

Tackling the menace of out-of-school children in rural areas through a media integration approach in Oyo State in Nigeria

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James, Adebayo John

Department of Mass Communication

Faculty of Social Sciences,

Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria

E-mail: adebayo.james@fuoye.edu.ng

Phone No: +2348038189936

Raman Olaniyan, Abubakri PhD

Senior Lecturer,

Department of Mass Communication

Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

Email: abubakriramanintegrity@gmail.com

Phone No: +2348034664305

Abstract

This study examined the menace of out-of-school children in rural areas of Oyo State. Mass media have failed social responsibility tests with regard to their educational functions, not only in the rural areas, but also in the urban centres. This study assessed how media integration approach could be used to tackle the menace of out-of-school children, especially in rural areas of Oyo State. The study adopted qualitative method. In-depth interview was adopted for this study. Interview schedule was used to collect relevant data from the interviewees. Findings showed that radio is the most suitable medium that could be fused with other indigenous communication media to accomplish enrollment campaign objectives in the rural areas of Oyo State. Findings also

showed that, although indigenous communication media hardly go beyond human bearers in the societies where they are used, they are culture-based, more effective and more credible than modern media of mass communication. Therefore, this study recommended the initiation and use of community-based radio and indigenous communication media to enlighten parents to enroll their children in schools.

Keywords: *Community-based radio, Indigenous communication media, Mass communication Media integration approach, Out-of-school children*

Introduction

Across sub-Sahara Africa, as Huntington et al., (2023) posit, 98 million children are illiterate, innumerate, and do not attend schools. Jabaar (2021) citing Global Education Monitoring Group (2017) asserts that Africa is a home to one third of all the children who are not in school. UNICEF (2022) report shows that among children under five years of age in Nigeria, six out of ten are multidimensionally poor. UNESCO report (2005) shows that 30% of the children in the rural areas of Nigeria are out of school, while 18% of the children in the urban centres of Nigeria are not enrolled in schools. Insecurity, especially in northern Nigeria, coupled with a rising economic misery has impeded efforts of policy makers at state and national levels to address the issue of out-of-school children in the region. As UNICEF (2022) report shows, the out-of-school rate for primary level education has witnessed limited progress from 27.2 per cent in 2016/17 to 25.6 per cent in 2021. According to UNICEF (2022), 25.3 per cent of children of primary and lower secondary school age are out of school. Jabaar (2021) avers that education is one of the fundamental rights recognised by national and international instruments. Access to education by children is limited in many developing nations, due to certain factors among which are issues of corruption, interest and parental preferences and influences. Education is a basic tool of human development, and a crucial instrument for creating informed minds. Education reforms character and refines the minds of human beings, irrespective of their age and social status. The issue of out-of-school children has attracted the attention of local, state and central government as well as development partners such as African Union, Economic Community of African States (ECOWAS), United Nations (UN), United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Children

Education Fund (UNICEF) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) at one time or the other. Despite repeated calls by relevant stakeholders, as Dyer and Echessa (2019) say, for educational system that responds swiftly to the needs of the children, little progress has been attained.

Media integration is concerned with the policy of fusing two media systems to evolve a mutually beneficial mix. It is a media system in which the indigenous communication system fuse into the western developed communication system to bring a more robust and effective communication system for the society. It is a media system in which a more dominant system does not dislodge or weaken the less dominant one. As James, Bello and Olatunji (2020) posit, media integration is a fusion between indigenous communication system and western developed print and electronic media system to create a more robust and effective information dissemination system in rural and urban sectors of Africa. Media integration, as James (2019) avers, enables a hitch-free information flow and effective accomplishments of communication objectives in the society. Several studies have established that ethno-communication media are indispensable in the mobilisation, entertainment, information, orientation, and enlightenment of people, most especially those living in the rural areas of Nigeria. Ethno-communication media are culture-based media and have the capability to speak the local language of the people. The ethno-communication media, unlike western-developed ones, are not owned by the government or the private individuals to influence their information gathering, processing and dissemination system (James, Bello and Olatunji, 2020). However, in spite of the seeming efficiencies of ethno-communication media, their messages hardly go beyond human bearers. African communication scholars have long established that media integration is the answer to all development challenges witnessed in many societies of Africa. Ethno-communication media are more effective in the rural areas of Nigeria because of its high credibility among the locals. As a convention, the ethno-communication media deploy credible individuals in the information and dissemination system, contributing to credibility of the information disseminated in the process. Several research findings have long established that the fusion of the ethno-communication media system such as traditional newsperson, opinion leaders, religious and traditional leaders and modern media of mass communication such as radio, television, newspaper, magazine, internet, and billboard is crucial on the march to attaining developmental potentials of many developing

societies of Africa (James, 2019). Although, the modern media of mass communication are urban-centric and hardly reflect the unique traditions of the local dwellers, integrating both indigenous and modern media ensures robust information delivery system to both the rural and urban sectors of the society (James, Bello and Olatunji, 2020).

Poor school enrollment and out-of-school children have impacted the policies of most government in Nigeria, and by extension, Africa. Out of school children have become a critical challenge to government at all levels in Africa. Not only that they form the latest security threats, but also are willing tools to be recruited by violent groups, especially the members of Boko Haram sect operating majorly in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. Several reasons account for non-enrollment of children in schools. Some of which, as Adeleke and Alabede (2022) posit, are education funding issues, dilapidated school buildings, remote locations of the schools, illiteracy on the part of the parents, diseases, poverty, government policies, lack of adequate teaching personnel, unqualified teachers, and disabilities on the part of the prospective pupils. Millions of Nigerian children of school age, but are not in school are considered as out-of-school children. As Ogunode and Adanna (2022) maintain, the population of out-of-school children continue to soar every year in Nigeria. Enlightenment campaigns, as Ogunode et al., (2022) maintain, represent enrolment information disseminated by both media of mass communication and indigenous communication media system to improve the level of enrolment in schools by children. Enrollment in urban centres has been mostly adequate due to the fact that urban dwellers have unhindered access to means of enlightenment such as radio, newspaper and television for the kids' enrolment in schools. Adeleke and Alabede (2022) aver that the rural areas of developing nations like Nigeria account for a larger proportion of out-of-school children. Thus, what Factors impede access to media enlightenment campaigns about school enrollment in the rural areas of Oyo State, and in what ways could a media integration approach help empower parents in the rural areas with regard to enlightenment campaigns on school enrollment programmes? This is called systematic and empirical investigations.

Out-of-School Children

Oyo State, as one of the viable, economically and educationally progressive states in Nigeria makes primary and secondary education

compulsory for the children. Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children, and the population of out-of-school girl child accounts for sixty percent of this number (Omang et al., 2022). Out-of-school children are children of school age, who are able, healthy, and mentally fit to be in school, but are not enrolled in a formal school setting. Out-of-school children are pupils who have never been privileged to enroll in schools. According to UNICEF-Ghana (2015) out-of-school children are children old enough to be enrolled in primary school or lower secondary schools, but are out of school. Although, Moslem parents are inclined to sponsor their wards to Quranic schools to acquire Quranic education, formal education is also compulsory for the children of school age in the state.

Media Integration Approach and Out-of-School Children in Oyo State

Education is the bedrock of social advancement and national progress (Zhang, 2022). It is a basic way to promote the quality of the citizenry and improve all-round development of the populace (Zhang, 2022). The new features of local media in the era of media integration are manifested in contents, forms, application, and communication. Media integration, as James, Olatunji and Adunola (2020) maintain, involves using radio, television, newspaper, magazine, and the blend of indigenous communication media such as the traditional newsperson, market square meeting, traditional rulers and religious leaders in the conception and execution of campaigns aimed at keeping out-of-school children in school. Media integration has “effectivised” enrollment campaigns in Oyo State (Abuya et al., 2013). The application of conventional media to reach parents in rural areas, as Heryatun and Septiana (2023) note, posit has not been effective in the enrollment campaigns in Oyo State, especially parents who occupy the far-flung places of rural areas of Oyo state. Media integration represents combining two media systems, the locally developed ones and western developed media systems, to attain certain communication objectives in a society. Media integration could involve trado-tronic media system or trado-modern media system. Trado-tronic media system, as James, Olatunji and Adunola (2020) aver, implies the fusion of television and radio with the indigenous communication system to accomplish a more robust and effective communication order for the society. The trado-modern media system, as James (2019) notes, presupposes integrating both the print and

electronic media with the indigenous communication system in order to initiate a more effective information delivery system for the society. Studies have long established that mass media are urban-centric, and dread to tread remote rural geographical spaces that indigenous communication system and radio can effectively tread.

Oyo state has 33 Local Government Areas with a greater percentage of the population living in remote rural areas (James, 2019). Studies have shown that out-of-school children in rural areas of Oyo State outnumber the ones in urban centres (Ogunode et al., 2022). Several factors, as Ogunode et al., (2022) maintain, are responsible for prevalent out of school children in the rural areas of Nigeria, chiefs of which are access to media of enlightenment, availability of teachers and social facilities.

Indigenous Communication System and Out-of-School Children in Oyo State

Indigenous communication system, as Cited by Aina (2003) in Wilson (1999), is the process of information dissemination, entertainment and education used in the societies which have not been seriously dislocated by western culture or any other external influence. James (2019) maintains that indigenous communication system is a form of communication that has served the information and communication purposes or needs of a community from time immemorial. Studies have shown that mass media of communication have failed the social responsibility test with regard to issues of out-of-school children in rural areas of Oyo State. As Ogunode et al., (2022) posit, out-of-school children in the rural areas of Nigeria outnumber those in the urban centres, due to failures of mass media to orientate and educate the parents about the essence of primary school education. Scholars of development communication have affirmed the indispensability of indigenous media in the disseminations of relevant information in the rural areas of developing nations like Nigeria. While the conventional media of mass communication such as radio, television, newspaper, magazine, and billboard are more effective in the urban areas, and less effective in the rural areas of Nigeria, indigenous communication media are more effective in the rural areas, but less effective in the urban centres. Scholars have now suggested the integration of conventional media of mass communication and indigenous communication media to accomplish certain communication objectives.

Barriers to School Enrollment in Nigeria

There are two major barriers that predominantly influence the acquisition of primary and secondary education among children in Nigeria, and Africa by extension. Demand or Primary Barrier and supply or Secondary Barriers are known to affect children on the march to acquire formal or western form of education in Nigeria.

Demand or Primary Barriers

Poor economic status has compelled parents to enroll their children in farming, bricklaying and other menial and body draining jobs unfit for children of school age. Butt et al., (2020) aver that children support their parents in their earning for living, and therefore they are involved in several activities such as farming, trading and hawking, preventing the children's enrollment in schools. Parents, especially in the rural areas, are of the belief that making money is the main objective of either going to schools or engaging in menial jobs.

Low Household Incomes

Correlation between education and poverty cannot be ruled out (Kamta, et al., 2020). In spite of school feeding programmes of the Federal Government of Nigeria to reduce short-term hunger and encourage enrollment in primary and lower secondary schools, as Yussif et al., (2022) aver, the menace of out-of-school children persists, especially in northern Nigeria. One of the major constraints to educating children by parents is the menace of poverty. Parents, as Butt et al., (2020) maintain, force their children to complement the financial status of the family by sending them to work on the farm or engaging in street vending rather than going to school to acquire western education.

Betrothal System

Research has long established that poverty and unemployment is one of the leading causes of betrothal system in predominantly Moslem dominated northern Nigeria. The responsibilities of parents, as Ojo (2022) observes, are to educate, train and take good care of their children from childhood to adulthood. Parents, who are not financially capable of training, educating and taking good care of their children, resort to

betrothal system to gift the female children away at young age and at a price. As Okah et al., (2023) maintain, most teenage girls have become teenage parents or lost their lives owing to early and unintended pregnancy and complications, arising from unsafe abortion. In most developing societies, girl-children have less educational opportunities than boys. Betrothing system is still extremely prevalent and dominant in most cultures in Nigeria. It is a practice that has become so ingrained among predominantly Moslem North in Nigeria. A baby girl or a boy is fixed to be married off at a certain age to a man who must have paid her bride price far ahead of time she reaches puberty stage. Betrothing system is known to precipitate early marriage and unwanted pregnancy, preventing young women from furthering their educational pursuits.

Parents' Perception of Education and Educational equity

Shaeffer (2019) says educational equality and inclusive educational system presupposes a rising school enrollment and completion, cutting down drop-out level, reducing gender disparities and strengthen cohesion. Northern Nigeria is the poorest of all the six geo-political zones of the country. The widening socio-economic inequalities among households in northern Nigeria has strengthened education inequalities between the lower class, middle class and the upper class in the region. Inequitable training of girls and boys is a rising concern for development partners and government at all levels in Nigeria. Parents, according to Hussain (2020), are a leading influencing factor in the educational development of their children. Illiteracy, as Butt et al., (2020) maintain, on the part of the parents and poor understanding of the future benefits of education prevent many parents from enrolling their wards in schools. Many Moslems, especially in the Moslem dominated northern Nigeria regard education as a waste of financial resources and time. In many communities in southern Nigeria, only male children are allowed to enroll in schools. Educating girl-children, in the estimation of the parents, is a waste of time and hard-earned financial resources of the family.

Child's Health Problems

Li et al., (2023) opine that children with severe and multiple disabilities that are becoming out-of-school children are a rising phenomenon in developing countries of the world. Some children have one disability or

the other that debars them from getting enrolled in a school. While some are deaf and dumb, others have mental issues that make learning a difficult engagement. Seeing, hearing and difficulty in walking, as Mizunoya et al., (2018) observe, are some of the issues that debar children from enrollment in primary school and lower secondary schools. A child with one disability or the other finds learning difficult to undertake.

Religions and Culture

Eliminating school fees by state government in Nigeria, Abuya et al., (2013) is not the magic bullet that ensures adequate enrollment of children in schools. There are other intrinsic factors that prevent children enrollment in schools. It is no longer news that gender disparities exist in the education of young children. In most basic schools in Nigeria, young girls are numerically underrepresented. There is a nexus between religion and education. In many Moslems dominated environment, a premium is placed on Quranic education to western education. Religious and cultural issues have, in no small measure, contributed to the high rate of out-of-school children in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa. In some predominantly Moslems occupied communities, female children, like their mothers, are not to be seen or heard. They are given less educational and training attention than young male children as a result of false cultural belief that educating female children is tantamount to a waste of financial resources of the family.

Supply or Secondary Barriers

Supply or secondary barriers imply the impediments that emanate from the official sources. Wrong policies and misplaced educational priorities have compelled many parents to aid and abet the menace of out-of-school children. Unsuitable medium of communication for teaching, remote locations of the schools and poorly trained teachers are all secondary or supply barriers, preventing positive school enrollment of children.

Language of Instruction

Local language, as Delprato and Frola (2022) Maintain, is a leading determinant factor for the school enrollment in any nation of the world.

Language is a critical medium of communication. Teacher-student communication experience is extremely vital to taking children out of the streets and getting them enrolled in schools. Language of instruction is very critical to understanding of all the subjects taught in schools. Wang and Postiglione (2015) observe that systematic studies about correlation between language and positive school enrollment are very scanty. English Language is taught as the foreign or second language in most schools and universities in the world. English Language, as Al-jarf (2022) opines, as a medium of instruction in Nigeria has stirred up a lot of debates among political office holders, scholars, policy makers, linguistic scholars, and education experts. While some advocate for the continued use of English Language as medium of instruction in Nigerian primary and secondary schools, other groups canvas for the adoption of Nigerian local languages as a medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools. The latter group argues that teaching and learning in local languages would enhance teaching and learning and promote understanding of the subjects. However, opinions are divided about the local language to adopt in a multilingual community that characterises many societies in Nigeria (Tollefson, 2015).

Lack of qualified teachers

The roles of teachers in the cognitive, physical, lingual, emotional, and intellectual development of children are crucial. Teachers' example in character building greatly influences the character formation of a school-girl or a school-boy. Qualified teachers in many of the primary and secondary schools are becoming a scarce commodity in Nigeria. Incessant strikes by the Academic Staff Union of Universities weaponised the production of half-baked graduates of educational programmes. Absence of qualified teachers in primary and lower secondary schools is extremely risky and signifies a bleak future for the academic pursuit of children solely because the levels are foundational one, which should have been made very strong at inception.

Poor infrastructural development

Children receive lectures under dilapidated classrooms. Most primary and secondary schools in Oyo State do not have adequate classrooms for the training of the pupils. Classes are held under trees in many schools in Oyo State. Youth corps members are deployed to complement the

existing teachers in most primary and secondary schools. Classrooms are hardly furnished with furniture, good chalkboards, well-arranged seats and good ceiling fans or air-conditioning system. Some schools even in the southern part of Nigeria are overgrown with bushes, giving room for security threat. Open defecation among pupils is rife, safe and hygienic environments are completely absent in most primary and secondary schools. Pupils sit on the bare floor to listen to their teachers.

Remote Locations of the school

Parents in the north of Nigeria suspect western education. According to UBEC (2010) about ten million children out of the four walls of primary and secondary schools pose a serious challenge to the Education for All initiatives as well as Millennium Development Goals initiatives. Schools sited in remote locations far away from the environment of the children is a barrier to adequate school enrollment situations. Yousaf (2021) posits that geographical factors, to a very large extent, determine a child's school enrollment procedures. Not many parents can afford to send their children to a distance-located school. The cost of transportation to and from school is factored into the enrollment of children by their parents.

Conflict-Affected Environment

As Ogunode et al., (2021) maintain, the continuous attacks on primary schools, secondary schools and higher institutions of learning have adverse effects on students' learning outcomes, teachers' job performances and policy-making processes. Attacks on Nigerian primary and secondary schools, as Verje and Kwaja (2021) maintain, propel national outcry without a proactive response by government and security operatives to prevent a recurrence. Many children, as Taka (2023) avers, miss opportunities of education in conflict-affected areas without any chance to have a second opportunity. An environment of insecurity prevents good enrollment in school by the children. In many communities in northern Nigeria, cases of kidnapping, pedophile, child molestation and inhuman treatment of children are rife, especially in the rural areas. Insecurity in most parts of Adamawa, Yobe and Borno States of Nigeria has sent many professional teachers away from the northeastern part of Nigeria. Bukar and Shua (2020) opine that hundreds of teachers have been killed, thousands of students have been wounded

and many schools have either been raised down or completely destroyed by Boko Haram insurgents in the northeast of Nigeria.

Methodology

Qualitative research approach was adopted in this study to facilitate the process of gathering and analysing non-mathematical and non-numeric data from a group of respondents. Mostly, qualitative research approach uses observation participant, participant observation, focus group discussion, in-depth interview, and interviews to sample the opinions and thoughts of a group of respondents. Jotters and electronic devices are used to collect the data from the respondents to facilitate data analysis.

The participants in the study were one official of the Ministry of Education, one official of the Oyo State Universal Basic Education Board and twelve (12) children who were not enrolled in any school by their parents or guardians. The participants were mainly children who are labourers, auxiliary farmers, bus conductors and traffic vendors. Of the twelve children interviewed, five came from separated parents, two were orphaned, three were living with their grandparents, while two were living with their parents. The participants were drawn from the five populated cities and towns in Oyo State. These include Ibadan, Ogbomosho, Oyo, Oke-Ogun and Ibarapa Areas of Oyo State. To further find the relevant participants in the rural communities in each of the zones, the researcher selected fourteen (14) research participants in all the zones to participate in the study. Four research of them came from Ibadan being the most heavily populated of the zones. Whereas the other ten, comes with twos were from Ogbomosho, Oyo town, Oke-Ogun Area and Ibarapa Area. Furthermore, the sample was made up of one official of the State Ministry of Education and one official of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB). The researcher freely interacted with the child-respondents to make them relaxed to give relevant answers to questions raised in the course of the interview. The researcher thoroughly explained the objectives of the research work were to the interviewees, and confidentiality of information given is assured before the interview session began. However, the 12-child respondents were not under duress or compulsion to partake in the research study.

On the other hand, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews, using the interview schedule to collect relevant data from the child-respondents, who are out-of-school children. This enabled the researcher to gather more data from the follow-up questions as well as clarify issues

raised from the field. Key interviewees were out-of-school children, an official of the Ministry of Education in Oyo State and an Official of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB).

Data analysis is the process of making sense or meaning out of a large amount of information collected from the research field. Data collected was analysed using description and explanation building. Data collected were coded and transcribed in a way that gives meanings, relevance, and connection to the study to facilitate understanding.

Results

Factors that impede access to media enlightenment campaigns about school enrollment in the rural areas of Oyo State

Factors responsible for the lack of access to media enlightenment campaigns to boost enrollment in schools are multi-faceted. It was discovered that many parents and guardians are exposed to no information about enrollment campaigns on either radio, television, newspaper or even billboard in Oyo State. Enlightenment campaigns about school enrollment is extremely vital to the clamour for the eradication of out-of-school children in Oyo State, and the media (radio, television, newspaper, and billboard, including internet) should be reliable partners on the march to phase out the menace of out-of-school children in Oyo State. However, the media have failed their social responsibility roles about providing information about education to improve school enrollment processes.

In the words of one interview participant said:

I had never received any information on any Broadcasting channel.

However, Corporation of Oyo State, the state government-owned radio and television stations or any other private-owned media organization did announce about school enrollment campaigns. He further narrated that:

I only listened and watched advertisement about enrollment of children in private-owned media organisations, especially when a new session was about to begin.

Another interview participant says that:

Government educational policy in Oyo State was never known to me. Most parents in Oyo State were in the dark about government efforts at eradicating a rising menace of out-of-school children in Oyo State.

An official of the Oyo State Universal Basic Education Board had this to say:

Though government had not done much in terms of using the media to enlighten the parents and guardians about enrolling their wards in schools, government had made provisions of writing and reading materials such as notebooks, pens, pencils and eraser, textbooks and furniture available in all primary and secondary schools across the state.

A participant who is orphaned maintains that:

I was always looking for means to survive because my parents had died. Life had become so difficult for me and my sibling because after the death of my parents. I wish the government could make special schools available free of charge for those who are orphans in the state. I did listen to the radio, and there is no educational programme that is aired to serve as a substitute for formal education in the state.

The narratives of another interview participant capture that:

The education function of mass media is lost. Mass media in Oyo State are fond of beaming several advertising messages to the audience instead of educative programmes that can better the lives of the people in the state. The parents, guardians and children are never exposed to enlightenment campaigns in the media in Oyo State that stimulate them to enroll their wards in schools.

Another participant had this to say:

I am a labourer and I am doing the job to fend for himself since my parents had no financial means to foot the bills of my schooling. I had no time to listen to radio or watch television during working hours, and I had not, at any time, received any message in the media canvassing for school enrollment in the media in Oyo State.

Another interview participant revealed that:

I am working for a traffic vendor, and I am doing the job to cater to his basic needs. I dropped out of school when I could no longer pay the required examinations fees for my O-level. The rate of pupils dropping out of schools because of economic misery is alarming, especially with the removal of fuel subsidy.

An official of the Oyo State Ministry of Education said that:

The government had tried to make primary and secondary education free across the state. He further narrated that even if media campaigns are embarked upon by the government of the state, some children would not still enroll in schools because of the orientation and perception of their parents about western education.

In summarizing the submission of the Participants, it was clear that most participants affirm that public-owned media have failed their social responsibility functions. Only private-owned media organisations, according to most interviewees, still meet their social responsibility functions with regard to enlightenment of parents about school enrollments.

Ways a media integration approach could help empower parents in the rural areas with regard to enlightenment campaigns about school enrollment programmes

Media integration is the fusion of modern mass media such as radio, television, newspaper, magazine, billboard and internet with the indigenous communication system in an attempt to bring about a more robust and more effective information dissemination system in a society. Most interviewees stated that integrating the modern media with the indigenous communication system would bring about a more robust enlightenment campaign that would improve the rate of school enrollment. Some further stated that using both systems of communication would get the children off the street because the message would be predominantly available in all the nooks and crannies of the state.

In the words of one interviewee, he said:

Television messages do not reach those people living in the rural areas of Oyo State as a result of the unavailability of electric power. He says that television messages are about government activities. He further maintains that issues that pertain to welfare of the masses are not taken seriously

Another participant maintained that:

Radio information delivery system is too elitist. He says radio messages are couched in English, and that the dwellers of rural areas find it difficult to interpret or understand. He maintains that radio messages, though omnipresent, never reflect the social and cultural realities of the people in the rural areas of Oyo State. He asserts that radio is the best medium to be fused together with the indigenous communication media to enhance enrollment campaigns in the rural areas of Oyo State. He says further that radio has some hallmarks that complement indigenous communication media

Another participant interviewee mentioned that:

The most effective way of disseminating information about enrollment campaigns is to make use of traditional newsperson and mobile public address system because they are more credible than the other media of mass communication. He narrates further that indigenous communication system is culture-based, and that people understand the message disseminated through indigenous communication system.

An official of the State Universal Basic Education Board said:

Indigenous and modern communication system must be integrated to accomplish enrollment campaign objectives. He narrated that while mass media should be deployed in the urban centres, radio and some indigenous communication media should be fused to accomplish enrollment campaigns in the rural areas of the state. He further stated that unlike other mass media, radio has the capability to cover remote locations other mass media dread to tread. He narrated further that radio can disseminate messages in local languages and can deliver a message to a target group at a particular time.

An official of the State Ministry of Education averred that:

Mass media are not competent to handle enrollment campaigns all alone. He said many enrollment campaigns have failed in the past because only mass

media were used for the enrollment campaigns. He further narrated that without a media integration approach to enrollment campaigns, the objectives of taking children out of the streets and get them enrolled in schools are dead on arrival. He further canvassed for the extension for the media integration approach to other government policies and activities to accomplish policy objectives.

In summary most interviewees affirm that indigenous communication system, when integrated with radio medium, could help orientate and mobilise parents in the rural areas to enroll their children in school. Indigenous communication system, according to the interviewees, is culture-based, and local understand its messages much better.

Discussion of Findings

Findings revealed that mass media (radio, television, newspaper, internet, billboard) have failed their social responsibility test about enrollment enlightenment campaigns in the rural areas of Oyo State. The findings agree with the report of UNICEF (2022) which shows that out-of-school rate for primary level education has witnessed limited progress from 27.2 per cent in 2016/17 to 25.6 per cent in 2021 mainly because parents of those children do not have exposure to enlightenment campaigns about school enrollment on media of communication.

Findings also revealed that indigenous communication media are more effective and more credible, especially in the rural areas of Oyo State where people live a communal life. The findings agree with position of James, Olatunji and Adunola (2020) which maintain that while the conventional media of mass communication such as radio, television, newspaper, magazine, and billboard are more effective in the urban areas, and less effective in the rural areas of Nigeria, indigenous communication media are more effective in the rural areas, but less effective in the urban centres.

Conclusion

The study concluded that certain factors such as the absence of electricity, bad roads and other poor infrastructural facilities have incapacitated the modern media from the effective delivery of enrollment campaigns in the rural areas of Oyo State. The study also concluded that indigenous communication media are owned by the local community

where they are used. Communal ownership of indigenous communication system greatly enhances the credibility of its messages when compared with the modern mass media, and this factor impinges on enrollment campaigns in rural areas.

Recommendations

Community-based enrollment drives that are heavily dependent on the use of radio and indigenous communication media should be initiated to enlighten the children and their parents, aimed at taking those children off the streets. Enrollment campaigns are better served when community-based radio educational programmes are initiated backed with indigenous media of communication. Development partners, corporate bodies and individuals have been advocating for the establishment of community-based radio. A type of radio that serves the information needs of the rural dwellers just like a traditional newsperson also known as town crier. A community-based radio is one owned, managed and operated by a community, without the financial intervention of the government or political interferences from either an individual or an entity.

Access to play-based pre-primary education, inclusive pedagogy, foundational literacy and numeracy, leadership, school record keeping and psychological support through an increasingly teacher-centred model of mentoring and supportive supervision (UNICEF, 2022) should be initiated. Massive infrastructural development should be embarked upon by the government of the day in rural areas of Oyo State aimed at lifting the level of enrollment and school attendance.

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