

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME EVALUATION OF THE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION (UBE) IN OBIO/AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE

Prof. Innime Righteous

Chancellor: Poise University, Rwanda.

Orchid ID: 000-0002-0909-6024

***Corresponding Author:** Prof. Innime Righteous

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<p><i>This study evaluated the objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study adopted summative evaluation model. The study revealed that there are 54 primary schools and 55 secondary schools under the UBE scheme in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The purpose of the evaluation was to access the degree of achievement of the Universal Basic Education objectives in Obio/Akpor L.G.A. The study showed that there is a wide gap between the actual and expected outcomes of the programme. Based on these findings, it was concluded that UBE objectives be revisited in order to put things right. The study recommended that the UBE programme should be free of payment among other things.</i></p> <p>Keywords: <i>Universal Basic Education (UBE), Programme Evaluation, Summative Evaluation, Educational Outcomes, Access to Education, Public Education Policy, Nigeria, Rivers State, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.</i></p>
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Introduction

Nigerian government has been continuously testing her schooling system through various educational reforms of which the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme is one significant initiative. The programme aims to provide wider access to basic education, while ensuring that it is also of better quality. The idea, termed as a nine-year uninterrupted educational program, is aimed at tackling problems of illiteracy, ignorance and poverty while contributing to national development and civic awareness and social harmony (Tahir, 2011). UBE offers a universal and cost-free programme to all children of school-going age, including additional incentives through government-subsidized school meals. All of the above has made basic education much more appealing, and enrolment rates nationally have skyrocketed.

But the successful execution of the UBE programme depends on provision of human and material resources which can cater for increasing student numbers. Increasing access to education while the number of necessary resources does not increase in a similar proportion can have negative consequences for the quality and standards of

education. Therefore, in this nexus physical infrastructure is an essential element of resources provision since it is the backbone that directly supports teaching and learning processes. Classrooms, laboratories and other instructional spaces are essential for effective programme delivery, for maintaining basic quality of learning outcomes in schools.

Indeed, empirical evidence further demonstrates the connection between the physical learning environment and students' academic performance. Similar to Onyeagbako (2014), Tan and Handa (2017b) ascertained that school facilities condition guarantees learners' performance. The roles of qualified teachers and a well-elaborated curriculum are apparent; however, improving learning outcomes has to be achieved through adequate provision of physical resources (Lindsey et al., 2019). Therefore, infrastructural facilities are precipitative in the sense not only for enhancing the quality of education delivery but also as a determining factor for overall educational outputs at primary schooling level.

Since physical resources are critical in providing educational services effectively, it is necessary to ascertain

how much these resources are optimally effective in the implementation of the UBE programme, and what factors impede its successful implementation. This diagnosis is critical to ensuring that the expansion of education access is accompanied by improvements in quality and efficiency.

In this context, evaluation is a process of systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of information that is relevant to the aims and objectives of an educational programme with comparisons being made against explicitly stated standards. Michael Quinn Patton (1987) views evaluation as an examination of programmes to assist in decision making and offer ways for performance improvement. In much the same way, Ralph Tyler and Robert Tyler define evaluation as a process or approach for assessing to what degree educational intentions are reached. In a school setting, it means measuring the extent to which institutional objectives are being achieved. Evaluation involves value judgement because stakeholders continually establish if a programme, process or outcome is desirable and/or effective in accordance with defined criteria (See Table 1).

Beyond measurement, evaluation plays a broader analytical role by providing education systems with the information they need to make sound decisions. It helps organizations and programmes assess the relevance and appropriateness of their initiatives, as well as the extent to which intended objectives have been achieved. According to Staff (2012), evaluation is structured interpretation directed toward both expected and observed outcomes, as well as how and why those findings were achieved. And here lies its continuing usefulness as a vehicle for continuous improvement: linking performance outcomes with original intentions and the means of implementation.

In addition, depending on its timing and objectives, evaluation may vary in type. A formative evaluation usually takes place as a program or project is being developed or implemented and is intended to improve the overall effectiveness of that program; whereas, a summative evaluation occurs when the intervention has been completed with the intent to understand both the overall impact of an intervention and higher-level learning associated with it for future practice. Evaluation is a systematic and disciplined methodology that studies not just outcomes but also the bigger picture of a programme including context, inputs, processes and products (Worthen and Sanders, 1987). This extensive approach guarantees a complete picture of programme performance aiding anything from the practical side of education directly to evidence-based enhancements in education.

Evaluation Model

The nature of evaluation (be it formative, summative or both) will depend on the purpose and timing within a specific programme. Formative evaluation is mainly used to expose weaknesses in a programme component to improve it before implementation. For better-resourced projects, this goes usually ahead of final programme rollout. Yet many programs begin implementation based on planning with formative evaluation done in real time. By this, errors and limitations can continuously be monitored and reported in the context of ongoing program development for quality improvement.

Summative Evaluation Model

Summative evaluation, on the other hand, focuses on evaluating the overall effectiveness of a project or programme: how are actual outcomes matching expected objectives (from the standpoint of stakeholders / funding bodies). While it may be done through the course of implementation, it is most often conducted at the end of a programme. This type of evaluation is intended — as Provus (1969) phrased it — to create a basis for decisions about whether a programme should be improved, continued or discontinued. In like manner, Michael Scriven (1967) argues that summative evaluation applies to already pre-existing stable programmes in order to decide if they are worth or their value or ‘worth’ so as to inform decisions regarding whether these programmes need to continue, change and/or be replaced.

Several summative evaluation models exist in the field, these are models by:

1. Robert Stake (1967) who postulates that the role of an evaluator is to provide “description” and “judgment”, data of educational programme based on “formal” inquiry techniques. To provide description is to delineate the variables in a phenomenon and to describe all activities under each variable. To provide “judgment” is to provide data on which judgment on a programme. To Stake, it is not the responsibility of an evaluator to pass judgment on a programme. The job of an evaluator is to provide data which will help a decision maker to pass judgment.
2. Provus (1969) noted that the purpose of evaluation is to determine whether to “improve” maintain or terminate” a programme. Provus (1967) does not lay much emphasis on rendering judgment during programme evaluation. His major emphasis is to identify any discrepancy that may exist between “programme standards” and “programme performance” using a team approach.
3. Stuffle Beam's (1971) model is a good example of a "approach to educational evaluators that focuses

on managing discussions." Stuffle Beam says that the basic goal of assessment is to "delineate, obtain, and provide useful information for judging decision alternatives." Stuffle Beam thinks that evaluation is like a "watchdog" for managing programs. So, he included the following important factors that are necessary for evaluation:

- a) Evaluation is done to help people make decisions, thus it should give decision makers useful information.
 - b) Evaluation is a process that happens over and over again, so it needs to be done through a planned program.
 - c) The evaluation process has three key steps: defining, getting, and giving information. These phases are the foundation of a system for evaluation.
4. According to Marvin Alkin (1969) evaluation is "the systematic assessment of the significant decisions that people make when deciding how best to improve, obtain and allocate resources and arrange opportunities for developing potential" (Euripo, 2008). Ultimately, this will result in the presentation of summarized research discoveries that can be used by decision makers to choose between different available alternatives.
 5. Hammond (1969) model is hinged on educational innovations. The rate at which they are introduced in the field of education prompted Hammond to ask for the basis of their adoption. Hammond's main concern is to determine the effectiveness of "educational innovations in meeting their objectives."
 6. According to Lee Cronbach (1963), there are two main reasons for the re-focusing upon evaluation. To begin with, there is an inherent scientific motivation to explore the classroom environment and understand what processes and interactions are occurring. Secondly evaluation is undertaken in order to provide funders and funding organizations with reliable evidence showing that programmes actually achieve what they claim. Evidence of this nature is critical for demonstrating programme value and maintaining secure funding.

For the purpose of this evaluation, summative evaluation model is adopted. Summative evaluation model as used by Robert Stake talks about providing description and judgment data of education programme based on formal enquiry technique. The evaluation is to provide data that will help a decision maker to pass judgment and not to pass the judgment.

Universal Basic Education in Nigeria

Primary education is probably the most universally recognized level of formal education because it gives students foundational skills such as literacy and basic knowledge so they can expand upon those concepts later in learning. It is important because it is the gateway into the whole educational system and all who may advance through higher education must go through it (Oni, 2008). Primary education normally refers to the first stage of formal learning (education) that occurs for 6-11 year old children, providing the essential foundation needed for progression in subsequent stages of learning. This means that success or failure of the larger education production function hinges mostly on performance at this basic level.

The primary education system is of such great importance that all successive governments in Nigeria have placed primary educational policy on the front burner of national policies. Multiple reforms have been there to strengthen the system and to expand services from pro-independence era to post independence. This continuity underscores a connection between historical and modern developments in the Nigerian educational landscape, showcasing an enduring commitment to improving the quality and access of primary education.

During the colonial period in Nigeria, the British educational structure was entrenched, which ultimately created four levels of formal education namely: primary, secondary, sixth form and higher education level (Fabunmi, 2005). In Nigeria, the general mission of education since independence has been to provide individuals with the knowledge, skills, attitude, and values necessary for their effective functioning in society. The movement to broaden educational access can be traced back towards programme like Universal Primary Education (UPE) introduced in the Western Region by Obafemi Awolowo which sought to deliver free primary school to every child of school-age (Eddy & Akpan, 2009). In a similar spirit, this initiative also shaped other regional programmes all aligned towards the common goal of enhancing access to primary education nationally.

The reason for UPE success in the West; and failure in most parts of the East, at least partly, is that implementation here was poorly planned and led to a multitude of operational difficulties. For instance, as previously shown, the early movement towards the universalization of primary education in Nigeria was mostly regional in nature; where each region including the Northern Region adopted its own means for increasing access to education. In 1976, the nationwide nexus programme which signified a turning point in educational development in Nigeria from regionally driven initiatives to nationally coordinated effort

was launched during the military administration of Olusegun Obasanjo.

The federal government then reformed the programme, which later became the Universal Basic Education (UBE) scheme to make it more holistic and accommodating in delivering education across the country (Eddy & Akpan, 2009). Such realignment of the programme was with the understanding going by the philosophy contained in Programme on Education Nigeria (NPE) which defines education as holistic development of an individual into a responsible and productive citizen, play an active role in society, contribute meaningfully to social-economic developments and seek fair access to educational opportunities at all levels from formal through non-formal systems. The Nigerian government continues to operate a policy since 1977 that commits the state to ensure that every child, regardless of socio-economic or physical circumstance is entitled to educational opportunities. Besides academic teaching instruction, the policy also emphasizes preparing students for their eventual specialized occupations as well as providing an appreciation of arts and recreational activities, and teaching skills and hobbies. Education as a tool for human capital development in Nigeria, finally boils down to the big picture of how education can become an instrument for national growth and sustainable development.

After Universal Primary Education (UPE) of 1976 then came the Universal Basic Education (UBE) of 1999. Many authorities agree that fundamental errors were made such as cost and population underestimation hence the failure of the UPE, the author of UPE President.

Olusegun Obasanjo agreed that UPE was a failure and therefore launched the UBE in 1999. The Universal Basic Education programme is almost the same as UPE scheme. It is “free” and “universal” like before, but now in addition, it will be compulsory.

According to Alutu and Olowodun (2015) the UBE programme was ushered into the Nigerian child education system as a pragmatic step by the federal government of Nigeria in 1999 geared towards ensuring universal basic education for every child who is aged between six and fifteen years. This structure requires children to start school from age 6–11 (primary education), and then all students aged 12–Approximately 14 proceed to junior secondary schooling. The objectives of the programme were set in place to provide for foundational learning and skills needed for personal development and citizenship in all Nigerian children.

A key element of the UBE scheme is its commitment to ensure that education is accessible and inclusive, notably through its free education strand aimed at removing

financial barriers to school attendance. This highlights the status of education as a fundamental right, and an essential means to live better individually or collectively. Thus, the programme targets to not only increase accessibility but also ensure provision of quality basic education nationwide.

The UBE project is also aimed at not only expanding access, but reducing the dropout rate and improving the relevance, efficiency and quality of education. It is aimed at providing learners with fundamental skills literacy and numeracy, values and lifelong learning and productive living skills. The programme improves these foundational capacities thereby contributing to a more educated and skilled population.

The UBE programmes also correlate with the World Education effort specifically, on an uninterrupted basis, led by United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) called the Education for All (EFA) movement that seeks to cut back illiteracy and poverty in the developing countries via its partnerships for progress together with those under of Millennium Development Goals. In doing so, it has aided the country surmount various pressing social issues—including gender inequity, poor educational access and high illiteracy rates. It has been silent but loud promoting equal educational opportunities among male and female children, inclusivity and empowerment. While challenges like poverty remain, ongoing investment and good policy making in basic education are likely to deliver long term social and economic returns.

In summary, the UBS initiative is a sincere government approach toward combating illiteracy and solidifying the foundation of education in Nigeria. The process not only resolves structural shortcomings and enables equitable access, it also reinforces national education goals and contributes to quality teaching and learning at the foundational level 78–[82].

The UBE Commission

The UBE commission, or UBEC, is a federal government organization that is in charge of making sure that all parts of the UBE program work together.

Vision of the UBE Commission

To be a top-notch education intervention and regulating body that works to make sure that all Nigerian children have the same high-quality and effective basic education.

Mission of the UBE Commission

To act as an intervention, coordination, and monitoring agency to gradually strengthen the ability of states, local government agencies, and communities to provide

unrestricted access to high-quality basic education in Nigeria.

Core values of the UBE Commission

- Honesty and Accountability
- Integrity and transparency
- Team work and transparency

Compulsory Free Universal Basic Education Act 2004

A law to strengthen the policy free basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age was enacted in May 2004, some aspects of the law pertinent to this report are reproduced as follows:

- I. Every Nigerian government must give every kid of primary and junior secondary school age free, compulsory basic education.
2. Every parent shall ensure that his child or ward attends and completes his:
 - (a) Primary school
 - (b) Junior secondary school education by trying to get the child into primary and junior secondary schools
3. The people who are responsible for education in a Local Government Area must make sure that every parent or person who is responsible for a child does what is required of them by section 2(2) of the Act.
4. A parent who contravenes section 2(2) of this Act commits an offence and is liable:
 - a) On first conviction, to be reprimanded,
 - b) On second conviction, to a fine of #2,000.00 for a term of one month.
 - c) On subsequent conviction, to a fine of #5,000.00 or imprisonment for a term of 2 months. 3-(1) the services provided in public primary and junior secondary schools shall be free of charge.
5. Anyone who gets a fee that goes against the rules in paragraph (1) of this section is breaking the law and might be fined up to #10,000.00 or sent to jail for 3 months or both.
4. Every parent must make sure that their child goes to school every day and gets a full-time education that is right for their age, skill level, and interests.

The implementation of the Universal Basic Education shall be financed from

- a) Federal Government block grants 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) 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.

Rivers State Universal Basic Education Board

Rivers State Universal Basic Education Board (UBEC) is a statutory government agency set up in the state to supervise free, compulsory and universal basic education for children of school age in Rivers State. THE Rivers State Universal Basic Education Board, headquartered along Elechi Beach Road, Port Harcourt under the supervision of the Rivers State Ministry of Education was established by the UBE Law of 2005. Its main functions are to advise the government on educational policies and strategies for basic education, manage the affairs of both teaching and non-teaching personnel, and protect every child's right to education. The Board members of the governance structure, including its Chairman and other staff that he/she may appoint constitute the effective administration and policy making in order to be able to fulfil their assigned regulatory role—155.

Universal Basic Education Board in Obio/Akpor

The Universal Basic Education Board (UBEC) in Obio/Akpor is in charge of making sure that all school-age children in the local government region get free and required basic education. It is next to the vehicle wash at Junction Rumualogu, Akpor, Port Harcourt.

It was set up in 2006. The universal basic education board in Obio/Akpor runs 54 primary schools and 55 junior secondary schools. The federal government pays for it, and the state ministry of education keeps an eye on what the UBE does at the local level.

One of their jobs is to make sure that the UBE program is carried out properly at the local level so that the state and country can get rid of poverty, ignorance, and illiteracy. They also make sure that the money given to carry out the UBE program is used correctly.

Objectives of the Universal Basic Education Commission

- To make sure that everyone can have nine (9) years of formal basic education without any restrictions
- The provision of free universal basic education for every Nigerian kid of school-going age;
- Significantly lowering the number of students who drop out of the formal school system by making it more relevant, high-quality, and efficient.

- Making sure that people learn the right levels of reading, writing, math, communication, and life skills, as well as the moral, ethical, and civic principles that will help them build a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Aim and objective of the Evaluation

The objective of this evaluation is to find out the relevance, challenges and way forward of the universal basic education in Obio/Akpor local government area.

Relevance of Universal Basic Education

Universal basic education is very significant since it helps shape the most basic parts of teaching and learning.

Some other relevance of the universe basic education are:

Reduction of child labour: It helps to lessen child labour by giving kids ages 6 to 14 free and required schooling. When kids are in school, there is no need to exploit them for no reason because they are getting the education they need.

Reduction in gender inequality: Because of universal basic education, more women are being educated, which means that a girl can take any position in society, whether it's political or not.

Motivation for students: The universal basic education has made learning exciting, fascinating, and free, which helps kids want to go to school instead of hanging out on the streets. This has led to a lower rate of school dropouts in the community.

Help to parents: Parents have less to worry about financially because basic education is mostly free, so their children can get a good education.

Job provision: Universal basic education has helped create jobs because schools needed teachers to educate in primary and high schools. This helps the economy grow and lowers the unemployment rate.

Crime reduction: Universal basic education helps lower crime rates by teaching people the moral values, beliefs, and attitudes that will make them useful to themselves and society.

Poverty reduction: Universal Basic Education ensures that people are productive by teaching them how to be resourceful entrepreneurs. This helps to reduce poverty. Universal Basic Education is vital because it is the solution to all of the difficulties that emerging countries face and the way to make a country grow.

Challenges of the Universal Basic Education

The government has made it its business to re-educate and empower every Nigerian citizen, as is evidenced by the

introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme. Even with this commitment, however, the programme still faces many obstacles to implementation due to the current socio-economic and systemic context in the country. This prevented the effective operation of its key functions and mandate as a whole.

Some of these challenges are;

Lack of adequate funds: The Universal Basic Education programme has a good and favourable objective but it lacks adequate funds for the execution of its functions and plans.

Misappropriation of Available Funds: The very first issue under the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme to deal with, is the misappropriation of funds meant for its implementation. Funded resources meant to meet learning infrastructure and learning materials are not being used for their proper purposes, resulting in poorly equipped facilities where learners find themselves having to sit on the ground without classroom furniture as they use old instructional materials that have fallen into disrepair. This is symptomatic of systemic failures in educational financing, where funds are often lost before they reach the required actors.

Corruption: Such a pattern of financial misappropriation has remained one of the greatest hindrances to the speedy development, implementation and success of UBE programme in Nigeria. Some officials tasked with managing and allocating delivery of the educational funds diverted these resources for personal gain, thus defeating the very purpose of the programme. These practices rob millions of schoolchildren of good educational opportunities, and diminish public confidence in public education. It is, therefore, vital that adequate measures are put in place to prevent the diversion of resources away from basic education by dealing with corruption through mechanisms for stronger oversight, transparency and accountability.

Nepotism: The persistence of favouritism in personnel recruitment as opposed to merit and professional competence further diminishes the character of the ineffectiveness associated with Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria. Often, people are brought on board for whom merit had nothing to do with their appointment—they sat in the same room as someone key; close family friend of someone important or other non-required experience. This leads to poor manpower strength because such officials are not able to do their work. As a result, there exists inefficiency, service delivery issues and slow implementation of programme objectives which culminates in the use effects on the overall impact of UBE.

Poor management: Moreover, bad management practices represent a serious threat to the sustainability of

programme. Most projects and infrastructure built under the UBE programme are fast falling apart as a result of poor supervision and administrative oversight. Poor facilities management has accounted for the fast deterioration of facilities in some primary schools making them a subject for blame to be put on unqualified or inefficient teachers. This development not only threatens the hard-earned gains of the programme but also strikes a blow at its integrity and overall long-term effect on Nigeria's educational growth.

Lack of policy implementation: The UBE programme has good policies, but most of these policies are never being implemented.

Among the factors largely responsible for this alarming trend is the pervasive absence of trust, commitment and integrity among some actors implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme. These traits are essential for the full achievement of any organisational target, but their absence has severely curtailed the programme effectiveness. In many instances recruited staff display little commitment and responsibility thereby undermining the attainment of UBE objectives specific to Nigeria. This is within a system that has become habitually infused with these mindsets, leaving scant ability to measure progress or maintain significant results. Therefore, the UBE programme can only be made to function better by improving ethical standards, dedication and ideas of integrity among its personnel.

Poor planning: It is been said that "if you fail to plan, you have planned to fail." This can be related to the outcome of the implementation of the programme in jeopardy.

Erroneous statistics on population, lack of studies and misassumptions are some main drivers that weaken planning in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme. Any plan is built on the most reliable strategies, and they are known that if planning fails again and its based on low quality which leads us to poor execution. Poor plans lead to poor implementation, which prevents the achievement of ideas. Inadequate planning regarding the plan of funds out etc limits programme's ability to achieve objectives. This means that effective and successive planning processes are highly limited in attaining UBE goals without accuracy, effectiveness and evidence.

Inadequate inspection: Poor inspection and monitoring are major threats to successful implementation of the UBE (Universal Basic Education) programme. The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) was established by the UBE Act of 2004 to coordinate programme implementation through State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) and Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs). But weak supervisory mechanisms

and lack of monitoring have led to implementation failures in some states and local jurisdictions which are ineffective for the project implementation.

Good inspection would quickly identify problems like a poor learning environment, unqualified teachers and funding being misused or corrupted. Without strict oversight, these weaknesses proliferate and deepen over time, undermining the programme's overall effectiveness. Thus, reinforcing inspection frameworks and ensuring consistent oversight can ensure accountability, improve the quality of implementation and the realization of UBE programme objectives.

Unfinished projects: The launch of new projects in the face of inadequate resources to complete existing ones often leads to a large stock of abandoned or uncompleted projects within the UBE programme. The spreading of available resources too thin across multiple initiatives leaves earlier started projects as unfinished, which in turn leads to inefficient fund expenditure and delayed outcome realization.

Moreover, new projects keep being introduced amidst a host of unfinished ones — dividing the attention and diluting administrative focus. This phenomenon dramatically reduces the collective impact of Nigeria's UBE programme since half-finished projects simply cannot be counted as effective interventions. As such, improvements in efficiency, accountability and progress that can be tracked are also better cause to have projects completed fully before beginning new ones.

Ways of Improving the Universal Basic Education Programme

While these constitute the challenges hampering the complete execution of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, such impediments should not be regarded as intractable Government authorities working together with the various stakeholders in education — Parents and guardians can all contribute towards meaningful progress. Policy actors, through working together to co-create and apply strategic, evidence-informed solutions, can fortify the system and further ensure outcomes desired by the programme.

Some of the ways are:

- ✚ Continuous increase in the intervention funds from the federal government, funds from the state and local government to the UBE programme in Nigeria. This will enhance the rapid progress of the programme.
- ✚ Immediate scrutiny, correction and timely adjustment, starting from the grassroots to the top of affairs in the UBE programme.

- ✚ Establishment of effective laid down rules and laws to curb corruption, negligence and unwholesome practices in UBEC Nigeria. This will in turn bring out desired result and success, improving the implementation of the UBE programme in Nigeria.
- ✚ Education is crucial to the development of a child, so the parents and guardians should have the responsibility of enlightening their wards on the importance of education to their lives, and must ensure that their wards are in school during school hours.
- ✚ Government on their part should ensure that men and women of proven integrity are given the public office so as to reduce the level of public fund embezzlement by corrupt officials.
- ✚ The government should endeavour to make the UBE programme free from all forms of payments.
- ✚ Teachers should be more proactive in carrying awareness campaign across the communities.
- ✚ Teachers should employ best teaching methodology while teaching in order to reduce the incidence of dropouts through improved relevance, quality, and efficiency.
- ✚ Students should as well endeavour to acquire the necessary skills needed to excel in life.
- ✚ To ensure high level of literacy and numeracy among UBE pupils and students, teachers' welfare must be a priority to the government.

Conclusion

The Universal Basic Education objectives were designed to correct the mistakes of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and bridged the gap in the present UBE programme implementation. But from the findings in this evaluation, it could be reasonably concluded that:

1. The UBE programme is being implemented in line with its own objectives.
2. Although an UBE Act exists, the scheme is operating as if none is in place. Everyone is operating as he/she likes.
3. The funding of the scheme is grossly inadequate resulting in low quality of the UBE programme.
4. The scheme is free in theory; levies of various types are collected by school heads to provide some basic facilities that government has failed to provide.
5. The UBE is compulsory in theory but not in practice as many primary school age children are found on the streets and markets hawking various items because their parents/guardians cannot afford to send them to school.

The findings show that pupils and students' learning needs are not properly met as enshrined in the UBE Acts, 2004. From every indication, it is obvious that the Universal Basic Education objectives are not faulty, but the implementation process is where the problem lies. Hence, the government should endeavour to improve the law as enshrined in the UBE Acts, 2004. Therefore, the UBE implementation committees need to be more proactive in the implementation process in order for the actual outcome to commensurate with the expected outcome as enshrined in UBE Acts, 2004.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions were made:

- Universal Basic Education should be properly funded by the government in order to enhance its effectiveness and implementation of programmes and projects.
- Increasing enrolment into basic education level should be accompanied with increase in provision of physical resources and proper maintenance of available ones.

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