



# Effective Management of Universal Basic Education for attainment of SDGs in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

*Article No.:* 112019208

*Type:* Research

*Accepted:* 28/11/2019

*Published:* 11/04/2020

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**Keywords:** Management; UBE;

Basic Education; SDGs

The study examined effective management of universal basic education for attainment of SDGs in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State. Descriptive survey research design was employed in the study. Two (2) Research Questions and One (1) Hypothesis were formulated for the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. A total population of 1829 teachers in 86 public secondary schools in Ikom education zone were used for the study with a sample of 344 teachers. The study revealed that material resources required for effective management of UBE program in the zone were grossly inadequate. It was concluded that if government provide the required human and material resources needed for the management of UBE program in the zone, it will go a long way in enhancing the achievement of the goals of UBE program. It was recommended that, there should be adequate provision of welfare services for teachers of basic education programme to enable their motivation for effective teaching and learning and government should provide adequate funding to enable teachers take learners to museums for better learning and practical experience, among others.

## INTRODUCTION

There are several indicators and challenges that could deter children all over the world who have reached the age of enrolling into quality and sustainable basic education programmes and to be denied access to acquiring basic education. As a result of such challenges like poverty, armed conflict and other emergencies, there has been enormous progress on the goal to provide basic education to all children worldwide. This is to enable the achievement of four (4) of the seventeen (17) sustainable development goals. When this is done, there will be improved performance of school age children, achievement of the goal of universal basic education, affordable vocational training, access to higher education and low rate of educational wastages in Nigerian basic education system. Since 1992, UNESCO has been promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). It led the UN Decade for ESD from 2005 to 2014 and is now spearheading its follow-up, the Global Action Programme (GAP) on ESD. The momentum for ESD has never been stronger. Global issues – such as climate change – urgently require a shift in our lifestyles and a transformation of the way we think and act. To achieve this change, we need new skills, values and attitudes that lead to more sustainable societies. The issue of Education for Sustainable Development entered the global discourse at the Rio Earth Summit (1992) with Agenda 21 and the imperative to “reorient education to embrace the concept of sustainable development and raising public awareness and training “, followed by the decade of education for sustainable development” (DESD, 2005-2014). Incorporating ESD through the universal basic education programme greatly empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning, and is an integral part of quality education. According to UNESCO (2017), education is both a goal in itself and a means for attaining all the other SDGs. It is not only an integral part of sustainable development, but also a key enabler for it. That is why education represents an essential strategy in the pursuit of the SDGs.

Basic education according to Obayan (2000) is a level, type and form of learning needed to build firm roots for literacy and numeracy, which will help to inculcate basic skills for a sustainable livelihood and further learning. Its importance is so germane to human and societal development. Anaduaka and Okafor (2013) added that, basic education is the foundation upon which other levels of education are built and a necessary prerequisite for human and national development. According to Etuk, Ering and Ajake (2012), the primary target of the UBE policy was ensuring that every Nigerian child acquires a minimum of 9 years basic education which will properly inculcate into the child requisite knowledge and competences required for higher education. Universal basic education comprises of (9) nine years duration;

comprising (6) six years of primary education and (3) three years of junior secondary education. It also includes adult and non-formal education programmes at primary and junior secondary education levels to take care of those who dropped out of school (Aboluwodi, 2015). The development of universal basic education in Nigeria did not start today but has been a fetus of other earlier policies since 1955 Universal Primary Education in Western Nigeria, 1957: Universal Primary Education in Eastern Nigeria, 1977 Publication of the National Policy for Education 1976 Universal Free Primary Education and 1999, when Universal Basic Education was formally launched and enacted to law in 2004, which is now in line with the four (4) sustainable development goal which craves for every child to be enrolled in school for quality education particularly in Nigeria where we have a lot of children who are out of school due to poverty. According to Abul, Uyilowhoma and Aboli (2017), the UBE programme was designed to remove distortions and inconsistencies in basic education delivery and to reinforce the implementation of the National Policy on Education. It is also Nigeria’s response to the achievement of Education for all (EFA), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the present Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UBE is aimed at enabling all children in the Nigerian society to participate in the free 9 years of schooling from primary one to junior secondary school (JSS) three classes. The intention is universal and compulsory (Anaduaka and Okafor, 2013).

Concise efforts were made at the onset of this programme by the federal government of Nigeria in the area of infrastructure like construction of 35,965 new classrooms, renovation of 52,038 classrooms, provision of 1,004,650 sets of pupils’ and teachers’ furniture; construction of 12,347 toilets, sinking of 825 boreholes, and the provision of 795 electricity generators (Emechebe, 2012). Due to the emphasis placed on the UBE policy, there has been tremendous increase in the net enrolment of children in primary school to JSS3 of junior secondary. Following the increase there have been a big challenge in the quality delivery of the UBE curriculum in Nigeria and Ikom education zone in particular. The effective management of both human and material resources for implementation of UBE in Ikom education zone, with respect to quality, efficiency and equity, is needful, so that the educational system transforms the increase in enrolment of children into a critical mass of educated persons needed for sustainable development; this will go a long way in improving the overall educational system of Nigeria. There are challenges that deter the effective management of UBE programme, these challenges include the availability of competent educators, the provision of a conducive learning environment, availability of physical facilities and instructional material and other resources, curriculum development, and classroom supervision and management, among others (Asagwara, 1997). Also, Anaduaka and Okafor (2013) lamented that there are enormous challenges affecting the effective management of basic education in Nigeria

and Ikom Education zone in particular like inadequate funding, inaccurate data for planning, lack of competent teachers, poor motivation of teachers, poor supervision and inadequate infrastructure and facilities.

### Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. find out the availability of material resources for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone
2. determine the human resources and instrument of motivation available for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone

### Research Questions

1. What are the available material resources for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone?
2. What are the human resources and instrument of motivation available for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone?

### Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated for the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on material resources available for effective management of UBE in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

### METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was employed in the study. Nworgu (2006) described descriptive survey as a study which aims at collecting data and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. The study was conducted in all secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone. Ikom Education zone has a total population of 1829 teachers in 86 public secondary schools in the education zone. Teachers are the subjects for this

study as they were selected as respondents for the questionnaire. To get the sample, four (4) teachers from each of the 86 secondary schools were sampled as respondents, giving rise to 344 teachers from a population of 1,829 teachers. The instrument used for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire titled "Effective Management of Basic Education for attainment of SDGs Questionnaire (EMBEASDGQ)". The instrument has two sections namely; section "A" which is concerned with personal data of the respondents and section "B" which contains 20 items in two clusters on material resources for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone and human resources and instrument of motivation available for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State. The instrument has 10 items that has two clusters with rating scale using Likert type rating of four point scale. The response mode applied were strongly Agree (SA) 4 Points, Agree (A) 3 Points, Disagree (D) 2 Points, Strongly Agree (SD) 1 Point. In order to ensure the internal consistency of the instrument, a trial test was carried out on ten (20) teachers which gave the internal consistency reliability for each of the cluster which was computed using Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) with an overall computation that yielded a reliability index of 0.78. This was considered appropriate because it ensured the extent of homogeneity of the items in each cluster. The Cronbach Alpha was used because it provided more stable measure of homogeneity. Data collected were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. A score of 2.50 and above was taken to mean that the respondent is in agreement with the option while a mean score of 2.49 and below showed disagreement to the items of the instrument.

### RESULT AND FINDINGS

The result presented in line with the research questions and null hypothesis that guided the study were presented in the table below.

#### Research Question 1

What are the available material resources for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone?

**Table 1: Mean ratings of male and female teachers on the available material resources for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone**

| S/N               | ITEM  | SA  | A   | D   | SD  | $\bar{\chi}$ | Std Dev.    | Decision     |
|-------------------|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1.                | There are adequate instructional resources for effective teaching of basic education curriculum | 161 | 87  | 66  | 30  | 2.41         | 1.13        | Disagree     |
| 2.                | Classrooms are insufficient for learners of basic education                                     | 139 | 98  | 71  | 36  | 3.22         | 0.98        | Agree        |
| 3.                | Learners pack themselves in one pew due to lack of seating chairs                               | 112 | 130 | 60  | 42  | 3.09         | 0.99        | Agree        |
| 4.                | Government provides students with good toilets for hygiene purposes                             | 95  | 18  | 119 | 122 | 2.35         | 0.91        | Disagree     |
| 5.                | Principals offices are not adequately furnished for effective management of basic education     | 212 | 103 | 89  | 15  | 3.03         | 1.13        | Agree        |
| <b>Grand Mean</b> |   |     |     |     |     | <b>2.82</b>  | <b>1.03</b> | <b>Agree</b> |

The result on Table 1 showed that items 2, 3, and 5 were accepted because they have mean values above the limiting value of 2.50, while item 1 and 4 were not accepted because they had mean value below 2.50. However, the grand mean of 2.82 is above 2.50, hence, the respondents reported that the available resources for teaching learners of basic education are insufficient and hence, affect the effective management of the programme in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State Universities. However, male and female teachers perceive that classrooms and

other facilities are insufficient for teaching and learning of basic education curriculum, thereby enhancing effective management.

#### Research Question 2

What are the human resources and instrument of motivation available for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone?

**Table 2: Mean ratings of male and female teachers on the human resources and instrument of motivation available for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone**

| S/N               | ITEM   | SA  | A   | D   | SD  | $\bar{\chi}$ | Std Dev.    | Decision     |
|-------------------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| 6.                | There are adequate welfare services available for teachers of basic education programme                | 33  | 63  | 90  | 158 | 2.40         | 1.14        | Disagree     |
| 7.                | Teachers whose pupils/students perform well in examinations are usually not rewarded                   | 141 | 100 | 65  | 38  | 3.21         | 0.88        | Agree        |
| 8.                | There is regular training and re-training of teachers of basic education                               | 112 | 130 | 60  | 42  | 3.09         | 0.99        | Agree        |
| 9.                | Government provides adequate funding that enable teachers take learners to museums for better learning | 75  | 21  | 125 | 123 | 2.31         | 0.90        | Disagree     |
| 10.               | The principal does not reward best performing students in the class                                    | 119 | 131 | 80  | 14  | 2.99         | 1.10        | Agree        |
| <b>Grand Mean</b> |  |     |     |     |     | <b>2.80</b>  | <b>1.00</b> | <b>Agree</b> |

The results on Table 2 showed that items 7, 8 and 10 were accepted because they have mean values above the limiting value of 2.50, while item 6 and 9 were not accepted because it had mean value below 2.50. However, the grand mean is 2.80, which is above 2.50. The respondents perceived that services and instruments for motivation available for teachers in basic education are inadequate and hence, affect the

effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State.

#### Hypothesis 1

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on material resources available for effective management of UBE in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State.

**Table 3: t-test analysis results on material resources available for effective management of UBE in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State.**

| S/N                 | Variables       | No. of Cases | $\bar{x}$ | Std Dev. | Df  | t.calc      | t.crit       | Dec.                         | Sig.                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|----------|-----|-------------|--------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1.                  | Male Teachers   | 201          | 2.22      | 1.09     | 342 | 0.86        | 1.960        | Accept Ho                    | Not Sig. (NS)        |
|                     | Female Teachers | 143          | 2.09      | 1.06     |     |             |              |                              |                      |
| 2.                  | Male Teachers   | 201          | 3.03      | 0.81     | 342 | 0.24        | 1.960        | Accept Ho                    | Not Sig. (NS)        |
|                     | Female Teachers | 143          | 3.00      | 0.82     |     |             |              |                              |                      |
| 3.                  | Male Teachers   | 201          | 2.01      | 1.14     | 342 | 0.55        | 1.960        | Accept Ho                    | Not Sig. (NS)        |
|                     | Female Teachers | 143          | 2.10      | 1.12     |     |             |              |                              |                      |
| 4.                  | Male Teachers   | 201          | 3.01      | 1.10     | 342 | 0.53        | 1.960        | Accept Ho                    | Not Sig. (NS)        |
|                     | Female Teachers | 143          | 2.93      | 1.08     |     |             |              |                              |                      |
| 5.                  | Male Teachers   | 201          | 2.55      | 0.97     | 342 | 0.12        | 1.960        | Accept Ho                    | Not Sig. (NS)        |
|                     | Female Teachers | 143          | 2.53      | 0.96     |     |             |              |                              |                      |
| <b>t-test Value</b> |                 |              |           |          |     | <b>0.46</b> | <b>1.960</b> | <b>Accept Ho<sub>4</sub></b> | <b>Not Sig. (NS)</b> |

Based on the results on Table 3, the t-test value of 0.46 is less than the f.crit value of 1.960. Therefore, Ho<sub>1</sub> is accepted, meaning that there is no significant difference between mean ratings of male and teachers on material resources available for effective management of UBE in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

## DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study with regard to research question one (1) showed that male and female teachers perceive that there are material resources for improving effective management of basic education in Ikom Education Zone made available by the government, but the challenge remains that, they are inadequate to improve effective management of basic education in the study area. This findings are supported by the result of the study conducted by Emechebe (2012) who stated that concise efforts were made at the onset of UBE programme by the federal government of Nigeria in the area of infrastructure like construction of 35,965 new classrooms, renovation of 52,038 classrooms, provision of 1,004,650 sets of pupils' and teachers' furniture; construction of 12,347 toilets, sinking of 825 boreholes, and the provision of 795 electricity generators. Due to the emphasis placed on the UBE policy, there became tremendous increase in the net enrolment of children in primary school to JSS3 of junior secondary. Following the increase there

have been a big challenge in the quality delivery of the UBE curriculum in Nigeria and Ikom education zone in particular. This challenge results from inadequacy of resources to carry the sharp increase in enrollment of students. The findings revealed that the adequate provision of material for effective management of UBE programme in Ikom Education Zone will greatly increase the effective teaching, learning and overall performance of the school management.

Also, the findings of this study with regards to research question two (2) revealed that there is lack of competent teachers, poor motivation of teachers, poor supervision and inadequate funding for effective management of UBE program in the study area. This findings is line with the findings of Anaduaka and Okafor (2013) who lamented that there are enormous challenges affecting the effective management of basic education in Nigeria and Ikom Education zone in particular; like inadequate funding, inaccurate data for planning, lack of competent teachers, poor motivation of teachers, poor supervision and inadequate infrastructure and facilities. Although the researchers' interest was particularly on instruments for motivation of human resources for effective management of the UBE programme, but other important factors were incorporated into the study. It implies that when government make available strategies that will motivate the teachers who are the core to curriculum implementation, it will encourage them to put best efforts in delivering the content of what children need to know at that level of basis education.

The findings of the study with regard to hypothesis 1 revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on material resources available for effective management of UBE in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State. Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 showed acceptance that both male and female teachers were of the opinion that material resources available for effective management of UBE in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State were inadequate.

## CONCLUSION

The sustainable development goals were developed to improve human capital development and improve the standard of living of the citizenry. One of the goals dwelled on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all which brought the universal basic education programme into the history of educational policies in Nigeria. The UBE programme policy was enacted to enable for an all-inclusive opportunity for all to be enrolled in the Nigerian educational system not minding religion, colour or region and also was made to be free and compulsory. The essence was to enable the government to provide her citizens with basic level of education that will inculcate into them the knowledge of reading, writing and counting for useful living among members of the society. Despite the extent of laudability of the UBE programme, there still exist great challenges encountered at the management level of the program in Nigerian secondary schools like inadequacy of resources required for proper implementation of the program and hence, becoming difficult to achieve the desired goals and objectives of the UBE program in Ikom Education zone of Cross River State.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made for the study:

1. Government should provide students with good toilets for hygiene purposes in the school
2. There should be adequate provision of instructional resources for effective teaching of basic education curriculum.
3. There should be adequate provision of welfare services for teachers of basic education

programme to enable their motivation for effective teaching and learning.

4. Government should provide adequate funding that enable teachers take learners to museums for better learning and practical experience.

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