goals, targets and implementation to the politics and ideas of inclusive education as it was largely aid based, the SDGs will face greater challenges or suffers similar fate if the core educational challenges are not addressed with direct involvement of the relevant stakeholders. Thus, a people based educational model is suggested which will put the people and their

educational needs first. Such ambivalence exemplified in the failure of the MDGs is avoidable. The emphasis on educational management stems from the fact that a knowledge based economy is integral to development, thus such initiatives could be attained with experts in managing education for sustainable development.

- 4) **Reducing high illiteracy rate:** In the entire low income societies, high illiteracy rate and out of school children remain at issue. This recurrent phenomenon has largely accounted for poverty which is as a consequence of the uneven educational development in addition to the nature and character of governance in most poor societies such as Nigeria. How educational management could reshape the conduct and attainment of the SDGs in Nigeria is an important scholarly agenda which challenges dominant development strategies and assumptions about the attainment of the SDGs. How can Nigerians overcome the limitations of the present educational challenge? The study makes a number of recommendations; it is important and desirable to investigate how educational management can help attain Goal 4 of the SDGs.
- 5) **Building capacity for home grown educational development:** Some of the greatest successes in global education have come from building permanent capacity through long term channels for providing aid. Ironically aid based project has often failed as it lacks ownership, accountability and accountability. The programs that are on track for achieving inclusive education appears to have proved rather robust in the context of policy formulation, however there are gaps in coordination and sustained strategies of inclusive implementation to meet the educational needs of the poor, less privilege and physically challenged. Inclusive educational mechanisms have been less visible and most obviously, educational management challenges the notion of achieving Goal 4 without prioritizing home grown educational needs of the low income societies particularly the girl child, the physically challenged, people living with HIV/AIDS and similar health challenges, migrant fishermen etc. These have made aspects of Goal 4 seemingly untenable in the context of operationalizing inclusive educational model in practical contexts either within country specific or at global levels.
- 6) Educational inequality remains central challenge to the attainment of sustainable education in Nigeria. This has created complex educational disparity among the rich and the poor. New inclusive curriculum to standardize education should be created in Nigeria. This in the context of gender has taken several dimensions; there is need for national and international commitments to manage

education for 'gender equality' and the attainment of SDGs. This will provide viable insights for relevant stakeholders and particularly women in order to address their educational needs. UNESCO has helped to change the development paradigm by introducing a new concept of education such as the universal basic education. One that is not based solely on achieving domestic self-reliance but on sustained international support as well." UBE thus created a mechanism of inclusive education. This suggests that, to create a more effective educational system, a continuous appraisal of educational needs of the educationally less developed societies will be needed. This will include mobilization of relevant stakeholders including civil society groups. However, it is important to note that the impact of equitable and inclusive response to education will help to bridge educational gaps between the educationally advantaged and the educationally less privileged and ultimately to wider social justice and educational equality.

- 7) **The Need for broader, inclusive and non-aid based educational project.** A similar global educational project broader in scope than – UNESCO is needed. The educational funding mechanism for Nigeria and the low income societies should not be largely aid based and should help(i) to strengthen educational gaps such as inequality among the educationally advantaged and educationally disadvantaged groups and individuals., (ii) provide skills and capacity to promote and address common indigenous educational problems at the national and global levels including violation of educational rights of the learner either on the basis of gender, which amounts to human rights violation or deprivation, and (iii)The core educational needs of the learner should be identified using needs assessments for effective coordination of resources in line with expected learner outcome.
- 8) There is need to assess and harmonize success of the SDGs with expected outcomes, this will help to advance the cause of results based approach to implementing the SDGs. Both the goals and targets should be in line with recent and ongoing educational needs of the learner and the wider society.
- 9) **Strengthening Educational Supervision:** Policies to promote educational supervision takes various forms including periodic observation of the process of implementing policies to determine how such implementation are in line with the overall educational objectives. In supervision certain standards are set and expectations towards attaining such standards are essential to effective supervision or otherwise. Effective supervision is needed in Goal 4 to strategically examine how the

Goal is meeting the educational needs of the people and how to redress identified policy gaps.

- 10) **Building New Educational Collaboration:** The new post-2015 educational management agenda together with the trajectories of the SDGs consciously aimed at establishing a "transformed educational community". This could be possible with collaborative efforts. While giving individual and institutional educational developments primacy, educational management, accounts nonetheless the involvement of relevant stakeholders such as civil society as the space where the ideological basis of sustainable development could be achieved .Beyond this, it is a social construction, poised and consolidated with the inevitable aim of collaborative education. Moreover, both CSOs and educational management leaders should focus on the need for more practicable criteria in attaining to Goal 4. In these ways, CSOs and proponents of educational management largely converge around the idea that the attainment of G4 is desirable where requisite institutional policy provisions are made. Thus, the clamor for Goal 4 forces both social actors and educationists to consolidate on educational management as a strand of overall development of the society.
- 11) **Prioritizing the role of educational managers:** There is need for policy response that could prioritize the role of educational managers. Since the central focus of educational management is human and institutional development, the SDGs and its overall targets could be successful with prioritization of roles for educational managers. Educational management gives particular attention to how and why educational policies and practices are adopted. In essence, as alternative conceptions of SDGs, which calls into question the basis for a more effective and inclusive educational model it is useful. It could be achieved by identifying the core educational needs, the structural and institutional composite nature of education as well as individual and institutional apparatuses that could facilitate the educational process. This not only demonstrates the modalities to counter several obstacles to education but also puts the idea of "management" frontal in educational pursuit. Thus, educational management plays both administrative roles in the sense that it is a fundamental guide to teaching and learning and also institutional guide and apparatus which is a sense of direction in the overall educational enterprise. Therefore, the idea of managing education is a conundrum at the top administrative level beyond the class room but also trickles down to the regulation of the processes of teaching and learning meaning that it is a mutually reinforcing model of impacting on both the learner and the teacher.

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