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ROLE OF WORLD BANK IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, 2014-2024

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Abstract: Education is a veritable tool for the social and economic development of any nation. Adequate funding is crucial for the deployment of necessary resources and interventions needed to improve educational outcomes. Previous studies have stressed the importance of effective allocation and utilization of funds for the promotion of sustainable educational development. Low funding has been identified as a key challenge in the educational sector of many developing nations including Nigeria and addressing this challenge is essential for improving the quality and accessibility of education, reducing poverty, and promoting peace and stability in these nations. This study examines the role of World Bank in educational development in the Federal Capital Territory (2014-2024). The study was built within the framework of human capital theory. It employed mixed research design comprising of qualitative and quantitative research methods drawing data from primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire was used and accompanied with in dept interviews. Secondary sources of data reviewed existing literature from journals, online articles, and research projects. Findings revealed that funding, infrastructural facilities development, provision of learning and teaching resources, provision of technical support for educational planning, policy formulation and educational management, provision of capacity building programmes and implementation of projects or programmes are contributions of World Bank to the development of education in Nigeria. The study concludes by stressing the urgent need for increased funding and interventions to improve the education system in Nigeria and recommends that the government should urgently increase public funding for education, encourage private sector investment in education, and prioritize education funding and development to ensure that the country's human capital is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to drive the nation's economic and social development.

Keywords: Development, Educational, Federal Capital Territory, Role and World Bank.

Introduction

Education is a foundational infrastructure for job creation, and good jobs are the surest way out of poverty. A powerful driver of development, education is one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. It delivers large, consistent returns in terms of income, and is the most important factor to ensure equity and inclusion. The education sector serves as a critical provider of human capital, equipping individuals with the requisite skills and enhancing their intellectual acumen to make meaningful contributions to their communities and nation (Irughe, Eregha and Edafe, 2020). Investment in education is as important as the plan for nation-building. It has the capacity to boost the human capital assets of individuals and fosters economic advancement for increased welfare and livelihood. Education is regarded as the hub which connects all other sectors. It serves as the processing or coordinating unit of the economy, a veritable tool for expanding man's knowledge, and a means for enhancing rapid economic productivity. Through quality education, human capital is built and this in turn contributes to economic growth, decent work and elimination of extreme poverty (Sachs, et al., 2021). Education promotes employment, earnings, health, and poverty reduction.

Education has long been viewed in the African setting as both a right and a prerequisite for the advancement of the country. According to Okech and Rolleston (2018), increasing productivity, advancing technical developments, and encouraging entrepreneurship are all made possible by the continent's educational progress. Developing countries have made tremendous progress in getting children into the classroom and more children worldwide are now in school. But learning is not guaranteed, as the 2018 World Development Report (WDR) stressed. However, learning is

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in crisis. Over 250 million children are currently out of school. Learning outcomes are also alarmingly low: seven in 10 children in low- and middle-income countries cannot read or understand a simple paragraph by the age of 10. In sub-Saharan Africa, the figure is even more concerning, nine in 10 children lack basic reading comprehension, a challenge that looms large as the region's youth population is expected to grow by 40 percent by 2050. Between January 2022 and June 2024, over 400 million students faced school closures due to extreme weather events (Sele and Wanjiku, 2024).

The World Bank is a significant partner in Nigeria's educational development, providing financial and technical support to improve the quality and accessibility of education at various levels. Their involvement includes funding projects focused on basic education, adolescent girls' secondary education, and teacher training, while also addressing issues like out-of-school children and nutrition. The World Bank supports initiatives like the Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) project, which aims to increase equitable access to basic education for out-of-school children and improve literacy, according to the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC). The development objective of the Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) Operation Project for Nigeria is to increase equitable access for out-of-school children and improve literacy in focus states, and strengthen accountability for results, in basic education in Nigeria. This operation is well aligned with the World Bank Group's 2014 Nigeria country partnership strategy (CPS) for FY2014-2017, as well as its adjustment under the 2016 performance and learning review (PLR). The program-for-results (PforR) instrument is considered the best fit to support the government's universal basic education (UBE) program; ensure a focus on education outputs and outcomes; and incentivize performance at all levels. By focusing on an agreed set of results, yet allowing flexibility and incentivizing home-grown solutions (to respond to specific needs) at the state and local levels, the PforR instrument accommodates Nigeria's federal nature.

The World Bank has approved three operations in Nigeria, totaling $1.08 billion in concessional financing, to enhance education quality, build household and community resilience, and improve nutrition for underserved groups. This includes $500 million in additional financing for the NIGERIA: Community Action for Resilience and Economic Stimulus (NG-CARES) Program, $80 million for Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ANRIN 2.0), and $500 million for Hope for Quality Basic Education for All (HOPE-EDU). However, the current Nigerian education landscape grapples with myriad challenges, undermining the nation's human capital potential. As of 2020, Nigeria's Human Capital Index, as assessed by the World Bank, stood at 0.36, positioning it 168th out of 173 countries globally - a marginal improvement from 0.34 in 2018, where it ranked 152nd out of 157 nations surveyed. This sluggish growth underscores the persistent obstacles hindering the effective education of Nigeria's populace (World Bank, 2024). The education sector comprises numerous interconnected elements, requiring a systematic approach to drive substantial reform. These challenges can be categorized into several areas. One such category encompasses obstacles hindering access to quality education for the Nigerian populace. These hurdles include the escalating number of out-of-school children, low rates of educational completion, limited transitions between educational levels, adult illiteracy, and the provision of education during emergencies.

Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja is the capital of Nigeria. Abuja is located in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The Federal Capital Territory is made up of six area councils. The six area councils include: Abaji, Abuja Municipal, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje and Kwali area councils. Education in Federal Capital Territory is administered by Federal Capital Territory Education Secretariat. Federal Capital Territory Abuja is home to many educational institutions both public and private schools. The educational system in Federal Capital Territory is implemented according to the National Policy of education (2013). Education in FCT consists of three forms the Universal Basic education (nine years), secondary school (three years) and higher education which include universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics Education, vocational Education (four, six years depending on the study). Other forms of education in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja include adult education, special education and mass education (Ogunode and Ahaotu, 2022).

Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following questions:

i. What is the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC?

ii. To what extent has BESDA programme impacted on community involvement in the education process in AMAC?

Objectives of the Study

i. Examine the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC.

ii. Ascertain the extent which BESDA programme has impacted on community involvement in the education process in AMAC.

Empirical Review of Related Literature

Role of BESDA in Bringing Out of School Children Back to the Class Room

Edung (2023) attempted to assess the role of World Bank in funding Higher Education in Nigeria. The study employed

secondary method and argued that the high financial challenges for several years in Nigeria have resulted in the poor quality of higher education being suffered in all parts of the country. The Government of Nigeria alone cannot finance higher education. Therefore, to improve upon the quality delivery of Higher Education, it is necessary that collaboration of all internal stakeholders, parents/guardian, the society and private sector should be facilitated. Intervention of international organization and non-governmental agencies should as well be strengthened. The education sector can only perform effectively when international organizations and stakeholders strive to carry out their responsibilities and obligations on financing in a manner that will account for the delivery of quality education.

The World Bank concentrates and pays more attention to basic and secondary education and largely gives less focus on Higher Education. This may be the reason why World Bank targeted in raising literacy level and enrollment rates up to the college level. With about 60 projects undertaken in Nigeria between 1958 and 2018, only 16 affected education sector. Out of these 16 projected, only 2 affected higher education. The study draws a conclusion that adequate attention should be given to funding higher education due to its strategic importance in the life and polity of the Nigerian nation; that much has been achieved by basic education and secondary level education through World Bank intervention. However, it is recommended that all other international organizations such as IMF, UNICEF, UNESCO, EU, AFDB,NGOs and others should focus on impacting on Nigeria's higher education if truly high quality education is desired for Nigerians. The study focused on the role of World Bank in funding Higher Education in Nigeria. While it also to x-ray other imperatives of Higher Education in Nigeria such as the supervisory role of the National Universities Commission as well as the obstacles in funding Higher Education in Nigeria, it fails to examine the role of BESDA in bring out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC which is the focus of this study.

Shobayo and Ajayi (2023) examined the expectation and reality of education funding in Nigeria in relation to education for sustainable development. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study. Secondary data was collected from the Central Bank of Nigeria's Statistical Bulletin, World Bank Indicator, and UNESCO. The data were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The results showed that there have been fluctuations in the trends of yearly allocated budgetary expenditure on education since 1990 up till date. Also, the results revealed a wide gap between what was expected from the government in terms of their spending on education as proportion of the yearly total budgeted expenditure and what the government actually spent considering the expected recommendation or benchmark of 26%. The study concluded that given the reality of education sector funding in Nigeria, the education sector in Nigeria may not produce the needed manpower through which sustainable development agenda could be achieved. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the federal government should enact a law that will fix adequate yearly budgetary allocation through the National Assembly. The study specifically, examined the reality of government expenditure on education as a catalyst for sustainable development, and determined the extent of disparity in expected and observed expenditure on education in Nigeria between years 1990-2022. However, the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC remains unexplored.

Impact of BESDA Programme on Community Involvement in the Education Process

Ogunode, Ayeni and Ogwuche (2023) examined the contributions of international organizations towards the development of education in Nigeria. The study used role theory to provide a theoretical framework. Documentary research method was adopted for the study, hence secondary data were consulted. The secondary data were sourced from online publications and print materials. Content analysis was used to select the suitable literature for the study. The paper identified funding, infrastructural facilities development, provision of learning and teaching resources, provision of technical support for educational planning, policy formulation and educational management, provision of capacity building programmes and implementation of projects or programmes meant to increase access to education services as contributions of international organisations to education. Based on these findings, the paper recommended that the federal government should establish an agency to coordinate the activities of all international organizations operating in Nigeria to improve their effectiveness. International organizations that are programmes inclined to education should always be involved and included in programmes concerning educational management. International organizations should be encouraged to participate in the development of education in Nigeria.

Amadi and Nwogu (2023) examined the impact of funding on educational development in Nigeria and how adequate funding can be leveraged to improve educational outcomes in the country. A quantitative research method was used to analyse data collected including interviews with key stakeholders in the education sector in Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that inadequate funding in Nigeria has contributed to low enrolment rate, teacher training and professional development, infrastructure and learning materials, and lack of relevance to the needs of the labour market, all of which have significant implications for the country's social and economic development. The paper concludes by stressing the urgent need for increased funding and interventions to improve the education system in Nigeria and recommends that the government should

urgently increase public funding for education, encourage private sector investment in education, and prioritize education funding and development to ensure that the country's human capital is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to drive the nation's economic and social development.

Theoretical Framework

The study chooses Human Capital Theory as its framework for analysis. The Human Capital Theory originated in the mid-twentieth century under the leadership of Jacob Mincer, Theodore Schultz, and Gary Becker. They formulated the theory based on their own research, as well as on ideas of several prominent economists before them. The human capital theory as explained by Adelakun (2021) is one that shows how education leads to increase in productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of their cognitive skills. He further stated that Theodore, Schultz, Gory, Bucker and Jacob Mincer introduced the notion that people invest in education so as to increase their stock of human capabilities which can be formed by combining innate abilities with investment in human beings. Examples of such investment include expenditure on education, on-the-job training, health and nutrition-these have been recurring in the literature. The provision of education is seen as a productive investment in human capital which is considered to be equally or even more worthwhile than that of physical capital.

The human capital theory is one of the foundational theories of socio-economic development. The founding scholars hold that any acquired qualities and abilities that help individuals and groups be economically productive is an individual or group human capital. However, the focus by classical human capital model on schooling and training as the major factors comprising human capital on all levels has made the human capital measurement tools to generally assess only educational attainment on these levels. This overly simplified approach creates difficulty in accurately assessing the strengths and weaknesses of human capital in a country but policy-makers and others use these simplified estimates of human capital because the factors suggested to have significant impact on human capital are mostly intangible and the collection of such data costly.

According to the human capital theory, educational investments are made in anticipation of greater future returns or value. Since knowledge is subject to increasing the returns because these are non-rival goods, some past studies have posited that the longer your studies or the more the training you are exposed to, the more the future benefits you are going to earn (Bowen, 2018). Also, this position of acquiring education and its implication for enhancing growth, productivity and employment has been situated in the growth literature.

Practically, human capital development involves various strategies and initiatives aimed at improving education systems, promoting lifelong learning, and providing individuals with the necessary tools to succeed in the labour market and society. These strategies may include: increasing access to quality education, investing in teacher training and professional development, promoting STEM education and digital literacy, and implementing inclusive and equitable education policies. The theory portrays education as an investment since it yields returns; it is designed for nations with great number of residence because of the large availability of human resources. Hence, the reason for adapting the theory for studies in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-method research design to address the research questions and achieve the purpose of the study. The study used both primary and secondary data sources to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of World Bank on educational development in the Federal Capital Territory through the BESDA project. The target population is comprised of educational planners working in the ministry, department, schools and agency of education that deals with education planning in the FCT including Parents Teachers Association (PTA). Therefore, the population consists of the educational planning officers in the selected area council of FCT, Abuja, Nigeria; AMAC, staff of the FCT UBEC Head Quarter, FCT Primary Education Board, Federal Ministry of Education, teaching/non-teaching staff of public primary schools and Parents Teachers Association (PTA) in AMAC. Hence the population of the study is 2,750. This was arrived at after visiting the institutions and making prior inquires and obtaining raw estimates of members of staffs at units or departments directly concern with the subject of investigation. The population of the study (2,750) is deemed to be large; and the researcher opted to make use of the sample rather than make use of the entire population. The statistical tool of Rakesh statistical is used to determine the sample size to 400.

Rakesh's Statistical formula for sample size determination is;

$$n = \frac{PS}{1 + PS\,(PE)^2}$$

Where n=sample size

N=total population size

1 is constant

PE = the assume error margin or tolerable error which is taken as 5% (0.05)

$$n = \frac{PS}{1 + PS\,(PE)^2} \quad \frac{2{,}750}{1 + 2{,}750\,(0.05)^2}$$

$$\frac{2,123}{1 + 2,750 \times 0.0025} \quad \frac{2,750}{6.8775} = 399.85 \text{ Approximate } \mathbf{400}.$$

Stratified and Random Sampling Techniques were used in selecting the respondents among different categories of staff that were used for the study. The sample was systematically chosen in order to proportionately represent the population of the study in accordance with the respective numerical strength of each category. The purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of respondents for interviews. This technique was chosen because it enabled the researcher to purposely choose respondents at their locations. The study made use of both primary and secondary methods of data collection. The instruments that were used in collecting data for this study are oral interview, questionnaire and secondary sources. The application of these instruments help the researcher has access to firsthand information about the World Bank and educational development in the Federal Capital Territory.

This study made use of descriptive statistics with the aid of tables as a platform to present the research data and also analyze the data that was collected from the field on the subject matter using simple percentage and table as the case may be for the descriptive analysis. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative information. Codes were created using letters and numbers to represent the topics and themes.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Table 1: Respondents' opinion on the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC

Responses	SA	A	D	SD	U	Total
Providing basic facilities for teaching and learning	91 (23%)	110 (28%)	84 (22%)	89 (23%)	15 (4%)	389 (100%)
School feeding programme is implemented in all schools	93 (24%)	85 (22%)	91 (23%)	95 (24%)	25 (7%)	389 (100%)
Sensitization and mobilization of members of the public	109 (28%)	122 (31%)	84 (22%)	63 (16%)	11 (3%)	389 (100%)
Provision of equal opportunities among children of school age	117 (30%)	108 (28%)	79 (20%)	63 (16%)	22 (6%)	389 (100%)
Training and retraining of Teachers	99 (25%)	102 (26%)	92 (24%)	82 (21%)	14 (4%)	389 (100%)

Source: Field Work, November 2025

Asked of the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC, 91 respondents (23%) and 110 respondents representing (28%) strongly agree and agree that providing basic facilities for teaching and learning, 84 (22%) and 89 (23%) have contrary opinion while 15 respondents (4%) were undecided. The above analysis clearly shows that provision of basic facilities for teaching and learning are the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC. On the other hand, 93 respondents representing (24%) and 85 (22%) strongly agree and agree that school feeding programme implemented in all schools are the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC, 95 (24%) and 91 (23%) strongly disagree and disagree respectively, 25 respondents (7%) were undecided. In separate responses, 109 (28%) and 122 (31%) ticked sensitization and mobilization of members of the public towards BESDA programme as the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC, 63 (16%) and 84 (22%) strongly disagree and disagree with the assertion, while 11 respondents (3%) could not ascertained the variable.

117 respondents (30%) and 108 (28%) strongly agree and agree that provision of equal opportunities among children of school going age are the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC, 63 (16%) and 79 (20%) strongly disagree and disagreed with the position while 26 respondents representing (6%) were undecided. 99 (25%) and 102 (26%) strongly agree and agreed that training and retraining of teachers are the role of BESDA in bringing out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC, 82 (21%) and 92 (24%) strongly disagree and disagree respectively, while 14 respondents (4%) were undecided.

Participants shared their understanding or knowledge on what function BESDA was created to meet. They described the focus of the programme on students of school age, strategies through which the programme was to carry out its objectives, and the program's benefits to the nation. Respondent 1 described the program in his words: The program was designed to broaden the scope and number of people, which are of school age to have access to school. With regards to drop outs, the BESDA was designed to reduce drop outs by providing access to schools through free education, provision of education materials in primary to secondary schools.

Respondent 2 in describing the focal aim of the BESDA program traced its origin, and how the program was

supposed to be a foundation for future benefits. He described: The BESDA was designed to meet the key ideals of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). It was supposed to help on job creation and wealth generation. It ensures the acquisition of functional education for laying the foundation for technical, vocational and entrepreneurship in dropouts. This perception was also put forward by Respondent 3 who stated that BESDA curriculum which includes technical, moral and civic education, was to help children to grow up as good citizens thereby reducing dropouts and building the quality of human resources in the nation. Respondent 4 concisely summarizes the description of the BESDA function in the following words:

It provides funding, infrastructural facilities development, provision of learning and teaching resources, provision of technical support for educational planning, policy formulation and educational management, provision of capacity building programmes and implementation of projects or programmes meant to increase access to education services as contributions of international organisations to education (Respondent 4, Abuja - November, 2025).

The enumerated data above described the knowledge, the various participants have on the BESDA. They described the program as structured towards providing free access to qualitative education that would first take away the children from the streets, and empower them for future pursuits, thereby enhancing nation building. They stated that the BESDA was supposed to impact through the provision of education materials, creation of free access and management of a curriculum system that would impact the needed skills profitable for future endeavors.

According to Word Bank (2025) report, the development objective of the Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) Operation Project for Nigeria is to increase equitable access for out-of-school children and improve literacy in focus states, and strengthen accountability for results, in basic education in Nigeria. This operation is well aligned with the World Bank Group's 2014 Nigeria country partnership strategy (CPS) for FY2014-2017, as well as its adjustment under the 2016 performance and learning review (PLR). The program-for-results (PforR) instrument is considered the best fit to support the government's universal basic education (UBE) program; ensure a focus on education outputs and outcomes; and incentivize performance at all levels.

By focusing on an agreed set of results, yet allowing flexibility and incentivizing home-grown solutions (to respond to specific needs) at the state and local levels, the PforR instrument accommodates Nigeria's federal nature. The BESDA operation is designed as a hybrid consisting of two parts: the program using a PforR instrument, and a technical assistance (TA) component, which uses an investment project financing (IPF) instrument. Given the scale of the challenge of out-of-school children in Nigeria, and the commitment of the World Bank to transformational improvement in education outcomes in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, this operation supports a first phase of the government's longer-term education reform agenda. The operation also incentivizes data collection on key education system attributes and outcomes, and use of these data in institutionalizing need-based state plans and in coordinated strategic planning across federal and state levels.

The World Bank impacts on education having acknowledged education as one of the avenues for investing in people. This role has, over the years, affected all levels of education. For example, the Bank has worked to increase enrollment at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels. Evidently, data from World Development Indicators is a proof to the positive trend in enrollments. The World Bank Organization is the highest global educational support (GES) established since 2012 purposely to help enhance and fast track the goal of Education for All (EFA). GPE was targeted at Millennium Development Goal (primarily meant to achieve universal basic education for all; promote and support gender equality, empower women and rendering special care and help to children) as well as the EFAE Goals. These MDG's goals were agreed in Dakar in 2000 (World Bank, 2024).

Table 2: World Bank Intervention Projects in Nigeria and Estimates of Worth (1958-2024)

Sectors of World Bank Intervention	Number of Projects	Percentage	Amount Committed	Percentage
Education Sector	16	6.8	1,776.3	6.7
Higher Education	2	0.85	222.4	0.84
Other Levels (Pre-Primary, Primary & Secondary Education)	14	5.95	1553.9	5.86
Other Sectors	219	93.2	24,777.24	93.3
Total	235	100	26,553.54	100

Computed by Authors from World Bank Data (2024)

World Bank has impacts on Nigeria higher education in three main areas which are: research, scholarship and finance. These facts which represent the main focus of this work are substantiated in Table 2: From the above table presented above, it can be observed that projects embarked upon by World Bank in Nigeria between 1958 and 2024 are 235 in all. Of this, 16 were targeted at education sector while higher education (subset of education sector) got 2 of them (less than 1% of the entire projects). Also, the World Bank extends its higher education support to Nigeria via research. This is made possible by including Nigeria in the list of countries whose macroeconomic time-series data are published on World Development Indicators. This has helped researchers at higher education level to conduct good and reliable researches. The Bank has also supported NHE by sponsoring supporting qualified candidates to pursue degrees in some developed countries universities. This is made possible through annual World Bank Scholarship Programme for HE student at all levels in different programmes/field of learning. It also offers Fellowship training programme (Post-Doctoral Research). Nigeria happens to be one of the beneficiary countries, among others.

The World Bank concentrates and pays more attention to basic and secondary education and largely gives less focus on NHE. This may be the reason why World Bank targeted in raising literacy level and enrollment rates up to the college level. With about 60 projects undertaken in Nigeria between 1958 and 2024, only 16 affected education sector. Out of these 16 projected, only 2 affected higher education. The World Bank documents only projects and associated costs it commits itself into for each country. Surprisingly, the World Bank seems to be the only international organization executing developmental projects on NHE system.

Respondent 8 described the programme as an avenue to educate and equip children. In his words: The function of the BESDA is to provide ready access to education for eligible students by providing free education. By this, the policy planner experts would encourage more student to schools, equip them better for the future and ultimately reduce dropouts. Respondent 9 also described the functions of the BESDA as a programme set to provide ready and easily affordable access to education for all students by providing free education. Respondent10 stated that the BESDA is a programme that is to give access to education to every child in the country. The programme apart from being free and should bolster the child with skills that could help him in the future (Respondent 8, Abuja - November, 2025). Participants described the BESDA as a programme geared towards educating and equipping children through free access to quality education, thereby empowering them for future pursuits.

Another area the international organizations like World Bank are contributing to the development of education in Nigeria is in the area of provision of technical support in educational planning, policy formulation and education management. Ogunode and Onakoya (2024) defined technical support as the professional service provided by professionals to support the development of educational programmes and projects. Technical assistance is professional guidance and instruction given by professionals to educational planners, managers and administrators to aid planning, implementation and formulation of policy in the educational sector.

Table 3: Respondents' opinion on the extent which BESDA programme has impacted on community involvement in the education process in AMAC

Options	Frequency	%
Very High Extent	139	36
High Extent	54	14
Low Extent	47	12
Very Low Extent	91	23
Fair	58	15
Total	389	100

Source: Field Work, November (2025).

Table 3 contains data regarding the extent at which the BESDA programme has impacted on community involvement in the education process in AMAC. The data indicates that majority of the respondents (36%) assess the extent of BESDA impact as very high extent and 23% assess it as being very low, 15% assessed it has been fair, 14% assess it to a high extent while 12% concluded that the establishment of BESDA improved the quality of primary education in AMAC to a low extent by increasing teacher quality, access to education and increased curriculum and Learning materials.

Respondent 6 expressed that the low quantity of Teachers and their poor motivation on another part have their negative consequence on implementation as they could be responsible for poor quality of the graduates that are turned out from the BESDA schools and poor retention of the teachers who though employed continue to search for greener pasture as they continue to move to other places or sectors of the work force at the slightest opportunity there by creating perpetual state of low quantity teaching and learning in the zone at basic education level and poor foundation for higher education. This situation is heightened by poor provision of teaching materials and infrastructure in the schools which is also discovered to be prevalent in the BESDA schools (Respondent 5, Abuja - November, 2025).

Participants stated that there was no implementation in their various schools which resulted in no impact. A key point is the non-acceptance of the dropout syndrome in private schools. However the part of the BESDA that would have actively involved the private schools, school curriculum has still not been updated (November, 2025). There was no implementation. I have knowledge that technical equipment was just stacked in some schools (not ours) without manpower. Teachers are still not qualified for the new structure, curriculum is still poor. Certain subjects were introduced but the schools system was too theoretical to impose any impact Education was not taught well enough to tap into talents. I think the school system especially private ones are not equipped to cause any impact. Also since private schools are privately owned, there is a consciousness to make profit as much as possible. This has caused them to go lower but cheaper standards (Respondent 2 Abuja - November, 2025).

Access to education is a critical issue in Nigeria, as many children still do not have access to education, particularly in rural areas and among marginalized communities. Access to education is essential to ensure that all Nigerian children have the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in life. Several factors contribute to the limited access to education in Nigeria, including poverty, cultural barriers, inadequate infrastructure, and poor quality of education. Many families cannot afford the cost of education, including tuition fees, uniforms, and learning materials, which makes it challenging for children from disadvantaged families to access education. Additionally, cultural factors such as early marriage and child labour, particularly among girls, limit access to education. In Nigeria, access to education is a significant issue, particularly for individuals from low-income families and marginalized communities (November, 2025).

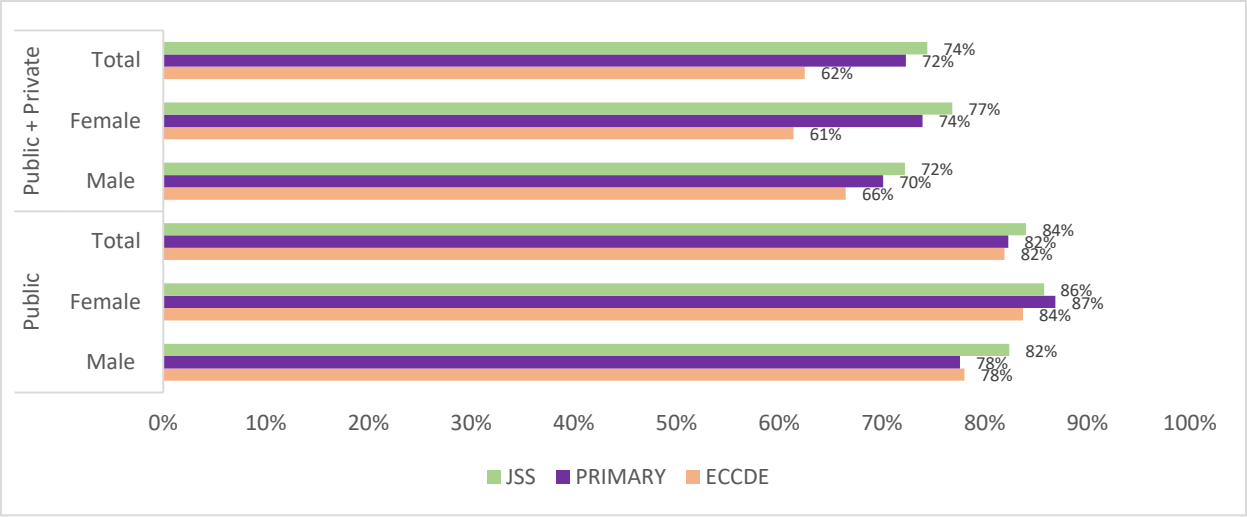
The government has taken various measures to promote equity in education, including the introduction of free primary education and the establishment of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) to promote access to basic education. Inadequate infrastructure, such as a lack of schools and classrooms, also contributes to limited access to education, particularly in rural areas. The poor quality of education, including outdated curricula and low teacher qualifications, further limits access to education in Nigeria. Several measures can be taken to increase access to education in Nigeria. These include increasing investment in the education sector, promoting public-private partnerships, and implementing policies that address the cultural and socio-economic barriers to education. The government can also provide financial support to disadvantaged families to ensure that they can afford the cost of education.

The early childhood development pilot does not appear to have culminated in the establishment of centers that provide the minimum standards for preschool that would contribute to improved learning prospects in primary school. Moreover, this pilot was developed too late in the project life to enable a true learning and evaluative process inherent in a pilot design. The quality of children's lives, their family and community circumstances, greatly influence the kind of learners they become. For this reason, compensatory interventions such as early childhood development can be viewed as proactive measures to improve student learning, since it can increase children's readiness for school. This pilot focused exclusively on education interventions at the pre-primary level, and did not integrate other aspects such as child health, nutrition, or child protection (November, 2025).

The quality of education in Nigeria is a significant concern and is an essential factor that affects the development of the country. The quality of education is determined by various factors, including the competence and qualifications of teachers, the relevance of the curriculum to current and future needs, the availability of learning resources, the teaching and learning environment, and the capacity of institutions to manage and deliver quality education. In Nigeria, several factors contribute to the poor quality of education. Firstly, inadequate funding of education limits the ability of institutions to provide the necessary infrastructure, learning materials, and teacher training needed to deliver quality education.

Participants evaluated the impact of dropouts on their respective schools. Respondent 5 stated that the BESDA had no impact in his school. In his own words, he stated "As earlier mentioned, for private schools, dropouts don't exist." Respondent 11 stated that as there was no implementation in her school, there was no impact as well. Respondent 7 gave further explanations to why there was no impact: Although we don't acknowledge dropouts in private schools, generally the BESDA has not really reduced dropouts. Dropouts was not only basically a function of finance (and by finance I mean provision of structures where schools could be accessed on a free platform), but was also supposed to address the ability to tap into the children's aptitude or talent. It was observed under former reforms that children might not be able to cope with senior secondary education. This was supposed to be done through an upgraded curriculum structure which was supposed to be applied in all schools. This was not implemented in my school. We currently are still using the old curriculum.

Figure 1: Percentage of Qualified Teachers in Basic Education, 2018 - 2025



Sources: National Bureau of Statistics/UNICEF (2025).

A cursory look at the current distribution of qualified teachers in public and private schools in the country (Figure 1), gives a false impression that there are enough qualified teachers in the basic education sector. The figure shows that the percentages of qualified teachers at ECCDE is 62% while that of both the primary and JSS levels have exceeded 70% respectively. Moreover, when public schools are looked at alone, the percentages of teachers for ECCDE are 82%, Primary 82% while that for JSS is 84%, which means there are more qualified teachers in the public schools than in the private ones. However, these high shares of qualified teachers across the three levels of basic education, though impressive, are deceptive on two counts: first, while they indicate considerable progress, they are not suggestive of low LQTRs. It is common knowledge that despite an acceptable national learner–teacher ratio of 35:1 at the primary school level, there are still disparities and ratios as high as 100:1, particularly in the big cities, where some teachers have double stream classes. UBEC statistics show that 47,010,008+ are total enrolment of students, 171,027+ total number of schools and 1,686,535+ total number of teachers.

Secondly, the impressive statistics for qualified teachers does not necessarily suggest improved learning outcomes within the sub-sector. Qualification is not synonymous with competence. A recent World Bank research opines that Nigeria is going through learning crisis, with 70% of its primary school pupils not able to understand a simple sentence or perform basic numeracy tasks, while 69% of primary school teachers are unqualified to be in the classroom. The NALABE (2017) Report further confirmed that many primary school children had not acquired even the most basic literacy and numeracy skills.

The implementation of the BESDA focused on enhancing capacity through provision of textbooks for students, erection of school buildings and training of teachers. Books were provided to further aid the learning process of students although the books sent to the school did not meet the need of the school and also did not go round. Buildings were erected to cater for the increased number of students expected with the program implementation and teachers were retrained to enhance effective knowledge delivery (Respondent 10 Abuja – November, 2025).

The implementation of the BESDA has affected the school's system ability to handle dropouts in various ways. Only qualified teachers were allowed by the government to teach in the secondary schools. This makes the effective handling of the students possible. Very few teaching aids were supplied and not in all subject areas. The government in order to ensure effective implementation of the BESDA scheme supply free textbooks, exercise books, sports facilities etc. to the schools. Although they were always few and this supply was not made frequently.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are discussed in line with the research questions that guided the study. Specifically, the findings of the study are hereby discussed in the light of the two objectives of the study.

i. Through BESDA project, World Bank has worked to increase enrollment and bring out-of-school children back to the class room in AMAC. This role has, over the years, impacted on all levels of education. For example, the World Bank has worked to increase enrollment at primary, secondary and postsecondary levels. Evidently, data from World Development Indicators is a proof to the positive trend in enrollments. The World Bank Organization is the highest global educational support (GES) established since 2012

purposely to help enhance and fast track the goal of Education for All (EFA).

The World Bank appears to be the largest external financier contributor to education in most developing countries. Generally, since the year 2000, the World Bank invested more than $45billion USD in education (World Bank, 2025). However, evidences abound that bulk of this spending is domiciled in basic/primary and secondary education levels. The finding is in line with the tenets of human capital theory which underscores the notion that people are valuable resources whose competencies can be enriched through educational pursuits and training programs. As per this theory, allocating resources toward human capital development results in heightened productivity, creativity, and overall organizational efficacy.

ii. The findings of this study revealed that the extent which BESDA programme has impacted on community involvement in the education process in AMAC is large. Finding shows that funding, infrastructural facilities development, provision of learning and teaching resources, provision of technical support for educational planning, policy formulation and educational management, provision of capacity building programmes and implementation of projects or programmes are contributions of World Bank to the development of education in Nigeria. Moreover, the theory of human capital underscores the significance of education in nurturing human capital, commencing from the early stages of life and persisting through formal educational channels. By imparting individuals with pertinent knowledge and proficiencies, education serves as a pivotal element in augmenting human capital and nurturing economic progress.

The findings of this study corroborate the findings of a research carried out by Edeme (2022), according to the findings of this previous study, the Federal Government of Nigeria and UNICEF sometimes partner to fund education in Nigeria. Not only that, but the findings of this study also corroborate the finding of another study that posited that EU Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, disclosed the funding of education in Abuja at the official launch of the €4O million intervention programme on education and youth empowerment in North Western Nigeria (Kolawole, 2023).

Conclusion

The study assessed role of World Bank on educational development in the Federal Capital Territory (2014-2024). Today, education remains a significant challenge in Nigeria, with limited access, poor outcome, and inadequate investment in the sector. The government has recognized the importance of education in driving economic growth and development and has taken steps to increase investment in the sector. However, sustained investment and a long-term commitment to education are needed to address the challenges facing the education sector in Nigeria. Effective allocation and utilization of funds are crucial for promoting sustainable educational development in Nigeria, as low funding has been identified as a key in the sector, and addressing this challenge is essential for improving the quality and accessibility of education, reducing poverty and promoting peace and stability. Inadequate funding has also contributed to poor infrastructure, low enrolment rate, inadequate teacher training, and outdated curricula among other factors contributing to low educational quality in Nigeria. While the government has made efforts to increase funding for education, the amount allocated to education in the national budget remains insufficient to meet the needs of the education sector.

The study concludes that given the reality of education sector funding in Nigeria, the education sector in Nigeria may not produce the needed manpower through which sustainable development agenda could be achieved. This implies that in Nigeria, education may fail to perform its role as catalyst for development. It is important to note that sustainable development agenda spans through all the economic sectors of a nation and every member of the society has a role to play in its achievement. Lack of quality education occasioned by underfunding is a cog in the wheel of attainment of sustainable development agenda.

The state cannot be fair in its role of rural development because, those who make policies by the state represent the state and its class contradiction as well as the World Bank and as a development partner or donor agency represents the international capitalist structure that is responsible for the establishment of the bank in the first place. The roles of the World Bank, IMF and MNCs as well as canvassing, for neoliberal ideology are rather venal where they endlessly pursue their selfish interest to the detriment of the people they claim to be empowering.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made to improve education and development in Nigeria:

i. Increase public funding for education: The government should increase its budgetary allocation to education and ensure that the funds are utilized effectively to improve access, quality, and relevance of education in Nigeria, ensure that marginalized groups have equal access to education and are not discriminated against in terms of quality of education.

ii. Encourage private sector investment in education: The government should encourage private sector investment in education by providing incentives and creating a conducive environment for private sector participation

in education, strengthening its partnerships with donor agencies to secure more funding for education in Nigeria. However, the government should ensure that the funding is aligned with national priorities and is utilized effectively.

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