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Better Education Service Delivery for all (BESDA) and the Challenges of Improving Basic Education in the Federal Capital Territory, 2014-2024

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Abstract

Generally, the Nigerian education system is characterized by deteriorating facilities and equipment; inadequate textbooks and other teaching materials; poorly stocked libraries, unequipped laboratories, poor administrative and managerial strategies, insufficient or incompetent teachers among many others. These and more are the responsibilities the government sees as being far from what it can solitarily contend with, thereby making a clarion call for external involvement of different agencies, organizations and other partners as donors. The World Bank has been identified to have pragmatically responded to this call. However, despite the role of World Bank through Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) Operation Project in the FCT to increase equitable access for out-of-school children and improve literacy, the level of educational development in the FCT appears to have not achieved desired result. This study examines BESDA and the challenges of improving basic education in the Federal Capital Territory (2014-2024). The study was built within the framework of structural functionalism theory. It employed mixed research design comprising of qualitative and quantitative research methods drawing data from primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire was used and accompanied with in-dept interviews. Secondary sources of data reviewed existing literature from journals, online articles, and research projects. Result collected and analyzed in the study showed that respondents agreed that inadequate infrastructure and learning resources, inefficient budget implementation, corruption, insecurity and population explosion are some of the general challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC. The challenges also include inadequate funding of planning, inadequate planning tools, inadequate educational planners, the poor capacity of educational planners, political influences, political instability and lack of reliable data/information. The study recommends that to improve the quality of education in Nigeria, a favourable atmosphere and a conducive environment must be provided to encourage the donors' full involvement, when the atmosphere is secured and favourable, more organizations/agencies would be willing to come into partnership with the country in assisting her for meaningful educational development.

Keywords: Challenges, Development, Educational, Federal Capital Territory and World Bank

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a foundational infrastructure for job creation, and good jobs are the surest way out of poverty. A powerful driver of development, education is one of the strongest instruments for reducing poverty and improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. It delivers large, consistent returns in terms of income, and is the most important factor to ensure equity and inclusion. Education has long been viewed in the African setting as both a right and a prerequisite for the advancement of the country. According to Okech and Rolleston (2018), increasing productivity, advancing technical developments, and encouraging entrepreneurship are all made possible by the continent's educational progress. Developing countries have made tremendous progress in getting children into the classroom and more children worldwide are now in school. But learning is not guaranteed, as the 2018 World Development Report (WDR) stressed. However, learning is in crisis. Over 250 million children are currently out of school. Learning outcomes are also alarmingly low: seven in 10 children in low- and middle-income countries cannot read or understand a simple paragraph by the age of 10. In sub-Saharan Africa, the figure is even more concerning, nine in 10 children lack basic reading comprehension, a challenge that looms large as the region's youth population is expected to grow by 40 percent by 2050. Between January 2022 and June 2024, over 400 million students faced school closures due to extreme weather events (Sele and Wanjiku, 2024).

According to the World Bank (2020), investing in education is one of the most important methods for nations to achieve sustainable development from a policy standpoint. Realizing this, the government of Nigeria implemented some educational reforms that attempted to improve quality, expand access, and match the curriculum to the needs of the labour market. Although there are still implementation problems, the 1999 launch of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in Nigeria signalled a major turn towards inclusive education. The World Bank Organization is the highest global educational support (GES) established since 2012 purposely to help enhance and fast track the goal of Education for All (EFA). The World Bank is committed to working with countries to build education systems that support quality learning at all levels, and so that everyone, everywhere, has the opportunity to learn. The World Bank is the largest financier of education with a $26.5 billion education portfolio in 85 countries, improving educational opportunities for 305 million students, including 146 million women and girls. The World Bank impacts on education having acknowledged education as one of the avenues for investing in human capital. This role has, over the years, impacted on all levels of education. For example, the World Bank has worked to increase enrollment at primary, secondary and postsecondary levels. Evidently, data from World Development Indicators is a proof to the positive trend in enrollments (Word Bank, 2023).

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

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yet allowing flexibility and incentivizing home-grown solutions (to respond to specific needs) at the state and local levels, the PforR instrument accommodates Nigeria's federal nature.

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

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

Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja is the capital of Nigeria. Abuja is located in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The Federal Capital Territory is made up of six area councils. The six area councils include: Abaji, Abuja Municipal, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje and Kwali area councils. Education in Federal Capital Territory is administered by Federal Capital Territory Education Secretariat. Federal Capital Territory Abuja is home to many educational institutions both public and private schools. The educational system in Federal Capital Territory is implemented according to the National Policy of education (2013). Education in FCT consists of three forms the Universal Basic education (nine years), secondary school (three years) and higher education which include universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics Education, vocational Education (four, six years depending on the study). Other forms of education in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja include adult education, special education and mass education (Ogunode and Ahaotu, 2022). It is against this background that the study examined World Bank and educational development in the Federal Capital Territory (2014-2024).

Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following questions:

i. What is the role of BESDA in improving the accountability of stakeholders such as World Bank, government agencies and school administrators in the management of funds for the project?
ii. What are the general challenges faced by BESDA in its effort to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC?

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EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Role of BESDA in Improving the Accountability of Stakeholders in the Management of funds for the Project

George, Olayiwola, Adewole and Osabuohien (2019) examined and analysed the role of Non-State Actors (NSAs) in public provision of primary education in Nigeria using descriptive and econometric techniques. The analysis demonstrated that the major source of funding of public primary education in Nigeria flows from the Federal Government to the State government and finally to the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA). The study shows that NSAs' activities are mainly the provision of school inputs with little or no role monitoring and management of public primary schools. It was found that the presence of private school inspectors has significant positive effect on pupils' performance. Parents occupation and household qualities especially type of building were found to have positive impact on the pupils' performance. Based on these findings, the study recommends the need for adequate involvement of NSAs in the management of public primary schools and improved inspection of schools as ways of improving the quality of primary education in Nigeria. The findings did not cover the role of BESDA in improving the accountability of stakeholders such as World Bank, government agencies and school administrators in the management of funds for the project.

Guda and Mando (2020) examined politics of educational policies and programmes for the underserved groups in Nigeria. Data was generated using secondary sources. The study pinpointed that the inconsistency in the education policies and programmes especially for the underserved is as a result of the interplay between politics and education. The study identified the underserved groups in education to include those that do not have equitable resources as other students in the education circle and those from minority ethnic groups among others. The study also discussed the impact of politics on educational policies in Nigeria. The negative impact of politics as discussed in the study seems to overweigh the positive impact as could be seen in inadequate funding of education, poor school mapping and others.

It was also observed in the study that most of the education policies especially for the underserved have political undertone. The political class does not show sincerity of purpose in ensuring that these policies are fully implemented for the benefit of all. Such policies are only used as campaign tool. Based on this discovery, the study recommended that political issues on education should be made sustainable by implementing educational policies of the previous governments. However, the role of BESDA in improving the accountability of stakeholders such as World Bank, government agencies and school administrators in the management of funds for the project was not explained in the study above.

General Challenges faced by BESDA in its Efforts to Improve Basic Education by Increasing Access for Out of School Children

Dambo and Ben-George (2022) examined the Nigerian economic situation, the Nigerian education system, Access to education in Nigeria and the barriers to primary education access in Nigeria. Inadequate funding, incompetent teachers, home factors, religious beliefs, poor policy implementation and child disability were identified as some of the chief causes of the problem of unequal access to free and compulsory primary education in Nigeria. The study therefore recommended inter alia, that, Government should provide adequate funding for the primary education needs of Nigerian children, provide enabling environments by ensuring educational provision and improvement of quality of education especially in the rural areas, provide financial and technical resources for development and implementation of an Inclusive Primary Education Initiative (IPEI), for children with disabilities and develop policies, plans and strategies to ensure that Nigerian children who are enrolled in primary schools remain in school, complete six years of primary education and possibly transit to upper basic level. However, the general

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challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC were not discussed.

Ogunode and Ahaotu (2022) researched on problems of public primary schools administration in Federal Capital Territory Abuja, Nigeria and possible solutions. Public primary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja are confronted with many problems. Secondary data sourced from print and online materials were used. The study identified a number of problems facing the administration of public primary schools in FCT and discussions were made on the points identified: lack of data to plan, weak school administrators, inadequate funding, inadequate professional teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities and shortage of instructional materials.

To address the problems facing the administration of public primary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, the following were suggested: increase in the funding of public primary schools, employment of professional teachers, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities and instructional materials, fight all forms of corruption, generate adequate data and appoint competent school administrators to head the public primary schools in FCT. Findings from the study are not sufficient in explaining the general challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC.

Theoretical Framework: Structural Functionalism Theory

Structural functionalism theory was propounded by Almond (1960). Structural functionalism is one of the theories of political science that explains the functions of a part of a social system in the development of the system as a whole. The structural functionalism sees society as an organic whole, with each of its parts working to maintain the other. This is akin to the way of human body work to maintain each other and the body as a whole. The most important features of functionalism are the concepts of structure and function.

To the functionalist therefore, behaviour in society is structured. In other words, relationships between members of society are organized in terms of roles. The structure is seen as the sum total of normative behaviour, consisting of the sum total of social relationships which are governed by norms; thus, the aspects of the social structure. The perspective conceptualizes society as a system or any organ in the body. An understanding of the liver, for instance requires and understanding of its relationships to other organs and in particular, of its contribution towards the maintenance of the organism. In a similar vein, an understanding of any part of society should also involve an analysis of its relationships to other parts especially its contribution to the maintenance of society. Thus, just as the survival of an organism depends on the satisfaction of certain basic needs, society requires that some basic needs must be met if it is to continue to exist. That a structure exists presupposes it continues to function and therefore relevance to the existence and survival of the whole system.

Continuing this analogy, functionalists argued that just as an organism has certain basic needs that must be satisfied if it is to survive, so society has basic needs that must be met if it is to continue to exist. Thus social institutions such as the education, family, health, law, religion among others are analysed as a part of the social system rather than as isolated units. In particular, they are understood with reference to the contribution they make to the system as a whole (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008). The BESDA comprise of different stakeholders organized to see to the actualization of the program. Each stakeholder in the light of structural functionalism is “subsystem” which works for the success of the general and specific objectives of the World Bank. These subsystems must be properly adapted to fit into the scheme (which in this case becomes its physical environment), also resources must be properly channeled by the “subsystems” for the attainment of the objectives of the scheme (Goal attainment). Furthermore each of these stakeholders must be integrated through internal coordination, in order to achieve equilibrium in

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educational development. Each of the stakeholders performs their respective functions for the success of the whole, failure of which can affect others. The structural functionalist perspective provides a search light into understanding the role of the stakeholder (subsystems) in the success of the BESDA.

METHODOLOGY

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

Rakesh's Statistical formula for sample size determination is;

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

Where n=sample size

N=total population size

1 is constant

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

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

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

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

This study made use of descriptive statistics with the aid of tables as a platform to present the research data and also analyze the data that was collected from the field on the subject matter using simple percentage

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and table as the case may be for the descriptive analysis. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative information. Codes were created using letters and numbers to represent the topics and themes.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents. However, three hundred and eighty – nine (389) copies of questionnaire were filled and retrieved. Thus 389 out of the 400 copies of questionnaire were used to analyse the data. Interviews were equally held with officials of the above mentioned organization and the interview results were supplemented with information from the extant literature, including newspapers, reports, and official documents.

Table 1: The role of BESDA in improving the accountability of stakeholders such as World Bank, government agencies and school administrators in the management of funds for the project has not been effective

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	166	43%
Agree	141	36%
Disagree	29	7%
Strongly Disagree	39	10%
Undecided	14	4%
Total	**389**	**100%**

Source: Field Work, November (2025).

For the question on whether the role of BESDA in improving the accountability of stakeholders such as World Bank, government agencies and school administrators in the management of funds for the project has not been effective, data supplied show that 43% of the respondents strongly agree, 36% agree, 7% disagree, 10% strongly disagree while 4% were undecided. It was stipulated clearly that the Government at all levels will support the UBE scheme with the necessary funds for effective implementation of the programme. Unfortunately, the annual budgetary allocations channelled towards education generally, has never met the 26% benchmark set by UNESCO.

Respondent 1 noted that:

> BESDA is helping parents reduce their financial burden. Many parents and guidance could not afford to send their children and wards to school for financial reason. Since basic education is now free through the intervention of UBE, all children of school age are able to enjoy the privilege of sound and quality education. The Nigeria variant of basic education is free and compulsory with the scope of accommodating every child (both those who need early childhood care and those who are of school-going age.) It is in this way that succeeding generations of Nigerians would develop a strong consciousness for education and become committed to its vigorous promotion that would be plausibly attained in the long run. Similarly, a very high or near completion rate of the school cycle as contained in the third objective is likely to be achieved if an effective monitoring

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> mechanism is established. The wide scope of the BESDA caters for persons who did not complete the school cycle at the time they were opportune. This implies that adults are provided for, in fact, everybody as number four objectives reflects. The fifth objective points to qualitative education that would make the individual functional and have a solid background for future education (informal, formal and non-formal), that is, life-long learning (Respondent 1, Abuja - November, 2025).

The World Bank's value-added was both global and country specific. Based on its operations and advisory work globally, the World Bank was able to draw on cross-country technical expertise to support the FGN in strengthening its education systems. Specifically, the project was linked to the higher-order objectives laid out in a number of Nigeria's strategic documents. For one, it contributed to Nigeria's long-term objective of human capital development for sustaining economic growth and reducing overall poverty rates which was consistent with its Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) FY10-FY13 at the time of project preparation. Similarly, it was also well aligned with the Government's plan for achieving its Vision 20:2020. Based on this vision, human capital development was positioned as strategic to the socio-economic development of the nation and included education, health, labor and employment and women affairs. In particular, it recognized that teacher performance and capacity varied significantly across states in Nigeria, with teachers in the South performing better than those in the North, and additionally, that a lack of resources (such as textbooks), poor infrastructure, low levels of financial investments and weak sector governance and management, had all impeded significant progress on educational outcomes.

Given the importance of education for social and economic development, addressing the challenges facing education in Nigeria is a critical priority. Funding is a key determinant of the availability and quality of education, and understanding how funding affects educational development in Nigeria is essential to improving the country's education system. The expenditure on education has been fluctuating with 8.6% in 2013, 10.6% in 2015,7.9% in 2016, 6.13% in 2017 and 8.8% in 2023. World Bank (2023). Percentages of Nigeria's education budgets between 2008- 2023 show that Nigeria has not significantly impacted on education sector to influence national development. Adequate funding plays an important role in education development as it determines the availability of resources for schools, teachers, and infrastructure. However, funding for education in Nigeria has been inadequate, with education accounting for only a small percentage of the national budget. Inadequate funding has significant implications for education access, quality, relevance, and equity, and limits Nigeria's potential for human capital development. The budgetary allocation to the education sector has not been stable, it has been fluctuating, the Federal Government's annual percentage budgetary expenditure on education from 2004-2023 is presented in **Table 2.**

FISCAL YEARS PERCENTAGE (%)	ALLOCATION TO EDUCATION
2014	8.70
2015	10.63
2016	7.90
2017	6.13
2018	7.14
2019	7.12

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2020	6.50
2021	5.70
2022	5.40
2023	8.80

Source: Adapted from the World Bank (2023), Nigeria Education Sector Analysis. Table 2 reveals that the budgetary allocation to the education sector for the past twenty (20) years shows a rising and falling line with the best years as 2015, 2007, 2013 and 2012 with budgetary allocations of 10.63%, 10.43%, 10.21% and 9.86%, which is far below UNESCO recommendation of 26% for developing countries allocation to the education sector. If the government of the day recognizes the place and importance of education in any developing economy, she will accord it its rightful place and provide its gigantic and worthwhile needs. Any government in power at any point in time must give the education enterprise its right of place through commensurate budgetary allocations to execute the sector, and ensure full implementation of resources allocated otherwise its objectives will not be met.

During the discussion, the stakeholders received detailed information about the purpose of the consultation and the BESDA program, including the project development objectives, the result areas, and the DLIs. The World Bank team also inquired from the stakeholders about the capacity of the states to handle E&S issues. Several questions based on the result areas were raised by the World Bank team, to which representatives from the states responded. The questions centered on the capacity of the states to handle E&S issues in procurement, availability of legislations and regulations and procedures for handling ESIA, ESMP, e-waste management, solid waste management, hospital waste management, grievance redress mechanism, gender-based violence and sexual harassment, OHS procedures, social inclusion, among others. The summary of the stakeholder's concerns and responses from the bank team is in Table 3 below. The detailed report of the stakeholder consultation is in the Annex.

Table 3: Summary of the stakeholder's concerns and responses from the World Bank team

Comments and Concerns of Stakeholders	**Responses**
There were concerns about the lack of explicit mention of key agencies such as the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB) in the program action plan, despite their important roles in education.	The was noted.
Despite their inclusion in vulnerable groups, the action plan did not specifically mention children with disabilities. The alignment with Nigeria's National Inclusive Education Policy raised questions	It was noted that vulnerable groups also include children with disabilities and others but none was explicitly mentioned in the PAP.
There were also concerns about the lack of involvement of relevant stakeholders, such as the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) and organizations	It was noted that all stakeholders were involved in the formulation of the Program by the World Bank Technical Team for Education. The

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representing persons with disabilities (OPDs), as well as the omission of key legislative references, like the Disability Act and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	team noted that the disability act will be included as part of institutional framework for vulnerable people.
For long-term sustainability, there was a strong emphasis on the program's full integration into Nigeria's educational ecosystem	The team indicated that it was already the case as the technical took account of the Nigeria educational ecosystem in Program design.
Engaging all stakeholders at federal, state, and local levels, such as national education boards, local authorities, state assemblies, and development partners, was a concern to ensure effective participation and prevent weak links in the program	It was observed that the technical team has made effort to engage all the stakeholders and that consultation with stakeholders is a continuous process.
Need for capacity building for new environmental and social safeguard (ESS) teams, particularly in emerging rural communities and areas with empty classrooms	This was noted and is already part of the PAP
Stakeholders in attendance recommended a holistic approach to program implementation, involving all levels of government and stakeholders and leveraging local partnerships to strengthen accountability and inclusion	Noted.

Source: World Bank 2025.

The Bank utilized a collaborative process with the States during preparation. The Bank team took the feedback from the State preparation teams into account in finalizing design options. When the Bank suggested expanding the school grants to include purchasing of textbooks and teacher training, the States expressed concerns that school-focused implementation and procurement was risky, given the lack of establishment of School Based Management Committees. Institutional arrangements, including monitoring and evaluation, were clarified. Procurement arrangements reflecting State's concerns were agreed upon.

During the delay in project effectiveness, the Bank and CUBE continued to work with State teams to finalize preparatory documents such as bidding documents, training manuals, selection of key consultants and development of Terms of References. When changes in lead personnel were made, the Bank team advised the States that they needed to ensure that few changes were made over the course of the project, and that new staff are fully aware of the project. The Bank expressed concern when baseline data were delayed, but its supervision ratings such as progress on the development objective and monitoring and evaluation were not used to signal its concerns. While the issue of reliable project data was consistently communicated by the Bank team to the implementation unit, most ratings were in the satisfactory range across the life of the project, even though outcome data were lacking to be able to substantiate progress on the development objective and monitoring and evaluation.

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Table 4: Actual Amount Allocated and Actual Amount Released to FCT

Year	Amount allocated	Amount released
2019	1,473,832,845.20	1,473,832,845.20
2020	1,519,884,078.86	1,519,884,078.86
2021	715,074,135.14	715,074,135.14
2022	946,646,664.48	946,646,664.48
2023	1,204,452,353.75	1,204,452,353.75
2024	1,395,784,959.14	1,395,784,959.14
Total	**7,255,675,036.57**	**7,255,675,036.57**

Source: UBEC (2024).

This result confirms the submission of Nwachukwu (2023) who observed that budgetary allocations that are available for educational planning in Nigeria are nothing to write home about. Funds provide for education planning is too small for proper planning to take place. The condition of the sector remains a thing of concern. Under-funding and systemic corruption makes the matter worse. The insufficient funding of the education planning sector stands as one of the major factors working against effective planning and implementation of education programs. This result is also in line with the finding of Noun (2016) that submitted that another important constraint of educational planning in Nigeria has to do with inadequate planning tools. Such as calculating machines, computers, and other materials and facilities that are essential for effective planning. It is equally important to note that educational planners in the country are not adequately consulted before policies that are related to education are formulated. Consequently, there is a tendency for them to develop programs on policies that are not clear to them or that may be difficult for them to justify.

Table 5: Respondents' responses on the challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC

Responses	SA	A	D	SD	U	Total
Inefficient budget						
Implementation	206	157	10	16	-	389
	(53%)	(40%)	(3%)	(4%)	(0%)	(100%)
Inadequate educational						
Planners & planning tools	191	175	8	5	10	389
	(49%)	(45%)	(2%)	(1%)	(3%)	(100%)
Corruption & weak	241	129	07	04	08	389
Governance	(62%)	(33%)	(2%)	(1%)	(2%)	(100%)
Insecurity and population						
Explosion	187	178	9	03	12	389
	(48%)	(46%)	(2%)	(1%)	(3%)	(100%)
Over populated class size &						
Inadequate qualified teachers	200	172	07	05	05	389
	(51%)	(45%)	(2%)	(1%)	(1%)	(100%)

Source: Field Work, November (2025).

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The above table demonstrates the challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC. On the first row, 206 (53%) and 157 (40%) strongly agree and agree to the inefficient budget implementation, 16 (4%) and 10 (3%) strongly disagree and disagree with the variable. 191 (49%) and 175 (45%) associated the challenges to inadequate educational planners & planning tools, 5 (1%) and 8 (2%) strongly disagree and disagree, while 10 (3%) were undecided.

241 (62%) and 129 (33%) strongly agree and agree that corruption & weak governance are the challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC, 4 (1%) and 7 (1%) strongly disagree and disagree, 8 respondents (2%) failed to comment. 187 (48%) and 178 (46%) strongly agree and agree that insecurity and population explosion are the challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC, 3 (1%) and 9 (2%) strongly disagree and disagree while12 respondents (0.5%) were undecided.

On the last row, respondents were asked whether over populated class size & inadequate qualified teachers are the challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC, 200 (51%) and 172 (45%) strongly agree and agree respectively, 5 (1%) and 7 (2%) strongly disagree and disagree with the position while 5 (1%) were indecisive. Teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogical skills played a critical role in student learning, but only a small share of teachers in Nigeria had adequate professional competencies. Teachers lacked the capacity to monitor student learning progress, with a significant share of teachers being unable to correctly add up marks on class tests, turn raw scores into averages and read and comment on bar charts containing information on children's learning achievements. Further, a significant share of teachers lacked subject knowledge in Mathematics (e.g., manipulation of numbers, place values, measurement and data); English (e.g., grammar and writing organization) and Science (e.g., understanding of scientific procedures in carrying out simple experiments).

Understanding the intricacies of Nigeria's educational challenges is vital for devising effective solutions. The education sector comprises numerous interconnected elements, requiring a systematic approach to drive substantial reform. These challenges can be categorized into several areas. One such category encompasses obstacles hindering access to quality education for the Nigerian populace. These hurdles include the escalating number of out-of-school children, low rates of educational completion, limited transitions between educational levels, adult illiteracy, and the provision of education during emergencies.

Interviews conducted with UBE officers and executives of PTA at the schools did not contradict responses of class teachers contained in the table above. The UBE officials as well as PTA executives complained of insufficient budgetary allocation from the government to provide adequate and necessary infrastructures such as classrooms, furniture, learning materials, etc. to make the school environment convenient and conducive for learning. They unanimously agreed that the rising level of poverty in the areas, shortage of competent teaching staff, low value accorded girl-child education, and long-distance trek to schools are major factors inhibiting the effective implementation of quality education by BESDA in AMAC (November, 2025). This finding is in line with the observations of Abutu (2022) who pointed out that inadequate and inconsistent funding, shortage of infrastructures, and shortage of qualified teaching personnel have been the major problems of the UBE program in Nigeria.

This result confirms the submission of Nwachukwu (2023) who observed that budgetary allocations that are available for educational planning in Nigeria are nothing to write home about. Funds provide for education planning is too small for proper planning to take place. The condition of the sector remains a thing of concern. Under-funding and systemic corruption makes the matter worse. The insufficient funding

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of the education planning sector stands as one of the major factors working against effective planning and implementation of education programs. This result is also in line with the finding of Noun (2016) that submitted that another important constraint of educational planning in Nigeria has to do with inadequate planning tools. Such as calculating machines, computers, and other materials and facilities that are essential for effective planning. It is equally important to note that educational planners in the country are not adequately consulted before policies that are related to education are formulated. Consequently, there is a tendency for them to develop programs on policies that are not clear to them or that may be difficult for them to justify.

Respondent 3 stated that:

> there is the problem of dearth of qualified teachers to adequately handle educational needs arising from the expansion of the previously existing educational structure. Most primary schools lack qualified teachers. The argument is, if most primary schools in the Federation lack qualified hands, how then can they adequately accommodate pupils of the junior secondary category who under the 9-3-4 system of the U.B.E. policy would now become integral part of the primary schools? The problem of lack of and unskilled teachers will affect pupils to the extent that they will pass out without being equipped with the required educational skills that match with that level of education. At the end the objective of having completers of the Universal Basic Education to possess literacy and basic life skill will be defeated. Furthermore, some work environments do not encourage study leave, and for some that give such room, often it is without pay or other financial incentives that facilitate furthering of education by staff. This condition deters self-improvement among teachers and further complicates the problem of lack of skill among them. Many of them will thus continue with their old skills, which may not completely meet demands of the UBE policy (Respondent 3, Abuja - November, 2025).

Today Nigerian children hardly aspire to become teachers. This is obviously due to the poor nature of teachers' motivation and remuneration in Nigeria. To say the least, a number of people currently on teaching jobs are only there because they have little or no other job options. Some of them are simply marking time, waiting to take their leave immediately an opportunity for one of the 'green pastures' shows up. This does not exclude those who studied education in tertiary institutions. This makes for brain-drain in the teaching sector and is still traceable to poor and sometimes absence of motivation.

Another set of challenges pertains to the erosion of education quality, resulting in insufficient capacity-building within the existing educational framework. Among these challenges is inadequate financing. Despite UNESCO's recommendation that developing nations allocate 10-15% of their budgets to the education sector, Nigeria's education budget allocation is a low 5.3% in 2023. Additionally, both the World Bank and UNESCO have disclosed that a minimum of 20% of teachers in public basic education institutions in Nigeria lack the necessary qualifications. This percentage nearly doubles in private schools. Furthermore, the quality of Nigeria's education system suffers from deficient educational infrastructure.

Respondent 4 emphasized that:

> Corruption is another monster that challenges the BESDA programme. A number of public office holders in Nigeria are more minded about amassing wealth to themselves than painstakingly doing their jobs. Government has taken giant strides in certain key areas of the educational system, including the UBE sector, however,

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> a lot of mismanagement is observed especially in the area of funds allocated to the programme. Instead of judiciously using such funds to execute the projects they are meant for, public office holders would prefer to divert some of such funds. Some officials at UBE offices, just like others in public offices across the country would delay and even deny a teacher access to services if the teacher does not 'tip' them. They often claim that the teachers file is missing. But the file comes out as soon as they are 'tipped'. This corrupt attitude on the part of such office holders discourage these teachers and create of unnecessary bottle necks and even outright hindrances to the furtherance of issues that will make for the success of the BESDA programme. The problem of general corruption poses a major threat to the present educational policy and must be decisively dealt with if the BESDA programme must yield dividends (Respondent 4, Abuja - November, 2025).

R6 reechoed the opinion of R3 that institutional corruption in the ministries and agencies of education is one of the problems preventing the full implementation of educational policies, especially that of the early child educational policies in Nigeria. Institutional corruption refers to corruption that takes place in public and private institutions. Corruption is common to Nigerian public institutions. Corruption has penetrated into most educational institutions. Funds budgeted for a different programme in the ministries are been diverted into private banks. Many public funds meant for the development of education in Nigeria are been mismanaged. The limited funds provided for the administration of early child education in the various ministries, department and agencies of education equally diverted and this is affecting the early child educational programme (Respondent 6, Abuja - November, 2025).

Osunyikanmi (2018) opines that Nigeria has been experiencing underwhelming development amidst overwhelming corruption, which does not insulate education from this malaise. Corruption allows a high percentage of the funds allocated to the sector to get diverted into the private accounts of public officials. Hence, the amount being spent on education is much lower than the figure in the budget. Corruption Perception Index 2016 revealed that Nigeria had a score of 28. The score ranges from 0 for the highly corrupt to 100 for the least corrupt. Therefore, country occupied the 136th position among the 176 countries ranked. It requires concerted efforts to tackle corruption so that development will not elude Nigeria.

Respondent 5 noted that:

> The educational system of Nigeria lacks sound educational planning. It is obvious that all the forms of education in Nigeria are characterized by one issue and the other. The problem of inadequate manpower in the Nigerian educational sector is a result of a lack of effective manpower planning. The inadequate infrastructural facilities in the primary, secondary and higher education in Nigeria is due to lack of comprehensive infrastructural facilities planning while the problem of inadequate funding can also be traced to the lack of financial educational planning for the entire educational sector. The decline in quality of education in Nigeria has been a major concern due to the rapid expansion in student numbers without comparable expansion in resources, staff, and facilities. This rapid growth has not been matched by substantial increases in the funding of educational institutions because of poor planning in the educational system. Basic education specifically has faced many challenges due to poor planning in the system. These challenges include overcrowding classes, teachers of professional teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate funding, shortage of instructional materials, and poor

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> supervision. The educational planners in the various ministries and agencies of government are responsible for planning the educational system especially basic education. The planning of basic education in Nigeria is a difficult task. It involves many processes and challenges (Respondent 5, Abuja - November, 2025).

According to Christine & Hayatu (2022), proper planning was not done before launching it. With the experience of UPE, it was expected that systematic planning would have been done before the take-off of the UBE program. Analysis or diagnosis of the state of schools should have taken place for guiding the implementation. There was a need to know the position of the basic enablers such as infrastructural facilities, manpower, enrolment, fund, curricular and instructional materials. According to him, the enablers of a successful UBE program were not in place and were unlikely to be in place when the UBE came on board. He identified the most critical enablers to include the teachers, classrooms, furniture and instructional materials and laboratories.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

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

i. The role of BESDA in improving the accountability of stakeholders such as World Bank, government agencies and school administrators in the management of funds for the project has not been effective. The finding certainly concurs with the celebrated opinion of Bolaji (2024), who stated that the World Bank appraisal of the basic education reforms in Nigeria has somewhat reached an overall unsatisfactory outcome. By implication, while the intentions and goals of the policy are commendable, the implementation strategies seem to have been inadequate.

   As observed by Oladele (2018) this dream has met bottlenecks and lack of accountability of stakeholders among others hindered the good implementation of the programme. Practically, human capital development involves various strategies and initiatives aimed at improving education systems, promoting lifelong learning, and providing individuals with the necessary tools to succeed in the labour market and society. These strategies may include: increasing access to quality education, improving the accountability of stakeholders, investing in teacher training and professional development, implementing inclusive and equitable education policies.

ii. Result collected and analyzed in the study showed that respondents agreed that inadequate infrastructure and learning resources, inefficient budget implementation, corruption, insecurity and population explosion are some of the general challenges faced by BESDA in its efforts to improve basic education by increasing access for out of school children in AMAC. The challenges also include inadequate funding of planning, inadequate planning tools, inadequate educational planners, the poor capacity of educational planners, political influences, political instability and lack of reliable data/information. The finding also exposes the state of inadequate funds allocation for the accomplishment of the objectives of the programme, and the desertion of classroom construction works by some contractors after collecting mobilization fees, which borders on corrupt mismanagement of resources, among others.

   These findings are also in agreement with those made by Johnson snd Wasiu (2025) who observed that inadequate funding is a problem preventing implementation of primary school education policies in Nigeria. Budgetary allocation for the administration and management of primary school administration is not adequate. The inadequate funding is the problem responsible for the slow development of primary school education in Nigeria. No wonder several experts namely Sele and

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Wanjiku (2024) insist that the abortion of various public polices in Nigeria is strongly linked to constraints such as untimely release of funds, corruption, and lack of patriotic leadership, among others.

CONCLUSION

This study critically assessed the contributions of World Bank in the development of education in Nigeria. The study identified funding, infrastructural facilities development, provision of learning and teaching resources, provision of technical support for educational planning, policy formulation and educational management, provision of capacity building programmes and implementation of projects or programmes meant to increase access to education services. The state cannot be fair in its role of rural development because, those who make policies by the state represent the state and its class contradiction as well as the World Bank and as a development partner or donor agency represents the international capitalist structure that is responsible for the establishment of the bank in the first place. The roles of the World Bank, IMF and MNCs as well as canvassing, for neoliberal ideology are rather venal where they endlessly pursue their selfish interest to the detriment of the people they claim to be empowering. The whole world is a class entity and World Bank derives it ideology, finance etc from western governments and work incessantly to ensure the further integration of Third World economies into global capitalism even though they hide under the popular guise of promoting community development especially at the grass roots.

The World Bank intervention is only aimed at ensuring the continuity of this process. Most of the international development agents are rather accountable to their donors and used to achieve the foreign policies of western countries. Despite their appearance as agents of socio – economic transformation, they are often co-opted by and reproduce neoliberal states as most of their developmental projects are often designed based on guidelines and policies of the imperialist centre and institutions. All these plethora of contradictions inherent in these agents of development activities have generated much heated debate and at the same time raising questions about their legitimacy and sustainability. In the long run such contradictions lead to social exclusion of the masses from the process of development.

Recommendations

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

i. Improve teacher training and professional development: The government should prioritize training and professional development programs for teachers to improve the quality of education in Nigeria. The government should prioritize the development of a relevant curriculum that is responsive to the needs of the labour market and encourages entrepreneurship.
ii. To improve the quality of education in Nigeria, a favourable atmosphere and a conducive environment must be provided to encourage the donors' full involvement, when the atmosphere is secured and favourable, more organizations/agencies would be willing to come into partnership with the country in assisting her for meaningful educational development.

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