
STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTION OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION IN KADUNA AND PLATEAU STATES

Dr. BEATRICE AHMADU BAHAGO

ABSTRACT

The study looked into the perception of stakeholders on the implementation of Universal Basic Education for sustainable development. Five research questions were raised during the course of the study. The population consists of 1000 stakeholders (30 SUPEB staff, 250 teachers, 360 students and parents) participated in the study. A reliability coefficient of 0.77 of Cronbach Alpha was determined. Descriptive statistics comprising percentages mean and standard deviation was used for data analysis. Findings revealed that though there is remarkable difference between UBE and UPE, funding was inadequate. Teachers' in terms of quantity and quality are not adequate. UBE impact on sustainability is being threatened by incessant strikes due to lack of job satisfaction by teachers. It was therefore recommended that improved funding be made to enhance prompt payment of staff salaries.

Introduction

Education has remained a central technique in transforming societies from generation to generation. It equips beneficiaries with skills, relevant knowledge and habits for surviving the ever changing environment. It is a weapon of bringing about positive change in the behaviour as well as assisting individuals in shaping human talents human talents and skills. Pre independence education was not geared towards meeting the social economic and political advancement of Nigeria (Yoloye, 2004). This informed the launching of Universal Primary Education

(UPE) in 1976 by the Military government led by General Olusegun Obasanjo after several attempts after independence to ensure accessibility of education failed due to numerous challenges encountered by the scheme through wrong projections. The programme failed as a result of enrolment explosion, shortage of teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities and inadequate funding (Adepoju & Fabiyi, 2007).

When the present democratic government came into power in 1999 in consonant with global focus on education since the 1990 summit on world conference on

Education for All (EFA) and subsequent EPI conferences to which Nigeria is a signatory to all of them. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) scheme was re-launched on 30th September 1999 with the aim of achieving the following objectives:

- Developing among citizens a strong commitment to the rigorous promotion of education.
- The provision of free universal basic education for every school age child.
- Reducing drastically the incidence of drop outs in the formal school system through improved relevance, quality and efficiency.
- Catering for school drop-outs and out of school children/adolescents thorough appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education.
- Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills, as well as ethical, moral and civil values, needed for laying a solid foundation for life long learning.

Universal Basic Education according to JOMITEIN Declaration 1990 is not limited to school and is not tied to formal education; Obanya (2000) asserts that it is a policy measure that is aimed at bringing reform in basic education. Obanyastates' that it is a reform measure intended to bring about change in the ways we have been implementing basic education so as to become more responsive to the needs of our people.

Steer and Wathne (2009) citing UNESCO described basic education as the first nine years progressively extending to 12 years of formal education, of which the first five or six are often identified as, primary "and the rest however secondary." It also includes basic education for youths and adults who did not have the basic opportunity or possibility to receive and complete basic education at the appropriate age. Basic education prepares population for further education, for an active citizenship. It meets the basic needs including learning to learn, the acquisition of numeracy, literacy and scientific and technological knowledge as applied. BE is viewed as the tool or the rapid transformation of Nigeria, It is regarded as the most efficient way through which the citizens of Nigeria can face the challenges of tomorrow.

The modalities put in place by the Federal Government for the implementation of the UBE programme in 1999. Apart from ensuring that the educational programme should be universal, free and compulsory, it should be collaborative, with local, state, communities, civil societies, international conference, etc as state holders are supposed to partner in its implementation. This is geared towards averting the pitfalls of the failed Universal Primary Education (UPE). The UBE act provides sanctions against parents who fail to send their children to school. On the issue of a robust and relevant curriculum that is keeping with our needs and aspiration as a nation.

Despite these modalities mapped out by the Federal Government, UBE has encountered problems that are threatening the realization of its objectives. One of the issues is what is to be taught on the new curriculum, many think the curriculum is too thin on moral content. Also, there are doubts on the feasibility of students acquiring entrepreneur skills to be acquired through the basic technology contained in the new curriculum. This may undermine our quest of facing the challenges of poverty, unemployment and youth restlessness, and militancy.

Financial and human resources allocation to the education sector

has been grossly inadequate. During 1999 and 2002, when UBE became a central theme of the total federal expenditure, the share of the total expenditure on education declined from 12.3 percent to 9.1 percent, while the share of capital remained the same. Apart from the decline in recurrent expenditure, assessing the funds allocated became difficult. Despite the cumulative disbursement of ₦61,336,978,866.00 as at 2008, only two states accessed 1st and 2nd quarter grants due to lack of counterpart funding.

On the management of human resources in the programme, there is a need for great improvement in the area of where SPEBs and LGEAs are over-bloated with non-teaching staff, which draws on financial resources and it exerts pressure on official space and facilities. There is also a great shortage of material resources. This inadequacy is as a result of inadequate funding which results from the proliferation of state and Local Government Areas between 1975 and 1996 on both staff and resource allocation. The UBEC scribe acknowledges that 4490 of teachers are unqualified which made it mandatory for all states to absorb the Federal Teachers Scheme (FTS). Teachers' salaries are irregularly paid with some states yet to implement the Teachers Salary Scale (TSS) which led to a trade dispute between Nigerian

Union of Teachers and Federal Government in 2009. This affects teaches dedication.

On the impact of UBE and sustainable development, sustainable development, (2008) defined sustainable development as meeting the social, economic and ecological demands or necessities of life without jeopardizing the capacity of forthcoming generation satisfying their own life demand. Research findings (Ker & Okwori 2004, Obong 2006; Obanya, 2010) discovered strong correlations between funding of education and sustainable development. For UBE to contribute to significantly to sustainable education, teachers should teach towards stimulating their pupils in solving societal problems and thinking autonomously.

Problem Statement

Since independence, education has been accorded top priority in Nigeria. This is due to the role of education reducing illiteracy, ignorance and poverty as well as igniting and hastening the rate of social, political and economic development. Adepoju and Fabiyi (2010) reported that since 1990, government has designed major activities to promote basic education, which include empirical identification of factors that affect quality and access to basic education; and the introduction of

nine-year schooling programme. However, Ker and Okwori (2004) noted that to provision of basic education to all its citizens, results improve positive have not been documented. The problem implementation continues to be a persistent problem towards the achievement of UBE objectives. This informed the basis of this study to seek stakeholders' opinions on its implementation.

1. Is there any outstanding shift of UBE from UPE?
2. Have necessary infrastructures been put in place for successful implementation?
3. Is the funding provision put in place for the programme adequate?
4. Is the necessary many power for successful implementation?
5. Has the programme contributed to sustainable development in Nigeria?

Method

The research designed selected for this study was a cross sectional survey. It is descriptive and explanatory which involves a once and for all observation of stakeholders of the Universal Basic Education. The population of study includes stakeholders of Kaduna and Plateau State Universal Basic Education Board (SUPEB), primary school teachers, students

of primary schools in Kaduna State and is made up of 17 Local Governments Areas. There are 546 secondary schools with a population 161,196 students and the total number of 7333 teachers (FME, 2006). The multistage sampling techniques were employed in selecting a sample of 20 SUPEB staff, 150 teachers, 250 students and 250 parents.

Instrument

The questionnaire titled "Stakeholders Perception of the Impact of UBE on Sustainable Development Questionnaire (SPUBEDD)" was the main instrument used for data collection. It contains 25 items which sought information on the variables such as distinction between UPE and UBE, Infrastructure, funding, human resources, UBE and sustainable development.

To ensure validity, the three questionnaires were first given to experts in the area of educational

evaluation and management to ensure face validity. The reliability coefficient of 0.71, 0.76, 0.71 for head teachers and assistant head teachers, teachers and students respectively was obtained. Head teachers/teachers, and students were asked to indicate the level of agreement to impact of UBE as follows:

Strongly Agree (SA)	=	4
Agree (A)	=	3
Disagree (D)	=	2
Strongly Disagree (SD)	=	1

The correctness of the statement was rated Strongly Agreed (SA) if the respondents agrees totally with it, while Strongly Disagree is the least agreement as perceived by the respondents. The data collected were analysed through the use of descriptive statistics including frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Research Question 1:

Is there any remarkable departure from the failed UPE?

Table 1: Differences between UPE and UBE

S/No.	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	X
1	UBE covers a small ground on the former UPE.	43.7	37.3	15.0	4.0	3.21
2	The objectives of UBE are specific and clear.	42.7	40.7	13.6	13.0	3.23
3	UBE is facing the problems encouraged by UPE.	23.6	50.4	25.2	0.8	2.95
4	Government did not have detailed facts and figures before starting the programme.	15.0	55.7	28.0	1.3	2.84
5	UBE will definitely succeed.	43.0	34.3	12.0	10.7	3.10
6	Availability of infrastructures in my school.	32.7	33.0	30.7	3.6	2.95
7	There is enough furniture for pupils in my school.	16.7	22.6	57.7	3.1	2.87

Information in table 1 shows that there is distinction between UBE and the collapsed UPE programme. This is seen in the responses of the respondents. For instance they

disagree that present UBE covers much ground ($X = 2.1$), UBE has objectives are clear and specific. ($X = 2.4$), and UBE will definitely succeed ($X = 2.48$).

Research Question 2**Table 2: Perception of Stakeholders on Availability of Infrastructure**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X
1	There is enough furniture for pupils in my school.	16.7	22.6	57.7	3.1	2.87
2	There is enough furniture for teachers in my school	17.3	34.0	37.7	11.2	2.58
3	There is functional Laboratories in my school.	7.8	48.6	31.8	11.8	2.54
4	Students are provided with textbooks.	30.3	17.7	34.7	17.3	2.61
5	Students are provided with breakfast in my school.	16.7	27.0	43.3	13.0	2.47

Findings in table 2 reveal that infrastructures provided presently are not adequate. For instance 60.7% of the respondents agreed that there are adequate furniture for students which provides a mean of 2.87, 64.4% ($X = 2.81$) that

teachers have enough furniture, 50.5% ($X = 2.85$), and agreed that there are functional laboratories 59.2% ($X = 2.54$), agreed that classroom are adequate for the students.

Research Question 3

Is funding provision put in place for the programme adequate?

Table 3: Funding of Universal Basic Education

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X
1	Funds available are targeted at areas which will really make a difference e.g. building, equipment, textbooks etc.	14.7	23.7	37.0	24.6	3.10
2	Funds meant for UBE are released as when due.	31.7	56.3	8.7	3.3	2.85
3	The UBE implementations being politicized.	26.0	53.3	19.0	1.7	3.04
4	There is clear guideline on funding UBE between the three tiers of government.	48.3	36.7	13.3	1.7	2.53

Information in table 3 shows that funds even though allocated to UBE are adequate (3.10), the funds is not released as when due (X = 2.57), the government is sincere with Ube financial policy (X =

2.85), but there is no clear guideline on funding UBE between the three tiers of government (2.53), and the school is starved of fund in executing more project.

Research Question 4:

Is there adequate manpower for successful execution?

Table 4: Availability of Human Resources.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X
1	Teachers are available:	26.0	37.7	30.1	13.2	3.23
2	(a) In their right numbers.	30.3	17.7	34.7	17.3	2.61
3	(b) In the right quality	7.8	48.6	31.8	11.8	2.54
4	The teacher/pupil ratio is 1:45	38.0	48.0	10.2	3.8	2.51
5	The libraries are stocked with required facilities.	20.6	45.2	26.6	7.6	2.65

It can be deduced from Table four that there are necessary manpower for the programme because government employed enough numbers of teaches (X = 3.23). However, pupil/ratio is (X = 2.51),

libraries are staffed with specialists (X = 2.46) and science laboratories are also staffed with specialist (X = 2.67) qualified teachers required are recruited (X = 3.02).

Research Question 5:

Has the programme contributed to sustainable development?

Table 5: UBE and Sustainable Development

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	X
1	UBE is preparing pupils for life outside school.	16.7	27.0	43.3	13.0	2.47
2	Students are equipped with relevant skills to help solve problems in their environment.	20.6	45.2	26.6	7.6	2.65
3	UBE curriculum covers all area on preparation for future challenges.	42.4	50.8	6.0	6.0	3.25
4	UBE has improved peoples awareness on environment protection.	46.3	33.3	10.0	10.4	3.16
5	UBE has enhanced people's economic independence.	17.3	34.0	37.5	11.2	2.58

Table 5 indicates that UBE has contribute preparing pupils for life outside school ($X = 3.52$), it has

equipped pupils with relevant skills to help solve problems in their environment ($X = 3.22$).

Table 6: Teachers Assessment of the UBE Programme.

Table 6 is report of assessment of Junior secondary school teachers for the implementation of the UBE programmes. Teachers agreed that their classrooms were overcrowded and are not comfortable or conducive for teaching and learning. In addition, their salaries and other incentives are not well planned neither were they paid at the right time.

Students reported that although some assistance is received from government, in the area of supply of books (20%) it is ridiculous low to equip them for classroom work. They claim that there was no force to compel their parents to send them to school.

Discussion of Findings

Five research questions were generated based on the literature

reviewed. These questions led to five findings which are discussed here in detail. The first research question, "Is there any remarkable departure from the failed UPE?" This study found that there was a remarkable departure form the failed UPE programme because it covers much ground, it has more detailed objectives, it is not likely to face the problems witnessed by UPE and its success is guaranteed. This finding is corroborated by the submission of Raji (2004) that there is a significant shift from UPE in the present UBE programme in terms of access, introduction of early childhood education to public primary school and other services like provision of mid-day meal.

This finding could be as a result of the fact that UBE was put in place so as to add to or improve the then

UPE programme. To start with, the scope of UBE in term of number of years is more than that of UPE. UPE covered only six years of primary education but UBE covers pre-primary, primary and junior secondary education nomadic, adult literacy and so on. The implication of this is that for anyone to claim possession of basic education now, such must have completed the junior secondary education. This extension increases the level of literacy in the country. Universal Basic Education (UBE) also has well-defined and detailed objectives. For instance, it is aimed at equipping individuals with such knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to live meaningful and fulfilling lives contribute to the development of the society and discharge their civil obligations competently among others. All these have been pointing to UBE as the advanced programme to the then UPE, hence the finding cannot be discarded.

The second research questions is "Have necessary infrastructures been put in place for successful execution of UBE?" This study found that the infrastructures are provided but not adequate at present. This finding reveals the extent to which the Federal Ministry of Education (1999) proposed implementation of blueprint have been carried out. It was planned in the blueprint that, additional 1.12 million pupils are

to be recommended and then, additional facilities such as classrooms (28,000), more teachers (28,000) and other materials are to be provided. It has been revealed that there is adequate furniture for pupils from which it could be inferred that there are enough classrooms, teachers also have enough furniture but facilities such as libraries, laboratories have not been adequately provided. This also could be as a result of leakages in the fund budgeted for the implementation of the programme.

The third research question is "Is the funding arrangement put in place for the programme adequate?" It was found that though government sincerely devoted adequate fund for the programme but there is no transparency in the disbursement of the UBE fund. This finding supported previous discussion. The government was aware of what it will cost to put UBE programme in the right shape and was ready to pay the price, but it is sad news that the channel by which the money would pass through to the people that would implement the programme is full of fraud. The money that gets to the schools is so small that most of the facilities planned for could not be supplied again.

The fourth research question is "Is there necessary manpower for a successful execution of UBE

programme?” This study found that there is enough necessary manpower for the successful implementation of the programme. This finding reveals how far the government had recruited teachers as proposed in the implementation blueprint FME (1999). It was planned that about 28,000 teachers would be recruited so as to have approximately 1:40 teacher-pupil ratio. It was noticed that large a number of teachers were employed for the UBE programme in almost all the states in the federation. However there was a set back in 2009 when almost 4000 were sacked by UBEC for presenting fake certificate. They also confirmed that the few laboratories that were put in place were staffed with specialists, and so also the science laboratories. It was also confirmed that only qualified teachers were recruited unlike the case of UPE when both qualified and unqualified teachers were recruited to teach in the schools.

The last research question is “Has the programme contributed to sustainable development in Kaduna state?” This study found out that UBE has contributed to awareness on environmental protection and equipping beneficiaries with life long skills from improved productive capacities. This study is in line with the aims of the programme as stated by the FME (2006). The aim among others is to equip the recipients with the

knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to live meaningful and fulfilling lives, drive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from the society and so on. This could be as a result of the fact that the scope, objectives and method of implementation of UBE make the programme more functional than any of its kind that has been practiced before. The programme has all that it takes to be more successful.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proffered for better implementation and to make the UBE programme more effective:

Since Nigeria is now a decade old in democratic system of government, Effort should be made in the implementation of UBE because it has been found to be far better and more promising than the previous programmes. However, increased funding, monitoring of the implementation strategies need to be put in place to ensure maximum result. Adequate chairs, tables, classrooms provided for this program in the state and other parts of the country are not enough, especially in some rural areas. There is a need for the government to provide more in terms of library facilities,

laboratory facilities and play materials. In fact, from schools visited during the study it seems libraries, play materials are inexistent in the primary schools and knowing fully that the best method of teaching the pupils at this level is through play materials, library facilities and laboratory facilities should be provided to enhance effective teaching-learning process.

It is also very important that a better monitoring strategy be designed for the fund released to the programme so as to ensure proper usage of such funds. It should be noted that a well-planned programme, that is well funded might be rendered ineffective through mismanagement of funds. If all these are ensured, then, UBE programme still have more in stock to give to Nigerians in terms of sustainable development as found in some other countries such as Japan, China, Ghana and so on.

Amongst the findings of the study are the remarkable departure of UBEC from the failed UPE, provision of infrastructure though not adequate (e.g. libraries and laboratories), release of adequate fund but with no accessibility, adequate provision of necessary manpower for the successful implementation of the programme and finally, enhanced sustainable It is the basis of these findings, the paper recommended

that, Nigerian government should be more conscious of the monitoring of UBE implementation and thus pay more attention to this area so as to ensure maximum result. More furniture should also be provided to schools in the interior part of the country.

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