



Role of Religious Bodies in Plant Maintenance for the Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programmes in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study explored the role of religious bodies in plant maintenance for implementing UBE programmes in Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the extent of the role of the religious bodies in the UBE Programme for plant maintenance in junior public secondary schools in Kogi State: one research question and a hypothesis guided the study. A descriptive research survey design and quantitative approach were used. Religious Leaders Involvement in Plant Maintenance (RLIPM) served as an instrument. A sample of 387 UBE principals consisting of 191 (49%) urban and 196 (51%) rural was selected using the proportionate stratified sampling technique. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the research question and z-test statistics tested the hypothesis at the 0.05 significance level. The descriptive analysis revealed that the religious bodies were poorly involved in plant maintenance and in implementing the UBE programmes efficiently and effectively at public junior secondary schools in Kogi State.

Keywords: Roles, Religious bodies, plant maintenance, Implementation, UBE programmes,

Introduction

Education affects other sectors of the economy just as these sectors also influence what happens in the educational sector. This is why education and the role of religion and religious bodies cannot be ignored. Funding of the education sector in the past was the primary duty of religious bodies before the responsibility was shifted to the government. The contribution of religious bodies to school management dates back to the late 17th century and early 18th century and their influence on education remains indelible to date (Ajah, 2015).

Educational researchers have stated that one reason why religious body cannot be separated from the management of the school system is because they ensure justice and equity which preserves harmony and peace in any society (Carpenter, et al. 2014). Religious bodies have been very helpful in balancing the inequalities in the education sector and schools in particular in any environment where they are located (Akudolu & Olibie, 2015; James, 2016). According to scholars such as Roebben (2012) and Blaggi (2020) the three main Protestant Churches transferred their school buildings, staff and pupils in the 1930s,



1940s and 1950s into state control with the understanding that the Christian ethos of these schools was to be maintained in perpetuity. Therefore, the contributions made through the participation of religious bodies in managing the school went beyond mere maintenance work to providing essential teaching and learning resources needed for quality education. Similarly, there are various other ways through which religious bodies contribute to the school system alongside the implementation of the UBE scheme. Religious bodies are first known to be promoters of good societal values. This is essential as it imbibes in students and other school personnel the values needed to preserve provided school facilities (Wachukwu, n.d.). The orientation provided by these institutions makes it possible for school personnel to protect resources provided in the school at all costs as custodians of these resources. Religious bodies equally make special donations of resources to the school system, especially in areas that promote such bodies' values (Wale et al. 2015). It is doubtful whether religious bodies make such special donations of resources to schools in Kogi State. This is because there are prevalent dilapidated structures in schools across Kogi State and one wonders if religious bodies exist in Kogi State.

Religious bodies are also essential as they help develop students and teachers in the school the potential to make reasonable judgments needed for making decisions that will contribute to attaining a healthy school community (Abumere, 2013). There are also situations where these religious bodies prepare educational materials for developing education. Their ability to provide resources tailored to the school's requirements makes it easy for the school to be in good shape over time (David, 2018). Like every other social group, religious bodies do manage schools by contributing to the resource needs of teachers and students and the school at large. However, their contribution is often taken from a



religious angle to promote the objectives of such a body. They operate from the angle of inputting in people the values to live a meaningful life and contribute to the safety and sanity of their environment (Eluu, 2016). This is where their participation in school plant maintenance is often felt.

Similarly, Itulua-Abumere (2013) stated that over the years, religious bodies have actively been known to be strong promoters of the values of genuineness, fairness, honesty, deference for all and care for the environment. Students are part of the maintenance of order and sanity in the school when it comes to the provision of classrooms, maintenance of a healthy and serene school environment, and protection of the welfare of teachers. (Oragwu & Nwabueze, 2016). These bodies are also known to contribute to human capital formation and this makes it easy for other resources provided in the school to be optimally utilized by all thereby contributing to the smooth implementation of any educational programme instituted in the school including the UBE scheme (Timothy & Funke, 2023). Be that as it may, their contributions to the execution of UBE programmes in Kogi State remain a mirage because such stated contributions are only heard elsewhere but are yet to be seen in the present situation of UBE schools in Kogi State.

President Olusegun Obasanjo the then Nigerian president was the initiator of UBE on 30/09/1999 at Sokoto (Wali,2007). Education for All (EFA) was the major target of the UBE programme by the Nigerian government and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). UBE programme is widely recognized by every Nigerian today as a free schooling programme established by the government to ensure that every child is enrolled in school to become literate (Opoh, et al., 2015). The UBE program was part of the worldwide



pursuit for the populace of whichever nation to be knowledgeable to a level of interaction with people within their domain.

The UBE programme was equally meant to mainstream the less privileged adults into education to enable them to fit into society. This could be why Daura & Audu (2015) posited that UBE is an all-time education of nine years of compulsory and free education programme- six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary education”. The programme also has provisions for some adults to promote social inclusion (Aja et al., 2018). Despite the paramount position of the UBE programmes to national development, the oral interviews with principals in both urban and rural UBE schools have revealed that educational facilities at this level of education are mostly death traps for teachers and students in Kogi state. Surprisingly, the majority of PTA members are mostly dominated by religious leaders. This among other things prompted this research to ascertain the extent of the contributions of religious bodies to plant maintenance for the implementation of UBE programmes in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Despite the contributions made by religious bodies to schools, their assistance is still less felt compared to the pre-colonial period when foreign evangelists were in charge of school administration (Fidelis & Senzokuhle, 2016). Missionaries were directly involved in the school administration during the pre-colonial era (Abdulrahman, 2018). It was noted that missions were responsible for recruiting staff, providing financial resources and designing policies needed for success during their time (Fidelis & Senzokuhle, 2016). Educational religious bodies believe that the period was one of the most successful eras in the history of school administration as the school did not lack the basic resources needed for the smooth running of the school. However, this structure seems to have seriously changed as most



religious organizations are only concerned about educational issues relating to their institutions. Little or no gestures were extended to other schools which are instrumental for the success of the school system and the sustenance of basic education. This is in the interest of all relevant educational religious bodies across all levels. This type of interest exhibited by the religious bodies in recent times motivates this research to investigate the extent of the role of religious bodies in plant maintenance for the implementation of all the UBE programmes in Kogi State.

Religious bodies also significantly influence the use of school plants and as such their presence in the school cannot be ignored if the UBE scheme will make any meaningful impact. Several studies by educational researchers have revealed that religious bodies play significant roles in influencing the attitude of school personnel on how they use and maintain existing school facilities and plants to prolong their life span (Hope & Jones, 2014; UNESCO, 2018; Oranefo et al., 2022). Nonetheless, aside from enforcing attitudinal change, religious bodies also engage in partnership with other social groups where some of these schools are located to provide basic social amenities that are needed to ease the pressure on existing school plants (Aniefiok et al, n.d). This helps ensure that school plants are less stressed thereby prolonging their existence. Furthermore, religious bodies also partner with some of their parent associations to donate other equipment that will make teaching and learning activities less stressful and disruptive such as the supply of computers, power supply and other teaching aids which reduces the pressure on school plants thereby keeping them in good condition. In some cases, some of these religious bodies also let out some of their facilities to UBE schools for use and this helps to ensure that other facilities in the school custody are kept in good working condition (Joseph, 2023). This practice of letting out their



facilities in the form of assistance is yet to be extended to Kogi state in the observation of the researchers because interviews with the principals of UBE have revealed that the available educational facilities in schools are in short supply and obsolete for quality teaching and learning.

UBE stakeholders such as religious leaders have a lot to contribute to the maintenance of school plants for the successful implementation of the programme in different states including Kogi State. Since the government alone cannot saddle the responsibility of providing quality education as an essential social service, the participation of these religious bodies in any way possible is important for executing the programme. In Kogi State UBE schools, religious bodies have partnered with the government to maintain school plants such as building school structures, providing equipment and machines and at the same time carrying out routine maintenance exercises (Stample & Emmanuel, 2020). Nevertheless, there is a need for a wider involvement and participation of these religious bodies in the maintenance of existing school plants which will consequently assist in actualizing the goals and objectives of the UBE scheme in Kogi State. financial and non-financial contributions of these religious bodies towards keeping school plants in good condition cannot be overemphasized. However, their involvement is unclear as most of the educational facilities in UBE schools in Kogi state are old and cannot guarantee effective implementation of UBE programmes.

Furthermore, the government needs to expand its partnership with some religious bodies that have not been active in maintaining school plants and other educational resources in UBE schools in Kogi State. This can be done by providing an enabling environment and supporting these religious bodies with relevant policy frameworks that will enable them to



contribute to the management of UBE schools in their locality. This has far-reaching improvements in actualizing the goals and objectives of basic education in the state and the country in general in the long run. Similarly, other religious bodies who have not been contributing to the maintenance of existing school plants need to make an adequate commitment to the school by supporting the maintenance of school plants on a regular or routine basis. This will help to improve the educational status of UBE schools in Kogi State.

Public schools were once considered in Nigeria as the chosen educational destination for learners by their parents and guardians. These schools were well-equipped with the needed materials and human resources for meaningful teaching and learning. To expand the benefits derived from this social service, the government have made several reforms in the provision of education including the metamorphosis of Universal Primary Education (UPE) to UBE which is free and compulsory for all school-age children in primary and junior secondary school level (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). The provision of quality education has remained the exclusive responsibility of the government to its citizens until recently when the government made it known that it could not continue to solely fund the education sector (OECD, 2012; UNESCO, 2021). This was to increase access to basic education for personal and societal growth and development. Presently, inadequate funding of education has made plant maintenance a difficult task in most UBE schools in Kogi State (Aja et al., 2018). This has made the gains of this educational programme almost elusive in the State.

Parents and students prefer attending private secondary schools to available public UBE schools in Kogi State. This results from the dilapidated structures in some of these UBE schools. The facilities and human resources in these schools appear to be inadequate where they exist and the inability of the government at all levels to salvage these schools has further



worsened the condition of UBE schools as well as the execution of the non-paid education programme (Ogbonnaya, 2023). The poor condition of school plants and the lack of maintenance of the available ones has become an issue of concern to all educational and religious bodies. In the face of the inability of the government to provide adequate support to UBE schools in Kogi State, questions have been raised concerning the role played by other educational religious bodies in dealing with this situation. This has prompted this study to explore the role of religious bodies in school plant maintenance for the effective implementation of the UBE programme in public junior secondary schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

An investigation by Odidi (2019) on the church and social responsibilities with a focus on a case study of the development of Church schools in the diocese of Kaduna, Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion indicated that religious organizations still support the school as part of their social responsibilities but not like in the past. It was also pointed out that these religious organizations have different challenges that limit their assistance to these schools. Nthontho (2018) investigated schools as legal persons reiterating the implications for religion in education and published that religion had been a contentious issue in schools.

A study by Itulua-Abumere (2013) on the importance of teaching religion in local primary schools with particular reference to Christianity showed that religious association contributed to students' articulation and morality in their educational activities. This contributed to the school administration. Ibrahim (2014) surveyed the managing system of Islamic private schools in Madrasah Da'wah al-Islamiyyat, Nigeria. It was found that the system contributes to religious, moral, and educational development. A study by Nzokurum



(2023) in Rivers State about stakeholders' involvement in UBE for the actualization of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) published that the stakeholders like school board members, religious bodies, and parents involvement in UBE in the area of curriculum development and provision of physical facilities for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) were low and moderate. Nwachukwu et al (2023) published from their study on managing facilities and educational funds for the effective implementation of the (UBE) in Imo state, Nigeria that the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) which consists of religious leaders poorly contributed to school plant maintenance.

Kazeem (2021) established from his study on the implementation of the UBE program in the North Central Region of Nigeria that preschools require being well equipped and added that the collaboration and active participation of all key stakeholders is needed for effective preschool education policy implementation and the establishment of more quality preschools across the region. Tolutope et al. (2017) discovered from their study on the exploration of optional sources of funding UBE for Sustainable Development in Nigeria that the dominant sources of financing Basic education were the government, households and religious organizations.

Mabeya, et al. (2010) conducted a study on the role of church sponsors for managing secondary schools focusing on the impact on academic performance and conflict concerns in Kenya. Four research questions were postulated to guide the study. The study used a descriptive survey design. All the 97 Christian church-sponsored secondary schools in Kenya formed the population of the study and a purposive sampling technique was used to draw these schools as samples for the study and their head teacher and education secretaries serve as informants. The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires and observation



schedules. The instruments were validated and the reliability index was estimated. The research questions were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage. It was revealed in the study that the expectations of the sponsor on teachers and students had a significant influence on school operations. Also, there was a significant relationship between a school sponsor and academic performance in schools. Lastly, it was revealed that administration challenges are significantly related to the roles played by school sponsors.

Fort (2017) conducted quantitative and qualitative contributions of faith-based organizations to healthcare in Kenya. Two research questions were developed to guide the study. The study used a survey design. The study's population consisted of health agencies in the study areas and some of the facilities were sampled for the conduct of the study. The instrument used for the collection of data for the study was the observation schedule. The instrument was validated before it was used for the study. The research questions raised were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The result of the study showed that FBOs contribute to 11% of all health facilities' presence in the country, doubling to 23% of all available beds. It was also revealed that FBOs continue to contribute to an important proportion of health care coverage in Kenya and do so with a relatively high quality of care among all actors. It was recommended that more partnerships be established to improve the contribution of these stakeholders to available facilities and equipment.

Muhammed et al (2023) investigated the role of religious and cultural education in solving radicalism conflicts in the Sibolga community in Indonesia. This study's results indicated that two elements such as educational and cultural elements were used for the resolution. The education element played a role in building the students' character and creating tolerance among religious communities to maintain unity and integrity among



citizens. Cultural elements act as controllers of societal differences with customs binding in society.

Umeanwe (2024) determined the resolution of intra-church conflicts between the clergy and the laity. It was found that the cause of such conflict was found to be; a lack of unity and the presence of factions in the church, poor skills management on the part of the pastor, conflicting visions for the church, a church's resistance to change, power and control struggles, personality conflicts, poor interpersonal relationship skills on the part of the congregation, conflict over leadership styles, dissatisfaction with the pastor's performance and theological differences.

Richard and James (2013) studied religious motivations and social service volunteers: the interaction of differing religious motivations, satisfaction, and repeat volunteering. The finding shows that religious motivation outweighed secular motivation for most volunteers, but a much larger percentage of adult volunteers were primarily religiously motivated than youth volunteers. Of the volunteers who were primarily religiously motivated, somewhat more described their motivation in personal terms because it makes me feel closer to God rather than institutional terms because my faith encourages me. Personal religious motivations were particularly characteristic of youthful volunteers, first-timers, and Catholics. Differing motivations for volunteering affected overall satisfaction and willingness to volunteer again. Religiously motivated individuals were more satisfied than secularly motivated individuals were, and religiously motivated individuals whose particular religious motivations were fulfilled were more satisfied overall and more likely to volunteer again.

Obaka et al (2024) explored the Alumni's participation in plant maintenance for effective implementation of the universal basic education (UBE) programme in public junior



secondary schools in Kogi state. The descriptive analysis revealed that Alumni contribute to managing UBE schools in Kogi state, especially in funding, infrastructural facilities, discipline, politics and quality control. This finding also shows that alumni contribution to educational institutions was unclear if they have contributed to education in some areas and none in other places making their relevance to plant maintenance unclear.

Agus (2024) explores the role of religious education in preventing radicalization, using a descriptive qualitative method with data collection techniques through in-depth observation and interviews involving teachers, students, principals, and parents. The focus of the research is on the implementation of religious moderation values in schools as an effort to build students' critical attitudes towards extremist ideologies. The results of the study show that inclusive, interactive, and collaborative teaching approaches in religious education, both in the classroom and by involving the external community, play an important role in fostering tolerant characters and being able to reject radical narratives. The study highlights the importance of collaboration between schools and families and the need for digital literacy education to strengthen students' resilience to exposure to extremist content on social media. Researchers have conducted several studies on the type of maintenance work that some of these religious bodies carry out in Nigeria. Scientists have investigated studies that show how religious bodies contribute to the education administration across different states. Some of these studies revealed that they have assisted schools in providing educational materials at the senior secondary or tertiary education level. There are no sufficient studies to show how these religious bodies have contributed toward implementing free education programs in Kogi State and this is the gap this study intends to fill.

Purpose of the Study



The main aim of the study was to the contributions of religious bodies in plant maintenance for effective implementation of the UBE programme in junior public secondary schools in Kogi State, Nigeria. The study specifically sought to:

1. Describe the extent religious bodies contribute to plant maintenance for effective implementation of the UBE programme in public junior secondary schools in Kogi State.

Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This design is often used when a study intends to investigate an ongoing phenomenon. The design also involves collecting samples from a population under study and using the findings made from the sample to draw inferences about the population. This design was, therefore, suitable for investigating the role of religious bodies in plant maintenance for effective implementation of the UBE program in public junior secondary schools in Kogi State.

The population for the study comprised 484 (233 urban and 251 rural) junior secondary school UBE principals distributed across the entire 484 Universal Basic Education (UBE) junior secondary schools in Kogi State (Source: Kogi State Universal Basic Education Board, 2020).

The sample for the study was 387 participants which consisted of 191 (49%) urban junior secondary school principals and 196 (51%) rural principals in selected UBE junior secondary schools in Kogi State. A proportionate stratified sampling technique was used for the study. This means that the participants were sampled from each UBE school to give a fair representation of the sample. The study adopted Nwana's (1981) classification of sample size determination which recommended 40% for the population of a few hundred. However, for



equal representation, the recommendation was doubled and the sample size used was 80% of the population of 484. This produced a sample size of 387 used for the study.

The tool used for gathering data was a self-structured questionnaire titled Religious Leaders Involvement in Plant Maintenance (RLIPM). RLIPM was segmented into two sections A and B; Section A was meant to gather information on the demographic characteristics of the participants. Cluster B contained 10 items in line with the research questions. The measuring tool was made up of four-point response modes of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE), and Very Low Extent (VLE) with weighted values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 which gives 2.50 that was used for decision-making and served as a benchmark for rejection and acceptance.

Three specialists from the faculty of education validated RLIPM. Two professionals were drawn from the Department of Educational Management and Business Studies, Faculty of Education, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State for content validity. In addition, one other expert in the field of Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Psychology/Guidance Counselling, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State also validated the instrument. The researchers presented the study's title, purpose, research question, hypothesis and a copy of the instrument for validation to these specialists. The corrections made by these specialists on the draft of the instrument were effected before the instrument was administered to the participants drawn for the study.

The instrument reliability was determined via Cronbach alpha statistics to ascertain the internal consistency. Twenty (20) respondents involving ten (10) rural and ten (10) urban principals outside the study sample from UBE junior secondary schools in Kogi State were used. Kogi State was chosen because her schools share the same qualities.



Data collection was done personally by the researchers including the use of three research assistants who were briefed on how to identify a valid response in addition to the method of collating and recording the responses obtained for analysis. The instrument was retrieved back from the respondents on the spot. 387 numbers of the questionnaire were administered to the participants and 323 copies (159 Urban and 164 rural) covering 83.5% were recovered and exposed to statistical analyses.

Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the guided research question. The decision rule for deciding on each item was placed at 3.91-4.00 VHE, 2.91-3.00 HE, 1.91-2.00 LE, and 0.00-1.00 VLE while 2.50 serves as the general decision rule for the main finding. The z-test statistics were used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance and the value of z-crit. of 1.96 was used to determine the rejection or otherwise of the hypothesis.

Results

Research Question one: To what extent do religious bodies contribute to plant maintenance for effective implementation of UBE programme in public junior post primary schools in Kogi State?

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Extent Religious Bodies Participate in Plant Maintenance for Effective Implementation of UBE Programme in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Kogi State

S/No	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	TOTAL	$\bar{X}$	SD	REMARK
Participation in Plant Maintenance									
1	Religious bodies have assisted in	77	158	65	23	323	2.90	1.53	High Extent



	conflict resolution which could have led to damage of school facilities								
2	Volunteer services are provided by religious bodies for the maintenance of school plants	46	109	111	57	323	2.45	1.67	Low Extent
3	Some of the new equipment used for teaching are provided by religious bodies.	46	122	95	60	323	2.48	1.69	Low Extent
4	Religious organizations have assisted in the painting of classrooms affected by bad weather	34	117	101	71	323	2.35	1.63	Low Extent
5	Some of the charts used in the classroom were provided by religious bodies	45	128	100	50	323	2.52	1.63	High Extent
6	Part of the social contribution of religious organizations to the school was drilling of boreholes	22	78	164	59	323	2.20	1.47	Low Extent
7	The toilet facilities in the school were provided and maintain by religious organizations	26	80	152	65	323	2.21	1.51	Low Extent
8	Religious	89	134	68	32	323	2.87	1.67	High



	organizations make financial donation to the school for the procurement of essential teaching and learning equipment									Extent
9	Religious bodies partner with the school to replace faulty facilities	64	145	71	43	323	2.71	1.64		High Extent
10	Sports and other recreational equipment have been provided by religious organizations to replace obsolete ones	35	73	131	84	323	2.18	1.72		Low Extent
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	484	1144	1058	544	3,230	2.48	1.62		Low Extent

Table 1 shows the responses of principals to items 21, 25, 28, and 29 yielded mean scores of 2.90, 2.52, 2.87, and 2.71 were by the criterion mean score of 2.91-300 used for decision-making and suggested that the items existed to a high extent as indicated in the questionnaire while items 22, 23, 24, 26, 27 and 30 with mean scores of 2.45, 2.48, 2.35, 2.20, 2.21 and 2.18 which were below the criterion mean score of 2.50 used for decision making implied that the items existed to a low extent. The grand mean score of 2.48 showed that religious bodies contributed to plant maintenance to a low extent for effective implementation of the UBE program in public junior secondary schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.



Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of principals from urban and rural schools on the contribution of religious bodies to plant maintenance for effective implementation of UBE programme in Kogi State

Table 2

Analysis on the Difference between Urban and Rural Schools Principals in the Mean Rating of Participation of Religious Bodies in Plant Maintenance for Effective Implementation of UBE Programme in Kogi State

Samples Test										
	Differences						z	z-crit.	Df	Decision
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference						
				Lower	Upper					
Urban Schools – Rural Schools	.98113	3.40415	.26997	1.51434	.44792	1.324	1.96	321	Accept	

In table 2, the value of z-crit. was 1.96 at 321 degrees of freedom and a 0.05 alpha level while the value of z-cal. was 1.32. Therefore, since the value of z-cal. of 1.32 was less than the value of z-crit. of 1.96, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means there was no significant difference between urban and rural schools in the mean ratings of participation of religious bodies in plant maintenance for effective implementation of the UBE program in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Discussion

The result of the study pointed to the fact that the average mean set of 2.48 revealed by respondents that religious bodies contributed to plant maintenance to a low extent for effective implementation of the UBE programme in public junior secondary schools in Kogi State. Supporting this dimension, Nthontho (2018) reported in the outcome of his study that religion had been a contentious issue in schools, and as such their contributions have remained unclear. Similarly, hypothesis testing also showed no significant difference between urban and rural schools in the mean ratings of participation of religious bodies in plant



maintenance for effective implementation of the UBE program in Kogi State. This finding is in total agreement with a related study conducted by Fort (2017) which showed that faith-based organizations contributed to only 11% of all health facilities' presence in the country, doubling to 23% of all available beds in Kenya however the quality of contribution was very high. There is a need for these religious bodies to improve their commitment to education so that every public school age can be adequately educated in the right atmosphere if the impact of faith-based organizations on basic education must be felt.

The result of the study showed that religious bodies volunteered more in the rural schools than the urban schools to maintain school plants. Ibrahim (2014) showed that education, religious, and moral development were tied to each other, and as such it is important for these social activities to be executed concurrently in Nigerian Society. This means that religious bodies in the rural areas showed more commitment to the plants of UBE schools than those in the urban areas. It is therefore important for religious bodies in the towns to show more support to basic education in the maintenance of school plants as shown by their counterparts in the rural schools. Supporting this assertion, Mabeya, et al. (2010) pointed out that religious bodies' contributions are significant to the academic performance of students and as such cannot be ignored. The role of religious bodies in the school must not be undermined as they strongly influence the school system in the long term.

However, it was revealed that these religious bodies make significant contributions in rural and urban schools in conflict resolution that could damage school facilities, provision of charts, financial donations for purchasing learning equipment and repairing faulty facilities. Religious bodies may have specific areas where they pay attention to assisting basic schools to meet their educational needs. However, they need to probe further into the needs of these



schools as religious bodies stand a better chance of assisting these schools since religious bodies and the school are social institutions that co-exist and function for the common good of the public and as such must continue to complement one another for the common good of the society and this is why religious bodies must continue to assist and participate in all areas where the school require intervention including the maintenance of school plants which is strategic in the implementation of the UBE program. This position was supported by Odidi (2019) who showed in the findings that these religious organizations still support the school as part of their social responsibilities unlike in the past. It was also pointed out that these religious organizations have different challenges that limit their assistance to these schools. Their role must therefore not be ignored in implementing the UBE scheme.

On the other hand, religious bodies did not do much in rural and urban schools providing new equipment, painting classrooms affected by weather, drilling boreholes, maintaining toilet facilities, and maintaining sports facilities. It is possible that the lack of resources may hinder the full participation of religious bodies in the maintenance of school plants but their contributions cannot be ignored and as such must be sustainably provided for the school to meet its educational goals. In his study, Itulua-Abumere (2013) also indicated that religious association contributed to raising students who are articulate and moral in their activities as this contributed to the school administration. This also suggests that the lack of resources may be why religious bodies concentrated more on morality than plant maintenance.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were made based on the findings of the study:



1. The study showed the low contribution of religious bodies to plant maintenance for implementing the UBE programmes in public junior secondary schools in Kogi State, Nigeria. This result is possible considering the availability of dilapidated structures in UBE schools fostering poor actualization of the programme in the area. The low participation of religious bodies in the maintenance of school plants may be responsible for the poor condition of school facilities in most of the public junior secondary schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.
2. The study showed no significant difference among respondents on the extent the religious bodies contributed to plant maintenance for implementing the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in public junior secondary schools in Kogi State, Nigeria. Poor support was seemingly received from religious bodies by principals and teachers in the rural and urban schools in the areas.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in line with the findings of the study:

1. Religious bodies should be organized in schools where none exist. The body should be saddled with the responsibility for protecting the school plant for efficient and effective implementation of the basic education programme in Kogi State, Nigeria.
2. It is important for heads of religious bodies to initiate a commitment where part of their earnings can be invested in schools as part of their corporate social responsibilities as this will help to ensure that religious bodies contribute to the provision and maintenance of school plants for the implementation of basic education in public secondary schools in Kogi State.



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3. School administrators should identify local and international religious philanthropists who can assist in plant maintenance in their schools. This will help to draw several projects into the school for smooth implementation of the UBE programme in public secondary schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.
 4. The religious leaders should be involved in the routine maintenance of educational projects in their communities. This will go a long way to guarantee the protection of these projects for lifelong education.
 5. The religious bodies should take cognizance of all the areas of underperformance in UBE schools in Kogi state and holistically intervene in the short and long term to enable the schools to attain the outlined objectives of education.
 6. The principals should periodically call on religious bodies to assess their contributions to the school.



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