

**PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS'  
PERCEPTION ON THE ATTAINMENT OF GOAL 4, ON EDUCATION  
OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)**

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**Abstract**

*This Study investigated the perception of public secondary school principals and teachers on the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 4 which states; Ensure inclusive and equitable, quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and the sample size was 872 respondents made up of 45 Principal and 827 teachers using a purposive sampling technique. Three research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. The instrument for data collection was developed by the researchers and validated by experts, and the corrections and suggestions were used to develop the final questionnaire. The questionnaire was a modified likert scale. Percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significant difference using t-test statistics. The result of the study showed that both Public Secondary School Principals and the Teachers have very poor knowledge and low awareness of the SDGs 4, on education. It was therefore recommended that the Government at all levels and NGO's should adopt and utilize the result of this study by organizing training and retraining programme, formation of SDGs implementation committee at secondary school level among other things.*

**Keyword: Sustainable, Attainment, and Sustainable Development Goals.**

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**Introduction**

The goal 4 of sustainable development goals, states: ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong long learning opportunities for all by 2030. Sustainable development goals were adopted by the World Leaders for implementation in September 2015, at a historic United Nations Summit. It is a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people have peace and prosperity, which is hoped to be achieved by 2030 (Inter-Agency and Expert Group of SDGs, 2016). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which also known as Global Goals and Transforming our World has 2030 agenda, with a set of 17 Goals and 167 targets between them. Sustainable Development is a development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability

of the future generations to meet their own needs (United Nation, 2015). On the other hand, attainment is the action or facts of achieving a goal towards which one has set or worked. This study focuses on goal 4, which concerns education with 21 indicators as listed by United Nations Statistical Commission (2016) as shown below:

**Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality Primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning

Outcomes

4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people:

(a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex

4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill

4.5 By 2030 eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated

4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

4.6.1 Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for

sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes;

(d) Adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) singlesex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)

4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study

4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

4.c.1 Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary; (b) primary; (c) lower secondary; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country. It is unarguable that education is the critical factor in national and international development, and it is a key to the success or failure of all other sectors. Therefore, given the nature of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and the roles expected of Secondary School Principals and Teachers to play, it becomes imperative to assess their perception (awareness and knowledge) on the attainment of Sustainable Development goal 4 on Education in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Ebonyi State was created in 1996, and is located at the South East Geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It is bounded at the North by Benue State, South by Akwa Ibom, East by Cross-river State and West by Enugu State. Ebonyi State is majorly an Agrarian State, with solid mineral deposits yet to be properly harnessed.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:** The purpose of the study was to investigate the Public Secondary School Principals and teachers' perception (awareness and knowledge) of the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 on education.

### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

**The following research questions guided the study:**

1. To what extent are public secondary school principals and teachers aware of SDG 4 and its indicators?
2. How knowledgeable are secondary school principals and teachers on SDG 4 and its indicators.
3. How can the public secondary school principals and teachers be aware and **actively involved** in the attainment of sustainable development goal 4 on education in Ebonyi State.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The researchers adopted a descriptive survey research design, because it sought opinion from the respondents on what is being investigated, which is Public Secondary School Principals and teachers' perception on the attainment of Goal 4, on Education of sustainable development goals. The study was carried out in Ebonyi State, using the Public Secondary School Principals and Teachers. The population for the study was all the principals and teachers numbering 225 and 4135 respectively (Ebonyi State Secondary Edu. board, 2018). The sample for the study was 45 principals and 827 teachers. This sample size was drawn using purposive sampling technique of 20% since the population is large (in thousands). The data was collected using a 23, item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers. The questionnaire had four sections. Section 1 was on the demographic data of the respondents. Section 2 was on the respondents' awareness of SDGs 4 and its indicators, while section 3 was on the knowledge of the respondents on SDG 4 and its indicators and section 4, was on the measures to create awareness and actively involve the respondents to attain SDG 4. It was a modified likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD), with assigned values of 4,3,2,1 respectively. The instrument was validated by the experts, and their corrections and suggestions were used to develop the final questionnaire. Cronbach alpha reliability method was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items, which yielded a reliability index of 0.81, adjudged to very adequate. The research assistants were selected and given orientation on the method of administration and collection of the questionnaire to and from the respondents. Therefore, a total of 872 questionnaires were distributed, filled and collected back from the respondents the same day. The data collected were analyzed using percentage, mean and standard deviation while the hypothesis was tested using t-test at 0.05 significant difference.

### **Results**

The result of this study were obtained from the research questions answered and

analyzed data.

**Research question 1.**

To what extent are Public Secondary School Principals and Teachers' aware of SDGs 4 on education and its indicators?

**Table 1:** Frequency and percentage of Public Secondary School Principals and teachers who have information (aware) of SDGs 4 on education

Category	Aware	Not Aware	Total
Principals	13(28.8%)	32(71.2%)	45
Teachers	267(32.3%)	560(67.7%)	827
Grand total	280(32.1%)	592(67.9%)	872

It could be observed from the above data that the percentage awareness of both Public Secondary School Principals and the Teachers is very low, with 28.8% and 32.3% awareness respectively. While no awareness has 71.2% for Principal and 67.7% for teachers.

**Research question 2**

How knowledgeable are Public Secondary School Principals and teachers on SDGs 4 and its indicators.

**Table 2:** Mean ratings of Secondary School Principals and teachers on their knowledge of SDGs 4; on Education and its indicators

S/N	ITEMS/STATEMENTS	PRINCIPALS		TEACHERS		TOTAL
		X	SD	X	SD	
4.1	Ensure that all girls and boys have free, equitable and quality basic education	2.82	1.04	2.75	1.08	
4.2	All girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development for primary education	3.14	0.98	2.33	1.27	
4.3	Equal access for all women and men to affordable technology, vocational and university education	2.45	1.32	2.36	1.23	
4.4	Increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills.	2.37	0.89	2.21	1.28	
4.5	Eliminate gender disparity in education	2.85	1.08	2.81	1.00	
4.6	All youth, adults, men and women achieve literacy and numeracy	2.36	1.27	2.46	1.31	
4.7	All learners acquire the skill and knowledge needed to promote sustainable development	1.38	1.97	1.15	2.02	
	<b>Average Mean</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>2.28</b>	<b>1.28</b>	

The result in the table two showed that both Public Secondary School Principals and the teachers have very low /poor knowledge or even lack of knowledge on the SDGs 4 on education as principals' average mean is 2.42 with SD 1.14 and that of the teachers is 2.28 with SD 1.28

**Research question 3**

How can the Public Secondary School Principals and teachers be aware and actively involved in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education.

S/N	Item statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Mandatory training and retraining principals and teachers of Public Secondary Schools, at least quarterly	3.82	0.48	
2	Organization of advocacy and awareness campaign on SDGs 4 for principals and all the teachers	3.00	0.98	
3	Involvement of principals and teachers in the implementation by provision of adequate material	3.42	0.57	
4	Formation of SDGs 4 committee at the secondary school level in the State	3.34	0.61	
5	Provision of logistics for principals and teachers working in difficult terrain	2.80	1.05	
6	Enforcement of free and equal girls and boys access to secondary schools	2.64	1.12	
7	Equipping of the Vocational and Technical Secondary School	3.65	0.55	
8	Making Secondary Schools ICT and Computer complaint for student development	3.27	0.82	
9	Encouraging men and women literacy and numeracy through adult and non formal education	2.84	1.06	
10	Including the skills and knowledge needed to promote sustainable development in school curriculum	3.71	0.51	
	<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>0.84</b>	

Analysis in table 3 showed that both the Public Secondary School Principals and the Teachers over whemingly agreed on the measure on how to create awareness and actively involve them in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Education

**Hypothesis**

HO1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Public Secondary School Principals and the Teachers on their knowledge of SDGs 4 on education at 0.05 significance level.

**Table 4:** t-test summary for significant difference between the mean ratings of the Principals and the Teachers on their knowledge of SDGs 4, on education.

Variable	Number	$\bar{x}$	SD	DF	Tcal	Tcrit	Decision
Principals	45	2.42	1.14				
				870	0.1	1.96	HO1
Teachers	827	2.28	2.28				Accepted

In table 4, the calculated t-value is 0.1 at 0.5 level of significance. Since the calculated value is less than the table value of 1.96, the hypothesis is therefore accepted. There is no significant difference between the opinions of the Public Secondary School Principals and their Teachers on their knowledge of SDGs 4 on education and its indicators.

### **Discussion**

The attainment of goal 4, of the sustainable development goals, which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030, may be illusive in Ebonyi state secondary education sector, since both the Public Secondary School principals and the teachers are not yet properly informed and knowledgeable about the goal and indicators that will guide operation for its realization.

From the field work and findings from research questions 1, it was discovered that on 13 Principal out of 45 of them and 267 teachers out of 827 of them have information or are aware of sustainable development goal 4 on education. These figures are translated to 28.8% Principals and 32.3% teachers, which is an ugly trend.

Equally the findings revealed a very low/ poor knowledge or even lack of knowledge by both the principals and teachers on the SDGs 4 on education as they had 2.42 mean and, SD 1.14, and mean 2.28 and SD 1.28 respectively. The reason for this conclusion was that the Principals had knowledge in items 1, 2 and 5 with a mean of between 2.85 to 3.14, and had a mean below 2.50 in 3, 4, 6 and 7. Also the average mean was below 2.50, implying that a lot has to be done for our Public Secondary School Principals and teachers to brace up to the challenges of this Global Goal and indicators for actualizing complete education for our citizenry.

On the other hand, the findings of the study showed an overwhelming agreement on how the Principals and teachers could be actively involved and create adequate awareness on the issues under discussion.

### **Conclusion**

The position of secondary education as an integral part and critical component in education system in Nigeria should be given adequate attention it deserves by making the Principals and the teachers understand and work according to the global best practice on the attainment of SDGs 4 on education. Odo (2017) lamented that the just ended Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) suffered a lot of set backs in Nigeria, and warned that if care is not taken the same thing may likely affect the implementation of the on-going Sustainable Development Goals.

In view of the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended that the Governments at all levels and the viable Non-Governmental Organizations and

some Donor Agencies should adopt the results of this study and utilize it in organizing training and re-training programme, workshops, and formation of SDGs 4 implementation Committee in Secondary Schools and many more as listed in table 3 of this study.

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