

An Assessment of Basic Education Curriculum Implementation for Sustainable Development of Public Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State

Audi Abubakar Ahmed, Yakubu Gunde & Moneke Ursula Ngozi

Department of Educational Foundations, Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

Corresponding author: audiahmedabu@gmail.com

Abstract

This study assessed the implementation of basic education curriculum for sustainable development of Junior Secondary Schools. The study was carried out to ascertain the adequacy of available school facilities, teachers and instructional resources for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised of 1,907 teachers in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 320 as respondents. A modified four points Likert – Type rating scale questionnaire was used to gather data and the data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics to answer research questions and hypotheses respectively. The study found that there was inadequate school facilities, supply of teachers and instructional resources for teaching and learning. Some of the recommendations were provision of adequate school facilities, massive recruitment of teachers and State Universal Basic Education Board should carry out awareness campaign on the need for effective implementation of UBE curriculum.

Keywords: Universal Basic Education, Curriculum, Public, Junior, Secondary Schools, Sustainable Development and Programme Implementation.

Introduction

The introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in 30th September, 1999 in place of the UPE that had failed was an outcome of the world inference on education held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 (Ukpong, 2020). As observed by Yolo (2004) the concept of Basic Education is not completely new in terms of the Nigerian society. To Yolo, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria can be said to be the product of earlier educational schemes or programmes. Universal Basic Education (UBE) is education meant for children between the ages of 6 to 15 years which a child will acquire basic literacy, numeracy, manipulative and communicative skills in addition to moral and civic values for living. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (NPE, 2004) defined the Universal Basic Education in section 15(1) of the compulsory free Universal Basic Education Act as “early childhood care education and nine year of formal education: This law described the UBE programme to include six years of primary education (primary 1-6) and the next 3 years of junior secondary education (JS 1-3), hence the universal Basic Education programme has the broad aim of laying a solid foundation for life-long learning through inculcation of appropriate learning to learn self-awareness, citizenship and the skills for every Nigerian child of school age.

According to Ukpong (2012) Universal Basic Education programme is packaged to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty. It is important to understand that the Universal Declaration for Human Rights asserts that "everyone has a right to education". This declaration engaged efforts from all countries of the world to universalize basic education which Nwagbara (2012) described it as that level, type and form of learning needed to build firm roots for literacy and numeracy, to inculcate basic life skills and more importantly, consolidate the skills of how to learn. As stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (NPE, 2014), the Universal Basic Education Programme is universal, free and compulsory education. Every Nigerian child of school age is provided with opportunities to go to school. Educational programmes are set up to teach or instruct learners on acquiring knowledge, skills, ideas, principles into order to advance progress in the society. Education is inherently tied to curriculum. A curriculum is a plan or programme of all experiences which the learner encounters under the direction of a school (Danladi and Akinola, 2012). Baba (2015) also mentioned that curriculum is the planned interaction of pupils with instrument, content, materials, resources and process for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives. For others such as Denga (2012), curriculum is the planned and unplanned learning experiences to which learners are exposed to within the school environment for individual and collective growth. From the definitions above, it is possible to state that a curriculum comprises the learning experiences of children for which the schools are responsible, it has content, it is planned and it is a series of courses to be taken by students.

The 9-year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) was introduced in response to Nigerians need for relevant, dynamic and globally competitive education that would ensure socio-economic and national development. BEC was developed to ensure that learners at the basic education level are capable to compete favorably anywhere in the world in terms of knowledge, skills technique and values (NPE, 2012). The curriculum accommodated the functions of both National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MGDS). Thus, BEC addresses among other things, the issue of value, orientation, poverty eradication, and critical thinking, entrepreneurship, and life skills. Specifically, the objectives of Universal Basic Education Curriculum launched 2008 are as follows:

- i. Developing in the entire citizens a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
- ii. Providing free and compulsory universal basic education for every Nigerian child.
- iii. Reducing drastically the incidence of early leaving from the formal school system, thus catering for drop-out from school.
- iv. 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 of basic education.

- v. Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life-skills as well as the ethical, moral and civil Values for laying a solid foundation for life-long learning (NPE, 2000).

Curriculum implementation is the sum total of all the organized activities geared towards the actualization of the goals and objectives of the curriculum. In line with that, Garba (2009) viewed curriculum implementation as putting the curriculum into work for the achievement of the goals for which the curriculum is designed. Okebukola (2008) also described curriculum implementation as the translation of the objectives of the curriculum from paper to practice. Japa (2008) further observed that implementation is simply the set of activities directed towards putting a programme into effect. Therefore, curriculum implementation involves the interaction between teachers, learners and other stakeholders in education geared towards achieving the objectives of education. In Nigeria, the 9-year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) was produced and distributed to all public primary schools nationwide in 2007 and its implementation commenced nationwide in primary 1 and JSS 1 classes in September, 2008. It was implemented to provide free, universal and compulsory basic education for every child age 6-15 years (NPE, 2004). Also, its implementation was geared towards the attainment of the targets of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS). The implementation of the Basic Education Curriculum is overseen by the UBE commission (Asotibe et al, 2015). Okoroma (2016) further elaborated that implementation of Basic Education and Management in Nigeria is the responsibility of Local Education (LGEAS) under the supervision of State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEBS) and the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) at the federal level. The first batch of JSS students graduated in 2014 while primary school pupils would have entered class of the junior secondary by September, 2014. However, its effective implementation is marred by so many challenges or obstacles.

Statement of the Problem

Effective implementation of any education curriculum to a great extent is the main key to the actualization of the objectives of such education programme. This is because the problem of most laudable programmes arises at the implementation stage. It is at the implementation stage that many excellent curriculum plans and other educational policies are marred without any trace. No matter how well a curriculum is planned, designed and developed, implementation is very important. The implementation of Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) has been marred by some challenges that hindered sustainable development of public junior secondary schools. Among these challenges are lack of adequate school facilities, qualified teachers and instructional resources in public junior secondary schools in Nasarawa State.

Purpose of the Study

This study is meant to access the implementation of Basic Education Curriculum for sustainable development of Public Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State. Thus, specifically, the study is designed to:

1. Ascertain the adequacy of available school facilities for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools.
2. Find out the adequacy of teachers for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools.
3. Examine the adequacy of instructional resources available for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools.

Research Questions

Three research questions raised to guide the study are as follows:

1. How adequate are the available school facilities for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools?
2. How adequate are the available teachers for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools?
3. How adequate are the available instructional resources for implementation of Basic Education in Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools?

Research Method

The design used for this study was the descriptive survey. The population for this study comprised 1,907 teachers in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State. A sample of 320 Students were used for the study based on Krajce and Morgan Table for determination of sample size. The researchers used both stratified and simple random sampling techniques to select the respondents. The stratified random sampling was used to group the Junior Secondary Schools into strata as Local Government Area (LGA). Subsequently, a simple random sampling was used to select one school each from the twelve Local Government Areas of Nasarawa State and 320 Students were randomly selected from the sampled schools. The instrument used for collection of data was titled Assessment of Basic Education Curriculum Implementation in Junior Secondary Schools (ABECII) was divided into sections: Section A contain demographic data and Section B has items on research questions. The items were structured using a modified 4-points Likert-type rating scale with the following grading: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point. The mean score is 2.5 $(4+3+2+1/4)$. To ascertain the validity of the instrument, it was given to three lecturers in Nasarawa State University, Keffi to validate. They made corrections and suggestions were taken into consideration. At the second look, they adjudged the instrument valid. To establish the reliability of the instrument, it was pilot tested using 35 students from GSS Laminga and GC Keffi. The split half method was adopted and Pearson product moment correlation statistics was used to compute the reliability coefficient and yielded a reliable

coefficient of 0.81 which means that the instrument is reliable. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation to answer research questions. When the mean score is 2.5 and above, it was accepted in explaining the phenomenon while the mean score below 2.5 was adjudged weak and rejected in explaining the phenomenon.

Results

Research Question One: How adequate are the available school facilities for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum for sustainable development of Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools?

Table 1: Teachers' mean Responses on how Adequate are the Available Facilities in Public Junior Secondary Schools.

N=320

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	In my school, classrooms for teaching and learning are adequate.	1.07	0.94	Rejected
2.	In my school, some students receive instructions under the tree.	0.65	0.97	Rejected
3.	In my school, we have 50 students per class	1.80	0.89	Rejected
4.	In my school, students are not congested in the classrooms.	1.91	0.93	Rejected
5.	In my school, text books in the library are adequately supplied.	1.40	0.95	Rejected
6.	In my school, students often complained of lack of text books in some subject area.	2.62	0.61	Accepted
7.	In my school, some of the text books in the library are too old and obsolete.	2.68	1.08	Accepted
8.	In my school, teachers' chairs and tables are	1.23	0.90	Rejected
9.	adequate. In my school, some teachers lack chairs and tables in the staffroom.	2.64	0.66	Accepted
10.	In my school, classroom seats for students are adequate.	1.06	0.98	Rejected
11.	In my school, some students receive instructions while standing in the class.	2.52	0.94	Accepted
12.	In my school, some students sit on the floor during lessons.	2.61	1.05	Accepted
13.	In my school, laboratory's equipment's are adequate.	1.84	0.91	Rejected
14.	In my school, some teachers borrow laboratory equipment from neighboring schools to teach.	2.54	0.78	Accepted

15.	In my school, at least four students sit on a seat in the classroom.	2.61	0.68	Accepted
16.	In my school, drugs are inadequate in the school clinic.	2.82	0.80	Accepted
17.	In my school, students often complained of lack of drugs in the school clinic.	3.01	0.62	Accepted
18.	My school has football field.	2.67	1.00	Accepted
19.	In my school, other sporting activities are available apart from football.	0.80	0.92	Rejected
20.	In my school, other sporting equipment's are not supply.	2.73	0.62	Accepted
Overall Mean		2.09		

Field Survey, 2022.

Table 1 presents mean and standard deviation scores on the responses of teachers on how adequate the available facilities in public Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State. The table revealed that items were accepted or rejected respective of their variations in mean scores and standard deviation. Items: 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 20 with mean values above 2.50 and their standard deviation ranged between 0.62 and 1.08 which showed their responses were far apart and were accepted while items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 13 and 19 that had their mean values below the set mean of 2.50 and their standard deviation ranged between 0.89 and 0.97 which showed that their responses were not far apart and were rejected. The overall mean of 2.09 was obtained which showed that the available school facilities are not adequate to ensuring sustainable development of junior secondary schools in Nasarawa state.

Research Question 2: How adequate are the available teachers for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nasarawa state Junior Secondary Schools.

Table 2: Teachers mean responses on how adequate are the available teachers in public Junior Secondary Schools.

N=320

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	In my school, all teachers have professional qualification.	3.02	0.76	Accepted
2.	In my school, we have adequate supply of teachers.	2.01	0.86	Rejected
3.	In my school, teachers attend workshop and seminar regularly.	1.82	0.82	Rejected
4.	In my school, we have sufficient Mathematics and English teacher.	1.96	0.84	Rejected

5.	In my school, some teachers teach students other than their discipline.	2.55	0.78	Accepted
6.	In my school, teachers are overloaded with work.	2.56	1.04	Accepted
7.	In my school, teachers sometimes miss classes due to heavy workload.	3.05	0.51	Accepted
8.	In my school, some teachers were reprimanded by the principal due to incompetency, lack of commitment and dedication to work.	2.83	0.70	Accepted
9.	In my school, all teachers are experienced.	1.93	0.78	Rejected
10.	In my school, all teachers have in depth knowledge and mastery of their subject area.	2.21	0.84	Rejected
Overall Mean		2.29		

Field Survey, 2022.

Table 2 presents mean and standard deviation scores on the responses of teachers on how adequate are the available teachers in Public Junior Secondary Schools. The table revealed that items: 1, 6, 7 and 8 with mean value above 2.50 and their standard deviation ranged between 0.51 and 1.04 which showed that their responses were far apart and were accepted. However, items: 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10 that had their mean value below the set mean of 2.50 and their standard deviation ranged between 0.82 and 0.88 which showed that their responses were not far apart and were rejected. The overall mean of 2.29 was obtained which showed that the available teachers for sustainable development of Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State are not adequate.

Research Question 3: How adequate are the available instructional resources for implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nasarawa State Junior Secondary Schools?

Table 3: Teachers' mean responses on how adequate are the available instructional resources in Public Junior Secondary Schools.

N=320

Items	Mean	SD	Decision
In my school, we have adequate markers and white boards for teaching and learning.	2.05	0.84	Rejected
In my school, we have adequate text books for teaching and learning in library.	1.87	0.82	Rejected
In my school, we have adequate charts and pictures for teaching and learning.	2.12	0.76	Rejected
In my school, we have adequate science equipment's for teaching and learning.	1.98	0.80	Rejected

In my school, we have adequate maps and pictures for teaching and learning.	2.01	0.79	Rejected
In my school, we have adequate home economics equipment's for teaching and learning.	1.82	0.81	Rejected
In my school, we have adequate posters and drawing equipment's for teaching and learning.	1.78	0.77	Rejected
In my school, we have adequate audio-visual equipment's for teaching and learning.	1.88	0.84	Rejected
In my school, we have adequate modern resources for teaching and learning.	1.68	0.78	Rejected
In my school, teachers improvise some resources for teaching and learning.	3.05	1.08	Accepted
Overall Mean	2.02		
Field Survey, 2022.			

Table 3 presents mean and standard deviation scores on the responses of teachers on how adequate are the available instructional resources in Public Junior Secondary Schools. The table revealed that items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 with the mean value below the set mean of 2.50 and their standard deviation ranged between 0.78 and 0.84 which showed that their responses were not far apart and were rejected. However, item 10 had its mean value above 2.50 and standard deviation of 1.08 which showed that the response of item 10 was far apart from others and was accepted. The overall mean of 2.02 was obtained which showed that the available instructional resources for sustainable development of Public Junior Secondary Schools in Nasarawa State are not adequate.

Discussion

The study assessed the implementation of Basic Education curriculum for sustainable development of Junior Secondary Schools. The result of the analyzed data in table 1 revealed that the available school facilities are not adequate to ensuring sustainable development of Public Junior Secondary Schools. This is in line with the findings of Ukpong (2020) which revealed that there was inadequate supply of school facilities in junior secondary schools. The findings confirmed that classrooms, student seats, teachers' chairs and tables, laboratory equipment's, drugs in school clinics, books in the library and sporting activities/equipment's are inadequate for sustainable development of public junior schools. However, it was found out that only football activities are observed in public junior schools. The findings also revealed that lack of text books in some subject areas and some books are too absolute in the school library. Some teachers lack chairs and tables in the staffroom and some students receive instructions while standing or sitting on the floor in classrooms but not under the tree. Finally, students often complained of lack of drugs in the school clinic.

The result presented in table 2 of the study showed that the available teachers in public junior secondary schools are not adequate. This collaborates Olakunle (2019) who find out that inadequate supply of teachers marred the implementation of Basic Education Curriculum (BEC). The findings of the study revealed that some subjects lacked teachers. There is inadequate supply of teachers as such some of them were made to teach subjects other than their discipline or area. This means that such teachers lack experience and indebt knowledge or mastery of that subject area. They don't attend workshop and seminar regularly to improve their knowledge and skills in teaching. There are also insufficient teachers for mathematics, English and Science teachers. The data analyzed also revealed that consequence to insufficient supply of teachers led to teachers sometimes miss classes due to heavy workload. Some teachers are being reprimanded by principals due to lack of commitment and dedication to work.

The result presented in table 3 of the study showed that the available institutional resources are not adequate to ensuring sustainable development of public junior secondary schools. As indicates by Olakule (2019), inadequate resources for teaching and learning hinder effective implementation of Basic Education Curriculum. The findings confirmed that white board and markers, text books in library, charts, maps, posters and pictures are inadequate for effective teaching and learning. Science, home economic and drawing equipment's are inadequate let alone modern resources for teaching and learning in public junior secondary schools. Consequently, teachers have to improvise some resources for teaching and learning.

Conclusion

This study assessed the implementation of Basic Education Curriculum for sustainable developments of public junior secondary schools. The result of the study has provided empirical proof that inadequate school facilities, teachers and instructional resources prevented successful implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in public junior secondary schools. It also evident based on the findings that school facilities, teachers and instructional resources must be improved in both quantity and quality in ensuring sustainable development of public junior schools. This has serious implementation on government funding of universal Basic Education.

Recommendation

In order to ensure sustainable development of public junior secondary schools in Nasarawa State, the following recommendations were made to enable effective implementation of Basic Education Curriculum:

- i. Provision of adequate school facilities to ensuring effective implementation of Universal Basic Education Curriculum. This includes supply of more teachers' chairs/tables and students' seats in classrooms. There should be building of more classrooms to accommodate the increasing school enrolments and well equipped

- libraries in schools with relevant books. Also, there is the need for more laboratory and sporting equipment's in schools. All this will ensure effective teaching and learning.
- ii. Massive recruitment of professional qualified teachers in various subjects. There should be adequate teachers in schools such that teachers are not converted to teach subjects other than their discipline or subject area. Special attention and consideration should be given to Mathematics and English teachers in terms of recruitment.
 - iii. Regular training and re-training programmes in form of seminars, conferences, workshops and in-service training should be organized at regular intervals to stimulate the teachers' influence in improving their productivity.
 - iv. Increase access to instructional resources that are pedagogically sound, culturally relevant and physically durable. Instructional resources such as charts, maps, posters and other relevant modern resources should be adequately supplied in schools for teachers to use during the teaching and learning process.
 - v. For Basic Education to be implemented effectively, prevailing issues and challenges have to be handled by all the stakeholders as important priority to education and indeed Universal Basic Education.
 - vi. The State Universal Education Board should carry out awareness campaign on the need for effective implementation of Universal Basic Education Curriculum despite the limited resources at her disposal.

References

- Asotibe, W. Christiana, T. A & Amuche, A. (2015). Appraisal of the Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. *Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development*. 8(2):144-168
- Baba, M. (2015). *Curriculum innovation and implementation*. Zaria Sabon Gari: YAG Enterprise.
- Danladi, E. N & Akinola, D. B. (2012). Teachers' Views on best practices in social studies curriculum implementation in schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. *Abuja Journal of Education*. 7(1): 147-157.
- Denga, D.T. (2012). *Educational and social psychology for schools and social organizations*. Calabar: Cleanliness Publications.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2000). *National policy on education*. NERDC Press, Lagos.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2012). *National policy on education*. NERDC Press, Lagos.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014). *National policy on education*. NERDC Press, Lagos.
- Garba, M. (2009). *The critical role of educational resources on curriculum implementation* in Noah, A.O.K., Shonibare, D.O. & Olujuwon, T. (Eds) Curriculum implementation and professionalizing teaching in Nigeria, Lagos: Central Educational Service.
- Japa, M. I. (2008). *Challenges to the implementation of universal basic education in Nigeria* in Maduka, C. & Afemiche (Eds). Issues in education, government and development. Benin City: Amfitop.
- Nwagbara, C. (2012). Enhancing quality in language and literacy development at the basic education level: The challenges. *Journal of Nigeria Academy of Education*. 2(91): 201-210.
- Okebukola, P.A. (2008). Curriculum implementation in Nigeria, *strategies for the 21st century* in Noah, A.O. Shonibare, D.O., Ojo, A.A & Olujuwon, T. (Ed.) Curriculum implementation and professionalizing teaching in Nigeria. Lagos: Central Educational Service.
- Okoroma, N.S. (2016). Educational policies and problems of implementation in Nigeria. *Australian journal of adult learning*. 46(2):84-101.

- Olakunle, S.A. (2019). *Implementation of Basic Education Curriculum in Nigeria: Challenges and directions for further action*. A discourse on educational issues, in Faculty of Education, University of Abuja.
- Ukpong, J.S. (2012). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Basic Education in Nigeria. *Natioanl Project Series*. 1(1):118-130.
- Ukpong, J.S., Wisdom, I.J & Bassey, E. (2020). Towards effective Basic Education programme in Anambra State: Issues and challenges of smooth implementation. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies (CON)*. 27(1):216-227.
- Yoloye, P. (2004). Facilities Utilization and Management. Paper Presentation at NAEAP Conference held in Imo State University, Owerri 29th Nov. - 2nd Dec. 2004.