

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MANAGEMENT AND FUNDING OF
MASS EDUCATION AGENCY (MEA) IN THREE SELECTED LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREAS (LGAs) OF OSUN STATE

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ADP/99/H/1115

BEING

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
FACULTY OF ADMINISTRATION

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD
OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
OF OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY, ILE-IFE, NIGERIA

2006

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the operations of the Mass Education Agency (MEA) of Osun State and assessed the roles of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders in its funding. This was with a view to evaluating the impact and problems of MEA programme in the State.

Primary data were collected through questionnaire and interview.. Two sets of questionnaire were administered on the beneficiaries and officials of Osun State Mass Education Agency (OSMEA) respectively. The study population was 1,916 comprising 1,826 beneficiaries and 90 officials. Structured questionnaire was administered on 183 representing 10% of the randomly selected beneficiaries sampled. Out of these, 151 were retrieved, representing 82.5%. Out of the 90 OSMEA officials, 9 representing 10% were sampled and the questionnaire administered on them was retrieved. In addition, 27 respondents were purposively selected for personal interview. These included the Director, the Deputy Director and the Secretary of OSMEA. Two (2) officials and six (6) beneficiaries were selected from each of the selected LGAs. Secondary data were extracted from books, academic journals, relevant official documents as well as government publications from the Ministry of Education at Federal and State levels. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics.

The result showed that mass education played a vital role in the eradication of illiteracy and awakened the critical awareness of the beneficiaries in their environment. It revealed that OSMEA was faced with many problems including inability to pay the Instructors' salaries

(N1000/instructor/month and the supervisors' honoraria (N1,500/supervisor/month) as well as inadequate supply of vocational and instructional materials as confirmed by 82% of the respondents. This situation arose because none of the three tiers of government contributed to the funding of the agency despite the arrangement by which the federal government was supposed to contribute 65%, state government 25% and local government 10% respectively. It also showed that the change of focus of the Donor Agencies like UNDP/UNCEF from mass education to social development negatively affected the finances and viability of OSMEA. This change of focus had a negative effect over the management as mass education officials stationed in each of the 30 LGAs of Osun State were deployed to the Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) as class teachers. The study further revealed that beneficiaries and other stakeholders (churches and mosques) made financial contributions to assist in paying the salaries and allowances of instructors (NI 000/instructor.month) and supervisors (N1,500/supervisor/month) in their respective established mass education centres. This was confirmed by 80% of respondents from Ayedaade, 74% from Irepodun and 83.3% from Ife Central local governments areas.

The study concluded that the roles played by the beneficiaries and stakeholders were not enough to solve the problem confronting the mass education programme and that the funding arrangement for the programme was inadequate.