

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSAL BASIC
EDUCATION (UBE) POLICY IN NIGERIA:
A CASE STUDY OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY (FCT)**

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ABSTRACT

The study is an investigation into the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy in Nigeria: A case study of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The purpose of the study is to investigate the manner in which the FCT Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB) is implementing the UBE policy, with a view to finding out if the policy is achieving its stated principal objective of providing qualitative, free, compulsory, universal basic education to all eligible Nigerians between the ages of six and fifteen. The study adopted the exploratory survey method and had a sample of 228 respondents randomly selected from staff of the FCT UBEB, teaching/non-teaching staff of public primary and junior secondary schools in the FCT. A 13-item open and close-ended questionnaire was used in obtaining primary data, which was supplemented with secondary data. Data were analyzed using the simple percentage statistical method, while the theoretical framework of analysis adopted for the study was the Iglesias Model of Public Policy Implementation Process. The investigation produced the following findings, among others: The FCT UBEB was slow in achieving its objectives; The quality of the UBE programme design and inputs was inadequate in the FCT; The UBE in the FCT lacked adequate human, institutional and financial resources for the implementation of the policy; The UBE in the FCT enjoyed stable political environment; and The UBE in the FCT lacked adequate monitoring. Consequently, the study has advanced some recommendations, which included that The Government should urgently re-structure the UBE legal framework and implementation procedure in such a way that the UBE policy programme shall be adequately and centrally funded to ensure adequate funding and timely release of approved financial allocations, effective monitoring, provision of adequate facilities/human resources of the UBE in the FCT, among others.

INTRODUCTION

Policy implementation is the totality of the process of achieving desired objectives of a given policy. Public policies are supposed to solve crucial problems a society faces. Being that public policies are projected means of improving human conditions, it is the preserve of the government of the day to

determine, to spell out, and implement a public policy according to the government's interpretation of the prevailing public opinion and/or public good at any given time. Accordingly, Governments meet educational needs of a society through policies, often pursued through the instrumentality of organizational devices like the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB), and some operational mechanisms, among others.

The record of basic education policy implementation in Nigeria dates back to the colonial era, during which free universal basic education was not contemplated by the then British colonial government. The state of affairs is understandable for the reason that the conception of the colonial government in Nigeria, in the words of Scott (1938:737) "was one of exploitation and development for the people of Britain." It was to the same purpose that the colonial educational policy was directed. In other words, education was very scarce, because the colonial government successfully implemented its deliberate policy of grossly under-educating the people of Nigeria. For instance, Coleman (1952:125) carried out a comparative study of colonial primary education enrolment figures in six African countries and discovered that in the 1950s the percentage of children of school age actually in school were as follows: Northern Rhodesia 46%, Gold Coast 45%, Belgian Congo 42%, Kenya 32%, Uganda 28%, and Nigeria 19%. That was the ugly scenario then despite the fact that Nigeria was the most populous British colony in Africa.

That obnoxious colonial policy on basic education delivery pursued by the Education Department of the colonial Government in Nigeria persisted despite the 1948 United Nations Organization Universal Declaration of Human Rights that stated in Article 26. The global objective clearly stated the fact that education was/is a right and not a privilege of the child. In fact, education is more than mere right but a fundamental human right, which should be respected by all nations. Alluding to this fact, Nwagwu (1976:4) affirms that "the right to education is a basic right necessary for the achievement of all other freedoms." The colonial power justified its cruel position with lame excuses like paucity of funds and prevention of possible social destabilization arising from glaring limited employment opportunities in the country then as posited by Lugard in 1926. That was the status quo till Nigeria broke away from the British colonial yoke on 1st October, 1960.

Even the regionalization policy vigorously pursued by the various Regional Governments in Nigeria prior to the country's independence, "largely unguided by an adequate socio-economic theory or analysis of the colonial social structures," (Nnoli, 1980:81). Various regional governments embarked upon unplanned provision of universal free primary education. According to Fasasi (2007), the Obafemi Awolowo-led Western Region set the pace in 1955; while the Nnamdi Azikiwe Eastern Regional Government, under intense pressure, followed suit in 1956. Neither the West nor the East could sustain the policy largely due to paucity of funds, deliberately orchestrated by the colonial government, in the first instance. But, sooner than later, the two regions, overwhelmed by the burden of the free basic education policy, directly and/or indirectly, variously aborted the populist policy through introduction of school fees in primary schools, fees that most parents/guardians could ill-afford. The sudden policy reversal occasioned much bickering among the masses. The famous Owerri women protest of 1958, for instance, was consequent upon the abortion of the implementation of the universal free primary education policy of the Eastern Region Government.

The post-independence educational system endorsed unique basic education policy programmes under the various regimes that governed the Nation. They were all directed towards realizing the national objectives, which Sani (1994:207) asserts is based on the Nigerian philosophy of education namely the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and the provision of equal educational opportunities for all citizens of the Nation at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, both within and without the formal school system. Some of the policy programmes in relation to basic education delivery include the following:

- (i) The action of the Federal Government and most States of the Federation in forcefully taking over voluntary agency-owned/operated schools from their proprietors though they did not benefit from government grants/aids, and perhaps, consequently charged exorbitant school fees;
- (ii) The Federal Government's launch of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1976 to provide every Nigerian child with the opportunity of going to school without paying any fee;
- (iii) The introduction of the 6-3-3-4 system of education, with its novel concept of Junior Secondary Schools (JSS), where emphasis is to equip students with basic technical cum vocational skills; and

- (iv) The introduction of nomadic education, to provide functional education to nomadic children everywhere in the country (Sani, 1994:207).

Some of the policy programmes were ambitious, full of hope, and promises for the citizens. With their implementation, rapid changes were noticed in the management of the Nation's basic educational system. Some of the policy programmes, however, failed to produce the desired results and became the unenviable target of public criticisms and conduit pipes for siphoning public funds by a powerful education mafia. The failure of some of these policy programmes typifies the wide gap existing between policy pronouncements and policy implementation in Nigeria. This is in tandem with Sani's (1994:182) belief that it is always at the implementation stage that most policy programmes of the Government on education experience obstinate problems. In the same vein, Tijani (1995:29) ascribes the failures of some of the educational programmes to poor implementation strategies in terms of planning, execution and the adaptation of the policy objectives to societal needs and expectations. That the country was in dire need of trained, experienced and seasoned educational administrators at all levels of the system, among others, was rightly recognized by Akpa and Udoh (2003: 18-30). In further concurrence, Ajayi and Ajayi (1989:236) affirm that "there was shortage of everything except pupils!"

The ugly trend continued till 30th September, 1999, when the Olusegun Obasanjo civilian government announced the re-birth of the universal free basic education policy, this time inclusive of not only primary education, but also pre-primary education, junior secondary education (first three years of secondary education) and adult education as well. In so far as the UBE policy, like its precursors, was hurriedly introduced and being that continuous interactions of policy theory and policy practice mutually inform each other (Howard, 1982), the present study became imperative to establish the linkage between the UBE policy objectives and the "effective implementation of what was consciously stated as the objectives" (Howard, 1982:15) of the said policy in Nigeria, using the FCT as case study. For instance, according to Obiageli Ezekwesili, former Education Minister, there were some 42.1 million Nigerians eligible for primary education, but only 22.03 million were actually in primary schools as at the end of 2005, the implication being that about 19.8 million (47%) of Nigerians who should have been in primary schools were not. The former Minister added that with the current pupil enrolment a total of 150,000 primary schools and 251,030 classrooms were needed as well as 297,400 more primary school teachers to complement the existing number of primary school teachers (UBE Digest, 2005:36). This study became pertinent in order to enhance the achievement of UBE objectives and to guide against a repeat of the lamentation of Fasasi (2007:36) that: "one characteristic of the past educational programmes is post-execution assessment, whereby flaws became manifest after the programmes had terminated."

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this work is to investigate the extent to which the objectives of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Policy were being achieved in Nigeria, using the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) as a case study. The UBE policy, which was being implemented in the FCT by the UBEB and various LEAs, contemplates provision of free, compulsory, universal basic education up to Junior Secondary School level for every Nigerian child between the ages of six and fifteen in the Territory.

Given that Nigeria's earlier attempt to implement the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme which was limited to six years of primary education was a colossal failure, the present study examines whether the UBE policy implementation, an obvious elaboration of the scope of the erstwhile UPE policy, was adequately expanding the cause of effective and efficient free, compulsory, universal basic education delivery in the FCT. With a larger pupil population at the time of the study and the gargantuan financial, infrastructural, and manpower implications of implementing a policy like the UBE, it was interesting to review the process of implementing the UBE policy programme.

The study therefore investigated the administrative capability of the FCT UBEB in implementing the UBE policy in the FCT. The study therefore sought answers to the following questions: Is the quality of the programme design and inputs adequate for the achievement of UBE goals in the FCT? Are there adequate human, institutional, and financial resources for the implementation of the UBE in the FCT? Is the political system in which the UBE is being implemented in the FCT stable? Is the extent of the monitoring of the implementation of the UBE in the FCT adequate? All these shall climax with the making of cogent recommendations towards ensuring effective implementation of not only the UBE policy, but also similar development-oriented public policies in the Nation.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To confirm the adequacy of the quality of the UBE programme design and inputs in the FCT;
2. To examine whether there are adequate human, institutional, and financial resources for the implementation of the UBE in the FCT;
3. To find out whether or not the political system in which the UBE was being implemented in the FCT is stable; and
4. To confirm whether or not the extent of monitoring of the implementation process of the UBE in the FCT was adequate; an.

Research Propositions

Based on the above research questions, the following propositions accordingly guided the study:

Proposition 1: There were inadequate human, institutional, and financial resources for the implementation of the UBE in the FCT;

Proposition 2: The political system in which the UBE was being implemented in the FCT is unstable;

Proposition 3: The operational environment of the UBE in the FCT is unsuitable for the implementation of the policy;

Proposition 4: The extent of monitoring of the implementation process of the UBE in the FCT is inadequate;

Significance of the Study/Contribution to knowledge

This study was expected to be significant in many ways since it was interested in studying the process and outcome of the intricate relationship between the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy objectives and the implementation of the policy programme by the FCT UBEB. First, it would provide a strong reference point to scholars of public policy, public administration, political science, education, and so on, interested in investigating public policy matters in Nigeria, especially the UBE policy. Second, being that the UBE policy, as formulated, was apparently novel, a study of this nature would certainly add to the body of knowledge not only on the implementation of the UBE policy, but also the implementation of similar public policies in FCT. Third, public policy makers would find the study a very useful guide for purposes of review or modifications of the policy or similar policies, as the case may be.

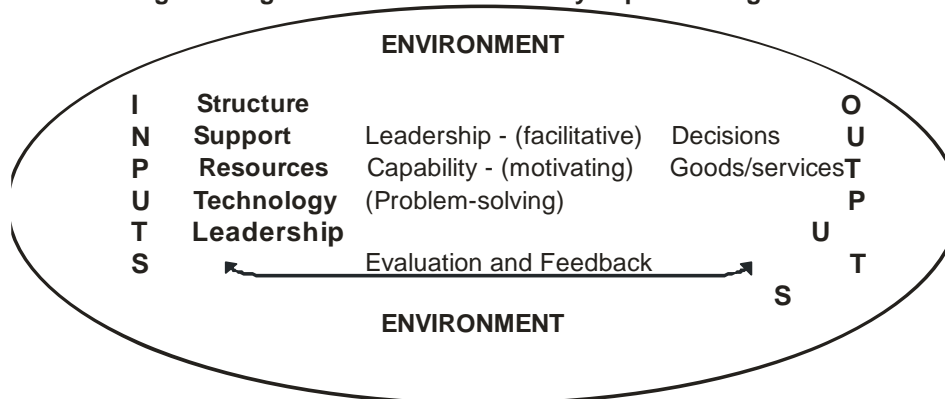
Fourth, the UBE policy implementers in the FCT and elsewhere would find it a veritable help in incrementally and decrementally adjusting their implementation strategies, where necessary. Fifth, it would be invaluable to the general public in assessing the progress or otherwise of the UBE in the FCT.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework chosen for this study is the *Iglesias Model of Policy Implementation*. The model has been considered internationally useful in analyzing the implementation of policies in developing countries like Nigeria. Propounded by Iglesias (1976), using the Asian experience, this model analyzes the policy implementation process as a function of the administrative capability of the implementing agency officially charged with the implementation of a policy. It is chiefly concerned with the administrative implications of implementing a policy programme as soon as a decision has been taken to float the policy programme. It is therefore centered on issues like the planning and management of available resources instead of issues relating to whether or not the envisaged programme is attractive. According to Egonmwan (2000:144), Iglesias (1976) therefore tries to *isolate and identify such factors or variables which enhance or increase the capability of administrative organizations to implement programmes as well as impeding factors or variables which tend to decrease administrative capability to convert or process critical inputs of the programs into certain outputs such as goods and services.*

To further elucidate the Iglesias model of policy implementation as the administrative capability of the implementing public institution, the figure below represents the model.

Figure 1 Iglesias Model of the Policy Implementing Process.



Source: Iglesias, G. U. (1976).”Implementation and the Planning of Development: Notes, Trends and Issues, Focusing on the Concept of Administrative Capability.” In Gabriel U. Iglesias *Implementation: The Problem of Achieving Results. A casebook on Asia Experiences.* Manila, Philippines, 1976, pp. xv-xxxix. Cited in Egonmwan, J.A. (2000).Public Policy Analysis: Concepts and Applications. Benin City: Resyin (Nig.) Company p.145.

Figure 1 above illustrates the Iglesias model of policy implementing process viewed as an administrative capability system. Iglesias model of the implementation process is typical of the systems theory. It is made up of an operational environment comprised of inputs, the conversion process and the outputs. The model emphasizes that the structure, the support, the resources, the technology, and the leadership inputs of a policy implementing agency, producing the administrative capability of the agency to take vital qualitative decisions, motivate the workers and solve problems that ultimately lead to outputs in form of production of goods/services. To sustain the administrative capacity of the implementing agency, regular evaluation and feedback are carried out by weighing the outputs against the various inputs. The central theme of this model is that an adjustment in any of the inputs will affect the capacity of the other inputs and ultimately the outputs. The five components of the critical inputs identified by Iglesias model namely resources, structure, technology, support, and leadership located within the environment of policy implementation are discussed below.

i. Resources

Resources, according to the model, consist of human and the non human components. Human components include programmed personnel, while non human resources include funding, physical plant and equipment, instructional materials, and so forth.

ii. Structure

Iglesias considers structure as an input in relation to certain stable organizational roles and relationships germane to a policy programme, whether or not organizational roles and relationships are approved legally or informally, by convention or both.

iii. Technology

The term *technology* which has to do with the requisite knowledge and behavior essential for the operation of the implementing organization, but more particularly the knowledge and practice essentially required by the given programme. In this sense, the knowledge may possibly be technical, specialized and as required, for instance, to organize the duties of the programme personnel, planning, and finding resources.

iv. Support

The term *support* denotes the whole range of actual or potential roles and behavior of persons and entities which have a propensity to promote attainment of certain organizational goals.

v. **Leadership**

Leadership is an important input, a central processing or conversion factor. It facilitates other inputs into outputs with the administrative framework of a policy implementing agency like the FCT UBEB. Leadership is considered in relation to its ability to alter and modify other vital inputs in the implementation of a development programme. Indeed, Iglesias (1976) conceives of leadership in relation to three qualities of the behavioral activities of critical officials of the implementing organization like the FCT UBEB. The activities are those related to facilitation of the process of implementing a policy programme, those that have to do with removing the numerous obstacles and solving the problems associated with the implementation, and motivational activities aimed at ensuring optimum commitment towards attaining the objectives of a policy programme like the UBE.

Furthermore, Iglesias (1976) insists that the five components of the model's inputs are as essential and critical in programme and project implementation as they vary in magnitude, time spans and quality. Furthermore, the five components of model are held to be interrelated and interdependent as deficiencies in one of them could have crucial effect(s) on the others. In a nutshell, the Iglesias model of policy implementation contends that the implementation process is a mechanical exercise that could be manipulated in order to produce projected outputs.

The shortcoming of this model is that it assumes that inputs such as technology and support would always be very much available in developing countries, since the demands and pressures are supposedly the source of policies. In reality, the reverse is usually the case because the political system is rather the source of policies in most developing countries. The masses or the civil society, under the heavy yoke of primordial factors, ignorance and pervading poverty seldomly checkmate their governments as expected of an informed vibrant democracy. Invariably, the Iglesias model discountenances invisible outputs like strikes and rebellions. On a conclusive note, Egonmwan (2000:146) asserts that "the model has drawn attention to the most chronic problem of leadership in the Third World in terms of leadership ability to alter and modify the critical inputs of development programmes for the purpose of achieving policy goals." Accordingly, the implementation of the UBE in the FCT shall be x-rayed in the light of the interface between the UBE policy inputs and outputs.

Research Methodology

The researchers employed the use of primary data. The primary data sources include the results obtained from questionnaires and first-hand observations. Data were also sourced from secondary sources in published and unpublished works, periodicals, books, journals, magazines, newspapers, official documents and the internet.

Proportional Stratified Sampling Technique was used in selecting the respondents among different categories of staff used for the study. The sample was therefore systematically chosen in order to proportionately represent the population of the study in accordance with the respective numerical strength of each category. Questionnaires were distributed to 300 respondents, as predetermined by the researcher. The three categories of respondents were each administered with 63 (21%), 197 (66%), and 40 (13%) of the questionnaires in the FCT to obtain their opinions on the subject of the study. The categories were as follows: selected Senior Staff of the FCT Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB), selected Teaching/Non-teaching staff of Junior Secondary Schools (JSSs). The sample comprised of people with many similar characteristics. Specifically, the sample was randomly drawn from Bwari, Gwagwalada and Abuja Municipal Area Councils in addition to the FCT UBEB office, as clearly presented in Tables below.

Table 1 Distribution of Questionnaires in Bwari Area Council

Area council	Institution /office	Name of school/inst itution	Teaching staff	Questionn aires	Non-teaching staff	Questionn aires	Total questionn aires
BWARI	PRIMARY SCHOOL	KUBWA 1	51	7	6	2	9
		BYAZHIN	37	5	6	2	7
		NPAPE	36	5	7	2	7
		MODEL BWARI	42	6	10	2	8
		DUTSE ALHAJI	37	5	4	1	6
	JUNIOR SECONDAR Y	BWARI CENTRAL	26	4	2	-	4
		KUBWA 1	48	7	4	1	8
		DUTSE ALHAJI	30	4	4	1	5
		NPAPE	17	2	-	-	2
		USHAFFA	19	3	4	1	3

Source: Field Survey, Feb. 2014.

Table 2 Distribution of Questionnaires in Gwagwalada Area Council

Area council	Institutio n /office	Name of school/ins titution	Teaching staff	Question naires	Non-teaching staff	Question naires	Total questionn aires
GWAGWALADA	PRIMARY SCHOOL	ZUBA	115	16	14	3	19
		TUGAN MAJE	44	6	8	2	8
		DOBI	18	3	3	1	4
		GADO NASKO	56	8	8	2	10
		GIRI	30	4	4	1	5
	JUNIOR SECONDA RY	ZUBA	60	8	5	1	9
		TUGAN MAJE	45	6	5	1	7
		GIRI	33	5	1	-	
		DOBI	32	5	3	1	6
		PAIKON KORE	29	4	3	1	5

Source: Field Survey, Feb. 2014.

Table 3 Distribution of Questionnaires in Municipal Area Council

Area council	Institutio n /office	name of school/ins titution	teaching staff	Question naires	non-teaching staff	questionn aires	total questionn aires
MUNICIPAL	PRIMARY SCHOOL	AREA 1	35	5	3	1	6
		ARMY BARRACKS, MAITAMA	18	3	3	1	4
		APO VILLAGE	10	1	1	-	1
		CHIKA	8	1	-	-	1
		DURUMI II	8	1	-	-	1
		GWAGWA	45	6	5	1	7
		KARU CENTRAL	88	12	7	2	14
		LUGBE	31	4	2	-	4
		WUSE III	21	3	4	1	4
		OROZO	24	3	2	-	3

JUNIOR SECONDARY	PYAKASSA	14	2	-	-	2
	GARKI	40	6	5	1	7
	JKWOYI	48	8	7	2	10
	TUDUN WADA	31	4	2	-	4
	JIWA	26	4	3	1	5
	GWARIMPA	28	4	4	1	5
	NYANYA	44	6	7	2	8
	AIRPORT	24	3	-	-	3
	LUGBE	22	3	1	-	3
	JABI	39	5	9	2	7

Source: Field Survey, Feb. 2014.

Table 4 Distribution of Questionnaires in FCT UBEB HQ

<i>Institution/Office</i>	No. of Staff	Total Questionnaires
FCT UBEB HQ STAFF	1596	63

Source: Field Survey, Feb. 2014.

Of the 300 questionnaires administered on the above population of the study, 228 were completed and returned, while 72 questionnaires were not returned. That gave us 76 percent return rate, which was reasonable enough for our analysis.

For the purposes of data analysis and data interpretation, the responses of the respondents namely Senior Staff of the FCT Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB), Teaching/Non-Teaching Staff of Primary Schools and Junior Secondary Schools (JSSs) in the FCT, respectively, were analyzed together. The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Percentages were used in presenting data in the simplest possible form to enhance understanding of the report of the investigation. To achieve a high degree of elucidation, the researchers used tables, where appropriate.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public Policy Implementation

In the words of Dunn (1981:46), public policy is “a long series of more or less related choices, including decisions not to act, made by governmental bodies and officials.” In this case, a public policy also implies a decision of any government institution or official not to act on any matter at a given time. Similarly, Waldt (2001:93) conceives public policy to mean “the formal articulation, statement, or publication of a goal that the government intends to pursue” in order to address a problem or a need. This definition explicates that public policy be published orally or in written form. However, the policy statement must be made by a competent public official. The formulation and implementation of public policies like the UBE policy is generally seen as a fundamental duty and strategy of government to legitimize and sustain its existence. However, the reverse is often the case in authoritarian regimes like the British colonial dispensation in Nigeria which lasted from 1900 to 1960, during which, as observed by Adebayo (1989:75), “very often, it had been the administrator who has been both the master and the instrument of policy.” Therein lay the evil of authoritarian rule.

Implementation as an activity constitutes a central phase in the policy process. Once a policy is formulated, the next logical sequence is to implement it using an appropriate implementation strategy for purposes of achieving effectiveness. Policy implementation, according to Obadan (2002: 27) is the process of assembling resources (including people), allocating resources and utilizing resources in order to achieve policy objective. In the view of Ripley (1985:4) *Policy* implementation activities are those tasks and functions undertaken after a law is passed. They translate the broad, vague and multiple statements about goals, programme outlines and policies in the statute into concrete activities. In other words, implementation activities imply the process of activating approved policy document.

Furthermore, Jones (1992: 241) thinks that implementation activities are what happen after laws are passed authorizing a programme, a policy, a benefit or some kind of tangible output. That implementation activity refers to some kind of activities that follow statements of intent about programme goals, and desired results by government officials. Implementation encompasses action by a variety of actors, especially bureaucrats, designed to put programmes into effect ostensibly in such a way as to achieve goals.

As for Franklin (1982: 27), implementation activities include amassing resources needed to mobilize and carry out responsibilities, planning specific programme designs, using legislation and translating them into specific regulations, organizing staff and creating or amending appropriate routines and providing the benefits and services to intended recipients. To Hyder (1984:1), implementation is about putting policies into practice. It is the often complex process of planning, organization, coordination and promotion which is necessary in order to achieve policy objectives. Implementation implies the process of activating an approved policy.

Various models of policy implementation have been identified by scholars and the respective models are on the approaches to the implementation and the assessment of policy implementation. Of the models or approaches to policy implementation postulated by various scholars and apparently the most popular is the “Top-Down” and “Bottom-Up” perspective. Unequivocally, Clarke (1992: 222) explains that the Top-Down approach is the most common perspective adopted in implementation. In this perspective, the leadership sends preferences and authority down the line which are translated by officials into definitions, procedures and precedents, while officials at lower levels perform a monitoring and filtering process to make a sense of all the information coming up the line as the policy impact is felt. The Top-Down Approach, as Clarke posits, rests on certain assumptions, mainly that:

- i) The leaders are able to make clear decisions which are capable of being further specified at lower levels;
- ii) There is efficient communication between leaders and officials;
- iii) There is no inherent reluctance within the bureaucracy to execute decisions because the leadership is able to control the bureaucracy.

The alternative to the Top-Down perspective sees implementation as more likely to work from the reverse order namely the “Bottom-Up Approach.” This perspective suggests that policy implementation is more likely to work from the Bottom-Up approach. This perspective perceives the flow of policy as taking precedence over leaders’ attempt to impose single meaningful decision upon it. This is the reason for the position of Clarke (1992:223) that the assumption of this perspective is that the politically discrete is highly constrained by past experiences and conventional wisdom as to what is possible. The condition in which implementation has to take place are constantly changing, so that decision makers must adapt their preferences to what is implementable rather than what is desired.

In the Bottom-Up perspective, bureaucracy is politically significant at all levels, though formal authority resides more at the top of the bureaucracy. It does not necessarily follow that the top will be the most powerful part of it. The lower level implementers will still perceive themselves as important stakeholders with the right to pursue their own agendas. The bottom-up approach, according to Elmore (1979), is apparently excellent in describing complexity, but looks incapable of providing prescriptive help to policy makers on how to make things better. Nonetheless, the summary of the observations made by several scholars is that some policy sectors give great credence to one perspective as opposed to the other, and that some policies are amenable to elements of both perspectives. In this study, however, the emphasis is that whatever approach is adopted in policy implementation, it is vital to distinguish policy inputs (what government does) from policy outcomes (the consequences of government activities).

While examining *Bureaucracy and Policy Implementation*, Ripley (1992:10) maintains that there are two principal ways of assessing policy implementation. The first approach is the *Compliance Perspective*. This approach is to ask whether implementation complies with the prescribed procedures, timetable and restrictions. It sets up a pre-existing model of correct implementation and measures actual behaviour against it.

The second approach is to ask how implementation is proceeding. In this perspective, there is a focus on what is happening and why. This perspective, according to Ripley (1982:11), can be characterized as *inductive* or *empirical*. There are general references in this approach to what was expected or hoped for by different participants and observers, but there is no rigid pre-existing model against which behaviour is measured. Summing up, Ripley (1982:11) advises that in the assessment of policy implementation, interest should constantly be on what is happening regardless of whether it is in compliance with somebody’s standard or not and in explaining what is observed.

A brilliantly formulated policy cannot achieve its stated objectives unless the programme and projects therein are effectively implemented. One of the essential requirements for policy implementation is the availability of the executive personnel and the technical staff needed to achieve the defined policy goals. For purposes of effectiveness, policy implementation could certainly require trained and competent hands that have the commitment and technical know-how to achieve the intended objectives. Availability

of adequate finance is very crucial in policy implementation, because of the central role it plays in the implementation process. The actual implementation of a policy programme begins with budgeting. Capital budgeting is very important because it actualizes intentions of the policy plan, and is, technically, the main apparatus for providing both legal and financial backing for policy programmes. By means of budgeting, funds are made available to the administrative agencies responsible for the implementation of the policy program.

Implementation of Educational Policy in Nigeria up to the UBE Policy

Although education is a universal social phenomenon, it varies from society to society in terms of goals, curriculum content, method of teaching, organization, evaluation and the uses to which education is put to translate the collective will and aspirations of the people, by the people, and for the people's benefit. Educational policy in Nigeria has been made to essentially centre on how to improve the educational standards of the country. Indeed, education is one of the earliest social services to be introduced to Nigeria. Traditional education (sometimes known as informal or indigenous education) was in vogue before the advent of Islamic and Western systems of education, respectively (Fafunwa, 1995:1). Indigenous education has many advantages; contrary to the colonial mentality that Africans were uneducated before the advent of Western education through Christian missionaries. Africans now know better.

One of the saddest mistakes of early missionaries was their assumption that they brought education to an entirely uneducated people. If literacy and formal schooling constitute the whole of education, they were right; but in so far as education is preparation for living in the society into which we are born, they were profoundly wrong. For in the deepest sense, African customary education was a true education (Castle in Okon and Anderson, 1982: 20).

Without a doubt, traditional education was sufficient and comprehensively prepared Nigerians for life within the Nigerian society before the epoch of "schooling in the sense of institutionalized induction into the life of society [which] is a comparatively recent development in Africa" (Brown and Hisket 2000: 15). In the same vein, (Fafunwa, 1995:1) asserts: "No study of the history of education in Africa is complete without adequate knowledge of the traditional or indigenous education system prevalent in Africa before the arrival of Islam or Christianity." Traditional Nigerian education system had varieties, but their ultimate goals, according to Fafunwa (1982), were as follows:

- i. To develop a child's latent physical skills,
- ii. To develop character;
- iii. To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority;
- iv. To develop intellectual skills;
- v. To acquire specific vocational training; and to develop a healthy attitude toward honest labour;
- vi. To develop a sense of belonging and to encourage active participation in family and community affairs; and
- vii To understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.

Concurring, Castle in Okon and Anderson (1982) totally mentions the purposes of traditional education:

For in the deepest sense African customary education was to conserve the cultural heritage of family, clan and tribe, to adapt children to their physical environment and teach them how to use it, to explain to them that their own future and that of their community depended on the perpetuation and understanding of the tribal institutions, on the laws, language and values they had inherited from the past.

The purpose of the education was for both the benefit of the individual and the survival of the culture of the community: for the new generation to know how to take care of their environment, and for the benefit of the society by becoming integrated into the society as a worthy member of the community. Fafunwa (1982) insists that the responsibility for the upbringing of young Africans is traditionally shared by the entire social group. Good manners, conventions, customs, moral rules and social laws were inculcated by close relatives, distant members of the extended family, and neighbours. The teaching methods employed in indigenous education were different from the methods used in modern schools. The methods, included imitation, instruction, apprenticeship, storytelling, watching, observation, role playing, discipline, games, recitation, and memorization, proverbs, and riddles demonstrations. The teaching methods met the objectives of the society. The indigenous method of instruction allowed for active participation of the

learner, who instead of sitting passive in rows while the teacher lectured, had a type of apprenticeship in which he practiced his new skills under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher sometimes provided a model or demonstration for the student to imitate and sometimes these may be reinforced with explanations regarding the best ways to do the work. The implementation of the Nigerian traditional education was, however, punctuated by the Islamic Missionary and Christian Missionary (or Western) education.

The history of modern education in Nigeria is older than the colonial government era, dating back to the missionary activities cum missionary education days. That was before the arrival of Islamic missionaries and later Christian missionaries, the latter leaving more domineering footprints in the sands of Nigeria's educational curriculum development (Okon and Anderson, 1982). What the Christian missionaries apparently saw at their arrival were only inter-tribal wars, barbarism, treachery, and other vices, as may be found in other human societies the world over. Nevertheless, there were then virtues and other aspects of the Nigerian society and culture worthy of admiration and continuation.

Accordingly, Alaezi (1987) observes that the early mission educators were not mindful of the Nigerian culture that sustained the society before they arrived with serious desire to introduce wholesome change of the existing social order through the implementation of their own educational curriculum. In the view of Fafunwa (1974), the curriculum was merely a replica of the British curriculum in the dark ages. The arrival of different Christian Church denominations in Nigeria, beginning with the Methodist in 1842, the church missionary society (CMS) in 1843, the United Presbyterian Church in 1846, the American South Baptist in 1853, the Roman Catholic in 1888 and the Qua Iboe in 1890, saw stiff competition among the churches for adherents; and Christianity was considered as the same as Western civilization and English social habits.

It is noteworthy that if the implementation of the mission school policy was to produce devout Christians with some skills of useful living, that of the colonial government was designed to produce competent but essentially subordinate officials of the colonial government. The philosophy of education by 1914 when Nigeria was created by the British was to develop the national education on national lines, which meant the improvement of native crafts rather than the introduction of new industries and skills. The primary concern of the mission school curriculum was to produce devout Christians with some skills of useful living (Alaezi, 1987). In a nutshell, all forms of education aimed towards providing artisans for government service.

By 1929, the Director of Education supported the 1925 Memorandum on Education that proposed curriculum integration and directed that the public schools should emphasize agriculture, crafts, hygiene, and interest in the environment. African languages and traditional history and custom were supposed to have been given considerable attention. The colonial government attempted to make the school curriculum responsive to the local economic and social needs. Alaezi (1987) insists that the aim was to combat the subversive tendencies that were troubling the minds of the older men and steer away the inevitable changes, so that they might not benefit the people. Of course, free universal basic education would have weakened the social base of the oligarchic authoritarian rule of the British colonial regime in Nigeria. Little wonder that when the colonial power consciously intervened in 1907 in the provision of educational opportunities in the country, it was carefully restricted, according to Kirk-Greene (1968:148), to "the sons of chiefs and men of influence who had been brought from various provinces under pressure by government." In fact, it was only close to the termination time of colonial rule that the Northern Region realized that it could neither find adequate number of its qualified indigenes to man its regional government/parastatals nor to represent its interests in the federal government, all as a result of an obnoxious deliberate selective educational policy of the colonialists. The perceived political danger posed by this state of affairs was mainly responsible for the Region's vehement opposition the Action Group's call in the Federal House of Representatives in 1953 for "self-government now," a call that immediately divided the House along regional cum ethnic lines.

The post-independence era was ushered in by the Ashby (1960) Commission that examined the status of higher education in post-independent Nigeria, the report of which gave impetus to the creation of the University of Lagos, University of Nsukka, Nsukka, University of Ife, (later Obafemi Awolowo University), Ife, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria and University of Benin. In the post-Independence Nigerian Constitution, education was on the concurrent list and was virtually left to the then Regional Governments which later were subdivided from an initial 27 in 1967, 19 in 1976, to the present 36 and the Federal Capital Territory, with the Federal Government legislating on broad policy matters. Besides the University of Ibadan (which was established in 1948) and a few

non-missionary colleges in Lagos, all other non-missionary educational institutions were inherited by their regions of location with the attainment of independence in October 1960.

According to Fafunwa (1995: 202), the education law promulgated by the States in the Federation laid down rules and regulations in respect of the administration of education, the statutory system of public education, primary education, Establishment and closure of schools, Teachers, Inspection of schools, Financial positions, Religious studies and curriculum, and other ancillary matters. The laws itemized the aims of primary education as follows: the mastery of *The Three Rs*-reading, writing, and arithmetic; thus to develop permanent literacy; and to develop sound standards of individual behaviour and conduct.

The new National Policy on Education (2004) was the product of the 1969 National Curriculum Conference. Pointedly, Fafunwa (1995:226) notes that nine specific decision areas were identified as crucial to the attainment of the conference objectives namely national philosophy of education, goals of primary education, objectives of secondary education, purpose of tertiary education, the role of teacher education, function of science and technical education, the place of women's education, education for living and control of public education. In addition, Fafunwa (1995) maintains that the conference made sixty-five recommendations in attempt to change the colonial orientation of the Nigerian educational system and promote national consciousness and self-reliance through the educational process.

The 1969 Curriculum Conference recommendations could not work due to the take-off of Nigerian Civil War (1967-1969). However, in 1973, Fafunwa (1995: 231) observes, the Federal Military Government organize a national seminar on a National Policy on Education. The Seminar adopted the five national objectives enunciated under the country's Second National Development Plan namely the building of a true democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self-reliant Nation, a great and dynamic economy, and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens. The seminar amplified and adopted the Recommendations of the 1969 Curriculum Conference. Notably, Fafunwa (1995: 235) states that Recommendation No. 59 proposed a 6-3-3-4 system of education. But the failure on the part of the Federal Government to release a White Paper on the implementation of the recommendations of the conference or a White Paper on the implementation of the 1973 National Seminar caused a serious delay in the commencement of the new system.

The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC), comprising representatives of the Federal and State Ministries of Education, Universities, Colleges of Education and other agencies, organized series of workshops on curriculum and materials production at primary, secondary and teacher education levels between 1973 and 1975. When the free universal primary education (UPE) policy was adopted and its implementation started in 1976, in order to achieve the objectives of the primary education policy, the new primary school curriculum, according to (Fafunwa 1995: 238), consisted of the following Language, Art, Use of the Mother Tongue or the language of the immediate community (for the first three years), English (at a later stage), Mathematics, Elementary Science, Social Studies, Moral Instruction, Agriculture, and Home Economics. The core of the National Policy on Education 1977, revised 1981, 1988 and 2004, respectively, with particular reference to the 6-3-3-4, is the six-year secondary school education. The core of the new education policy flows from the Second National Development Plan 1970-1974, which in the words of FRN (1975:1), defines Nigeria's national objectives as the building of "a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant Nation; a great and dynamic economy; a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens." The Plan, thus, sees education as a consumer good and a capital good. A consumer good implies enriching a person's knowledge base, fully developing his personality; a capital good implies a way of equipping a person to execute tasks and employment functions, necessary for transformation of his environment. The national objectives are hinged on socio-economic and political planks. *Free and democratic society* implies building an egalitarian society through education. *United* denotes an educational curriculum that is universally applicable throughout Nigeria. The aspiration for a *dynamic economy* as well as *land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens* indicate the quest to build a productive, wealthy Nation where all citizens are equipped through education, at least basic education, to enjoy equality of opportunities.

These national objectives were further elucidated in the National Policy on Education as:
The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity, the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society; the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around; and the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical as an equipment

for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society (NPE, 2004:8).

All these eventually culminated in the UBE policy goals as stated in the UBE Act 2004. The 4th edition of the National Policy on Education published in year 2004 provides for compulsory, free, universal basic (primary and junior secondary) education for Nigerian children between the ages of six and fifteen (NPE, 2004:9-18). The 4th edition was “necessitated by some policy innovations and changes, the need to update the 3rd edition” (NPE, 2004).

The primary school, a component of the UBE, is to last for 6 years and the Junior Secondary School (JSS) is for three years duration. It is followed by the Senior Secondary School (SSS) the duration of which is also three years. The higher education is the post-secondary education offered in Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology, Colleges Education, and such allied institutions. Higher educational institutions, being the storehouse of knowledge, are to pursue the goals of higher education through teaching, research, and the dissemination of existing and new information, the pursuit of service to the community. Technical Education, as indicated by Fafunwa (1995: 259), is that aspect of education that leads to the acquisition of practical skills and applied skills as well as fundamental scientific knowledge.

From independence to date, the Nigerian educational system has endorsed unique educational policy programmes under the various regimes that governed the country. All the educational policy programmes were directed towards realizing the national objectives, which Sani (1994:207) asserts, is based on the Nigerian philosophy of education namely the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and the provision of equal educational opportunities for all citizens of the Nation at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, both inside and outside the formal school system. Some of those policy programmes on education include the following:

- i. The action of the Federal Government and most States of the Federation in taking over voluntary agency-owned schools from their proprietors who were not granted aids but charged exorbitant fees from pupils and students;
- ii. The launch of the UPE Scheme in 1976 to provide every Nigeria child with the opportunity of going to school without paying any fees;
- iii. The 6-3-3-4 type of education, with the novel concept of junior secondary schools (JSS), where emphasis is to equip students with basic technical cum vocational skills;
- iv. Adult Literacy Programme through the programmes of mass literacy campaign to enable every citizen acquire literary skills of reading and writing in order to liberate himself from the limitations imposed on his thoughts, his attitudes and his action by illiteracy; and
- v. Nomadic education, to provide functional education to nomadic children everywhere in the country.

Some Lessons from the Collapse of pre-UBE Basic Education Policies

Various challenges to successful implementation of the pre-UBE policy programmes implicitly account for Nigeria’s many failures in this regard. Many lessons could be learnt from the previous failed attempts variously organised at Regional, State, and Federal levels.

1. Formulation, pronouncement, planning and commencement of policy programme implementation were hasty and haphazard. Thus, they easily got to stages where financial capability of the various governments could not cope with the demands of free universal basic education, hence the financial burden of the implementation of the programmes were either haphazardly handled or pretentiously shifted to parents, or completely dropped in policy summersault of some sorts;
2. Physical facilities required in basic schools included classrooms with adequate furniture, doors, windows and ceiling libraries and books, books shelves, seat and tables, and offices with necessary facilities were insufficient and not qualitative enough in most of the schools. It is pertinent therefore that Government supplies adequate physical facilities, personnel, and funds based on relevant and reliable statistical data;
3. Sincerity of purpose and continuity of policy programme implementation irrespective of change of leadership in Government was lacking. For instance, a programme which was initiated by one regime becomes abandoned soon after the exit of the initiator. Thus, the initiative is subbed when another person takes over the mantle of leadership for the fear that the success of the programme would be credited to the initiator only, and not to the executor. This development was most noticed when the initiator is from a different political camp with the executor. In other words, the various leaders who took over the reins of power did not consider Government as a continuum.

Another instance of insincerity of the various governments was their setting of idealistic targets for basic education despite prevailing social economic and political state of affairs, and often in total discharge of economically sensible counsels by experienced bureaucrats and academicians – due to political expediencies;

4. Personnel were inadequate, ill-trained and insufficiently motivated. No sooner had the programmes taken off than they started to expand astronomically, which called for additional teachers and administrative staff. Since immediate recruitment of proficient, dedicated and adequate number of teachers and administrative staff was not easy, the various Governments had to muddle through with the preponderance of low calibre of people who were accessible as workers. The Governments did not take into consideration Professor Fredrick Harbison's celebrated opinion, as rightly cited by Fafunwa (1974:154), that school and college buildings can be constructed in a matter of months, but that it takes decades to develop high level teachers and professors. Actually, the development of human resources demands a long planning which he previous programmes did not take into consideration;
5. Certainly, the basic educational programmes of 1955, 1976 and 1979 consumed a lot of money at public expenses, yet the respective implementation exercises suffered inadequate funding and absence of prudent financial management. This development furthermore, state or other resources; and
6. Planning the implementation of a public policy like UBE requires accurate and relevant statistical data on variable such as age of eligible and prospective pupils, population, and number of educational institutions, numbers of teachers and her qualifications and number of facilities. Sadly, these data were not available in complete and accurate forms, constituting major impediments towards successful implementation of previous educational programmes

UBE Policy: Emergence, Objectives and Structure.

With the introduction of the National Policy on Education in 1977, a basic educational programme tagged 6-3-3-4 system was embarked upon. As part of implementation strategies, the Government made a proposal for universal basic education (UBE). It was declared that “universal basic education [shall be provided] in variety of forms, depending on needs and possibilities shall be provided for all citizens” (FRN, 1977: 5; 1981: 8; 1998: 9; 2004: 9). The implementation of UBE remained a proposal between 1977 and 1999, not a plan. In 1999, the federal government under the leadership of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo embarked upon the UBE scheme in consonance with national needs and inspirations, and in tandem with international calls for the education, especially basic education, to be democratized. The UBE programme (introduced on 30th September, 1999 but made legally effective by *The Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education and Other Related Matters Act, 2004*) as presently structured implies that the Government is pursuing a 9-3-4 system of education. Section 2 (1) of the UBE Act 2004 unequivocally asserts: “Every Government in Nigeria shall provide free, compulsory and universal basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age” (UBE Act, 2004:2). This is the main thrust of the UBE policy. To accomplish this policy statement, Section 7 (1) of the Act, “established a body to be known as the Universal Basic Education Commission” (UBEC) charged with the responsibility of galvanizing the implementation of the policy nationwide, as directed by its Board with various members.

According to the UBE Act 2004, primary school “means a school, which provides a six-year course of full time instruction suitable for pupils between the age of six years and twelve years” (UBEC, 2004:11), while Junior Secondary School (JSS) “means a School which provides a three year post-primary course of full-time instruction suitable for pupils between the age of twelve years and fifteen” (UBEC, 2004:11). In other words, the first 9 years is for basic education (primary/junior secondary education), 3 years for senior secondary education and 4 years for tertiary education; that is a 9-3-4 educational system. It is noteworthy that public school, as designated by the UBE Act 2004, denotes “a school, primary or junior secondary, as the case may be, which is assisted out of funds provided by funds provided by authority or a local government or is maintained by a local education authority or a local government” (UBEC, 2004:11). Furthermore, the services that shall be provided free of charge by Government under the UBE policy “are books, instructional materials, classrooms, furniture and free lunch” (UBEC. 2004:12).

Section 11 (1) of the Act provides that the implementation of the UBE shall be financed through “not less than 2%” of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation, funds or contribution in form of Federal Guaranteed Credits; and local and international donor grants (UBEC, 2004:8-9). The UBE Act 2004 further provides that for any State or the FCT to qualify for the Federal Government block grant

pursuant to Sub Section 1 (1) above, the State or the FCT shall contribute counterpart fund of not less than 50% of the total cost of projects as its commitment to the execution of the project. Additionally, the administration and disbursement of funds shall be through the State or FCT UBEB, as the case may be (UBEC, 2004:9). The implication of this clause in the Act is that notwithstanding the total population of eligible pupils who present themselves or are enrolled in a State or the FCT, the State's/FCT's UBE schools, the State's/FCT's portion of the not less than 2% of the Federal Government Consolidated Revenue Fund earmarked for UBE implementation in the country is limited to the value of its 50% counterpart funding in respect of the total cost of project(s) it initiates.

This provision, *ab initio*, tantamount to a major constraint for any SUBEB/UBEB or Education Board in ensuring the provision of compulsory free, universal basic education for all eligible and available pupils of primary and junior secondary schools in the given State or FCT. Moreover, the numerical increase of eligible UBE pupils does not rise in equal proportion with the financial capability of all the States/FCT. While population growth has been known to rise geometrically and variously in different parts of Nigeria, the same cannot be said of the funds of the respective States/FCT. To the extent that the said compulsory 50% equity contribution of States/FCT to their respective UBE projects does not make for egalitarian provision of UBE services across the country, the legal framework of the UBE policy is fundamentally inconsistent, flawed, and antithetical to the effective implementation of the UBE policy. Come to think of it, there is free movement of eligible UBE pupils from a part of the country to another, especially as a result of heightened rural-urban migration. The worst hit is apparently the FCT, which is invariably attracting the highest influx of eligible pupils from than all the 36 states of Nigeria. The implication of this large influx of eligible pupils into the FCT has serious negative implication on the capability of the FCT UBEB to provide adequate funds for the achievement of the laudable goals of the UBE policy.

The procedure of financing the UBE, especially with regards to primary education, which hitherto was done by the Federal Government through first line charge allocation, was punctuated by the April 5th, 2003 Supreme court ruling to the effect that the Federal government should cease "to cover financing through first line charge allocation" (UBEC, 2004:19).

These national objectives were further elucidated in the National Policy on Education first published in 1977 with the following objectives:

The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity, the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society; the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around; and the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical as an equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society (NPE, 2004:8).

All these eventually culminated in the UBE policy goals stated as in the UBE Act 2004. In very unequivocal terms, the Act states that the major objectives of the UBE policy programme as originally conceived include:

- a) Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion;
- b) The provision of free, universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school age;
- c) Reducing drastically the incidence of dropout from formal school system, through improved relevance, quality and efficiency;
- d) Catering for the learning needs of young persons, who for one reason or another have had to interrupt their schooling, through appropriate forms of complimentary approaches to the promotion of basic education;
- e) Ensuring the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values needed for laying a solid foundation (UBE Act, 2004: 16-17).

Furthermore, the objectives of the UBE policy emanated from Section 18(1) and (3) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that enjoins Government to provide free and compulsory basic education as follows:

Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels. Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end, Government shall as and when practicable provide: - Free, compulsory and universal primary education; Free secondary education; Free university education; and Free adult literacy programme (FRN, 1999).

It is noteworthy that though the Constitution tasks all tiers of Government in Nigeria to strive to eradicate illiteracy and to provide free, compulsory basic education to all eligible citizens, these rights/objectives, according to the UBE Act (2004:20), are non justiciable; that is, cannot be enforced in any court of law by any person(s). The policy was to evidence Nigeria's commitment to the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) at Jomtien (1990) and the Dakar World Education Forum that set an agenda for 21st Century education and so on. EFA emphasized: "access, equity, quality and efficiency." Access means making education physically, socially and economically available to all; equity signifies ensuring that sex, economic conditions, social status, geographical location, and so forth, should in no way lead to discrimination in the provision of educational opportunity; quality is ensuring that the inputs, processes, and output factors of education are the type that should promote learning; and efficiency denotes emphasis on learning and on success in the pursuit of learning.

In the same vein, UBEC (2005) maintains that the UBE policy is part of Nigeria's efforts to uphold and renew its commitment to the provision and promotion of basic education for all as required by a number of covenants to which Nigeria is a signatory. These include, among others, the 1992 Ougadougou Pan-African Declaration on the Education of Girls and Women, the 1995 Amman Re-Affirmation demanding for pushful quest for the accomplishment of the 1990 Jomtien recommendations on EFA (UBE, 2005). Certainly, the UBE policy was enunciated and expected to be carried out in such a way, according to Ayeni (2000) that Nigeria's education would cater for future professional needs of Nigerians. It is also expected to eradicate *mass illiteracy* and spread useful skills among Nigerians, which in Mahatma Gandhi's luminous position immediately after India's independence, "is India's sin and shame and must be liquidated; but the literacy campaign must not end with knowledge of the alphabet; it must go hand in hand with the spread of useful skill" (UNESCO, 1970: 25). Indeed, mass illiteracy is Nigeria's sin and shame and must be liquidated.

Of course, according to Report of the 1962 International Committee of Experts on Literacy, which in the words of Mahatma Ghandi denotes "the spread of useful skill" implies that the recipients of basic education acquires the essential knowledge and skills that would enable them engage in all those activities in which literacy is mandatory for valuable functioning in their group and community, and whose attainments in reading, writing, and arithmetic make it possible for them to keep on using these skills towards their development and that of their community and for their effective membership of their country (UNESCO, in Harman 1970: 6). This encapsulates the objectives of the UBE policy.

From the foregoing, it can be observed that a number of the above policy programmes of Government were ambitious. With the implementation of some came rapid changes in the management of the Nation's educational system and some, due to apparent lack of definite focus, failed to produce the desired results and became the unenviable target of public criticisms. The failure of some is attributed by some scholars to the wide gap existing between policy pronouncements and implementation. In fact, Sani (1994: 182) believes that it is always at the implementation stage that most policy programmes of the Government on education experience obstinate problems.

Administration of the UBE in the FCT

The UBE programme was introduced on 30th September, 1999 at Sokoto, but made legally effective by *The Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education and Other Related Matters Act, 2004*. The structure of the policy programme implies that the Government is implementing a 9-3-4 system of education. Section 2 (1) of the UBE Act, 2004 unequivocally asserts: "Every Government in Nigeria shall provide free, compulsory and universal basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age" (UBE Act, 2004:2). This is the main thrust of the UBE policy. To accomplish this policy statement, Section 7 (1) of the Act, established a body to be known as the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), charged with the responsibility of galvanizing the implementation of the policy nationwide, as directed by its Board with various members.

Before 1976, there was not a single secondary school in the whole area that now constitutes the FCT and the few primary schools existing were established as part of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme of that same year. In the area of health care, there was no standard hospital or health centre and few ill-equipped dispensaries existed in Gwagwalada, Garki, Kwali, Bwari and Karu. The four major roads leading into the territory, namely Koton Karfe-Abuja (150km), Bida-Abuja (156km), Minna-Abuja (112km) and Keffi-Abuja (84km), were not tarred by 1976. Thus movement of persons was largely by foot or bicycle. The Administration of the Territory is headed by a Minister. For purposes of administrative convenience, the FCT is sub-divided into six Area Councils (equivalents of Local

Government Councils in other parts of Nigeria) namely Abuja Municipal Area Council, Kuje Area Council, Gwagwalada Area Council, Abaji Area Council, Kwali Area Council and Bwari Area Council.

Section 12 (1) of the UBE Act 2004 not only establishes UBEC at the national level, but also establishes the FCT UBEB as follows: “There shall be established for each State (FCT inclusive) a State Universal Basic Education Board (in this Act referred to as the “Education Board”) (UBEC, 2004:9, 12) as the body charged with the duty to implement the UBE policy at the State/FCT level. In the same vein, Section 13 (1) of the Act adds that “there shall be established for each Local Education Authority (in this Act referred to as “the Local Education Authority) which shall be subject to the supervision of the Education Board.” Accordingly, in Section 14 (1) and (2) of the Act, respectively repealed Cap. 271 Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1990, which hitherto established the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) Act, and rested in the UBEC the assets and liabilities of the NPEC.

The administrative structure of the UBE programme implementation is modelled on cooperation and consultative federalism, as it involves all three tiers of Government in Nigeria, extending to the community level. UBEC (2004) asserts that the Federal Government, which initiated and launched the policy, provides the minimum standard and general oversight and monitoring of its implementation. The administration and eventual disbursement of UBE funds in the FCT, however, is done by the FCT Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB), which came into being on 15th November, 2005, replacing the defunct FCT Primary Education Board (PEB). UBEC (2004) adds that Sections 12 (2) and 13 (2) of the enabling Act provides that the structure, functions, composition and tenure of office of the chairman and members of the FCT UBEB and LEAS shall be as prescribed by a law enacted for that purpose by the National Assembly. Under the FCT UBEB are six Local Education Authorities (LEAs). The UBEC usually enters into memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the FCT UBEB before releasing matching grants (funds) for any project by the FCT UBEB. An essential element of the MOU, before the FCT UBEB embarks on any project, is that both UBEC and FCT UBEB must agree as to the specific or peculiar needs of the FCT upon which projects/programmes evolve for execution with the grant.

Furthermore, a clause is included in the MOUs to ensure that misused, misapplied or diverted funds are recovered by the UBE commission through appropriate means including suspension or outright stoppage of grants if FCT UBEB defaults. This arrangement allows the UBEC to adopt monitoring mechanisms to ensure proper utilization of UBE funds as well as compliance of FCT UBEB and LEAS with the spirit and letter of the general provisions of the UBE Act, 2004. The FCT UBEB also monitors the LEAs, which include regular, routine and specialized supervision and evaluation, special financial audits through independent auditors, joint monitoring with the LEAs and so on. That is to say that the FCT UBEB works in concert with the LEAs to ensure overall achievement of UBE in the Territory.

The management of the UBE in the FCT is the same as it applied to all the 36 states of the federation. The Federal Capital Territory Education Board (FCT UBEB), like State UBEBs, performs the following functions.

- (i) Formulates policies for the UBE in the FCT;
- (ii) Sees to the day to day running of the UBE in the FCT;
- (iii) Recruits, disciplines, and promotes teachers on Grade Level 07 and above;
- (iv) Pays the salaries of JSS teachers; and
- (v) Establishes and maintains other UBE agencies in the FCT.

As earlier mentioned, in the FCT, the management of UBE at the area council level is coordinated and supervised by the FCT UBEB. As the FCT UBEB (2008:4) notes, the Board,

which is the highest decision making body as regards Basic Education in the FCT comprises the Executive Chairman as the Chief Executive, assisted by the Board Secretary and five Heads of Divisions of School Services (S.S.), Administration & Supplies (Adm & S), Finance and Accounts (F&A), Planning, Research and Statistics (P.R.S.), and Physical Planning & Project Management (PP&PM). There are also Board Members. In addition, there are for zonal offices of Bwari/Municipal, Kwali/Yaba/Gwagwalada/Kuje and Rubochi/Abaji.

The Area Councils perform the following functions:

- (i) They establish and maintain LEAs in their respective areas;
- (ii) Recruit, discipline and promote teachers of public schools and non-teaching staff in their areas; and
- (iii) Pay the salaries of primary school teachers in their areas.

These and other roles of the LEAs are complementary to those of UBEB. An Executive Secretary, according to FCT UBEB (2008:5), heads each LEA as well as a “District Education Committee, established to complement the efforts of the Board in areas of mobilization and sensitization activities aimed improving Basic Education for the youths.”

It is noteworthy that the Board has fruitful relationship with donor agencies, since Nigeria is internationally categorized under countries whose citizens lack basic social infrastructure, especially in urban slums and rural areas. The donor agencies include the World Bank/MDG, USAID, UNESCO, ETF and UNICEF. It is noteworthy that the FCT UBEB (2008:5) acknowledges that the *various Donor Agencies have assisted to build the capacity of government partners in areas of teaching methodology, school inspection, data input, costing of activities, rehabilitation of schools, provision of school furniture, mote vehicles and motorcycles; the supply of instructional materials and establishment of school libraries.*

Milestones of Progress by the UBE in the FCT

According to UBEC (2005), the FCT through the FCT Primary Education Board (PEB) made concerted efforts towards the successful take-off and the implementation of the UBE policy implementation in the FCT, subsequent to the President Obasanjo’s launch of the policy implementation on 30th September, 1999. The PEB eventually coalesced into the FCT Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB). Achievements have been so far recorded in terms of school infrastructure, equipment and classroom furniture, numerical strength of staff, trainings, establishment of additional primary schools, and rapid increase in pupil/student enrolment.

School Infrastructure

It is the assertion of UBEC (2005) that the FCT UBEB embarked on renovation of school input towards the successful commencement and execution of the UBE policy. Various primary school and JSS school structures in the six area councils of the FCT were renovated by MFCT/FCTA in partnership with the Education Trust Fund (ETF). This was in addition to the construction of new blocks of classrooms in all the area councils facilitated by the UBEC Secretariat in Abuja.

Equipment and Classroom Furniture

The FCT UBEB, according to UBEC (2005), purchased essential school equipment like textbooks, registers and diaries were purchased and distributed to all primary schools in the FCT, to enhance effective teaching and learning. Other equipment procured and also distributed to the LEAs includes chalk, chalkboards, cardboard papers and syllabuses of some subjects (UBEC, 2005). Again, efforts to obtain actual costs of provision of equipment from the relevant public agency were tactically rebuffed. Efforts to obtain actual costs of the said renovation and building of new infrastructure from the relevant public agency were tactically rebuffed.

Numerical Strength of Staff

As the implementation of the UBE policy commenced, there was an increase in numerical strength of the staff of the UBE in the FCT. More qualified teachers, both male and female, were recruited to fill the existing vacancies in the LEAs. According to (UBEC, 2005), the figures for the six Area Councils of the FCT for the years 2000/2001, indicating total staff strength of 4,510; teaching staff, 4,173 and non-teaching staff, 337. As at March 2008, the FCT UBEB (2008:5) published that

The numerical strength of the personnel of the UBE in the FCT as at year 2008 is well over 7000. While the Board’s head office holds about 1596 of the entire workforce, the six LEAs on the other hand share about 1017 support staff, while the remaining 6998 are teachers spread in the six LEAs.

Trainings

The FCT UBEB and Area Councils LEA have sponsored their staff to attend seminars and workshops to enhance their productivity. Accordingly, UBEC (2005) observes that the workshops and seminars include: Master-Trainer Workshop, 13-14 August, 2001 for HIV/AIDS awareness campaign at Makurdi. About 142 participants attended it from various States and the FCT. A Sensitization Workshop at the LEA level for all head-teachers and teachers towards better school management, all in its efforts to provide quality teachers for the programme. In addition to the above, a month long exhibition of

African Fiction Materials in UBE Library was sponsored by Heinemann Educational Publishers. Over 100 teachers from FCT attended the one-day workshop. Other workshops followed suit.

Additional Primary Schools/JSS Schools

With the launch of the UBE in the FCT, UBEC (2005) asserts, additional primary schools have been established in the six area councils of the FCT and more are in the process of being established in many needy communities across the LEAs in the FCT. Table 3.1 below shows the total number of primary schools in the various area councils before the commencement of the UBE policy implementation and those established thereafter. It shows the existence of 285 pre-UBE schools and 182 additional schools as at year 2008/2009, making a total of 467 schools in all. Further insight shows that Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) had 118 primary schools, the highest number, as at 2008/2009 academic session, followed by Kuje, 92; Kwali, 78; and so on. Abaji Area Council had the least number of 54.

In the same light, Table below shows that as at the 2004 Session when the JSS policy implementation effectively began a total of 55 JSS schools existed. About three academic sessions thereafter, the number had increased by 35, thus totalling 90 as at 2008. This expansion has additional financial and logistics implications as well.

Table : Distribution of Pre-UBE Primary/JSS Schools and Additional Primary/JSS Schools in the FCT according to Area Councils, 2009.

S/N	Area Councils	Primary Schools			JSS Schools		
		Pre-UBE primary schools	Additional Primary Schools	Total as at 2008/2009 Session	JSS Schools as at 2004	Additional JSS Schools as at 2008	Total as at 2008/2009 Session
1.	Kwali	46	32	78	4	6	10
2.	Municipal	60	58	118	22	14	36
3.	Gwagwalada	42	14	56	8	3	11
4.	Abaji	34	20	54	6	1	7
5.	Kuje	67	25	92	6	4	10
6.	Bwari	36	33	69	9	7	16
Total	6	285	182	467	55	35	90

Source: FCT Primary Education Board 2000/2001 & FCT UBEB (2008/2009).

However, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2008:24) at least, as at December 2007, the Municipal Area Council, with a total of 263 (44.20%) Nursery/Primary schools, has the largest concentration of Nursery and Primary Schools in the FCT, followed by the Bwari Area Council with 172 (28.91%), while the Abaji Area Council has 21 (3.53%). These form the foundation of the UBE policy implementation in the FCT, and do reflect the uneven distribution pattern of Nursery and Primary Schools in the FCT. The same is applicable to junior secondary schools in the Territory.

Rapid Increase in Pupil/Student Enrolment

In the opinion of Ojo (1984:7) maintains that in 1843 when the first formal school system was introduced in Nigeria by the Methodist Mission, only a few pupils were enrolled for primary education.

For decades, it was always a royal battle securing an appreciable number of pupils for schooling. Most parents did not take kindly at all to sending their favourite children to school. To counter the stiff opposition of some parents, various indigenous plays and subterfuge, such as distributing sweets during school hours, were devised by the missionaries and local catechists of those days to lure the pupils to school (Ojo, 1984:7-8).

However, it is noteworthy that the era of devising ways of luring pupils to school has passed in some places in Nigeria (like the FCT), especially if it is free-of-charge. So, Ojo (1984:8) is right in asserting that “there has been in recent decades a revolutionary change through out the country to another in favour of primary education,” occasioning an all time high number of enrolments. The FCT is typical of this development.

Enrolment into the UBE in the FCT is a continuous exercise. Many new schools have been opened where large number of children of school age was registered.

Junior Secondary Schools (JSSs)

Additional classroom blocks were constructed by the MFCT in some of the junior secondary schools (JSSs) spread across the Area Councils. Some dilapidated classrooms and school hostels have been renovated to accommodate the UBE pupils entering into JSSs. Furniture were procured and distributed to all secondary schools in the FCT. Besides, some of the schools have functional libraries equipped with assorted textbooks of different titles in core subjects. Again, efforts to obtain actual costs of equipping of functional libraries with assorted textbooks of different titles in core subjects from the relevant public agency were tactically rebuffed, while they claimed to be in the process of compiling the total number of new primary and JSS schools that have effectively relocated to new/permanent sites at public expense under the UBE scheme.

Limitations of the UBE Policy Implementation

While policy performance was satisfactory in some other areas, some constraints which need to be tackled for greater success were noticed by the FCT UBEB. These include the following:

- i. Inadequate mobilization of staff of the Inspectorate Division of the UBE office for effective and efficient monitoring;
- ii. Unenviable development of school libraries along side structures like classrooms;
- iii. Insufficient number of competent teachers;
- iv. Inadequate infrastructural facilities/equipment; and
- v. Dearth of classrooms.

Furthermore, FCT UBEB (2008:13) laments that between 2005 and 2008, the Board faced *great challenges especially with regards to the issues of reliability or dependability of data on Basic Education for effective planning and for use in research as secondary data. Successive efforts over the years towards the situation yielded but minimum success. Meanwhile one of the major challenges has been that of inadequate funding of data collection exercise and research. This situation has many times affected the timeliness of data availability in the Board. Another serious challenge has been that of inadequate training of the Statistics and Research Officers on relevant courses that should have built up their capacity thereby enhancing their productivity in the long run.*

This implies that basic education delivery by the FCT UBEB has scarcely been based on reliable data to date. Tahir (2002:13) corroborates the foregoing arguments on the limitations of the UBE policy implementation, thus: “The major challenge is the enormity – size – of the programme. The size of primary education, the size of junior secondary education, the size of the basic education programme is very large to the extent that it is sometimes difficult to even get a focus because you are expected to do so many things

Perhaps, it is noteworthy to add that indiscriminate demolition of illegal residential and office accommodations in the FCT between 2003 and 2007 created undue management problems for the UBE in the territory as many households were suddenly rendered homeless and several UBE pupils, teachers and administrators dislocated. However, the official Government position is captured by Mallam Ahmed Nasir el-Rufai, erstwhile Minister of the FCT, who enforced one of the most orchestrated demolitions of illegal structures in Nigerian history on the grounds that when his team assumed duty at the MFCT they were a very angry team;

angry at the degree of despoliation of the original ideals of a modern Federal Capital City, at the destruction of the ideals of the illustrious founding fathers of Abuja, and at the desecration of the fundamentally innovation notion of our centre of unity (El-Rufai, in Julius Berger PLC, 2006:5).

The flaws of the demolition exercise appears to have stemmed from the fact, according NBS (2005:5), that several reports before then revealed that “higher concentration of the poor live in the rural areas and urban fringes” of the FCT like Nyanya, Gwagwa, Karmo, Aleita, etcetera. It is worsened by the position of NBS (2005:5) in *Poverty Profile for Nigeria* that “poverty is multi-faceted, multidimensional and multi-disciplinary,” as the Nation’s economy has been associated with the “paradox of growth without poverty reduction and the trickledown effect of growth on the poor.” This has been coupled with slow government response to the apparently endemic incidence of poverty and poor governance, occasioned by lack of purposeful designing of programmes that are truly anti-poverty in orientation and implementation.

DATA PRESENTATION, DATA ANALYSIS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

Data Presentation and Data Analysis

Proposition 1: There are inadequate human, institutional, and financial resources for the implementation of the UBE in the FCT.

Table below helps us to analyze data responses related to Proposition 2, which states that there are inadequate human, institutional and financial resources for the implementation of UBE in the FCT.

Table 2: Inadequacy Resources in FCT UBEB.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
AGREED	177	78%
DISAGREED	51	22%
Total	228	100%

Table 2 shows that 78% of the respondents agreed that are inadequate human, institutional and financial resources for the implementation of the UBE in the FCT. About 22% had a different view. The majority position confirms Proposition 2 which states that there are inadequate human, institutional and financial resources for the implementation of UBE in the FCT. This finding further confirms the common knowledge and daily complaints in the Mass Media that UBE schools lack adequate qualified human, institutional, and financial resources, because it was hurriedly embarked upon, without the benefit of long term planning. This could have been avoided if the Federal Government had taken cognizance of the lessons from the colossal failures of previous attempts to provide free universal basic education in the country and/or parts of the country like the defunct Western Region, Eastern Region, and LOOBO States, among others.

Proposition 2: The political system in which the UBE is being implemented in the FCT is unstable.

Table below helps us to analyze data responses related to Proposition 3, which states that the political system in which the UBE is being implemented in the FCT is unstable.

Table 3: Political Instability affects UBE in the FCT.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
AGREED	30	13%
DISAGREED	198	87%
Total	228	100%

Table 3 shows that 87% of respondents disagreed with the assertion that the political system in which the UBE is being implemented in the FCT is unstable. About 13% had a different view. Thus, the majority position of respondents fails to confirm Proposition 3 which states that the political system in which the UBE is being implemented in the FCT is unstable. This development is understandable because there was neither a major political uncertainty arising from forceful change of Government by military fiat nor change of political party in power at the centre that could have occasioned sudden change of policy thrust like that of the UBE. In fact, the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, 7th Edition defines ‘instability’ as “the quality of a situation in which things are likely to change or fail suddenly.” From 1999 to date (2009), the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) has been in control of the federal

government machinery, as the baton moved from Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua, who continued to ensure implementation of the UBE policy.

Proposition 3: The operational environment of the UBE in the FCT is unsuitable for the implementation of the policy.

Table below helps us to analyze data responses related to Proposition 4, which states that the operational environment of the UBE in the FCT is unsuitable for the implementation of the policy.

Table 4. Unstable Operational Environment of the FCT UBE

Response	Frequency	Percentage
AGREED	210	93%
DISAGREED	18	7%
Total	228	100%

Table 4 shows responses as to whether the operational environment of the UBE in the FCT is unsuitable for the implementation of the policy. It manifestly shows that 93% (majority) of respondents agreed that the operational environment of the UBE in the FCT is unsuitable for the implementation of the policy. An insignificant 7% held disparate view. The majority position, therefore, eminently confirms the Proposition 4 which states that the operational environment of the UBE in the FCT is unsuitable for the implementation of the policy. The reason for this finding could be traced to such factors as the appointment (reward) of all UBEB members that had always been based on political affiliation and not the quest to promote professionalism and patriotism of the workers. Other reasons for the unsuitability of the environment include appointment, promotion, and posting of workers based on primordial factors instead of merit. The poor leadership examples such as lateness to work and personalization of official positions characteristic of the Nigerian public sector also contribute to this palpable apathy towards the operational environment of the UBE in the FCT.

Proposition 4: The extent of monitoring of the implementation process of the UBE in the FCT is inadequate.

Table 5 below helps us to analyze data responses related to Proposition 5, which states that the extent of monitoring of the implementation process of the UBE in the FCT is inadequate.

Table 5: Inadequate Monitoring of the FCT UBE Programme.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
AGREED	201	88%
DISAGREED	27	12%
Total	228	100%

According to Table 5, about 88% of the respondents agreed that the extent of monitoring of the UBE programme implementation in the FCT is inadequate; 12% had a contrary opinion. This majority view clearly confirms Proposition 4 which states that the extent of monitoring of the implementation process of the UBE in the FCT is inadequate; thus, giving room for the perpetration of lapses and shortcomings in the policy implementation process. A development of this nature does not allow for early detection/curbing of policy abortion trends.

Respondents who agreed that monitoring exercise was irregular were asked to furnish reasons for their response. Below are the reasons advanced.

- (i) Lack of funds for adequate monitoring and evaluation exercise which are the basic function of the implementing agencies.
- (ii) Lack of equipment and stationeries for the exercise.
- (iii) Limited number of serviceable functional vehicles for monitoring and evaluation exercises.
- (iv) Managerial inefficiency.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are hereby discussed in the light of the four proposition postulated for the study. Proposition One, which states that the quality of the UBE programme design and inputs in the FCT is inadequate, was upheld. This finding aligns with the position of Lassa (2002:52) that there has to be appropriate quality, size and quantity of facilities and equipment (inputs) for the implementation of a policy to be effective. Furthermore, the finding justifies the claim of Abdullahi (1999) that policy implementation is said to be bad or faulty when the implementation is chaotically designed. Therefore, programme design and the quality of inputs of the UBE in the FCT ought to be quickly and periodically reviewed.

Proposition Two states that there are inadequate human, institutional, and financial resources for the implementation of the UBE in the FCT. This proposition was also confirmed by the study. This finding re-affirms the composite positions of Haque (1992:8), Sani (1994:26) and Adedeji (1982:8) that the availability of human, institutional and/or financial resources largely informs successful implementation of policy. The finding further concurs with the conclusion of Adedeji (1982:8) that the success of a government's policy programme is to a large extent determined by how the resources are deployed or put into beneficial use. Furthermore, the finding agrees with the position of Akpa and Udoh (2003) that Nigeria (FCT inclusive) is in dire need of seasoned educational administrators at all levels of education. This calls for an expanded training affordable training programme for prospective and serving basic educational administrators/planners in the FCT. The finding also exposes the state of inadequate funds allocation for the accomplishment of the objectives of the programme, and the desertion of classroom construction works by some contractors after collecting mobilization fees, which borders on corrupt mismanagement of resources, among others. No wonder several experts namely Sani (1994:114), Imobighe (1992:522) and Kyari (1989:120) insist that the abortion of various public polices in Nigeria is strongly linked to constraints such as untimely release of funds, corruption, and lack of patriotic leadership, among others. Funding is probably the most essential determinant of the success of UBE policy.

Proposition Three asserts that the political system in which the UBE was being implemented in the FCT is unstable. The study failed to confirm proposition. The finding certainly concurs with the celebrated opinion of Halpin and Croft (1963) that the organizational climate of schools mainly defines the direction and extent the school (organization) effectively achieves its policy goals. The Nigerian political system requires stability over a long period for much success to be recorded in the UBE in the FCT. There is need for policy sustenance through prolonged political stability so that the Nation would amply implement the UBE policy for a reasonable period in order to arrive at an empirical conclusion on its suitability or otherwise.

Proposition Four states that the operational environment of the UBE in the FCT is unsuitable for the implementation of the policy. The finding of the investigation upheld this proposition as well. The finding, of course, lays credence to the view of Essien (1975) that great educational experiences are the direct correlates of the greatness of certain environmental factors. It is obvious that provision of adequate funds by the Government, periodic review of UBE Act, 2004, probity in the award, execution and supervision of capital projects that border on important infrastructure like additional classrooms, office accommodation, as well as avoidance of too many impromptu activities that upset the execution of projects statutorily appropriated for, are among the several factors that shall create conducive operational environment for the implementation of the policy. Of course, the operational environment of the UBE policy can only be made as further suggested by the respondents conducive when it is made free indeed by the Government. Morale of workers must be high to enable the policy succeed as envisaged.

Respondents also confirmed Proposition 4 which states that the extent of monitoring of the implementation process of the UBE in the FCT is inadequate. This finding implies that the staff of the UBE schools in the FCT would be free to treat their official duties with levity since they were invariably

left on their own. This occasioned absenteeism among teachers and students as well and did not represent an atmosphere suitable for learning. Carrying over of such attitude to the senior secondary would engender a situation in which only few students study judiciously and pass their external examinations in flying colours. Thus, the goals of qualitative education would have been missed. The finding critically underscored the managerial inefficiency associated with the management of the UBE policy in the FCT; thus, aligning with the incisive conclusion of Akpa and Udoh (2003) that Nigeria (the FCT inclusive) is in dire need of seasoned educational administrators at all levels of education. Furthermore, monitoring ought to be done by the UBEB in collaboration with other basic education stakeholders in the FCT. Public enlightenment of the activities of the UBE policy implementation efforts must be adequately made.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study is an investigation into the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy in Nigeria: a case study in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The study was undertaken as an assessment of the administrative capability of the FCT UBE, the agency of Government implementing the UBE in the FCT. The basic conclusion therefore is that the policy programme of the UBE in the FCT was not well designed and the administrative capability of the implementing agency to deliver was suspect.

Noticeable constraints in the implementation process of the programme were similar to the constraints of previous basic education policy programmes in the FCT. The problems identified ranged from inadequate funding, inadequate provision of infrastructural/instructional materials, limited human resources, and non-conducive learning/working environment for both the pupils and teachers. Moreover, though monitoring exercises were conducted, it was not always regular due to some problems encountered by the monitoring units of the UBE policy implementation agency in the FCT.

The UBE policy in the FCT did not operate under any legislation in its first five years, thereby making it difficult to enforce the compulsory aspect of the scheme. These mentioned constraints were the most pressing challenges implementers of the policy faced. Similar constraints likewise bedevilled erstwhile UPE programme. The identified problems are surmountable; the operators of the scheme should therefore urgently address them to ensure the sustainability of the policy.

The societal demand for UBE is strong in Nigeria. There is the need to urgently make well over half of Nigeria's 140,000,000 populations functionally literate. Only a policy programme like the UBE can effectively carry out this function within the shortest possible time. Coupled with that is the greater need of laying a solid foundation for life-long learning for present and future generations. The school system needs to be made very functional and particularly responsive to Nigerians valid demand for access, equity, relevance and efficiency in universal basic education delivery.

One of the main objectives of the UBE policy is to provide free education for every Nigerian child of school going age. The public ought to know the extent to which the policy is envisaged to be free in order not to live in a deceptive world thinking that everything about the scheme is free in the strictest sense of the word *free*. It is therefore fundamental to make a distinction between private costs and public costs of the UBE in Nigeria. Of course, public costs are those financed by government while private costs are those borne by individual students, pupils and their parents/guardians.

If UBE is to be free, does it mean that all private costs such as payment of fees, uniforms, textbooks, notebooks, and so on, will be borne by the government? These are basic issues that should be clarified, so that a more inclusive budget for successful implementation of the UBE policy can be obtained. The explication is imperative so that UBE students, pupils, and parents/guardians will recognize their areas of responsibilities. Another interesting issue begging for further explanation is the compulsory aspect of the UBE scheme. Does compulsory mean something binding on both the government and the citizens? What will happen where the government fails to provide appropriate incentives for basic education? How will coercion for parents to send their children to school be enforced? These issues need to be fully explained for the public to appreciate what the compulsory aspect of the UBE entails. UBE policy requires the conscientious efforts and co-operation of UBE officials and all the stakeholders to ensure its successful implementation. Effective linkage among the various agencies and organizations that are responsible for the implementation of basic education programme is needful. The quality of the programme design and the quality of inputs into the UBE in the FCT are inadequate. The availability of adequate human, institutional and financial resources for the UBE in the FCT is lacking. The stability of the political system in which any public policy like the UBE in the FCT is implemented is crucial. The success of a policy like the UBE in the FCT can be guaranteed by making its operational environment conducive. The legislative framework of a policy is critical to its effective implementation and structure. Constant, regular monitoring of the UBE in the FCT by relevant government agencies to eliminate wasteful spending and ensure prudent

application of funds is yet to be embarked upon. The Top-Down approach to policy implementation is adopted for the UE in the FCT.

It would be unrealistic therefore to expect that the UBE as presently constituted can cater for all the educational needs of all basic school children in the FCT. No government or governmental agency can possibly do so single-handed. Certainly, the UBE policy as it is being implemented in the FCT requires the conscientious efforts and cooperation of UBE officials and other stakeholders like parents/guardians to ensure its successful implementation.

On the basis of the foregoing findings, some cogent recommendations are hereby made to guarantee speedy cum effective implementation of the UBE policy. It is noteworthy that these recommendations constitute crucial management principles applicable to other public policies already initiated or yet to be initiated in the ever-changing Nigerian public administration environment. The recommendations are as follows:

- i. The Government should urgently re-structure the UBE legal framework and implementation procedure in such a way that the UBE policy programme shall be adequately and centrally funded, controlled and managed by the UBEC for the Federal Government so that the encumbrances created by the involvement of the three tiers of Government in the implementation process shall be drastically reduced;
- ii. The Federal Government should ensure the availability of adequate human, institutional and financial resources for the UBE in the FCT. Provision of sufficient qualified human resources, their regular re-training and enhancement of their welfare package are crucial for the policy to succeed. Consequently, Government should guarantee adequate budgetary allocations/timely release of funds for the UBE policy programme in the FCT;
- iii. The Federal Government should guarantee the continuous stability of the political system in which the UBE in the FCT is implemented, by ensuring adequate and equitable distribution of essential complimentary social services like good road network, portable water/electricity, and affordable qualitative medicare;
- iv. The FCT UBEB should make the operational environment conducive for the success of the UBE in the FCT by emphasizing merit and equity in appointments, promotions, postings, remunerations and discipline of staff;
- v. All Government agencies charged with constant, regular monitoring of the implementation of the UBE should wake up to their responsibilities, while the Government should provide them with sufficient logistics/funds to that effect. Furthermore, reports of monitoring exercises should largely inform future review of the UBE policy in order to ensure prudent use of available funds;
- vi. Government should ensure that adequate facilities/equipment in good condition are provided for UBE schools;
- vii. Government should abolish the Top-Down approach to the implementation of the UBE policy in other to carry along other stakeholders in the policy like parents/guardians to ensure effective implementation, sustainability, and improvement of the policy. The Top-Down approach to the implementation of the UBE policy should be abrogated; and

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