

Beneficiaries' Knowledge and Perception of Girls' Education Programme Strategies in Bauchi State, Nigeria

John Onche Idu¹, Matthew Funsho Bello^{2*} & Deborah Gaius Alaji³

¹Department of Local Government and Development Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

²Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Gombe State University, Gombe, Nigeria

³Department of Forestry Technology, Yobe State College of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Gujba – Damaturu, Yobe State

Corresponding Author: matthewfbello@gsu.edu.ng

Abstract

The study investigated the extent to which the knowledge and perceptions of programme beneficiaries impacted and/or constrained the girls' education programme strategies of the Bauchi state government and UNICEF from improving girls' education in the state. Using project communication as an approach, it was argued that lack of project communication through awareness creation and enlightenment using traditional and religious institutions is a constraint to project success. A mixed method research design comprising both qualitative and quantitative approach to data gathering was developed and utilized to obtain a sample size of 180 respondents out of a total population of 283 using Qualtrics quantitative sample size calculator based on purposive sampling technique. Data obtained were analysed thematically and hypothesis tested using multiple regression with the aid of the SPSS statistical software (version 20) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate upheld. Findings from the study showd that programme beneficiaries' knowledge and perception significantly constrained the girls' education programme strategies of the Bauchi state government from improving girl child education while it enhanced that of UNICEF. In conclusion it was recommended that, the state government should utilize traditional and religious institutions to enlighten and create awareness about the benefits of the girls' education programmes been implemented.

Keywords: Beneficiaries; Constrain; Perception; Girls Education; Programme Strategies

INTRODUCTION

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A critical objective of the World Education Forum (WEF) on Education For All (EFA) that was adopted by the World Summit for Children in 1990 was to promote equity and make access to education universal. In realization of the importance of education globally, there has been concern for the attainment of functional and qualitative education all over the world. This was reflected in the inauguration of Education For All (EFA) at Dakar in 2000 and was followed by a meeting called by the 56th General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) to implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (Sofowora, 2010). To this effect, the urgent priority area for development intervention should be provision of access, improvement of quality education for both girls and women and; the removal of obstacles that hamper their active participation and all forms of gender stereotyping in education (Osokoya, 2005). It then means that advocacy and policy dialogues should constitute the means of providing access to free and compulsory basic education.

In 2007, a National Policy on Gender in Basic Education was established which focused on increasing girls' participation in education (FME, 2007) and most states in northern Nigeria have taken positive steps to increase girls' enrolment in partnership with NGOs and CBOs through major advocacy drives especially in rural areas. The Federal Government went further and launched the policy framework on the girl-child and women education with the aim of ensuring access and sound education for the girl-child and young women in Nigeria. In addition to this, fees for girls have been abolished and some girls-only schools at both primary and secondary levels were established and efforts are being made to increase the proportion of female teachers (Nakodia, 2011).

Tracing the problem of girl-child education in northern Nigeria to the colonial era, Pittin (1990) acknowledged that the British educational policy at that time placed more emphasis on co-education whereby boys and girls attended the same school which was not appealing to the predominantly Muslim communities in the north. It was not until 1929 when the first girls' school was established in the Northern Province. Furthermore, there was low spending on girls' education at that time. Therefore, girls education during the colonial era provided a small percentage of girls with the option to move beyond pursuing the "career" of marriage and family which is an ideology that runs through up to the post-colonial era. It was observed that, globally girls are nearly 90% more likely to be out of school than their male counterparts and 32 million girls of primary school age are out of school (CODE, 2017).

Despite efforts made by Government with support of development partners in making basic education free and compulsory within the National Policy on Education, at least 20 million children are reported to be 'out of school' in Nigeria and 13.2 million children out of this are victims of Boko Haram's activities in north-east Nigeria, making it the highest in the world (Owolabi, 2021). Sadly, they are mostly girls and children from northern states. Only 61% of 6-11-years old regularly attend primary school and only 36 per cent of children between three and five years of age attend organized early childhood education programme (CODE, 2017). More girls (31% or 4,456,414) are out of school than boys (25.5% or 3,833,133) in Nigeria and Bauchi state on its part has 46 % of its girls enrolled into a primary school and with respect to girls' education, it is considered educationally disadvantaged (UNICEF, 2011). About 62.3% of females have no formal education, 17.5% have some primary education while only 7.3% completed

primary schools (NDHS, 2011). According to UNESCO (2012) the female literacy rate across the state was 35.3%, Gender Parity Index stood at 0.3%. Odimegwu & Okemgbo (2000) observed that in Sub-Sahara Africa, societal and parental discrimination against girls in education is reflected in lower rate of social enrolment for girls. If it is said that education is one of the most powerful routes to a better future, the statistics presented is indeed worrisome. As such, governments and development partners must ensure that there is equal access to education for all.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Basic and girl-child education in Bauchi State evolves and operates within the framework of the National Policy on Education (NPE), Nigeria's commitment to Global Initiative on Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There were serious concern about the educational situation of girls in rural communities of northern Nigeria by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF. These include low enrolments, retention, progression, completion and transition of girls in basic education. The problems associated with girls' education in Bauchi state include deplorable state of infrastructure at the primary school level, shortage of primary school teachers, religious beliefs and ignorance of the value of education generally and girls education in particular (BASUBEB, 2009).

To address these deplorable state of education, the Bauchi state government through the Bauchi State Universal Basic Education Board (BASUBEB) and the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) through the Girls Education Projects (GEP) rehabilitated primary schools in the state, provided learning materials for learners, trained and employed more primary school teachers, provided free education for girls, raised enrolment figures especially for girls and improved the quality of education offered with a view of attaining the set objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE). In spite of these interventions by the state government and UNICEF in the area of girls' education, the girl-child in Bauchi state has not fared any better in basic education (Edeh, 2014). In the light of the foregoing therefore, this study sought to assess the extent to which the knowledge and perceptions of beneficiaries impacted and constrained the girls education programme strategies of Bauchi state and UNICEF in enhancing girl-child education.

OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS

The objective which provides direction to the research is: to highlight the extent the knowledge and perceptions of programme beneficiaries constrained the girls' education programme strategies of the Bauchi state government and UNICEF from improving girls' education in the state. The following are hypothesized to guide the study:

H₀: Beneficiaries' knowledge and perception do not significantly constrain the girls' education programme strategies of the Bauchi state government and UNICEF from improving girl-child education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Girls Education Programme

Educating girls has become relevant if the goals of development is to be realised. As such, Okebukola (2014) defines girl-child education as a major way of ensuring that women and girls are strategically and properly positioned to contribute effectively and efficiently towards national development. Girl-child education is the involvement of girls in formal training for the purpose of acquiring basic knowledge, skills and expertise necessary for living a meaningful and impactful life. It generally aims at the development of human abilities (Schaeffer, 2005). Ugwu (2001) defines girl-child education as the education that would make a girl-child become aware of herself and her capacity to exploit her environment, and involves training in literacy and vocational skills to enable her become functional in the society.

Programmes entail the collection of projects related to some common objective (Pellegrinelli, 2011). Programme strategies are the various interventions implemented by governmental and non-governmental agencies to improve education for the girl-child. Access to education is the ability of all people to have equal opportunity in education regardless of their social class, gender, and ethnicity, physical and mental disabilities and encompasses initial enrollment, persistence, attendance, and retention in an education system (Subrahmanian, 2005).

Adequate investments in education facilitate the achievement of related development goals and increases the probability that progress will be sustained (United States Agency for International Development USAID, 2017). This is because education builds the human capital that is needed for economic growth and also produces significant improvement in health, nutrition, life expectancy, and countries with an educated citizenry are more likely to be democratic and politically stable.

In clear terms, access for the girl-child is the right and opportunities provided for the girl-child to be educated. Oyigbenu (2010) stated that lack of access to education is indeed the end of the world, because without it there is certainly no future for the girl-child in the strict sense of full inclusion and participation in the development process, self-actualization, self-fulfillment and personal freedom. Akyeampong (2009) argues that access to education deals with the availability, convenience and ability to be educated and posits that many governments make provision for the education of their citizens, but the provisions most of the time do not take cognizance of the peculiarities of the girl-child student. In that case the girl-child student may not have access to education, which is a fundamental human right. Girls' education is a strategic development priority.

Beneficiaries' Knowledge and Perception of Programmes

Beneficiaries refer to those individuals or groups who are ultimately the direct or indirect recipients of programme/project outcomes. They are individuals, groups or organizations that benefit from an intervention, project or programme (PMI, 2013). Knowledge is sum total of the experiences and basic understanding of beneficiaries on the girls' education programme of the state government or UNICEF while perception is the way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted (Axford, 1997). Beneficiary knowledge and perception means the experiences, understanding, awareness and interpretation of girls' education programme strategies by recipients (pupils, teachers, parents and communities) within their community. It is pertinent to note that the involvement and support of beneficiaries was critical to the success and sustainability of efforts made to reduce the gender gap and move towards equity in education (Akunga, 2010).

Ramsing (2009) asserts that the number one cause of failure of many projects is ineffective project communication. The intensity of the investigation of the variables

was limited to the objectives of the study. It is a community's perceptions of projects that determine their motivation to participate. Therefore, any collective action depends on the motivation of group members to accomplish desired outputs (Ostrom, 2001). Recipients of programmes/project interventions have mixed feelings and reactions about such interventions. These feelings and reactions could range from trust to suspicion about the programmes, activities and funding of the programmes. It was asserted that some form of controversies and suspicions exist among the populace and civil societies regarding whose own NGOs are and whose interest they represent.

Furthermore, Ellerman (2001) makes the case that development work is only effective when its activities are owned by local people themselves. In essence, donors, IDPs and NGOs cannot 'develop' other people as development has to come from within. They can build infrastructure and provide goods and services; but these do not contribute to lasting change without associated changes in local people's confidence, attitudes and behaviours. This relationship between intervening agencies and their beneficiaries and the knowledge/perception beneficiaries have about the project is widely seen as the foundation of effective project interventions. Based on research across NGOs, it was concluded that "the quality of an NGO's field work is primarily determined by the quality of its relationships with its intended beneficiaries". This was expanded: 'NGOs deliver quality work when their work is based on a sensitive and dynamic understanding of beneficiaries' realities; responds to local priorities in a way that beneficiaries feel is appropriate; and is judged to be useful by beneficiaries' (BOND, 2006).

Perhaps the most significant findings from this literature review are that, despite the rhetoric surrounding girls' education, not much has been done by governments to improve access and quality of education for the girl-child. It is acknowledged that there is increase in the responsibilities of governments, coupled with low income and competing demand for scarce resources. Thus, there is the need for the private or non-state actors to support government by introducing viable initiatives to enhance girl-child education (Stromquist, 1992). By looking at what has been done for girls, including national policies deemed non-discriminatory by educators, in actuality discriminate against girls. Patterns of investment also favour boys, whether it is insistence on co-education despite cultural resistance or reduced resources allocated to girls' schools (Miller, *et. al.*, 2003).

Theoretical Framework - Project Communication

In recent years project communication has become a critical concept in development discourse. Project communication is an approach that engenders project success and sustainability. The key proponents of this approach are Robert Chambers, Baker, Ramsing, amongst others. This approach characterizes projects/programme intervention since the late seventies and early eighties. Project communication refers to information exchanges with the intention to create understanding amongst project stakeholders (Ruuska, 1996). Project communication is strategic to donors, development partners, governments and beneficiaries or stakeholders who are group of individuals who can affect or are affected by the project been implemented (Freeman, 1994) including the local communities, regulatory agencies, customers, project team, project sponsors and so on.

The fact that communication is crucial for project success has been echoed by scholars like (Baker, 2007 and Ramsing, 2009) although up-to-date communication still stands as a major cause of failure of many projects (Ramsing, 2009). It is to this effect that Baker (2007) avers that ineffective communication contributes up to 95% of many project failures. Also, Lester (2007) opined that effective communication is one of the most important factors that accounts for the success of any project. The effectiveness of project communication depends on the quality of the communication flows. The quality of communication all through the project life-cycle can be described as the degree to which appropriate information reaches the intended information sources/receivers in an apt time (Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers, 1976). Projects can be communicated as extra-project communication i.e. with the external project environment and intra-project communication i. e. within the project.

The application of project communication to this study is that, it calls for the need to acknowledge the critical role beneficiaries play in the successful implementation of girls' education programme strategies. This is because the knowledge of a project been executed shapes the perception of beneficiaries and determines the acceptability or rejection of the intervention. Beneficiaries can be enlightened about the benefits of the girls education programme been implemented. This enlightenment drive can be achieved through traditional and religious institutions. The communities in Bauchi state hold traditional and religious institutions in high esteem to extract commitment to programme success. In other words, if teh benefits of

girls education projects/programmes are adequately communicated to beneficiaries through institutions they hold in high regards, then the chances for successful implementation is high.

METHODOLOGY

The Research Design

In order to explore the issues related to government and UNICEF intervention in girl-child education in the selected LGAs of Bauchi State, a mixed method research design was developed and utilized for the study while the GEP served as a case study. This is because a mixed method approach to investigation employs the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods with a case study. Quantitative data were analysed to complement findings from qualitative sources.

Population, Sample Size and Technique

The target population are the UNICEF personnel/consultants involved in girl-child education, the staff of BASUBEB directly involved in the implementation of UNICEF GEP, the Education Secretaries (ES) of the selected LGEAs that implemented GEP intervention, the SBMC members and teachers of the 20 pilot schools/communities who were beneficiaries of UNICEF GEP intervention in each of the 3 selected LGAs for the study. The researchers decided to work within this population because they were involved with the GEP and the information obtained from these categories of respondents has the potential to make the findings of the study more acceptable. To conduct the study, it was necessary to select a total sample size of 180 respondents out of a total population of 283 respondents. To ensure representativeness, one LGA was selected randomly from each senatorial zone of Bauchi state where UNICEF intervened in the area of girl-child education. They are: Giade LGA in Bauchi North senatorial district; Dambam LGA in Bauchi Central senatorial district and Dass LGA in Bauchi South senatorial district. Five (5) pilot primary schools/communities were chosen in each of the three LGAs for in-depth study. The pilot primary schools were selected such that 1 was urban in nature, 2 semi-urban and 2 rural in nature. Two (2) non-GEP primary schools (1 semi-urban and 1 rural) were also chosen from each of the selected 3 LGAs for comparison.

The pilot GEP schools/communities who are beneficiaries of the GEP were represented by 10 teachers each comprising the Head Teacher (HT), Assistant Head Teacher (AHT), Subject Teachers (ST) in English and Mathematics, and Class Teachers (with focus on female teachers and Sciences and Civics teachers). Thus, 10 questionnaires were administered to teachers in each of the 5 UNICEF (GEP) pilot schools in each of the selected LGAs of study, giving a total of 150 teachers. Also, questionnaires were administered to 30 teachers (HT, AHT, English and Mathematics) from 2 non-GEP schools in the same selected pilot LGAs of study. This gives 180 questionnaires distributed in all (both UNICEF and government schools).

The sample size for questionnaire administration was arrived at using the Qualtrics quantitative sample size calculator. This was obtained by imputing the confidence level at 95 %, the margin of error at 5 % and the target population size of 283 to give a sample size of 163 respondents. However, this was increased to 180 respondents because deliberate efforts were made to ensure that more female teachers or at least 2 female teachers were administered a questionnaire irrespective of whether they were subject teachers captured by the study sample population. Three FGD were conducted with 7 SBMC members of the respective UNICEF pilot schools in each of the 3 selected LGAs of study. Also, to get a view of government activities in improving access and quality education for the girl child, 2 FGD were conducted with 5 PTA members of government primary schools in 2 selected LGAs. This gives a total of 5 FGDs conducted in all. The purposive sampling technique was adopted. In purposive sampling, informants and cases are chosen based on characteristics and experiences that relate directly with the research questions or field of interest. It is a non-random sampling technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of participants.

Sources of Data

The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data is the firsthand information the researchers obtains from the field. Sources of primary data for this study include the semi-structured interview of UNICEF, BASUBEB and BASMoE officials involved in the GEP. Others are the FGD with SBMC and PTA, observation of project facilities or infrastructures created as a result of the intervention in the study primary schools and the questionnaire which was used to compliment the interview, FGD and observation. In addition to primary sources of data, the study also

made use of secondary sources of data already collected and documented in project reports, annual reports, newsletters, evaluation reports, enrolment statistics and policy documents in soft and hard copies. Secondary data was extracted from the works of other researchers and used to describe, explain and analyze the study phenomenon.

Research Instruments

Research instruments used to collect data were interview schedule for UNICEF, BASUBEB and LGEA personnel involved in GEP; FGD interview schedule, checklist for observation, questionnaires for SBMC members and documentary analysis. They were developed and used to generate required data for this study. The semi-structured interview method that was conducted was face-to-face and on one-on-one basis which gave opportunity for free interaction with respondents. The focus group discussions combined elements of both interviewing and participant observation. The hallmark of FGD is the explicit use of the group interaction to generate data and insights that would unlikely emerge without the interaction found in a group. FGD was used to elicit information from SBMC members in the 3 selected GEP pilot schools/communities/LGA for the study. Three FGD sessions were conducted with a minimum of 7 SBMC members. This is because, Cheng (2007) expressed that the number of discussants in a focus group should be between 5 and 12 because there is a correlation between the number of people involved in a focus group discussion and the amount and quality of data collected. FGD was also conducted with a minimum of 5 PTA members in 2 locations of non-GEP schools/communities/LGAs. This enabled the study get information about government approach to girl child-education. The FGD was meant to enrich data obtained through secondary sources and semi-structured interviews.

The observation of project facilities created to improve education for the girl-child in the selected GEP and non-GEP schools/communities were also useful tools for acquiring relevant information. Project sites or locations within the benefitting schools/communities were visited to ascertain the actual projects executed by the BASG and UNICEF to improve access and quality education for girls. In order words, the concrete project infrastructures created through government and GEP interventions were inspected and their current status confirmed to ascertain if the facilities so created were still serving the purpose they were created to serve.

Observation was done directly and was non-participant in nature. Observation was done purposively as it will be practically impossible to observe all the selected schools. Observations were conducted in 3 GEP schools and 2 non-GEP schools in the selected pilot LGAs. The following were observed: Classrooms (constructed or renovated), furniture supplied, water facilities, separate toilet facilities for girls, teaching and learning resources (textbooks, maps, charts, etc.), the schools in their settings, school fence, teachers-pupils interaction in a teaching session, neatness of school surroundings and pupils especially girl-children, etc. with the aim to determine whether the schools were well equipped and conducive to improve education for the girl-child. The questionnaire was used as a device or instrument to obtain answers and have the advantages of cost effectiveness and collecting information from various people simultaneously (Patton, 2002). The questionnaires contained both open and close-ended questions to allow for collection of qualitative and quantitative data.

Validity of Research Instruments

The research instruments (interview guide, FGD schedules, questionnaire and observation checklist) were validated by five (5) experts. Three (3) in the field of project management and two (2) in girls' education. Their suggestions / corrections led to the present form of instruments making them valid for use in the study.

Reliability of Instrument

The reliability of an instrument or scale is an indication of how free it is from random error and to ensure internal consistency and one of the most commonly used indicators of internal consistency is the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of a scale should be above 0.7 (DeVellis, 2003). Thus, Values above 0.7 are considered acceptable; however, values above 0.8 are preferable. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software (version 20) was used to analyse the Cronbach alpha for the questionnaires designed and used in this study. The reliability of questionnaires designed and administered in UNICEF/GEP pilot schools has a Cronbach alpha of 0.91 while those administered in government/non-GEP schools was 0.99. This result suggests very good internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire as an instrument.

Methods of Data Presentation and Analysis

Data obtained through the semi-structured interviews, FGD, observation and secondary data were presented in a thematic manner in such a way as to meet the objective and justify or debunk the hypotheses postulated for the study. Secondary data were presented first, followed by interview, FGD and questionnaire responses. In between, where applicable, reports of observations made were also presented. Each source of data was used to corroborate or reinforce the other or even to counter a position. Data obtained through the questionnaire was presented in tabular form followed by detailed explanation (description). A descriptive analysis of the quantitative data in the form of simple frequencies and percentages was employed. Also, the parametric statistics in the form of multiple regressions was used to test the hypothesis postulated at the 0.05 significance level using the SPSS version 20 software. The study adopted multiple regressions because each of the study hypotheses comprises a dependent variable and an independent variable with multiple indices explaining them. Hence the study is interested in explaining the relationship between the independent and dependent variables and the predictive power of the indices in the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Multiple Regressions Model

The variables for government and UNICEF Beneficiaries' knowledge/ perceptions are:

X = GBK1, GBK2, GBK3, GBK4, GBK5

X = UBK1, UBK2, UBK3, UBK4, UBK5

Where

GBK1, UBK1 = Ignorance of the benefits of girl-child education

GBK2, UBK2 = Lack of awareness of girl-child education activities

GBK3, UBK3 = Non-involvement in girl-child education activities

GBK4, UBK4 = Lack of support for girl-child education activities

GBK5, UBK5 = Lack of trust/confidence in girl-child education activities

These are the indicators of government and UNICEF Beneficiaries' knowledge/perception (GBK & UBK) and represent the Independent Variable (IV),

while the Dependent Variable (DV) (Y_i) is Access/Quality of girl- child education. The multiple regression model 5 is specified as:

$$Y = e_0 + e_1x_1 + e_2x_2 + e_3x_3 + e_4x_4 + e_5x_5 + U_t \text{ ----- (4)}$$

Where e_0, e_1, \dots, e_5 are the coefficient to be estimated and U_t is the disturbance or residual or error term used to capture other factors that improves access and quality of girl-child education but not included in the model. The regression equations/models was estimated using the SPSS statistical software version 20 and the hypothesis was tested at 5 % critical value.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Respondents acknowledged that they know the benefits of educating girls and the role of the Girls Education Project (GEP) in actualizing this (In-depth interview, 2018, Focus Group Discussion, 2018). Among the benefits of girls' education is that educated women are more likely to raise educated children and work to support the family. When the GEP was to commence in 2005, community fora were organized to sensitize the whole community about the importance of girls' education and the implementation of the GEP. So, most beneficiaries in GEP communities have positive knowledge about the importance or benefits of girl-child education and they were adequately sensitized about the GEP to be implemented in their communities. There was another follow up sensitization and mobilization of community members through traditional/religious leaders before actual implementation commenced. Therefore, it was observed that: *Due to the awareness about the importance of girls' education to the communities, they changed their attitude towards their daughters' education. As such, parents were encouraged to send their children to school and they participated in school activities for the good of the school and community* (Focus Group discussion, 2018).

The impact of beneficiary knowledge/perception cannot be overemphasized; as knowledge creates support and trust in programme activities. The involvement and support of stakeholders at the community level has been a key to the success and sustainability of the efforts being made to reduce the gender gap and move towards equity in education (Akunga, 2010). Also, the use and consistent reinforcement of key

messages, such as the call that “educating all children is a religious duty, and drawing on evidences from the Qur’an and other religious texts, has influenced many parents to take their children, particularly girls to school” in GEP focus schools/communities.

Properly informed community leaders do play crucial roles in tackling issues of low priority for girls’ education, child labour, early marriages, prejudiced perceptions of ‘Western’ education as being incompatible with traditional/religious/cultural beliefs and practices, and the sceptical attitudes towards the benefits of educating girls (Akunga, 2008). The task of advocacy, sensitization and mobilising community members in GEP focal schools/communities of Bauchi state lies with the SBMC. The SBMC educate parents/guardians of girl children on the importance of education and why-school-aged children should be enrolled in school. SBMCs also support GEP pilot schools with financial and material resources including the employment of additional teachers where necessary.

However, responses from government officials and beneficiaries of government intervention indicated that most parents/guardians, especially in rural communities of the state are ignorant of the benefits of girls’ education and knew very little about government programme strategies to improve access and quality of girl child education (In-depth Interview, 2018). In other words, awareness and sensitization of community members about government effort to improve girl child education was inadequate. This situation raises some concerns about government girls’ education programme implementation because; it is difficult for beneficiaries to demand for education as a right since they do not have adequate knowledge of the programme.

Again this is symptomatic of the top-down approach to programme/project implementation that characterizes most governmental efforts. Although, government officials (In-depth Interview, 2018) allude to the fact that radio messages, community mobilization through traditional/religious leaders and the PTAs are the key awareness creation strategies of the state government in her girls’ education drive, these seem not to be effective with the larger population who reside in rural areas. Also, given the fact that most school PTAs exist in theory but are largely non-functional. As was stated by a respondent *there is lack of awareness about the activities of government to encourage girl-child education in the state generally, therefore it was difficult for people to participate and support government efforts to improve schools* (In-depth Interview, 2018). The absence of detailed and adequate information on government programme to

improve girl-child education places beneficiaries in a position of disadvantage because they are unable to demand for their rights and to make contributions towards the success of government’s efforts.

Knowledge or information at the disposal of programme/project beneficiaries shapes their perception of the programme. It also determines the support they give to the programme in terms of financial, material, moral contributions, etc. Beneficiaries will not participate or get involved in a programme they know little or nothing about which ultimately creates a feeling of lack of trust or confidence in the programme. Also, most beneficiaries have come to view government interventions with a sense of deep pessimism. This is because the government hardly carries the beneficiaries along in programme formulation and implementation. This is in contrast to efforts by the private sector and NGOs. Non-governmental interventions create significant levels of awareness, incorporate community participation/support/involvement for project success. Beneficiaries also view non-governmental interventions as having no bias in terms of ethnic, religious or political colouration. This creates a higher level of trust and confidence in such projects to succeed and achieve its objectives in the long-run (Focus Group Discussion, 2018).

Author Artwork

Table 1: Extent Beneficiaries’ Knowledge/Perception Constrain Programme Strategies

Knowledge/Perception	UNICEF Schools			Government Schools		
	High	Ave	Low	High	Ave	Low
Ignorance of benefits of girls’ education	24 (18%)	31 (21%)	90 (61%)	14 (47%)	11 (37%)	5 (16%)
None awareness of girls’ education activities	32 (22%)	16 (11%)	99 (67%)	20 (67%)	6 (20%)	4 (13%)
No support for girls’ education activities	26 (18%)	7 (5%)	114(77%)	19 (64%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)
No involvement in girls’ education activities	18 (12%)	19 (13%)	110(75%)	11 (37%)	8 (26%)	11(37%)
No trust / confidence in girls’ education activities	29 (20%)	13 (9%)	105(71%)	13 (44%)	9 (30%)	8 (26%)

Source: Field Work, (2017)

Table 1 shows that 18% of respondents from GEP schools rate ignorance of the benefits of girls’ education high, 21% rate it average while 61% rate it low in affecting access and quality girl- child education. Also, 47% of respondents from non-GEP schools rate ignorance high, 37% rate it average while 16% rate it as low in affecting

access and quality girls' education. With respect to awareness of girls' education activities, 22% of respondents from GEP schools rate it high, 11% rate it average and 67% rate it as low in affecting access and quality girl-child education in their schools/communities. In the same vein, 67% of respondents from non-GEP schools rate lack of awareness high, 20% of the respondents rate it average while 13% rate it low as a variable affecting access and quality girl-child education. On lack of support for UNICEF girls' education activities by benefitting communities, 18% of respondents from GEP schools rate it high, 5% rate it average while 77% rate it low in affecting access and quality girl child education.

For non-GEP schools respondents, 64% rate lack of support for government girls' education activities by benefitting communities high, 13% rate it average while 23% rate it low in affecting access and quality girl-child education. In addition, 12% of respondents from GEP schools ranked non-involvement in UNICEF girls' education activities high, 13% of respondents rate it average while 75% of respondents ranked it low in affecting access and quality girl-child education. For non-GEP schools respondents, 37% ranked non-involvement high, 26% ranked it average while 37% of non-GEP schools respondents ranked non-involvement in government girls' education activities by benefitting communities low in affecting access and quality girl-child education.

Finally, 20% of respondents from GEP schools rate lack of trust/confidence in UNICEF girls' education activities high, 9% of respondents rate it average while 71% of respondents rate it as low in affecting access and quality education for girls in their schools/communities. Also, 44% of respondents rate lack of trust/confidence in government's girls education activities by benefitting communities high, 30% rate it average while 26% rate it low in affecting access and quality girl-child education in their respective schools/communities. What this means is that the knowledge/perception of programme beneficiaries is critical to programme/project performance. Consequently, respondents from GEP focus schools/communities have exhibited a significant knowledge and positive perception of UNICEF girls' education activities compared to respondents from non-GEP schools/communities who exhibit inadequate knowledge and not too positive perception of government's girls' education activities in their schools/communities. Therefore, beneficiaries' knowledge and perception constrained the girls' education programme strategies of the Bauchi state government more than that of UNICEF.

Test of Hypothesis

Beneficiaries' knowledge and perception do not significantly constrain the girls' education intervention programme strategies of the Bauchi state government and UNICEF from improving girl-child education.

Table 2: ANOVA^a Result for Hypothesis

Respondent	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Government	Regression	1326.623	5	265.325	147.252	.000 ^b
	Residual	43.244	24	1.802		
	Total	1369.867	29			
UNICEF	Regression	217.438	5	43.488	3.973	.002 ^b
	Residual	1422.879	130	10.945		
	Total	1640.317	135			

Source: Researchers' Computation (SPSS Version 20)

- a. Dependent Variable: GAQ / UAQ
- b. Predictors: GBK / UBK (Beneficiaries' Knowledge / Perception)

Table 2 shows that the Fcal value of 147.252 for government beneficiaries' knowledge/perception and the associated significance level of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Also, the UNICEF Fcal value of 3.973 at the associated significant level of 0.002 is less than the predetermined significance level of 0.05. This shows that the model is significant and that the combination of the independent variable (GBK 01 - 05) significantly predicts the dependent variable (GAQ) and (UBK 01 - 05) significantly predict the dependent variable (UAQ).

Table 3: Coefficient^b Output for Hypothesis

Model	Standardized Coefficient		Sig.	Remarks
	Beta	t		
(Government Beneficiary Knowledge)		.389	.701	
Ignorance of benefits of girls' education	.205	2.108	.046	S
None awareness of girls' education activities	.091	.916	.369	NS
No support for girls' education activities	.022	.192	.850	NS
None involvement in girls' education activities	.495	5.651	.000	S
No confidence in girls' education activities	.224	1.916	.067	NS
(UNICEF Beneficiaries' Knowledge)		34.816	.000	

Ignorance of benefits of girls' education	.415	1.871	.064	NS
None awareness of girls' education activities	.205	.643	.521	NS
No support for girls' education activities	-.284	-1.044	.298	NS
None involvement in girls' education activities	-.036	-.147	.884	NS
No confidence in girls' education activities	.021	.058	.953	NS

Source: Researchers' Computation (SPSS Version 20)

(S – Significant < 0.05 NS – Not Significant > 0.05)

Based on available statistics in table 3, two out of five indices of government beneficiaries' knowledge/perception significantly predict the dependent variable. These are ignorance of the benefits of girl-child education ($r = 0.046$) and none involvement in girls' education activities ($r = 0.000$) and significantly predicted the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. On the other hand, all the indices of UNICEF beneficiaries' knowledge/perception did not significantly predict the relationship between the independent and dependent variables under UNICEF. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate which states that beneficiaries' knowledge/perception significantly constrained girls' education intervention programme strategies of both the Bauchi state government and UNICEF from improving girl child education is accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The null hypothesis which states that, Beneficiaries' knowledge and perception do not significantly constrain the girls' education intervention programme strategies of the Bauchi state government and UNICEF from improving girl-child education was rejected and the alternate upheld. Therefore the following findings were discussed. The study found that programme beneficiary's knowledge and perception significantly constrained the girls' education programme strategies of the Bauchi state government from improving girl child-education compared to that of UNICEF. As such, the involvement and support of beneficiaries was critical to the success and sustainability of efforts made to reduce the gender gap and move towards equity in education (Akunga, 2008). In addition, findings related to the ignorance of the benefits of girls' education and lack of awareness about programme strategies by beneficiaries is in tandem with the position of Ramsing (2009) who asserts that the main cause of failure of many projects is ineffective project communication. Government strategies are ineffective due to lack of awareness and sensitization of beneficiaries by government implementation agencies.

However, the adequate knowledge of the benefits of girls' education by GEP beneficiaries could explain the positive perception and support given to GEP implementation. Moreover, the bottom-up approach through SBMCs and MAs in contrast to the top-down approach by the government creates support and the involvement of beneficiaries which induces trust and confidence in programme strategies as captured by Ellerman (2001) who makes the case that development can only be effective when its activities are owned by local people themselves. In other words, development has to come from within not imposed.

The constraining effect of beneficiaries' knowledge and perception is higher on government strategies compared to that of UNICEF because the creation of the School Based Management Committee (SBMC) and Mothers' Association (MA) structures within benefitting communities guarantees awareness, support, trust and involvement in girl-child education activities within the communities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study showed that beneficiaries' knowledge and perception significantly constrained the girls' education programme strategies of the Bauchi State Government from improving access and quality girl-child education more than that of UNICEF. Some remedies to the challenges affecting girl-child education may be gender-neutral. The state government uses the top-down approach to implement a gender neutral policy predominantly to encourage basic education for every Nigerian child; IDPs such as UNICEF utilize a bottom-up approach to implement gender-specific policies to encourage basic education delivery. In addition, working closely with traditional and religious leaders is an effective way of gaining the understanding and support of communities to support the girls' education drive.

Religious and community leaders should sustain and possibly increase their efforts in enlightening community members on the benefits of girl-child education to remove any cultural and gender bias associated with educating girls.

The Bauchi State Government should intensify her efforts in creating awareness among the populace on the benefits of girl-child education. Every available platform and structures such as the media, community, traditional and religious institutions

should be activated and utilized to sensitise and mobilize all the citizens in the state to be involved in girl-child education.

It is important that the people should be carried along and seen as partners in the quest to improve education for the girl-child. This can create a positive impression and influence the perception of parents/guardians and other care givers to support girl-child education.

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