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EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION PROCESS ON PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN KWARA STATE.

BY

DR. (MRS.) A.T. ALABI

Department of Educational Management University of Ilorin, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

The study was carried out to investigate the process of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programmes it affected pupils' enrolment in primary education programme in Kwara State, A questionnaire tagged "UBE Process: Evaluation Questionnaire UBEPEQ" was designed to collect relevant data. Thirty-two ' respondents were randomly selected from UBE officials from the State Primary Education Board, Ministry of Education (Nomadic Education Unit) UBE Zonal Office and State Agency for Mass Education. Data on pupils' enrolments were also collected and collated. Simple percentage was used to analyze the collected data. it was revealed that though UBE had not kicked-off, the events that already took place had resulted in substantial increase in pupils' enrolments in regulars primary school, nomadic and adult education, programmed Based on these findings, it was recommended that funding arrangement should be better concretized to ensure adequate provision of resources for the full take-off. Also proper monitoring of UBE funds by Federal Staff is suggested to prevent diversion of the funds to other uses. In addition, teacher's 'factor in terms of productivity, and welfare should be looked into.

Introduction

The Universal Basic Education Programme was launched on September 30, 1999 by President Olusegun Obasanjo in Sokoto. It was designed to take care of formal and non-formal forms of education for children and adults alike. Specially, .the scope of the Universal Basic Education Programme includes early childhood education, literacy, numeracy and life-skills education for adults and nomadic education. Others arc non-^s formal training for those who have not had the ' benefit of formal training and who left school before acquiring the basic needed for lifelong learning and the formal school system from the beginning, of primary education to the end of junior secondary school (FRN, 1999).

Since the launching in 1999, a lot of have taken place at the different levels of government, from the national to the grassroots. These have, resulted in massive mobilization of all Education Authorities, teachers'/parents' association, primary education boards, government and international agencies and organizations at grassroots level. Institutions of higher learning and professional organizations were not left out in these mobilization efforts.

Some of these activities include policy dialogues and UBE conferences at the various levels and constitution of National council on UBE chairmanned by the Vice-President with all the 36 state governors, minister of education and UBE National Coordinator as members. The council formulates policies for the UBE programme. Other activities include improvement on infrastructure at the school level supply of facilities such as library books and training and retraining of teachers.

Registration exercise into primary one took place in July, 2000 for the 2000/2001 session, which took off in October 2000. It should be pointed out that since its take-off, it has not been possible to enact an enabling law to legally back up its implementation. The UBE bill has been passed back and forth from the Senate to the House of Representative with the agitations by the state and local government chief executives to be involved in the formulation of the bill. However, the offshore and on-shore controversy on revenue allocation has put paid to the enactment of the UBE bill. Since UBE programme has not been enshrined in the 1999 Nigerian constitution, legal authority in form of a bill for its implementation cannot be taken.

In spite of this legal restriction however, the UBE programme at the primary level is on course and focused, at varying degrees of coverage, on the different components of primary education. Specially intensive actions have been taken towards concretizing the noble ideals of UBE. Chronologies of these key UBE events are as follows;

Nov. 29/Dec. 1,1999	Mini-summit on UBE attendance by 257 stakeholder which idea which is generated idea for the implementations guidelines.
Dec., 1999	First draft of implementation guidelines.
Jan.,2000	Appointment of coordinator and wide ranging consultation on draft implantation guidelines.
Jan-May .2000	Three monthly working sessions of SPEBs; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised implementation guidelines • general framework for a national enrolment drive. • acceleration of state of readiness for UBE • upstream mobilization activities • plans for <u>National UBE Day(May27)</u> • State and local level policy dialogues (April 45),(may 11-12)
May 27-july 31,2000	Registration exercise into the primary one class of 2000-2001

By February 2001, the percentage of "useable classrooms" has risen from 22% in January 2000 to about 44.5% in October. Likewise, enrolment for the 2COO 2001 primary classes was a lot higher than. anticipated (UBE, 2001).

In addition, some inter-agency cooperative arrangements have been put in place. These include arrangement with National Teacher's Institute (NTI) for teacher's improvement programmes. The Pivotal Teacher Training Programme of NTI took off in 29 states in July 2000 and in the remaining 7 states in October. The third set of the programme is currently on with the two previous sets of graduate yet to be absorbed into the system. Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC.) for curriculum development and National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration for capacity development for the local management of UBE.

With all these events, Nigeria has become fully UBE-conscious and UBE active. It is expected that this consciousness' would bring about increased enrolments in the different UBE Programmes. This study was then undertaken to evaluate the impact of the introduced UBE programme on enrolment in primary school programmes in Kwara State.

Statement of the problem

The problem of this study was to evaluate the impact of the UBE programme on primary school enrolment in Kwara State. Specifically, the study sought to find out the impact of the newly introduced UBE programme on student enrolment in

- i) primary schools
- ii) nomadic pastoralist /migrant fishermen primary schools and
- iii) basic literacy programme.

Also, the problems militating against, and the resources needed for, a full take-off of UBE programme at primary school level (which can be extended to other levels) was examined. Based on the findings of this study, relevant recommendations for improved UBE programmes implementation would be made.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study,

1. To what extent have the components of UBE programmes been implemented –in Kwara State?
2. Has there been any appreciable increase in pupils' enrolment in regular Primary Schools in Kwara State?
3. Is there any appreciable increase in pupil's enrolment in Nomadic Education Programme after the introduction of UBE programme in Kwara State?
4. Is there any appreciable increase in students' enrolment in literacy education for adults after the introduction of UBE Schemes in Kwara State?

Methodology

A survey research method was employed in this study. A structured questionnaire tagged UBE. Process Evaluation Questionnaire (UBEPEQ) was designed to collect relevant information the UBE process in Kwara State. Available statistics were also collected and collated on the programme of activities and student enrolments at the primary education level. The questionnaire was complemented with unstructured interview with the key officials of the UBE programme in the State, towards gaining better insight into the UBE process.

The population of this study comprised all the officials of the four agencies involved in UBE programme in the state. These agencies are the State Primary Education Board (SPEB), the State UBE Zonal Office (representing the UBE Commission at Abuja) serving Kwara, Niger, Kogi States and the Federal Capital Territory, the Ministry of Education (Nomadic Education Unit) and Kwara State Agency for Mass Education, Respondents totaling 32 were randomly selected from the Administration, Finance and Supply, Planning, Research and Statistics and School Services units of SPEB, Nomadic Education units of the Ministry of Education, officials of UBE Zonal Office and Agency for Mass Education.

Statistics on enrolment were collected and presented in tables will) the calculated growth rates. Simple percentage was used to analyzed responses on the level of UBE implementation and the achievement of UBE objectives.

Results of the study

The findings of the study are presented according to the research questions as follows;

Research questions¹ To what extent have the components of UBE programme been implemented in Kwara State?

Table 1: Extent of Implementation of UBE Components

S/No'	Activity	Extent of Implementation	Percentage Implementation
1.	Early childhood care and education	Not implemented	0
2.	Literacy education for adults	Fairly Implemented	31.25
3.	Nomadic education	Fairly Implemented	46.88
4.	Non-formal programmes for school dropouts	Not Implemented	0
5.	Non-formal programmes for people never in school	Not Implemented	0
6.	Primary education	Fairly	40.63
7.	Junior Secondary School	Not Implemented	0

Results on Table 1 show that three components of the UBE scheme namely; mass literacy, nomadic education and regular primary education have been fairly implemented. The extent of implementation was taken as the extent to which the UBE Scheme had impacted positively on the activities especially on increased student enrolments in these programmes. Since nomadic and adult literacy programmes are also organized at the primary level, the result indicated that only the primary school components of the UBE programme have been fairly implemented so far.

However, with questionnaire design by the Federal Ministry of Education to collect baseline statistic on pre-primary and primary levels of education, the Nigerian government might soon be involved in day-care and nursery education programmes.

Research question 2: Has there been in any appreciable increase in pupils enrolment regular primary schools in Kwara State?.

Table 2: 3-Year Regular Primary Schools Enrolment in Kwara State (199-2001).

Year	Enrolment			Growth Rate
	Male	Female	Total	
1999	155,433	140,177	305,610	
2000	190,907	165,598	35,805	16.75
2001	228,594	199,555	428,149	19.99

Source: SPEB Mimeograph on Pupil Enrolment Trend and Gender Distribution for year 1995-2002 by LGEA.

Figure on Table 2 indicate growth rate of 19.9% .the 2001 pupil enrolment against the previous rate of 16.76% in the year 2000. This is an appreciable increase in pupil enrolment, This might be attributed to greater mobilization and enlightenment of parents towards their children schooling.

Research Question 3: Is there any appreciable increase in pupils' enrolment in nomadic education after the introduction of UBE programme in Kwara State?

Table 3: Year Nomadic Pastoralist School Enrolment in Kwara State.

Year	LGAs	School	Male	Female	Total	Growth Rate
1999	10	28	742	464	1,206	
2000	10	28	485	315	800	-33.67
2001	10	28	1,004	612	1,616	102.00

Sources: Collated from Kwara State Ministry of Education – Nomadic Education Unit Reports of 1999 to 2001.

Enrolment for nomadic classes is taken twice yearly, usually in March and September. The figures here represent the average of both. It should also be noted that, in the year 2001, there Migrant Fishermen Children Schools, (M.Fi.C.S.) have been established in Edu LGEA of Kwara State with student enrolment of 133 (76 male and 57 female). Hopefully, with time, the migrant farmers children's schools would be established to take care of children of migrant farmers in the

state. With this, the educational backwardness of these migrants would have been taken care of (Oyebade, 2000).

Research Question 4: Is there any appreciable increase in student enrolment in the literacy education for adults after the introduction of UBE Scheme in Kwara State?

Table4: 3- Year Enrolment in Adult Literacy Classes in Kwara State.

Year	LGAs	No of classes	Male	Female	Total	Growth rate
1999	16	480	4,857	3,587	3,444	
2000	16	480	6,252	5,078	11,330	34.18
2001	16	480	9,942	5,923	15m 865	43.90

Source: Kwara State Agency for Mass Education Analysis of Basic Literacy Classes 1999-2001.

Note: after the 3-months Basic literacy programme, candidates who proceed to 3-years post literacy programme, candidate who proceed to 3years post literary programme are awarded certificate equivalent to primary six school leaving certificate.

Discussion of Results

This study evaluated the Universal Basic Education (UBE) process in relation to pupil's enrolment in primary school programme in Kwara State Table I revealed that only regular primary, adult literacy and nomadic education programmes have been impacted by the introduction of the UBE scheme in the State. Considering the fact that these programmes had been on ground before the introduction of UBE, it is expected that UBE would first impact on them before extension to new programmes. This result underscores the importance of primary education as the basic foundation for the higher levels. The result also addressed the low literacy rate among the pastoral nomads, which was 0.02 percent (Tahir, 1998), and among adults. Results on Table 2-4 revealed appreciable. Increase in enrolments for the primary one pupil, nomadic and, adult education programmes. In fact, growth rate was as high as 102 in nomadic environments. This result complemented the results that UBE introduction impacted

positively on enrolment in these primary education programmes. Hence, UBE has not only succeeded in raising the consciousness and possibly commitment of the populace for education, it has also raised school enrolment at the primary level considerably. Inadequate funding topped the list of identified problems militating against a full kick-off of UBE programme in the state. Money is needed to procure other resources such as instructional materials, personnel and to erect physical structure. Fortunately in the FGN (1999) implementation Blueprint, collaborative efforts for adequate funding have been proposed involving the three tiers of government, individuals, voluntary agencies, non-governmental organizations and international donor agencies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The key events of UBE process have sensitized, enlightened and mobilized the populace to consciousness and commitment to education in Kwara state. These commitment and consciousness are evident in the appreciable increase in pupils enrolments in the primary education programmes. To ensure a full take-off of UBE programme in the state, the following recommendations are made:

The draft UBE bill should be passed into law without any further delay. This is to ensure constitutional backing for the programme.

With this appreciable increase in enrolments, it is expected that with the full takeoff of UBE programme, enrolments would be raised to all time high. Hence, the need to provide adequate infrastructural facilities, such as classrooms and other buildings.

More instructional materials would also be required to cater for increased enrolments. Proper funding is necessary. The funding arrangements by governments and other agencies should be concretized and possibly backed up by laws.

Arrangements should be made to employ more teachers. There are unemployed NCE and graduate teachers in the State. Two sets of the NTI pivotal teachers are also waiting for employment while the third set is about to graduate. With increased enrolments, more teachers would be needed to ensure efficient and effective teacher-pupil ratios. Also, more incentives should be given to teachers to make them perform. Implementation of teacher's salary scale could be the first step.

In addition, proper monitoring of funds allocated to UBE scheme is important. It might be necessary to get a crop of efficient and honest staff from the federal level to disburse UBE funds at the state level. They would ensure that UBE funds are not diverted to any other use.

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