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International Digital Organization for Scientific Research
IDOSR JOURNAL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES 3(1): 47-56, 2018.

ISSN: 2579-0773

Effect of the Universal Basic Education Policy on the Quality of Teachers and Teaching in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the “Effect of Universal Basic Education Policy on the quality of teachers and teaching, in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The objective of the study was to determine how UBE Programme enhanced the quality and quantity of teachers and teaching in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. The researcher adopted the systems and the Juran quality theories which emphasize how education increases the productivity and efficiency of people. Cross Sectional Survey research design was adopted. The population of the study comprised all the 291 Principals of the 291 Secondary Schools in the six education Zones of Enugu State. The sample size of 236 was obtained using simple random sampling technique. The major data for the study were gathered through structured questionnaire. Chi-square test statistic was used to test the hypothesis formulated. The study revealed that UBE Policy has increased the quality of school infrastructure in Enugu State. The study recommended allocation of more funds to teachers training and provision of educational facilities in secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Universal Basic Education, Quality of Teachers and Teaching, Junior Secondary School.

INTRODUCTION

The development of any nation depends to a very large extent on the quality of its educational system, which hinges and is dependent on the quality of its teachers. For any nation therefore, to attain its set educational policies and goals the quality of its teaching staff and their output (teaching) is paramount. It is the pivot upon which the implementation of its educational policy guidelines is based. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria [1] in her National Policy on

Education, “No education system can rise above the level of its teachers. Teachers factor are considered the most outstanding implementation device employed by the operators of the Universal Basic Education.

Teacher`s development was regarded as a core point of basic education in Nigeria. This gave rise to the introduction of the on-going Pivotal Teacher Training programme (PTTP). The programme which is being executed by the National

Teacher's Institute (NTI) through its Distance Learning System (DLS) took off in August, 2000.

The implementation scheme of UBE clearly states that Teachers will always be an integral part of the process [2]. Under UBE availability of teacher in both quality and quantity is very important. This is because the quality of teachers determines the quality of teaching and learning. The important of teachers in the educative process are central to UBE [3]. In third world countries, like Nigeria there are no substitutes for teachers-role in education process unlike advanced countries, where there are teaching machines with programmed instructions. To further buttress the need for teachers in the school system, [2], noted that teachers are the main determinants of quality Education: if they are apathetic, uncommitted, uninspired, lazy, unmotivated, immoral, and anti-social, the whole nation is doomed: if they are ignorant, they are not only useless but also dangerous.

The survival and success of UBE policy lies in among other things, the provision of the right calibre of teaching staff in the school. Such teachers should equally be trained, retrained and motivated to ensure effective delivery of instruction. The extent to which this is within one educational system is worrisome to the researcher.

A teacher is the King-pin, the hallmark and the hub up which the educational system revolves. The teacher according to [1], constitutes the most vital factor in the educational system because it is upon the numerical strength, quality and commitment to duty

That the effectiveness of any education system is achieved. The nature of the teachers job and her privileged position to relate with learners has a serious and lasting impact on the nation. That is to say that good teaching in schools can keep the society in a better shape socially, politically, religiously and economically. It is therefore very necessary for a nation to have qualified teachers who possess the skills, techniques, and knowledge for the achievement of all these, as one can only give what he or she has. This is the crux of this study which is aimed at investigating the effect of the Universal Basic Education policy on the quality of teachers and teaching in Junior Secondary Shools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Research Question

The following research questions were raised to guide this study.

1. To what extent does the Universal Basic Education policy affect the quality of teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent does Universal Basic Education affect the quality of teaching in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at .05 level of confidence.

Ho₁ Universal Basic Education has no effect in the quality of teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State

Ho₂ Universal Basic Education has no effect in the quality of teaching in Junior Secondary School in Enugu State.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the system theory of Ludwig and Von Bertalanffy and the Juran Quality

theory. Beneath is an in-depth explanation of the theories and how they are related to the present study.

System Theory

This study is also based on the system theory postulated by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy. It has influence in much other discipline. Most especially in the application of sociology system theory propounded by Niklas Luhmann. According to [4], every educational institution is a dynamic system and must be seen in its own uniqueness and totality for management. In order to look into the aspect of quality of secondary school education, it is pertinent to understand the systems approach to education. Systems theory is an interdisciplinary theory about the nature complex systems in nature, society, and science, and is a

framework by which one can investigate and/or describe any group of objects that work together to produce some result. This could be a single organism, any organization or society, or any electro-mechanical or informational artifact. As a technical and general academic area of study it predominantly refers to the science of systems that resulted from Bertalanffy's General System Theory (GST), among others, in initiating what became a project of systems research and practice. Systems theoretical approaches were later appropriated in other fields, such as in the structural functionalist sociology of Talcott Parsons and NiklasLuhmann.

A system is an organized, unitary whole composed of two or more interdependent parts (sub-system). The chief proponent of system theory was Von Bertalanffy and it was propounded in the year 1950. The systems' theory states that the school is made up of a set of distinguishable but interrelated and interdependent parts operating in a logical manner to achieve a goal. The theory argues that a system is viewed as a whole where changes in one part of the system affect the other parts and the entire system. The propounder argued that the whole is not just a sum total of the sub-systems, but a holistic representation of the characteristics, what the whole can do, the sub-system cannot. The systems theory provides a unified focus to organizational efforts. School

managers (principals) are alerted against analyzing educational problems in isolation, but encouraged to develop the ability for integrated thinking. The basic postulate of systems theory has it that as sub-systems are integrated as a whole and interrelated with each other, the position and function of each sub-system can be analyzed only in relation to other sub-systems and to the organization as a whole rather than in isolation. The school organization is not only an open system but it is a one that perceives opportunities or threats from the outer environment and reacts appropriately towards the same. A system may be open or closed, an open system is related to and exchanges matter with its environment. This theory forms a base for this study in the sense that the educational institutions exhibit the behavior of an open system which has an environment that inputs some form of energy to the system, which undergoes transformation to give some outputs into the environment. This implies that the educational institutions (secondary schools inclusive) have an input sub-system, a transformation sub-system and an output system. Therefore, for secondary education to achieve its set goals, quality has to be maintained at the various sub-systems that make up the system, starting from the educational; inputs (teachers, students, instructional facilities), process (Teaching leaning

process, motivation, supervision), content (curriculum) and output (graduates). This is in relation to ensuring quality in secondary education; the quality of teachers, supervision by principal, motivation among others will invariably affects the other sub-systems and the entire secondary educational system as a whole as they are interrelated and interdependent of each other such that what affects one affects the other.

Juran Quality Theory

Joseph Juran was the proponent of Juran quality theory developed in 1988. The theory states that to ensure quality of product in any organization is the responsibility of the management and should be responsible for the production of poor quality products. Juran defined quality as fitness for purpose. According to him, a product or service can meet its specifications and yet not be fit for its purpose. The specification according to him may be faulty and thus the specification should be what the customers want. He further maintained that poor quality is the result of the failure of the management as he stated that 85 percent of the problems in an organization are due to system failure and the remaining 15 percent due to individual workers [5]. [5] maintained that teamwork is the secret of quality management. He further maintained that there are no shortcuts to quality and he is skeptical of organizations that rush into

applying quality circles. Juran's quality trilogy emphasizes the roles of; quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement. The purpose for quality planning is to provide operators with the ability to produce goods and services that can meet customers' needs. In the quality planning stage, an organization must determine who the customers are and what they need, develop the product or service features that meet customers' needs, develop processes which are able to deliver these products and services and transfer the plans to the operating forces. Juran further maintained that if quality planning is deficient, then chronic waste occurs.

Juran also stated that quality control is used to prevent things from getting worse. Quality control is the inspection part of the quality trilogy, where operators compare actual performance with plans and resolve the differences. Chronic waste he maintained here should be considered as opportunity for quality improvement. The third element of the trilogy, quality improvement encompasses improvement of fitness-for-use and error reduction, seeks a new level of performance that is superior to any previous level, and is attained by applying breakthrough thinking.

Quality planning therefore is what the educational organization should be doing. It is normal for the individual secondary schools to focus their efforts on quality

assurance via employing strategies of control. The educational institution in line with Juran's quality trilogy employs activities of supervision and inspection to determine deviations from achieving quality standards [3]. The educational institutions also embark on quality improvement and make it an integral part of daily work for individuals and teams. Juran's quality trilogy is also integrated into school's planning activities such as strategic plans; teaching-learning process, evaluation of students learning experience among others. The theory also view the management (secondary school principals) as those in charge of ensuring that quality education is maintained in their schools and thus should be responsible if the reverse becomes the case by their failure to adopt some strategies towards quality assurance and this will provide a hinge for this study.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study involved a cross sectional survey research design. Cross sectional design, involves the collection of data from a sample of 236 secondary schools in all the 6 education zones of Enugu State.

Sources and Method of Data Collection

Two sources of data collection were used for this study. They are primary and secondary sources.

Primary Sources: The primary data in this study were gathered through in depth interview and structured questionnaires administered on the principals of the selected secondary schools in Enugu State.

Secondary Sources: The study collected data from secondary source such Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination (JSSCE) result records, UNICEF child friendly school model, journals, Government Publication, newspapers and internet materials which are relevant and related to the study.

Population of the Study

The population for the study consists of all the 291 Principals from all the 291 secondary schools in all the six (6) education Zones of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Sampling and Sampling Procedure

The researchers used simple random sampling to select 236 principals from the 291 public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Validity of the Instrument

In this study, in order to ensure the validity of the instrument, the researchers applied content and face validation. The instrument was validated by three experts from Enugu State University of Science and Technology- one each from Public Administration, Measurement and Evaluation and Educational Management. The validators were requested to validate the instrument in terms of, clarity of instruction to the research subjects,

proper wording of the items, appropriateness and adequacy of the items in addressing the purpose and problems of the study, grammatical adequacy and relevance of the items.

To do this, the researchers gave the validators the purpose of the study, the research question and research hypothesis formulated to guide the study. After their constructive criticism, the researcher modified the instrument in line with their input.

Reliability of the Instrument

The researcher used the test-retest validity estimate to ascertain the reliability coefficient of the instrument. This the researcher did by conducting a pilot study using 10 principals of Junior Secondary Schools in Ebonyi State. This served as a similar population for the study. This exercise was repeated after an interval of two weeks. The scores obtained were analyzed using spearman correlation reliability estimate and coefficient of .74 was obtained. After evaluating the data collected from the second retest result, the researcher compared the first result with the second result. It was discovered that all of them showed consistency and therefore were reliable.

Method of Data Analysis

The researchers relied on qualitative description analysis. This entails extracting meaning and making logical deductions from the already documented

mass of data. According to Asika (2006) qualitative descriptive analysis basically summarizes the information generated in the research work: so that appropriate analytical methods could be used to further discover relationships among the variables. This method of data analysis is fundamentally the application of qualitative research technique in the thorough examination and interpretation of research data.

Through the qualitative technique of data analysis, descriptive explanation was given to the data gathered during the

study. The use of this method is premised on the simplicity with which it reduces, unravels and interprets relationship implicit in a given data by giving a qualitative explanation to the variable under study. Figures and tables were also used to reinforce the researcher's findings.

Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

The data obtained from the questionnaire were subjected to Chi-Square (X²) quantitative analysis. The findings and discussion were presented according to research hypotheses as follows.

Research Hypothesis 1

UBE policy has no effect on the quality of teachers in Junior Secondary schools in Enugu State.

Options	Observed	Expected	Residual	Chi-square X ²	Decision
Strongly Agree	190	58.5	131.5	295.59	True
Agree	38	58.5	-20.5	7.18	-
Disagree	2	58.5	-56.5	54.56	-
Strongly Disagree	4	58.5	-54.5	50.77	-
Total	234			408.1	

Source: Field survey 2017

Decision Rule: Chi-square (X²) calculated 408.1 is >Chi-square (X²) tabulated 7.815. Thus, the Chi-square (X²) indicated that hypothesis 1 which states that UBE policy has not added value to the quality of teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State is rejected.

Deducing from the research result above, 228 (97%) of the respondents agreed with

our hypothesis i that stated that UBE policy effected to the quality of teachers in Junior Secondary School in Enugu State. 6 (3%) of the respondents however disagreed. This is in agreement with the UBE policy which earlier stated that the policy had federal teachers scheme for basic education. Through the scheme teachers were trained and pay allowance

for two years after which the state government recruit them as permanent staff [2].

The federal government introduced the federal teachers' scheme in 2006 following the recognition of the government that teachers are more important human resources in UBE implementation, since they are the one who adopt and implement the idea and aspirations of the UBE designers. This implies that sufficient supply competent and trained teachers are need.

The declaration of free and compulsory primary and secondary education in Enugu State led to phenomenal increase in enrolment that the number of teachers becomes inadequate to match the

increase in enrolment [3]. Before the introduction of UBE policy in Enugu State, teacher: students ratio is seen to be 1:58, over load when compared with the average 1:35.45 that should be the normal teacher-student ratio [4]. [3] that Enugu State secondary schools now maintain 1:32 which is normal teacher-students ratio.

Furthermore, UBE policy have enhanced the quality of teachers in secondary schools in Enugu State. The number of teachers with Degree and Post Graduate Degree has increased and the state seems to be moving forwards achieving a goal of having the Degree as a minimum qualification for teaching in the secondary schools in the state [3].

Research Hypothesis 2

UBE Policy has no effect on the Quality of Teaching in Junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State

Options	Observed	Expected	Residuals	Chi-square X ²	Decision
Strongly Agree	81	58.5	22.5	8.65	
Agree	109	58.5	50.5	43.59	True
Disagree	29	58.5	-29.5	14.87	-
Strongly Disagree	15	58.5	-43.5	32.34	-
Total	234			99.45	True

Source: Field survey 2017

Decision Rule: The Chi-square (X²) calculated 99.45 is > Chi-square (X²) tabulated 7.815. Thus hypothesis 2 which stated that there were no impacts of UBE on quality of teaching in Junior Secondary

schools in Enugu State is rejected. The findings above shows that 190 (81%) of the respondents agreed that there were impact of UBE on quality of teaching in Junior Secondary schools in Enugu State.

44 (19%) of respondents disagreed that there were no impact of UBE on quality of teaching in Junior Secondary schools in Enugu State .To transit from the 9th year of the basic education class to the Senior Secondary, the JSCE is conducted for candidates in third year of Junior Secondary school in Enugu State just like every other secondary schools across the country. This finding validates the result of JSCE in Enugu state which indicated an increase in the pass rate since the introduction of UBE in Enugu state. Between 2010 and 2014 average of 78.6% have passed six subjects and above

including English language and Mathematics in JSCE in Enugu State. (Enugu State Ministry of Education, 2014) [5]. This marked an increase in student's performance. The result of JSCE in Enugu state showed that students performed better in Arts subjects than science subjects, male students in Junior Secondary schools outperformed their female counterparts. It was recommended that students should be actively involved in the learning process and that the state government should provide opportunity to facilitate science instruction in schools in Enugu State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study after due consideration of the findings recommended as follows:

- i. More funds should be allocated to teachers training under UBE policy to ensure that more teachers benefitted from the Teachers Training Scheme.
- ii. More teachers need to be employed and posted to schools in

rural communities where their services are more needed.

- iii. Adequate resources need to be set aside for the proper motivation of teachers in the country. Teachers need their reward here on earth.
- iv. Teachers need to be promoted and paid all salaries and fringe benefits as at when due.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the Universal Basic Education has contributed to the quality of teachers in junior Secondary Schools in Enugu State, improved the quality of teaching in schools, enhanced the rate of school enrolment and also improved the performance of the students. Students are now enjoying improved environment that is conducive for teaching and learning. This have all translated to improved academic excellence on the side of the students.

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy is bringing about character and attitudinal change among teachers and students. It has helped to reshaped human potentials for desire development in Enugu State and Nigeria in general.

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