

PERCEPTION OF PRINCIPALS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM (UBE) IN EBONYI STATE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ABAKALIKI EDUCATION ZONE EBONYI STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate the perception of principals on the Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in Abakaliki Education Zone, Ebonyi State. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Abakaliki Education Zone. 221 principals and vice principals were the population studied, comprising 101 male and 120 female principals. The entire population was used so there was no sample. Self structured questionnaire was used consisting twenty-eight (28) items to find out respondents perception on the Implementation of UBEP. The questionnaire was structured as a four point likert rating with 4 as the highest value 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts, from Faculty of Education of Ebonyi State University. In order to determine the internal consistency reliability of the instrument, the exercise was carried out with thirty Principals in Ebonyi central Zone of the State. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions and t-test for hypothesis. The major findings indicated that there is an effort in Ebonyi State to implement UBE Program but there are some factors militating against the implementation process, with poor funding as an instance. Some fundamental recommendations were made.

Keywords: Perception, Principles, Implimentation and Education.

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Government of Nigeria adopted education as an instrument for national development. This is because Education is the key that opens the door of development in all sectors. No society without functional education can claim to be healthy because the future of any society depends wholly on the education of her citizens (FRN 2000). After attainment of Nigeria's independence in 1960, several efforts have been made by successive government to universalize Basic Education, especially at the primary school level. The first nationwide attempt to universalize Basic Education was made by General Olusegun Obasanjo the then military Head of State on 6th September 1976. The program initiatives of the Federal Government provided the legal frame work and operational guidelines towards universalizing primary education scheme, though the implementation faced so many set backs and challenges as Nwagwu (1976), Adesina (1977), Taiwo (1981) pointed out including the following,

increased enrollment, poor planning and implementation, lack of political will, under estimation of cost of universal primary education, Poor funding, over estimation of the federal government capacity to finance the program. Moreover, poor planning in personnel and physical resources, short supply of qualified teachers, other infrastructural facilities and instructional materials and equipment needed for the implementation of the program. These made the implementation of the program inaccessible and unavailable to the children of school age.

The present Universal Basic Education (UBE) program was launched on September 30th 1999, in Sokoto State by Olusegun Obasanjo FRN (2000). Federal Ministry of Education 2000 accepted UBE scheme as educational program, which comprised Primary, Junior Secondary, Nomadic as well as Adult literacy. Basic Education is introduced to lay the foundation for sustainable life-long learning whose sole aim is to replace the failed UPE. It provides reading, writing, numeracy and skill

acquisition. It encompasses wide variety of Formal and Non- formal education activities and program designed to enable learners acquire functional literacy.

The rationale behind Basic Education is that Nigeria is a signatory to the Jomtien; 1990 Declaration of Education For All (EFA) by the year 2000 and also a member of the group of E-9 nations committed to the total eradication of illiteracy (Ogbonnaya 2003). To enlarge Jomtien vision on Basic Education, it included compulsory school which allows Personal Development, Intellectual autonomy; Integration into professional life and participation in the development of the society in the context of democracy. These would lead to skill acquisition, tools development for life-long learning and vocational guidelines. Knowledge values abilities for participatory and responsible citizenship (UNESCO 1990:66).

Specifically the objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE): Program aimed at realizing the following:

- To develop in the entire citizenry strong commitment to its vigorous promotion;
- Provide free, compulsory, Universal Basic Education (UBE) for every Nigerian child of school age;
- Reduce drastically drop-out rate from the formal school system through improved relevant and efficiency;
- Cater for drop out and out of school children, adolescents through various forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education;
- To ensure the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative and life skill, as well as the ethical moral and civil values needed for laying the foundation for life-long living.

Generally, it includes; Increase awareness of the importance of literacy and soliciting the participation and cooperation of all persons in the task of literacy for all by the 2010;

- Develop literacy program for young people and adults with special attention to disadvantaged group like women, disabled,

rural settlers among others;

- Mobilize other social economic and political sectors of our public life in the task of eradication of illiteracy within the shortest possible time;
- Universalizing access and promoting educational equality to all children, youths and adults through basic education
- Marshalling new resources and providing less expensive forms of education through the improvement in the planning and management of education.
- Promoting post literacy activities so as to help create conducive condition for general fulfillment of the individuals' potentials;
- Develop materials resources suitable for the realization of new goals;

The policy objective of the UBE is to promote youth, adults and non-formal enrolment opportunity to benefit from Basic Education;

Eliminating disparity access to education and reducing wastages;

The three components of UBE are; the first nine years of schooling, that is six years primary and three years junior secondary school education for all, children of pastoral nomads and migrant fishermen, and non-formal education for out of school children, youths, and illiterate adults. Adenira (2000) observed that the UBE program would mobilize local communities, resources, infrastructural and facilities. The twenty first century will lay foundation for practical skill acquisition; subjects taught in school with the UBE curriculum will enhance poverty alleviation.

The difference between the current UBE and the UPE of 1976 is that the UPE was mainly for primary education, and the planning did not give room for local participation unlike UBE. The free and compulsory education of the UBE extends from primary to junior secondary, and the UBE curriculum press for skill acquisition, for self reliance and sustainable education. The successful Implementation of the UBE program requires the combined efforts of the three tiers of governments, on the provision of infrastructural facilities, instructional materials and personnel resources etc. Some notable educational authorities like Ukeje

(1983) and Ogbonnaya (2002) stated that inadequate personnel, material resources and funds hamstrung the implementation of early UPE. Ibiom (2001) opined that only the provision of adequate personnel, financial and material resources could assure the success of UBE implementation. Otherwise it would go down to the drain as UPE of the old.

In Ebonyi State, the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) is the board charged with the responsibility for providing the necessary personnel and material resources, staff recruitment and deployment, infrastructural facilities and instructional materials for effective implementation of the UBE program. The implementation of the UBE scheme in the state must take into consideration of the fact that the state is educationally disadvantaged and backward in socio political and economic conditions. It should consider the gender sensitiveness, especially among the women folk, which constitute greater percentage of illiterates in the state by seeking their opinions on the girl child education under UBE Program. It must as well take into account the role of teachers, recruitment of qualified staff, deployment, funding, provision of infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, statistical data, capacity building, teachers participation in curriculum development, sensitization of parents and other stake holders in the overall educational decision making and routine planning. The UBE implementers must bear the above in mind and work towards developing in the people strong commitment towards education.

The role of principals in the implementations of the UBE must be given priority attention, since their opinion and perception as the implementer of the program counts much to the successful implementation of the program in the state at the junior secondary school level. The principals specifically assign duties to staff through supervision of school activities. They observe and improve classroom instruction and sporting activities. Students' relations' function, the principals ensure that the students granted admission meet government requirements. The principals arrange the students according to the

purpose and provision of instruction and for judicious use. Where boarding house is in operation the principals supervise, monitor and assign duties to staff to ensure adequate care of the students' welfare also maintain cordial relationship between the host communities. They maintain school facilities and adequate security of those facilities, as well can allow its use by the community. The principal ensures proper provision and maintenance of all school plants. Ever since the declaration of the UBE program, the Ebonyi State government has made effort towards its implementation. However, many students still receive lessons under the trees; availability of inadequate provision of laboratories, libraries, evidence of leaking roofs, no provision of computers and technicians. Generally there is under funding of UBE.

Statement of the problem

Universal Basic Education is a laudable program, which only its successful implementation by provision of human and material resources can guarantee effective achievement of the program objectives. The facts on the ground show, infrastructural decay, inadequate training of qualified teachers, dilapidated structures, inadequate instructional materials, non increment of teachers salaries and non implementation of 30% minimum wage in Ebonyi State.

There has been general outcry by parents, teachers, administrators, educational managers and planners and civil society on the poor funding of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Ebonyi State. The desired objectives such as introduction of information and communication technology, repositioning of science, technical and vocational education in the scheme of national education for optimum performance among others as stipulated in the national policy on education are lack of proper funding (Eze-Anyim, (2014).

Furthermore, Eze-Anyim (2014) reiterated that the poor funding as evidenced in the UBE programs has led to delay in the payment of teachers' salaries and allowances, poor infrastructural facilities for learning, and inadequate supervision due to poor funding of UBE Program in Ebonyi state. Okorie (2007) has contended that unless the principals'

perception is taken into consideration for the implementation of the UBE Program, the objectives may not be achieved in Ebonyi State. These made it imperative to investigate what Principals perceive and how it would help to achieve the objective of UBE in Ebonyi State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the perception of principals on the implementation of UBE program in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State.

Objective of the Study

1. To find out the perception of principals on the Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education zone.
2. To examine the factors militating against the implementation of the Universal Basic Education program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education Zone.
3. To identify the factors enhance the Implementation of Universal Basic Education program.
4. To proffer solutions on the ways of improving the implementation of UBE program.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to the Perception of Principals on the Implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions guarded the study

1. To what extent do principals perceive the implementation of Universal Basic Education program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education Zone?
2. What are the factors that militate against the implementation of the UBE program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in

Abakaliki Education Zone?

3. What are the factors that enhance the implementation of Universal Basic Education Program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education Zone?
4. What are the ways through which the implementation of UBE program can be improved?

Hypotheses

To guide the study, the following null hypothesis were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- HO1: There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female principals on their perception in the implementation of UBE Program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education Zone.
- HO2: There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female teachers on their perception in the implementation of UBE program in Ebonyi state JSS in Abakaliki Education Zone.

Methodology

The researcher adopted descriptive survey design. The area was Ebonyi state Nigeria. The population of the study consisted 221 teachers, made up of 77 principals and 144 vice principals. There was no sampling, because the population was small hence the researcher used the entire population of the principals and vice principals in the Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education Zone made up of 101 Male and 120 Female principals and vice-principals totaling 221. The instrument for data collection was the researcher self structured questionnaire that had two sections titled "Perception of Principals on the Implementation of Universal Basic Education in Ebonyi State Questionnaire" (PPIUBEQ) with twenty-eight items was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) in weighing value of 4 3 2 1 respectively.

The questionnaire was validated by two experts in

the Faculty of Educational Foundations Ebonyi State University Abakaliki. Their corrections were used to modify the work. Cronbach Alpha was adopted for the reliability test. The reliability index of 0.78, 0.61, 0.74, and 0.74 were established and the co-efficient of reliability high index of 0.78 obtained were considered adequate for the study.

Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test tested the null hypotheses at 0.05 significant levels. To answer the research question, a bench mark of 2.50 was adopted for acceptance. Any mean below 2.50 was rejected.

Results:

Research Question one

How do Principals perceive the Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Junior Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State Abakaliki Education Zone?

Table 1: Mean rating of male and female principals on the UBE programme is been implemented.

S/N	ITEMS	X	SD	Decision	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
		Male 101	Male 101		female 120	female 120	
1	The objectives of UBE have not been fully achieved in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary School.	3.29	0.79	Agreed	2.52	1.08	Agreed
2	There are inadequate personnel for the implementation of the program.	3.10	0.94	Agreed	2.79	1.08	Agreed
3	The Universal Basic Education program is inadequately implemented in Junior Secondary Schools of Ebonyi State.	3.10	0.95	Agreed	3.00	1.85	Agreed
4	There is inadequate provision of sporting equipment for physical education under UBE.	2.56	1.25	Agreed	3.25	0.83	Agreed
	GRAND \bar{X} and SD	3.01	0.98		2.89	1.21	

From the table one above, it was observed that principals view UBE as a Programme that has not been fully achieved its objectives, inadequate personnel, inadequately implemented in Junior Secondary Schools and inadequate provision of sporting equipment for physical education in Junior Secondary schools in Ebonyi State. This is so because the items meet the acceptable level of 2.5 and above at four point rating scale. They have the means of 3.29 3.10, 3.10 and 2.54 for male and 2.52, 2, 79, 3.00, and 3.25 for female respectively.

Research Question two

What are the factors that militate against the Implementation of Universal Basic Education programme in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools Abakaliki Education Zone.

Table 2: Mean rating of the principals on the factors militating against the UBE implementation

S/N	ITEMS	\bar{X}	SD	Decision	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
		Male 101	Male 101		female 120	female 120	
5	Lack of systematic planning and poor management.	3.10	0.88	Agreed	3.00	1.16	Agreed
6	Trekking distance from home to school which results lateness, absenteeism and truancy.	2.93	0.94	Agreed	2.80	1.12	Agreed
7	Government inability to provide sufficient funds for the procurement of instructional materials and equipment for the implementation of UBE programme for skill acquisition.	2.78	0.89	Agreed	3.12	0.93	Agreed
8	Most Junior secondary schools (JSS) still share the premises and infrastructural facilities with senior secondary school in the State.	2.58	1.16	Agreed	2.96	1.14	Agreed

9	Computer equipment and internet facilities have not been made available to enable students to acquire new techniques in the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).	3.30	0.90	Agreed	3.56	0.64	Agreed
10	The government in power determines the mode of implementation of educational program at the expenses of the public interest.	3.20	0.82	Agreed	3.23	0.64	Agreed
11	Specialized or vocational teachers are not motivated to enhance productivity on skill acquisition for long learning time living.	2.88	0.82	Agreed	3.17	0.90	Agreed
12	Falsification of statistical data.	3.08	1.06	Agreed	2.90	1.04	Agreed
13	Often professional and technical advices are abandoned at the implementation stage due to political interest.	3.18	0.89	Agreed	3.10	1.06	Agreed
14	Diversion of funds made for UBE to other sectors like health, agriculture etc.	3.09	0.83	Agreed	3.27	0.87	Agreed
15	Inadequate accommodation and infrastructural facilities.	3.10	0.88	Agreed	2.91	0.85	Agreed
16	Poor remuneration of teachers by government.	3.20	0.75	Agreed	3.04	0.73	Agreed
	Grand Total \bar{X} AND SD	3.03	0.90		3.08	0.92	

Table 2 above shows the mean ratings of principals on the factors militating against the implementation of UBE program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary School in Abakaliki Education Zone. Looking at the table, we can see that items 5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13, 14, 15, and 16 have mean ratings of above the criterion mean of 2.50. It is therefore the opinions of the male and female principals that there is lack of systematic planning and poor management of the UBE program, trekking problems from home to school, government inability to provide sufficient fund, Sharing the same premises with the senior secondary schools, non availability Information Communication Technology (ICT), government in power determines the mode of implementation of educational program, lack of motivation of specialized and vocational teachers to enhance production, Falsification of statistical data, Abandonment of professional and technical advice at the implementation stage, diversion of funds made for UBE for other

sectors, inadequate accommodation and infrastructural facilities and poor remuneration of teachers by government. This is so because the items meet the acceptable level of 2.5 and above at four point rating scale. They have mean of 3.10, 2.93, 2.78, 2.58, 3.30, 3.20, 2.88, 3.08, 3.18, 3.10 and 3.20 for male and 3.00, 2.80, 3.12, 2.96, 3.56, 3.2, 3.17, 2.90, 3.10, 3.27, 2.91 and 3.04 for female.

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

What are the factors that enhance the implementation of Universal Basic Education program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education Zone?

Table 3: Mean ratings of the principals on the factors that enhance the implementation of UBE program.

S/N	ITEMS	\bar{X}	SD	Decision	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
		Male 101	Male 101		female 120	female 120	
17	Funds are regularly and promptly made available for the payment of staff salaries and allowances.	3.05	1.03	Agreed	3.37	0.70	Agreed
18	Relevant curriculums improve the UBE implementation and achievement of the program objectives.	3.21	0.65	Agreed	2.67	1.18	Agreed
19	Provision of staff quarters for teachers.	3.16	0.92	Agreed	3.16	0.91	Agreed
20	Teachers have been re-oriented to adopting the new techniques of using Information Communication Technology (ICT) to improve teaching and learning.	3.21	0.68	Agreed	2.79	0.96	Agreed
21	There are running costs to principals for smooth operation on the implementation of the UBE Program.	3.12	0.89	Agreed	2.79	1.06	Agreed
22	Parents pay levies to assist school in providing and maintain school plants.	3.09	1.05	Agreed	2.66	1.20	Agreed
	Grand \bar{X} and SD	3.14	0.87		2.90	1.00	Agreed

Items 17,18,19,20,21 and 22 have mean ratings of 3.05,3.21,3.16,3.21,3.21 and 3.09 for male principals while the female principals rated these items 3.37, 2.67,3.16,2.79,2.79 and 2.66. These indicate that the factors which enhance the implementation of the UBE program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools include regular and prompt payment of the staff salaries and allowances, relevant curriculum, provision of staff quarters for teachers, orientation of teachers in new techniques of using information communication technologies, running costs to principals, levies paid by parents to assist schools in providing modern and maintaining school plants improve the implementation of UBE in Junior secondary school in the Ebonyi State.

RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR

What are the ways through which the implementation of UBE can be improved?

Table 4: Mean ratings of principals on ways of improving the implementation of UBE program.

S/N	ITEMS	\bar{X} Male 101	SD Male 101	Decision	\bar{X} Female 120	SD Female 120	Decision
23	Provision of adequate and relevant curriculum according to UBE objectives as indicated in the Nation Policy in Education.	3.38	0.67	Agreed	2.85	1.05	Agreed
24	Provision of sufficient funds, infrastructure, and instructional materials by government.	2.98	0.91	Agreed	2.88	0.98	Agreed
25	Involvement of teachers in planning hence they are the implementers.	3.19	0.78	Agreed	3.28	0.82	
26	Government should make provision for re-training, workshop, seminar and conferences for serving teachers.	2.61	0.67	Agreed	3.04	.0.84	Agreed
27	Implementation of 30% minimum wage, promotion, increment and regular payment of teachers by government.	2.94	1.12	Agreed	3.08	0.76	Agreed
28	Regular supervision of teachers by government.	2.83	0.74	Agreed	3.17	0.69	Agreed
	Grand \bar{X} and SD	2.98	0.81		3.05	0.85	Agreed

Table 4 above presented the mean ratings of the principals on the ways to improve the UBE implementation program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools. From the table, one can observe that items 23 to 28 have the mean rating of 3.38, 2.98, 3.19, 2.61, 2.94 and 2.83 for male principals while the female principals rated these items 2.85, 2.88, 3.28, 3.04, 3.08 and 3.17.

It was therefore the opinion of the male and female principals that government should provide adequate and relevant curriculum, sufficient funds, involve teachers in planning, make provision for re-training for serving teachers, implementation of 30% minimum wage, promotion, increment and regular payment of teachers as well as regular supervision of teachers can improve the implementation of UBE program implementation.

Null hypothesis One (H₀₁)

There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female Principals on the implementation of UBE program in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Education Zone.

. The T-test analysis was computed and the result shown below

Respondent	\bar{X}	SD	N	d.f	t- cal value	Lev.of.sig	t-crit value	Decision
Male	3.01	0.98	101					
				219	0.81	0.05	1.96	Accepted
Female	2.81	1.21	120					

From the table, it is observed that the t-test value is 0.81 at degree of freedom 219 and 0.05 level of significance. Since the t- cal value of 0.81 is less than the t-crit value of 1.96, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion: There is no significant difference between the respondents’ perception of the male and female principals on the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State Junior Secondary School in Abakaliki Education Zone.

Conclusions And Recommendations

This research work exposed the lopsided nature in the planning of UBE in Nigeria. It further highlighted on the need for employing quality teachers, training and retraining of teachers, provision of functional facilities and infrastructures in UBE schools, prompt payment of teachers salaries and allowances and respect consideration to principals perceptions especially at the planning stage of the curriculum as sacrosanct and a way forward for proper implementation of UBE program in Ebonyi State.

The Ebonyi State government should increase educational budget to accommodate proper

implementation of the UBE to enable the program achieve its identified objectives

Government should encourage and motivate private and parental Participation, empower them to ensuring that Basic Education is provided to the citizens especially on the area where government cannot touch, and must ensure that quality and standard are maintained among other recommendations.

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