

RESEARCH
ARTICLE**Perceived Measures for Effective Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Primary and Junior Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria****Yusuf Suleiman**

Dr.

Department of Educational Management and Counselling, Faculty of Education,

Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State

Nigeria

Email: yusufsuleiman@alhikmah.edu.ng

**Festus Diamiruiye
Mrakpor**

Doctoral Student

School of Education, Unicaf University

Cyprus

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Abstract

Education is described as the key to unlock the golden door of freedom. One of the main reasons for the introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria is to provide free and compulsory basic education for every Nigerian child of school age. Despite the efforts of successive governments in Delta State to provide quality education, there is still a learning crisis because 551,709 children are out of school. The education deficit in the state was recently highlighted by the case of a primary pupil called Success Adegor, who was sent home because her parents could not pay the illegal school fee; additionally, the infrastructure and education in her school were both of poor quality. In unraveling the factors preventing the effective implementation of UBE, qualitative and quantitative research design approaches were employed. Five headmasters and ten principals were selected from three senatorial districts in Delta State using stratified, purposive, and convenience sampling techniques. An instrument called "Interview Protocol on Perceived Measures for Effective Implementation of UBE Programme" (IPPM EI) was used to gather relevant information. Additionally, secondary data was obtained from the Federal Ministry of Education's education indicators. Findings from the qualitative approach indicate that the objective of providing free and compulsory education for children in primary and junior secondary schools is yet to be fully achieved, and that there are many factors associated with

the implementation of the UBE programme. These factors include poor funding, inadequate infrastructure, poor maintenance culture, lack of adequate data, and poor remuneration for teachers. Additional findings from the quantitative approach revealed that classrooms are overcrowded, with too many pupils in each class. Specifically, in primary schools, there are 57 pupils per classroom, whilst in secondary schools, the figure is 52 pupils per classroom. There is also a decline in enrolment level; in public primary schools, the enrolment level is 2,346,112, while the student enrolment level in public junior secondary schools is 924,662. The completion rate is also a serious issue. The completion rate in public primary schools is 43.13% for males and 39.48% for females, while the completion rate in junior secondary schools is 42.74% for males and 35.83% for females. Furthermore, there are too few teachers in both primary schools and junior secondary schools. For instance, the total number of qualified primary school teachers is 7,930 while the number for junior secondary schools is 5,283. The number of unqualified teachers in primary schools is 1,377 while 6,059 are unqualified in junior secondary schools. Measures suggested for the effective implementation of the UBE programme include adequate collection of data, adequate funding, adequate infrastructure, adequate availability of teaching and learning materials, recruitment of qualified teachers, and improving teachers' welfare.

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Introduction

It is often said that education is critical to global development and human welfare in every society, and especially for Africa and indeed for Nigeria, given the state of our development. When delivered well, education promises young people employment, better earnings, good health, and a life without poverty. For communities, education spurs innovation, strengthens institutions, and fosters social cohesion. These benefits depend on learning, as schooling without learning is a wasted opportunity (World Bank Report, 2018). More than that, it is a great injustice: the children whom societies fail are the ones who are the most in need of a good education to succeed in life. It is on this premise that the Federal Government of Nigeria launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in September 1999 to provide compulsory, free, and universal basic education. It was also Nigeria's response to the achievement of Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The UBE programme, as a policy reform measure, aims to rectify distortions in the delivery of basic education (for primary and junior secondary schools) in the country as well as to provide basic education in the formal and non-formal sectors. The main thrust of the UBE programme is to lay the foundations for lifelong learning through the provision of effective learning, self-awareness, citizenship, and life skills. Specifically, the objectives of the programme include:

- (i) Developing a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion among the whole population.
- (ii) Provision of free, compulsory, universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school age.
- (iii) Drastically reducing the drop-out rates in the formal school system.
- (iv) Catering for the learning needs of young persons who for one reason or another, have had to interrupt their schooling. This is through appropriate forms of complimentary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education.

The UBE programme was established mainly to cater for primary and junior secondary schools in Nigeria. According to the National Policy on Education, Section 2 sub-section 18, primary education is the education given to children aged 6-12 years. Section 2 sub-section 19 states the following as objectives of primary education:

- (i) Inculcate permanent literacy skills, numeracy skills, and the ability to communicate effectively
- (ii) Lay a sound basis for scientific, critical and reflective thinking
- (iii) Promote patriotism, fairness, understanding, and national unity
- (iv) Instill social and moral norms and values in the child
- (v) Develop in the child the ability to adapt to the changing environment
- (vi) Provide opportunities for the child to develop life skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capability.

Section 2 sub-section 21 of the policy describes junior secondary education as the education which a child receives immediately after primary school. Section 2 sub-section 22 of the policy highlights the objectives of junior secondary education in Nigeria. They are:

- (i) Provide the child with diverse basic knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship and educational advancement
- (ii) Develop patriotic young people equipped to contribute to social development and to perform their civic responsibilities
- (iii) Inculcate values and raise morally upright individuals capable of independent thinking, and who appreciate the dignity of labour
- (iv) Inspire national consciousness and harmonious co-existence irrespective of differences in endowment, religion, colour, ethnic and socio-economic background.

In spite of the success recorded in providing basic education in Nigeria, a World Bank (2018) report shows that the education crisis in Nigeria is currently widening the social gaps in the country. The report observed that even after several years in school, millions of children could not read, write or do basic mathematics. This learning crisis, according to the report, is widening social gaps instead of narrowing them. The report further indicates that millions of children in Nigeria face the prospect of lost opportunities and lower wages in the future because their primary and secondary schools were failing to educate them to succeed in life. In the same vein, a recent report released by the National Bureau of Statistics (2018) revealed that there are over 10 million -children out of school in Nigeria.

In Delta State, there is a general belief that the much desired socio-political and economic changes can only be achieved through education, whether formal or non-formal.. Within Nigeria, Delta State has a historical precedent of being educationally conscious, and it emphasizes education as a tool for socio-political and economic growth

(Delta State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, 2014; The Pointer Newspaper, 2019). Despite the fact that Delta State occupies a frontline position in the country's education sector in terms of service delivery, there are 551,709 children out of school in public primary and junior secondary schools in the state, as reported in Nigeria Education Indicators, which was released by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2017, indicating that there is much to be done to ensure that no child is left out of education.

In view of the above, this study examined measures for the effective implementation of the UBE programme in Delta State so that the objectives of primary and junior secondary education can be achieved.

Literature Review

Previous research has shown that the school principals face several challenges in the implementation of the UBE scheme because of poor school facilities and inadequate funding, which leads to poor maintenance culture in most schools (Ifeoma, 2012; Muiyawa, 2011; Obidike & Onwuka, 2013; Odu, 2011; Ogunsanmi & Francis, 2014). According to Ifeoma (2012), to achieve a good quality school, there must be provision for adequate management of educational facilities because the education curriculum cannot function properly under poorly managed school facilities. Obidike and Onwuka (2013) note that schools with high maintenance of their facilities had higher levels of academic success for their students. Adirika and Oluwatayo (2013) confirmed that students attending schools with new and well-equipped facilities performed better than students in schools with older and poorly equipped facilities. They concluded that the school environment is critical in ensuring effective teaching and learning. At this point, it is obvious that even the best school principal can do little or nothing under difficult circumstances; In particular, if schools are poorly funded with inadequate or poorly maintained school facilities, it will eventually result in poor academic performance for the students.

Eddho (2009) found that poor funding of schools and insufficient planning, as well as the unstable government in Nigeria, hindered the continuity of its educational programmes and policies. Additionally, Amuchie, Asotibe and Christiana (2013), found that no educational programme can survive without adequate funding. They concluded that the financing of education in Nigeria has been on the decline. However, training and retraining of principals and teachers is necessary for the growth of education in Nigeria because for any nation to experience significant improvement, training and retraining are critical to educational policy implementation (Odu, 2011).

Theoretically, the most prominent framework that can be used to explain the wholesale adoption of education and development is human capital theory. In reference to the work of Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1997), Sakamota and Powers (1995) and Schultz (1971), the theory hypothesises that education is key to improving the production capacity of a population. The theory also emphasises how education increases the adeptness of workers by increasing their cognitive level. Proponents of human capital theory argued that the theory provides justification for large investment in education both in developed and developing countries. According to the human capital model developed by Robert (1991), the use of education for the creation of human capital has been largely responsible for differences in labour productivity and differences in technological development in the world. In view of the extensive literature review, three research questions and objectives were formulated to guide the study. The research questions and objectives are as follows:

Research Questions

1. Are the objectives of UBE programme in public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State being achieved?

2. What are the challenges preventing the implementation of the UBE programme in public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State?
3. What measures can be used to ensure the effective implementation of the UBE programme in public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State?

Relating to the research questions, three research objectives were generated for the study:

Research Objectives

1. To establish whether the objectives of the UBE programme in Delta State are being achieved.
2. To identify challenges preventing the effective implementation of the UBE programme in public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State.
3. To suggest possible measures that can be used to ensure the effective implementation of the UBE programme in public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State.

Methods

Research Philosophy/Design

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), a research philosophy, which is also referred to as a research paradigm, can be defined as the perception that guides investigation. Myers (2013) classified research philosophy into two categories: positivist and interpretivist paradigms.

The positivist paradigm can be traced to the works of a French philosopher, Auguste Comte (1798-1857) (Moore, 2010). The positivist paradigm is based on the notion that social reality can be studied independently (Scotland, 2012). It is assumed that social life can be investigated quantitatively using experimentation and correlation to examine the cause and effect links between variables. The interpretive paradigm, also referred to as constructivist or anti-positivist, is the philosophy of a Mathematician and German Philosopher, Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) (Wright, 2009). The assumption of the interpretive paradigm is that human life can be studied through observation, interview, case studies and so on (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Additionally, interpretivists believe that social reality is generally constructed and subjective, with both participants and the researcher cooperating to understand the phenomenon from the perspective of the individual. Both positivist and interpretive paradigms (quantitative and qualitative methods) were adopted for the study.

The use of a qualitative method (interview) is dominant in this study while quantitative techniques (use of secondary data) were used to support the qualitative method. There are reasons for the dominance of the qualitative method in this study. First, qualitative methods provide an environment for an in-depth investigation of the research questions. Second, studies have shown that qualitative methods are more flexible and create a better understanding of complex issues because they involve interaction between participants and the researcher. For example, the use of open-ended questions and unstructured interviews allows participants to respond to the questions differently in their own words instead of simply providing a yes or no answer. Third, this methodology creates a friendly atmosphere between the researcher and participants, especially when an experienced researcher is involved and applies the rules of engagement. Fourth, the method is less formal than quantitative method. Based on the above reasons, the qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate for this research.

Population/Sampling Techniques

Delta State is located in the southern part of Nigeria. Specifically, the state belongs to one of the six states in the South South region of the country (see figure 1). The population of the study consists of all headmasters and principals of public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. Three sampling techniques (stratified, purposive

and convenience sampling) were used to recruit the participants. First, the stratified sampling technique was used to classify schools in the 25 Local Governments according to three senatorial districts (Delta North, Delta South and Delta Central) in the state. Table 1 shows the local governments under the three senatorial districts in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 1: 25 Local Governments in Delta State, Nigeria

S/N	Local Governments Under Delta North Senatorial District
1	Aniocha North
2	Aniocha South
3	Oshimili North
4	Oshimili South
5	Ika North-East
6	Ika South
7	Ukwani
8	Ndokwa West
9	Ndokwa East
S/N	Local Governments Under Delta Central Senatorial District
1	Ethiope East
2	Ethiope West
3	Okpe
4	Uvwie
5	Sapele
6	Udu
7	Ughelli North
8	Ughelli South
S/N	Local Governments Under Delta South Senatorial District

1	Bomadi
2	Burutu
3	Isoko North
4	Isoko South
5	Patani
6	Warri North
7	Warri South
8	Warri South-West

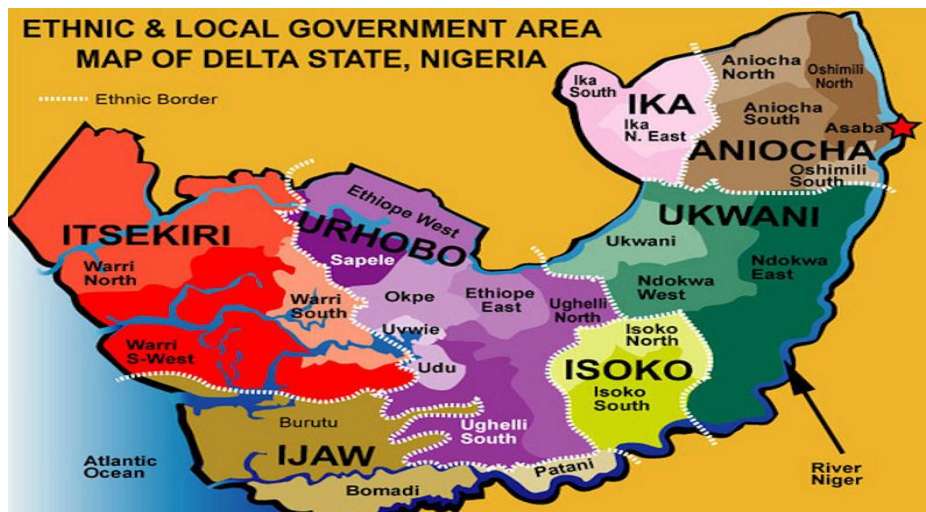


Figure 1: Map of Delta State, Nigeria

Secondly, purposive sampling was used to select Local Governments in the three senatorial districts. This technique was used. This technique is often used in qualitative research for in-depth investigation cases (Patton, 2002) as it enables the researcher to discover a sample population that supports a better understanding of the problem being investigated (Creswell, 2007; Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2011). Thirdly, convenience technique was used to select 15 headmasters and principals from 15 primary and junior secondary schools across the three senatorial districts in the state participate in the study. Table 2 below illustrates how the headmasters and principals from 15 schools were selected via purposive and convenience sampling techniques.

Table 2: Selection of Participants for the Study

S/N	Senatorial District	Number of Participant Selected	Number of Participant Selected
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1	Delta North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 headmaster from one primary school - 3 principals from three junior secondary schools 	4
2	Delta Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 headmasters selected from two primary schools - 5 principals selected from five junior secondary schools 	7
3	Delta South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 headmasters selected from two primary school - 2 principals selected from two junior secondary schools 	4
	Total	-	15

Sources of Data

(a) Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is a document that the interviewer uses as a guide to conduct the interview. It covers the introduction and questions the interviewees are to be asked. Interview protocol can also be defined as a set of questions to assist and guide semi-structured open-ended interviews (Creswell, 2013; Turner, 2010). For the purpose of the present study, we developed the “Interview Protocol on Perceived Measures for Effective Implementation of UBE (IPPMEI)” to elicit relevant information from the school principals. The reason for selecting principals as participants for the study is that they are responsible for implementing education policies, as enshrined in the UBE programme. Our interview protocol has 3 main questions and 9 sub-questions. The questions in the protocol were adapted from the studies conducted by Arong and Ogbadu (2010), Ejere (2011), Subair and Talabi (2015). Specifically, the interview questions were formulated to investigate the study’s three research questions.

Wikiversity (2015) notes that the validity check is an essential part of qualitative research. The importance of the validity check is that it helps to ensure the credibility of the data and that the results of the research reflect the research context. In order to ensure the validity of the interview protocol, the protocol was subjected to content validity check as suggested by Creswell (2013). The interview protocol was reviewed by experts in the field of Educational Management to ensure that the questions in the protocol aligned with the study’s objectives. The experts’ suggestions and observations were collected and included in the final draft of the protocol. Moreover, to ensure the protocol was fit for purpose, we conducted a pilot study with one principal in one of the secondary schools in Delta State which was not used for the main study. Conducting a pilot study ensures the reliability of the questions in the interview protocol before the main data collection phase (Creswell, 2013; Silverman, 2016; Wikiversity, 2015). Additionally, the data collected in the pilot study were transcribed and coded in line with the research questions. This was to ensure the coding process would run smoothly following the main phase of data collection.

(b) Secondary Data

To get comprehensive information for the study, secondary data and some documents were collected to support the data collected during the interviews. Specifically, data on the number of teachers, the availability of teaching and learning materials and other relevant data were collected. The secondary data supported the data collected during the interviews. Table 3 shows the checklist used for collecting secondary data.

Table 3: Checklist for Secondary Data Collection

S/N	Item	Period Covered (5 years)
1	Data on teacher/pupil ratio in primary and junior secondary schools.	2012-2016
2	Data on pupil/classroom ratios in primary and junior secondary schools.	2012-2016
3	Data on enrolment level in primary and junior secondary schools.	2012-2016
4	Data on completion rates in primary and junior secondary schools.	2012-2016
5	Data on number of primary school teachers	2012-2016
6	Data on number of junior secondary school teachers	2012-2016

Ethical Considerations

The ethical issues associated with research studies were considered before the research was conducted to address any issues commonly found in research studies. To avoid problems relating to the participants' privacy, participants' anonymity was guaranteed and the aim of the research study was explained. Furthermore, participants gave their informed consent to proceed participate in the research study using a consent form. Finally, a cordial relationship was established to create room for participants' willingness to participate in the study (Creswell, 2013).

Data Collection/Analysis Procedure

Following Creswell's (2013) suggestions on data collection in qualitative studies, the interviews were conducted in all the selected schools with the assistance of two research assistants who we employed to assist us in data collection. The interviews were conducted with the use of a laptop, a biro, a pencil, a jotter, a digital audio tape recorder and a video camera. For the quantitative part of the study, the secondary data were obtained from the Federal Ministry of Education's Book on Education Indicators, Delta State Universal Basic Education Board, and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The data were analysed using Excel. Specifically, descriptive analysis of education indicators was conducted.

Results

(a) Findings from the Qualitative Approach

Transcription of Interview and Coding

The interviews were conducted between 2nd of October and 20th November 2018. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed using a laptop and an air phone. The transcribed interviews produced 10 pages of excerpts. In agreement

with the research questions and objectives of the study, the transcribed interviews were coded following the conventional method of coding in qualitative research (theme, sub-theme and sub-sub-theme). The transcribed interviews produced three main themes and ten sub-themes. Table 4 shows the timelines of the interviews conducted, Table 5 shows the code assigned to participants ,while Table 6 highlights the main themes and sub-themes created during the coding process.

Table 4: Timeline of Interviews Conducted

School	Interview Period
School 1	2nd - 4th October, 2018
School 2	8th - 9th October, 2018
School 3	12th - 14th October, 2018
School 4	15th - 17th October, 2018
School 5 and 6	20th - 21st October, 2018
School 7 and 8	24th - 25th October, 2018
School 9 and 10	5th - 7th November, 2018
School 11 and 12	10th - 11th November, 2018
School 13 and 14	15th - 16th November, 2018
School 15	17th - 20th November, 2018

Table 5: Code assigned to participants

School	Code Assigned
School 1	Principal 1
School 2	Principal 2
School 3	Principal 3
School 4	Principal 4
School 5	Principal 5
School 6	Principal 6
School 7	Principal 7
School 8	Principal 8

School 9	Principal 9
School 10	Principal 10
School 11	HM 1
School 12	HM 2
School 13	HM 3
School 14	HM 4
School 15	HM 5

Table 6: Synopsis of Themes and Sub-themes of the Study

Theme 1: Objectives of the UBE Programme in Delta State Primary and Junior Secondary Schools
<p><i>Sub-themes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide free education (primary and junior secondary education) 2. Increase literacy 3. Reduce the rate of out-of-school children
Theme 2: Perceived Challenges in the implementation of the UBE Programme in Delta State Primary and Junior Secondary Schools.
<p><i>Sub-themes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor funding 2. Inadequate infrastructure 3. Poor maintenance culture 4. Lack of adequate data 5. Lack of qualified teachers 6. Poor teachers' remuneration
Theme 3: Perceived Measures for Effective Implementation of the UBE Programme in Delta State Primary and Junior Secondary Schools.
<p><i>Sub-themes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adequate Data Collection 2. Adequate Funding 3. Adequate Infrastructure 4. Adequate Teaching and Learning Materials 5. Recruitment of Adequate/Qualified Teachers

6. Teachers' Welfare

Research Question 1: Are the objectives of the UBE programme in public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State being achieved?

The first research objective seeks to establish whether the objectives of the Universal Basic Education Programme are being achieved. Based on the interviews conducted, the school principals and headmasters clearly expressed the objectives of the UBE. According to Principal 1, "the UBE was set up to improve literacy and ensure the number of out-of-school children in Nigeria is reduced". Similarly, other principals expressed their thoughts on the aims of the UBE programme:

"The Universal Basic Education is aimed at providing basic education at the basic level of education in the state and Nigeria at large (HM 1, 4, Principal 2 & 10)."

"The purpose of establishing the UBE programme in 2000 was to provide free and compulsory education for all Nigerian children of school age, but some of the objectives are yet to be achieved because we still have many children that are out of school (HM 5, 2 & Principal 3)."

Principal 4 revealed that... "The UBE programme was designed to reduce illiteracy and poverty in the nation because education is the gateway to success". According to HM 3, "Universal Basic Education is one of the Millennium Development Goals aimed at providing equality and free basic education for children across the length and breadth of Nigeria, but we still have some children whose parents are not even of the programme." In the same vein, Principal 6 asserted that... "Despite the replacement of UPE (Universal Primary Education) with UBE, because of the challenges associated with it, the main objective of UBE, which is to reduce the number of out-of-school children to the barest minimum (by offering free and compulsory education), is yet to be achieved."

Research Question 2: What are the challenges preventing the implementation of the UBE programme in Delta State, Nigeria?

Using interviews allowed for individual differences in how participants interpreted and responded to the questions based on their personal experience. However, the main question asked during the interviews asked participants about the major challenges hindering the implementation of the universal basic education programme in the schools they managed.

(1) Poor Funding

Most of the Principals expressed a high level of disappointment about the fact that the UBE scheme was underfunded and noted that no system can survive without adequate funding. Principal 1's response commended the government for their efforts so far on education but admitted that poor funding was the primary reason why the school principals were unable to implement the UBE programme. In the same vein, HM 2 asserted that "poor funding is a big issue in education but junior secondary schools under UBE have not been funded well by various governments." Likewise, Principal 3 said:

“Considering the budget allocated to education, it can be said that funding is one of the factors affecting the effective implementation of the UBE programme, not only in our junior secondary school here, but across primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State and Nigeria.”

In support of the above, Principals 4, 5 and HM 4 are of the view that:

“There is no doubt that inadequate funding of education, especially in primary and junior secondary schools, is a serious challenge that hampers the effective implementation of the UBE programme in many schools. There is a lack of funding to run junior schools efficiently and effectively. This is affecting the goals and objectives of the UBE. They claimed that the terrible economic situation in the country as a result of fall in the oil price globally has also negatively impacted the scheme due to the reduction of government income from the sales of oil.”

(2) Inadequate Infrastructure

Principal 1 said “most government schools’ facilities in Delta State are in a poor state which also affects the implementation of the UBE scheme by the school principals.” Principal 2 confirmed that:

“Poor funding of the scheme, inadequate infrastructure, poor maintenance culture, lack of political will, instability in government and their policies. The aforementioned contemporary challenges are often responsible for the inadequacy of infrastructure in the majority of primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State.”

In the same vein, HM 1 is of the opinion that:

“The lack of funding in most cases has prevented school principals from providing the necessary basic school infrastructure that support teaching and learning in most junior schools in Delta State. This is a major challenge that has hindered the UBE scheme from achieving its objectives”.

Principal 4 argued that:

“The poor state the infrastructure in junior secondary schools in the state has made teaching and learning difficult. In some cases, there is inadequate or limited classroom furniture and classrooms without a roof are not fit for learning. These are fundamental challenges facing the UBE implementation.”

Principal 5 states that “No meaningful teaching and learning can take place with the poor level of infrastructure found in junior secondary schools as seen in some government schools in Warri, Delta State”.

(3) Poor Maintenance Culture

On the poor maintenance culture in primary and junior secondary schools, Principal 10 said that... “The poor maintenance culture in junior secondary schools in Warri Delta State was as a result of lack of funding”. In support of the above, Principal 8 stated that:

“The poor maintenance culture seen in schools is a result of corruption which is a major factor in the poor maintenance of schools in Warri because even when funds are provided, they are not used for the purposes they are meant for. Rather, they are diverted for private use. Corruption has greatly impacted negatively on the effective implementation of the UBE scheme”.

Furthermore, HM4 3 is also of the opinion that “Corruption is a major hindrance in the school maintenance system because of the lack of payment of staff salaries, most funds are diverted for personal purposes”. Principal 7 revealed

that “The poor maintenance culture in junior secondary schools today is an after effect of poor funding and government neglect in the educational sector”.

(4) Lack of Adequate Data

A lack of data poses forecasting difficulties and invariably implementation problems. Untrustworthy data makes it difficult to make satisfactory prognoses in terms of anticipated school enrolment (primary, secondary and higher institutions), the number of teachers required, infrastructural needs and other facilities needed. Ejere (2011) observed that the accurate and reliable data that are needed for educational planning rarely exist in Nigeria. In support of the above, the current study notes a lack of adequate data in the education system based on the interviews conducted with the principals. Principal 9, observed that “The lack of adequate data hindered the effective implementation of the UBE programme.”

Principal 2 is of the view that:

“Planning is very difficult when the data available are inadequate; for example, data about the total number of qualified teachers not adequate; the data showing the status of school infrastructures are inadequate. There are no adequate data showing the number of school children, number of functional science laboratories, numbers well-equipped school libraries and so on. The aforementioned reasons are some of the challenges that have hindered the implementation of the UBE programme.”

Also, the views of Principal 3, 4 and HM 1 are the same. They admitted that “Data is a success factor for planning in any system including the UBE scheme, but inadequate data is a challenge for proper planning in the UBE programme.”

(5) Inadequate Numbers of Qualified Teachers

According to a document sponsored by the Federal Government and United Kingdom’s Department of International Development (2009), over 60 percent of teachers in Nigeria’s primary schools are unqualified. The document also revealed crowding and a lack of classrooms, poor sanitation facilities and lack of teaching equipment as other contemporary problems affecting effective teaching and learning. They affirmed that although teachers are a major factor in ensuring the quality of education at all levels, the basic education level in Nigeria is plagued by a lack of professionally qualified teachers. Subair and Talabi (2015) found that the teacher shortage in primary and secondary schools can also take the form of high student-teacher ratios in schools. Additionally, teachers are always in short supply for several reasons, including, for example, poor salaries, high numbers of students enrolment and poor working conditions..

Principal 1 admitted that “The lack of well-trained technical teachers and tools among others were some of the problems responsible for the poor implementation of the UBE scheme by the school principals.” Similarly, Principal 6 claimed that his school “does not have qualified teachers for technical education, which is another major challenge in the implementation of the UBE scheme.”

(6) Poor Teachers’ Remuneration

Principal 6 states that “Poor wages leading to demotivation and spending longer working hours without compensation are huge spanners in the works of implementing the UBE programme in both primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State.” HM 4 aggressively stated that “Poor salary and continuous delay of teachers’ promotion and training killed the morale of the teachers; hence it affects the process of teaching and learning.” Principal 1 claimed that “The current teachers’ salary cannot support their immediate needs and there is no way anybody could survive in the present economic condition in the country; as such, teachers are highly demotivated to teach”.

(b) Additional Findings from the Quantitative Approach

The secondary data obtained from the Federal Ministry of Education's School Education Indicators were analysed using Excel to provide graphical representations for easy understanding of the data. Some of the education indicators that were analysed include ratios (pupil/teacher ratio & pupil/classroom ratio) in public primary and junior secondary schools; enrolment levels (male and female) in public primary schools; enrolment levels (male and female) in public junior secondary schools; completion rates (male and female) in public primary schools; completion rate (male and female) in public junior secondary schools; numbers of primary school teachers (including qualified ones) and of junior secondary school teachers (including qualified ones).

(1) Ratios in Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools

The data collected revealed that the pupil-teacher ratio in public primary schools is 32:1 while ratio in public junior secondary school is 28:1. Additionally, in public primary secondary schools there are 57 pupils per classroom, meaning that the classrooms are overcrowded, which is against UNESCO's recommendation. In the same vein, in public junior secondary schools, there are 52 pupils per classroom. This implies that classrooms in junior secondary school are overcrowded; no effective teaching and learning can take place in such an environment. Table 7 shows the ratio in public and junior secondary schools based on the two education indicators, while Figure 2 provides a visual representation of the data.

Table 7: Ratio in Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria

Indicator	Public Primary Schools	Public Junior Secondary Schools
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	32	28
Pupil/Classroom Ratio	57	52

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 2017 Report

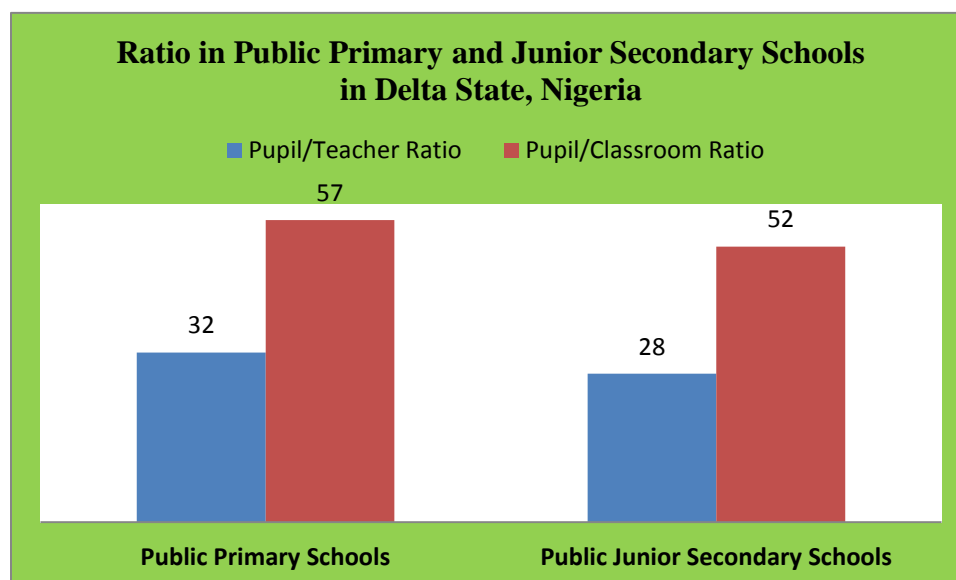


Figure 2: Graphical Representation of Ratios in Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools

(2) Enrolment Levels in Public Primary Schools (2012-2016)

Findings indicate that there has been a decline in the number of pupils enrolling in primary schools from 2012 to 2016. For instance, 248,363 males enrolled in 2012 was . This and went down in 2013 to 242,401 enrolments. In 2014, the enrolment level was 253,461, in 2015 it was 240,405, and 2016 it dropped to 194,207. Concerning females, the findings revealed that 249,989 females enrolled in 2012, 239,013 in 2013, 248,288 in 2014, 238,675 in 2015, and 191,310 in 2016. Table 8 shows male and female enrolment levels, while Figure 3 displays the trend in enrolment level in public primary schools in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 8: Enrolment Level in Public Primary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria (2012-2016)

Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Male	248,363	242,401	253,461	240,405	194,207	1,178,837
Female	249,989	239,013	248,288	238,675	191,310	1,167,275

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 2017 Report

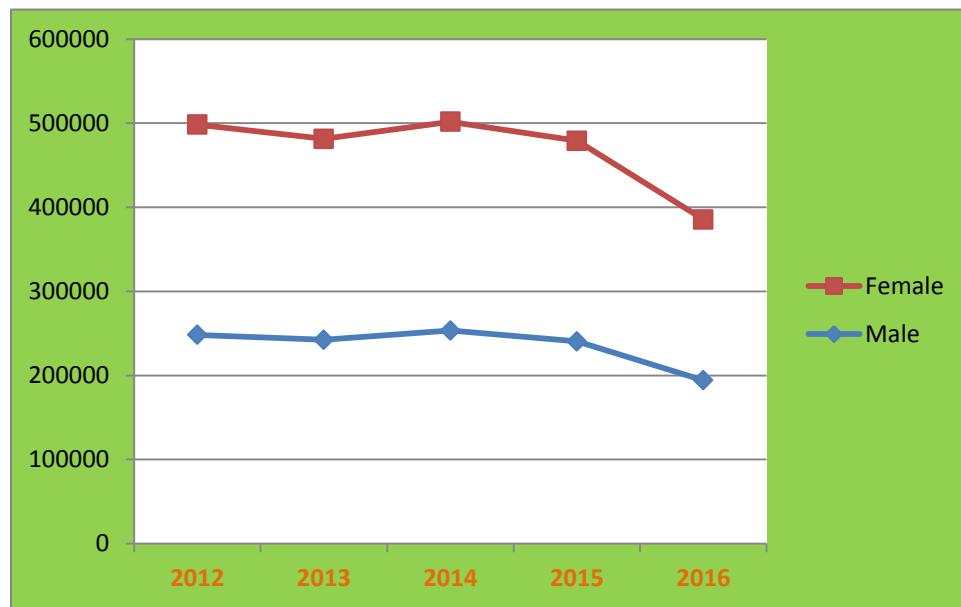


Figure 3: Graphical Representation of the Trend in Enrolment Level in Public Primary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria.

(3) Enrolment Level in Public Junior Secondary Schools

Like in primary schools, enrolment levels in public junior secondary schools in Delta State are decreasing. Regarding males, 89,714 were enrolled in 2012, 90,593 in 2013, 92,476 in 2014, 108,651 in 2015, and 79,740 in 2016, meaning that the total number enrolled between 2012 and 2016 is 461,174. For females, 89,206 pupils were enrolled in 2012, 92,401 in 2013, 95,499 in 2014, 110,994 in 2015 and 75,388 in 2016. Table 9 indicates the enrolment levels, while Figure 4 illustrates the trends in enrolment for both males and females.

Table 9: Enrolment Level in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria (2012-2016)

Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Male	89,714	90,593	92,476	108,651	79,740	461,174
Female	89,206	92,401	95,499	110,994	75,388	463,488

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 2017 Report

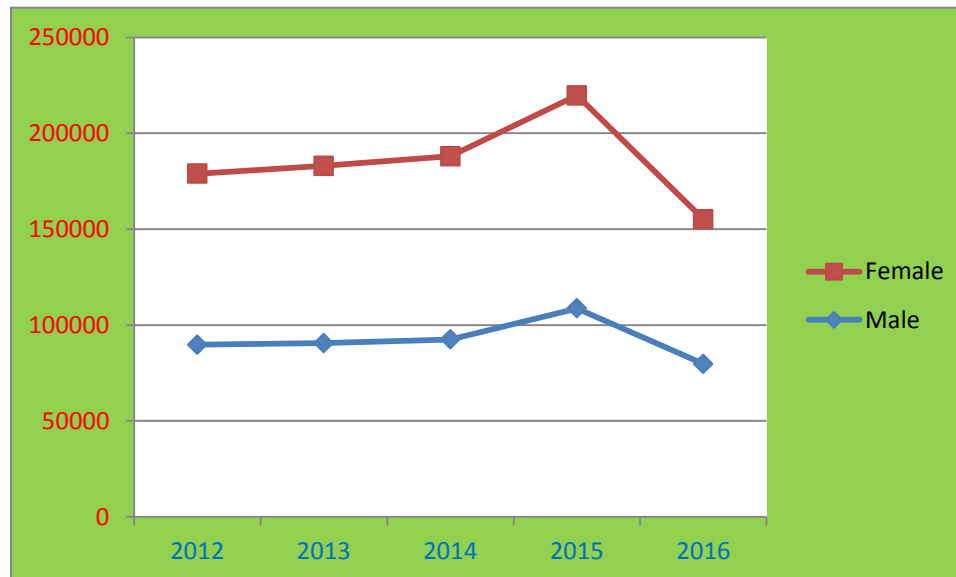


Figure 4: Graphical Representation of the Trend in Enrolment Rate in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria

(4) Completion Rate

Based on the data collected and analysed, the completion rate in public primary schools is 43.13 percent for males and 39.48 percent for females. This indicates that the percentage of males that completed school higher than that of females. Similarly, the completion rate in public junior secondary schools for males is 42.74 percent, but 39.48 percent for females. Table 10 shows the completion rate in both primary and junior secondary schools while Figure 5 provides a graphical representation of the completion rate.

Table 10: Completion Rate in Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria (percent)

Indicator	Public Primary Schools	Public Junior Secondary Schools
Male	43.13	42.74
Female	39.48	35.83

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 2017 Report

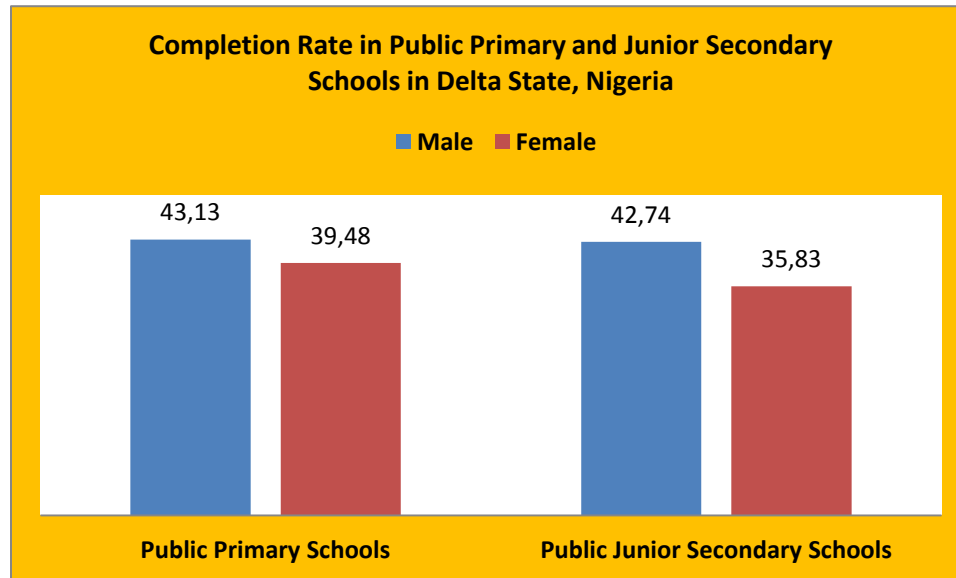


Figure 5: Graphical Representation of the Completion Rate in Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools (percent)

(5) Number of Primary School Teachers

The total number of primary school teachers in Delta State is 9,307 (males: 2,658; females: 6,649), and there are 7,930 qualified teachers in public schools (males: 2,161; females: 5,769). This means that 1,377 teachers are unqualified. Therefore, the issue of unqualified teachers is a serious concern in primary schools. Table 11 shows the numbers of primary school teachers while Figure 6 provides a graphical representation of the statistics.

Table 11: Numbers of Primary School Teachers in Delta State, Nigeria

Indicator	All Teachers	Qualified Teachers (Public)	Unqualified Teachers (Public)
Male	2,658	2,161	1,377
Female	6,649	5,769	
Total	9,307	7,930	

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 2017 Report

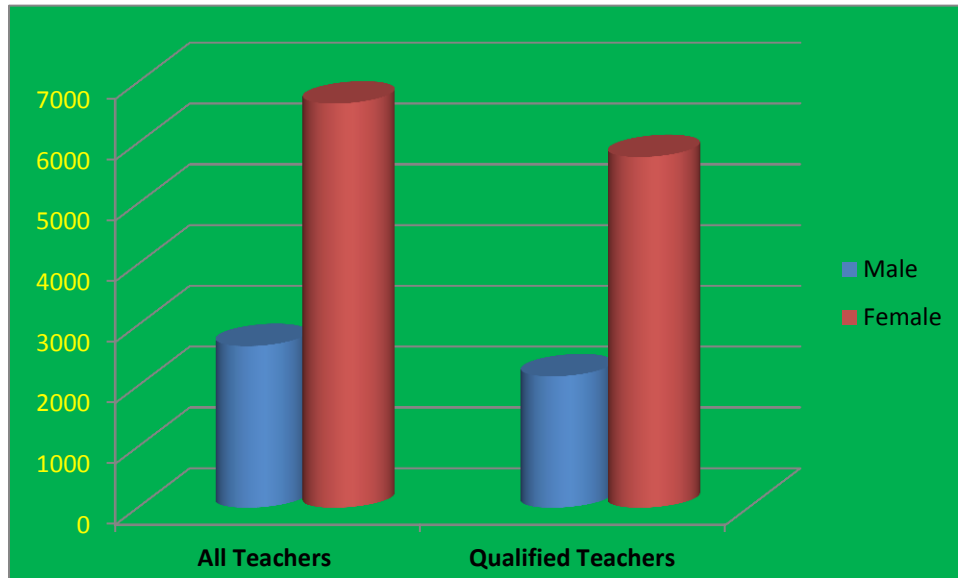


Figure 6: Graphical Representation of the Number of Primary School Teachers in Delta State, Nigeria

(6) Number of Junior Secondary School Teachers

The total number of junior secondary school teachers in Delta State is 11,342 (males: 5,245; females: 6,097). Of these, 5,283 are qualified (males: 2,311; females: 2,972) while 6,059 are unqualified. The number of unqualified teachers is, therefore, a grave concern in junior secondary schools. The table below indicates the number of junior secondary school teachers while Figure 7 provides a graphical representation of the statistics.

Table 12: Number of Junior Secondary School Teachers in Delta State, Nigeria

Indicator	All Teachers	Qualified Teachers (Public)	Unqualified Teachers
Male	5,245	2,311	6,059
Female	6,097	2,972	
Total	11,342	5,283	

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 2017 Report

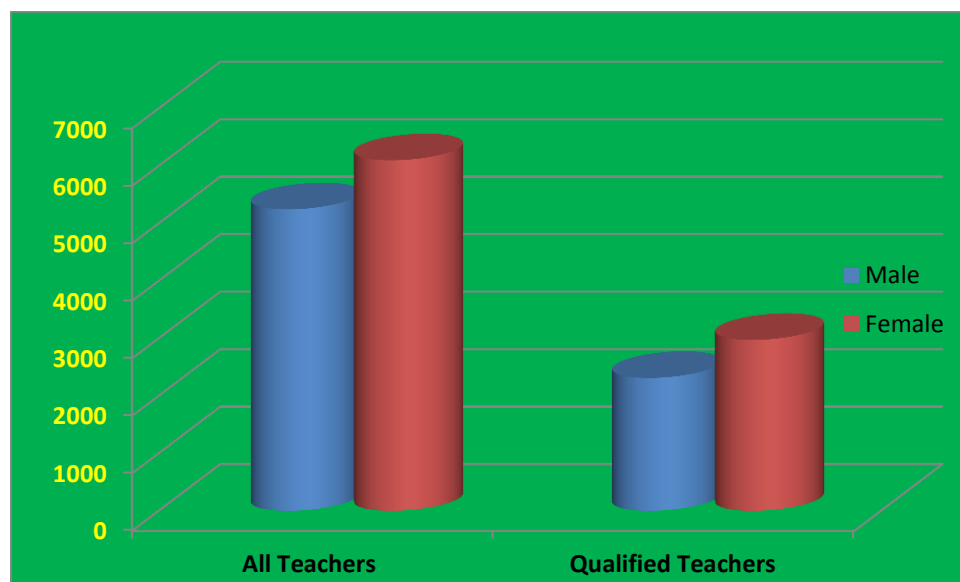


Figure 7: Graphical Representation of the number of Junior Secondary School Teachers

What measures can be used to ensure the effective implementation of the UBE programme in Delta State, Nigeria?

The third research question investigates measures that can be used to ensure the effective implementation of the UBE programme in public primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. Based on the interviews conducted, six measures are suggested to address the challenges providing the successful implementation of the UBE programme. These measures are given below:

(1) Adequate Data Collection

Principals 1 and 6 are of the view that “For us to get our UBE programme right in Nigeria, the government at all levels (local, state, and federal) must ensure synergy with a view to collating adequate and reliable data for the purpose of planning, budgeting and implementing the various stages of the programme.” Similarly, HM 3 stated that “Since data is needed for the growth of education, adequate and reliable data should be collected so that proper planning can be made for the successful implementation of the programme”. The views of Principal 5 and HM 4 are similar; they state that “The availability of data is important for the advancement of primary, secondary and tertiary education in Nigeria.”

(2) Adequate Funding

According to Principal 5, “No school can function effectively without adequate funding; thus proper funding is vital in all spheres of education so that the philosophical goals of education can be achieved.” HM 3 stated that “Federal, State and Local Governments should set aside special funds to be allocated for the UBE programme so that the needs and aspirations of children can be met.” Likewise, Principal 2 and HM 5 are of the view that:

“No matter how well the UBE’s policy and programme are structured, if there is not adequate funding available for its implementation, the challenges of UBE will persist because the funds are needed to procure all the instructional materials and to pay the teachers’ salaries constantly without any issues”

HM 1 stated that:

“It is a fact that most schools under the UBE programme are underfunded; therefore, adequate funds must be allocated to the education sector as recommended by UNESCO so that millions of Nigerian children can return to school as part of the general growth of education in Nigeria. Since schools under the UBE programme provide the foundations upon which other levels of education are built, constant and adequate funding of the sector cannot be compromised.”

(3) Adequate Infrastructure

Principal 1 suggested that:

“Since a school cannot exist without infrastructure, adequate infrastructure such as classrooms, dormitories, administrative blocks, staff offices, laboratories, workshops, clinics, libraries, school buses, guidance and counselling units, sports centres and other important facilities should be available in all primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State so that the goals of UBE can be achieved.”

In support of the above, the views of Principals 2, 4 and HM 3 are given below:

“For the government to achieve any significant success in the UBE, infrastructure is key. Therefore, new modern facilities such as classrooms, libraries and clinics should be built, while existing facilities should be renovated to a higher standard to ensure effective teaching and learning, and also to ensure that the aims and objectives of UBE are realised”

“There is a need to for the government at all levels (local, state and federal) to embark on focused infrastructural development (e.g. building modern classrooms, quality chairs and tables, accommodation, libraries, clinics, guidance and counselling units, etc.) in the education sector, especially in primary and secondary schools so that people are discouraged from selecting private schools because they have superior facilities (HM 1 & 5).”

(4) Adequate Teaching and Learning Materials

HM 1 asserted that “Modern teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, books, novels, TVs and Radios, and other useful instructional materials should be made available in primary and junior secondary schools so that effective teaching and learning can be assured.” Similarly, according to Principal 4:

“The adequate provision of teaching and learning materials is key to effective learning in schools. Therefore, it should be ensured that modern teaching materials such as textbooks, markers, boards, teaching aids, workshops and other relevant materials are provided for the effective implementation of the UBE programme not only in the primary and junior secondary schools in Warri Local Governments, but these should also be made available in the entire Delta State and throughout the whole of Nigeria.”

(5) Recruitment of Qualified/Adequate Teachers

This study demonstrated that school principals and headmasters believe that mass recruitment of qualified and competent teachers in junior secondary schools will help solve the problems of education in primary and junior secondary schools in Delta State. According to Principal 3, “The government should embark on recruitment of qualified teachers to fill the vacant positions in both primary and junior secondary schools, most especially in rural areas where they have a shortage of teachers.” Similarly, Principal 6 stated that “The recruitment of qualified teachers

for schools is long overdue. In recruiting teachers, emphasis must be placed on science subjects (Mathematics, Integrated Science, Computing, Introductory Technology etc.) and English Language.” HM 1 and 2 support the above:

“For the government to get education right, constant recruitment of well-trained teachers in science subjects is needed in primary and junior secondary schools. This will help to actualise the goals and objectives of the UBE programme. All employed teachers should be sent to rural areas because those areas are short of pupils and students in primary and junior secondary schools.”

(6) Teachers’ Welfare

According to HM 4, “Teachers’ welfare should be taken seriously by the government so that they can be efficient and effective in the classroom.” Similarly, Principal 2 is of the view that “Teachers’ salaries should be paid promptly so as to improve their morale; this will ensure effectiveness on their part.” Principal 5 asserted “Training and retraining of teachers should be constant so that they can be informed of the current trends in the education system.” In the same vein, Principal 1 stated:

“Teachers’ welfare should be prioritised if we intend to improve the state of the Nigerian education system. Teachers’ salaries, bonuses and allowances must be paid when due. Also, other fringe benefits such as a health insurance scheme, car and housing loans, and training and retraining should be considered.”

Conclusion

1. The main objective of the UBE programme (reducing the number of out-of-school children by offering free and compulsory education from primary to junior secondary education) is yet to be achieved. Currently, 551,709 children are out of school in Delta State, Nigeria.
2. There are many challenges preventing the effective implementation of the UBE programme. These include poor funding, inadequate infrastructure, poor maintenance, lack of adequate data, and poor remuneration for teachers.
3. The pupil-teacher ratio in public primary schools is 32:1, while the student-teacher ratio in public junior secondary schools is 28:1.
4. There is overcrowding classrooms. Specifically, the pupil-classroom ratio in public primary schools is 57:1, while the pupil-classroom ratio in public junior secondary schools is 52:1.
5. Enrolment levels have declined. The pupil enrolment level in public primary schools from 2012-2016 is 2,346,112 (males: 1,178,837; females: 1,167,275), while the student enrolment level in public junior secondary schools is 924,662 (males: 461,174; females: 463,488).
6. The completion rate is low. In public primary schools, the completion rate is 43.13 percent for males and 39.48 percent for females, while the completion rate in junior secondary schools is 42.74 percent for males and 35.83 for females. Thus, the completion rate is less than 50%.
7. There are unqualified teachers in primary schools. The total number of all primary school teachers is 9,307 (males: 2,658; females: 6,649) and the number of qualified teachers in public primary schools is 7,930, meaning that there are 1,377 unqualified teachers.

8. There inadequate and unqualified teachers in junior secondary schools. The total number of all junior secondary school teachers is 11,342 (males: 5,245; females: 6,097), and the number of qualified teachers is 5,283. There are 6,059 unqualified teachers.

Recommendations

1. A review of UBE policy is needed to reflect the current reality in education.
2. In line with UNESCO's recommendation of allocating 25% of the to education, the Delta State government should increase the budget allocation to primary and junior secondary education.
3. Stakeholders in education should assist the government in by providing adequate facilities in primary and junior secondary schools.
4. Existing facilities in the schools should be maintained regularly.
5. Adequate qualified teachers should be recruited.
6. Improvement in headmasters, principals and teachers' working conditions.
7. To increase enrolment levels in both primary and junior secondary schools, parents should be made aware of the importance of education; this will help to reduce the number of children who are out of school.
8. To ensure effective learning, the teacher-pupil ratio should be reduced to 25:1. Similarly, the pupil-classroom ration should be reduced to 25:1.
9. There should be periodic training and retraining of headmasters, principals and teachers..
10. Adequate data regarding primary and junior secondary schools should be collected to help in policy formulation and implementation.

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APPENDIX A

State of Some Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria





