

Challenges of Community Participation and Stakeholders Collaboration in Accelerated Innovation for Early Childhood Education in Two Rural Communities of Nigeria

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SINCLAIR - Building Enduring Partnerships

Iyanuoluwa Olalowo (*University of Ibadan, Nigeria*)

The recent stir of globalization and technological advancement has introduced rapid innovations to the world of education including education given to children in early years. However, as fast and captivating these innovations may be, continuity of such innovations at community level has been a mirage. This makes education gap to be temporarily filled especially for children rural communities. Guided by the Stakeholders' Theory of Stanford Research Institute, this study sought to explore the challenges facing communities' participation and stakeholders' collaboration in accelerated innovation for early childhood education in rural communities of Nigeria. The study adopted a qualitative research design of the phenomenological type. One rural settlement in Ibadan was purposively selected with the criteria of homing the only early childhood education centre that serves seven rural communities in the state. Chain-referral sampling was used to identify and select community leaders and stakeholders who have been engaged in the management of the centre. Sixteen respondents formed the total sample. Three research questions were raised and data was collected qualitatively through key informant interview and focused group discussions. Data gathered was transcribed, and analysed thematically. Findings from the study revealed that community members have been reluctant to some accelerated innovations in the centre because their expertise were not employed in the areas where they are skilled. Stakeholders, however, expressed concerns of difficulty in convincing other developmental partners whose thematic focus would be instrumental to innovation sustainability. The study recommends among others, advocating for and building enduring partnership across all tiers of education.