

Assessment Of The Implementation Of The Universal Basic Education Programme In Benue State Of NigeriaProf. M.N. SULE¹; DR. (MRS.) M.U. OLUWOLE²¹Department, Educational Foundations, University of Jos²Department of Educational Foundations, Benue State University, Makurdi
08164330438, ugawole@gmail.com

Abstract: This study assessed the extent to which the UBE programme has been implemented in Benue State of Nigeria. Three research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The related literature review which was done under theoretical/conceptual framework, empirical studies and summary, identified the gap to fill in the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 22,768 public primary school teachers, 35 SUBEB staff and 2656 PTA and clan heads involved in the implementation of Universal Basic Education programme in Benue State, Nigeria. Therefore the total population of this study was 25,459. A sample of 1,171 was drawn from the population of 25,459 of the SUBEB staff, teachers, PTA Zonal Chairmen and Clan heads in Benue State was used for the study. Two instruments were developed and used to obtain the data for this study. They are; *Universal Basic Education Program Implementation Questionnaire (UBEPIQ)*, *Universal Basic Education Programme Implementation Observation Schedule (UBEPIOS)*. The statistics used in the analysis included mean ratings, ranking and percentage along with bar graphs for the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using both independent and non independent Chi square tests. A mean cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. Any mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted as been significantly different while any mean score below 2.50 was rejected as not been significantly different. The inferential statistic of chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of-fit was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that the extent to which public enlightenment influence implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State is good majority of teachers used for the implementation of UBE programme in Benue State were NCE teachers while the total number of qualified teachers (NCE, B. Ed and M. Ed) was 767 representing 67.4% of teachers and that the proportion of qualified teachers engaged was different and lower than what is provided for in the UBE implementation guideline. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended among other things that, being a people oriented programme, the people should be properly educated about the programme by emphasizing educational guidance for the parents. Parents also need to be educated on need to give their children the basic education for a life-long education. On the other hand, if the orientation programmes geared towards attracting the public especially the parents in cooperating by sending their wards to school, the government should have the political will to put into effect the act that stipulates penalties for parents who refuse to send their children to school.

[M.N. SULE; M.U. OLUWOLE. **Assessment Of The Implementation Of The Universal Basic Education Programme In Benue State Of Nigeria.** *Rep Opinion* 2015;7(4):60-72]. (ISSN: 1553-9873). <http://www.sciencepub.net/report>. 9

Keywords: Assessment, Universal Basic Education, programme, Public Enlightenment, Qualified Teachers, Infrastructural Facilities.

Introduction

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was introduced in 1999 to enhance the provision of qualitative education by ensuring uninterrupted access to the nine years free and compulsory basic education for every child of school age. The programme is also meant to drastically reduce the incidences of school drop-out and engender quality assurance and efficiency in the sub-system. Above all, it is geared toward the acquisition of literacy, numeracy, life-long education and useful living. Basic education in any society is important since it is the foundation of education and it helps to eradicate illiteracy and poverty (Ojukwu, 2006).

Obidike (2005) sees *basic education* in Nigeria as an educational programme that is compulsory for

all children between the ages of six and fifteen years which is aimed at eradicating illiteracy. He further adds that, it is equally geared toward consolidating literacy, numeracy, the acquisition of social and appropriate life skills. Specifically, it emphasizes acquiring the skill of learning how to learn, and the preparation of the learner for lifelong learning. According to Popoola (2001), the goals of the UBE are to universalize access to basic education, engender a conducive learning environment, and eradicate illiteracy in Nigeria within the shortest possible time. Thus, Universal Basic Education is the hub of national development. The idea behind the UBE is that at the end of nine years of basic education, every Nigerian child would have been properly equipped to contribute meaningfully to the development and growth of

his/her immediate society. This can be done by putting into action the skills acquired during the period.

In April 2004, the Federal Government enacted the compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education Act (FRN, 2004). The Act was to put the programme into law to enable all states and local government areas in the country to enforce the implementation of the programme. The Federal Government outlined nine implementation guidelines to facilitate the successful achievement of the stated objectives of the programme. These include: public enlightenment and social mobilization for full community involvement; data collection and analysis of human and material resources; planning, monitoring and evaluation; teacher recruitment, education, training, re-training, motivation; provision of infrastructural facilities; provision of enriched curricula; provision of textbooks and instructional materials; improved funding; and management of the entire process of the UBE programme (FRN, 2004). Of these nine guidelines, stakeholders have expressed concerns over lack of serious attention to the implementation of the UBE programme, especially in four of the guidelines namely: public enlightenment and social mobilization for full community involvement, teacher recruitment, education, training, retraining and motivation, infrastructural facilities as well as monitoring and evaluation (Oguche, 2006). Thus, this study is focused on these four guidelines.

The first guideline is centred on public enlightenment and social mobilization for full community involvement. For any programme to succeed, the community where it is implemented must be fully involved, especially where awareness is created. This is particularly so in an area such as education where vast resources are required and government cannot single-handedly carry such an enormous responsibility. There is the need for public enlightenment and social mobilization to create awareness of the privileges and rights which would ensure that stakeholders view UBE as the people's programme.

Another UBE guideline is centered on the provision of qualified teachers for its effective implementation. Jegede (2001), Ajayi (2001) and Dorayi (2000) established that teacher quality and quantity are very crucial to any meaningful development in education and with particular reference to primary education; hence teachers are necessary for effective UBE implementation. Teachers are so important that they determine the quality of every educational outcome (Ogbuka, 2000). For teachers to be provided, there is need to create awareness of the kind of teachers needed. For instance, the current minimum qualification benchmark for teachers in Nigeria, which applies to the

basic education programme, is the National Certificate in Education (NCE). Upon employment, teachers are supposed to be periodically retrained for fresh knowledge and skills acquisition so they can be empowered for the job. Apart from teacher quality, quantity is another crucial aspect that relates to teacher availability in the school system. For instance, the expected teacher-pupil ratio in the primary school in Benue State is one teacher to thirty-five pupils (1:35). Mandatory teacher- pupil ratio at pre-primary is 1:20, primary 1:40, ideal teacher-pupil ratio at pre-primary is 1:10 and primary 1:40 while optimal pupil teacher ratio at pre-primary is 1:20 and primary 1:35. Where the class is more than 35 pupils to one teacher, it shows a deviation from the expected standard as stipulated in the Minimum Standards for Basic Education (2010 p.27). In most urban schools, especially the public schools, large populations have remained a major challenge resulting in the pupil-teacher ratio being over-bloated. However, most teachers refuse to be posted to rural schools due to the absence of basic social amenities (Obioma, 2000).

The third UBE implementation issue that is of concern to stakeholders is the provision of infrastructural facilities. Infrastructural facilities are the hardware facilities in the school design to facilitate and stimulate educational programmes (Richard, 2006). They are the school buildings, ground, library, laboratory, workshop, sport/games equipment and transport facilities among others. He further noted that classrooms, furniture equipment and other instructional materials are inadequate and are not in good shape due to neglect.

The success of a programme such as the UBE depends largely on adequate mobilization and sensitization of members of the society within the rural and urban locations. If properly carried out, mobilization and sensitization will attract grassroots' participation in terms of mobilizing for funds, development, and the maintenance of needed equipment, facilities and infrastructures, all of which are necessary for the successful implementation of the UBE programme. Besides, local participation will lead to increased pupil enrolment and the retention of the pupils in school.

Assessing the success of the UBE programme is therefore very important as the assessment will serve as guide and check. The essence of the current assessment of the UBE programme is thus, to establish a purposeful educational system; and provide a guide for taking future actions to ensure the maintenance of standards in the country's educational system. Like every other enterprise, the success of the UBE programme depends largely on the provision of adequate resources which include proper employment

of qualified and adequate number of teachers and good functional infrastructures (FRN, 2004).

It is against this background that this study assessed the implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State with specific focus on the enlightenment and social mobilization of the people for community involvement, teacher's qualification, monitoring, urban/rural disparity and the strategies that school officials have used to ensure the effective implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State.

Statement of the Problem

Stakeholders are worried that the UBE programme in Benue State has not been implemented properly. They are specifically worried about the inadequacy of facilities provided for the implementation of the UBE programme in the State. This is because, in their view, a number of infrastructural facilities such as classrooms, libraries, office accommodation, furniture, toilets and sporting facilities are inadequate both in quantity and quality. Even the few existing ones are not in good shape. In some schools, pupils sit either under tree shades or on bare floors to receive instructions. Thus, this scenario is an indication that facilities are either not available or insufficient. Therefore, the minimum benchmark for the implementation guidelines to improve infrastructural facilities may not have been met in any way.

Community involvement in the UBE programme through the sensitization of members is speculated to be very low. This is probably due to lack of awareness of members of the community who in most cases expect government to do everything. One wonders if public enlightenment and social mobilization for participation in the UBE programme are properly carried out in the state at all. In view of this, the present study sought to ascertain the extent of public enlightenment and social mobilization as well as community involvement in the UBE programme in Benue State.

Stakeholders are also worried over the low level of implementation of the UBE programme in schools located in rural and urban areas which seem to have a lot of disparity in terms of funding, staff strength, distribution of textbooks and other instructional materials as well as regular school routine monitoring. In Benue State, it has been observed that most of the units lack functional vehicles to carry out their duties. One wonders if regular school routine monitoring was carried out in all the schools in the state as stated in the minimum standard and implementation guidelines. This study therefore sought to verify the implementation status of the UBE programme in Benue State especially the study concentrate on public enlightenment and social mobilization for full

community involvement in the UBE programme, empowerment as well as enforcement of the UBE regulation, the provision of infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, monitoring, teacher recruitment, training and retraining among rural and urban primary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to assess the extent to which the UBE programme has been implemented in Benue State of Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1 determine the extent to which public enlightenment and social mobilization for community involvement in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme are carried out in Benue State.

2 ascertain the quality and quantity of teachers for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Benue State.

3 establish the quality and quantity of infrastructural facilities for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Benue State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1 To what extent is public enlightenment and social mobilization for community involvement in the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) done in Benue State?

2 To what extent are the quality and quantity of teachers provided for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Benue State?

3 To what extent are the quantity and quality of infrastructural facilities provided for effective implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Benue State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance thus:

Ho₁ The proportion of qualified teachers is not significantly different from the one hundred percent (100%) provided for in the UBE implementation guideline.

Ho₂ The proportion of provision of infrastructural facilities is not significantly different between the schools located in urban and rural areas of Benue State.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will be beneficial to the following stakeholders: Ministry of Education; educational planners; teachers; parents; government policy makers and researchers. In particular, the findings will assist the Government of Benue State to identify the likely limitations in the implementation of the Universal Basic Education programme and take appropriate actions to remedy the situation. It provides a guide for action to take in meeting the challenges in

implementing the UBE programme in Benue State. The findings should awaken the Ministry of Education in the areas of monitoring the programme, provision of adequate staffing and infrastructural facilities in schools for the proper implementation of the UBE programme.

Finally, the findings of this study will also be of benefit to educational planners as it will provide the basis for a review of the UBE programme. The study is expected to serve as a springboard for further research work not only in the Universal Basic Education Programme but also in education generally.

Review of Related Literature

The review of related literature is carried out under the following sub-headings:

Theoretical Framework

This study hinges on Dror's theory of evaluation which is relevant to the study. Dror (1973) identifies two categories of evaluation that could be used in making judgment: primary and secondary evaluations. Dror defines the primary category as a "category that is used in business firms which exist to make money and profits which can be counted or measured". The primary category is not feasible in education. Dror defines the secondary category as a "category that is used for assessment in education". The secondary category is unified and can be used to underpin this study because it is applicable in several activities including education. Thus, it can be used for the assessment of the implementation of the Universal Basic Education in Benue State.

The secondary category is considered under four headings: process pattern; secondary out-put; organizational structures; inputs and resources. The process pattern determines if the process which delivers the end result in the implementation of the Universal Basic Education programme is as good as it should be. This is more so as a process variable affects the output. Secondary output would be assessed in this study to find out to what level the Universal Basic Education programme implementation has impacted on society. Dror defines organizational structures as "arrangement in order or to form parts and coordinate". In this study, the organizational structures are the leadership of the UBE programme. The study will examine the organizational structures of the Universal Basic Education programme in Benue State as they affect its implementation. Dror defines inputs and resources as pupils, teaching materials, books and school buildings. These will be examined to determine the level of achievement of the implementation of the UBE programme. The resources to be considered are the materials or facilities available for the effective implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State.

Dror suggests that it is wise to sub-optimize, which implies sampling and extrapolating or guessing at the generalities. Usually this is done in three ways, namely by limiting the evaluation time to a small population and to a selected area of activity as employed in this study. The theory is related to this study, since it relates to education.

Benchmarks and standards are utilized in this study for making assessment. Dror's theory describes a baseline as a yardstick or benchmark that can be used in measuring activities such as the implementation guidelines of the UBE programme. Such a baseline, as advocated by the scholar, could be used to assess or measure the level of the implementation of the UBE programme, hence the relevance of this theory in the study. The primary category could be used in education for private schools, but in this study the secondary category is used because the focus of the study is on assessing the level of implementation of the UBE programmes in the public schools of Benue State. Dror's model of policy thus forms the theoretical framework for this study.

Concept of the Universal Basic Education Programme

No nation can aspire to greatness without adopting education as an instrument for effecting national development. This is why there has been a lot of emphasis, particularly in recent times, on the importance of all citizens of the world having access to basic education. It is also in recognition of the importance of education that the international communities and governments all over the world have stressed the need for citizens to have access to education.

Universal Basic Education received global acceptance after the World Conference on Education for ALL (WCEFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand in early 1990. Article 1 of the conference states that "every person – child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from the educational opportunities designed". Nigeria was a signatory to the declaration (UNESCO, 2002). The declaration was re-affirmed at the World Summit for Children in the same year 1990. The re-affirmation of basic education states that all children should have access to basic education by the year 2000. Nigeria also participated at that summit held in Ouagadougou in 1992.

In a bid to achieve educational goals, the Dakar World Education Forum, held in 2002 and in which Nigeria was in attendance, was a follow-up to the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) of 1990. In the Dakar Forum, a new set of goals was set to be attained by the year 2015. It was also in the Dakar Framework for Action (2002) that the basic learning needs for all were re-affirmed by insisting on

access to nine years of schooling and completely free and compulsory primary education of good quality was made (UBE, 2002).

Similarly, two of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), adopted in September 2000 at the United Nations Millennium Declaration are devoted to education. They are Goal 2, to achieve universal primary education and Goal 3, to promote gender equality and empower women. This study is concerned with primary education.

Nigeria in her bid to reduce illiteracy is not left out in this global concern for Basic Education. According to Obanya (2002), Nigeria became a signatory to the following major international and inter-African covenants for the generalization of basic education:

i. The Jomtien 1990 Declaration and Framework for Action.

ii. The New Delhi 1992 Declaration requiring the nine countries of the world with highest concentration of illiterate adults to reduce the incidence of illiteracy drastically within the shortest possible time span.

iii. The Amman Re-affirmation of 1995 confirming everyone's commitment to the Jomtien Declaration.

iv. The Durban 1998 statement of commitment by which African states re-affirmed their commitment to making their nations' basic education a reality.

v. The OAU Decade of Education in Africa (1997-2006) also reaffirms African's commitment to the generalization of basic education.

The review of literature in this section shows that basic education is a Nigerian trend that needs to be followed with all seriousness. Education is seen as an instrument of excellence for effecting national development worldwide; hence the emphasis in recent times is on all citizens of the world to have access to education, of which Nigeria is not left out. In consonance with that, Basic Education was launched in 1999 but the question now is how successful is the implementation? These questions can only be answered after the assessment of the implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State in the present study.

Aims and Objectives of the Universal Basic Education Programme

According to the Implementation Guidelines, the principal objectives are stated as being intended to remove all obstacles to life-long education for millions of Nigerian citizens (FME, 1999). In more specific terms, the UBE programme is intended to achieve the following objectives:

“... to minimize illiteracy and poverty level, as well as stimulate and accelerate the pace of national development, political consciousness and national

integration, there arose the need to make basic education compulsory for the populace”. Having recognized these facts, Nigeria introduced the Universal Primary Education in 1976. The UBE scheme, like any other educational programme in Nigeria has very clear aims and objectives that, when properly implemented, ought to make a lot of impact on the development of the individual and the society at large. According to the guidelines for the implementation of UBE programme, the aims and objectives as enshrined in the UBE guideline (FME, 2004, p. 9) are:

i. To develop in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion;

ii. To provide free, compulsory, Universal Basic Education for Nigerian children of school age;

iii. To reduce drastically, drop-out rate from the formal school system through improved relevance, quality, and efficiency;

iv. To cater for drop-out and out-of-school children and adolescents through various forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education; and

v. To ensure the acquisition of the appropriate level of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and life skills needed for laying the foundation for life long learning.

It is in recognition of the above attractive objectives of the UBE that Obanya (2000, p.40) opined that, “UBE is a programme with a strong emphasis on all round development of its beneficiaries”. He equally stressed that the UBE programme aims at cutting across all Nigerian children and adolescents in all social conditions, geographical location, irrespective of sex, in and out of the formal school system. The UBE scheme is designed to cover the primary, junior secondary and nomadic education as well as adult literacy. The scheme aims at laying a very broad foundation of education on which the future of the country's economic, social, political and technological advancement would depend. Youth unemployment is an index of underdevelopment. The UBE scheme is out to reduce this phenomenon to its barest minimum through its provisions for those who for one reason or the other had to drop out of the formal school system as well as those youth and adolescents who have not gone to school at all.

For the current study, the objectives of the UBE programme are very important because they serve as a guide to its implementation. Every programme is aimed at achieving set objectives. This study will assess the implementation of the UBE programme in a bid to determine the extent to which the objectives of UBE have been achieved in Benue State.

Concept of Assessment of the UBE Programme

Assessment according to Sinclair (1992, p.231) is “the consideration and judgment of a programme.” Gearhart and Gearhart (1990, p87) define assessment as “a process of involving the systematic collection and the interpretation of wider variety of information and placement decision.” In other words, they see assessment as a process for evaluating the strength and weakness of a programme with the aim of providing a base for efficiency. Assessment is the process of measuring the level of performance of an individual or group in a particular area or field of endeavour. It is a tool for measuring the level of success of programmes in the school system. Assessment can involve both active and passive forms of observing a programme. A programme like UBE can be assessed to ascertain the attainment of its strength and weaknesses (Ejebo, 2001).

Assessment needs to be a regular monitoring activity which will not only enhance programme effectiveness but the achievement of programme objectives. Both assessment and evaluation are often used interchangeably. However, evaluation is broad and involves assessment and other strategies while assessment is based on an internal standard of the result of measurement, all in an attempt to ascertain the level and value or worth of progress made or changes observed. Technically, assessment is a sub-set of evaluation and both are integral parts of education (Grondlund, 1976).

The realization of the importance of assessment is predicated on the belief that several samples of an individual will give a better aggregate of that individual than only one sample or a few samples would give (Denga, 1987). Assessment is thus the process of collecting, synthesizing, and interpreting information to aid in decision making (Okoro, 2000).

Public Enlightenment and Community Involvement

Public enlightenment and social mobilization for full community involvement is necessary for UBE programme implementation. Various social, economic and geographic disparities in the country have made it necessary to mount a campaign of public enlightenment about the value of education. But in order to achieve any kind of success in the campaign, the intrinsic worth of education and its extrinsic benefits have to be clearly demonstrated. Something may have clearly gone wrong when large segments of a society begin to turn their backs on education because it has failed to deliver the expected goods in terms of social change and immediate access to paid employment (Adebola, 2007). This has to do with the sad experiences of our recent history. It has to be made clear, as Asemah (2010, p.87) observes, that “education is not a game and children’s lives are not

to be lightly played with.” It is intolerable that a great deal of educational practices should be the outcome of the whims of individuals, be they politicians, government officials or even teachers.

Bisong (2004) observed that inadequate enlightenment of the general public to gather support for well intended and new programmes is one major reason why many government policies and programmes failed in the last millennium. The UBE, therefore, should be well projected to the generality of Benue State and Nigeria. This will help to enlighten the different categories of audience in terms of the goals and objectives of the programme on the one hand, and the roles and expectations of the target audience on the other. Information will promote the understanding and awareness of the UBE programme in Benue State.

The importance of education in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. Enlightenment programmes and social mobilization will drive home the reasons and importance why government has to embark on the UBE programme. The enlightenment programmes will make them fully understand that UBE is free and compulsory. They will also explain how it is different from the former UPE programme which was said to be a failure (Obong, 2006).

Parents, especially the illiterate class, need adequate enlightenment if they must be effectively mobilized to ensure their active participation in the UBE scheme. Illiterate and poor parents who cannot bear the financial costs of schooling or forgo the opportunity costs to do so, need to be informed about the benefits derivable from enrolling their children in the UBE programme. Unarguably, illiterate parents whose academic dreams were not realized, yearn for ample and free education opportunities to send their children to school. Thus, the UBE programme provides adequate motivation to enable the illiterate and low-income earners to send their children to attain free primary and junior secondary school education.

Infrastructural Facilities for the Implementation of the UBE

Halak (1990) identifies educational facilities as the main factors contributing to academic performances in a school system. Without these facilities, effective instruction and learning may not take place. Such facilities include: school uniforms, exercise books, pencils/pens, textbooks, buildings, furniture and an environment that is conducive to learning. Denga (2000) observes that the introduction of UBE in 1976 brought about a plethora of changes including an over-whelming increase in enrolment which resulted in a shortage of learning facilities. In the same vein, Omojuwa (1999) notes that basic school facilities such as classrooms, libraries and playgrounds are critically in short supply. Classrooms

are overcrowded and inadequate such that many classes are held under trees and on open grounds. Sad enough, proper teaching cannot be done in these unorthodox makeshift classrooms because pupils' learning in quantity and quality will be intangible and poor due to lack of facilities. The lack of adequate infrastructure in the Nigerian education programme is thus another issue without any contention. The evidence of dilapidated school buildings is everywhere and sadly, sometimes in places one does not even expect; even in reputed government schools. The primary schools are worse hit. Dike (2003) reports that about 2,015 primary schools in the country have no buildings of any type!

UBE primary one class in Benue State was envisaged to be in the region of 1.12 million pupils at the ratio of 40 pupils per class (Benue State Universal Basic Education Board, (2012). This, it was envisaged, would require the provision of 280,000 additional classrooms and a minimum of 280,000 teachers at the ratio of 1 teacher to 40 pupils. Assuming we have adequate teachers in the existing schools, the envisaged pupils for the UBE would still require an additional 280,000 teachers which will be at the ratio of 1:40. The situation is really pathetic especially that funds are not quite forthcoming for the provision of these facilities in Benue State (Agbe, 2008).

To further stress the importance of teaching facilities, Akpa (1987 p.46.) laments thus:

How can our children enjoy potentialities inherent in these instructional facilities which include developing in the child scientific attitudes such as honesty, patience and appreciative feelings, helping a child in a real life situation rather than memorization and regurgitation of facts and finally adding to the child's knowledge base such as creativity, carefulness, open-mindedness, accuracy and objectivity?

Infrastructural facilities are important components of the schools and their absence or insufficient supply to schools could hinder teachers' performance (Ker & Oluwole, 2006; Okon, 1997; Nnabuo, 2001). In Benue State, infrastructural facilities have been reported to be in short supply. Perhaps, this accounts for the seemingly poor implementation of the UBE programme experienced in the State. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) emphasizes the need for providing infrastructures in schools for teaching and learning.

The importance of instructional materials in the effective implementation of the UBE programme in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. However, the major problem with Nigerian education today is lack of textbooks and instructional materials. The situation can be compared to a farmer who wishes to have a viable farm yet he has no tools for that. According to

Asemah (2012:35), "Textbooks and instructional materials comprise a vital part of the teaching and learning process in our school system. They convey learning experiences to students and often determine the structure of the curriculum". For this reason, one can understand that to achieve the goal of the UBE programme, enough textbooks and other instructional materials are needed.

From the foregoing, it can be observed that there is urgent need for an environment in Nigerian schools that is conducive for teaching and learning and for good facilities to be provided for the UBE programme for it to effectively achieve its aims and objectives. The provision of furniture and equipment is very important for the implementation of the UBE programme. Many scholars opined that the provision of facilities, especially in the rural schools, is far below expectation. (Oluwole, 2007; Akpakwu, 2008). Thus an assessment of the scheme will enable the researcher to determine the extent of the provision of the infrastructural facilities for the UBE implementation in Benue State.

Methodology

The study adopted a mixed method research design. The population of the study consist of 22,768 public primary school teachers, 35 SUBEB staff and 2656 PTA and clan heads involved in the implementation of Universal Basic Education programme in Benue State. Therefore the total population of this study was 25,459. A sample of 1,171 was drawn from the population of 25,459 of the SUBEB staff, teachers, PTA Zonal Chairmen and Clan heads in Benue State was used for the study. The purposive sampling and proportionate stratified random sampling techniques was used in this study. Two instruments were developed and used to obtain the data for this study. They are; *Universal Basic Education Program Implementation Questionnaire* (UBEPIQ), *Universal Basic Education Programme Implementation Observation Schedule* (UBEPIOS). The questionnaire was validated by experts in Tests and Measurement from the Faculty of Education, University of Jos, Plateau State Nigeria. The questionnaire was trial tested using 60 teachers who were not part of the sampled population. The data collected were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha statistics to establish its reliability which yielded 0.78. The coefficient indicated high internal consistency. The statistics used in the analysis included mean ratings, ranking and percentage along with bar graphs for the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using both independent and non independent Chi square tests. A mean cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. Any mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted as been significantly different while any mean score below 2.50 was rejected as not been

significantly different. The inferential statistic of chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of-fit was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

Results and Findings

Research Question One: To what extent is public enlightenment and social mobilization for community involvement in the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) done in Benue State?

Data Presented on table 3 showed the mean rating of respondents on the extent of public enlightenment in UBE implementation in Benue State. The data indicated that the mean rating of respondents for items 3-10 are 3.16, 2.80, 2.79, 3.02, 2.62, 2.92, 3.17 and 2.77 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.21, 0.76, 0.71, 0.57, 0.77, 0.59, 0.78 and 0.78.

Table 1: Extent of Public Enlightenment in UBE Implementation in Benue State

Item Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
3. Through public enlightenment majority of parents in Benue now accept the change initiative of the UBE programme	1138	3.16	0.21	Accepted
4. Public enlightenment engaged in enables parents to contribute in provision and maintenance of infrastructural facilities in Prim school in Benue State	1138	2.80	0.76	Accepted
5. Local communities are mobilized by the Clan heads for the provision and maintenance of infrastructure	1138	2.79	0.71	Accepted
6. As a result of public enlightenment there have been increase in pupil enrolment in the UBE programme	1138	3.02	0.57	Accepted
7. Sponsored drama and town criers are used in mobilization for successful implementation of the UBE programme	1138	2.62	0.77	Accepted
8. Our school has a public enlightenment programme for UBE implementation	1138	2.92	0.59	Accepted
9. I have attended a seminar organised for UBE programme implementation	1138	3.17	0.78	Accepted
10. I have attended a community meeting on creating awareness for UBE programme implementation in my community	1138	2.77	0.78	Accepted
Grand Mean and Standard Deviation	1138	2.90		Accepted

Based on the cut-off point of 2.50, all the respondents' rating in the items 3-10 was acceptable. The opinion of the respondents indicates that through public enlightenment of parents in Benue now accept the change initiative of the UBE programme. Public enlightenment engaged in, enables parents to contribute in provision and maintenance of infrastructural facilities in primary schools in Benue State. Local communities are mobilized by the clan heads for the provision and maintenance of infrastructure. As a result of public enlightenment, there has been increase in pupil enrolment in the UBE programme. Sponsored drama and town criers are used in mobilization for successful implementation of the UBE programme. The schools has public enlightenment programme for UBE implementation. Teachers have attended seminars organised for UBE programme implementation. The respondents also agreed that they have attended community meetings on creating awareness for UBE programme implementation in their communities. The grand mean of 2.91 with the standard deviation of 0.65 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicating that there is a good extent to which public enlightenment influences the implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State.

Research Question 2: To what extent are the quality and quantity of teachers provided for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Benue State?

The data on the extent of qualified teachers provided for the UBE programme in Benue State is presented in table 2 and figure 1

Table 2: Provision of Teachers for UBE in Benue State by Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
M. Ed	49	4.3	4.3
M. Sc	42	3.7	8.0
M. A	57	5.0	13.0
B. Ed	152	13.4	26.4
B. Sc	170	14.9	41.3
B. A	101	8.9	50.2
NCE	566	49.7	99.9
Any other Qualification	1	.1	100.0
Total	1138	100.0	

Table 2 and Figure 1 reveal the percentage distribution of sampled teachers in Benue State by

qualification as: M. Ed 49 = 4.3%, M. Sc 42 = 3.7%, M. A 57 = 5.0%, B. Ed 152 = 13.4%, B. Sc 170 = 14.9%, B. A 101 = 8.9%, NCE 566 = 49.7% and any other qualification 1 = 0.1%. Therefore NCE is the single largest category of teachers in the teaching workforce in Benue State that was sampled. This means that the majority of teachers used for implementation of UBE programme in the State are NCE teachers. The total number of qualified teachers is, (NCE, B. Ed and M. Ed) 767 representing 67.4%.

This means that 67.4 percent of UBE teachers are qualified with NCE being the majority.

Research Question 3: To what extent are the quantity and quality of infrastructural facilities provided for effective implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Benue State?

The data that provided answer to the research 3 on the extent of infrastructural facilities provided for UBE programme in Benue State. The result is presented in table 5.

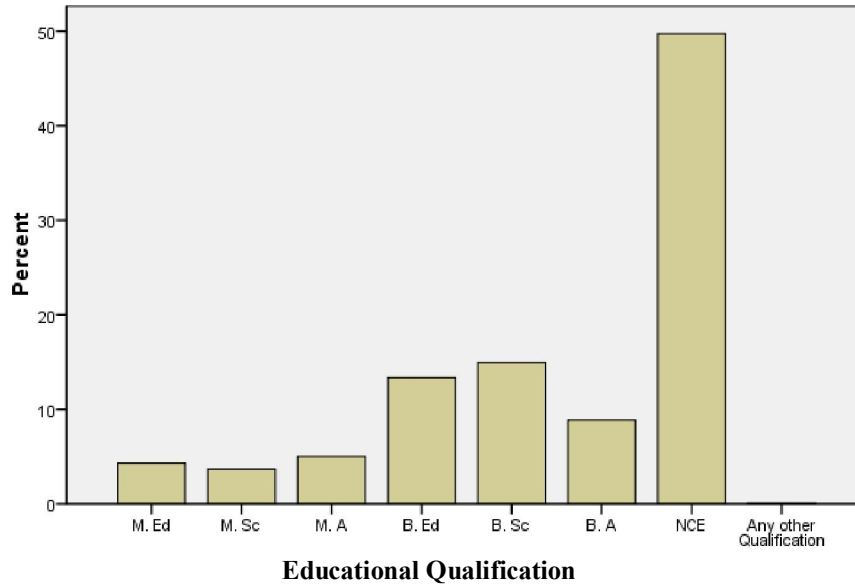


Figure 1: Distribution of teachers by educational qualification

Table 3: Quantity and Quality of Infrastructure in UBE Schools in Benue State

S/No	Infrastructural Item	Av. Number Provided per School	Mean Quality Rating	Remark	Mean Adequacy Rating	Remarks
1	Classroom Block	5	4.0	Good quality	4.0	Adequate
2	Office Accommodation	2	3.0	Average Quality	3.5	Adequate
3	Benches & tables for Pupils	670	2.5	Average quality	3.0	Average Adequate
4	Benches & tables for teachers	31 benches, 28 tables	2.5	Average quality	3.0	Average Adequate
5	Libraries structure	Nil	1.1	Poor quality	1.2	Very inadequate
6	Library book holding	1	2.5	Average quality	3.0	Average Adequate
7	Toilet facilities	2	3.5	Good quality	3.5	Adequate
8	English textbooks	1	3.5	Good quality	4.0	Adequate
9	Mathematics textbooks	366.7	4.0	Good quality	3.5	Adequate
10	Social studies' textbooks	234	4.0	Good quality	4.0	Adequate
11	Science textbooks	200	3.5	Good quality	4.0	Adequate
12	Chalk Boards	12	3.5	Good quality	4.0	Adequate
13	Play Fields	1	2.0	Fair quality	3.0	Av. Adequate
	Mean Provision		3.1	Av Quality	3.4	Av Adequate

(1.0-1.49 poor quality; 1.5- 2.49 Fair quality; 2.5 – 3.49 Average quality; 3.5 – 4.49 Good quality; 4.5–5.0 Excellent quality; 1.0 – 1.49, Very inadequate; 1.50 – 2.49 Not Adequate; 2.5 – 3.49 Average Adequate; 3.5 – 4.49 Adequate; 4.5 – 5.0 Very Adequate.)

The data on Table 3 reveals that aside from library infrastructure, with mean rating of 1.1 (poor quality), all other range between 2.0 (fair quality) and 4.0 (good quality). The grand mean for quality of provision is 3.1 which indicate that in general, the facilities are of average quality. Similarly, for adequacy of provision, except library structures with mean adequacy of 1.2 (very inadequate), all others range from 3.0 (average adequate) to 4.0 (adequate) with grand mean of 3.4 indicating averagely adequate.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: The proportion of qualified teachers is not significantly different from the one

hundred percent (100%) provided for in the UBE implementation guideline.

The result of Chi-square test of the proportion of qualified teachers not significantly different from one hundred percent is provided in Table 4.

It can be seen from Table 4 that the Chi Square value is 56 at 49 degrees of freedom and $p = 0.000$. Since $p < 0.05$, it implies that the proportion of qualified teachers is significantly different from the one hundred percent (100%) provided for in the UBE implementation guideline. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4: Chi Square Test on Proportion of Qualified Teachers Available for UBE Implementation

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	56.000 ^a	49	.229
Likelihood Ratio	33.271	49	.958
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.000 ^b	1	.008
N of Valid Cases	8		

b. The standardized statistic is 646.

Hypotheses Two: The proportion of provision of infrastructural facilities is not significantly different between the schools located in urban and rural areas of Benue State.

Table 5: Chi Square Test on the Proportion of Provision of Infrastructural Facilities in Schools Located in Urban and Rural Areas of Benue State.

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.750 ^a	12	.724
Likelihood Ratio	10.023	12	.614
Linear-by-Linear Association	.349 ^c	1	.555
N of Valid Cases	1138		

a. 8 cells (30.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .45.

The result of Chi-square test of the proportion of provision of infrastructural facilities not significantly different between the schools of Benue State is presented in table 5.

It can be seen from Table 10 that Chi Square value is 8.75 at 12 degrees of freedom and $p = 0.555$. Since $p > 0.05$, it implies that the proportion of provision of infrastructural facilities is not significantly different among urban and rural schools in the UBE implementation. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The study assessed the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in

Benue State of Nigeria. This was based on the extent to which public enlightenment and social mobilization for community involvement in UBE programme as well as the provision of qualified teachers, infrastructural facilities, level of monitoring of the UBE programme, urban rural disparity, challenges faced by schools in the implementation of the UBE programme and strategies adopted by respective schools to overcome implementation challenges in the UBE programme. To do this, 7 research question, 3 hypotheses were formulated and tested bases on the determining scores of stakeholders in the education who are involve in the implementation of the UBE programme in the state on these components.

The finding of this study indicates that there is a good extent to which public enlightenment influences implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State. Interview with the different categories of respondents revealed that, the extent of public enlightenment has a significant influence on the implementation of UBE programme in Benue State. It was also revealed that the extent to which communities are involved in the UBE programme implementation in Benue State is acceptable due to other public enlightenment programme engaged. This is in agreement with the proposed implementation blue print (FME 1999; Obong 2006). It was stated that stakeholders will be given orientation on their duties, obligation and responsibilities as wards, custodians, implementers and facilitators of UBE programme.

According to Bisong (2004), awareness creation, sensitisation and adequate enlightenment of UBE enhance participation in the programme. The study also indicates that infrastructural facilities are averagely adequate for the successful implementation of UBE programme in the state. This finding reveals the extent to which the Federal Ministry of Education (1999) proposed implementation blueprint have not been carried out. It was planned in the blue print that, additional facilities such as classrooms (28,000), more teachers (28,000) and other materials are to be provided. A large number of the P.T.A leaders and clan heads interviewees acknowledge that there is inadequate furniture for the pupils, it could be inferred that there are not enough classrooms. Teachers also do not have enough furniture and facilities such as chalk board, play fields, office accommodation and class blocks are not adequately provided. Library structures are very inadequate. This unfortunate situation cannot be unconnected with the costly nature of UBE programme (Okpanachi 2003).

The finding reveals that adequate qualified teachers are employed for the successful implementation of UBE programme in the State under study. The majority of teachers used for the implementation of UBE programme are NCE being the majority in Benue State. This finding reveals how far the government had recruited teachers as stated in the proposed implementation blue print (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 for the UBE programme in almost all the states in the federation the ratio is 1.98 (Izuagba, 2006). This could explain why respondents who were teachers agreed that government employed sufficient teachers for the programme in Benue State, the number of the SUBEB staff interviewed also acknowledge the fact that NCE which is the minimum qualification of teachers in

primary schools are the majority employed in Benue State for UBE programme.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from this study that:

1. The extent to which public enlightenment influence implementation of the UBE programme in Benue State is good.
2. Majority of teachers used for the implementation of UBE programme in Benue State were NCE teachers while the total number of qualified teachers (NCE, B. Ed and M. Ed) was 767 representing 67.4% of teachers.
3. The proportion of qualified teachers engaged was different and lower than what is provided for in the UBE implementation guideline.

Recommendations

This study assessed the extent to which the UBE programme has been implemented in Benue state of Nigeria. Based on the discussion and conclusions made, the following recommendations were advanced for consideration:

1. Being a people oriented programme the people should be properly educated about the programme by emphasizing educational guidance for the parents. In particular, the parents need to be educated on need to give their children to basic education for a life-long education. On the other hand, if the orientation programmes geared towards attracting the public especially the parents in cooperating by sending their wards to school, the government should have the political will to put into effect the act that stipulates penalties for parents who refuse to send their children or wards to school.
2. Since the provision of more universal basic education schools in Benue state automatically translates to provision of more quantity and quality teachers, government should make provision and prepare for training of qualified teachers. In this regards, the colleges of education as well as faculties of education in the universities should wake up to their responsibilities in giving adequate and qualitative training to the prospective teachers. As much as there is need to train a lot of teachers to fill the classrooms, quality must be the watchword. Hence, there is also the need to retrain mostly the existing NCE teachers in the system to reshape their orientation towards qualitative education in Nigeria.
3. There should be adequate provision and maintenance of facilities in urban and rural areas in form of physical structures likes school building, school grounds, classrooms, laboratory, literary, school hall, staff rooms among others. These should be of high quality and quantity to commensurate with the number of Pupils environment in every school.

References

1. Adebola, O. J. (2007). Perceived impact of universal basic education on national development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Africa and African American Studies*, 1(1), 49-59.
2. Agbe, J.A. (2008). Effect of location on achievement of UBE objectives in Benue State. *Journal of Education*, 5:123-126.
3. Ajayi, T. (2001). Effective planning strategies for UBE programme: UBE forum. *Journal of Basic Education Nigeria* 1(1), 22-23.
4. Akpa, G.O. (1987). Supervision as an instrument of teaching and learning effectiveness: Challenges for the Nigerian practice. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 2, 46-51.
5. Akpakwu, S.O. (2008). *Essentials of education management*. Makurdi: Jalim Press Nigeria Ltd.
6. Asemah, J.I. (2010). *Perspectives in education management and administration*. Makurdi: Destiny Ventures.
7. Asemah, J.I. (2012). School physical facilities maintenance in the 21st Century. *International Journal of Educational Administration, Planning, Research* 1(1), 27-30.
8. Benue State Universal Basic Education Board. (2012). Teachers statistics. Makurdi: Government Press.
9. Bisong, J.O. (2004). Assessment of public enlightenment and social mobilization for full community involvement in UBE programme. *International Journal of Research in Basic and Life-long Education*, 1(1&2), 40-44.
10. Denga, D.I. (1987). *Educational measurement, continuous assessment and psychological Testing*. Calabar: Rapid Educational Publishers.
11. Denga, D.I. (2000). Evolving a new culture: The universal basic education focus. *International Journal of Research in Basic and Life Long Education*, 1(2), 1-6.
12. Dike, V.E. (2003). The State of education in Nigeria and the health of the Nation. *Africa Economics Analysis*, 111-122.
13. Dorayi, A. (2000). *The role of teachers in Universal Basic Education scheme*. Proceedings of the education mini summit of UBE for Nigeria, 66-67.
14. Dror, Y. (1973). Policy making re-examined. In B. Hadley, J. Brain, R. Caldwell & H. Millikan (Eds), *Creating an excellent school: Some new management techniques* (pp. 134-214). New York: Ronfledge.
15. Ejebo, A. (2001). *Effective teaching principles and practices*: Port-Harcourt: Paragraphics.
16. Federal Ministry of Education (1999). *Implementation guidelines for the universal basic education* (UBE). Abuja: UBEC.
17. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). National policy on education, 4th edition. Lagos: Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council.
18. Gearhard, G.B. & Gearhard, R.A. (1990). *Introduction to education assessment, principles and practices*. Denver: Love Publishing Company.
19. Gronlund, N.E. (1976). *Measurement and evaluation in teaching*, (3rd ed.) New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing.
20. Hallak, J. (1990). *Investing in to the future: Setting educational priorities in the developing world*. Oxford Pergamum Press.
21. Izuagba, A. C. (2006). Demand and supply of teachers in the Imo State Primary Education Board system: An appraisal. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 13(1), 49-60.
22. Jegede, O. (2001). Producing teachers for UBE through open and distance learning. *UBE forum: A Journal of basic education in Nigeria*, 1(1), 56-65.
23. Ker, B.O & Oluwole M.U. (2006). *Personal management in Tertiary institutions of learning*. In P. T. Ortese (ed) *Towards functional and qualitative education in Nigeria*. Makurdi: Destiny Ventures pp 377-386.
24. Nnabuo, P.O. (2001). *Essentials of education management*. Umuahia: Versatile Publishers.
25. Obayan, P. (2002). Library development for UBE-Keynote address presented at the Annual conference of the Nigerian School Library Association, at the children's centre Library, UNN, 23-26.
26. Obidike, N.D. (2005). Quality control in education for effective implementation in primary school in Idemili LGA of Anambra State: The teacher factor. *Journal of Qualitative Education*, 1(2), 8-15.
27. Obioma, G. (2000 June). *Challenges of implementing the UBE programme at federal, state and local government levels*. An invited paper presented at the National workshop on UBE and Local Government Council in Nigeria Organized by African Business School at the National Universities Commission, Abuja.
28. Obong. I.J (2006). *The state of basic education in Nigeria: the way forward*. Nigeria Union of teachers. Retrieved July, 25, 2008 from <http://www.nutnigeria.org/stateprimaryeduc.html>.
29. Ogbuka, C. (2000, July). Gearing up for Universal Basic Education. *The Punch Newspaper*, Vol. 2, pp 19-21.

30. Oguche, D. (2006). *Sustaining the UBE programme*. Lagos: African First.
31. Ojukwu, U.A. (2006). Effective Management of Primary Education in Nigeria. The Challenges before the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC). *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research and Development*, 7(1), 103-108.
32. Okon, L.E. (1997). A Survey of the teaching facilities and equipment in Calabar Municipality Schools. Unpublished B.Sc. Project, University of Port Harcourt.
33. Okoro, O.M. (2000). *Programme evaluation in education*. Uruowulu-Obosi: Pacific Publishers.
34. Okpanachi, S.S. (2003). *Preparedness to implement Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Kogi State: A Case Study*. Paper presented at the 4th National Conference of National Association of Educationist for National Development, F.C.E., Okene.
35. Oluwole, M.U. (2007). *School management and supervision*. Makurdi: Destiny Ventures.
36. Omojuwa, J. (1999, April). Performance of final year NCE students in the national common entrance examination. In U. Onwuka (Ed.), *Curriculum development for Africa* (pp.75- 93). Onitsha: Africana Fep.
37. Popoola, T.O. (2001). Nigeria universal basic education scheme: Learning from universal primary education. *Journal of Education Thought*, 1(2)108-120.
38. Rechard, A. (2006). *UBU: Issues, prospects and problems*. Benin City: Ethiopia publishing corporations.
39. Sinclair. J. (1992). *BBC English Dictionary*. Onitsha: African First Publishers.
40. UNESCO. (2002). *Implementing and financing education for all*. Paris: UNESCO.
41. Universal Basic Education. Annual report (2002). Abuja: UBE programme.
42. WCEFA (1990). *World declaration on education for all and framework for action to meet basic learning needs*. New York, NY: The International Commission.
43. World Bank (2002). *Education for dynamic economies*. Action plan to accelerate progress towards education for all. Washington D.C.: World Bank.
44. World Conference on Education for All (1990). *World declaration on education for all and framework of action to meet basic needs*. Jomtien, Thailand, 5th-9th March sponsored by World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF.

4/18/2015