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ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME OF PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FACILITIES AND SUPPORT OF SPORTS DEVELOPMENT IN EBONYI STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the implementation UBE programme of provision of information and communication technology facilities and support of sports development in Ebonyi State.

Ebonyi State. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 1,277 respondents made up of 219 principals and 1,053 head-teachers in Ebonyi State. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to draw 639 respondents made up of 111 principals and 528 headteachers. Questionnaire titled 'Assessment of Implementation of Universal Basic Education Programme Questionnaire (AIUBEPQ)' was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts who were lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha which yielded an overall reliability of 0.80 for the instrument with coefficients for the clusters being 0.80 and 0.79 respectively. The researchers together with five research assistants collected data for the study and a 98 percent return rate of the instrument administered was recorded. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed among others that there was no implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State relative to support of sports development. It was also found out that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and head-teachers' assessment of the implementation of universal basic education programme with regard to provision of information and communication technology facilities in Ebonyi State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that Government should adhere to the 26% budgetary allocation to the education sector as recommended by United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), so as enhance the availability of funds for the implementation of universal basic education programme relative to supply of ICT facilities to primary and secondary schools for implementation of UBE programme.

KEYWORDS : Assessment, Implementation, Universal Basic Education, Sports

INTRODUCTION

Society depends on institutions of learning to provide well-skilled and knowledgeable individuals to bring about positive development. In response to this, government established and funded various educational institutions. Education institution serves as vehicle for developing creative minds, shaping right attitude and equipping individuals with requisite skills to promote nation building. Nnebedum and Ugwuogo (2020) pointed out that education enables individuals to acquire requisite literacy, build their confidence and develop their potentials to promote active

participation in development of the society. Countries all over the world have embraced free basic education at primary and junior secondary schools to reduce illiteracy and poverty.

Free basic education was recommended in the World Conference on Education held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1991 Education for all (EFA). Opoh, Okou and Nkang (2015) stressed that the World Conference on Education recommended that basic education should be made free and available to all and sundry, thus emphasizing free access, equity, efficiency, literacy, numeracy and lifelong skills for all. The Federal Government of Nigeria implemented the recommendation of the World Conference on Education through official launching the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in September 1999 and enacting the UBE in 2004. Egbo (2021) stressed that the universal Basic Education (UBE) Act which was signed into law by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, the then President of Nigeria on May, 2004 gave birth to Universal Basic Education programme in Nigeria under the management of the Universal Basic Education Commission. The Commission oversees the activities of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) to promote implementation of the UBE programme at the state and local government levels. Egbo (2021) stressed that the Act establishing UBE in Nigeria also made provision for one year of Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) within which the child will qualify to enter into basic one of the programme. The Act also provides for free and compulsory education for children in the primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria because primary education alone may not adequately equip the child with basic skills and knowledge to survive in a rapid technological advancing world. Suleiman, Mrakpor and Ishola (2020) noted that the UBE programme as a policy reform measure is aimed at rectifying

distortions in basic education (for primary and junior secondary schools) delivery in the country. The authors also pointed out that the main thrust of the UBE programme is to lay the foundation for lifelong learning through the inculcation of appropriate learning, self-awareness, citizenship and life skills.

The implementation of the UBE Act started in 2004; 17 years after (2004-2021), an assessment of the policy is deemed necessary. Nwabueze, Edikpa and Iremeka (2018), assessment is the systematic collection of data for measuring and evaluation the success of a programme geared towards achieving the intended learning objectives. It is the collection and analysis of information on a project, programme or policy to determine the attainment of intended objectives. The assessment of the UBE programme provides information on efforts and progress made by education stakeholders towards the implementation of the programmes. According Egbo (2021), implementation is the activities of transforming ideas and policy into an identified objective. Chigbu and Ogboegbulem (2018) defined implementation as the process of interpreting and practicing content to be meaningful. It is the activities undertaken to attain the goals and objectives of a policy or programme. The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) Standard Action Plan (2004, p.7-12), Part Two 9a articulated the framework for successful implementation of the programme to include provision of relevant instructional materials, guidance and counseling, teachers development programme, library development, provision of guidelines for infrastructural development, promotion of culture of record keeping, provision of information and communication technology facilities and the support of sports development in schools. The interest of this study was on provision of information and communication technology facilities and the support of sports development in schools.

Provision of information and communication technology (ICT) facilities is vital component of UBE programme. Ugwuja (2015) defined ICT as those computerized devices used to create, design, store, share, transmit, interpret and manipulate information in its various formats. ICT could be seen as whole range of electronic devices use in creating, processing, storing, retrieving and transmitting information electronically. ICT facilities include computers, laptops, overhead projectors, printers, scanner, photocopying machine, optical fibres, fax machines, CD-Rom, internet, Digital Video Display (DVD) and software among others.

UBEC Standard Action Plan (2004) pointed out that the strategies for provision of ICT facilities for implementation programme include; the procurement and installation of appropriate hard and software. Okah (2012) asserted that with the right ICT software, hardware and curriculum activities, even severely handicapped pupils/students are likely to succeed in UBE programme. Lawson and Gede (2011) pointed out that majority of the UBE schools seem not to have been equipped with computer facilities which afford the learner the opportunities for developing manipulative skills that are geared toward helping the child to function effectively in the society to the limits of his/her capacity.

Support of sports development is another essential component of UBE programme implementation. Sports are parts of the school co-curricular activities. Sports are the activities

that students engage in beside academics in the school to develop skills and talents (Kirul, Kipkoech & Simotwo, 2017). Furthermore, Kirul et al outlined sports activities to include ball games, track events and field events that students engage in to showcase their creativity and talents. Oladipupo (2012) affirmed that sports can build up individuals' health and self-esteem, help them learn the ideals of teamwork and tolerance and be drawn away from the dangers of drugs and crimes. Sports development promotes interaction, reduce dropout and help learners to discover athlete's talent (Bamidele & Ige, 2016). UBEC Standard Action Plan (2004) articulated the implementation strategies for supporting sports development in school to include; developing and mobilizing stakeholders and developing various sports competitions such as football, althetics, basket ball, handball and traditional games among others.

UBE is a not new programme in Nigeria's education system particularly as it has been in operation for over a decade. Over the years, Nigerian governments have been confronted with a lot of difficulties in the educational sector, especially in the aspect of funding and infrastructure development (Adamu & Adole, 2015). The problems of funding and infrastructure may adversely affect drastic reduction of illiteracy and dropouts among students of school-going age which are some of rationales for launching UBE programme in Nigeria's. Despites, several years of implementation of universal basic education programme in Ebonyi State, there are still cases of drop-out and hawking among children of basic school-going age which contradicted the universalization of education in Nigeria. This seems to contribute to high rate of illiteracy which made Ebonyi State to be classified among the educationally disadvantage states in Nigeria. On this background that this study on assessment of implementation UBE programme of provision of information and communication technology facilities and support of sports development in Ebonyi State was deemed imperative.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assessment of implementation UBE programme of provision of information and communication technology facilities and support of sports development in Ebonyi State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. Implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to provision of information and communication technology facilities.
2. Implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State

relative to support sports development.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the principals' and headteachers' assessment of implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to provision of information and communication technology facilities.
2. What are the principals' and headteachers' assessment of implementation of UBE

programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to support

sports development.

1.3 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and headteachers'

assessment of the implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to provision of information and communication technology facilities.

2. There is no significant difference on the mean scores of principals' and headteachers'

assessment of the implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary

schools in Ebonyi State relative to support of sports development in Ebonyi State.

2. Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study

comprised 1,277 respondents made up of 219 principals and 1,053 head-teachers in Ebonyi State. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to draw a sample size of 639 respondents made up of 111 principals and 528 headteachers for the study.

A-researcher developed instrument titled "Assessment of Implementation of Universal

Basic Education Programme Questionnaire (AIUBEPQ)" AIUBEPQ was developed based on

insight gained from reviewed literature, UBE action plan and information gathered from consultation with experts. The instrument has two sections A and B. Section A has one item on respondents status, while Section B contains 22 items arranged in two clusters namely: I and II. Cluster 1 contains 12 items on UBE programme relative to provision of information and communication technology facilities, while cluster II has 10 on UBE programme relative to support of sports development structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts who are lecturers, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one in Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The internal consistency

of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha. This yielded reliability co- efficient of 0.80 and 0.79 for the two clusters respectively and the overall coefficient of the instrument was 0.80.

The researcher together with the help of five research assistants of which two are secondary school teachers and the others primary school teachers in Ebonyi State collected data

for the study using direct approach. The distribution and collection of the copies of the questionnaire lasted for two weeks. Out of the 639 copies of questionnaire distributed, 624 copies were dully completed and retrieved (indicating a 98% return rate) and used for data analysis. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions and t-test for testing the hypotheses. For decision on the research questions, mean ratings that fall below 2.50 were taken as disagreement, while mean rating of 2.50 and above were taken to indicate agreement. Standard deviation was used to ascertain the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents mean ratings. In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if t- calculated value is equal to or greater than t-critical value, the null hypotheses was adjudged to be significant and thus rejected, but if otherwise, it was adjudged not significant and not rejected

3. Results Research Question 1: What are the principals' and headteachers' assessment of implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to provision of information and communication technology facilities in Ebonyi State?

Table 1: Respondents Mean Ratings on Provision of ICT Facilities for the Implementation of

UBE Programme

above the cut off mean score of 2.50 indicating agreement with the items. The headteachers only disagreed with the principals in items 6 and 10. The standard deviation scores which range for

0.45-1.24 for both principals and headteachers respectively are closer to the mean indicating

similarity in their responses in each cluster. The cluster mean of 2.45 and 2.44 for principals and headteachers respectively indicated that there was no implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State relative to provision of ICT facilities.

Research Question 2: What are the principals' and headteachers' assessment of implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to support of sports development in Ebonyi State?

Table 2: Respondents Mean Ratings on Support of Sports Development for the Implementation of UBE Programme

As revealed on Table 2, items 13, 14 and 15 have mean scores above the cut off mean of 2.50 in respect of principals and headteachers and this indicates their agreement with the items. On the other hand, mean ratings of both the principals and headteachers for items 17-22 fell below the acceptable mean score of 2.50 indicating their disagreement with the items. The principals disagreed with the

headteachers only in item 16. The standard deviation scores for principals and headteachers range from 0.81-1.30 indicating that the respondents are homogeneous in their responses. The cluster mean of 2.44 and 2.43 for principals and headteachers respectively indicated that there was no implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State relative to support of sports development.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and headteachers' assessment of the implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to provision of information and communication facilities.

Table 3: The t-test of Significant Difference between the Mean Ratings of Principals and Headteachers on the Provision of Information and Communication Technology Facilities for the Implementation of UBE Programme

The result presented on Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 0.08 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 622 degree of freedom. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and headteachers' on the implementation of universal basic education programme in Ebonyi State relative to provision of information and communication technology facilities. Thus, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and headteachers' assessment of the implementation of UBE programme in primary and junior secondary schools in Ebonyi State relative to support of sports development.

Table 4: The t-test of Significant Difference between the Mean Ratings of Principals and

Headteachers on the Support of Sports Development for the Implementation of UBE Programme

The result of data analysis presented on Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 0.08 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 622 degree of freedom. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and head- teachers' on the implementation of universal basic education programme in Ebonyi State relative to sports development. Thus, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

4. Discussion

The study found out that principals and head-teachers assessment revealed that there was no implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State relative to provision of information and communication facilities. The implementation of UBE has not resulted to the provision of the following information and communication technology facilities: internet connectivity to enhance communication, laptop for managing information, audio cassette to store relevant information,

overhead projector for presentation during school programmes, video tape to record events in school, multimedia package for performing administrative tasks, scanner to make copies of document and record players for displaying events in school. teachers as the population of the study. This is in agreement with the finding of Tyoakaa (2014)

who found out among others that there was inadequacy in the provision of the basic infrastructural and ICT facilities in schools. This is supported by the finding of Oghuvbu (2009) who reported that the implementation of universal basic education programme has not resulted to expected ICT resources such as internet services, computer and video devices in primary and junior secondary schools. The agreement in finding could be that ICT facilities are expensive to procure and install and funds allocated to the implementation of UBE programme seems to be limited.

Innovation in science and technology and the growing complexities in the world today demand the provision in communication technology (ICT) facilities. The absence of basic ICT

facilities contributes to the use of obsolete materials in instructional delivery in primary and secondary schools. It was also reported that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and head-teachers' assessment of the implementation of universal basic education programme with regard to provision of information and communication technology facilities in Ebonyi State. The finding of no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and head-teachers could point to the fact that they apply similar UBE Act in managing their schools.

It was found out that principals and head-teachers assessment revealed that there was no implementation of UBE programme in Ebonyi State relative to support of sports development. The implementation of UBE has not supported sports development through the: provision of

sports facilities, organising handball competition in the school, inviting professionals to coach

students in various sports, organizing table tennis competition, organising volleyball competition in school and developing of partnership with the private sector in promoting sporting activities. This in line with the finding of Obiunu (2015) who reported that there was low perception of the UBE implementation in relation to sporting programmes. The poor support of sports development limit students and pupils participation in sports so as to provides them with the opportunity to socialize with peers, promotes their health, improve physical fitness and also improve sense of relaxation.

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of principals' and head-teachers'

assessment of the implementation of universal basic education programme with regard to sports development in Ebonyi State. The test of hypotheses was not significant probably because of the

fact that supporting of sports development is capital intensive and this area is neglected by the

Government and principals and headteachers might be aware of this.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there was no implementation of

universal basic education programme of information and communication technology facilities and support of sports development in Ebonyi State. The failure in the implementation of these aspects of universal basic education programme has contributed to low enrolment and participation

of children of school-going age in basic education in Nigeria. This is a worrisome development of which has adversely affected the acquisition of permanent literacy, numeracy, manipulative and communicative skills among pupils and students in Ebonyi State.

Plan

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