JOURNAL OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE
ISSN Print: 2992-2763 – ISSN Online: 2992-4618 | Vol. 3, No. 2 / June, 2025
https://www.jopd.com.ng

UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION AND BASIC OUTCOMES IN OKPOKWU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BENUE STATE

By

Prof. Dalhatu Mohammed Jumare
Department of Local Government and Development Studies,
Faculty of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
Tel: 07032309564
dalhatujumare@gmail.com
and

Ogbe Ekoja Bernard
Department of Local Government and Development Studies,
Faculty of Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
Tel: 08035356243
Email: benogbe2015@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigated the effect of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme implementation on the development of basic education in Okpokwu Local Government Area of Benue State. The objectives were to assess the effectiveness of UBE in improving school enrollment, retention, teaching quality, and infrastructural development, as well as to identify challenges affecting its implementation. A total of 120 questionnaires were administered to respondents which includes teachers, parents, and education officials within the local government area using a stratified random sampling technique. However, only 110 were retrieved and analyzed. Findings revealed that at the inception of the UBE programme, it has contributed positively to increased school enrollment and awareness of the importance of basic education. The finding reveals that school awareness and enrollment increased to over ninety percent (90%) at inception and subsequently dropped to about forty-five percent (45%) due to some significant challenges. These include inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, insufficient learning materials, shortage of qualified teachers, and weak monitoring mechanisms: and insecurity in the rural areas. Additionally, limited community and parental involvement further hinder the programme's effectiveness. The study concludes that the success of UBE in Okpokwu LGA depends on stronger government commitment, improved funding, community participation, teacher motivation, and transparent implementation practices. Recommendations include increased government investment, recruitment and training of qualified teachers, improved supervision, and awareness campaigns to foster community support for basic education.

Keywords: Universal Basic Education (UBE), Basic Education Development, Programme Implementation, Okpokwu Local Government, Educational Challenges

Introduction

The right to be educated has become increasingly accepted as a core fundamental human right, and the need for education is being universally recognized and proclaimed, (Article 26 of the United Nations Charter of 1948). This was a response to issues arising from the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA), held in Jomtein, Thailand in 1990, and the

Millennium Development Goals (MDG) on Education for All by 2015 (UNESCO, 2005), stated that every child has the right to basic education, and that at this level, education shall be compulsory and free, while technical and professional education shall be generally available. Furthermore, the millennium development goal, number two (MDG-2) envisaged that by 2015, all children of school age must be made to complete a full course of primary education.

For Nigeria to be in line with this recommendation and coupled with failure of the then Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal Basic Education (UBE) was introduced (Dike, 2000), also (Fabunmi, 2004: 8), argued that:

> *...the conference culminated in Nigeria's emphasis in the provision of compulsory basic education for all. The programme was launched by the federal government on 30th September, 1999 in Sokoto with Obanya as National Coordinator (Federal Ministry of Education, 2000).*

Among the countries in the world, Nigeria is one that places a premium on a good education. According to Nigeria's National Policy on Education, the country's educational system is a key component in its pursuit of national development (FRN, 2014). As a result, the nation's requirements will be met through the medium of education. According to the National Policy on Education (2014 revised), the purpose of schooling is to instill a sense of national consciousness and national unity; instill the right types of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and Nigerian society; train the mind to understand the world around us; acquire appropriate skills; and foster the development of mental, physical, and social abilities and competencies (2014 revised). On September 30th, 1999, then-president of Nigeria Chief Olusegun Obasanjo started the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Sokoto State, in part because of the aforementioned assertions (Ambe, Agbor & Eyo, 2018).

The initiative's introduction was lauded by many Nigerians, who saw it as a chance to address the country's literacy crisis and reform the country's broken educational system. A basic education in Nigeria consists of 9 years of schooling, including 6 years of elementary school and 3 years of junior high school (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). The plan mandates that all citizens must participate in what amounts to a free and universal elementary education. The plan will cover both in-school and out-of-school children by providing them with access to primary and secondary level non-formal and adult education programmes.

Universal, basic, and education are the three pillars upon which the UBE project rests. The term universal refers to the fact that the programme is open to all people, regardless of their background or socio-economic status. When something is described as basic, it is assumed to be crucial and must be provided no matter what. This is the lynchpin upon which the entire structure is built. It is impossible to accomplish anything without it. It is the cornerstone of education (Akpokiniovo, 2022).

Despite the noble objectives of the UBE programme, its implementation has faced numerous challenges across different regions of the country, especially in rural areas like Okpokwu Local Government Area of Benue State. These challenges include inadequate infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, insufficient funding, poor supervision, and limited community participation (Ajayi & Afolabi, 2020). These issues have hindered the full realization of the UBE goals and adversely affected the quality and accessibility of basic education in the area.

Okpokwu Local Government Area, like many other rural communities in Nigeria, struggles with infrastructural decay, low literacy levels, and socio-economic factors that limit educational

access and participation. Understanding the extent to which the UBE programme has addressed these challenges in Okpokwu is crucial for policy formulation and educational planning. This study, therefore, seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of UBE implementation in Okpokwu LGA by assessing its impact on school enrollment, teacher availability, infrastructure development, and community involvement in basic education delivery.

Empirical Review

Researchers have conducted several empirical studies in the recent past in relation to basic education delivery in Nigeria. Many studies have been carried out on various aspect of UBE implementation before and after the commencement of the programme. Prior to the establishment of the UBE, research works have also been undertaken on previous educational policies with emphasis on programme implementation, resource provision and general challenges. The researcher intend to find out why classrooms buildings are grossly in adequate, libraries and laboratories are not properly furnished in some cases among other findings. Therefore, it is recommended that government must ensure adequate infrastructural facilities to aid teaching and learning.

In a research conducted by Ashiru (2015), on the impact assessment of the Universal Basic Education Policy on school enrolment in selected local government areas of Kwara state, 2006-2011. The author assumed that the implementation of UBE programme has not created more access to basic education for children of school -age. Using analytical research method, the researcher found a progressive increase in the rate of enrolment; which implies that more school-age children were enrolled within the period under review. It is also discovered that gender disparity still remained steady, but insignificant because of the marginal difference (49% to 51%) in the rate of enrolment between boys and girls. the researcher stressed the need for more facilities to aid learning and teaching. However, the study did not go further to find out the rate of completion and transition a s completion is much more important than just been enrolled.

Oladela and Oralu (2015), in a more detailed way analysed the budgetary allocation of Nigeria to Education form 1999 -2013 and discovered that, the lowest allocation was in 1999 with 4.46% while the highest allocation was in 2006 with 10.43%, this is contained in the International Journal of Social, Behavioural, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering. They concluded that, Nigeria is still yet to meet the recommendation of UNESCO of 26% budgetary allocation to education by developing countries. This shows the unserious attitude of our nation toward education.

Consenting to their line of thought Aboluwodi (2015), in a journal of education and research wrote on Political Will and Strategic Planning in the Implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria: The Obafemi Awolowo example, found out that, lack of political will on the part of government, absence of strategic planning, inaccurate data, politicization of the programme and inadequate funding constitute some major constrain to the success of the programme. To achieve the desired result, the same commitment, determination and political will that helped Awolowo meet the objectives of his programme are what the government can apply to sustain and advance the current Universal Basic Education programme. In essence, the need to exact high level of commitment and allocate more resources cannot be overemphasize.

Yahaya (2015), wrote on the Assessment of Education related millennium development goals (MDGS): a study of primary education in Nigeria. In undertaking the study, the researcher used the longitudinal structure; hence information was collected that covers a twelve year period. Data was sourced from both primary and secondary sources. Major Findings reveal that, the

pursuit of MDG 2 has not significantly impacted primary school enrolment, completion and literacy levels in Nigeria; that there are some discrepancies with MDGs funding in Nigeria, as appropriation of funds isn't correlated to the actual release of fund. The researcher recommended that the OSSAP -MDGs should promote incentives such as free lunch, uniforms, free text books and transportation to encourage school enrolment and adopt strategies that will continue to ensure that children enroll and stay in schools.

Also research work published in the international journal of economic, commerce and management, United Kingdom on the implications of poor quality teacher education on educational development in Nigeria undertaken by Andrew and Damian (2016) posits that, effective teacher education in all around development is as a result of compliment, qualified trained retrained teachers, adequate teaching and learning materials, availability of fund, e-library, and conducive environment just to mention but few. For any country to be proud of quality teacher education, these aforementioned machineries have to be in the right direction to meet the aspirations of the desire groups. This is in consonance with the national policy on education (FME, 2004) emphasizing the role of teacher in national development observed that ―no education system can rise above the equality of its teacher.

However, Ibrahim (2016), in her research work, the Contributions of Development Partners to Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme published in the Journal of Research & Method in Education, believed in her opinion that, no single stakeholder can provide adequate resources for the successful execution of UBE programme. Her view justify the need for public private partnership in providing funding for education hence the intervention from World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF and Japan's international Cooperation Agency (JICA) in various spheres of educational endeavours in Nigeria.

Osei, Otchere, Banunle and Dontwi (2017), published their work on the trend analysis of students' admission, enrolment and completion in most distance learning Postgraduate programmes in the journal of education and human development. The team of researchers analysed the trends of admission, enrolment and completion of some Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology – Institute of Distance Learning (KNUST–IDL) postgraduate programmers over 6 years, and the factors that affect candidates' delay in completion of programmers. Academic records review and questionnaire were used to gather data. Analysis of the data revealed that students' admission and enrolment were highest in 2011 with 1,669 and 1,370 students respectively and lowest in 2015 with 576 and 436 students respectively. Admission trends show a yearly increase in admission from 2009 to 2011 but a decrease from 2012 to 2015. Student enrolment showed a fluctuating trend between 2009 and 2015. Comparatively, completion in science programmers was lower than in humanity programmers. Candidates inability to graduate on time was as a result of factors such as household issues, financial constraints, thesis and examination related issues. It is recommended that (KNUST –IDL) should implement strategies in ensuring and increasing student enrolment and on time completion of programmes.

Theoretical Framework

There are different theories and models that could be adopted for this study among which are: Systems Theory by David Easton (1953), the Incremental model by Charles E. Lindblom (1950s) and Development theory. However for the purpose of this study, the system theory is adopted. The systems theory can explicitly showcase the aggregate underpinning elements that make up the component of the study. The justification for discarding Lindblom's Incremental theory is based on the fact that the theory is merely descriptive in nature than

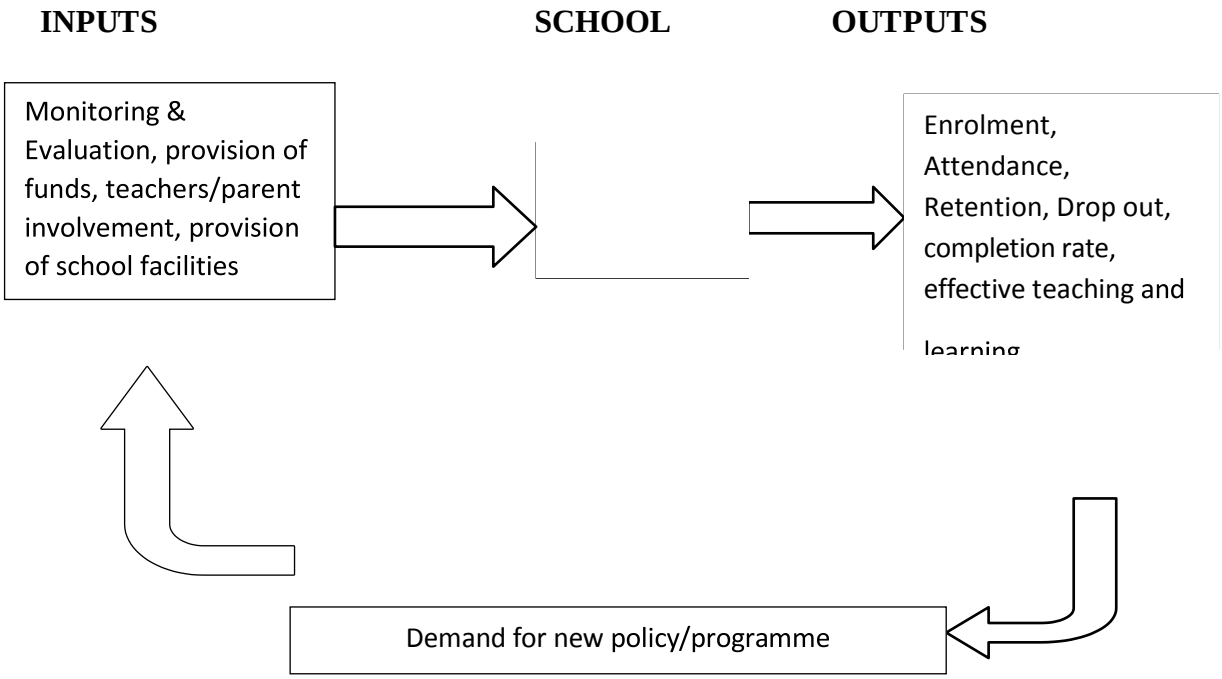
being concerned with the process and impact generated. Development theory is known for being too formalistic and highly procedural which question its applicability, while systems theory is chosen for the simple fact that the study is concern with outcome created.

According to Sharma and Sadhana (2006),—systems theory has been in use since 1950s. Easton (1953), conceives system as essentially an assemblage of subsystems interconnected and mutually interdependent to each other, so as to form a complex system. It explains relationships and not individuals. Elements that guide the understanding of the theory are: Parts, the parts must be related to the whole; and each part makes certain contributions towards the survival of the whole.

The last aspect is referred to as function. This means that, units, branches or departments do not work for the realization of their own personal interests but rather for the overall goal and objective of the organization. Lucey (1997), observes that, the systems approach is a framework, which helps us to analyze and explore the operation and interactions which exist in the system. Systems are composed mainly of three key activities which are inputs, process and outputs. Ezeani (2006), opines that an important element in the systems approach is the emphasis on input -output analysis.

In relation to human society, any named political system is made up of several sub-groups-economic, political, cultural, educational, social among others. These sub-groups performs different functions and it is a combination of these functions that keeps the entire system moving (Easton,1953).The workability of the theory starts from when the citizens make demand from the political system (government) for education. The justifications for such demand are that, no nation has ever developed without first developing her education system; and that, education helps in eradication of poverty and minimising the prevalence of diseases in the society. The government which is the conversion process will meet the demand through policies and programmes formulation, Universal Basic Education inclusive. The model according to Easton (1953) as quoted by Sanusi (2016), postulates that all political systems function within the context of political culture, which consist of traditions, values, and common knowledge. Furthermore, it holds that citizens invariably have expectations and place demands on the political system. But they also support the system in various ways. Therefore, the application of the systems theory in this study will be of immense benefit to us as it will enable us assess UBE as a system that takes in inputs from its environment and converts it into output diagrammatically illustrated below.

EASTON'S MODEL OF SYSTEM ANALYSIS



Source: Hagueand Harrop (1982)

The environment of UBE in this context refers to all the communities within Okpokwu local government area while the inputs are the teachers, pupils, finance and facilities which schools receives from the communities in both immediate and external environment. On the other hand, the outputs become the educational services which schools provides for the communities to include, improved quality of graduates, reducing the number of dropout, and effective teaching and learning. The resultant effect should be improvement in literacy level within the state.

However, the inability of the stakeholders to effectively and efficiently implement the programme has so far led to the demand for new approach to improving the quality of basic education delivery to the citizens. Any new demand is also expected to go through the process of government policies, programmes formulation or institutional reforms so a s to ensure quality Basic Education is provided in Nigeria.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. This design was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to gather data from a representative sample of the population in order to describe and analyze the effect of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme implementation on basic education development in Okpokwu Local Government Area.

Area of Study

Okpokwu Local Government Area (LGA) in Benue State was established in 1976. The Local Government spans an area of 731 square kilometers, with a mix of deciduous rainforest in the South and grassland Savannah in the North. According to the 2006 census, it has a population of approximately 176,647. Geographically, Okpokwu LGA shares boundaries with several other LGA's, Ohimini to the north, Ogbadibo to the west, Ado and Otukpo to the east, and it also borders Olamaboro LGA of Kogi State to the northwest and Isi-Uzo LGA of Enugu State to the

South. The local government is predominantly agrarian, with major crops including citrus fruits, guinea corn, maize, soya beans, millet, and cassava. Markets like Afor in Ugbokolo and Eke in Olegbocho drive economic activity.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised teachers, parents, and education officials involved in or affected by the UBE programme in Okpokwu LGA. These stakeholders were chosen due to their direct experiences with the implementation and outcomes of the UBE scheme.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of 120 respondents was selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure that different categories of stakeholders (teachers, parents, and officials) were proportionately represented. The sample included 60 teachers, 40 parents, and 20 education officials. However, a total of 110 questionnaires were retrieved and analyzed.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the selected respondents with the help of two trained research assistants. Respondents were given ample time to complete the questionnaires, and a 90% return rate was recorded.

Instruments for Data Collection

The primary instrument used for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire was developed to elicit responses on the level of Universal Basic Education (UBE) implementation and its effects on basic education outcomes in the study area. It was divided into two sections: Section A: Sought demographic information of respondents such as gender, age, occupation, and qualification. Section B: Contained items on the extent of implementation of UBE components including funding, infrastructure, teaching personnel, monitoring, enrolment rates, and community involvement. The questionnaire items were close-ended.

Validation of Instrument

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, both face and content validation were carried out. The initial draft of the instrument was submitted to three experts in the fields of Educational Administration, Measurement and Evaluation, and Curriculum Studies at a Nigerian university. These experts assessed the instrument for relevance, clarity, appropriateness of language, and alignment with the study objectives. Their suggestions led to modifications in the wording and arrangement of some items to improve clarity and ensure that the instrument adequately measured what it was intended to measure.

Reliability Check

The reliability of the questionnaire was determined through a pilot study conducted with 15 respondents (teachers and education officials) in a neighboring local government area with similar educational characteristics as Okpokwu LGA.

Ethical Considerations

This refers to the principles, and guidelines that the researchers follow to ensure their study is conducted in a morally responsible and respectful manner by protecting the rights, dignity, and welfare of participants. The researcher ensured that the research process was fair, transparent,

and confidential and did not in any way compromise the participants involved. In other words, this research adhered strictly to ethical principles guiding the conduct of social research.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. These methods helped in interpreting the extent to which the UBE programme has impacted the development of basic education in the area.

Results and Analysis

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic information of respondents

Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Male	58	53
Female	52	47
Total	110	100
Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
18-25	16	15
26-35	26	24
36-45	40	36
46 and above	28	25
Total	110	100
Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Student	14	13
Teacher	42	38
Parents	30	27
Education Official	24	22
Total	110	100
Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
SSCE	16	15
NCE/OND	34	31
HND/BSc/BA	42	38
Postgraduate	18	16
Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 above sought to find out the demographic information of respondents. Data from the table reveals that 58 respondents (53%) were males while 52 respondents (47%) were females. This implies that both genders are adequately and fairly represented. On the age of respondents, 16 (15%) were between the ages of 18 – 25, 26 (24%) fell within the age bracket of 26 – 35, 40 respondents representing 36% were between the age grade of 36 – 45 and 28 (25%) were between the age limit of 46 and above. Also, on the occupation of respondents, 14 (13%) were students, 42 respondents representing 38% are teachers, 30 (27%) are parents and the remaining 24 (22%) are educational officials. This implies that the stakeholders were fairly represented. Lastly, 16 respondents (15%) attended secondary school, 34 (31%) have either NCE or OND, 42 (38%) are either HND holders or Degree holders and 18 respondents representing (16%) have Postgraduate Degrees. This implies that the respondents are literate enough to respond to the questionnaire adequately.

Table 2: Teachers and pupils have adequate awareness of the UBE Programme.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	60	55
Agree	40	36
Strongly disagree	6	5
Disagree	4	4
Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Tabel 2 present responses on the awareness of the UBE programme among teachers and pupils in Okpokwu LGA. A significant majority of respondents indicated a high level of awareness, with 60 respondents strongly agreeing (55%) and 40 agreeing (36%) that they are aware of the programme. Conversely, a smaller proportion either disagreed (4%) or strongly disagreed (5%) with the above statement. These findings suggest a positive level of awareness of the UBE programme among the surveyed population.

Table 3: UBE is effectively implemented in schools within Okpokwu LGA

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	8	7
Agree	4	4
Strongly disagree	62	56
Disagree	36	33
Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 outlines responses on the effective implementation of UBE Programme in schools within Okpokwu LGA. A notable proportion of respondents indicated negative views towards the implementation of UBE programme, with 62 respondents strongly disagreeing (56%) and 36 disagreeing (33%) that there is poor implementation of UBE programme in Okpokwu LGA. In constrast, a smaller number either strongly agreed (7%) or agreed (4%) that the implementation of UBE programme is effective. These findings highlight a perceived lack of adequate implementation due to insufficient learning materials, shortage of qualified teachers and a weak monitoring framework.

Table 4: Pupil enrollment has increased due to UBE Programme

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	26	24
Agree	16	15
Strongly disagree	40	36
Disagree	28	25
Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 provides insight into respondent's opinions on whether pupil enrollment has increased due to UBE programme. Majority of respondents indicated disagreement with this statement, with 40 respondents strongly disagreeing (36%) and 28 disagreeing (25%). Notably, 26 respondents strongly agreed (24%) with the statement, and 16 respondents agreed (15%). These findings reveals a significant concern among the surveyed population regarding pupil

enrollment because pupils enrollment increased from the inception of the UBE programme but with time, the retention rate has reduced drastically due to high intake into private schools as a result of unqualified teachers, poor remuneration of teachers and lack of proper monitoring particularly in the rural areas. The findings reveal the critical need for targeted approach by government on the need for teacher-training and enhancement of teacher-welfare in the rural areas.

Table 5: UBE has improved the quality of teaching in public schools.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	17	15
Agree	11	10
Strongly disagree	46	42
Disagree	36	33
Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 examines respondent's perceptions on whether UBE has improved the quality of teaching in public schools. The data indicates that majority of respondents are of the opinion that UBE has not improved the quality of teaching. Specifically, 46 respondents strongly disagree (42%), and 36 disagree (33%) with the statement. Conversely, a smaller proportion of respondents either strongly agree (15%) or agree (10%) with the statement. These responses highlight the lack of qualified teachers thereby limiting the quality of education provided particularly in the rural areas. The high percentages of disagreement underscores the critical need to enhance training of teachers in order to fill the existing shortage of qualified teachers.

Table 6: Learning materials are adequately provided through UBE.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	6	5
Agree	4	4
Strongly disagree	58	53
Disagree	42	38
Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 6 explores respondent's views on whether learning material are adequately provided through UBE. Majority of the respondents indicated disagreement with the statement, with 58 respondents strongly disagreeing (53%) and 42 disagreeing (38%) that learning materials are not adequately provided. On the other hand, only 6 respondents constituting (5%) strongly agree with the statement, and the remaining 4 respondents agree (4%). These findings reveal a general lack of satisfaction in the provision of learning materials by UBE due to corruption and the lack of adequate funding of the UBE programme.

Table 7: Lack of funding affects UBE implementation in Okpokwu LGA.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	68	62
Agree	30	27
Strongly disagree	8	7
Disagree	4	4

Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 7 presents respondents opinions on whether lack of funding affects UBE implementation in Okpokwu LGA. The study reveals that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the lack of funding affects UBE implementation, with 68 respondents strongly agreeing (62%) with the statement and 30 respondents agreeing (27%). Conversely, a smaller proportion either strongly disagreed (7%) or disagreed (4%) with the statement. These findings suggest that lack of adequate funding of the UBE programmes is responsible for the poor infrastructure in public schools, insufficient learning materials and shortage of qualified teachers that will enhance learning outcomes.

Table 8: I am satisfied with the impact of the UBE programme in my community.

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Strongly agree	7	6
Agree	4	4
Strongly disagree	61	55
Disagree	38	35
Total	110	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 8 presents responses on the satisfaction with the impact of the UBE programme in my community. A significant majority of respondents indicated a high level of dissatisfaction, with 61 respondents strongly disagreeing (55%) and 38 respondents disagreeing (35%) with the statement. However, a small number of 7 respondent strongly agreeing (6%) with the statement, and the remaining 4 respondents constituting (4%) agreeing. These findings reveals that an overwhelming majority of the respondents are not satisfied with the impact of the UBE programme in their communities. At inception, the UBE programme contributed positively to increased school enrollment and awareness of the importance of basic education. However, inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, insufficient learning materials, shortage of qualified teachers, weak monitoring framework as well as limited community and parental involvement further hinders the programmes effectiveness.

Summary of Findings

The following major findings were made in the course of this study:

1. There has been an increase in pupil enrollment since the inception of the UBE programme; due to the provision of compulsory, free, and universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school age as contained in the UBE policy document. However, pupil retention rates remain a challenge due to lack of qualified teachers and inadequate funding.

2. To ensure effective implementation of the UBE curriculum, the National Policy on Education states that government shall provide basic infrastructure such as school libraries, health services, laboratories, classrooms amongst others, however, many schools still operate with inadequate infrastructure, including insufficient classrooms, poor sanitation, lack of libraries, and limited learning materials.

3. The number of qualified teachers in UBE schools is inadequate, and many teachers lack access to continuous professional development programmes. This is contrary to the pivotal role of quality teachers for the provision of quality education at all levels.
4. Funding for the UBE programme in Okpokwu LGA is irregular and insufficient, affecting the provision of necessary facilities and resources for effective teaching and learning.
5. Parental and community involvement in school management and UBE activities is generally low, limiting the sustainability of programme initiatives.
6. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are weak, with little follow-up to ensure that UBE policies and projects are properly executed.

Conclusion

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme was established to provide free, compulsory, and quality basic education to all Nigerian children. However, findings from this research reveal that while the UBE programme has made some positive impact at inception in Okpokwu Local Government Area, particularly in increasing enrollment and raising awareness of the importance of basic education, however, several challenges continue to hinder its full implementation and effectiveness.

Infrastructural decay, inadequate funding, shortage of qualified teachers, weak monitoring systems, and low community involvement are among the major barriers identified. These challenges affect not only access to basic education but also its quality and sustainability. For the UBE programme to achieve its intended objectives in Okpokwu and similar rural areas, it is imperative for stakeholders — including government, community members, and NGOs — to work collaboratively in addressing these challenges. Only through sustained investment, effective policy implementation, and active community participation can the goals of the UBE programme be fully realized and the future of Nigerian children secured.

Recommendations

1. Increase Funding and Ensure Timely Disbursement

Government at all levels should increase budgetary allocations for basic education and ensure timely release of funds to support infrastructure, learning materials, and teacher training.

2. Improve School Infrastructure and Learning Resources

There is a need for the construction and renovation of classrooms, provision of desks, books, ICT tools, and other essential teaching aids to create a conducive learning environment.

3. Recruit and Train Qualified Teachers

The government should recruit more qualified teachers and organize regular in-service training and workshops to improve their teaching skills and competence.

4. Enhance Teacher Motivation

Incentives such as prompt payment of salaries, rural allowances, promotion opportunities, and housing support should be provided to motivate teachers.

5. Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular supervision and monitoring of UBE projects should be conducted to ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance with standards.

6. Promote Community and Parental Involvement

Community leaders and parents should be sensitized and actively involved in planning and implementing educational programmes to enhance ownership and sustainability.

7. Ensure Transparency and Curb Corruption

Strict mechanisms should be put in place to check mismanagement and corruption in the execution of UBE-related projects, including public audits and whistleblower protection.

8. Address Socio-Cultural Barriers

Awareness campaigns should be conducted to discourage early marriage, child labor, and other practices that hinder children from attending school. Social support schemes such as school feeding and scholarships can also help.

REFERENCES

Aboluwodi, A. (2015). *Political Will and Strategic Planning in the Implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria: The Obafemi Awolowo Example. Journal of Education and Research*,15(1) 23-31.

Ajayi, & Afolabi, (2020). Investment in Education for the Nigerian Economic Development.

Akpokiniovo, S.R (2022). Effects of Self-Instruction and Guided Inquiry Teaching Strategies on Secondary School Physics Students' Achievement. *Rivers State University Journal of Education* (RSUJOE). 25 (1), 156-165

Ambe, B.A., Agbor, C.E. & Eyo, E. O. (2018). Extent of Provision of Infrastructure and Instructional Material for the Universal Basic Education Curriculum in Schools of Cross River State. Nigeria. *International Journal of Contemporary Social Science Education*. 1(1), 86-96.

Andrew, A.O. and Damian, O. M.(2016).*The implications of poor quality teacher Education on educational development in Nigeria. International journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, United Kingdom.

Article 26 of the UN Charter. 1948: *Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice*: San Francisco, 1945.

Ashiru, A.O. (2015). *Impact Assessment of the Universal Basic Education Policy onSchoolEnrolmentinSelectedLocalGovernmentAreasofKwaraState.PublicPolicyandAdministrationResearchjournal*,5(1), 43-49.

Dike, V.W. (2000). School Library Required for Successful Implementation of the Universal Basic Education in Nigeria paper presented at the 16th Annual Conference of the Nigerian School Library Association, at the Children's Centre Library. UNN, 23 – 26 October.

Easton, D. (1965) *A system analysis of Political life*: Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ezeani, E. O. (2006) *Fundamentals of Public Administration.* Enugu: Snaap Press Ltd.

Fabunmi M. (2004). The Relevance of Universal Basic Education to National Development. A Planner's Perspective. In Fagbamiye E. O. etal (Eds) *Management of Primary and Secondary Education in Nigeria* (pp351-360). Ibadan: Awmark Industrial Printers.

Federal Ministry of Education (FME). (2004). *Implementation Guidelines for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.

Federal Ministry of Education (FME). (2000). *Implementation Guideline for Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme,* Abuja: Federal Ministry of Education.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN). (2014). National Policy on Education, Lagos: NERDC Press.

Hague, R. & Harrop M. (1982). *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*. 6th Education.

Ibrahim, F. (2016).*Contributions of Development Partners to Universal Basic Education Programme. Journal of Research &Method in Education*, Volume 6, Issue 3Ver.IV.

Lindblom, C .E. (1950). *Union and Capitalism Publication*: New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lucey, T. (1997). *Management Information System* (8th Edition) Lreffs Education, Aldikine Place, London.

Nation Policy on Education (NPE) (2014) Revised.

Oladele, B.K. & Oralu, T. (2015). The management and Funding of Education in Nigeria. World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology International 124 *Journal of Social, Behavioral, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering,* 9(7) 53 - 61.

Osei, C.K, Otchere, K.G, Banunle, A and Dontwi, I.K (2017). Trend Analysis of Students" Admission, Enrolment and Completion in KNUST Distance Learning Postgraduate Programmes. *A journal of Education and Human Development, Institute of Distance Learning Kwame Nkurmah University of Science and Technology*. Ghana: Kumasi.

Sharma, M. P. & Saldana, B. L (2006). *Public Administration in Theory and Practice*. Published by Kitab Mashal, 22, Sarojini Waidu Marg, Allahabad.

Sanusi, L.S. (2016). *Nigeria, Research for a Growth Mode*.(Speech Naira Metric).

UNESCO, (2005). *Establishing State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEB) in Nigeria: A Guide*. UNESCO Abuja Office.

Yahaya A. O. (2015). Impact of Competition on the Financial performance of Listed Deposit Money Banks in Nigeria: *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*. 6(18), 55 - 67.