

# ***THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES***

## **Influence of Environmental Factors on Effective Administration of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in North Central Nigeria**

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### **Abstract:**

*This study investigated the Influence of Environmental Factors on Effective Administration of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in North Central Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the influence of environmental factors on effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria; determine the extent of provision of infrastructural facilities and instructional materials, on effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The survey research design was employed for the study. The total population of the study was 124,363 teachers and head teachers, from 13349 primary schools in North Central Nigeria, 399 teachers constituted the study sample. Environmental Factors and Administration of UBE Questionnaire (EFAUBEQ) was used to collect data from respondents in the study area. Means and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions, while chi-square was employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that infrastructural facilities, and instructional materials, have significant influence on effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria. Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made among others, government and education authorities in particular should provide enough classrooms, resource centers in schools and should also ensure that these follow the standard specification to ensure academic activities in UBE schools in the study area, government and education authorities in particular should provide adequate instructional materials in UBE schools to ensure quality teaching in the study area, towards effective administration.*

**Keywords:** Environmental factors, administration, UBE programme

### **1. Introduction**

Education is today recognized all over the world as a potent means of achieving progress by an individual as well as the society as a whole. Consequently, all nations, both developed and developing strive to put in place education systems and programmes which are designed to enable them achieve their set goals. In fact, education is the key to the technological, socio-economic and political development of nations across the world. It is in view of this that contemporary world attention is now focused on education. It is generally believed that the world's largest economies, America, Britain, France, Japan and China are where they are today because of their sound and vibrant education systems. It is in realization of this fact that, the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended at least 26% of budgetary allocation of member nations to education sector.

Similarly, Ibh and Agbe (2009) point out that, it is known (at least in the developed world) that education determines, not only earnings capacity but also the very longevity of human life has relationship to education. They further

stress that in a society that appreciates educated class, those with good education tend to earn higher incomes, they are also in better positions to live better and healthy life. It is through education that individuals acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary for effective living.

The main goals of Nigeria which have been endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education, according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014) are: the building of a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a great and dynamic economy and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens. In order to achieve the stated goals, it is believed that education is the only instrument for national development, to this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development, and the interactions of persons and ideas are all aspects of education. Consequent upon this the policy stipulates that, every Nigerian child shall have a right to equal education opportunities irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities each according to his or her ability. Also, the policy adopts education as an instrument per excellence for effective national development. By this policy, government takes upon herself the cost of educating her citizens. In the same vein, Section 18, of 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended states that, government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that, there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels of education for all Nigerians and that, government shall promote science and technology, government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy, and to this end shall as and when practicable provide: free, compulsory and universal primary education; free university education and free adult literacy programme. (FRN, 1999).

In Nigeria, various Policies and programmes have been introduced by successive governments aimed at enhancing the growth and development of Education particularly at the primary and secondary school levels. One of such programmes is the Universal Basic Education which was established in 1999. The Universal Basic Education programme is intended and designed to make education accessible to Nigerian children at the levels of primary and junior secondary as well as nomadic and adult education for the vulnerable adult population.

Similarly, the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014), Section 3 defines Basic Education as a type of education comprising 6 years of primary education and 3 years of Junior Secondary school. The policy stipulates that the education shall be free and compulsory. And that, the scheme shall include adult and non-formal education programmes at primary and junior secondary school levels for both adult and out-of-school youths. The UBE has three main components, universal, basic and education. Universal here means the programme is for everyone irrespective of tribe, culture or race and class. The term basic depicts that which is a fundamental or essential thing that must be given. It is on this factor that every other thing rests. Without it, nothing may be achieved. It is the root for acquisition of any knowledge. Hence UBE can be seen as that type of education that every individual must have, it should not be a privilege but a right and it should be the sum total of an individual's experience, (Lapo-popoola, Bello & Atanda, 2009).

Again, with the onset of democratic governance in May 1999 and the reawakening of brighter educational and political vision for Nigeria, the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo adopted the proposed Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme which was formally launched on Sept. 30, 1999 with a view to educating all Nigerian citizens. According to Lapo-popoola, et al (2009) the concept of Universal Basic Education may not be a new idea totally. From all indications, the Universal Basic Education can be regarded as an offshoot of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme which was launched in the country in 1976. But, the scheme was abandoned mid-way probably because of poor funding, inadequate provision of instructional materials, dilapidated infrastructures, and poor motivation of teachers among others. But the fact that, the scheme had something to offer led to the re-introduction of the programme in another name and concept known as Universal Basic Education in 1999. The UBE is a policy reform measure the Federal Government of Nigeria aimed at rectifying distortions in the basic education. It is conceived to embrace formal education up to age 15, as well as adults and non-formal education including education of the marginalized groups within the Nigerian society.

As is applicable to all programmes of government, the UBE needs to be managed and administered according to the known best practices in order to achieve desired results. Education administration involves the right application of the principles of management in educational settings. These principles according to Ochai (2012) are represented in an acronym called POSDCORB (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting). Administration is sometimes seen as the everyday job of the school manager.

In a similar vein, Tyokyaa (2016) defines administration as that which has to do with the mobilization of adequate resources in order to maximize output. According to Tyokyaa, the resources include human, material and financial resources. The author stresses further that, administration connotes a sequence of coordinated events including planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling or leading in order to use available resources to achieve a desired outcome in the fastest and most efficient way. Olatunde (2015) defines administration as the harmonization of human and material resources in an institution of learning in order to achieve the stated educational objectives. In addition to the above, Abah and Odeh (2012) view administration as a social process concerned with identifying, maintaining, motivating, controlling and unifying formally and informally organized human and material resources within an integrated system designed specifically to achieve pre-determined objectives. They further stress that, administration has to do with getting things done with accomplishment of defined objectives.

The implications of the various definitions of administration stated above on Universal Basic Education are: the programme has to be well planned. Planning, according to Abah and Odeh (2012) is the process of deciding in advance, the method and process which an individual or group or an organization intends to follow in order to accomplish its outlined

objectives. Planning is a very crucial stage to top success or failure of organizational goals. Proper planning leads to very good decision and vice-versa. In our school system, the headteacher, the Ministry of Education, the State Universal Basic Education Board, all engage in major and minor plans and decisions from time to time regarding various aspects of Universal Basic Education programme.

Another vital component of administration which is essential for Universal Basic Education programme is coordination. This refers to the process of bringing related activities together. It also entails the careful arrangement of activities in order to obtain a smooth flow of work in the organization. It is well known that, the Universal Basic Education programme with its many different curricular, departments and other services require some top-level coordination.

Another administrative component essential for Universal Basic Education programme is organization. According to Abah and Odeh (2012), organization involves arranging the men, the task and the materials needed to put plans into operation. It also means the process of determining the activities to be performed in order to achieve the objectives of an institution. For Universal Basic Education programme to be properly implemented, it needs to be properly organized.

Similarly, staffing is also another administrative component that is vital or needed for the successful implementation of Universal Basic Education programme. This refers to both teaching and non-teaching staff who are needed to implement the programme.

This programme has laudable goals and objectives which according to Lapo-popola, et al (2009:36) include among others:

- Ensuring unfettered access to nine years of formal basic education;
- The provision of free, universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school-going age;
- Reducing drastically the incidence of dropout from the formal school system, through improved relevance, quality and efficiency and;
- Ensuring the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for laying a solid foundation for life-long learning

Laudable as these objectives are, they can hardly be realized if adequate funds are not provided for UBE programme to build infrastructures in schools, provide instructional materials in schools such as textbooks, flannel board and computers among others the programme cannot succeed as the success of the programme depends on these facilities (Tyokyaa & Kende; 2016). The authors stress the importance of sound policies on financing education generally. They list the important elements of a sound policy as manpower, materials, money, time and implementation strategies. It is evident that, Universal Basic Education programme in Nigeria is very expensive and needs adequate funds to succeed.

It is observed that, even though the programme has now existed for over eighteen years, there seems to be little or no impact felt, in terms of the goals and objectives set at its inception. This is evident from observation that teachers' performance as measured by pupils' academic achievement has not been very encouraging. The administration of Universal Basic Education programme seems to be inundated with various challenges. It is assumed that part of the problems of UBE administration emanate from environmental factors. Such factors might include; inadequate provision of infrastructural facilities and instructional materials. It has been observed that, the administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria is greatly affected by poor environmental factors described earlier which may result into failure of implementation programme. It is therefore imperative to undertake this study to identify and determine influence of environmental factors on the administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria.

Thus, the importance of environmental factors on the administration of educational programmes with particular reference to the UBE cannot be over-emphasized. Researches conducted by educationists, researchers and analysts including Adeyemi and Quadri (2012), and Musibau and Oluwarotimi (2011) among others reveal that environmental factors such as instructional materials and infrastructural facilities may have significant influence on effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme. Olayangu and Olusunde (2011) established that students taught with adequate teaching materials and under conducive environment perform better than their counterparts who are taught without teaching materials and in unconducive environment. Similarly findings by Adeyemi and Quadri (2012) reveal that high levels of students' academic performance may not be guaranteed where instructional space such as classrooms, libraries, technical workshops and laboratories are structurally defective. It is therefore instructive that the influence of environmental factors on the administration of Universal Basic Education should be empirically determined. It is in the light of this that, this study seeks to ascertain the specific influence of such environmental factors as infrastructural facilities and instructional materials on the administration of Universal Basic Education Programme in North Central Nigeria.

### *1.1. Statement of the Problem*

The implementation of any educational programme like the Universal Board Programme essentially requires mobilization and utilization of several facilities. Environmental factors such as infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, teacher motivation, supervision of instructions class-size, funding and even school location are supposedly foundational to effective implementation of educational programmes.

The Universal Basic Education Programme implementation in the North Central Nigeria seems not to be very successful. This could be the case when infrastructural facilities and instructional materials such as enough classrooms, laboratories,

computers, flannel boards are inadequate. This could affect teaching and learning in the study area and eventually lead to poor academic performance of pupils.

What could have been responsible for this scenario? Does it mean that environmental factors such as infrastructural facilities and instructional materials are not considered in the implementation of this programme? The researchers are therefore spurred to investigate the influence of these environmental factors on the implementation of UBE in North Central Nigeria.

### 1.2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of environmental factors on effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria. Specifically, the study intended to:

- Ascertain the influence of infrastructural facilities on effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria.
- Determine the influence of instructional materials on effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme.

### 1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

- How do infrastructural facilities influence effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria?
- How do instructional materials influence effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme?

### 1.4. Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Infrastructural facilities have no significant influence on effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria.
- Instructional materials have no significant influence on effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme.

## 2. Methodology

The study was conducted in public primary schools in the North Central Nigeria comprising the following states: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria, Abuja. The population of this study consisted of 124363 teachers from all the 13349 public primary school in the North Central Zone. A sample size of 399 respondents made up of teachers and headteachers was selected using Taro Yamene's formula for determining sample size. Teachers and Headteachers were chosen as respondents because they were knowledgeable about the variables under study and could supply useful information on the research instruments. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Environmental Factors and Administration of Universal Basic Education programme Questionnaire (EFAUBEQ). The instrument was a 14 item questionnaire structured on the 4 point rating scale with a response mode of Strongly Agree (S.A) – 4, Agree (A) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2, and Strongly Disagree (S.D) – 1.

The items on the questionnaire were based on the two research questions that guided the study. This scale was chosen because the flexibility of the scale renders it appropriate for measuring the variables of the study. In order to ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to face and content validity by three experts; one from Test and Measurement and two from Educational Administration and Planning from Federal University of Agriculture Makurdi in Benue State. The reliability of the instrument was trial tested on forty (40) respondents comprising twenty 20 teachers from two (2) public primary schools in Obudu Town and twenty teachers in two public primary schools in Ogoja Town, Cross-River State which are outside the study area and not part of sample for the main study and yielded an Alpha reliability co-efficient of 0.80. This indicate that the instrument was reliable. Three research assistants were trained and employed in the distribution of the questionnaire for collection of data. This was done to ensure that the entire copies of questionnaire were duly completed and returned.

## 3. Results

The results are presented on Tables 1 and 2 according to research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

### 3.1. Research Question 1

How do infrastructural facilities influence effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria?

Item No.	Item Description	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Decision
1	My school has no enough permanent classrooms to accommodate all the pupils in the school.	399	1.89	.30	LI
2	My office is not well furnished therefore I find it difficult to do my job	399	3.41	.68	HI
3	There is no resource centre in this school, this makes teaching/learning difficult	399	3.27	.91	HI
4	A well furnished staff room makes staff and students work better	399	3.34	.86	HI
5	Our classrooms are generally not well equipped and conducive for teaching and learning process.	399	3.10	1.00	HI
6	This school lack recreational facilities and places for conveniences, thereby making the school dirty	399	3.34	.98	HI
7	The buildings in this school are poorly structured and in a state of disrepair.	399	3.07	.90	HI
Cluster mean and Standard Deviation.			3.06	0.80	HI

*Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Respondents on Infrastructural Facilities and Administration of Universal Basic Education*

Table 1 showed the mean responses of respondents on items 1-7 as 1.89, 3.41, 3.27, 3.34, 3.10, 3.34, 3.07 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.30, 0.68, 0.91, 0.86, 1.00, 0.98 and 0.90. However, responses of respondents in item 1 indicated low influence of classrooms to accommodate all the pupils in the schools while for items 2-7, respondents indicated high influence of furniture, resource centers, furnished staff room, equipped and conducive classrooms, recreational facilities and poorly structured buildings have high influence on the administration of UBE programme. The cluster mean score of 3.06 with standard deviation of 0.80 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that infrastructural facilities have high influence on effective administration of Universal Basic Education Programme in North Central Nigeria.

### 3.2. Research Question Two

How do instructional materials influence effective administration of UBE programme?

Items No.	Item Description	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Decision
8	Under UBE programme, pupils are hardly taught with instructional materials, thereby making teaching/learning difficult.	399	3.34	.90	HI
9	Instructional materials facilitate teaching and learning.	399	3.14	.85	HI
10	There are obsolete instructional materials in this school.	399	3.25	.90	HI
11	This school has no library that is well stocked with up to date books for pupils and teachers use, thereby making teaching/learning difficult	399	3.47	.93	HI
12	My school has no functional laboratory for pupil's practicals.	399	3.37	.68	HI
13	Under UBE programme, Many schools are not supplied with computers for pupils/teachers use.	399	3.56	.68	HI
14	In this school teachers hardly make use of improvised materials.	399	3.07	1.12	HI
Cluster mean and Standard Deviation.			3.31	0.86	HI

*Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Instructional Materials and Administration of UBE Programme*

Table 2 showed the mean scores and standard deviations of influence of instructional materials on administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria. Item by item analysis revealed that instructional materials had the mean scores for items 8-14 as 3.34, 3.14, 3.14, 3.25, 3.47, 3.37, 3.56 and 3.07 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.90, 0.85, 0.90, 0.93, 0.67, 0.68 and 1.12. From these results, it can be observed that, majority of the respondents agreed that instructional materials have high influence on the administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria. The cluster mean of 3.31 with standard deviation of 0.86 was also found to be above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that instructional materials have influence on effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria.

### 3.3. Hypotheses Testing

Data from respondents were computed to test the two hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using chi-square test. The results are presented on Tables 3 and 4 below;

#### 3.3.1. Hypothesis One

Infrastructural facilities have no significant influence on effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria.

Df	X <sup>2</sup>	P-value	Sign	Remarks
8	389.73	0.000	0.05	High influence

*Table 3 Chi-Square Test of Influence of Infrastructural Facilities on Effective Administration of UBE Programme*

Table 3 presented a summary of Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test on influence of infrastructural facilities on effective administration of UBE programme. The result showed that,  $df=8$ ,  $\chi^2$  value = 389.73,  $p=0.000$  at 0.05 level of significance. Since  $P_{value}$  is less than the significant value, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that infrastructural facilities have significant influence on effective administration of UBE programme.

#### 3.3.2. Hypothesis Two

Instructional materials have no significant influence on effective administration of UBE programme

df	X <sup>2</sup>	P-value	Sign	Remarks
8	148.96	0.000	0.05	High influence

*Table 4 Chi-Square Test of Influence of Instructional Materials on Effective Administration of UBE Programme*

Table 4 presented a summary of Chi-square test on influence of instructional materials on effective administration of UBE programme. The result revealed that,  $df=8$ ,  $\chi^2 = 148.96$ ,  $P_{value}= 0.000$ , sign value = 0.05. Since  $P$  is less than 0.05, the hypothesis of no significant influence is rejected. This means that, instructional materials have significant influence on effective administration of UBE programme.

## 4. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study are discussed in line with the research questions and hypotheses of the study. Two findings are made.

The first finding revealed that, there is significant influence of infrastructural facilities on effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria. This finding agrees with the findings of Apendah (2015) which indicated that a positive, supportive and culturally conscious school climate can significantly shape the degree of academic success experienced by students. Findings also revealed that infrastructural facilities play an undisputable role in the maintenance and promotion of teaching and learning in the school system and also enhance school/community relationship. This is in agreement with Odigwe and Eluwa (2013) who found that adequate school plant and healthy environment enhance teaching/learning process.

The second finding of this study is that instructional materials have significant influence on effective administration of UBE programme. This finding agrees with that by Tyavyar (2014) who found that instructional materials supply and utilization contribute significantly to teaching/learning process in primary schools. This finding conforms with the findings of Effiong and Igiri (2015) who found that instructional materials promote meaningful communication and effective learning, ensure better retention and above all stimulate and motivate students to learn.

## 5. Conclusion

The study investigated the influence of environmental factors on the effective administration of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in North Central Zone of Nigeria. The study showed that the respondents (teachers and head teachers) share the same views on the environmental issues that influence the effective administration of UBE programme in North Central Nigeria. Some of these common views are on infrastructural facilities and instructional materials. Based on the results of the study, it is therefore concluded that environmental factors of infrastructural facilities and instructional materials have significant influence on effective administration of Universal Basic Education programme in North Central Nigeria.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Federal and state governments and education authorities in particular should provide enough classroom buildings, quality staff rooms, resource centers in primary schools and should also ensure that these follow the standard specifications to enhance academic activities in UBE schools in the study area.
- Governments and education authorities should provide adequate instructional materials in primary schools to facilitate teaching/learning situation, and should also provide buildings for the storage of instructional materials so as to ensure the safety of those materials.

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