

EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

This study employed the descriptive survey research design to examine the extent to which the Universal Basic Education programme objectives has been attained, relative to urban and rural school locations in Delta State. The population consisted of all Government owned Universal Basic Education schools in Delta State, numbering about 1649, out of which 494 schools were sampled by random selection from both urban cum rural areas of the State. School Head of each selected school was sampled. A checklist, which was subjected to face and content validation through expert judgement served as instrument to generate data. Test - retest method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument and it gave a reliability index of 0.89. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for data analysis. The results were used to answer two research questions and test two null hypotheses at 5%alpha-level. Major findings in this work were that the UBE objectives have been reasonably implemented by Delta State, except for two; that the level of material resources available for UBE schools of Delta State was high, except for power supply, library and laboratory. The results also showed that UBE objectives were being evenly implemented in urban schools and rural schools of Delta State. Arising from the findings, the study recommends that there should be continuous sensitization of stakeholders through workshops, seminars and publications, and that existing legislations on child rights should be enforced to check issues of school drop outs.

KEY WORDS: Objectives, Implementation, Basic Education, Delta State.

Introduction:

Education has always been given high recognition as a core fundamental right of citizens of any Nation. This is because of its transformative ability and the development it brings to the individual and society at large. Every society have their peculiar form of education from one generation to another. The issue of basic education has gained universal attention and interest. It is supposed to be compulsory for every Nigerian child to acquire basic education. The National Policy on Education in Nigeria indicated that education will be used as an instrument par excellence for national development (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004). Education is expected to provide literacy, enlightenment, political consciousness, stability, national integration and development. Article 26 of the United Nations Charter of 1948 stated that everyone has the right to basic education, and that at this level, education shall be compulsory and free. The millennium development goal number two (MDG-2) envisaged that by the year 2015 children of school going

age must be made to complete a full course of basic education. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria was a response to the resolutions of the World conference on Education for All (WCEFA), held in Jomtein, Thailand in 1990 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) on Education for All (UNESCO, 2005).

Prior to the introduction of the UBE programme, Nigeria has had the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the 6-3-3-4 system of education. These programmes did not fully achieve the educational needs of the citizens because of the problem of implementation such as inadequate supply of human and material resources, poor instructional materials, funding and challenges of security. Eventually, the laudable goals of these educational programmes were not achieved, (Igabari & Odili, 2015). The Universal Basic Education (UBE) is another programme introduced to underscore the importance of basic education. According to Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2004), the universal basic education programme has been designed to cater for a wide range of needs such as formal and informal education and skills development programmes with a view to enable the individual to live a meaningful life and contribute in developing the society, derive maximum benefits economically and culturally from the society so as to discharge their civic responsibilities as patriotic citizens.

The specific objectives of UBE programme are spelt out in the implementation guidelines (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004) as follows:

- i) Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
- ii) Provide free and compulsory basic education for children of school age.
- iii) Reducing drastically the incidents of school drop-outs and catering for academic needs of young people, persons whose schooling was interrupted, by providing relevant forms of complementary approaches to provide and promote basic education.
- iv) Ensuring the inculcation of the appropriate levels of literacy, enumerative, manipulative and communicative and life skills, ethics, morality and civil norms needed to effectively implement the UBE agenda.

Igabari and Odili (2015), evaluated the levels of human resources available to enhance the conditions for instruction in schools through Teacher quality improvement, updating of infrastructural facilities and enhanced availability of instructional materials. Furthermore, to realize the UBE objectives, material resources must be adequately supplied, including classrooms, offices for teachers, provision of suitable textbooks, well-structured library and other instructional materials, availability of chair and desks, science and computer laboratory, provision of good staff rooms among others. Nweke, Alumode, Umahi, and Chinelo (2022), investigated the scope of implementation of Universal Basic Education programme in South-East of Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The study used the descriptive survey design with 1,348 Junior Secondary School Principals and Primary School Head Teachers as sample. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire prepared by experts.

Descriptive statistics were employed to answer research questions while t-test accounted for testing the hypotheses at 0.05 significance level. The study revealed that extent of implementation of free universal basic education programme in South-East is low and also, that the extent to which the need of drop-out of basic school children have been catered for is low. The findings from the tested hypotheses concluded that there were significant differences in the mean ranking between male teachers and female teachers on the extent to which basic education has addressed the issue of drop outs in South-East Schools. It recommended that schools should be equipped with adequate human and material resources.

Another study was also carried out by Obasi and Madu (2019) to assess the implementation of the UBE programme in Imo State, Nigeria. With two research questions and

one hypothesis on a descriptive research design, the study sampled 501 staff of which 216 was from Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and 285 staff of State Ministry of Education. The instrument used was a checklist and a self-structured questionnaire to collect data. The study concluded that UBE programme in Imo State was partially free and was not fully implemented. Oladimeji and Ogunyebi (2019), carried out an assessment of how the UBE programme was being implemented in South-West of Nigeria. The research revealed that the implementation has not been thorough, there were shortages in qualified teachers, and that the proportion of qualified teachers was not in conformity with the UBE guidelines. The recommendation was that appropriate authorities should make adequate provisions to employ additional qualified teachers, organize regular seminars and conferences for teachers and should provide other necessary facilities to upscale the level of implementation in South-West of Nigeria. Izuka, Uche and Chukwuemeka (2022), investigated the implementation of UBE in Anambra State. The study adopted a survey research design with four research questions. The findings revealed that many facilities for implementing the UBE programme were available, but not sufficiently utilized, that teacher to student ratio was too high, and opined that the UBE scheme has done little in providing access to basic education for school going children in the study area.

Abimbola, Erunke and Abdul (2024) undertook a study on UBE policy and quality of Primary Education in Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The study adopted the quantitative and qualitative research approach. Data collection was done from Primary and Secondary schools using questionnaires and a well-structured interview. The findings revealed that the mandate of UBE Policy have not improved the standard of primary education in the Federal Capital Territory. The reason adduced was that important facilities needed for UBE policy were grossly inadequate in UBE schools. The study also showed that the introduction of UBE scheme in FCT has not improved access to needed free and compulsory basic education for children of school age. The study went ahead to recommend that Government, through the UBE Commission, should intensify efforts to establish effective institutional framework for monitoring teaching and learning so as to drastically reduce the rate of child-hawking and school drop-out within the area. Ossai (2022) identified some challenges facing the UBE implementation to include the provision of resources and infrastructures, inadequate number of institutions and poor funding. Nanighe (2015) argued that inexperienced teachers, poor infrastructure, inadequate finance and poor political will were major challenges opposing the successful implementation of the UBE programme. Ossai (2022) frowned at how funds released by Government for education programme were diverted and how many facilities were left to rot. The study suggested that Government should shop for qualified teachers, adequate resources and facilities for teaching and learning, ensure security and institute regular school inspection and supervision so that the objectives of the UBE can be realized.

Statement of the Problem

With all the efforts and resources Government have put into basic education programme, it is very sad to see the high level of illiteracy, school drop-outs, child hawkers and moral decadence all on the increase. The UBE programme, if well implemented has the ability to change this narrative and ensure quicker development of the nation. It is against this back-drop that the researcher decided to evaluate the depth of implementation of the UBE objectives and resource availability in Delta State. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ascertain the extent to which the objectives of the Universal Basic Education Programme has been implemented in Delta State, and to assess the state of material resources available in both urban and rural schools.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following questions and hypotheses were constructed to guide the study:

1. To what extent has the UBE objectives been implemented by Delta State?
2. What is the level of material resources available for implementing the UBE programme in both urban and rural schools of Delta State?

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the rate of implementation of the UBE objectives between urban and rural schools in Delta State.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the level of material resources available for implementing the UBE programme between urban and rural schools in Delta State.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to determine the extent to which the UBE programme is implemented and its objectives attained, relative to urban and rural schools within Delta State. The population of study comprised of all Government owned UBE schools within Delta State, numbering about 1,649. A random sample of 494 schools was obtained from both urban and rural locations in the State. The School Head of each selected school received and responded to the instrument. A checklist on extent of implementation of UBE objectives and availability of material resources was used to collect data. It was first subjected to face and content validation through expert judgement. Test-retest method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. With a reliability index of 0.89, it was considered reliable. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for analysis of data so as to answer research questions and test hypotheses.

Presentation of Results

The analysis and presentation of result were organized around the core research questions and null hypothesis.

Research Question 1

To what extent has the UBE objective been implemented within Delta State?

Table 1: Level of implementation of the objectives of UBE

S/N	UBE Objective	No of Respondents	Not Implemented		Partially Implemented		Fully Implemented	
			No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Providing free UBE for children of school going age	494	8	1.6	418	84.6	68	13.8
2	Developing a strong consciousness for education	494	15	3.0	398	80.6	81	16.4
3	Commitment to vigorous promotion of education	494	69	14.0	332	67.2	93	18.8
4	Acquisition of literacy skills, numeracy skills, manipulative, communicative and life skills	494	37	7.5	380	76.9	77	15.6
5	Acquisition of levels of ethical, moral, & civic values	494	101	20.5	344	69.6	49	9.9
6	Drastic reduction in school drop-out	494	103	20.9	331	67.0	60	12.1

Table 1 shows the rating of the implementation of the six core UBE objectives in Delta State, as perceived by Head-teachers. From the results, 'Provision of free, compulsory UBE for children of school age' is considered as highly implemented with only 1.6% dissenting. Along the same

line, the objective of 'Development of a strong consciousness and interest for education' is considered implemented with 3% dissenting. The objective of 'Strong commitment to vigorous promotion of education' is considered implemented with 14% dissenting. The objective of 'Acquisition of literacy skills, numeracy, manipulative skills, communicative and life skills' is considered implemented with 7.5% dissenting. However, the objective of 'Acquisition of levels of ethical, moral, & civic values' is considered implemented but dissention of 20.5% shows that much needs to be done. Finally, the objective of 'Drastic reduction in school drop-out' is considered implemented but with a high level of dissent at 20.9 % .

Research Question 2

What is the level of material resources available for implementing the UBE programme in both urban and rural schools within Delta State?

Table 2: Availability of basic facilities for Urban Schools in Delta State

S/N	Facility	No of schools	Sufficiently Available		Not Sufficiently Available		Availability Ranking
			No	%	No	%	
1	Classroom blocks and staff rooms	279	203	72.8	76	27.2	2
2	Head-teacher's Office	279	266	95.3	13	4.7	1
3	Chairs, Tables for staff. Desks for pupils/students	279	169	60.6	110	39.4	4
4	Well-equipped library	279	62	22.2	217	77.8	6
5	Science/ICT/Computer Lab, and workshop for Intro-tech.	279	34	12.2	245	87.8	8
6	Chalk/marker board	279	192	68.8	87	31.2	3
7	Electricity supply/Generator	279	56	20.1	223	79.9	7
8	Toilet facilities	279	155	55.6	188	44.4	5
Aggregate		279	142	50.9	137	49.1	

Criteria for sufficiently available is 60% and above

Table 3: Availability of basic facilities for Rural Schools in Delta State

S/N	Facility	No of schools	Sufficiently Available		Not Sufficiently Available		Availability Ranking
			No	%	No	%	
1	Classroom blocks and staff rooms	215	173	80.5	42	19.5	4
2	Head-teacher's Office	215	199	92.6	16	7.4	1
3	Chairs, Tables for staff. Desks for pupils/students	215	181	84.2	34	15.8	3
4	Well-equipped library	215	28	13.0	187	87.0	7
5	Science/ICT/Computer Lab, and workshop for Intro-tech.	215	25	11.6	190	88.4	8
6	Chalk / marker board	215	183	85.1	32	14.8	2
7	Electricity supply/Generator	215	41	19.1	174	80.9	6
8	Toilet facilities	215	133	61.9	82	38.1	5
Aggregate		215	120	56.0	95	44.0	

Criteria for sufficiently available is 60% and above

Tables 2 and 3 are representations of the level of availability of basic facilities in Urban schools and rural Schools, respectively. Classroom blocks and staff rooms (72.8%), Head-teacher's Office (95.3%), Chairs, Tables for staff, desks for pupils/students (60.6%) and Chalk / marker boards (68.8%), were regarded as sufficiently available in urban schools of Delta State. Well-equipped library (22.2%), Science/ICT/Computer Laboratory / workshop for Intro – tech. (12.2%), Electricity supply/Generator (20.1%) and Toilet facilities (55.6%) were considered not to be sufficiently available.

Similarly, for schools in rural locations, Classroom blocks and Staff rooms (80.5%), Head-teacher's Office (92.6%), Chairs, Tables for Staff / Desks for pupils/students (84.2%), Chalk / marker board (85.1%) and Toilet facilities () were considered to be sufficiently available. Well-equipped library (13.0%), Science/ICT/Computer Laboratory / workshop for Intro – tech. (11.6%) and Electricity supply/Generator (19.1%) were considered not to be sufficiently available.

A Spearman's rank correlation coefficient of facilities between urban schools and rural schools gave a correlation coefficient of 0.90, showing that they exhibit a strong positive relationship.

Hypotheses

The formulated hypotheses were analysed at 0.05 significance level.

Hypotheses 1:

There is no significant difference in the rate of implementing the UBE objectives between urban and rural schools.

A test of this hypothesis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Aggregate Level of implementation of UBE objectives

Location	Extent of implementation				χ^2	d.f.	p-value	Decision *
	N	Not	Partially	Fully				
Urban	279	30	210	39	0.331	2	0.195	Hypothesis
Rural	215	26	157	32				accepted

*significant $p < 0.05$

From Table 4, $\chi^2 (2) = 0.331$ and $p = 0.195$, Since $p > 0.05$ the null hypothesis is accepted. This means there is no significant difference in the extent of implementing of UBE objectives between urban schools and rural schools within Delta State. Therefore, the UBE objectives were being evenly implemented in both urban schools and rural schools of Delta State.

Hypotheses 2:

There is no significant difference in the level of material resources available for the implementation of UBE programme between urban schools and rural schools within Delta State.

Test of this hypothesis is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Aggregate Level of Material resources availability in urban schools and rural schools

Location	Extent of Availability			χ^2	d.f.	p-value	Decision *
	Not Sufficient	Sufficient	Total				
Urban	137	142	279	1.19	1	0.151	Hypothesis
Rural	95	120	215				accepted
Total	232	262	494				

*significant $p < 0.05$

From Table 5, $\chi^2 (1) = 1.95$ and $p = 0.151$. Since $p > 0.05$ the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of material resources available for the implementation of UBE programme between urban schools and rural schools within Delta State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are summarized below:

- i) All the UBE objectives have been reasonably implemented in Delta State, except for 'Acquisition of ethical, moral and civic values' and 'Drastic reduction in school drop-out', which has a long way to go.
- ii) Level of material resources available for UBE schools within Delta State is high, except for power supply, library and laboratory.
- iii) The UBE objectives are being evenly implemented in both urban and rural schools of Delta State.
- iv) There is even provision of material resources to both urban schools and rural schools of Delta State.

These findings did not agree with Ossai (2022) that there is inefficient implementation of UBE in Delta province, that the purpose and objectives of UBE is not in the visible conscious of both Government and the public. The findings are in tandem with Obasi and Madu (2019) that UBE programme was yet to be fully implemented, and was partially free because there were some items that were assumed to be free, but were not free. It also agrees with Nweke et al (2022) that implementation of free UBE has been partial, and that this challenge of school drop out is still prevalent. It is in consonance with Izuka et al (2022) that facilities were available but insufficient and that for children of basic school age, compulsory education has not yet been achieved. The findings from research question (2) revealed that the level of material resources in urban schools are same as those of rural schools. Generally, the aggregation of levels of material resources needed for implementation of UBE was not sufficiently available in all the schools. This study found that there is no significant difference in the level of material resources available in urban schools and rural schools. This is in consonance with Igabari and Odili (2015), and also, Oladimeji and Ogunyebi (2019) that there was uniformity in distribution of basic facilities, among others and there is gross shortage of facilities especially in rural schools. With these findings it becomes pertinent to understand that to realize the objectives of this UBE programme, material resources must be sufficiently available across both urban and rural schools.

Conclusion:

This study was intended to ascertain the state of implementation for the objectives of Universal Basic Education scheme in Delta State, and to evaluate the level of material resources available in both urban and rural schools. The findings were that some of the UBE objectives have been reasonably implemented by Delta State, level of material resources available for UBE schools within Delta State is above average and that the UBE programme has received even attention in both urban and rural schools of Delta State.

Recommendations

In view of the results of this study, recommendations are made that:

- i. There is real need for continued sensitization of all stakeholders on the objectives and goals of the UBE programme, through workshops, seminars and publications.
- ii. Legislations on child rights to education should be enforced to reduce the rate at which children drop out of school.
- iii. There should be better funding for basic schools to improve resource availability.

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