

INTEGRATIVE FUNDING AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME: A NEED ASSESSMENT IN PRIMARY AND JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study was an assessment on the extent of integrative funding for the effective implantation of universal basic education (UBE) programme in Ebonyi state, Nigeria. In carrying out the study, a descriptive survey design was adopted by the researchers. Three research questions and two hypotheses were posed to guide the study. The population of the study was comprised of 228 principals and 1036 primary school head teachers in Ebonyi state. A 30 % sample size of 59 principals and 311 primary school head teachers were randomly drawn making the sample to be 370 research respondents. The instruments for data collection were self structured questionnaire which was based on face and content values. The reliability of the instrument was established through test re-test method and the statistical tools used to analyze the results was Pearson product moment and it yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.75. Mean and standard deviation were employed in the analysis of the data based on the research questions. While t-test of difference was used to analyze the two hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. The study revealed that government contributed to a great extent but not enough for effective implementation of UBE programme. The study also showed that local donor agencies contributed insignificantly to the effective implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi state. Also, that international donor agencies contribute to a low extent in the provision of instructional material, sports and health equipment, furniture and classroom blocks for the implementation of UBE programme. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government should maintain the policy of allotting at least 26 percent of the entire budget to education hence, adequate fund for

UBE implementation, and ensure there are committed body to see to the prudent management of such fund. Government should devise a way of holding a regular or routine meetings with the various stake holders, parents and other voluntary agencies for them to be committed towards UBE funding in Ebonyi State etc.

Keywords: Integrative funding, basic rdution programme, Nigeria

Introduction

Education has been identified by all in the economy as a dynamic instrument of change, hence both developed countries and those aspiring to develop have adopted it as an instrument per excellence for affecting national development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Nigeria as a nation needs the education of its citizens, in her onward march for technological development. It therefore needs the collective efforts of all concerned to reduce the illiteracy level to the barest minimum. Illiteracy is a dangerous weapon, socially powerless and vulnerable to development.

However, Nwoji (2002) noted that education may find it difficult to achieve technological development, hence, needs global awareness whereby the populace would know the dynamics of what exists in their societies. To enhance fruitful compliance of this ambition, the UBE was lunched in Sokoto in 1999 by the then president, President Olusegun Obasanjo. The UBE is a response to section of 1989 Nigeria constitution which reads: Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring equal and adequate education opportunities at all levels”.

It is pertinent to note that the said 1989 constitution suffered a “still birth” as it was never put to use. However that section was replicated as section 18 (1) of the current 1999 constitution because the goals of UBE programme are to universalize access to basic education, engender a conducive learning environment and eradicate illiteracy in Nigeria within the shortest possible time (Babalola, 2000).

In pursuance of these goals, the ministry of education organized a three-day mini summit on the implementation of the UBE in Abuja, Nigeria between November 29th and December 1st, 1999. To enhance these goals and make the implementation of the programme relevant to Nigeria’s socio-cultural background, the UBE programme as spelt out in the implementation guidelines (FRN, 2004^a:3) is aimed at achieving the following specific objectives:

- Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion;
- The provision of free, Universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school age;

- Reducing drastically the incidence of drop-out from the formal school system;
- Catering for the learning needs of young persons who for one reason or the other have had to interrupt schooling, through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education;
- Ensuring acquisition of the appropriate level of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills as well as the ethnical, moral and civic values needed for the implementation of the UBE scheme.

Considering the above objectives, the Federal Government of Nigeria enacted the UBE law on 24th August 2004. In section 11 of the law it made among others the following provisions:-

1. The implementation of the Universal Basic Education shall be finance from;
 - a. Federal Government block grant of not less than 2% of its consolidated revenue fund;
 - b. Funds or contributions in form of Federal guaranteed credits and
 - c. Local and international donor grants.
2. For any state to qualify for the federal government block grant pursuant to sub-section 1 (1) of this section, such state shall contribute not less than 50% of the total cost of projects as its commitment in the execution of the project.

The administration and disbursement of funds shall be through the state Universal Basic Education Board. (FRN, 2004: 7).

In Ebonyi State, where the present study was conduct, the Ebonyi State law on UBE was enacted in 2003, with the follow provision, among others.

- Financing of the state Universal Basic Education (UBE).
- Block grant accruing from the consolidated Revenue fund of the Federal Government.
- Contributions in form of Federal guaranteed credits.
- Local and international donor grants etc.

From the above provisions, one could deduce that the Ebonyi State law on the implementation of UBE programme is in line with that of the Federal Government of Nigeria. The question now is: how effective is the implementation of the UBE law in Ebonyi State, Nigeria? Considering the far reaching provisions of the Federal Government of Nigeria and Ebonyi State's law on UBE, it stands to reason therefore, that more than ten years after the lurching of the UBE programme, it is time to look back and see the extent of financial obligations that have been made toward its implementation having at the back of our mind that the initial educational programmes like UPE were hampered and disrupted by financial impediments. It is on this ground that one recalls Mgodile's (2000) observation, that there may be no problem in the enactment of necessary

legislation and perhaps also in the articulation of the enabling policies; the real problem may be encountered during mobilization of fund. Optimal allocation and effective utilization of resources.

Compulsory education is the education that one must achieve and should be backed by statutory law (Asarka & Munch, 2006). These authors reveal that such education serves as a road map to universalization of education of any given country since it will mandate everyone in that country to obtain it. This invariably implies high financial involvement of all that mattered in the country in order to achieve qualitative education in such country.

In their separate studies, Okwo (1995), Ndu, Ocho and Okeke (1997), Ehiametator (2001), Zelvys (2004), & Munch (2006) identified some other impediments to the implementation of UBE programme. Ehiametator (2001) observed that inadequate facilities and instructional materials are impediments since comfortable seats, building equipments, electricity and good water supply are lacking in most primary schools. Continuing, he reported that unreliable data on pupils, teachers, facilities and non-teaching staff affect planning and decision making as they relate to implementation of the UBE programmes.

For Okwo (1995), most facilities found in most schools are allowed to decay for lack of adequate financial aid. This is evident in most schools where dilapidated buildings and uncompleted buildings are allowed to collapse; laboratories were ill-equipped, while textbooks and teaching aids were in short supply. To Munch (2006), fund allocated to educational programmes in primary and junior secondary schools are misappropriated by school managers and school heads.

Ndu, Ocho and Okeke (1997:175) in their findings see geographical disparities as hydra headed stigma that have labeled some parts of the country as educationally disadvantaged state. Sociological disparity affects the affordability of education by some families. These are known features of Nigerian educational landscape that has in one way or the other affected the effective implementation of UBE programmes in Ebonyi state. In another study carried by Nakpodia (2011), he affirmed that lack of interest on the side of Non-governmental agencies as it relate to the funding of education constituted a problem of poor implementation of programs. The law does not established clearly the level or percentage to which the international donors will be contributing for the successful implementation of UBE programme. As a result of this ambiguity on the provisions of the law/Act establishing UBE, many school age children are found along the street. Again, many teachers are no longer committed to the job of teaching, hence quality is being sacrificed at the expense of quantity.

Onele & Okonkwo (2009), opined that in most countries of the world, education is seen as the most costly ventures and leaving it in the hand of individuals will mean restricting some group of people who may not afford the cost from obtaining such education. It therefore means that there should be concerted efforts of government, Non-governmental (local donor) agency and international donor agency for such expensive investment to be properly funded. Uko-Awomoh, Oko and Omatseye (2007) stated that for education to be accessible to all, it should be made free at least at the lower levels and this entails a huge amount of money. In primary and secondary schools, it was noticed that both male and female head teachers are involved in the implementation of UBE programmes. UBE programmes covers both schools in urban and rural areas. Therefore the financial involvement for its effective implementation in the two areas is supposed to be the same.

Onele (2011) affirmed that in the implementation of any education related programme, the availability of fund is always a key factor in the programme implementation. Thus, in other to ascertain the level of effectiveness in the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State the head teachers' view will be an important index. Observation has shown that many primary and secondary schools are still having dilapidated walls. Some are still using palm front to wall their classrooms. In addition, in most schools teachers are still facing some difficulties as it relates to availability of instructional materials for effective teaching and learning. Eighty percent lacks portable water let alone electricity supply. Therefore the need to investigate the extent to which NGOs (local donors); international donors and Government are committed in the provision of fund for the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State becomes necessary.

Statement of the problems

In view of the provision cited in the foregoing section of this work, it is assumed therefore that the effectiveness in the implementation of UBE programme can better be assessed with regard to financial contribution of local donor agencies (NGOs), international donors and Government block grant. With the current emphasis of the government on ensuring uniform and qualitative Basic Education throughout the country, it has become very necessary that researchers in the field of educational administration explore the extent to which this laudable programme has been implemented. For the implementation to be successful it calls for tactfulness on the area of mobilization and allocation of fund. Unfortunately, in Ebonyi State, there is no research evidence that uncover the level to which problem of availability and optimal allocation of fund hindered the implementation of UBE programme. The problem of this study is therefore is: what extent has fund

been integrated for the effective implementation of the UBE programme in Ebonyi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. To what extent does financial contribution of local donor agencies enhance the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.
2. To what extent does financial aid from international donor agencies enhance the implementation of UBE programme.
3. To what extent does government block grant enhance the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level significant.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural head teachers on the extent of the financial contribution of local donor agencies as it relates to the implementation of the UBE programme in Ebonyi State.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female head teachers on the extent of financial contribution of international donor agency for the effective implementation of the UBE programme in Ebonyi State.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of primary and junior secondary school head teachers on the extent to which block grant from government enhanced the implementation of UBE programme.

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The area of the study was all primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The population of the study consist 624 male and 412 female head teachers of primary school and 122 male and 96 female principals of junior secondary schools in the state. These resulted to the total population of 1036 primary school head teachers and 228m principals given total population of 1264. Proportionate stratified random sampling techniques was adopted in selecting 311 primary school teachers and 59 junior secondary school principals. This resulted in a sample of 370 research respondents representing 30% of the entire population according to Nwana (1990) proposal. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researcher tagged integrated funding and implementation of Universal Basic Education (IFIUBE) with reliability co-efficient of 0.87. The respondents were made to rate the extent to which financial contribution of

local donor agencies (NGOs), international donor agencies and government block grant have enhanced the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The research question was tested using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using t-test analysis at 0.05 levels of significance.

Results

Summary of result are presented in tables as follows:

Research question

RQ1: To what extent does financial contribution of local donor agencies enhanced the implementation of the UBE programme in Ebonyi State, Nigeria?

Table 1: mean rating of urban and rural head teachers on the extent to which financial commitment of local donor agencies enhanced UBE implementation. N=370 Extent of financial enhance UBE implementation

S/N	ITEM	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	DECISION
1	Local donors donate money for the renovation of dilapidated buildings	2.43	0.73	1.53	0.70	Little extent
2	Build classroom blocks	2.37	0.66	1.58	0.48	Little extent
3	Provides writing desk and benches	2.53	0.89	3.44	0.75	Great extent
4	Buy books for the library	1.84	0.84	1.91	0.86	Little extent
5	Buy science equipment for the laboratory	2.05	0.85	1.90	0.82	Little extent
6	Provide fund for toilet facilities	1.91	0.94	2.31	0.91	Little extent
7	Provide fund for portable water	1.96	0.85	2.00	0.94	Little extent

The summary of results presented on table 1 shows that items 1, 3,4,5,6 and 7 have their mean values below 2.50 which is the criterion mean. These supported the idea that local donor agencies (NGOs) contribute insignificantly towards the effective implementation of UBE.

RQ2: To what extent does financial aid of international donor agency enhanced the implementation of the UBE programme in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Table 2: mean rating of male and female head teacher on the extent to which financial aid of international agencies enhanced the implementation of UBE programme.

S/N	ITEMS	Extent of financial enhancement on UBE				
		Male		Female	Decision	
1.	Building classroom blocks for the school.	2.53	0.88	2.67	0.83	Great extent
2.	Purchase science and laboratory equipments for the schools	2.08	1.11	2.34	0.93	Little extent
3.	Provide furniture	2.36	0.97	1.96	0.92	Little extent

4.	Provide books and writing materials	2.01	0.98	2.00	0.93	Little extent
5.	Fund for transportation of staff children	2.07	0.91	2.26	0.83	Little extent
6.	Pay allowances to some special subject teachers.	1.78	0.85	2.04	0.88	Little extent
7.	Provide fund for sports/health equipment.	2.05	0.85	2.47	0.95	Little extent

Result in table 2 shows that UBE programme has been implemented to a little extent. For male and female teachers their mean responses are below the criterion mean of 2.50 in all the items except in item 1 where the mean response of the two groups are above the criterion mean of 2.50. Looking at the individual items one will deduce that the extent of funding for the provision of classroom blocks, science and laboratory equipment, furniture, books and writing materials, transportation allowances for special subjects and sports/health equipment is low, indicating that there is low implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State.

RQ3: To what extent does block grant from government enhanced the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean ratings of primary and junior secondary school head teachers on the extent to which block grant from government enhanced the implementation of UBE programme.

S/ N	Item	Extent of enhancement of UBE of UBE implement					
		Primary school		Junior secondary school		Decision	
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
1.	Provides money for payment of staff salaries and allowances regularly	3.22	0.81	3.15	1.01	Great extent	
2.	Provides fund for the development of new structures	2.52	0.84	2.50	0.86	Great extent	
3.	Provides fund for library and laboratory equipment	2.73	0.94	2.96	0.94	Great extent	
4.	Provides fund for maintenance and repair of building, equipment and furniture	3.30	0.86	3.29	0.89	Great extent	
5.	Provides fund to the day-to day running of school	2.89	1.00	2.95	0.97	Great extent	
6.	Provides fund for sports health facilities	2.06	0.83	1.92	0.85	Little extent	
7.	Provides fund for feeding of all pupils/student	2.01	0.98	2.00	0.93	Little extent	

The summary of result shown on the table 3 above reveal that both the primary school head teachers and junior secondary school principals indicated that government provision of fund for the implementation of UBE programme is to great extent considering the individual items, the result show great extent on the level of funding for all the items except in item 6 and 7 which indicated little extent in terms of sports, health facilities and feeding of all pupils/student.

Three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

Ho.1 There is no significance difference between the mean ratings of urban and rural head teachers on the extent local donor agencies' financial commitment enhanced the effective implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State.

The respondents were categorized based on location. The first group comprised of both primary and junior secondary school head teachers from more developed area called urban while the second group comprised the primary and junior secondary school head teachers from less developed areas tagged rural communities. T-test analyses of the difference between these two groups of respondents were computed and the result is shown on table 4.

Table 4: t-test analysis of urban and rural head teachers' responses on the extent of financial commitment of local donor agencies (NGOs) for the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State.

S/N	Items	Urban		Rural		t-cal	t-critical	
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD			
1.	Donates money for renovation of dilapidated buildings	1.89	0.87	1.92	0.49	0.31	1.96	
2.	Provide fund for classroom blocks	2.51	0.89	2.34	0.83	1.39	1.96	
3.	Provides writing desk and benches	3.27	0.92	3.43	0.81	1.34	1.96	
4.	Purchase books for library	2.57	0.03	2.67	0.83	0.87	1.96	
5.	Buy science equipment for the laboratory	1.93	0.88	1.82	0.75	0.68	1.96	
6.	Provide fund for toilet facilities	1.78	0.93	1.89	0.61	1.15	1.96	
7.	Provides fund for portable water supply	2.91	0.95	2.90	0.94	0.03	1.96	
t-cal average					0.82			

Significant of 0.05 level of significance.

The result presented on table 4 revealed that for items in the table , the t-critical value of each item is greater than the t-calculated value at 5% probability level. Since the t-critical (1.96) is greater than the average t-calculated of 0.82, the null hypothesis was therefore upheld. This implies that the financial commitment of local donor agencies towards the implementation of UBE programme are not influenced by location.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female head teachers on the extent to which international donor agencies financial aid enhanced the implementation of UBE programme.

Responses of the male and female respondents on the items of the IFIUBEP were separated and subjected to a test of difference using t-test.

The summary of the results were shown on table 5.

Table 5: The t-test analysis of male and female head teachers’ responses on the extent to which international donor agencies financial aid enhanced the implementation of UBE programme.

S/N	Items	Urban		Rural		t-cal	t-critical
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD		
1.	Grants for building classrooms blocks for the schools	2.13	1.09	2.19	1.11	0.51	1.96
2.	Aid for purchase of science laboratory equipments.	2.13	1.09	2.19	1.11	0.51	1.96
3.	Grants for provision of furniture.	1.74	0.83	1.87	0.94	1.39	1.96
4.	Fund for text books and writing materials.	1.69	0.76	1.56	0.72	0.42	1.96
5.	Fund for transportation of staff and children	1.82	0.87	1.71	0.83	1.24	1.96
6.	Grants for the payment of allowances to some special subject teachers	1.34	0.68	1.40	0.72	0.85	1.96
7.	Provide fund for sports/health equipments.	1.97	0.93	2.05	0.94	0.86	1.96
	t-cal average				0.83		

From the table, the analysis shows that all the items had the t-critical value of (1.96) at probability level.

Since the t-calculated value is 0.83, which is less than the t-critical of 1.96, the null hypothesis of no significant different in the mean rating of the two groups is therefore accepted. This implies that the responses of male and female head-teacher on the financial commitment of the international donor agencies toward the implementation of UBE programme are not influenced by gender. So, the study.

H₀₃: T Here is no significant difference between the mean rating of primary and junior secondary school head teachers on the extent of block grant from government for the implementation of UBE programme.

In terms of school type, two groups were involved. Primary school and junior secondary schools. Summary of t-test between the two group is presented below in table 6.

Table 6: The t-test Analysis of primary and junior secondary school head-teachers’ response on the extent of government block grants for the effective implementation of UBE programme.

S/N	Items	Primary		Junior secondary		t-cal	t-crit
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD		
1.	Provides money for payment of salaries and allowances regularly.	2.89	0.99	2.95	0.97	0.50	1.96
2.	Provides money for the development of new buildings/structures.	3.09	0.96	3.10	0.98	0.11	1.96
3.	Provide fund for libraries and laboratory equipments.	2.61	0.94	2.44	0.86	1.53	1.96

4.	Provides fund for maintenance and repair of buildings, equipments and furniture's.	3.28	0.91	3.30	0.90	0.26	1.96
5.	Provides fund for day-to-day running of schools.	2.35	0.96	2.66	1.00	0.99	1.96
6.	Provides fund for sports/health facilities.	3.05	0.94	3.16	0.91	0.99	1.96
7.	Provides fund for feeding of all the children	2.52	0.84	2.50	0.86	0.21	1.96
	t-cal average			0.66			

Significant at 0.05 level of significance

From table 6, it revealed that the t-calculated value is 0.66, which is less than t-critical of 1.96. Since the t-calculated is less than the t-critical, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is therefore accepted. This means that school type has no significant influence on government block grant as it relate to the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Discussion

Table 1 and 2 show that the mean rating of urban and rural schools on the extent to which financial commitment of local and international donor enhanced the implementation of UBE are below the criterion rule of 2.50. This implies that there is low level of implementation in respect to Building of classroom, purchase of science and laboratory equipment, furnitures, books and writing materials, transportation, sports/health facilities, feeding and portable water etc. This goes with the earlier discussion of Ben and Ezeoke (2000) that most of the lofty education policies, ideas and programmes is always well thought of and laudable, the problem has always been defective implementation. Hence, they noted that the funds or facilities to be readily available before the implementation of the programme. The absence of these make the implementation to be haphazardly done.

The last section of the research instrument (table, 3) was used to collect data on the extent government block grant was made for the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State. The finding is in consonance with Onele (2009) who observed that government in a bit to ensure effective implementation of UBE, sent grant to different states of the federation. The extent government grant a lone enhance the UBE implementation is still too low. Similarly in Ebonyi State, the UBE Act 2004 is yet to be observed and implemented fully since the Local donors are not yet interest in its funding so as to argument government efforts.

Data presented on tables 4, 5 and 6 show that the t-calculated value of each item is less than the t-critical, therefore the null hypothesis of no significance difference is accepted. This implies that location, gender and school type had no significant influence on the extent financial commitment of local and international donor agencies as well as government block grant enhanced the implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State. The findings is in accord with Nwoji (2002) who

stated that most school were not well funded for the effective implementation of UBE in Nigeria.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Federal government should devise the parameters of ensuring that both local and international donor agencies are deeply involved in the funding of UBE programme as stipulated by UBE Act (2004). In doing this, it will help to generate more fund for the provision of instructional materials and other physical facilities.
2. Parent, communities, stakeholders and co-operate bodies in the state should be encouraged to help in the provision of most facilities that are needed in some schools, for effective implementation of the UBE programme.
3. Government should ensure that the aspect of Federal Government guaranteed credits is also implementation.
- 4.

Conclusion

Education is generally accepted as vital tool for nation building. The attainment of UBE objective is dependent on concerted funding of local and international donor agencies as well government grant. However the paper concludes that the UBE programme has brought about access to free compulsory education which definitely attract high level of monetary involvement for efficiency to be achieve. The problem of poor financial contribution of local and international agency has adversely affected the implementation of UBE programmes, making quality to be sacrificed at the expense of quality. So, inspite of government block grant, the implementation is not yet effective, hence, call for integration of fund for more efficiency.

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