

POWER POINT PRESENTATION

IMPROVING UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION IN NIGERIA

BY

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Introduction

- Education is a key factor to the development of Nigeria's economic, political, social and technological sectors.
- Efforts have been made in the areas of policy formulation and implementation, reforms in the various sectors of economy for the nation's growth, development and wealth creation.

➤ In the educational sector, UPE and UBE programmes are the means of social demand approaches made to provide education that is free and compulsory at the elementary stage of education.

- UPE was first introduced in 1955, 1957, in the Western and Eastern regions respectively. In 1976, UPE was introduced for all Nigerians.
- The scheme was confronted with challenges such as inadequate plans, resulting to shortages and lack of human and material resources as well as insufficient funds.
- The scheme failed as stated goals were inadequately achieved.

- UBE was launched on the 30th September, 1999 by President Olusegun Obasanjo in Sokoto. The aim is to provide basic education that is free and compulsory from primary to junior secondary school levels (9 years activities) and adult literacy programmes.
- It was an attempt to transform the existing UPE scheme.
- Yet, it appears that UBE is also experiencing the problems that affected the UPE scheme in a variety of ways.
- The question to address now is; how will UBE programme implementation be improved?

Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme

- UBE took its roots from the United Nations Organization (UNO) declaration of fundamental Human rights that 'every child has a right to education' and that education shall be free and compulsory.
- It was also emphasized at the Jomtiem World conference in 1990 and framework for action on basic education for all by the year 2000.
- The Federal Republic of Nigeria also stated in the 1999 constitution section 18 that it shall when possible provide free, compulsory and universal primary education.
- The major aim of UBE is to reduce drastically the illiteracy rate of Nigerians by providing education at the elementary levels, and is open to all Nigerians regardless of sex, geographical locations and status.

- The specific objectives of UBE as stated in the implementation guidelines of UBE (FRN, 2000) include:
- Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its vigorous promotions.
- The provisions of free Universal Basic Education for every Nigerian child of school-going- age.
- Reducing drastically the incidence of drop-out from the formal school system (through improved relevance, quality and efficiency).
- Catering for the learning needs of young persons who for one reason or another have had to interrupt their schooling through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the provision and promotion of basic education.

- Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, cumulative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civil values needed for laying a solid foundation for life-long learning (FRN, 2000).
- To successfully achieve the stated objectives, government further set appropriate approaches to improve the following:
 - Public enlightenment and social mobilization for full community involvement.
 - Data collection and analysis.
 - Planning, monitoring and evaluation.

- Teachers: their recruitment, education, training, retraining and motivation.
- Infrastructural facilities.
- Textbooks and instructional materials.
- Improved funding.
- Management of the entire process (FRN, 2000)

- The key points of 9-years Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) include;
- Identification of minimum competencies and aligning these to the methodology of classroom transactions including pedagogical skills need, instructional materials and suggested evaluation activities.
 - Linking learning to the world of work of learner and in the cultural context.
 - Emphasis on functional literacy, numeracy and strategic communication skills.

- Infusion of relevant and functional entrepreneurial skills using the relevant subject context as drivers.
- Consolidation of some contents and subjects in the basic education context thus reducing subject/content overload.
- The inclusion of strategic life-long skills as well as positive national values, civic, moral and ethical education as a course of study.
- Infusion of element of critical thinking.

- Infusion of such emerging issues as HIV/AIDs education, anti corruption studies, capital market studies etc.
- Curriculum made flexible for adaption to the socially marginalized including nomadic and other migrant groups, vulnerable communities, adults and special needs learners.

UBE Challenges

➤ Management Problems

- Planning and process disorder. The 'cart before the horse' syndrome. That is implementation before the actual plans.
- Political leaders make pronouncements of educational policies to gain political credit, rather than subject educational matters to professionals.
- Inadequate interpretation of the policy. E.g. The key factors 'free and compulsory' education are not well understood by the populace.
- Problems of monitoring and evaluation
- Maintenance problems.

➤ **Dearth of Data**

- Use of unreliable data. For example, during the UPE scheme, projections for the cohorts for implementation were based on unreliable census figures, the number of children that turned out in 1955, 1957 and 1976 was more than double the projected figure which crippled the whole programme (Udoh & Akpa, 2009). These problems are replicated in the UBE programme.

➤ **Inadequate Resources**

- There are shortages and lack of both human and material resources. Inadequate infrastructure facilities, equipment, instructional materials etc.
- Unqualified teachers still teach in Nigeria. For example, UBEC (2011) stated that the profile of unqualified teachers in public schools nationwide stood at 41.1% out of 667,550, of the qualified NCE holders, most of them appear to have a challenge of very poor quality in the classroom.
- Unmotivated teachers.

➤ Funding Problems

- Nigeria has not met the 26% allocation of its national budget to education as prescribed by UNESCO. Allocation of fund to UBE seems to be on a decline.
- For example, Igbuzor's (2006) findings showed a decline from 47.8% in 2000 to 37.67% in 2001 and then 19.0% in 2002, and average of 13.98% between 2003 and 2004 and 19.26% in 2005.
- Kumbo (2001:211) outlined some factors that militate against effective funding of education as follows:

- Declining economic resources of the government due to inadequate planning and/or refusal to plan.
- Inadequate fund allocation for the implementation of programmes due largely to faulty financial fiscal-policy measures of the government through financial institutions.
- Epileptic funding of programmes owing to lack of concentration and focus on the importance of programmes to the nation future growth and sustenance.

- Misappropriation of funds by operators and custodian of the programmes.
- Bureaucratic bottlenecks in releasing funds to the programme manager and operators at all levels, resulting to untimely fund disbursements for programme execution.
- Inadequate fund supervision through careless monitoring of programmes implementation and resource utilization in order to check waste.

- Over-reliance on a single source.
- Lack of continuity in educational programmes.
- Under-utilization of available educational resources and attendant wastage.

➤ **The Problem of Access to School**

- Many children are out of school (drop-out or stay-out). More than 40% of school-going-age children are out of school. For example, the world census data signified that 42.1 million of Nigerian children are between the ages of 1-14 years, out of this population, 22.3 million are in primary school, while 3.6 million are in junior secondary school giving a total of about 25.9 million children in primary/junior secondary schools (Azikiwe, 2006).

- Mal-implementation of the Nomadic, Migrant fisherman, Almajiri and non-formal education systems.
- An overwhelming number of adult illiterates.
- The early childhood care education (ECCE) turns out to be an elitist level of education. The poor's children cannot afford to attend.

Improving UBE implementation

➤ To improve UBE implementation, robust attempts should be made to tackle the militating factors identified through good governance.

- Governance refers to the use of institutions, structures of authority and collaboration to allocate resources and coordinate activity in society.
- Governance is a manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country considering its rules of the political system to solve conflicts through visionary leadership.

- The important elements of good governance are summarized to involve:
- Transparency, equity and accountability.
 - Rule of law, participation and responsiveness.
 - Cooperation between the political and the administrative class for the delivery of high quality service needed for sustainable development and growth.
 - Control of corruption.
 - Promotion of the values of political participation of the citizens for effectiveness and efficiency.

- Security and justice administration; and
- Elaborate citizens' participation in the governance process (Peter, 2009).
- To improve UBE implementation, leaders and managers must ensure the following:
 - Educational plans should be done by experts and professionals before pronouncements and implementation.
 - Managers should clearly interpret the policies to the understanding of an ordinary Nigerian.
 - There should be accountability in all facets of the system. Leaders, managers, parents/guardians, communities and the society must be involved in ensuring adequate implementation of UBE.

- Efforts should be made to ensure achievement of objectives outlined for UBE programmes.
- Education should not be used as a political instrument for campaign rather, proper plans, design and readiness for implementation must be ensured before commencement.
- Accurate and reliable data must be used for any educational planning. Shortfall of this will affect every area of execution.
- Monitoring and evaluation of activities must be ensured. This can only be possible when mobility and incentives are provided to supervisors and inspectors. Quality assurance must be seen as a tool for effectiveness and a necessity.
- Corruption and fraudulent acts must be stopped at all levels of operation.

- Adequate human and material resources should be provided. Leaders and managers must ensure maintenance of infrastructures, facilities and equipment provided. The scarce resources available should be adequately managed. Quality teachers must be ensured through training and retraining to update their knowledge.
- Strategies should be made to ensure that funds are raised for education by all stakeholders. Misappropriation of funds by operators must be tackled with vigour.
- Teacher motivation should be seen as a necessary tool for teacher effectiveness.
- Apparently, to successfully improve UBE implementation, the following must be put into consideration;

➤ **Lessons from the Past**

- Educational plans are often successful when the past and present conditions are examined in order to predict the future achievements.

➤ **Sensitization of the People**

- Public enlightenment and social mobilization for full community involvement in UBE implementation.
- Problems of access due to disparities. E.g the girl-child is denied education base on some cultures.
- Identifying the salient issues of education as a tool for development (the benefits of education)

➤ **Teacher Supply and Retention**

- Quality education should be ensured through quality and quantity teacher supply. To update the teacher through in-service training, workshops, seminars, conferences etc.
- Improve teacher condition of service and ensure proper motivation strategies.
- Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) must ensure that set targets are achieved for quality teacher in Nigeria.

➤ **The Problem of Control**

- Instability in the control of primary education in Nigeria leads to ineffective control.
- The cumbersome tasks assign to UBEC could mean planning to fail. It is to over see the Early Childhood Care Education, primary, Junior secondary, adult literacy and numeracy programme initiatives, out-of-school non-formal programmes etc. coordination and control might be difficult.
- Quality assurance must be ensured through proper control and good governance.

➤ Curriculum

- The reviewed UBE curriculum must be properly guided for execution.
- Curriculum review is necessary and requires constant evaluation to identify the strengths and weaknesses.

➤ Books

- For quality, textbooks are tied to the curriculum.
- National Book Development Council (NBDC) should ensure the production and distribution of relevant books tied to any reviewed curriculum.
- The provision of adequate libraries would serve as a guide for proper learning.

➤ Funding

- To comply with UNESCO's guide of 26% allocation of the nations annual budget in funding education.
- Use of unit cost rather than standard cost in education plans.
- Enforce appropriate strategies for raising funds through involvement of individuals, communities, Parents Teachers Association (P.T.A), private sectors, NGO's, international agencies etc.

- Eradicate corruption and administrative bottle necks in handling UBE funds.
- All stakeholders must be accountable for education.

➤ **Defining the Horizons and Magnitude of UBE**

- The key points in UBE programme are; universal, free and compulsory education. The clear boundaries of these should be defined to the understanding of every Nigerian.
- The idea of sanctions to be imposed on parents/guardians or people who deprive their children from going to school can only be successful when the ideas of free and compulsory education are well understood by government functionaries and individuals in the society.

- When parents are to provide uniform, transportation, writing materials to their children, there may be no justification for imposing sanctions on them. This is because not all parents can afford to provide the necessary school requirements for their children even in terms of opportunity foregone.
- the price to be paid for education by individuals and government should be clearly specified.

➤ **Methodology**

- These are approaches for translating the set goals into action and reality.
- The approaches mostly used in Nigerian education system is the copy-cat attitude of using the developed nation's style.
- Nigeria should use methodologies relevant to its unique culture and standard of living.

➤ **Poverty**

- Poverty have denied so many children from benefiting the free education programme.
- Efforts on poverty alleviation programmes had not yet yielded significant impact in Nigeria. Strategies could be introduced to improve Nigerians standard of living.

➤ **Conclusion**

- Universal Basic Education can achieve its laudable goals when the strategies of implementation are dynamic, constantly open to change to meet new demands of the people as well as the society.
- The curriculum must be subjected to reviews and ensure social control.
- Generate alternative strategies considering the cost-benefit ratios and ensure adequate control and evaluation of the programme.

- When every stakeholder is actively, effectively involved and positively held accountable for education, then, a re-direction to education of individuals will be improved.
- For any successful projection of educational planning, reliable data is the base for success.

- When Nigerians stop politicizing education, better educational plans and implementation strategies will be put in place by professionals.
- Finally, Nigeria has hope for its elementary education if UBE is fully implemented, when children and adults irrespective of age, sex, location, and socio-economic status have access to quality education.

Thank you for listening