

Universal Basic Education Programme in Rivers State, Nigeria: An Examination of Implementation Challenges

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Abstract. *This study investigates the implementation challenges of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The study was guided by four research questions and three hypotheses. The study adopted a descriptive design which was used to explore the opinion of respondents on implementation challenges of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The population of the study was 8,367 which comprised 5, 150 male teachers and 3,217 female teachers in the 309 public primary and junior secondary schools in Rivers State. The study sample was 500 teachers determined using Crech and Morgan table from the total population of junior secondary schools in Rivers State and comprised 263 male and 237 female teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The instrument that was used for collection of data for the study was a 20 items self-structured questionnaire titled: Implementation Challenge of Universal Basic Education Programme Questionnaire (ICUBEPQ). Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, and inadequate trained and qualified teachers are challenges of effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. It was also revealed that to a high extent, inadequate funding/infrastructure, and inadequate trained/qualified teachers militated against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The test of hypotheses in this regard revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent, funding, infrastructure, and trained/qualified teachers militated against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. On account of these findings, it was recommended that to effectively implement the UBE programme in Rivers State, government should provide needed funds, infrastructure and employ qualified teachers. Training and retraining of teachers should be embarked upon by relevant educational agencies of government.*

Keywords: *Effective Implementation; Implementation Challenge; Universal Basic Education (UBE).*

Introduction

Education has been aptly described as a dynamic agent of social change that brings about rapid development of nations (Obasanjo, 1999) Thus, the need for an affordable and accessible educational system to ensure acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills by the citizenry cannot be over-emphasized. According to Fafunwa (2004). Education was brought to Nigeria by the missionaries. The objectives and goals of Education then were to facilitate reading and writing of the Bible so as to enhance the missionary aim of disseminating good news. At the onset of colonialism in Nigeria, the objectives changed though not completely, the aims were shifted to reading, writing and calculation (simple arithmetic) as well as to train stewards, clerks and translators for the colonial masters, to propel trade and exchange.

Universal Basic Education (UBE) is an ambitious educational programme, which was initiated and launched by the Federal Republic of Nigeria to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty as well as stimulate and accelerate national development, political consciousness and national integrations. President Olusegun Obasanjo flagged off the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme on the 29th of September 1999 in the city of Sokoto in Sokoto state, Nigeria. Universal Basic Education is a programme initiated by the Federal government to rectify the existing distortions in the Basic Education sub-sector of the educational system. The major goals of Universal Basic Education is to bring about positive changes by making the programme responsive to the needs of the people and ensuring that the individuals and communities become actively involved in the provision of Basic Education just like the slogan “*education for all is the responsibility of all*”. Globally, the Universal Basic Education is conceived to embrace formal Education up to the age of 15 years as well as adult and non-formal Education including Education of the marginalized groups within the society.

The Universal Basic Education is defined according to the Universal Basic Education (UBE) annual report (2001) as: “The foundation of life-long learning that comprises a wide range or variety of formal and non-formal Educational activities and programmes designed to enable learners acquire functional literacy as well as equipping individuals with such knowledge, skills, attitude and so on that will enable meaningful living, contribute to the development of the society: derive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from the society; and discharge their civic obligations completely. The National Policy on Education (1981), conceptualizes Education as the process that helps to develop the whole man and discover potentials towards achieving goals. The organization of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU) Decade of Education for Africa (1997 – 2006), which required African States to generalize access to quality basic education as a foundation stone for sustainable socio-economic development. (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education, 2000). The specific objectives of the Universal Basic Education Programme, as outlined in the guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Education, (2000), are as follows:

- a) Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
- b) The provision of free Universal Basic Education for every Nigerian child of school age.
- c) Reducing drastically the incidence of drop outs from the formal school system through improved relevance, equality and efficiency.
- d) Catering for the learning needs of young persons who for one reason or another have had to interrupt their schooling through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education.
- e) Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, education and ethical, moral and civic values needed for laying solid foundation for life –long learning.

According to the UBE Annual Report Year (2000), the scope of the UBE programme are:

- a) Programmes initiatives for early childhood care and socialization.
- b) Education programmes for the acquisition of functional literacy, numeracy and life skills; especially for adults (persons 15 and above).

- c) Out-of-school, non-formal programmes for updating the knowledge and skills of persons who left school before acquiring the basics needed for life-long learning.
- d) Non-formal skills and apprenticeship training for adolescents and youths who did not have the benefit of formal education.
- e) The formal school system from the beginning of primary education to the end of the junior secondary school.

The Universal Basic Education Scheme also spelt out the various approaches and strategies for the successful implementation of the scheme such as: the enactment of necessary legislation; the articulation of enabling policies; the sensitization and mobilization of the target groups and all stakeholders; adequate funding; optimal allocation and efficient utilization of resources; adequate teacher training, recruitment and motivation; the effective coordination of activities; the encouragement and stimulation of the active participation of the private sector, non-governmental and voluntary organizations, as well as local communities in the Scheme; the establishment of working partnership and collaboration with the international community and donor agencies; and regular supervision and monitoring.

Universal Basic Education (UBE) is monitored and maintained by Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC). Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) was established by an Act of the National Assembly as a way of ensuring the achievement of the objectives of the Universal Basic Education Programme. It is the responsibility of this commission to coordinate the activities of the programme throughout its first nine years ‘gestation period’, from 2001 to 2009 and beyond (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education, 2000). It is expected that the compulsory nature of the Universal Basic Education Programme will ensure that more girls are enrolled in the primary and junior secondary schools being the stages that lay the foundation for the educational attainment of children. The Universal Basic Education guidelines also aim to correct the gender disparity in education by ensuring that all children of school age including girls are to enrolled in schools. The UBE programme is intended to be Universal, free and compulsory, thereby emphasizing that the parents have obligations to send their children to school. Furthermore, sanctions will be imposed on persons, societies or institutions that prevent children, adolescents and youth from benefiting from the programme. (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education,2000). This harsh posture of the Federal Government in ensuring compliance with the Universal Basic Education Programme by all citizens is very laudable. It gives hope of bridging the wide gender disparity in educational attainment of children in Nigeria in the near future. Omoniwa (2000), states that “the launching of the Universal Basic Education programme is not an incidental development given the history of Nigeria Education”.

The Universal Basic Education Programme has its conceptual foundation in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) which states in section 18 as follows: “*Government shall direct its policies towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels. Government shall eradicate illiteracy, and to this end, Government shall as and when due provide:*

1. Free compulsory and Universal Primary Education.
2. Free Secondary Education
3. Free University Education and;
4. Free adult literacy programme.

Universal access to Education has been the prime target for Nigeria, since the middle of the 1970’s when the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme was introduced. Predictably, the pupils’ enrolment burgeoned rapidly from 6.2 million in the 1975/76 session to 14.8 million in 1992. As usual, this burst of educational activity brought in its wake a plethora of changes, some positive, others very problematic. The over whelming unanticipated results of this sudden educational expansion evidence a profound shortage of learning facilities including space, a severe dearth of teachers and funds to implement the system. Loud grumbling started to be heard from parents and the general public because of the cost imposed on them from a programme that was purported to educate the children free of charge.

The Educationally conscious Nigerians began to lose faith in the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme disparaging the government's effort to finance the system which many concluded was a nightmare. The teachers' morale suffered some battering. Various kinds of levies were re-imposed on parents by some state governments in a bid to salvage the collapsing scheme. All these happened despite the excellent objectives and philosophy of the programme which were enunciated optimistically in the National policy on Education published in 1977. In 1950, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserted that "everyone has a right to Education. This declaration triggered efforts from all countries of the world to Universalize Basic Education.

In Africa, at the Addis Ababa conference of 1961 African Ministers of Education set 1980 as the target for all African countries to achieve Universal Primary Education. Many African Nations, Nigeria inclusive made efforts to meet this target. Though many countries spent between 25 and 40 percent of their annual budgets on Education alone, none was able to achieve the target. In fact many nations began to lose their grounds which they had gained because of economic depression faced by rapid population growth and general poverty.

The mid-eighties witnessed a renewal effort and a determination to achieve the Basic Education for all. Greater attention started to be paid to the needs of such underserved groups such as illiterate men and women, nomadic as well as the handicapped. The most important activity for Basic Education was the world conference in Jomtien, Thailand from 5th to 9th March 1990, this conference was organized by the World Bank, UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF and came up with a document entitled "World Declaration on Education for all and frame work for Action to meet Basic Learning Needs".

Since this document became a sort of blue print for all countries of the world, Nigeria was encouraged to step up educational activities to achieve Education for all. One of such activities was the situation and policy Analysis of basic Education in Nigeria, which was carried out Nationwide from 1991-93. Basic Education, therefore, means the type of Education, in quality and content that is given in the first level of Education. This concept changes from country to country. In Nigeria for instance, basic education was continuous nine-year schooling from primary 1-6(six) years and 3 years junior secondary school. The concept is expected to take care of a new Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme of curriculum. In Rivers State, there is perceived decrepitude from financing, personnel, and infrastructure which tends to impede on the effective implementation of the programme which are yet to be verified empirically, hence this study to investigate these observations and provide plausible evidence to validation the assertion.

Statement of the Problem

Education has been a tool for development in all nations of the world including Nigeria especially the basic education which is the foundations of all level of education. Despite the importance of education to human and national development, there appear to be challenges militating against the basic education programme in Rivers State, Nigeria. These challenges are ranging from: inadequate funding, improper planning, inadequate infrastructural facilities or decay, inadequate trained and qualified teachers, over-population, inconsistency of government policies, and corruption etc. These factors are probably impeding or disrupting teaching and learning processes, adequate planning, effective instructional delivery, and effective implementation of the UBE programme. Perhaps an investigation into these factors will help to mitigate the challenges of the programme to effectively achieve its objectives in the education industry. Premised on the above statement, the research set out to investigate the challenges of effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the challenges of effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does is inadequate funding a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?

3. To what extent is inadequate infrastructural facilities a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?
4. To what extent is inadequate qualified teachers a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent funding is a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent inadequate infrastructural facilities is a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

HO₃: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent inadequate qualified teachers is a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Theoretical Review

The study is anchored on the human capital development theory propounded by Theodore W. Schultz in 1961 cited in Naphat Wuttaphan 2017.

Human Capital Theory

The human capital theory has its roots from the work of Adam Smith (1776) known as the “wealth of Nation” he talks extensively on how skill and knowledge acquired by the labor force can influence economic growth and development. Adam Smith explains that resources spend on education and training of human capital is as important as the resources spend in acquiring physical capital and investment. Smith asserted that human capital development theory is the most influential economic theory of Western Education, setting the framework of government policies on school funding for the development of students’ academic performance since the early 1960's. Human capital development theory states that “investment in human capital is the key determinant of greater economic output”. It was used to explain academic performance within the school system. A key strategy in determining academic performance has been to employ a conception of individuals as human capital and various economic metaphors for the funding of university and other tertiary institutions in order to promote educational system through research and publication, scholarships, salaries, building facilities, classroom facilities, instructional materials, office facilities, conferences, workshops, seminars and in-service training.

However, in the past, economic strength was largely depended on tangible physical assets such as land, factories and equipment for university education. Labor was a necessary component, but increases in the value of the business came from investment in capital equipment. Modern economists seem to concur that education and health care are the key to improve human capital and ultimately increasing the economic outputs of the nation. In the new global economy, tangible assets may not be as important as investing in human capital.

Smith identified people as the source of the economic growth while other economists were attributing national growth to improvements in technology. In his book, *The Role of Human Capital* (2000), quoted description of human capital:

"Consider all human abilities to be either innate or acquired. Every person is born with a particular set of genes, which determines his innate ability. Attributes of acquired population quality, which are valuable and can be augmented by appropriate investment, will be treated as human capital. P.21-23."

Human Capital Theory posited that funding of education is an investment in human capital which will lead to greater academic performance of students’ and increase economic outputs towards

development. Labor was a necessary component among lecturers in the university for the teaching and learning, but increases in the value of the salaries come from investment in capital equipment. Modern economists believed that funding of university education is the key to students' academic performance which improve human capital development and ultimately increasing the economic outputs of the nation. The high level of unemployment situation amongst graduate from university coupled with the level of under-funding, under-development, poverty and high rate of dropouts from the university level in Nigeria have continued to raise eye-brown on the need for funding and managing Nigeria university educational system for national development. Hence, it is hope that the first-place government should encourage a diversification of the economy is the funding of university education for capacity building through adequate provision of constant electricity supply, classroom facilities, students' scholarship, hostels' accommodations, good roads, lecturers' salaries, instructional materials. There is need to create more sources of funding to initiative in the Nigeria educational institutions in order to develop human capital that will make contributive effort towards national and international development.

However, education as regarded as an effective tool for national integration and development, is an instrument "par excellence" as outlined by the National Policy on Education (2004), and used in effecting changes and developing the human capacity level in the society. Education equips the human capital with the relevant skills, knowledge, ideas, values and innovations with which to function effectively in the society. For any nation to develop, priority must be given to funding of university education capacities that wheel the economy towards national development. Adequate attention of funding must be given to relevance of education by providing classroom facilities, office facilities, instructional materials, lecturers' salaries and scholarships, conferences, seminars, workshops and in-service. This implies that human capital development through funding of university education immensely contribute to poverty alleviation as well as national development and improve staff and students' academic performances. The more effective the funding of educational system is applied to the university, the more profitable it becomes and higher the profitability of teaching and learning in the university for the improvement of staff and students' academic performances.

Also Alfred Marshall in his book "Principle of Economics" published in 1961 argued that education can be regarded as a personal investment, this according to him is because the intention to invest in education and training is the same on the intention to invest in any other type of investment hence societies and individuals invest in education to get certain benefit at the end of it all. The above argument justifies the early birth of human capital theory and the investment in education for its social and economic benefit. Hence, Human Capital Theory as used in this research emphasized on the availability of funding universal basic education programme effective implementation. Whether the individual that benefit in terms of getting higher earnings after acquiring additional level or type of education or the society who benefited in terms of getting good and enlighten workforce, good health care, improve economic development and healthy political participation. The Human Capital Theory (HCT) is relevance to this study because, it is the foundational economic rationale for the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, asserting that education is a strategic investment in people that enhances individual productivity and national economic growth.

Conceptual Review

Universal Basic Education (UBE)

Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) was established by Act of the National Assembly as a way of ensuring the proper of the objectives of the Universal Basic Education Programme. It is the responsibility of this commission to coordinate the activities of the programme throughout its first nine years 'gestation period', from 2001 to 2009 and beyond (Nigerian Federal Ministry of Education. 2000). It is expected that the compulsory nature of the Universal Basic Education Programme will ensure that more girls are enrolled in the primary and junior secondary schools being the stages that lay the foundation for the educational attainment of children. The Universal Basic Education guidelines also aim to correct the gender disparity in education by ensuring that all children of school age including girls are to enrolled in schools. The UBE programme is intended to be Universal, free and compulsory, thereby emphasizing that the parents have obligations to send their children to school.

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Benefit of Universal Basic Education Programme

The programme, Universal Basic Education is designed for Children aged 3-5 years for Early Care Development Education (ECCDE) Children aged 6-11 years for Primary School Education and Children aged 12- 14 years for junior Secondary School Education. Its benefits include the following:

- a) To bring programme and initiatives for the acquisition of functional literacy, numerically and life skills, especially for adults between (Ages 15 and above).
- b) To give special programme for the nomadic populations and migrant fisher folks.
- c) Cut-of-school children, non-formal programme for updating the knowledge and skills of persons who left before acquiring the basics needed for lifelong learning.
- d) Non-formal skills and apprenticeship training for adolescents and youth who have not had the benefit of formal education.
- e) The development in the entire citizenry a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
- f) The provision of free universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school age.
- g) The drastic reduction of the incidence of drop-outs from the formal school system (through improved relevance, quality and efficiency).
- h) Catering for the interest of young persons who, for one reason or another have had to interrupt their education and the other out-of-school children/adolescents, through appropriate forms of contemporary approaches, to the provision and promotion of basic education.
- i) Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for the laying of strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Management of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme

The body to take charge of the Universal Basic Education Programme was established by an Act of the National Assembly for the overall co-ordination of the Programme. This body is known as the

Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), at the federal level, this came to be on the 7th of October, 2004. The Commission has the following responsibilities.

1. The commission shall prescribe the minimum standards of primary, junior secondary and adult literacy education throughout Nigeria.
2. The Universal Basic Education commission shall inquire into and advise the Federal Government on the funding of Basic Education in Nigeria.
3. The commission shall collate, after consultation with all the state governments, periodic master plans for a balanced and coordinate development of Basic Education in Nigeria.
4. Make proposals to the Federal Government for equal and adequate Basic Education opportunities in Nigeria.
5. The commission shall ensure that the Basic National curriculum and syllabus and other necessary instructional materials are in use in all the primary, junior secondary and adult literacy institutions in the country.
6. The commission shall take charge of collation, analyses, and publications of information, relating to primary, junior secondary and adult literacy education in Nigeria.
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11. The commission shall take charge of collation, analyses, and publications of information, relating to primary, junior secondary and adult literacy education in Nigeria.

The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) shall carryout other activities that are relevant and conducive to the discharge of its functions under the enabling Act and such other functions as the commission may from time to time determine. The Universal Basic Education Commission shall work in close collaboration with relevant. At the states level, the various house of assembly shall also promulgate the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act and a Board set to manage the activities of the UBE programme at the state level as it is at the federal level. The functions of the board are outlines in the UBE Act as in the federal level. Federal Agencies and parastatals and more closely with all the state and local education boards.

Funding as a Challenge in the Implementation of UBE Programme

Inadequate funding refers to the insufficient allocation or provision of financial resources to support a particular project or programme. Inadequate funding has posed a serious challenge to universal basic education in Nigeria. UNSECO recommends 26% of the country budgetary allocation to education. But Nigeria has since independence did not meet this recommendation. Ndujihe (2013) lamented that Nigeria had the least budgetary allocation to education compare to other countries. The National Human Capital Development Index (2010) noted that, education in Nigeria is not given adequate attention, instead the funds meant to be used for this sector is being expended on irrelevant ceremonial functions of government. Also, federal government has budgeted only 5.5 billion Naira students' loan for all federal tertiary institutions in Nigeria, but budgeted trillions of Naira for Hajj and other irrelevant trips and ceremonies. Also, government at all levels make the pronounced a free universal basic education but, most of these schools especially primary level suffered lack or non-payment of teachers' salary and other allowances which affect teachers job performance which they make a policy of no pay no work in some rural areas. Also, it is said that a hungry lion cannot lives a hungry lion. Below is the typical Federal government budgetary allocation to education from 2009-2024.

Table 1: Federal government budgetary allocation to education from 2009-2024

S/N	Year	Budget	Allocation to Education	Percentage to Budget
1	2009	3.049trn	₦221.09bn	7.25
2	2010	5.160trn	₦249.09bn	4.83
3	2011	4.972trn	₦306.3bn	6.16
4	2012	4.887trn	₦400.15bn	8.20
5	2013	4.987trn	₦426.53bn	8.55
6	2014	4.962trn	₦49.3bn	9.94
7	2015	5.067trn	₦392.6bn	7.74
8	2016	6.061trn	₦550bn	6.10
9	2017	7.444trn	₦605.8bn	7.38
10	2018	8.612trn	₦620.5bn	7.04
11	2019	8.923trn	₦671.07bn	7.05
12	2020	10.33trn	₦742.52bn	6.70
13	2021	13.60trn	₦923.79bn	5.40
14	2022	17.13trn	₦6.97trn	15.09
15	2023	28.7trn	₦9.3trn	17.03
16	2024	28.77trn	₦1.5trn	7.09

Source: Walson & Asawo (2024)

Infrastructural Facilities as a Challenge in the Implementation of UBE Programme

The state of inadequate infrastructure facilities in Universal Basic Education (UBE) schools in Nigeria is a pressing concern. Oyedele, (2020) noted that prior to the launch of the UBE program, infrastructural facilities in Nigerian primary and secondary schools were already in disarray, with classrooms being overcrowded and lacking essential instructional materials. Inadequate infrastructure in the context of this work refers to the insufficient, outdated, or poorly maintained physical structures and systems that support economic and social development. This can include:

- a) Overcrowded classrooms: Too many students packed into small, poorly ventilated classrooms. Many UBE schools in Nigeria lack adequate school buildings and classrooms, leading to congestion and overcrowding. This has resulted in the overstretching of existing facilities, making it difficult for students to learn effectively.
- b) Dilapidated school buildings: Crumbling walls, leaky roofs, and broken windows.
- c) Lack of desks and chairs: Students forced to sit on the floor or share desks.
- d) Inadequate lighting and electricity: Poor lighting, frequent power outages, or no electricity at all.
- e) Insufficient toilets and sanitation facilities: Broken or non-existent toilets, lack of clean water, and poor waste management.
- f) Limited access to technology: Outdated or non-existent computers, lack of internet access, and limited educational software.
- g) Poorly equipped laboratories: Insufficient or broken science equipment, limiting hands-on learning experiences.
- h) Inadequate libraries: Limited or outdated books, no digital resources, and poor reading spaces.
- i) Unsatisfactory playgrounds and sports facilities: Limited or unsafe outdoor spaces, broken or non-existent sports equipment.
- j) Inadequate facilities for students with disabilities: Lack of ramps, elevators, or accessible restrooms, limiting access to education.

These inadequate infrastructure examples hinder the learning experience, affecting student outcomes, teacher morale, and overall educational quality.

Also, in this age of accelerating technological development and globalization, modern equipment and facilities for effective teaching and learning are not only essential but must be provided in adequate and usable conditions. Robert Okah (2013), observed that most educational institutions in Nigeria are faced with the problems of coping with old and dilapidated infrastructures facilities including obsolescent equipment. In his words, teaching facilities procured for a handful of students over two decades ago are still being used for thousands of the students in the 21st century.

Inadequate Teachers as a Challenge in Implementation of UBE Programme

Inadequate trained teachers refer to educators who lack the necessary training, qualifications, and experience to effectively teach and support students in achieving their academic goals. This can include:

- a) Unqualified teachers: Individuals who have not received formal training or certification in education.
- b) Underqualified teachers: Teachers who may have some training or certification but lack the necessary qualifications or experience to teach specific subjects or grade levels.
- c) Inexperienced teachers: Newly hired teachers who lack experience in teaching and classroom management.
- d) Teachers without specialized training: Teachers who lack specialized training in areas such as special education, English language learners, or technology integration.

Causes of Inadequate Trained Teachers:

- a) Insufficient Teacher Training Institutions: Nigeria has a limited number of teacher training institutions, which cannot meet the demand for trained teachers.
- b) Poor Quality of Teacher Training: Many teacher training institutions in Nigeria lack the necessary resources, infrastructure, and qualified instructors to provide high-quality training.
- c) Brain Drain: Many Nigerian teachers seek better opportunities abroad, leading to a shortage of trained teachers in the country.
- d) Low Teacher Morale: Poor working conditions, low salaries, and lack of benefits contribute to low teacher morale, leading to a decline in the quality of teaching.

Characteristics of Inadequate Trained Teachers may include:

- a) Lack of subject matter expertise: Teachers who are not familiar with the curriculum or subject matter they are teaching.
- b) Ineffective classroom management: Teachers who struggle to manage classroom behavior, leading to disruptions and decreased learning.
- c) Inadequate lesson planning: Teachers who fail to plan engaging and effective lessons, leading to student boredom and disengagement.
- d) Poor communication skills: Teachers who struggle to communicate effectively with students, parents, and colleagues.

The presence of inadequate trained teachers can have serious consequences, including:

- a) Poor student academic performance: Students taught by inadequate trained teachers may perform poorly academically.
- b) Low student motivation: Students may become disengaged and demotivated when taught by inadequate trained teachers.
- c) Negative impact on school culture: Inadequate trained teachers can contribute to a negative school culture, leading to decreased teacher morale and student achievement.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study was 8,367 which comprise of 5, 150 male teachers and 3,217 female teachers in the 309 public primary and junior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample of the was 500 teachers determined using kretech and

Morgan table from the total population of junior secondary schools in Rivers State and comprised 263 male and 237 female teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The instrument that was used for collection of data was a 20 items self-structured questionnaire titled: Implementation Challenge of Universal Basic Education Programme Questionnaire (ICUBEPQ). The instrument was validated by two experts in the Department of Educational Management, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of 0.75. Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Findings

Research Question One: What are the challenges of effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers on the challenges of effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

S/ N O	Question Items (The factors that militating against the effective implementation of UBE)	Male Students		Female Students		Mean Set		DECISION
		Mean	ST D	Mean	ST D	Mean	ST D	
1	Inadequate funding	2.64	.70	2.76	.90	2.59	.80	Strongly Agreed
2	Inadequate infrastructural facilities	2.53	.57	2.64	.45	2.56	.51	Strongly Agreed
3	Inadequate trained and qualified teachers	2.67	.63	2.54	.71	2.61	.67	Strongly Agreed
CLUSTER MEAN/STD		2.91	.67	2.77	.72	2.82	.69	Strongly Agreed

Table 2 showed the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the challenges of effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. Item 1 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.59 and .80 which implies that the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate funding is a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. Item 2 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.56 and .51 which implies that the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate infrastructural facilities is a factor that militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. Item 3 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.61 and .67 which implies that the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate trained and qualified teachers is a factor that militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The cluster mean of 2.82 and standard deviation of .69 shows that the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, and inadequate trained and qualified teachers are factors that militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: To what extent is inadequate funding a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers on the extent inadequate funding is a challenge to effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

S/N	Question (Extent militate against the effective implementation)	Items funding the UBE	Male Students		Female Students		Mean Set		DE CIS ION
			Mea n	ST D	Mea n	ST D	Mea n	ST D	
4	Budget provision is low		2.76	.90	2.67	.70	2.68	.65	High Exte nt
5	Teachers' salaries are poor		2.24	.45	2.43	.57	2.34	.54	Low Exte nt
6	Teachers' allowances are poor		2.64	.71	3.67	.63	3.12	.62	High Exte nt
7	Budgetary provision on instructional materials		2.61	.51	3.02	.64	2.82	.53	High Exte nt
8	Increase in the rate of turnover among teachers due to poor remuneration		2.31	.55	2.22	.62	2.27	.67	Low Exte nt
CLUSTER MEAN/STD			2.51	.62	2.81	.63	2.61	.61	High Exte nt

Table 3 showed the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent funding militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. Item 4 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.68 and .65 which implies that to a high extent budget provision is low and militate against the implementation of the UBE programme in Rivers State. Item 5 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.34 and .54 which implies that to a high extent, teachers' salaries and allowances is poor and militate against the implementation of the UBE programme in Rivers State. Item 6 had a mean set and standard deviation of 3.12 and .62 which implies that to a high extent, teachers' motivation in the school militates against the implementation of the UBE programme in Rivers State. Item 7 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.82 and .53 which implies that to a high budgetary provision on instructional materials militates against the implementation of the UBE programme in Rivers State. Item 8 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.27 and .83 which implies that increase the rate of turnover among teachers militates against the implementation of the UBE programme in Rivers State. The cluster mean of 2.82 and standard deviation of .67 shows that to a high extent, funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: To what extent is inadequate infrastructural facilities a challenge to effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?

Table 4: Mean ratings and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers on the extent inadequate infrastructural facilities are a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

S/ N O	Question Items (Extent affects the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE))	Male Students		Female Students		Mean Set		DEC ISION
		Mea n	ST D	Mea n	ST D	Mea n	ST D	
9	infrastructural facilities hinder the learning experience	2.64	.70	2.76	.90	2.59	.80	High Extent
10	infrastructural facilities affect students' academic performance	2.53	.57	2.64	.45	2.56	.51	High Extent
11	infrastructural facilities affect teacher's morale	2.67	.63	2.54	.71	2.61	.67	High Extent
12	infrastructural facilities affect overall Educational Quality	3.50	.64	2.81	.71	3.16	.68	High Extent
13	Students lose concentration if facilities are inadequate	3.21	.80	3.11	.85	3.16	.83	High Extent
CLUSTER MEAN/STD		2.91	.67	2.77	.72	2.82	.69	High Extent

Table 4 showed the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent infrastructural facilities affects the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. Item 9 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.59 and .80 which implies that to a high extent, infrastructural facilities hinder the learning experience. Item 10 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.56 and .51 which implies that to a high extent, infrastructural facilities affect students' academic performance. Item 11 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.61 and .67 which implies that to a high extent, infrastructural facilities affect teacher's morale. Item 12 had a mean set and standard deviation of 3.16 and .68 which implies that to a high extent, infrastructural facilities affect overall educational quality. Item 13 had a mean set and standard deviation of 3.16 and .83 which implies that to a high extent, students lose concentration if facilities are inadequate. The cluster mean of 2.82 and standard deviation of .69 shows that to a high extent, infrastructural facilities militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Research Question Four: To what extent is inadequate trained and qualified teachers a challenge to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State?

Table 5: Mean ratings and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers on the extent inadequate trained and qualified teachers are challenges to the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

S/ N O	Question Items (Extent inadequate trained and qualified teachers is a challenge to the effective UBE implementation)	Male Students		Female Students		Mean Set		DEC ISIO N
		Mea n	ST D	Mea n	ST D	Mea n	ST D	
14	Lack of trained and qualified teachers lead to poor student academic performance	2.58	.85	2.67	.70	2.63	.78	High Extent
15	Lack of trained and qualified teachers lead to low student motivation	2.54	.44	2.63	.57	2.58	.51	High Extent
16	Lack of trained and qualified teachers can contribute to a negative school culture, leading to decreased teacher morale and student achievement	3.02	.67	3.07	.63	3.05	1.30	High Extent
17	Students may become disengaged and demotivated when taught by inadequate trained teachers	2.52	.53	3.02	.64	2.77	1.17	High Extent
18	Lack of trained and qualified teachers can lead to negative impact on school culture	2.77	.71	2.62	.62	2.69	.67	High Extent
CLUSTER MEAN/STD		2.67	.64	2.80	.63	2.74	.68	High Extent

Table 5 showed the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. Item 14 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.63 and .78 which implies that to a high extent lack of trained and qualified teachers lead to poor student academic performance. Item 15 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.58 and .51 which implies that to a high extent lack of trained and qualified teachers lead to low student motivation. Item 16 had a mean set and standard deviation of 3.05 and 1.30 which implies that to a high extent, lack of trained and qualified teachers can contribute to a negative school culture, leading to decreased teacher morale and student achievement. Item 17 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.77 and 1.17 which implies that to a high extent, students may become disengaged and demotivated when taught by inadequate trained teachers. Item 18 had a mean set and standard deviation of 2.69 and .67 which implies that to a high extent, lack of trained and qualified teachers can lead to negative impact on school culture. The cluster mean of 2.74 and standard deviation of .68 shows that to a high extent, trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Hypothesis One: H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Table 6: Summary t-test analysis result on the significance difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Groups (teachers)	N	X	Std.	df	Sig. (tailed)	2-	t-value	Decision
Males	263	55.90	7.16					Ho ₁
Females	237	56.61	7.03	498	.474		.517	accepted

Data in table 6 show summary of t-test analysis result on the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The t-value .517 is greater than 0.05 (.517>p.0.05), therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female teachers on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

This means that male and female teachers alike had similar view of the types on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant different between the mean rating of male and female teachers on the extent infrastructural facilities militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Table 7: Summary t-test analysis result on the significance difference in the mean ratings of male and female on the extent infrastructural facilities militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Groups (teachers)	N	X	Std.	df	Sig. (tailed)	2-	t-value	Decision
Males	263	44.07	5.09					Ho ₁
Females	237	44.53	5.01	498	.424		.458	accepted

Data in table 7 show summary of t-test analysis result on the mean ratings of male and female on the extent infrastructural facilities militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The t-value .458 is greater than 0.05 (.517>p.0.05), therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female on the extent infrastructural facilities militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female male and female on the extent infrastructural facilities militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. That is male and female teachers alike had similar view on the extent infrastructural facilities militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant different between the mean rating of male and female teachers on the extent inadequate trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Table 8: Summary t-test analysis result on the significance difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Groups (teachers)	N	X	Std.	df	Sig. (tailed)	2-t-value	Decision
Males	263	17.68	5.72				Ho ₁
Females	237	19.71	4.01	498	.532	.568	accepted

Data in table 8 show summary of t-test analysis result on the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The t-value .568 is greater than 0.05 (.568 > p.0.05), therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between male and female teachers on the extent trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. That is male and female teachers alike had similar view on the trained and qualified teachers militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Challenges to the Effective Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Rivers State

The findings in this research question showed that inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, and inadequate trained and qualified teachers are factors that militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. These findings agree with those of Walson (2006) the factors that militates against were curriculum, teachers, funding, and infrastructure. The study found out that available teachers, infrastructural facilities and funds had a strong significant relationship with effective implementation of the universal basic education (UBE) programme, while available legislation had a weak relationship with effective implementation of the UBE programme in Rivers State. Similarly, in a study by Adeyemi, (2014) on the challenges facing the Implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria", it revealed that the challenges militating against Public-Private Partnership in education is increase in the growing population, inadequate financing of the sector, lack of qualified teachers, ill-motivated manpower, corruption and systemic embezzlement as well as the exclusion of low-income people from the PPPs services.

Extent Funding militates against the Effective Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Rivers State

The findings in this research question showed that to a high extent, funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The test of hypothesis in this regard revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. This means that male and female teachers alike had similar view of the types on the extent funding militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. These findings agreed with the assertion of Ndujihe (2013) who lamented that Nigeria had the least budgetary allocation to education compare to other countries. The National Human Capital Development Index (2010) noted that, education in Nigeria is not given adequate attention, instead the funds meant to be used for this sector is being expended on irrelevant ceremonial functions of government. Also, federal government has budgeted only 5.5 billion Naira students loan for all federal tertiary institutions in Nigeria, but budgeted trillions of Naira for Hajj and other irrelevant trips and ceremonies. Also, government at all levels make the

pronounced a free universal basic education but, most of these schools especially primary level suffered lack or non-payment of teachers' salary and other allowances which affect teachers job performance which they make a policy of no pay no work in some rural areas. Also, it is said that a hungry lion cannot lives a hungry lion. Also, Adeyemi, (2014) on the challenges facing the Implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria", it revealed that the challenges militating against Public-Private Partnership in education is increase in the growing population, inadequate financing of the sector,

Extent infrastructural facilities militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State

The findings in this research question showed that to a high extent, infrastructural facilities militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The test of hypothesis in this regard revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent infrastructural facilities militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. This means that male and female teachers alike had similar view on the extent infrastructural facilities militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. These findings agreed with the assertion of Oyedele, (2020) who noted that prior to the launch of the UBE program, infrastructural facilities in Nigerian primary and secondary schools were already in disarray, with classrooms being overcrowded and lacking essential instructional materials. Inadequate infrastructure in the context of this work refers to the insufficient, outdated, or poorly maintained physical structures and systems that support economic and social development. Robert Okah (2013), observed that most educational institutions in Nigeria are faced with the problems of coping with old and dilapidated infrastructures facilities including obsoleses equipment. In his words, teaching facilities procured for a handful of students over two decades ago are still being used for thousands of the students in the 21st century.

Extent Available Teachers militate against the effective Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Rivers State

The findings in this research question showed that to a high extent, trained and qualified militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The test of hypothesis in this regard revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the extent trained and qualified militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. This means that male and female teachers alike had similar view on the extent trained and qualified militates against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. These findings agreed with the assertion of Fagbamiye, (2016) carried out a study a study on an Examination of the Factors Militating Against the Implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria" and found that the factors militating against the implementation of the UBE in Nigeria were: the role of public private partnership in the provision and management of school resources for school effectiveness include providing physical facilities, recruitment of qualified teachers, providing ICT hardware and software, providing technical support, providing free internet access to school staff and construction of quality convenience for students and staff among others.

Conclusion

It is concluded that to a high extent lack of funding, infrastructure, and teachers act as challenges that militate against the effective implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study.

1. To effectively implement the UBE programme in Rivers State, government should provide needed funds.
2. To effectively implement the UBE programme in Rivers State, government should provide infrastructure.
3. To effectively implement the UBE programme in Rivers State, government should employ qualified teachers and ensure regular training and retraining of teachers in the services.

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