

SDG Goal 4: Out-of-School Children and All-Inclusive Development in South West Nigeria

Amaka Theresa Oriaku Emordi¹, Ibukunoluwa Ruth Olufemi²

¹Senior Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

²Department of Political Science, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Correspondence: a.emordi@oauife.edu.ng¹

ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This paper critically assessed sustainable development objectives in Nigeria's education context, focusing on individuals and the factors militating against accessibility to quality education in Nigeria.

Methodology: The study relied on secondary sources of data from reputable sources, including the United Nations and its other sub-agencies, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals report (SDGs), as well as content analysis of relevant literature from journals, articles, and annual reports.

Findings: The study found that achieving SDG4 is essential for promoting social and economic development through the accessibility to quality education without leaving anyone behind. Also, the study revealed that education serves as a bedrock for life fulfillment and a vital contribution to societal development. Factors such as poverty, child labor, gender inequality, and the COVID-19 pandemic were identified as impediments to accessible education, posing a substantial threat to SDG targets.

Conclusion: The study concluded by emphasizing the urgent need for collaborative efforts among government, international organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure universal access to quality education, especially for underprivileged children in Southwest Nigeria.

Keywords: Education, Out-of-school Children, Goal 4, All-inclusive Development.

Introduction

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and crucial for sustainable development. It has been the bedrock beneath the development of nations across the globe. It has also been considered an instrument to achieve the development and transformation of countries politically, socially, and economically because it is seen as a means to solve the socioeconomic problems of the world (Elujekwute, 2019). Therefore, education is the center of sustainable development. Education becomes a priority in SDG achievement, given that it is regarded as a fundamental human right and the foundation on which to build peace and drive sustainable development. Besides, each sustainable

Article History

Received:
May 21, 2023

Revised:
August 29, 2023

Accepted:
September 13, 2023

Published:
September 30, 2023

development goal can only be actualized with education. Even though many of these goals are intertwined or overlapped, none can be handled without recourse to education, whether at the policy-making or implementation level. Thus, quality education remains *sine qua non* to virtually all sustainable development programs.

Education plays a dual role in advancing SDGs. First, it stands as a stand-alone goal in promoting human development. Second, education is a potent tool for achieving other SDGs by raising awareness, enhancing knowledge, and developing the capabilities of individuals working towards these objectives (UNESCO, 2019). Now, more than ever, education is responsible for being in gear with 21st-century challenges and aspirations and fostering the suitable values and skills to lead to sustainable and inclusive growth and peaceful living together. The realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Agenda 2030, of no poverty, zero hunger, good health and well-being, quality education, decent work, and economic growth, amongst others, will become a far cry from actualization without the development agenda being driven by quality education. There is a growing consensus among countries and people all over the globe that the only way out of the chain of subjections affecting them is through quality education.

However, Nigeria's increasing number of out-of-school children underscores achieving SDGS goal 4. According to a report by UNICEF, Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children in sub-Saharan Africa, with an estimated 10.5 million children between the ages of 6 and 15 out of school (UNICEF, 2021). The Southwest region of Nigeria is no exception, with a significant rate of children being out of school, depriving them of the fundamental right to education and hindering their overall development. The lack of access to education is a critical concern as it contributes to poverty, illiteracy, exposure to unruly acts or behavior, and limited opportunities for social and economic advancement (Adebowale, 2019; Olatokun & Olutola, 2021). The impact of out-of-school children in Nigeria on development is far-reaching, as education is a fundamental human right that enables individuals to live a fulfilling life and contribute to the growth of their societies. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) states that education is a crucial driver of sustainable development, reducing poverty, promoting gender equality, and enhancing economic growth (UNDP, 2021). The out-of-school children phenomenon has become a complex issue that requires a multi-sectoral approach to mitigate the impending consequences to the development of the country.

To address the issue of out-of-school children, various initiatives have been implemented in Southwest Nigeria to ensure that all children have access to quality education. However, although some achievement has been made, the phenomenon is still threatening and alarming yearly. To curb the situation, the Oyo State government partnered with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to implement a program to improve access to education for out-of-school children. The government also launched the School Improvement Plan (SIP) to enhance the quality of education in public schools and increase enrolment rates (Oyo State Government, 2021; UNICEF, 2021). Again, the Osun State government established the Osun Elementary School Feeding and Health Programme to improve public primary school enrolment, attendance, and retention rates (Osun State Government, 2021). In addition, various NGOs such as the Child Life-Line and the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) have implemented projects to improve access to education for girls and other marginalized groups, which Oyo state should have paid attention to.

These efforts culminated in an improvement in school enrolment. However, the results of the initiatives have been limited, with the report that one in every five of the world's out-of-school children is a Nigerian, which means achieving the sustainable development goal regarding education by 2030 seems unattainable. Based on those mentioned above, the paper SDG Goal 4: Out-of-school Children and All-inclusive Development in Southwest Nigeria examined the sustainable development goal concerning education, the impact of education on individuals, and the factors militating against accessibility to quality education in Nigeria. It also provided possible ways forward for inclusive academic development in achieving SDG goal 4.

Problem Statement

Out-of-school children remain a significant challenge to achieving quality education and development in Southwest Nigeria. Despite efforts to increase access to education, many children, particularly girls, and children from low-income families, continue to be excluded from formal education, thereby hindering the development of their potential for growth and economic development. UNESCO showed that Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children globally, with approximately 10.5 million out of school, and the Southwest region has the second-highest rate of out-of-school children in the country (UNESCO, 2020). As mentioned above, the problem of out-of-school children in the Southwest region is multifaceted, ranging from poverty to cultural beliefs and practices, child labor, inadequate funding of education, and poor educational infrastructure (Adeyemo & Abidoye, 2019). Furthermore, the need for inclusive development initiatives catering to marginalized communities' needs further intensifies the problem of out-of-school children.

Furthermore, the issue of out-of-school children and all-inclusive development remains a significant challenge in Osun state, Nigeria. Despite the government's efforts to improve the education system, many children still need to be enrolled in schools. Additionally, the lack of all-inclusive development initiatives in the state has resulted in disparities in the quality of education, access to healthcare, and socioeconomic opportunities, especially for rural areas. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in 2018, Osun State has many out-of-school children, with an estimated 306,214 out-of-school children, representing 14.7% of the total out-of-school children in Nigeria (NBS, 2018). As of 2019, Osun State had an estimated 380,000 out-of-school children between 6 and 14 (NBS, 2019). This number represents about 26% of the state's population in that age range, while according to a UNICEF report, as of 2021, an estimated 297,000 children aged 6-11 years old were out of school in Osun State, accounting for 13% of the total number of out-of-school children in Nigeria. Furthermore, only 60% of primary school-age children in the state were enrolled in schools, and there is a significant gender disparity, with more boys enrolled than girls (UNICEF, 2021).

All-inclusive development requires the participation and inclusion of every member of society, irrespective of age, gender, social status, or location. The exclusion of a significant portion of the population from education has severe consequences for the region's development, as out-of-school children are more likely to be involved in child labor, early marriage, and other forms of exploitation, which further perpetuate poverty and underdevelopment in the region. To achieve all-inclusive development, addressing the issue of out-of-school children is crucial. This requires a broad approach that tackles the root causes of the problem and provides access to quality education for all children, regardless of their background. It also involves creating a platform that promotes inclusivity, equity, and social justice. Hence, this study.

Study Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. evaluate the sustainable development goal in the context of education
2. examine the impact of education on individuals
3. identify the factors militating against accessibility to quality education in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Over time, many research works have been concentrated on the phenomenon of out-of-school children. Most of these research works have examined the underlying causes and effects of out-of-school children on the socio-economy, security, and development of the society within which it is studied. Some have similarly investigated the phenomenon to identify its effect on the education system of countries across the globe, states, and societies at large. For instance, Ndanusa et al. (2021), used a qualitative approach to examine the fragments and causes of increasing out-of-school children in Nigeria, most especially in the

North. They found out that the immense rate of out-of-school children in Nigeria can be traced to cases of insecurity, weak institutional and policy structure, cultural beliefs of the people, poverty, and total excommunication of children with disabilities in consideration of policies. According to the authors, the breakdown of children in the out-of-school set includes children with disabilities, nomadic groups (comprising of pastoralists and migrants), Almajiri students, and displaced people due to violent Nigeria conflicts, mostly Northern states.

Furthermore, Adeleke and Alabede (2022) examined the relationship between out-of-school children and the socioeconomic attributes of their location. Findings from the study show that Yobe, Taraba, and Plateau are the hotspots of out-of-school children, and there is a spatial variation in the predictors of out-of-school children in the country. Poverty and internally generated revenue (IGR) predict more cases of school non-attendance of children in northern Nigeria, while foreign direct investment determines the number of children out of school in the southern region. Similarly, Olaniyan et al. (2018) also investigated out-of-school children and the demographic dividend in the context of Nigeria. Central to these studies is that the unending issue of out-of-school children in society serves as a severe threat to the nation's stability, and this is to call on relevant stakeholders, especially the government, to address the issue to foster national development.

These studies have all examined the notion of out-of-school children in different contexts. However, these existing studies have yet to examine the implication of this issue as regards the attainment of SDGs goal 4. Also, existing studies focused more on the effects of out-of-school children in the northern part of the country, neglecting the persistence in the southern part of Nigeria. Just like other studies, the lacunas left behind by these and other existing studies on the concept under discussion engendered the thematic focus of this study. Accessibility to quality education is germane to a nation's economic and social development, and it is one of the top priorities of the SDG Agenda 2030. It is, therefore, essential to ensure that the enthusiasm of these children for education is intact to sustain and improve the development of a nation in different dimensions.

Theoretical Framework

The five alternative theories explain why some children are not in school from different angles and perspectives. Battin-Pearson et al. (2000) believed that no single theory has been able to explain the reason some children are not in school and thereby compared five identified theories such as the academic mediation theory, general deviance theory, deviant affiliation theory, low-income family socialization theory, and structural strains theory, in order to analyze the different sets of predictors. These individual and structural reasons account for the dropout of children in schools. The academic mediation theory explains how poor academic performance interacts with and affects the relationship between school dropout and other factors. The theory posits that a student with low academic performance coupled with other factors such as deviance, association with bad peer groups, less or little parental encouragement, or low socioeconomic background is likely to drop out of school.

The general deviance theory examines the association between general deviant behavior and dropout. It states that a student who practices deviant behaviors such as drug abuse, delinquency, and early pregnancy has a high tendency to drop out of school. However, according to Battin-Pearson et al. (2000), deviant affiliation theory describes how engaging with antisocial peers affects dropout tendencies. The theory posits that a student is likelier to drop out if he or she relates with deviant friends, is deficient in school social bonding and parental expectations, has uneducated parents, and is from a low socioeconomic status regardless of how well that student may be academically. The low-income family socialization theory emphasizes the student's family background and dropout behavior. It posits that a student whose parents are not educated parents and who does not receive encouragement or parental expectations about his or her educational performance is highly liable to drop out of school.

Lastly, the structural strains theory investigates the relationship between demographic factors like gender, ethnic and socioeconomic background, and the tendency to drop out of school. Dropouts are most likely

to come from a family with a low socioeconomic background and also as a result of gender inequality. Therefore, in line with this theory, every government policy is expected to address these identified factors across all levels to reduce the issue of out-of-school children. However, given the persistence of the issue, there is a need for the government and other relevant stakeholders to intensify their efforts on addressing this issue in pursuit of achieving the targeted goal of SDG 4 by 2030. This is way beyond what the government can do alone; there is a need for joint efforts across all levels of society.

Methodology

The study adopted data secondary data sources to retrieve relevant and related documents, especially those of the United Nations and its other sub-agencies, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals report (SDGs). Also, relevant literature from journals, articles, and annual reports was adopted, which were content analyzed.

Discussion

Sustainable Development Goals in the Context Education

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is universal, comprehensive, and indivisible, with a particular intention to leave no one behind. Education and the achievement of SDG 4 guarantee inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, as it plays a central role in building sustainable, inclusive, and resilient societies. Although much progress was made under the Millennium Development Goals toward universal primary school enrollment, some impediments in achieving its set goals paved the way for SDG 4 to make education a catalyst for broader change toward sustainable development. Education is a fundamental right and elementary to human dignity. While education in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is most expressly formulated as a stand-alone goal (SDG4), there are also a number of education-related targets and indicators in other sustainable development goals. These include health and well-being [Target 3.7], gender equality [Target 5.6], decent work [Target 8.6], responsible consumption and growth [Target 12.8], and climate change mitigation [Target 13.3] (HLPF 2019).



Source: ILO & UNICEF 2021

Education for sustainable development (ESD) promotes innovations in knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to enable a more sustainable and just society for all (Aberu & Lawal, 2022). It aims to empower and equip present and future generations to meet their needs using a balanced and integrated approach to

sustainable development's economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Education is the most prolific investment any country can make towards developing the economy. Education is one of the key pathways through which sustainable development can be secured and maintained. The launch of the United Nations (UN) Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) activated a global initiative to reorient the education system to address sustainable development challenges.

Sustainable Development Goal, 4 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal aims to ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This goal is poised to provide people with the knowledge, skills, and competencies they need to live healthy, productive lives and contribute to sustainable development (UNESCO, 2019). The target of SDG 4 is to "ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes" by 2030 (A4ID, 2022). This target is supported by several other sub-targets, including increasing the number of qualified teachers, expanding access to early childhood development and care, promoting technical and vocational education and training, and eliminating gender disparities (A4ID, 2022).

Achieving SDG 4 is crucial for promoting social and economic development, reducing poverty, and advancing sustainable development worldwide. By providing all individuals with access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities, SDG 4 can help to build more just and equitable societies, empower individuals and communities, and foster innovation and growth. To build a developed world with sustainability through education, all stakeholders, i.e., policymakers, institutional leaders, students, parents, teachers, and political leaders, are prominent elements that can strengthen education for sustainable development in achieving SDG (UNESCO, 2020). To achieve quality education and accomplish SDGs 2030, countries must create a yardstick to assess their present levels of education and use this yardstick for future educational aims, set up school monitoring systems, promote teacher quality, transform the learning environment, and inculcate cultural content to educational curriculum and systems (GAP, 2021).

Overall, the goals and targets of SDG4 reflect a commitment to ensuring that education is accessible, inclusive, and equitable for all. By achieving these targets, governments can help promote sustainable development, reduce inequality, and create a more prosperous world.

Impact of Education on Individuals

Education is significant to an individual as it provides the necessary knowledge, skills, and values that enable people to lead a fulfilling life and contribute to society (Adeyemi, 2021). It is an individual's most valuable asset as it is crucial to personal and professional development. *Education* is a lifelong process that helps individuals to grow intellectually, emotionally, and socially. It enhances critical thinking and decision-making skills essential for personal growth and development. It is often seen as a means of social mobility, which provides an individual from a disadvantaged background with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed and achieve their full potential. It serves as an escape route from the cycle of poverty (UNESCO, 2021).

Furthermore, education broadens an individual's perspectives, exposes them to new ideas, and fosters positive attitudes, values, and beliefs. It serves as a platform for training and enlightenment of individuals to increase their knowledge of the world in which they live. It is the process of gaining vital competencies, knowledge, behaviors, and morals that are required by an individual to be responsible while contributing to the development of society. Such knowledge is necessary for the improvement of living conditions in the society. Education can also serve as a socializing channel that equips an individual with the necessary tools such as skills, attitude, cultural values, language, social skills, and privileges required to advocate for themselves, enable them to conform to the demands of the society they find themselves, most especially in this technological world (UNESCO, 2019). Moreover, education enhances resilience in the face of global challenges, such as climate change and pandemics, by promoting sustainable behavior and problem-solving skills (UNESCO, 2020). In summary, education plays a crucial

role in shaping an individual's personal and professional development, enabling them to achieve their goals, contribute to society, and live a fulfilled life.

Factors Militating against Accessibility to Quality Education in Nigeria

Despite the transformative potential of education, numerous barriers impede access to quality education in Nigeria, particularly in the Southwest region. Scholars like Adeyemi Adeyinka (2020) argued that economic factors such as poverty and unemployment make it difficult for many families to cater to their children's education needs. According to UNICEF (2021), more than 10 million children in Nigeria are out of school, and poverty is the main reason. Low-income families cannot afford school fees, uniforms, and books, essential for accessing quality education. In addition, low wages and high unemployment rates make it difficult for parents to provide for their children's education. A report from the World Bank shows that Nigeria is one of the poorest countries in the world, with a poverty rate of 40% in 2019 (World Bank, 2021).

Furthermore, social factors such as gender discrimination, early marriage, and cultural beliefs also limit Nigeria's education access. UNICEF (2021) maintained that girls are often victims of marginalization in Nigeria, and their education is not prioritized, especially in the country's northern region. Early marriage and cultural beliefs that girls should be married off at a young age prevent them from continuing their education. Also, children engaged in labor activities may not have the opportunity to attend school regularly or may not be able to attend school at all, which may lead to limited access to education. The International Labor Organization (ILO) noted that child labor significantly affects school dropout rates in many countries worldwide (ILO, 2019). This, no doubt, can affect such children's physical and mental health and discourage them from academic work in school.

Inadequate government policies and regulations also hinder access to quality education in Nigeria is the need for adequate policies and regulations. Oladipo (2018) argued that the absence of these policies and regulations contributes to the marginalization of specific learners, accounting for educational inequality. Hence, the need for policies that address issues of gender discrimination to promote equal access to education and inclusive education is imperative for the advancement of quality education in Nigeria. To this, The Nigerian government's allocation to education is meager, which significantly impacts the quality of education. According to a UNESCO report, Nigeria spends only 7.4% of its annual budget on education, which is below the recommended benchmark of 26% (UNESCO, 2020). This has led to inadequate funding of schools, which results in a lack of qualified teachers, insufficient teaching materials, and inadequate infrastructure.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted education globally, significantly affecting students, teachers, and educational systems. Many schools were closed across various countries worldwide, disrupting students' education. According to UNESCO, at the height of the pandemic, over 1.5 billion students worldwide, Nigeria inclusive, were affected by school closures (UNESCO, 2021). The pandemic has also increased dropout rates, particularly among disadvantaged and marginalized students. Also, the immense rate of insecurity in the country cannot be left out while examining the issue of out-of-school children, as it is a significant barrier to accessing quality education in the affected areas. According to a report by Amnesty International, more than 1,100 schools have been attacked by armed groups in Nigeria since 2013, leading to the death of hundreds of students and teachers and the closure of many schools (Amnesty International, 2021). Most parents in the affected may feel reluctant to send their children to schools for their children's safety and mental health.

Way Forward for Inclusive Academic Development

- Government should formulate and implement policies and laws that will promote inclusive education regardless of the student's ability or social status. This should include laws that protect the rights of a child, children with disabilities, and female children in the country. It should also include policies that promote inclusive practices in schools.

- Families, community leaders, and other stakeholders should be involved in decision-making. Avenue for feedback and dialogue should be noticed.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of inclusive education policies and practices should be done often to identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- There is a need to improve access to education for all students, including those from marginalized and underrepresented communities. It includes providing access to education in rural areas, as well as providing access to education for female children.
- Appropriate infrastructure and learning facilities should be made accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. Various governments at all levels should see the need for investment in infrastructure development that allows students a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- The government should collaborate with international organizations, NGOs, and other relevant stakeholders to promote inclusive education.
- International organizations can channel their efforts into supporting the marginalized groups in Nigeria to ensure equal access to quality education.
- International organizations can also partner with local or community-based organizations to implement educational programs that enhance inclusiveness and quality education, especially in rural areas.

Conclusion

The issue of out-of-school children in Southwest Nigeria is a critical challenge that must be addressed to achieve all-inclusive development. The consequence of the inaccessibility of a child to quality education can be devastating, not only for the child but also for society. It is germane to ensure that every child has access to education, regardless of background or circumstances. To achieve this, it is essential for the government, international organizations, stakeholders, and civil society organizations to continually work hand-in-hand towards developing an inclusive education system that addresses the needs of all children through efforts and investment in the sector. It is also essential to prioritize the education of all children in Southwest Nigeria through the development of an inclusive education system that engenders equal and equitable access to quality education in order to ensure that every child has the opportunity to attain the peak of their potential and also contribute to the development of the society as a whole. All of these are to ensure that the goals and targets of SDG as regards education are achieved before the end of 2030 to save the country from the daunting state of national development.

Acknowledgements

None

Conflict of Interest

Authors have no conflict of interest.

Funding Source

The authors received no funding to conduct this study.

ORCID iDs

Amaka Theresa Oriaku Emordi ¹  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1059-9219>

Ibukunoluwa Ruth Olufemi ²  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5700-6134>

References

- A4ID. (2022). SDG 4: Quality Education. Retrieved from https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resources-attachments/A4ID_SDG%20Legal%20Guide_SDG4_Quality%20education_February2022_EN.pdf
- Aberu, F., & Lawal, Y.O. (2022). The Relationship between Education and Sustainable Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration, Finance and Law*, 24(1), pp.7-10.
- Adebowale, S. A. (2019). Access to basic education for out-of-school children in Nigeria: The implications for the realization of the sustainable development goals. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 10(7), 123-130.
- Adeleke, R., & Alabede, O. (2022). Geographical Determinants and Hotspots of Out of School Children in Nigeria. *Open Education Studies*, 4, 345-355.
- Adeyemi, T. O. (2021). Education and Sustainable Development: Nigeria in Focus. *International Journal of Education, Learning, and Training*, 6(2), 115-122.
- Adeyemi, T., & Adeyinka, T. (2020). Financing education in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 10(2), 1-6
- Adeyemo, D. O., & Abidoye, A. R. (2019). Exploring the challenges of education in Nigeria: Implications for national development. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 7(10), 346-352.
- Amnesty International. (2021). Nigeria: End to school attacks by armed groups is a must. Retrieved from <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2021/03/nigeria-end-to-school-attacks-by-armed-groups-is-a-must/>
- Battin-Pearson, S., Michael, D., Robert, D., Karl, G., Richard, F., & David, J. (2000). Predicators of Early High School Dropout: A Test of Five Theories. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92(3), 568-582.
- Elujekwute, E.C. (2019). *Educational Management; Concept and Theories*. Makurdi: Destiny Ventures.
- GAP. (2021). Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (2015-2019).
- HLPF. (2019). High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Retrieved from <https://www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2019>
- International Labor Organization. (2019). Global Estimates of Child Labor: Results and trends, 2012-2016. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5?groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575499.pdf
- National Bureau of Statistics. (2018). Education Statistics of Nigeria 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/download/777>
- National Bureau of Statistics. (2019). National personnel audit report of public and private schools: Basic Education Census 2018/2019. Retrieved from <https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/download/815>
- Ndanusa, M. M., Abayomi, Q. K., & Harada, Y. (2021). Examining the fragments and causes of increasing out-of-school children in Nigeria. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 13(4), 66-73.
- Nwangwu, O., Onuorah, A. E., & Otegbulu, R. I. (2012). Appraisal of Out-of-School Children and the Implication for National Development. *The Nigerian Academic Forum*, 23(1), 1-5.

- Oladipo, F.O. (2018). The Challenges of education in Nigeria and its prospects. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 8(1), 1-12.
- Olaniyan, O., Lawanson, A. O., Olasehinde. N., & Soyibo, A. (2018). "Out of School Children and Demographic Dividend in Nigeria. Available on <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347433847>.
- Olatokun, W. M., & Olutola, A. O. (2021). Out-of-school children and development in Southwest, Nigeria: Implications for quality education. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 10(6), 2746-2761.
- Osun State Government. (2021). Osun elementary school feeding and health programme. Retrieved from <https://osun.gov.ng/osun-elementary-school-feeding-and-health-programme/>
- Oyo State Government. (2021). School improvement plan. Retrieved from <https://www.oyostate.gov.ng/school-improvement-plan/>
- UNDP. (2021). Education for sustainable development. Retrieved from <https://www.undp.org/education-sustainable-development>
- UNESCO. (2019). Cali Commitment to Equity and Inclusion in Education. Retrieved from <https://unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf000030910>
- UNESCO. (2020). Education for Sustainable Development: A Roadmap. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, France. Pp.66.
- UNESCO. (2020). Education in Nigeria. <https://en.unesco.org/countries/nigeria>
- UNESCO. (2021). COVID-19 impact on education. Retrieved from <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>
- UNESCO. (2021). Education in Africa: Progress and Challenges. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf000377049>
- UNICEF. (2021). Nigeria Education: Overview. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/education>
- UNICEF. (2021). UNICEF Nigeria Humanitarian Situation Report No.5. retrieved from <https://www.unicef.orgg/nigeria/reports/unicef-nigeria-humanitarian-situation-report-no-5>
- World Bank. (2021). Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2020: Reversals of Fortune. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-and-shared-prosperity>