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BASIC EDUCATION: THE MOST CHALLENGING OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Basic or primary education is the foundation upon which all other levels of western education are built. It is considered basic as it is the first level of education a child receives before proceeding to the next level of education. In Nigeria, this type of education has been made a nine-year free and compulsory for all the school going age children with six years of primary and three years of junior secondary schools. Coincidently, it is the second goal of the Millennium Development Goals for development adopted by the United Nations in the year 2000. This paper examines the importance of basic education in achieving the Millennium Goals for development in Nigeria. The country has a robust and well-articulated policy on education but the major issue has been implementing the policy for desired progress in the education system. Problems such as indiscipline, inadequate access to schools, poor funding have been found to be affecting the provision of qualitative and accessible education in Nigeria. This is in addition to other internal and external challenges faced by the Ministries, Departments and Agencies responsible for the provision and monitoring of the system.

Keywords: Basic, Development, Education, Goal and Millennium

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The paper therefore recommends collective efforts by all stake holders in ensuring provision of quality education for all citizens through appropriate funding and effective supervision for achieved millennium goals for overall Nigeria's development.

Introduction

Global declaration of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and national governments' decision of establishing the Universal Basic Education (UBE) scheme, according to Fasasi (2006) is an intention to develop an enlightened citizen who will be aware of what goes around and be able to derive maximum benefits from his environments. Citizens should also possess the ability to adapt to new inventions and discoveries, knowledge of what goes on in the environment and ability to influence the life of others to become better and educated members of the society. Another important objective which the Government wanted to achieve through MDGs and UBE was to enable an individual discharge civic responsibility competently. The programme was also expected to assist the beneficiary to be aware of governments' policies, understand his/her rights and perform his/her duties as good citizen of the country. However, achievement of MDGs goal 2 through UBE cannot be accidental. The programme's weakness areas have to be consciously and consistently pursued by all stakeholders in general and by the educators at the grassroots in particular. Specifically, the heads of primary and junior secondary schools who are the supervisors of their schools have to ensure that right things are done at the right time.

At the national level, a study conducted by Yahaya (2015) titled 'Assessment of Education Related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): A Study of Primary Education in Nigeria' which objectives was to was to ascertain the extent to which primary school enrolment, completion and literacy rates has been impacted with the pursuit of MDGs in Nigeria; How MDGs' funding has impacted the realization of UPE and to find out the strategies in place to achieve UPE in Nigeria, made an assessment of MDGs goal 2 achievements in

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Nigeria and found out that, that the pursuit of MDG 2 has not significantly impacted primary school enrolment, completion and literacy levels in Nigeria; that there are some discrepancies with MDGs funding in Nigeria, as appropriation of funds isn't correlated to the actual release of fund. The study also revealed the strategies in place to pursue MDG 2 through the MDGs funded programmes being implemented under the coordination of the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and its parastatal. Longitudinal structure method was used in carrying out the study as such collected information covering twelve-year period and recognised the important of achieving MDGs goal 2 for national development. Hence, recommended the increase of funding to primary education and ensure the level of education is free for all school-going age children. This study was able to portray one of the major problems confronting basic education in the country and that is inadequate funding to the education sector which this study also outlined in its findings.

Similarly, Igbuzor (2011) in his study titled 'Overview of Implementation of MDGs in Nigeria: Challenges and Lessons' described development as a means of overcoming challenges of life which can be achieve through Investing in early and ambitiously in basic education and health while fostering gender equity and are preconditions to sustained economic growth, where growth in turn can generate employment and raise incomes- feeding back into further gains in education and health gains. But highlighted some constraints such as lack of coordination between the country's three tiers of government and overconcentration on economic reforms/transformation and neglect of political and social reforms/transformation.

Also, Olabode, Kayode, Hillary and Elizabeth (2014) titled 'Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria: Issues and Problems' defined development as a key factor in every given society and examined the possibility of achieving MDGs is Nigeria which according to the study were meant for Africa as a continent with a bench mark of 2015. They also analysed the situation of realization of these goals in spite of the financial resources committed and measures put in place by Nigeria as a country. Hence,

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investigated the issues and problems of MDGs in Nigeria using secondary method of data collection and noticed that Nigeria as the giant of Africa might not attain the MDGs even if smaller nations (Ghana, Cameroon and Botswana etc) in Africa do.

Aluede (2006) in his manuscript titled 'Universal Basic Education in Nigeria:Matters Araising' examined the issues considered significant in the implementation of Universal Basic Education scheme in Nigeria. The study employed the analytical approach as its method of explaining issues and raising vital questions on the possibility of the scheme being successful in Nigeria. Issues such as various changes witnessed in the education sector and successive government policies were discussed and the need for basic education for all was also highlighted. Also, questions were raised about literacy; enrolments, infrastructures etc were raised and substantively addressed. The research concluded that proper planning and effective implementation are required for the programme to be successful.

A study on the possibility of providing free basic education to all school-going age in the study area (Sokoto state) was carried out by Gado and Alkammawa (2017) titled 'Primary Education as means of Achieving Sustainable Development: An Assessment of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Program in Nigeria' where education has been directly equated with the overall development process of any human society and basic or primary education being the foundation, is necessary not only for the sake of basic literacy and numeracy, but because it prepares children or human for future challenges. The more adequate and qualitative the primary education is given to children, the more equipped and industrious the children would become in the future. To achieve this, the study contended that good administrative planning and provision of primary level of education is crucial in achieving educational development. The study examined Universal Basic Education (UBE) as a programme designed to provide primary education, outline it`s policy thrust and nature of implementation as well as assessing the ways through which the scheme can tackle the educational challenges facing the country, for an

achieved sustainable development. Secondary data was used comprising the UBE documents and various literature written by scholars on education and development in order to analyse and assess the relationship between basic (primary) education and sustainable development in Nigeria.

An Overview of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

Millennium Declaration, (2000) by the world leaders had it that, "We have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to the entire world's people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs" (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report, 2005). As a result, United Nations (UN) member nations adopted eight development goals which were seen as the most comprehensive and most detailed set of human development goals ever adopted by the world leaders.

The MDGs represent one of the most important strategies in the United Nations, to an extend that no other set of international commitments and policy objectives have attracted such strategic, systematic and sustained attention since the foundation of the world organisation. The goals have much to offer human rights, just as the human rights have much to offer the goals (Hunt, 2007:8). There is therefore, more to human development than the MDGs, but progress towards them means progress towards human development.

However, not achieving them will result in immense human costs, the credibility of governments will be lost and the future of international cooperation to solve global problems will be jeopardized. In September 2005, the United Nations General Assembly reviewed the achievements since the Millennium Declaration of 2000, including progress towards the eight MDGs. These goals provide tangible benchmarks for measuring progress in eight areas, with a target date for most of them of 2015. Similar review had been made recently on 20th of September, 2010.

To measure progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, a framework of 8 goals with 21 quantifiable targets and 60 indicators was set up by a consensus of experts from the United Nations Secretariat, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. Table 2.2.1 below shows;

Table 1: MDGs goals, targets and indicators

Goal	Targets	Indicators
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Target 1A - Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day.	Indicator 1.1: Proportion of population below $1 (PPP) per day
		Indicator 1.2: Poverty gap ratio
	Target 1B - Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.	Indicator 1.4: Growth rate of GDP per person employed
	Target 1C - Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.	Indicator 1.8: Prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age
		Indicator 1.9: Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	Target 2 - Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full	Indicator 2.1: Net enrolment ratio in primary education
		Indicator 2.2: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary

	course of primary schooling.	
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	Target 3 - Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.	Indicator 3.1: Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	Target 4 - Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.	Indicator 4.1: Under-five mortality rate
		Indicator 4.2: Infant mortality rate
		Indicator 4.3: Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against measles
Goal 5: Improve maternal health	Target 5A - Reduce by three-quarters the maternal mortality ratio.	Indicator 5.1: Maternal mortality ratio
		Indicator 5.2: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
	Target 5B - Achieve universal access to reproductive health.	Indicator 5.3: Contraceptive prevalence rate
		Indicator 5.4: Adolescent birth rate
		Indicator 5.5: Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits)
		Indicator 5.6: Unmet need for family planning
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Target 6A - Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.	Indicator 6.1: HIV prevalence among population aged 15-24 years
		Indicator 6.2: Condom use at last high-risk sex

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		Indicator 6.3: Proportion of population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS
		Indicator 6.4: Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years
	Target 6B - Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it.	Indicator 6.5: Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs
	Target 6C - Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.	Indicator 6.6: Incidence and death rates associated with malaria
		Indicator 6.7: Proportion of children under 5 sleeping under insecticide-treated bed nets
		Indicator 6.8: Proportion of children under 5 with fever who are treated with appropriate anti-malarial drugs
		Indicator 6.9: Incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis
		Indicator 6.10: Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course
	Target 7A - Integrate the principles of sustainable	Indicator 7.1: Proportion of land area covered by forest

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Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.	
	Target 7B - Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss.	Indicator 7.2: CO_2 emissions, total, per capita and per $1 GDP (PPP)
		Indicator 7.3: Consumption of ozone-depleting substances
		Indicator 7.4: Proportion of fish stocks within safe biological limits
		Indicator 7.5: Proportion of total water resources used
		Indicator 7.6: Proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected
		Indicator 7.7: Proportion of species threatened with extinction
	Target 7C - Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.	Indicator 7.8: Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source
		Indicator 7.9: Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility
	Target 7D - By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives	Indicator 7.10: Proportion of urban population living in slums

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	of at least 100 million slum dwellers.	
Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development	Target 8A - Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. This includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally.	*Official Development Assistance*
	Target 8B - Address the special needs of the least developed countries. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for the least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction.	Indicator 8.1: Net ODA, total and to the least developed countries LDCs, as percentage of OECD/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors' gross national income
	Target 8C - Address the special needs of land-locked countries and small island developing states through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development	Indicator 8.2: Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable ODA of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services (basic education, primary health care,

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	of Small Island Developing States and 22nd General Assembly provisions.	nutrition, safe water and sanitation)
	Target 8D - Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term.	Indicator 8.3: Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC donors that is untied
		Indicator 8.4: ODA received in landlocked developing countries as a proportion of their GNIs
		Indicator 8.5: ODA received in small island developing states as proportion of their GNIs
		Market Access
		Indicator 8.6: Proportion of total developed country imports (by value and excluding arms) from developing countries and from LDCs, admitted free of duty Indicator 8.7: Average tariffs imposed by developed countries on agricultural products and textiles and clothing from developing countries

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		Indicator 8.8: Agricultural support estimate for OECD countries as a percentage of their GDP
		Indicator 8.9: Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity
		Debt Sustainability
		Indicator 8.10: Total number of countries that have reached their Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiatives (HIPC) decision points and number that have reached their HIPC completion points (cumulative)
		Indicator 8.11: Debt relief committed under HIPC and MDRI initiative
		Indicator 8.12: Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services
	Target 8E - In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.	Indicator 8.13: Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis
	Target 8F - In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially	Indicator 8.14: Telephone lines per 100 population
		Indicator 8.15: Cellular subscribers per 100 population

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	information and communications technologies.	Indicator 8.16: Internet users per 100 population

Source: United Nations-Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) (u.d)

From the above table, the eight goals and their targets include; Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty - Halving the proportion of people living on less than $1 a day, achieve descent employment and halve the proportion of people with malnutrition. Goal 2 is to Achieve universal primary education - Ensuring that all children are able to complete primary education. Goal 3 Promote gender equality and empower women - Eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary schooling, preferably by 2005 and no later than 2015 for all level of education. Goal 4 Reduce child mortality - Cutting the under-five death rate by two-thirds. Goal 5 Improve maternal health - Reducing the maternal mortality rate by three-quarters. Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases - Halting and beginning to reverse HIV/AIDS and other diseases. Goal 7 Ensure environmental sustainability – Reversing loss of environmental resources by 2015. Finally, Goal 8 Develop a global partnership for development - Reforming aid, trade and ICT with special treatment for the poorest countries. Notwithstanding, some critics are of the view that some of the important MDGs such as combating malaria and other diseases as well as maternal health are not easy to measure or the measurements are inadequate (Attaran, 2005). The UN agency that runs the programme has no direct data on some of the goals while some are not easy to measure. For instance, there is no enough data even on the basic life indicators such as, birth and death rates in most of the poorest countries. Even the available data for some goals are based on specialised household surveys, estimation and censuses. He argues that, the UN and the donor countries are only encouraging the developing countries on what could not be adequately measured and justified. Albeit, as 2015 is approaching the UN has no evidence that the goals could be accomplished. They are only interested in reducing child mortality but do not care to know

whether it is genuinely reducing. Thus, the MDGs could turn from opportunity to liability (Attaran, 2005).

Meanwhile, the final MDG Report found that the 15-year effort has produced the most successful anti-poverty movement in history. It stated that since 1990, the number of people living in extreme poverty has declined by more than half. The proportion of undernourished people in the developing regions has fallen by almost half. The primary school enrolment rate in the developing regions has reached 91 percent, and many more girls are now in school compared to 15 years ago. Remarkable gains have also been made in the fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. The under-five mortality rate has declined by more than half, and maternal mortality is down 45 percent worldwide. The target of halving the proportion of people who lack access to improved sources of water was also met. The concerted efforts of national governments, the international community, civil society and the private sector have helped expand hope and opportunity for people around the world. The report also lamented that the job is unfinished for millions of people, there is need to go the last mile on ending hunger, achieving full gender equality, improving health services and getting every child into school. That there is a need to shift the world onto a sustainable path and thus the conceptualization and proposing the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Global Goals, which will guide policy and funding for the next 15 years, the beginning of a historic pledge on 25th September 2015, to end poverty, everywhere permanently (UNDP, 2017).

Educational System and Basic Education in Nigeria

Education is a major tool for national socio-economic development of any nation and for individual socio-economic empowerment and poverty reduction. Educational system is vital because it produces the personnel required to functions in various aspect/sectors of national life and development process (Ibidapo-Obe, 2007:1). Education played a significant role in the technological and economic development of the industrial countries.

The philosophy of Nigeria' s education is based on developing individuals into a sound and effective citizen, full integration of the individual into the community and providing of equal access to educational opportunities for all Nigerian citizens at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal system. While the national goals include, inculcation of national consciousness and national unity, inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society, the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around and the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

We live in the 21st century, unarguably the age of knowledge, idea, information, science and technology, with more changes to come in our societies and there is a great challenge of creating and transmitting the knowledge for understanding and coping with a future that is mostly uncertain and highly unpredictable. Thus, for Nigeria to achieve or overcome these challenges and parade herself in a community of the world nations, the path to salvation lies with education. However, in recognition of these enormous challenges, Nigerian governments made efforts towards ensuring that the greater proportion of country's population are educated. Although some of these efforts have produced some positive results but at the same time create number of challenges that need to be addressed if the country is to ensure that children attend a full course of primary schooling and achieve the objectives of MDGs.

As a nation, Nigeria recognized the importance of basic education through participating in various international meetings and conferences where declarations concerning education are made from time to time. For instance, the Persepolis Declaration 1975 – a declaration on people's right on access to litracy through eliminating all forms obstacles and discrimination againts access to education, the Vienna Declaration 1993 – by the world conference on

human rigths, pronounced equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all with emphasis on education as one of the ingredients for human development, and the Hamburg Declaration 1997 - aimed at improving the quality of litracy and numeracy, with specific pronouncement of adult education as more than a right to all and even see it as the key to the 21st century development. Programmes, especially on the need to make the basic literacy and numeracy accessible to the citizens have been introduced in the country, among which is now the Universal Basic Education (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), 1990:27).

Similarly, in one of the nation's policy of entire economic transformation tagged 'National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS)' it was clearly stated that, "the goals of wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and value reorientation can be effectively pursued, attained and sustained only through an efficient, relevant and functional education system" (NEEDs document 2004:35). In spite of this, the literacy level in Nigeria remain daunting. Thus, for Nigeria to attain the desired national literacy rate and overall sustainable educational development, the current education programme, (UBE) Scheme should be re-designed to meet so many challenges.

For instance, Nigeria signed the 1990 Jomtien (in Thailand) Declaration of Education for All (EFA) by the year 2000, and committed to the total eradication of illiteracy. But presently, the country is among the nations with high rate of illiteracy in the world. The nation's litracy rate is estimated to be 57 percent. Education statistics for 2006 shows that only 4.1 million children are enrolled in primary schools out of the 8 million children of school going age. The completion rate was 64 percent while the rate of transition to junior secondary school was 43.3 percent (FRN, 2004).

This was further elaborated by the former minister for education, Professor Tunde Adeniran, in his opening remarks at the UBE mini-summit in Abuja that, our record shows that the transition rate from primary school to junior

secondary school is 43.7 percent. By implication 56.3 percent of those in the nation`s primary school today is likely to grow into adulthood as illiterates and this would further compound the problems of an estimated 43 percent adults who have missed their opportunities of formal education (UBE, 2000: iv).

Conversely, Nigeria launched universal basic education programme in 1979 and 1999. The trend in gross enrolment ratio (GER) indicated considerable fluctuation in the enrolment rate from 1991 to 2000. It increased from 1991-94, rising from 68 per cent to 86 per cent; it however declined from 81 per cent in 1995 to 70 per cent in 1996. Overall literacy rate declined from 58 per cent in 1999 to 49 per cent in 2001. It is aimed at providing nine years of free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of 6-11; six years at primary school and three years at junior secondary school (Mark, et al 2008: 325). There was significant improvement on this goal in 2005. About 84 out of 100 school age children attend school and an increasing number stay there up to Grade 5. Net enrolment ration in primary school education was 84.26 per cent in 2005 as opposed to 81. per cent in 2004. There was also improvement on the literacy rate among 15-24-year-olds from 76.2 per cent in 2004 to 80.20 per cent in 2005. This was attributed to successful implementation of UBE, improvement in intergovernmental coordination in educational sector and the policy environment (UNDP- Nigeria, 2007).

On the basic education information between the period (1999 and 2014) revealed that, 60,188 primary schools existed with 254, 319 classrooms. Completion rate of primary six students was 78% while enrolment was highest in 2003. Teacher pupil ratio ranged from 43 in 2000 to 36 in 2004. Projected adult illiteracy rates for the year 2000 stand at 35.9% (males, 27.7%; females, 43.8%). More than half of the primary school teachers were graduates in addition to basic requirement. More female teachers were found in primary school than male counterparts. Human development index rated Nigeria 112th with a score of 72.0 in Adult literacy rate (Okegbile, 2010).

Tables below contained the national summary of public primary schools' enrolments, public primary schools' teachers and their qualifications, public

junior secondary schools' enrolments, public junior secondary schools' teachers and their qualifications in Nigeria.

Table 2: National Enrolment Summary of Public Primary Schools Pupils by Class and Gender 2012/2013 & 2013/2014 Sessions

2012/2013			2013/2014		
No. Of Schools	**61,305**		**No. Of Schools**	**62,406**	
Primary 1	**Male**	2,595,547	**Primary 1**	**Male**	2,347,235
	Female	2,218,390		**Female**	2,057,173
Primary 2	**Male**	2,344,931	**Primary 2**	**Male**	2,213,893
	Female	2,026,048		**Female**	1,938,705
Primary 3	**Male**	2,182,194	**Primary 3**	**Male**	2,104,496
	Female	1,913,633		**Female**	1,857,993
Primary 4	**Male**	2,096,325	**Primary 4**	**Male**	1,962,552
	Female	1,827,773		**Female**	1,736,326
Primary 5	**Male**	1,918,408	**Primary 5**	**Male**	1,825,329
	Female	1,678,546		**Female**	1,606,063
Primary 6	**Male**	1,778,780	**Primary 6**	**Male**	1,689,671
	Female	1,604,452		**Female**	1,498,836
Total	**Male**	12,916,185	**Total**	**Male**	12,143,176
	Female	11,268,842		**Female**	10,695,096
Grand Total	24,185,027		**Grand Total**	22,838,272	

Source: UBEC Database (2015)

Total number of enrolled children in primary schools across Nigeria during the 2012/2013 academic session was put at 24,185,027 out of which 12,916,185 were males and 11,268,842 were females. While there was a total of 22,838,272 enrolments during the 2013/2014 session where 12,143,176 were males and

10,695,096 were females. It can be observed that there was a decrease in the number of enrolments across the two academic sessions as shown on table 2.

Table 3: National Enrolment Summary of Public Primary Schools Students by Year and Gender from 2012 - 2016

Years	Gender	Enrolment
2012	Male	13,167,067
	Female	11,726,375
	Total	**24,893,442**
2013	Male	13,500,893
	Female	12,657,482
	Total	**26,158,376**
2014	Male	13,255,789
	Female	12,545,408
	Total	**25,801,197**
2015	Male	13,393,310
	Female	12,049,225
	Total	**25,442,535**
2016	Male	13,435,940
	Female	12,155,241
	Total	**25,591,181**

Source: Federal Ministry of Education (2016)

As indicated on the above table 3, total number of children enrolment in public primary schools in 2014 was put at 25,801,197 where 13,255,789 were males and 12,545,408 were females. In 2015 enrolment rate were 25,442,535 where 13,393,310 were males and 12,049,225 were females, while in 2016 the enrolment rate was 25,591,181 where 13,435,940 were males and 12,155,241 were females. There is also an observed decrease in the enrolment rate between 2014 and 2015 academic sessions.

However, it should be noted that the differences and decrease in the number of children enrolled in public primary schools in Nigeria can be attributed to the menace of insurgencies which characterised the country, especially in the Northern part of the country, with intensity of the crises in the North eastern region of the country. The crises were perpetrated by dreaded insurgents group known as *Boko Haram* which started in 2010 and was intense between 2011 to 2015 during which public schools were raided, destroyed, school children were also abducted which made parents withdraw their wards from schools and western education generally.

Table 4: National Summary of Public Primary School Teachers by Qualifications 2012/2013 Session

Qualifications	Gender		Total
Higher Degree With Teaching Qualification	Male	1,624	4,447
	Female	2,823	
Higher Degree Without Teaching Qualification	Male	823	1,876
	Female	1,053	
First Degree With Teaching Qualification	Male	22,914	56,582
	Female	33,668	
First Degree Without Teaching Qualification	Male	16,078	21,622
	Female	5,544	
HND With Teaching Qualification	Male	1,425	2,645
	Female	1,220	
HND Without Teaching Qualification	Male	1,505	4,084
	Female	2,579	
NCE	Male	148,027	324,286
	Female	176,259	
Diploma in Education	Male	11,788	17,704
	Female	5,916	
Ordinary National Diploma (OND)	Male	16,317	23,143
	Female	6,826	
	Male	2,813	4,848

Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE, ACIE) or Equivalent	Female	2,035	
Teachers Grade II Certificate (TC II) or Equivalent	Male	39,525	62,327
	Female	22,802	
Teachers Grade II Certificate (TC II) Referred	Male	6,351	9,339
	Female	2,988	
Below Teachers Grade II Certificate (TC II)	Male	31,399	44,403
	Female	13,004	
Total	Male	300,589	
	Female	276,714	
Grand Total	577,303		

Source: UBEC database (2015).

Data on table 4, above represent the national summary of public primary schools' teachers by qualification and gender in Nigeria. There were total of 582,633 teachers at public primary schools during the 2012/2013, out of which 4,447 hold higher degree with teaching qualification and 1,876 also hold higher degree but without teaching qualification. Teachers holding first degree with teaching qualification were 56,582 and teachers holding first degree without teaching qualification were 21,622, those teachers holding HND with teaching qualification were 2,645 and those holding HND without teaching qualification were 4,084. Teachers who had NCE as their highest qualification were 324,286, those with diploma in Education were 17,704, and those with OND were 23,143. Other teachers with other qualifications were ACE, ACIE or equivalent 4,848, TC II or equivalent were 62,327, TC II referred were 9,339 and those teachers holding below TC II as their highest qualification were 44,403.

Table 5: National Enrolment Summary of Public Junior Secondary Schools Students by Year and Gender from 2012 - 2016

Years	Gender	Enrolment
2012	Male	2,816,746
	Female	2,460,781

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	Total	5,277,527
2013	Male	3,221,959
	Female	2,946,805
	Total	6,168,764
2014	Male	3,311,470
	Female	2,891,624
	Total	6,203,094
2015	Male	3,260,109
	Female	2,920,182
	Total	6,180,291
2016	Male	3,181,810
	Female	2,786,332
	Total	5,968,142

Source: UBEC Database (2015).

As contained on the above table 5, the total number of public junior secondary schools in 2014 was put at 6,203,094 where 3,311,470 students were males and 2,891,624 students were females. In 2015, the total enrolment rate was put at 6,180,291 students where 3,260,109 students were males and 2,920,182 students were females. Total enrolment in 2016 was put at 5,968,142 where 3,181,810 students were males and 2,786,332 students were females. There was a noticeable decrease in enrolments rates across years, e.g from 6,203,094 students in 2014 to 5,968,142 students in 2016 which indicate the rate of junior secondary school dropouts in the country.

Table 6: National Summary of Public Junior Secondary School Teachers by Qualifications 2012/2013 Session

Qualifications	Gender		Total
Higher Degree With Teaching Qualification	Male	2,654	6,146
	Female	3,492	
Higher Degree Without	Male	987	2,190

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Teaching Qualification	Female	1,203	
First Degree With Teaching Qualification	Male	25,275	53,436
	Female	28,161	
First Degree Without Teaching Qualification	Male	5,509	9,507
	Female	3,998	
HND With Teaching Qualification	Male	1,907	3,720
	Female	1,813	
HND Without Teaching Qualification	Male	2,693	4,859
	Female	2,166	
NCE	Male	36,896	71,417
	Female	34,521	
Diploma in Education	Male	2,218	3,328
	Female	1,110	
Ordinary National Diploma (OND)	Male	3,273	4,754
	Female	1,481	
Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE, ACIE) or Equivalent	Male	498	1,108
	Female	610	
Teachers Grade II Certificate (TC II) or Equivalent	Male	955	2,022
	Female	1,067	
Teachers Grade II Certificate (TC II) Referred	Male	521	1,251
	Female	730	
Below Teachers Grade II Certificate (TC II)	Male	3,478	6,121
	Female	2,643	
Total	Male	86,866	
	Female	82,994	
Grand Total	169,860		

Source: UBEC database (2015).

Data on table 6, above show that during the 2012/2013 academic session there were a total number of 169,860 teachers at junior secondary school level in

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Nigeria. Where 6,146 teachers had higher degree with teaching qualification and 2,190 teachers had higher degree without teaching qualification. Those who had first degree with teaching qualification were 53,436 teachers while those who had first degree without teaching qualification were 9,507 teachers, those who had HND with teaching qualification were 3,720 teachers and those who had HND without teaching qualification were 4,859 teachers. Teachers who had NCE as their highest qualification were 71,417 teachers; those who had diploma in education were 3,328 teachers, those who had OND were 4,754 teachers, those with ACE or equivalent were 1,108 teachers, those with TC II or equivalent were 2,022 teachers, those with TC II Referred were 1,251 and those with qualification below TC II were 6,121 teachers.

Table 7: Gross enrolment ratio of primary school pupils in Nigeria from 2004 – 2008

Year	Value
2004	100.26
2005	100.93
2006	101.67
2007	92.90
2008	83.76

Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (2018).

A table above shows a gross enrolment ratio of primary school pupils in Nigeria from 2004 – 2008**.** Gross enrollment ratio is the ratio of total enrollment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown. Primary education provides children with basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills along with an elementary understanding of such subjects as history, geography, natural science, social science, art, and music.

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Table 8: National Summary of Public and Private Primary and Junior Secondary Schools Teachers by Gender 2016

Primary Schools					
All Public Schools Teachers			**All Private Schools Teachers**		
M	**F**	**M+F**	**M**	**F**	**M+F**
283,051	259,482	542,533	221,018	245,447	466,465
Junior Secondary Schools					
All Public Schools Teachers			**All Private Schools Teachers**		
M	**F**	**M+F**	**M**	**F**	**M+F**
152,623	139,457	292,080	104,030	98,078	202,108

Source: Federal Ministry of Education (2016).

Table 8 above contained information on the national summary of both public and private schools' teachers at basic level in 2016. The information showed that public primary schools teachers totalled 542,533 teachers where 283,051 teachers were males and 259,482 teachers were females. Teachers in private primary schools totalled 466,465 teachers where 221,018 teachers were males and 245,447 teachers were females. Total number of public junior secondary schools in same year was 292,080 teachers where 152,623 teachers were males and 139,457 teachers were females, while total number of private junior secondary schools was 202,108 teachers where 104,030 teachers were males and 98,078 teachers were females. In all, there were 1,008,998 primary schools' teachers in 2016 where 53.8 percent were public primary schools' teachers and 46.2 percent were private primary school's teachers, also there were 494,188 junior secondary teachers in same year where 59.1 percent were public junior secondary school's teachers and 40.9 percent were private junior secondary school's teachers.

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Table 9: National Summary of Public Primary Schools Statistics – 2013 & 2014

Summary	2013	2014
Total Schools	61,305	62,406
Total Enrolment	24,185,027	23,129,927
Total Male Enrolment	12,916,185	12,145,968
Total Female Enrolment	11,268,842	10,983,959
Total Teachers	577,303	574,579
Total Male Teachers	300,589	313,836
Total Female Teachers	276,714	260,743
Total Classrooms	376,592	342,303
Teacher/Pupil Ratio	42	40

Source: NBS, (2016).

Data on the above table showed the national summary of public primary schools' statistics in 2013 and 2014. In 2013, the total public primary schools were 61,305 comprised of 376,592 classrooms accommodating 24,185,027 pupils with 577,303 total teachers and teacher-pupil ratio of 42. While in 2014, the total public primary schools were 62,406 comprised of 342,303 classrooms accommodating 23,129,927 pupils with 574,579 total teachers and teacher-pupil ratio of 40.

Table 10: National Summary of Public Junior Secondary Schools Statistics – 2013 & 2014

Summary	2013	2014
Total Schools	11,561	11,874
Total Enrolment	4,253,370	4,434,979
Total Male Enrolment	2,290,478	2,392,750
Total Female Enrolment	1,962,892	2,042,229
Total Teachers	169,860	170,628
Total Male Teachers	86,866	83,125

Total Female Teachers	82,994	87,503
Total Classrooms	66,172	84,342
Teacher/Pupil Ratio	25	26

Source: NBS, (2016).

Similar data on table 10 showed the national summary of public junior secondary schools' statistics in 2013 and 2014. In 2013, the total public junior secondary schools were 11,561 comprised of 66,172 classrooms, accommodating 4,253,370 pupils with 169,860 total teachers and teacher-pupil ratio of 25. While in 2014, the total public junior secondary schools were 11,874 comprised of 84,342 classrooms, accommodating 4,434,979 pupils with 170,628 total teachers and teacher-pupil ratio of 26.

While the information above showed some achievements in basic education provision in Nigerians, one can also observe that more Nigerian children need to be educated. For instance, the UBEC admitted in 2006 that, more than 8 million children 6-11 years were not in school, dropout rate in primary school was 9.3% and the transition rate in primary school was 6%. It also suggested that, for the programme to be successful the nation was in dire need of more than 40, 00 qualified teacher, 336,467 additional classrooms and 336,144 additional chairs and desks to meet the requirement (Bako, 2010).

Although Nigeria's educational institutions in general are in dire need, the most troubled of the three tiers is the primary education sector. The recent statistics on primary education available to this writer shows that there are about 2,015 primary schools in Nigeria with no buildings of any type. Classes are held under trees. The quality of lectures conducted under such an inhumane condition would not be anything to be proud of. With this dismal statistics, the government is still in the habit of allocating less money to the educational sector. If Nigeria's allocation to education is compared with that of other less affluent societies in Africa, the picture becomes more discouraging (Dike, 2010).

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Ogbonna (2002) attributed this scenario to inadequate funding of the education generally and of primary education by the Nigerian governments at all levels. He argues that, annual budgetary allocations by all governments in the country for the past years have been far short of the 26% recommended minimum by UNESCO. According to a national primary education commission study, the federal government contributed N50 per pupil per annum at a time when recurrent cost of education per pupil had risen from an average of N891 in 1995 to N1,030.40 in 1996. For instance, the tables 2.5.25 and 2.5.26 below show Nigeria's budgetary allocation to educational sector annually, from the period of 1995 to 2001 and the comparism with other African countries

Table 11: Federal Government Budgetary Allocation to Education in Nigeria from 1999 - 2015

Year Allocation	(%)
1999	11.12
2000	8.36
2001	7.0
2002	5.9
2003	1.83
2004	10.4
2005	9.3
2006	11.0
2007	8.09
2008	13.0
2009	6.54
2010	6.40
2011	1.69
2012	10.0
2013	8.70
2014	10.6

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2015	9.5
2016	6.10
2017	7.38
2018	7.03
2019	7.03
2020	6.7

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria (2021) Statistical Bulletin and Information.

It can be clearly seen from the above table that, within the period under review Nigeria's allocation to the education sector had never reach even up to 25% as recommended by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to which Nigeria is a member. The highest allocation was in 1999 and that was the democratic transition period, since then allocation to education sector kept on decreasing.

Table: 12: Total Government Expenditure on Education for some African Countries as compared to Nigeria

Countries	% of GDP	% of Total Expenditure on Education
Benin	4.4	17.5
Burkina Faso	4.2	18.0
DRC	2.3	12.5
Cote d'Ivoire	4.8	21.2
Gabon	2.7	11.2
Ghana	6.2	21.0
Guinea	2.4	12.0
Malawi	4.7	17.2
Mali	3.8	18.2
Niger	6.0	18.5

Nigeria	-	6.0
Rwanda	3.5	12.3
Senegal	7.1	23.8
Sierra Leon	2.9	12.5
South Africa	5.9	18.1
South Sudan	1.8	0.8
Tanzania	3.5	17.3
Togo	5.1	16.0
Uganda	2.3	10.9
Zimbabwe	7.5	30.0

Source: World Bank, (2017). World Development Indicators: Education Inputs and Daily Trust (2018) Nigeria's Expenditure on Education.

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country with an estimated population of about 200 million and 6th in the world, people often refer to it as the giant of Africa. But what has this pay for the country which is far left behind among others in terms of financing one of most important ingredient in the its development process. As shown on the above table, Nigeria's total expenditure on education is far low compared to most African countries. For instance, while Zimbabwe spent 30.0 percent of the country's total expenditure on education in 2016, Nigeria spent only 6.0 percent of its total expenditure on education in same year.

However, Nigeria Demography and Health Survey (2013) showed that More than one-third (38%) of Nigerian women and 21% of men age 15-49 have no education. Only 17% of women and men have attended primary school. More than one-third (36%) of women and nearly half of men have attended secondary school. Less than 10% of women and 14% of men have attended more than secondary school. Women and men in urban areas are most likely to

achieve higher levels of education. Nearly half of women (47%) and one-quarter of men are illiterate (NPC, 2014).

Problems Facing Nigeria's Educational System

The Nigerian educational system generally is faced with a number of problems which according to Aliyu (1997) and Fafunwa (1975) include, lack of access, low discipline and low funding.

Problem of Inadequate Access: While much has been done lately to enhance accessibility of secondary schools to most learners, much still needs be done, in several states. Ideally, a learner should not have to walk more than 2 or 3 kilometres to get to school. All Nigerian children who should be in school are not in school. In the eastern (especially lgbo-speaking societies) one prevalent problem is the boy-child drop-out syndrome. The boys, for economic reasons, refuse to go to school, and those who enter primary schools drop out prematurely. They refuse to complete primary and secondary education because of the economic problems encountered in the society. Many boys are found in mechanic villages as apprentices to crafts masters, in various types of businesses, or in other engagements outside the school. In the northern parts of the country, the most serious problem is that of girl-child drop-out from school, for reasons ranging from early marriage to cultural values opposed to female education as well as ignorance. Thus, there are more boys than girls in schools in that part of the country (Aliyu, 1997).

Indiscipline manifests in such areas as examination malpractices and secret cult menace (especially in the Southern part of the country) on the one hand, and on the other crises in the universities has led to "brain-drain" syndrome. Academics drift away from the universities in search of greener pastures in other sectors of the Nigerian economy or outside the country. Problem of Inadequate Funding of Education. The national policy on education was virtually silence on how education at all levels should be finance when all the stake holders in Nigeria's education system are in consensus that the institutions (primary, secondary and tertiary) are grossly under-funded.

Evidence exists on the degree of dilapidation that characterises the primary and secondary school buildings in all parts of the country. The non-payment of teachers' salaries and allowances as a result of which strikes are the order of the day, the lack of necessary teaching and learning materials at all levels of the educational system, poor working conditions of all teachers in the country, among other indices. It has also been argued that financial mismanagement and lack of accountability by officials led to diverting substantial resources from the educational institutions to other ends. The nation's policy on education failed to spell out how to prevent or tackle these problems (Fafunwa, 1974).

Challenges to the Attainment of UBE in Nigeria

Despite the efforts made by the three tiers of Government in Nigeria to achieve UPE there are so many challenges facing this sector, among which include: Poverty is one of the major challenges to the achievement of UPE in Nigeria. For instance, the average per capita income per head is $2 per day, with this nearly 70% of the country's population are living below poverty line (National Development Commission, 2006). Thus, poor people cannot afford expenses for text books and uniforms.

In the same vein, there are problems of both supply and demand for education, because some children are not interested in attending primary school because of massive unemployment of school leavers. They feel they will end up in the same way. There is lack of human and financial resources in the sector owing to increase in the enrolment of children into schools. The number of enrolments has increased, but the government has not made any provision to cater for the needs of additional students, such as classrooms, chairs, tables and teachers who will teach the students. Consequently, they are squeezed in the same classes which make the environment inconvenient for learning. It also leads to fall of standard of education owing to teachers not being able to cater for the needs of large number of students. Thus, on the other hand, the

increase in the enrolment has harmed the standard of education. (UNDP, Nigeria: 2007).

Cultural Practices, mostly affect girl child education in northern part of Nigeria, where some girls are being forced into marriage at an early age of 14 or drop out halfway. This prevents them from acquiring formal education. For instance, there is culture of *Egikpa* in Yoruba whereby a girl child usually under age is given to another family for upkeeps and training or free to men as wives. There are also similar cultural practices among most tribes in Nigeria (Osita- Oleribe, 2007).

Apart from the problems discussed above there are other problems identified by UNDP (2008). That quality of governance is very poor in the country, irrespective of serious effort at the federal government level towards the realisation of the goal, there is no commitment by the other two tiers of government: state and the local governments which are more directly involve, being them closer to the poor peoples to integrate UPE into their development strategies. There is also a very weak monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the MDGs as well as low stake holder's involvement in the programme, like private sector and civil society organisations. There are lapses in the system of information gathering and management due to inadequate funding for data generation and management and decline in aids by the donor countries irrespective of the declared huge disbursement there is no much on the ground.

However, there are some challenges which are attributed to the government's inability to deliver its role to the people to attain UPE. For instance, funding on the educational sector is insecure and contested. The issue of funding of UPE in Nigeria is a contentious one. The federal government proclaims that it spends a lot on education; while the stakeholders in education claim that the government is not doing enough to solve the problems of the sector. But if one considers UNESCO's recommendation that not less than 26 per cent of the annual budget should be earmarked to educational sector in any countries' budget; and compares it with less than ten percent of Nigeria's annual budget

earmarked to education from 1999-2006, one could say that educational sector is underfunded (Akinyemi, 1983, Ajayi, 2007).

Problem of walking distance from home to school: Government has not made any provision for buses or transport fare which students could use for transportation to school. Some trek for two kilometres from their home to school. This causes lateness, absenteeism, truancy and drop out. There is need to set schools which could be just one kilometre from the student's home (Ajayi, 2007).

Mismanagement: At times governments proclaim that huge amount of money are spent on UPE, but on reality there is nothing on the ground, this is due to corruption, lack of transparency, accountability and social justice (UBEC Report, 2005). Inconsistency in policies as a result of political instability is another factor facing the attainment of UPE in Nigeria. Every new administration came up with a new policy which is most often contrary to that of its predecessor (UBEC, 2005).

Finally, corruption is also a major challenge because the funds allocated for the achievement of UPE are diverted into the pockets of individuals. The corrupt environment makes the country not suitable for foreign donors and investors to contribute their quota towards the realisation of the goal, because there is no respect for rule of law and adherence to tenets of contract enforcement. Heavy external debt burden affects the finances of the government and the economy. For example, in 2000, Nigeria's debt services obligation was over five per cent of the GDP, which represented three times the national budget on education and nine times public health budget (MDGs Report, 2004).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The main aim and objective of this research is to assess the rate or level at which authorities were able to achieve MDGs goal 2 of basic education provision for all children in Nigeria, with Sokoto state as the study area, for both personal and societal development. This is because; the development of any nation does not only rest on production in its economic wealth but also on

the smart investment and development of its educational sector. Arguably, education is the pillar upon which all other sectors of the economy rest because no any meaningful development can be achieved without a vibrant educational sector, for it provides the society with experienced, productive and sound minds. Basic education, as the starting point, seems to be in a state of neglect in Nigeria. Various governmental efforts towards providing and improving access to quality basic education have more often than not been abortive. Although some of these programmes and policies may appear to be very comprehensive, they most of the time lack proper implementation.

Previous researches on education and development mainly focused on the educational policy, issues of curriculum and access or enrolments to education with little or no emphasis on the importance and necessity of education for personal and societal development. Likewise, little attention is being given to the importance of quality basic education as the foundation on which other levels of education rest. Further researches should therefore focus on the establishing the linkage between basic education and personal as well as societal development for the fact that basic education is an instrument using which an individual can improve his quality of life and positively contribute to the overall development of society. In addition, sequel to MDGs, which were set to be achieved by the end of 2015, there are new goals and targets tagged Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set up to consolidate and sustain the achievements recorded during MDGs. There is the need for further researches on the nature and performances of these goals.

Thus, for the MDGs goal 2 and UBE scheme to achieve their targets and stated objectives, of which they were set up, various measures, methods and mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure proper implementation of these plans, programmes and schemes for an improved access to quality and free education for all in our society.

1. Collective efforts by all stakeholders in the society namely, parents, teachers, NGOs, government etc in providing education for all.

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2. Creating synergy and collaboration between all organisations charged with the administration and provision of education (e.g. ministries of education, UBE etc), more especially in data collection and record keeping.
3. Using or appointing people who fear Almighty God and love the country (are patriotic) at heart.
4. Effective and efficient monitoring departments in all the Ministries, Departments and Agencies responsible for education provision.

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