

PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND HEAD TEACHERS ON POLICY IMPLEMENTATION OF UBE PROGRAMMES IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN FCT, ABUJA

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Abstract

This paper examined the perception of Junior Secondary School administrators and head teachers on the implementation of the Universal Basic Education programme in the Federal Capital Territory. Three research questions guided the study. The design was survey using descriptive approach. Population for the study covered 886 junior secondary school teachers in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. A sample size of 24 administrators and 47 head teachers were drawn out of the population for data collection. The questionnaire was a structured type using likert modified four point scale. It was found that the implementation of the programme in the FCT is on-going but needs more effort. It was recommended that the government should ensure that the policies are fully implemented despite the challenges.

The existing educational programmes in Nigeria failed to meet the educational needs and aspirations of the populace while the educational, scientific and technology were on the increase. When it was envisaged with the global clarion call the proposal of the Universal Basic education by the then Nigerian government came on board; not only the proposal but also the launching.

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was launched by the former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo in Sokoto on the 30th of September, 1999. The programme was aimed at providing basic education that lays foundation for sustainable lifelong learning. It is aimed at providing reading, writing, numeric skills and applying the acquired skills to practical use both for the learner's benefit and the larger society (FGN, FME, 2000).

The introduction of UBE was as a result of the conviction that the effective channel to meaningful individual development, ensuring peace and sustainable property of the emerging nation is functional literacy. UBE, unlike the previous Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme of 1976 covers primary, Junior secondary, Nomadic education as well as Adult literacy with a variety of formal and non-formal activities and programmes carefully designed to enable the learner to acquire functional literacy and competence.

Flagging off the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, the Federal Government enumerated the aims and objectives of the programme.

Objectives of UBE

The Universal Basic Education at its time of launching has the following as its objectives and the reasons for its introduction

- Ensuring an interrupted access to 9years formal education by providing FREE and COMPULSORY basic education for every child of school going age under:
 - a) Six years of primary education
 - b) Three years of junior secondary education providing early childhood care development and education (ECCDE)
 1. Reducing school drop-out and improving relevance quality and efficiency
 2. Acquisition of literacy, numeracy, life skills and values for lifelong education and useful living.

3. Emphasis on curriculum diversification and relevance to effectively and adequately cover individual and community needs and aspirations
4. Introduction of rudiments of computer literacy
5. Appropriate continuous teacher professional development (*FME, 1999*)

In addition to foregoing, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) commission in its annual report in 2005 listed the objectives of the Universal Basic Education to include:

- a) Ensuring unfettered access to 9 years of formal basic education
- b) Provision of free, universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school going age
- c) Reducing drastically the incidence of drop out from the formal school system, through improved relevance, quality and efficiency; and
- d) Ensuring the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative communication and life skills, as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for laying a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

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The Universal Basic Education Implementation Plans

According to Federal Ministry of Education (FME) on UBE implementation (2000) detailed, strategic planning needed to ensure qualitative success of the UBE programme. The progressive and cumulative nature of this implementation plan would be JSS 1 classes of 2006/2007.

UBE year 8 – primary 1-6 JSS 1-2 class 2007/2008

UBE year 9 – primary 1-6/JSS 1-3 classes as follows:

UBE year 1 – Primary 1 class of 2000/2001

UBE year 2 – primary 1 and 2 classes of 2001/2002

UBE year 3 – primary 1, 2, and 3 classes of 2003

UBE year 4 – primary 1, 2, 3 and 4 classes of 2003/2004

UBE year 5 – primary 1-5 classes of 2004/2005

UBE year 6 – primary 1-6 classes of 2005/2006

UBE year 7 – primary of 2008/2009

Source: Federal Ministry of Education (2008)

The functions of Universal Basic Education

National policy on education is a document that guides educational bodies/agencies, educator and the management of human and material resources towards achieving the overall philosophy and objective of the nation, the policy clarifies the purpose, efforts vision and benefits of the current investment of both the public and private sectors in education

According to the Policy (2004) the functions of UBE production is inclusive, and brings within it the following:

- (1) Programme and initiative for childhood education and development
- (2) Programme and initiative for the acquisition of functional literacy, numbers and life skills, especially for adult between the age 15 years and above
- (3) Special programme on nomadic education
- (4) Out of school children non-formal programme for updating the knowledge and skills of person who left before acquiring the basic needs for life long learning.
- (5) Non-formal skills and apprenticeship training for adolescents and youth have not had the benefits of formal education
- (6) The formal school system from the beginning of primary education to the end of the junior secondary school.

The Beneficiaries of Target Group of UBE

According to Pai (2000) Universal Basic Education is targeted at reaching the enriched that is, Nigerian children, adolescents and even illiterate adults in all social conditions and geographical locations irrespective of sex, are to benefit by they in or out of the formal school system. The beneficiaries of UBE include everybody in the society including children, adults (persons aged 15 and above) the nomadic population and youths who have not had the benefits of formal education before.

Statement of the Problem

The outcome of Universal Basic Education programme so far has shown certain level of achievement in the provision of infrastructures, instructional materials, and recruitment of teachers and development of new curriculum.

However, there are still associated problems which are obvious hindrances to the UBE programme to assume its intended aims and objectives; such as poor funding, inadequate instructional material, inadequate human resources, inadequate structures and others.

Therefore, to ensure that the programme achieves its desired objective, the government at all levels must deal with these challenges. It is based on the on-going programme coupled with associated challenges that the researchers decided to carry out this study on the perception of Junior Secondary School Teachers in the Federal Capital Territory on Achievement and peculiar problems of UBE programme.

Research Questions: The following questions were used to guide the study:

1. What has the government so far done for the successful implementation of UBE programme?
2. What are the challenges of UBE programme in the FCT?
3. Apart from government efforts what should she do in order to enhance her efforts in the implementation of the programme?

Methodology

The study was conducted in Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The descriptive survey design was used. The chosen design was more suitable for gathering data on the perception of administrators and head of departments of FCT Junior secondary school on the achievement of Universal Basic Education. A total of 24 administrators and 47 head of departments (teachers) were drawn using stratified random sampling technique from 12 junior secondary schools in the FCT. Due consideration was given for equal representative on the basis of area council with respect to urban and rural schools. The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire titled, "Perception of Administrators and Head Teachers on the Achievement of UBE Programme Questionnaire (PAHTAUBEPQ)." The instrument had two sections; A and B; section A was on demographic information. Section B was on four point rating scale of likert. Three tables were used for data presentation and analysis, each containing relevant data for each of the research questions. The validity of the questionnaire was ensured through two expert opinions from measurement and evaluation before final consideration and the reliability score was high indicating that the instrument was reliable in achieving the study objectives. To collect data from the study, the researchers met with the teachers with the help of two trained research assistants both for distribution and collection of the seventy one copies of questionnaire. This measure ensured that the sampled teachers completed the questionnaire. Data collected were later subjected into analysis to answer the research questions using frequency and simple percentage. The value of 2.5 was used to determine which item in the questionnaire that is significant (agree) and which is not (disagree). 2.5 is the mean of the modified 4-point Likert scale used in analysing the data.

Data Analysis

Research Question One: What has the government done so far for the successful implementation of UBE Programme?

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of Effort Made So Far by the Government for the Successful Implementation of UBE Programme

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	x	SD	Decision
1	Lunching of UBE in FCT	35	31	3	2	3.39	0.71	Agree
2	Establishment of UBE Commission	36	33	1	1	3.46	0.61	Agree
3	Establishment of policy guidelines on UBE programme	35	27	9		3.37	0.71	Agree
4	Establish of State and Local Government Authority Board	32	34	5		3.38	0.71	Agree
5	Providing free education for UBE programme	34	26	9	2	3.30	0.69	Agree
6	Ensuring that UBE is compulsory	26	36	7	2	3.21	0.66	Agree
7	Raising awareness campaign on the importance of child education	33	31	7		3.37	0.77	Agree
8	Encouraging girl-children education	30	34	4	3	3.28	0.68	Agree
9	Encouraging adult and nomadic education	34	26	9	2	3.30	0.69	Agree
10	Provision of adequate infrastructure:	23	41	3	4	3.17	0.65	Agree
11	Teacher professional development e.g. organizing workshops and seminar.	31	31	5	4	3.25	0.67	Agree
12	Motivation of UBE teachers e.g. paying teachers salary promptly.	32	30	7	2	3.30	0.69	Agree
13	Adequate provision for special Education	33	29	6	3	3.30	0.69	Agree

Table 1 shows that item 1 has 35 respondents who strongly agreed, 31 just agreed and the rest disagreed with a mean of 3.39 and SD of 0.71. Item two which is on establishment of UBE commission has 36 respondents who strongly agreed and 33 respondents agreed and two disagreed having a mean of 3.46 and SD of 0.61. Item 3 which is on establishment of policy guidelines on UBE programme, 35 respondents agreed and 27 agreed only nine respondents disagreed to the opinion having mean of 3.37 and SD of 0.71. Item 5, 6, 7 and 8 has the following number of respondents who strongly agreed to the statement 34, 22, 33, 30 and 34 while on the side of agree we have 26, 36, 31, 34 and 26 respondents respectively, while the rest are on the negative side, that is, not accepted with the following mean scores: 3.30, 3.21, 3.37 and SD of 0.69, 0.66 and 0.77. Most of the respondents still strongly believed on the positive statements concerning UBE in the FCT as seen on item 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13 having the following mean scores of respondents 3.30, 3.17, 3.25, 3.30, 3.21, 3.37, and SD of 0.68, 0.68, 0.65, 0.67, and 0.69 respectively. Similar high scores are on the agree column as indicated by the respondents while very low number of respondents disagreed. From the analysis above it can be affirmed here that the government has carried out so many activities to ensure successful implementation of UBE programme.

Research Question 2: Apart from what the government has done, what are the challenges of UBE Programme

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Analysis of Challenges of UBE Programme

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Decision
1	Financial constraints and mismanagement of fund	38	25	7	1	3.41	0.72	Agree
2	Insufficient competent teachers	25	36	4	6	3.13	0.64	Agree
3	Overcrowded classrooms	40	24	4	3	3.42	0.73	Agree
4	Narrow curriculum content	19	43	8	1	3.13	0.64	Agree

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5	Non-availability of infrastructural facilities to implement UBE programme	32	32	5	2	3.32	0.69	Agree
6	Non availability of instructional materials	24	41	2	4	3.20	0.66	Agree
7	Politicking educational plans and resources	31	33	6	1	3.32	0.62	Agree
8	Insecurity in the country e.g. the movement of Boko Haram that Western Education is sin	40	29	1	1	3.52	0.76	Agree
9	Cultural and religious factors in some part of the country e.g. preference of Qur'anic, Almajiri, and pudah system of education to formal education.	31	34	3	3	3.31	0.69	Agree
10	Lack of parental involvement and commitment to their children's education	35	31	3	2	3.39	0.72	Agree
11	Faulty planning process	32	30	7	2	3.30	0.69	Agree
12	Non-effective government policies towards the implementation of UBE programme	39	25	5	2	3.42	0.73	Agree
13	Absence of authentic statistical data	31	33	4	3	3.30	0.72	Agree
14	Poor motivation of UBE teachers	33	28	4	6	3.24	0.67	Agree
15	Lack of support by most of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Nigeria.	34	28	6	3	3.31	0.64	Agree

Table two above shows that item 1 has 38 respondents who strongly agreed, 25 agreed while 7 respondents disagreed with mean score of 3.41 and SD of 0.72. In Item 2, 25 strongly agreed 36 agreed and the rest disagreed. Having a mean score of 3.13 and SD of 0.72 On item 3, 40 respondents strongly agreed, 24 just agreed the rest also disagreed. Item 4 has 19 respondents who strongly agreed, 43 agreed while 5 disagreed. Still high number of respondents strongly agree with the many of the statements as can be seen on items; 5,6,7,8, and 9 which have the following scores; 32, 24, 31, 41 and 31, on the agreed column the following scores are seen 32, 41, 33, 29 and 34 respectively having the following mean scores; 3.32, 3.20, 3.32, 3.52, and 3.31 with SD of 0.69, 0.62, 0.76 and 0.69. The rest of the various scores are on disagree and strongly disagree. On item 10, 35 respondents strongly agreed 31 agreed while 3 disagreed. For item 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, the following number of respondents strongly agree, 32, 39, 31, 33 and 434 with mean score of 3.30, 3.42, 3.30, 3.24, 3.31 and SD of 0.69, 0.73, 0.72, 0.67 and 0.6, under agreed column we have; 30, 25, 33, 28 and 28 respectively the rest of their respondents are on the negation that is, disagreed. The data analyzed show that the programme already has obvious challenges to its realization.

Research Question 3: What should the government do to enhance its efforts in the Implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of What the Government Should Do To Enhance Its Efforts in the Implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	X	SD	Decision
1	Effective planning and management of resources	50	17	2	2	3.62	0.79	Agreed
2	Adequate funding for State UBE Boards	45	22	4		3.58	0.78	Agreed
3	Proper management of fund	41	24	3	3	3.45	0.73	Agreed
4	Adequate provision of infrastructure e.g. provision of classroom and classroom furniture.	48	20	1	2	3.61	0.79	Agreed
5	Renovation and rehabilitation of schools and classrooms.	41	25	3	2	3.48	0.82	Agreed
6	Provision of free learning materials e.g. textbooks, exercise books	39	22	9	1	3.39	0.79	Agreed
7	Management and intelligent utilization of human and material resources	34	28	5	4	3.3	0.69	Agreed
8	Provision of adequate competent teachers to minimize the rate of drop-outs in the schools.	40	25	5	1	3.46	0.61	Agreed
9	Addressing cultural and religious factors that hinder access to school	42	21	5	3	3.44	0.73	Agreed
10	Emphasizing the education of the girl-child	22	44	4	1	3.23	0.67	Agreed
11	Evenly distribution of education facilities	42	24	4	1	3.51	0.75	Agreed
12	Addressing the Boko Haram believe that Western education is sin.	44	20	6	1	3.51	0.71	Agreed
13	Adequate professional development and motivation of teachers	44	20	5	2	3.49	0.75	Agreed
14	Non Politicization of education	35	28	6	2	3.35	0.70	Agreed
15	Adequate provision of computer facilities	30	33	6	2	3.28	0.68	Agreed
16	Adequate provision of educational facilities for the special needs children	43	23	3	2	3.51		Agreed
17	Provision of well equipped libraries and laboratories	35	28	3	3	3.28	0.28	Agreed
18	Provision of curriculum guidelines and teaching aids.	41	22	3	3	3.45	0.74	Agreed
		57.7	31.0	7.0	4.2			

Table 3 shows that item 1 has 50 respondent who strongly agreed, 17 agreed and two disagreed with a mean score of 3.62, and SD of 0.79. On item 2, 45 respondents strongly agreed, 22 agreed while 4 disagreed with a mean score of 3.58 and 0.78 SD. Item 3, 41 strongly agreed, 24 agreed while 3 disagreed. On item 4, 48 respondents strongly agreed, 20 agreed, the rest disagreed with a mean of 3.45 and SD 0.73. Looking at items 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 the following scores were obtained under strongly agreed; 41, 39, 34, 40 and 42 while 25, 22, 20, 25 and 21 just agreed, the rest number of respondents disagreed respectively with mean score of 3.45, 3.39, 3.30, 3.46, 3.44 and SD of 0.82, 0.79, 0.69, 0.61, 0.73 . The same high scores of respondent are seen on item 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 under strongly agreed with the statements having the following scores 42, 44, 44, 35, 30, and 43, under agreed of the same statement, we have 24, 20, 20, 28, 33, and 23 respondents respectively. On item 17, 35 respondents strongly agreed, 28 agreed the rest disagreed. Finally, item 18, 41 respondents strongly agreed, 22 agreed while 5 and 3 respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with mean

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score of 3.45 and SD of 0.74. The challenges of UBE has not yet reached to a level that it cannot be surmounted there are still ways the respondents agreed that can be used to overcome the problems

Discussion of Findings

The matter of implementation of Universal Education Policy in the FCT has several aspects to it. There are several issues to contends with such as infrastructural development; provision of facilities and equipment; Widespread dissemination of the policy for acceptability and positive response; preparing supporting documents for the policy; developing relevant and culturally appropriate teaching and learning materials and testing them; training personnel such as teachers and school managers, monitoring and evaluation to ensure quality assurance; conducting research periodically to assess whether targets are being met and funding.

According to Tsafe (2013) the implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) depends on quite a number of things which ranges from funding, staffing, infrastructure, etc. UBE act (2004) stresses that the implementation of the Universal Basic Education shall be financed from: Federal government block grant of not less than 2% of its consolidated revenue fund. Funds or contribution in form of federal guaranteed credits and local and international donor grants.

The challenges so far faced by the programme are over whelming, ability to allocate enough funds for the programme remains the greatest challenge. From 1999 to date, the central government has spent billions of naira on the education sector alone and little to show for such huge expenditure (Folorunsho, 2009). The amount seems to be huge but it is not measuring up with the challenges in the education sector as observed by Dike (2001) and Igbuzor (2006) who affirmed that government has been allocating inadequate amount to education which have affected negatively to the implementation of the programme. Improper planning on the other hand affected negatively on the implementation of the programme. When the plan is punctured with lopsided ideas definitely the implementation will not go well. UNESCO (2012) disclosed that poor planning on the side of the government is richly affecting the implementation of the programme.

The problems identified are not insurmountable, therefore, can be tackled by both government and other stakeholders. Being a people oriented programme, the people should properly know about the scheme by emphasizing educational guidance for the parents. The parents in FCT more especially the indigenes should be properly guided on the relevant of the programme Government on their side should have the political will to implement every bit of the act that established it. For instance, section 2 (2) of the UBE Act which states that the educational police force must visit the major roads in the cities, mechanic villages, artisan workshops to fish out any child learning a trade but less than 16 year old. These children along side with their parents should be questioned on their reasons for not sending their children to school being that it is free and compulsory.

The issue of funding should be looked into, as every government says that they have been spending huge amount of money on education but there is no significant impact. Let every amount budgeted be implemented in education and the implementation guideline should be strictly followed to ensure compliance.

Evaluation and monitoring by the state ministry of education should be taken seriously to wake up stakeholders to their statutory responsibilities. First of all, they inspectors and supervisors should be empowered then send out on regular bases to ensure smooth monitoring and running of the programme.

Massive provision of teaching and learning facilities and improvement of existing ones will enhance programme implementation.

Conclusion

The main reason for this study is to investigate the achievement so far made by the Universal Basic Education in FCT. The rationale for this is to deal with the problems affecting the full implementation of Universal Basic Education programme.

From the discoveries made, there are great impacts so far in various schools in the Federal capital territory. But despite the impact so many challenges are facing the success of the programme being an on-going programme. These problems cut across all the stakeholders such as the government, the school itself and the parents. There were also investigations on what the government should do in order to tackle these challenges squarely. It was recommended by the researcher on the way out of the challenges.

Recommendations

It is important here to make some recommendations based on the findings:

1. The government and other stakeholders should endeavour and ensure that extra classrooms are built to cater for the number of pupils who have been admitted.
2. There should be adequate facilities like library, laboratory, and ICT centres in the schools for the purpose of achieving the goals and objectives of the programme.
3. Regular inspections of schools should be carried out to maintain standard likewise on supervision of instruction both internal and external to improve teaching and learning in schools.
4. Parent Teachers Associations and philanthropic Organization should be encouraged to help provide some of the materials needed for the programme as the government cannot do it all.
5. The federal government should also increase the funds she gives to UBEC to ensure the quality and successful implementation and of the programme .

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