

Impact of Principals' Managerial Strategies on Universal Basic Education in Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of principals' managerial strategies on Universal Basic Education in Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State. The study was guided by two research objectives and questions, employing a descriptive survey research design. The population under consideration comprised 5,593 respondents, from which a random sample of 375 individuals was selected. Data collection was conducted through the utilization of a questionnaire. Analysis of the research questions was performed using mean and standard deviation. The study findings unveiled a significant impact of funding on the practical implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in junior secondary schools within Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State, among other discoveries. Based on the study's findings, several recommendations were proposed, including fostering synergy between government bodies and school authorities to ensure enhanced funding and adequate instructional materials to effectively implement the UBE program in the Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State.

Keywords: Managerial Strategies, Implementation of UBE Programme, Funding, Instructional Materials.

Introduction

Education is crucial in driving national development worldwide, catalyzing societal progress and equipping individuals with essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for personal and collective growth (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). The Universal Basic Education (UBE) program exemplifies Nigeria's commitment to making education accessible to all, irrespective of age, gender, or socio-economic status. Enacted as an educational reform initiative by the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the UBE program aims to provide free, compulsory, and universal nine-year education to all school-age children, with the overarching goal of addressing educational disparities and enhancing the quality of primary education delivery across the nation (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Spearheaded by former President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999, the UBE Act was signed into law in 2004, laying the groundwork for the program's effective implementation and signaling its formal initiation.

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) concept traces back to the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme, initially introduced in Nigeria in 1976. However, due to the

scheme's lack of success, it was revamped and reintroduced as the Universal Basic Education in 1999. The UBE framework embodies three key components: universality, primary education, and inclusivity, aiming to provide education to all, regardless of ethnicity, culture, or social class (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2000). The enactment of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act in 2004 formalized the implementation of the UBE scheme, establishing it as a legal framework directed at ensuring compulsory primary education for all Nigerians, with governmental and stakeholder support. The UBE Act also led to the establishment of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) to oversee the practical realization of the scheme's objectives, along with the creation of School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) to enhance local-level management and accountability (Arhedo et al., 2019). It is envisioned that the UBE program's implementation will contribute to the eradication of long-standing illiteracy challenges in the country, aligning with Nigeria's pursuit of Education for All (EFA) and the education-related Millennium Development Goals.

The objectives outlined in the implementation guidelines of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act encompass several vital areas: Cultivating a strong sense of awareness and enthusiasm for education, coupled with a robust commitment to its widespread promotion, providing free Universal Basic Education to every Nigerian child of school-going age, thereby ensuring equitable access to education, significantly reducing the incidence of dropout rates from the formal school system through enhanced relevance, quality, and efficiency of education delivery, addressing the educational needs of young individuals who have experienced interruptions in their schooling due to various circumstances, by employing suitable complementary approaches to essential education provision and promotion, and facilitating the acquisition of critical literacy, numeracy, manipulative, cumulative, and life skills, alongside the inculcation of ethical, moral, and civil values necessary for establishing a solid foundation for lifelong learning and holistic development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2000).

The effectiveness and success of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program hinge on efficient management practices. Responsibility for managing the UBE program lies with local, state, and federal government entities at the state and national levels. However, several challenges have hindered the program's effectiveness. Poor planning often results in delayed or inadequate implementation of educational policies, strategies, and procedures, undermining achieving set objectives. Additionally, insufficient funding, either due to delays in fund disbursement or inadequate budget allocations, poses a significant obstacle to meeting the financial needs of schools. The "Cart before the Horse Syndrome," as Wali (2017) described, exacerbates these challenges, where policy pronouncements precede proper planning, leading to flawed implementation. This syndrome has notably impeded the successful implementation of the UBE program in Nigeria.

Effective management strategies are imperative to overcome these challenges and ensure the successful implementation of the UBE program. Proper planning, organization, and coordination of human, material, and financial resources are essential. These strategies are

necessary for the realization of the UBE program's goals to be attainable. This study proposes that principals play a crucial role in advancing the UBE program through managerial strategies. These strategies include advocating for improved funding, ensuring the provision of adequate instructional materials, recruiting qualified teachers, enhancing infrastructure, and maintaining school facilities. By employing these strategies, principals can contribute significantly to the effective implementation of the UBE program and ultimately improve educational outcomes for Nigerian children.

Ezeaku (2013) provides valuable insight into management, defining it as utilizing physical and human resources effectively through cooperative efforts. This process encompasses various activities, including planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling, aimed at overseeing the day-to-day affairs of an organization, school, or business. In the education sector context, management assumes a critical role in executing executive duties and implementing school policies. This involves tasks such as procuring resources, recruiting teachers, managing finances, and working towards achieving the specific objectives of education. Effective management in education is essential for fostering an environment conducive to learning and ensuring the successful attainment of educational goals.

Expanding on Ezeaku's perspective, effective management in education involves the efficient utilization of resources, strategic decision-making, and leadership. According to Fullan (2014), successful educational management entails creating a shared vision, fostering a positive organizational culture, and empowering stakeholders to contribute to the school's mission. Moreover, effective educational management requires a strong focus on continuous improvement and innovation to adapt to evolving educational needs and challenges.

Furthermore, Mintzberg (2019) emphasizes the multifaceted nature of managerial roles, highlighting the importance of interpersonal, informational, and decisional activities in educational leadership. Effective school management necessitates building relationships, communicating effectively, and making informed decisions to drive organizational success. In summary, management in the education sector is a complex and multifaceted process involving the strategic utilization of resources, effective leadership, and decision-making. By embracing principles of effective management, educational institutions can create environments conducive to learning, enhance organizational effectiveness, and ultimately contribute to achieving academic objectives.

Improved funding is indispensable for the effective functioning of any educational program, as it directly impacts the quality of teaching and learning. Ogbonnaya (2015) emphasizes that adequate financial resources are essential for the survival and effectiveness of any educational system. Without sufficient funding, academic programs are at risk of failure. This is particularly true for secondary education, which requires significant public financing support as it forms the foundation level of the educational system. School principals are crucial in ensuring that teachers can readily access human and material resources, even if they need improvisation. Teachers rely on instructional materials to engage and motivate students, enhancing their academic performance. Akpakwu (2018) underscores that

teaching in the 21st century involves more than just teacher-student interactions; it encompasses a range of interrelated activities. Teaching with instructional materials involves organizing lesson content using appropriate methods and materials to facilitate student learning. Thus, the use of instructional materials not only improves teaching and learning experiences but also enhances students' understanding and academic performance.

Expanding on this perspective, Ezenwa (2020) argues that adequate funding enables schools to invest in modern teaching aids, such as multimedia resources and technology tools, which can significantly enhance the learning process. Moreover, Adeniran and Agbetuyi (2017) emphasize the importance of equitable distribution of funds to ensure that all.

Statement of the Problem

The practical implementation of primary education in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State, faces numerous challenges that hinder its success. These challenges include widespread dropout rates, inadequate learning facilities, such as classrooms and libraries, and insufficient instructional materials, resulting in substandard learning environments for students. Moreover, the employment of unqualified teachers further compounds the problem, compromising the quality of education delivered in Junior Secondary Schools in the region. Additionally, poor infrastructure maintenance exacerbates the situation, as schools need more facilities for effective teaching and learning. Given these obstacles, it is critical to investigate whether Principals' Managerial Strategies can positively influence the implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the impact of improved funding for effective implementation of the UBE Programme in Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state.
2. Identify instructional materials needed to effectively implement the UBE Programme in Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the impact of improved funding for the effective implementation of the UBE Programme in junior secondary schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state?

2. What instructional materials are needed to effectively implement the UBE Programme in junior secondary schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state?

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the impact of Principals' Managerial Strategies on Universal Basic Education in Junior Secondary Schools within Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state. The population of the study comprised 5,193 teachers from all public junior secondary schools in the zone above. There were 159 junior secondary schools identified in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone at the time of data collection. The sample consisted of 375 respondents, including principals and teachers, selected from 108 junior secondary schools in the area. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample size determination. Data were collected through a self-structured questionnaire titled "Impact of Principals' Managerial Strategies on Universal Basic Education Questionnaire (IPMSUBEQ)." The questionnaire was subjected to validation by three experts from the Departments of Measurement and Evaluation and Educational Foundations at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The instrument's reliability was assessed through a pilot study, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.72. The pilot study involved respondents from a school not included in the sampled schools for the main study. Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were computed to analyze the research questions. At the same time, hypotheses were tested using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) at a significance level of 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the impact of improved funding for the effective implementation of the UBE Programme in junior secondary schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state?

Table 1: Mean Analysis showing the impact of improved funding for effective implementation of the UBE Programme.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev.	Remark
1	Amounts have been allocated for the installation of internet access in schools.	43	62	79	175	2.34	.989	Agreed
2	Sufficient money is allocated to provide tables and chairs to improve efficient learning.	52	103	122	82	2.40	.109	Agreed
3	Because of the UBE program's substantial funding, the library is well-equipped.	78	99	99	84	2.48	.989	Agreed

4	There are enough classrooms because special monies are set out each year to develop new ones.	109	81	70	50	2.75	.957	Agreed
5	There is not enough money to give pupils free writing supplies, such as exercise books and biros, so they can study effectively.	158	92	66	48	2.98	1.07	Agreed

The above shows the respondents' response to the improved implementation of the UBE programme. The result showed that items 1 and 2 had a mean score of 2.50, while items 1,2,3,4,5 and showed a mean value at the benchmark of 2.50. Hence, respondents agreed that improved funding is significant for effectively implementing the UBE programme in Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state.

Research Question 2: How do instructional materials impact the effective implementation of the UBE programme in junior secondary schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state?

Table 2: Mean Analysis showing the impact of instructional material on effective implementation of the Universal Basic Education programme.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev.	Remark
1	All UBE students in the Kaduna North Senatorial Zone in the state of Kaduna receive complimentary uniforms.	40	94	102	54	2.7	9.46	Agreed
2	Some instructional materials are pertinent to improving the UBE program's effectiveness in teaching and learning.	63	139	104	54	2.69	.946	Agreed
3	Free writing supplies are given to the pupils in the Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state of UBE.	61	94	105	62	2.9	1.02	Agreed
4	Every classroom has a projector to properly present and illustrate the teachings so students learn the material.	30	96	98	136	2.83	.919	Agreed
5	Various forms are offered to clarify complex ideas and improve students' comprehension of each session.	63	154	71	72	2.58	.998	Agreed

The above table shows the respondents' responses to the impact of instructional material on the practical implementation of the UBE programme in junior secondary schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State. The result showed that all items had a mean score above 2.50. Hence, respondents think instructional materials are relatively low on effectively implementing the UBE programme in Junior Secondary Schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state.

Significant Findings of the Study

The summary of the significant findings of the study include:

- i. Improved funding significantly impacts the practical implementation of the UBE programme in junior secondary schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state.
- ii. Instructional materials impact the effective implementation of the UBE programme in junior secondary schools in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna state.

Discussion of Findings

The initial discovery underscores the substantial influence of managerial strategies on funding, which is crucial for effectively executing the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in junior secondary schools within Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State. These findings align with Onyubiko's (2012) conclusions, highlighting a significant correlation between managerial strategies and funding for effective UBE scheme implementation, as evidenced in Imo and Akwa Ibom States. Funding, as defined, encompasses the provision of financial resources essential for supporting programs or projects. Its significance in educational endeavours for facilitating growth and ensuring the smooth execution of educational policies cannot be overstated.

The subsequent finding emphasizes the notable impact of instructional materials on the planning strategies of principals and teachers, which is crucial for effectively implementing the UBE program in junior secondary schools within Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State. This finding corroborates Ezeaku's (2013) perspective, which suggested a need for a more significant influence on the utilization of instructional materials for program implementation in the Kogi State Dekina Education Zone. However, it underscores the expectation for teachers to leverage instructional materials to enhance student engagement and subsequently improve academic performance.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the Universal Basic Education policy, much like other educational policies, is meticulously drafted and clearly outlined. When adhered to meticulously, these policies can catalyze a significant enhancement in the quality of the Nigerian education sector and the achievement of the nation's educational objectives. However, the implementation stage of such policies often encounters numerous challenges. Despite these hurdles, the

Government, school principals, and other stakeholders persistently endeavour to enhance the quality of education across Nigeria. To ensure tangible improvements, measurable outcomes must accompany efforts. This necessitates the organization of training sessions and symposiums for school leaders and policymakers.

Dedicated budgetary allocations should be earmarked for the education sector, supplemented by special funds. Adequate planning for educational needs should encompass human and material resources, ensuring their provision is of sufficient quantity and quality. Moreover, the provision of school buildings and structures must be prioritized to accommodate the burgeoning student enrollment in public schools, fostering an environment conducive to learning.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been proposed:

- i. Federal Government, private individuals, communities, and other voluntary donors should continue to support the Universal Basic Education programme in Kaduna North Senatorial Zone, Kaduna State, and other states by planning and budgeting for funds for UBE schools, free-will donations, and community support.
- ii. Qualified teachers should be employed to teach in UBE schools and trained and re-trained regularly.
- iii. All teachers of the program should have sufficient instructional materials for teaching. This can be done by improvising and prudently managing the resources available.

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