

Implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme in North-Central, Nigeria from 1999-2024: A Review Study

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Abstract:

This paper is a review paper that critically evaluate the implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in North-central, Nigeria from 1999 to 2024. As a review paper, it depends on secondary data which were collected from different sources such as online publication and print documents. The paper conclude that Universal Basic Education (UBE) has been implemented to a moderated extent in North-Central, Nigeria. The paper identified inadequate fund, shortage of infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, insecurity, corruption, lack of political will to access intervention grant and outdated UBE act as challenges militating against implementation of the effective implementation of the Universal Basic Education programme in North-Central, Nigeria. Based on these points, the paper suggests the following measures; increment in the budgetary allocation of UBE programme, employment of more professional teachers, provision of more infrastructure facilities, improvement of supervision, provision of security in the schools, deployment of technology for the fighting of corruption, control of inflation and.

Keywords: Universal Basic Education, Implementation.

Introduction

The introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Nigeria that replaced the Universal Primary Education (UPE) of 1976, with a 9 year programme which was launched on September 21, 1999, has the objectives of providing free and compulsory UBE for every Nigerian child of school going age. The UBE consist of a compulsory primary and junior secondary education as basic and thereby making it different from other similar attempted of UPE. The programme caters for the rural population, nomadic population, person in physical isolated settlements, urban slum, adult illiterates, *Almajiri*, street children etc. (Samuel, Umar, and Atinuke, 2012).

Universal Basic Education can be viewed in three dimensions according to Uga and Fanan (2019), universal refers to a programme that is meant for people from all walks of life including, the wealthy, the poor, the able, the physically challenged, the dull, the smart and anybody else eager to learn or ready to acquire knowledge. The term basic refers to the starting point in the acquisition of knowledge as well as the fundamental and bottom line of education. Education refers to the transmission of knowledge. This shows that the UBE is the bedrock of higher educations. Effective implementation of UBE entails providing proper educational facilities and providing coordinated help to instructors in order to ensure quality instruction, students' self-efficacy and meeting society's demand (Abdullahi, 2021).

The objectives of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria as highlighted by Universal Basic Education hand book (2007) includes:

1. Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a commitment to its vigorous promotion.
2. The provision of free Universal Basic Education for every Nigerian child of school age.
3. Reducing drastically the incidence of drop-out from the formal school system (through improved relevance, quality and efficiency).
4. Catering for young persons who for one reason or another, have had to interrupt their school as well as other out-of school children/adolescents through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education.
5. Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills as well as the ethnic, moral and civic values needed for laying a strong foundation for lifelong learning. As can be seen, Bulama, and Musa, (2023) noted that the objectives of the universal basic education programme (U.B.E) are comprehensive and achievable. They also point to the fact that Nigeria wants all her citizens irrespective of race, gender or ethnicity to get basic education of higher quality whether they are in Urban or Rural areas, primary or junior secondary schools. The curriculum of U.B.E breaks the nine years of basic education into three components viz: lower basic education (primaries 1-3) middle basic education (Primaries 4-6) and upper basic education (J.S.S 1-3). The curriculum of the middle basic education level differs from the lower by the inclusion of French language, while the upper differs from the middle by the inclusion of basic technology. The Basic Education Curriculum is the curriculum developed for use in lower, middle and upper basic in the Universal Basic Education programme. From the above, universal basic education is an organized and planned educational programme meant to provide quality and unstopped basic education for children to prepare them for the senior secondary schools. universal basic education is a organized education designed for implementation globally to eradicate illiteracy and to prepare the children for the junior and secondary school.

The implementation of universal basic education programme (U.B.E) in Nigeria started differently in differently but the implementation was a national programme that cut across the states and local government across the federation. The act established the universal basic education programme

(U.B.E) in Nigeria provided for evaluation of the programme by the stakeholders involve in the programme (Universal Basic Education Commission 2010).

The importance of evaluation in a programme like the universal basic education programme (U.B.E) cannot be overemphasized. Evaluation It is based on this that this paper seek to evaluate the implementation of universal basic education programme (U.B.E) in North Central, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Universal Basic Education

Universal Basic education (UBE) is a programme which higher education is founded. It is compulsory for all citizens to enable to function effectively in society (Ikoya and Onoyase, 2008). Alabi (2022) submit that the UBE is an act that includes compulsory and free for all school-aged children to complete nine years of basic education, six years of primary schooling and automatic transition into three years junior secondary school, which supposedly makes provision for Early Childhood Care Development and Education (ECCDE). The introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Nigeria that replaced the Universal Primary Education (UPE) of 1976, with a 9 year programme which was launched on September 21, 1999, has the objectives of providing free and compulsory UBE for every Nigerian child of school going age. Basic education is fundamental to human and national development as it is the foundation upon which other levels of education is built as a necessity. It is axiomatic that no nation ever developed technologically, economically and socially without first investing its resources in basic education. The UBE is a continuous nine-year education scheme that seeks to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty with the general goal of stimulating and accelerating national development, political consciousness and national integration (FGN-UBE Guidline,1999).

On September 30, 1999, the then president of Nigeria, President Olusegun Obasanjo, launched UBE. The following were the goals of the UBE as stated in the implementation guidelines: provision of free UBE for every Nigerian child of school going age; developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its vigorous promotion; cater for dropouts and out of school children and adolescents through various forms of complementary approaches to promotion of basic education; ensure the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, manipulative and life skill as well as the ethical moral and civic values needed for laying the foundation for lifelong learning. Universal Basic education is expected to give basic education that will be completed by the end of the 9 years. It is not only for school-aged children, it is also intended to meet the educational needs of young people and adults who have not had access to sufficient and proper schooling, including nomadic education, adult education, migratory, fishermen's education, adult's education, out of school children and dropouts.

Component of Concept of Universal Basic Education

Fund

Funding UBE: Federal intervention in UBE will be funded through:

- i. Not less than 2% of the Consolidated Revenue Fund (CRF) of the Federal Government.
- ii. Funds/ contributions in form of Federal Government guaranteed credits.
- iii. Local/ international donor grants.
- iv. The federal intervention fund to state will be used for the purpose of broadening access, improving quality and ensuring equity in basic education but not for teachers' emoluments and overhead costs. Appropriation- the fund should be shared among the six (6) components of UBE:
 - i. Substantial part of the CRF will be disbursed to states as matching grants i.e. 75%.

ii. Part of it will be disbursed to states for special intervention to support: initiatives to correct education imbalance up to 2010 – i.e. 14%. Efforts by state to provide special education for the physically and mentally challenged 2%. Effort by state to implement school feeding programme. Good performance 5% (Universal Basic Education Commission 2012; Dennis, & Chidimma, 2016).

Infrastructural Facilities

Infrastructure facilities is one of the major component of the UBE programme. Infrastructural facilities according to Ogunode (2021) are those facilities aiding the delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet etc.. Infrastructure according to Ehiamezor (2001) is the operational inputs of every instructional programme and constitutes elements that are necessary for teaching and learning. Such include buildings, laboratories, machinery, furniture and electrical fixtures. These must be functional in relation to other aspects of the community, such as health centres, libraries, and good roads and must be large enough to allow for expansion as enrolments expand. The Universal Basic Education is educational revolution aimed at reducing illiteracy to a vanishing point. It is intended to help our primary schools overcome teething and logistic challenges confronting quality basic education in Nigeria. It will provide infrastructural facilities like chairs, classrooms, computers, textbooks, etc. It will help in prompt payment of teachers. This will enable teachers face their work without much complaints. It will provide the much needed accommodation for primary school pupils. It provides high motivation of both teaching and nonteaching staff. As a result of inbuilt machismo, supervision in UBE, teachers' truancy will be checked (Dennis, et al 2016; Ebehikhalu, & Dawam 2016). Ojeniyi and Adegbesan (2020) observed that school plants are physical materials that are used at all levels of education for teaching and learning processes which include school buildings or classrooms, workshops, laboratories, assembly halls, libraries, teaching aids and devices such as modern, educational hardware in the form of magnetic tapes, films and transparent educational facilities. Subedi (2020); Ihuoma (2022) and Uko (2021) opined that the school plants consist of all buildings for academic and non-academic activities, equipment for academic and non-academic activities, areas for sports and games, landscape, farms and gardens including trees, roads and paths. Others according to them include; furniture, and toilet facilities, lighting, acoustics, storage facilities, parking lot, security, transportation (school bus), ICT, Cleaning materials and special facilities for the physical challenge persons.

Professional Teachers

Teachers are the implementers of school curriculum. Their functions include to teach, prepare lesson note and lesson plan, to evaluate the students, sets exam questions and marks answer sheet. Their functions also include providing leadership in classes, perform academic services, relate with parents on feedback on students' progress and sometime carry students for excursion with school permission. The teachers are very important factors in the management of educational institutions especially the secondary schools. The teachers' roles cannot be replaced in delivering of teaching programme (Atiga and Ogunode 2021). The teacher is an important figure in the implementation of UBE programme in Nigeria. Osiesi (2020) defined the teacher as the human functional face that engineers the educational advancement and development of societies, as they provide and direct the education systems by fostering and sustaining knowledge, skills and experience acquisition. The teacher has a huge role to play at ensuring that learning at any level is achieved systematically and practically. The continued existence and progress of the teaching profession is a function of the teacher. Teachers are the key agents as well as the most important factors in teaching and learning process (Wit Education Policy Unit, 2015). Chireshe and Shumba (2021) stressed the critical role teachers play in nurturing the hearts and minds of the young ones when they opined that almost every professional (doctor, lawyer, accountant, engineer etc) and the political class have all passed through the hands of a teacher. As a result of the important roles they play within and outside the

school setting, there must be training and re-training of teachers to improve or help them attain the required level of knowledge or skills needed for better performance.

Ogunode (2021); and Olowonefa and Ogunode (2021) observed that teachers are fundamental to the effective delivery of the teaching programme in educational institutions. The teachers' place in educational institutions cannot be replaced. The teacher plans the lesson, organizes the instructional resources and delivers the lesson. The teachers ensure the students learn the right knowledge and skills through the process of teaching and learning. Teachers are found in all educational institutions. Agu and Manafa (2019) observed that teachers are important figures in the nation and are authorities at all level of the education system. This is because apart from their primary role in curriculum implementation, their feelings or opinions about their job as well as their behaviour towards the students in the classroom are issues of great concern. The teacher according Ogunode and Paul (2021) is an important figure in the realization of the objective of educational institution. The teacher is responsible for the training and production of manpower for the social, economic and technological advancement.

Instructional resources

Instructional materials according to Ogunode and Josiah, (2023) are used in all forms of educational institutions. The resources are influencing the implementation of teaching, research and community service in the various tertiary institutions. In secondary schools, instructional materials are supporting teaching and learning. Teachers in educational institutions teach well with the deployment of instructional materials. Instructional materials serve as a channel between the teacher and the students in delivering instructions. They may also serve as the motivation for the teaching-learning process. It is used to get the attention of the students and eliminate boredom. Instructional resources usage refer to the practical deployment of resources in the classroom for the implementation of teaching and learning programme.

Supervision

Supervision according to Ogunode & Ibrahim, (2023), is a programme of instruction designed to improve teachers' job performance and students' academic performance in schools. Nakpodia (2006) asserts that, instructional supervision in the modern era centers on the improvement of the teaching-learning situation to the benefits of both the teachers and learners, helps in the identification of areas of strength and weaknesses of teachers, follow-up activities that should be directed at the improvement of identified areas of teachers' weaknesses and give recognition to the teachers and create a cordial working atmosphere based on good human relations. Dodd in Ogunode, & Fabiyi, (2023), defined supervision as a constant and continuous process of more personal guidance based on frequent visits when attention is directed to one or more aspects of the school and its organization. Nwaogu in Ogunode, & Fabiyi, (2023), viewed supervision as the process of bringing about improvement in structure by working with people who are working with pupils. Supervision is a process of stimulating growth and a means of helping teachers to help themselves. Supervision is used to describe those activities which are primarily and directly concerned with studying and improving the conditions which surround the learning and growth of pupils and teachers.

National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN, 2006) listed benefits of supervision to include provision of opportunities for teachers to be groomed through critical study of instructional processes and classroom interactions to carry out their teaching tasks in line with professional codes of conduct. If schools are not supervised adequately, it will have inimical effects on the students' output and the educational objectives may not be achieved, consequently various instructional supervisory techniques should be employed to ensure qualitative and quantities service delivery by the teachers. School supervision aids realization of school objectives (Ogunode & Ajape 2021;Ogunode, Olatunde-Aiyedun, & Yemi 2021).

Method

Data Presentation and Analysis

1	Adeyanju, & Oladipo,(2023)	This study examined the fidelity of implementation and efficacy of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Kwara State. The study found among others that: teachers' quality of delivery in the UBE programme was dependent on the quality of post qualification trainings they receive; the efficacy of the programme was a function of the adequacy of facilities in UBE schools.
2	Ndagi, (2024)	The findings underscored the critical role of teachers, whose high level of involvement significantly enhances the program's implementation, contrasted with the average involvement of parents, which suggests areas for potential improvement in parental engagement.
3	Ugboja, (2020)	The study by investigates the Nigeria Education Curriculum and the Issues of Implementation: Implications for a corruption free Universal Basic Education in Kogi State. The findings reveals that Universal Basic Education in Ibaji LGA is not free from corruption. The research also finds out that the UBE curriculum in Ibaji LGA is Appropriate to an extent. The result further reveals that both teachers and students have the same view of corruption in UBE in Ibaji LGA Kogi State Nigeria.
4	Muhammed (2023)	The examined teachers' perception of the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in Kogi State, Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed that the extent to which UBE program was implemented in Kogi State was low.
5	Jerry,& Adebisi, (2020).	The study assessed the awareness and compliance of the Universal Basic Education Act on school enrolment in the primary section of Barki Ladi local government area of Plateau state.
6	Akwengs, (2018).	This study assessed the implementation of Early Childhood Care Development Education in Plateau State, Nigeria. Findings revealed among others that instructional materials like charts, television, computer, toys, and story books among others are not available for the implementation of early childhood care development education in Plateau state. In addition, to a great extent the content of early childhood care development education is being implemented in early childhood care development education centres in Plateau state.
7	Olaniyan, Erunke, & Abdul, (2024)	This study examines Impact of the mandates of Universal Basic Education Policy on the quality of primary education in the Federal Capital Territory. The study also revealed that the implementation of UBE in FCT has not been successful in giving access to free basic education to school age children with respect to free tuition in basic education; School feeding programme; Sensitization and mobilization of members of the public towards UBE programmes and; training and retraining of teachers.
8	Ogunode,& Abashi, (2020)	The study investigated the challenges facing the administration of Universal Basic schools in Abaji area council of FCT, Nigeria. The result established that their challenges facing the administration of Universal Basic schools in Abaji area council of FCT and programme implementation was high to an extent.
9	Ikhaobomeh, I (2021)	This study looked at how the introduction of the Universal Basic Education program affected the number of students who dropped out in Pleateau and Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Findings demonstrate that UBE policies are at a

		high average stage of implementation in Pleateau and Nasarawa State, Nigeria, with a mean score of 3.75, while pupil drop-out is at a low average stage, with a mean score of 2.45, due to UBE policy implementation. With a 0.000 level of significance, the hypothesis shows that the implementation of the UBE policy has a significant impact on pupil dropout in Pleateau and Nasarawa State, Nigeria.
10	Audi, Yakubu, & Moneke, (2022).	This study assessed the implementation of Basic Education Curriculum for sustainable developments of public junior secondary schools Nasarawa. The result of the study has provided empirical proof that inadequate school facilities, teachers and instructional resources prevented successful implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in public junior secondary schools.
11	Nafiu Lanlege, & Hakimi, (2013)	Statistical Analysis of Knowledge and Awareness to Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. The paper revealed that implementation of Basic Education programme was moderate to an extent.
12	Danjuma (2018)	Assessment of Universal Basic Education programme policy implementation in Niger state. The study disclosed poor implementation of Basic Education programme in the state.
13	Dolapo (2015)	The study assessed Implementation Of the Revised 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) In the Northcentral Nigeria: A Monitor of Benue State. The finding' indicated that implementation of the revised 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) in the Northcentral Nigeria was implemented to an extent in the sampled states.
14	Abu, (2020).	Evaluation of Implementation of universal basic education programme in Bunue State and found out that UBE programme has led to increment in children enrolment. The study also revealed a moderate implementation of the programme in the state.

Findings

The study disclosed that the implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in North-Central, Nigeria from 1999 to 2024 was moderate to an extent. The paper identified inadequate funding, shortage of professional teachers, inadequate infrastructure facilities, ineffective supervision, corruption, insecurity and poor access to federal government intervention fund as problems militating against the implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in North-Central, Nigeria from 1999 to 2024.

Discussion of Findings

From the review above, it was disclosed that implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in North-Central, Nigeria from 1999 to 2024 have been moderate to an extent. This implies there is more to do to realize the full implementation of the programme as planned and designed. The specific challenges facing the implementation of UBE programme in Nigerian North-centra geo-political zone includes; inadequate funding, shortage of professional teachers, inadequate infrastructure facilities, ineffective supervision, corruption, insecurity and poor access to federal government intervention fund. This result is in agreement with the findings of Enaohwo (2021) in his study where he found out that inadequate provision of essential resources such as inadequate or unqualified staff, inadequate classrooms, poor furnishing of classrooms, lack of basic equipment, irregular water supply, poor libraries furnishing and inadequate space are major problems hindering the growth and development of educational system in upper basic education system in Nigeria (universal basic education programme).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper assessed the implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in North-Central, Nigeria from 1999 to 2024. The paper conclude that Universal Basic Education (UBE) has been implemented to a moderated extent in North-Central, Nigeria. The paper identified inadequate fund, shortage of infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, insecurity, corruption, lack of political will to access intervention grant and outdated UBE act as challenges militating against implementation of the Universal Basic Education programme in North-Central, Nigeria.

Based on these points, the paper suggests the following measures; increment in the budgetary allocation of UBE programme, employment of more professional teachers, provision of more infrastructure facilities, improvement of supervision, provision of security in the schools, deployment of technology for the fighting of corruption, control of inflation and

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