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TEACHER FACTOR AND POLICY ISSUES ON BASIC EDUCATION IN ONDO TOWN, ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper investigated teacher factor and policy issues on basic education in Ondo town, Ondo State, Nigeria. It also investigated how the policy on UBE affects teachers' productivity and determined whether adequate resources were supplied for the programme to boost teachers' competence. It further evaluated the level of awareness that has been created for teachers on UBE programme. The study adopted the ex-post facto design of the descriptive survey to carry out the study. One hundred teachers selected from ten secondary schools using random sampling method were involved in this study. A structured questionnaire titled Teachers Factor and Policy Issues on Basic Education in Ondo State were used to obtain data. The validity and reliability of the instrument were duly ensured. The data obtained were analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage. The results from the study revealed that UBE is a very popular programme whose objectives were partially achieved. The study concludes that the drive of success and failure of UBE policies lies with the teachers. This study among others recommends the improvement in the release of funds for the implementation of the policy by the government.

Keywords: Teacher factor, policy, Universal basic education.

Introduction

Notable permanent changes in individual's behavior as a result of acquisition of knowledge, skills and right attitude is called Education. It is a veritable tool to transform the socio economic status of the nation. The role of education in the march towards development for any nation cannot be overemphasized. According to Ochoyi and Danladi (2010), education is generally concerned with the transmission of worthwhile values such as skills, knowledge and planned activities that can develop learners' potentials for national development. Adeyanju (2015) noted that no development can occur at all without education, and no peace or security without development. To him, at personal level of development, education is one of the strongest weapons for escaping poverty because it improves the quality and chances of the individual's progress.

It is a desirable way to harrow the existing gap between members of the society who are from the affluent line and those who are poor. Various governments encourage children to get enrolled in school to secure a bright future for them.

At the International level, there was declaration of human rights in 1948 which include the right to education. This was repeated by the United Nations in 1959. Nigerian leaders, knowing this, have made concerted efforts to make Basic Education available for the citizens. The International conference in Paris in 1968 on "the world crisis in education" gave full support to the quest for basic education in Nigeria and this birthed the Jomtien World Conference for All (WCEFA) in 1990.

The official statement of the government's intention on a sector of government is referred to as policy (Aja, Egwu, Aja-Okorie, Ani & Amuta, 2018). The processes of formulating, taking decisions, adopting, implementing, violating, evacuating, revising and rescinding a policy take a long period. The national policy on education is the policy which provides the principles, guidelines, persons, programmes, contents, methods, supervision and evaluation of all the processes to achieve the educational goals in Nigeria. Policies on education are produced as a result of brainstorming of high powered committees and are revised over the years. Educational policies are course of actions recommended and adopted by leaders that is government agencies or those in political power.

According to the national policy on education, Universal Basic Education programme was introduced by the government in Nigeria to achieve education for all (EFA) with the aim of eradicating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty by increasing the opportunities and creating awareness to the citizens to be educated. Also it aimed to lay sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking, developing sound attitude and manipulative skills in every child to be responsible in the society. This is in accordance with John Dewey theory on making learning experiences centered on students' interests and developing responsible citizens.

The Universal Basic Education Act (2014) defines Universal Basic Education as early childhood early education, the nine years of formal schooling, adult literacy and non-formal education, skills acquisition programmes and the education of special groups such as nomads and migrants, girl-child and women, almajiri, street children, and disabled, groups. UBE is therefore more comprehensive than UPE or other programmes of the Federal Government on education. According to the Implementation Guidelines for the UBE, the scheme stresses the inclusion of girls and women and a number of under-served groups; the poor, street and roaming children, rural and remote population, nomads, migrants, workers, indigenous people, minorities, refugees and disabled. The formal education system is only one of six components included in UBE. Others relate to early childhood, literacy and non-formal education or apprenticeship training for youths outside the formal education system.

UBE objectives for schools are to develop communication skills, reflective thinking, sound sense of judgment, understanding health and sanitation, understanding and taking up one's role in the family and the society. (Tsafe, 2013). To implement the programme, government has to establish two committees as part of its strategy to ensure that the goal is achieved, the coordinating committee and the technical committee to be headed by the vice president and the minister of education respectively. The plans include public information and community mobilization, provision of resources, and the setting up of mechanism to facilitate implementation of the programme. There is also need to develop sound implementation plans, which would have to be preceded by a survey of the existing resources and capacity of the national and local planning structures to implement the plan and monitor progress made in order to detect problem areas and address them at an early stage.

The UBE programme if properly implemented would help in ensuring quality in Nigeria education, achievement of the MDGs, more jobs for Nigerian citizens, curbing of indiscipline and crime, reduction in child labour, reduction of gender imbalance, better health for the Nigerian child and reduction of the level of poverty. At the foundation level of implementing any education programme are the teachers. The drive success and the failure of such programme lie with them. Teachers on the field are to implement UBE scheme. The following factors are to be critically considered about the teachers if the UBE programme will be successful: teacher's recruitment, teachers' qualification, teachers' competency, teachers' locality,

teachers' years of experience, availability of teaching infrastructure and materials, teachers' remuneration.

Statement of the Problem

There is no doubt that Nigeria formulate very sound policies in education similar to what is obtainable in advanced countries, yet her education system, across the states is still at a very low level as recorded by 2013 report of National Assessment of Learning Achievement in Basic Education conducted by UBE commission of general poor pupils and students' performance in all subjects which were attributed to supply of instructional materials, poor school environment, poor implementation strategies amongst others. Scholars believe that the major problem facing education in Nigeria is not the absence of good educational policy but lack adequate support at the implementation stage hence this study examines the teacher factor and policy issues in Basic Education in Ondo town.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the teacher factor and policy issues in Basic education in Ondo town. Hence the researcher focuses on:

- how the policy on UBE affects teachers' productivity in Ondo town
- whether there are adequate resources supplied for the programme to boost teachers' competence in Ondo town.
- evaluating the level of awareness that has been created for the teachers on UBE programme in Ondo town.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in the study:

- Do policies in basic education system affect teachers' productivity in Ondo town?
- Are there adequate resources on Basic education system for the teachers' competencies in Ondo town?
- To what extent has awareness been created for teachers on basic education in Ondo town?

Methodology

The research design used in this study is an ex -post facto research design employing the descriptive survey. The population for this study comprised all upper basic level teachers' Junior Secondary School teachers in Ondo town. A total of 10 Junior Secondary Schools in the Ondo town were randomly selected, using simple random sampling technique. 10 teachers from each school (not gender specific) were also

randomly selected, making 100 teachers in all. A structured questionnaire titled ... and consisting of 15 items was constructed. The questionnaire is grouped into sections A and B. Section A contains the Bio-data of the teachers' i.e. background information, while section B contains the 15 itemized questions constructed on a 4 - point invert rating scales from strongly agreed (SA) to strongly disagreed (SD). The questionnaire was given to three experts in the school of education for correction and for face and content validity. The questionnaires were trial tested using 20 teachers from five schools outside the scope of study in Ondo town. The results were used to determine the

reliability coefficient which yielded 0.82 of the instrument using test-re-test method after two weeks period. One hundred copies of the questionnaires were fully completed and returned after administration. This was used in the computing the data used in this study. The researchers personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents by visiting their schools. An explanation for the purpose of the questionnaires was made. The questionnaires were collected immediately to ensure that none of the questionnaire got missing. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	40	40
Female	60	60

Source: Field survey, 2022

The table above shows the distribution of the respondents based on gender. 40% of the respondents were male teachers while 60% were female teachers.

This implies that there were more females respondents than male.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents Based on Academic Qualification

Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
NCE	55	55
B.ED	41	41
PGDE	4	4
M.Ed	-	-
Ph.D	-	-
OTHERS	-	-

Source: Field survey, 2022.

Table 2 above shows that 55% of the respondents had NCE, 44% had B. Ed, 4% had PGDE, none had M. Ed

and none had Ph.D. This implies that most of the respondents had B. Ed.

Research Question 1: Do policies in Basic Education system affect teacher's productivity positively?

Table 3: How Policies in Basic Education affect Teacher's Productivity.

S/N	Do policies in Basic Education system affect teacher's Productivity positively	SA	A	D	SD
1	Teachers have sufficient training on the policies that guide Basic Education system	90%	-	10%	-
2	There is significant effect of Basic Education system on teachers' productivity.	55%	5%	40%	-
3	There is no significant effect of Basic Education on teachers' productivity,	-	40%	5%	55%
4	There are no significant trainings for teachers on the policies that guide Basic Education system.	-	40%	5%	55%
5	UBE implementation strategies are successful in my Local Government Area.	10%	40%	5%	45%

Table 3 shows 90% of the respondents agreed to the fact that teachers have sufficient training on the policies that guide Basic Education system while 10% disagreed. 55% strongly agreed and 5% agreed that there is significant effect of Basic Education system on teacher's productivity while 40% did not. 40% agreed that there is no significant effect of Basic

Education on teacher's productivity while 60% did not agree. 40% agreed that there are no significant trainings for teachers on the policies that guide Basic Education system while 60% did not. 50% agreed that UBE implementation strategies are successful in their Local Government Area while 50% did not agree as well.

Research Question 2: Are there adequate resources for the implementation of UBE to boast teachers' competencies?

Table 4: Whether there are Adequate Resources for the Implementation of UBE to Boast Teachers' Competencies.

S/N NO	Are there adequate resources for the implementation of UBE to boast teachers' competencies?	YES	%
1	Inadequate funding affects teacher's competencies in my Local Government Area	65%	35%
2	Shortage of infrastructures limits teachers' competencies in my Local Government Area	70%	30%
3	Teachers are not skillful to handle the available resources in my Local Government Area.	55%	45%
4	The government is not sensitive to the needs of the teachers in my Local Government Area.	90%	10%
5	The government is not committed to supplying adequate	100%	-

Table 4 shows that 65% agreed that inadequate funding affects teacher's competencies in their local government area while 35% did not. 70% agreed that shortage of infrastructures limits teachers' competencies in their local government area while 30% did not. 55% strongly agreed that teachers are not skillful to handle the available resources in their local

government area while 45% strongly disagree. 90% agreed that the government is not sensitive to the needs of the teachers in their local government area while 10% strongly disagree. All the respondents strongly agree that the government is not committed to supplying adequate resources that can improve teachers' competencies in my local government area.

Research Question 3: To what extent has awareness been created for teachers on basic education in Ondo town?

Table 5: Level of Awareness for Teachers on Basic Education System.

S/N	Is there any significant level of awareness for teachers on basic education system.	YES	%	NO	%
1.	Teachers are adequately informed on Basic Education system in my Local Government Area.	70%	-	-	30%
2.	Teachers are well trained on the use of provided infrastructures for UBE.	100%	-	-	-
3.	Poor monitoring affects the successful implementation of UBE.	100%	-	-	-
4.	Inadequate support from the community to the teachers affects the implementation of UBE.	75%	-	-	35%
5.	Teachers are not aware of the objectives of UBE.	-	-	-	100%

Table 5 shows that 70% strongly agree that teachers are adequately informed on basic education system in my local government area while 30% strongly disagree. All the respondents agreed that teachers are well trained on the use of provided infrastructures for UBE. All also agree that poor monitoring affects the successful implementation of UBE. 75% of the respondents strongly agree that inadequate support from the community to the teachers affects the implementation of UBE while 35% did not agree. Furthermore, all the respondents strongly disagree that teachers are not aware of the objectives of UBE, none agreed.

Discussion of Findings

The study work focused on investigating the teacher factors and policy issues in Basic Education in Ondo State. The analysis has revealed that UBE is a very popular programme whose objectives are partially achieved in Ondo State Local Government Areas. This result is in agreement with the evaluation study of Osadebe (2010) that there was low implementation of the programme in Delta State as UBE objectives have not been fully achieved in the State. The result disagrees with Delta Ministry of Information (2008) which reported that so much has been done in the area of education. The results further reveal that problems faced in the implementation of the Basic Education policies include inadequate support from the community to the teachers, poor monitoring from the government, shortage of infrastructures limits teachers' competencies and so on. Araromi (2007) supported this finding that inadequate funding poor infrastructure, delay in payment and lack of instructional materials are the problems against UBE programme.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were suggested:

1. The funds allocated by the federal government to drive the policies do not commensurate with the demands let alone the realization or its set objective, so the government should release enough funds for the implementation of the policy.
2. The federal government should see to the regular in-service training of the teachers to keep them updated and competent to implement the policy successfully.
3. The government should ensure adequate supply of resources that can improve teachers' competencies on the implementation of the

programme.

4. Orientation programs that can improve the level of awareness of the teachers and the public on the objectives of the programmes should be organized across the local government areas. This would increase the level of support the teachers enjoy in actualizing the objectives of the program.
5. Frequent research, monitoring and evaluation of the programme by the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) should be intensified.

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