



Historical Analysis of Implementation and Completion Rate of Universal Basic Education in Sokoto State of Nigeria, 2004–2018

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Abstract Original Research Article

This paper is an historical analysis of implementation and completion rate of Universal Basic Education in Sokoto State of Nigeria. Universal Basic Education (UBE) scheme was launched in Sokoto State of Nigeria in 1999 to provide free and compulsory education to pupils up to the junior secondary school level. However, reports indicated that the goal of UBE was not being achieved in Sokoto State, which partly accounts for the low completion rate recorded in this state from 2004 to 2018. This study therefore was carried out to historically analyze the implementation and completion rate of UBE in Sokoto State. The study revealed among others that there was inadequate implementation of Universal Basic Education Scheme from 2004 to 2018 in Sokoto State while the completion rate was not encouraging. The study suggested that general orientation or awareness campaign on UBE to parents and tutors about the objectives of basic education should be carried out by the State Universal Basic Education Board to create awareness on the importance of education.

Keywords: Historical Analysis, Implementation, Completion Rate, UBE, Curriculum, NPE.

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Introduction

In developing nations, especially Africa, the elites have long harped on the fact that education is the basis of all societal development. Any education system, structure, or process that is unplanned or whose policies and objectives are relegated to the background or left in the hands of inexperienced or unqualified personnel can hardly guarantee the expected foundation for significant socio-economic development. To stress this further, any education system, structure, process, program, or project that has evolved without conscious implementation is likely to fail to the expected targets. As a result, it will

be unable to contribute its expected share to societal development. Thus, national and state efforts at delivering basic education cannot achieve the desired result if Universal Basic Education (UBE) objectives are not implemented judiciously, systematically deployed, effectively monitored, and well evaluated. Universal Basic Education was formally inaugurated in Sokoto State of Nigeria in 1999 and its enabling law passed in 2004.

Basic Education refers to the entire educational process in different areas (formal, and informal) aimed at meeting the basic needs of scholars and the whole community (Ekundayo, 2016). The education



given at the elementary level is referred to as "basic education". The definition of universal basic education varies per nations. In the past, six years of elementary schooling was considered basic education in Nigeria. In recent years, basic education has expanded to include six years of elementary schools and three years of junior high school. The term "Universal Basic Education (UBE) refers to a fifteen (15) year period of formal education. Non-formal education and education for Nigeria's marginalized communities are also included in the UBE system. Because it serves as the foundation for higher education, basic education is typically regarded as the first degree of education. Many individuals particularly governments all around the world, have become aware of the necessity for universal education through out the years.

The expansion of the provision of basic education, targeted at increasing access for all eligible children, is based on an international framework that started in 1948 through the world wide announcement of human rights, which was embraced through the Bill of Rights Article 26 that stipulates 'a right to education for all'. This declaration was re-echoed at the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) that took place in Jomtien, Thailand, between March 3rd and 9th, 1990. The conference gave basic education a new direction, most importantly with the goal and renewed dedication of making it workable for all citizens (Akinbi, 2022). To achieve this objective, Article one (1) of the WCEFA declaration affirms that "every individual, child, youth, and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs". The pronouncement was echoed later at the United Nations World Summit for Children (WSC), which took place in New York on September 29 and 30, 1990. The summit declared that basic education by the year 2000 should have become accessible to every child.

Specifically, WSC set goals to achieve an all-embracing avenue to make elementary education accessible for all children. At least 80 percent of children that are of school age should finish basic school, and there should be a decrease in the number of adults that are illiterate, with special attention paid to increasing the level of girls' education. This means

that the rate of education will increase significantly, as children constitutes the largest percentage of the population.

It is everyone's right to be educated. Every nation in the world was made to adopt renewed measures to universalise and put extra effort into achieving basic education for its populace. Despite the improved actions, the situation was not much better. The World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) held in Jomtien Thailand from March 3-9, 1990, was the result of this. The conference was sponsored by UNESCO, UNOP, UNICEF, the World Bank, and some other governments and organizations. At the end of the conference, the participants adopted for action the document on the World Declaration for All and the Framework for Action Meeting Learners Basic Needs.

In Nigeria, the Federal Government took immediate steps, in a joint effort with UNICEF, to conduct research on the condition and policy of basic education, using the Universal Basic Education blueprint as its guide.

The universalization of elementary education in the country was formerly the project of each region. This means that the three regions in Nigeria - Eastern, Northern, and Western Regions made an attempt to establish the advancement of educational programs in their regions (FGN 2013). Specifically, Nigeria's attempts towards universalization of education date back to 1955, when the government of western Region embarked on a free primary education program through the Universal Primary Education (UPE) project. The initial success recorded in the Western Region, which increased Primary Schools enrollment, spurred the Eastern Region Government to introduce UPE in the region in 1957. (Osokoya, 2011) On September 6th, 1976, UPE became a national program when the Head of State, Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo, inaugurated the universal free primary education scheme in Lagos State for the whole nation. The primary reason for the Federal Government's participation of UPE was the desire to increase overall student's enrollment in schools across the country and reduce educational insecurity among the people of the country (Taiwo, 1980, in Akinbi 2022). Early, the UPE programmes

in Nigeria focused on increasing primary schools enrollment and changing the attitude of the public towards education. However, for political and socio-economic reasons among others, subsequent governments in the country did not sustain the program.

Challenges in Education

As a result of the global community's challenge in the fight against illiteracy, the Federal Government of Nigeria launched the Universal Basic Education program in Sokoto State in September 1999, with the goal of providing free and mandatory education from primary to junior secondary level to every child in Nigeria. In July 2002, the UBE bill was passed by the Senate in Nigeria. (Fawole, 2006). The UBE blueprint defined basic education as involving pre-primary education, primary education, education for junior secondary, and functional literacy for youth and adults that did not have the privilege of completing their basic education. In this study, completion rate refers to the successful completion of education. It means successful accomplishment and is a sign of successfully finishing an educational program or achievement. However, as laudable as the aims of UBE are, the participation level of children between the ages of six and fourteen years has been very low. In 1999, for instance, it was estimated that children of primary school age in the country numbered around 19.7 million. Only 15.7 million children of primary school age were in school, while the remaining 3.8 million were not (UNESCO, 2000). Statistics also revealed that, out of about 30 million primary school-age children in the country were not enrolled in school (UNESCO,

2012). Only 22% of over 10.5 million capable children between the ages of 12 and 14 were enrolled in junior secondary schools in 2006. Furthermore, 33% of the pupils registered in primary schools in 2000 were able to complete junior secondary schools in 2009. (Akinbi, 2022)

The low participation in basic education in the country cuts across gender, economic factors, parental occupation, parental academic achievement, as well as geographical boundaries. For instance, female enrollment in schools is generally low in the northern part of Nigeria. In the South, female enrollment is greater than male. Enrollment in the South-east, are almost the same for the genders. There are widespread geographical disparities in basic education coverage, noted to be to the disadvantage of children generally in the northern area of the nation, particularly in the north-west geopolitical zone of the nation, that is Sokoto, Kebbi, Katsina, Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna and Zamfara States. According to UNICEF (2001), while approximately 60% of the children that ought to be in primary school are in primary school in the South, less than 40% are in school in the Northeast and only one-third has the chance of attending a primary school compared to a child from any part of southern Nigeria (Akinbi 2022).

Objectives of the study

This study set out to look at the implementation and completion rate of Universal Basic Education in Sokoto State of Nigeria with particular attention on pupils and students enrollment, completion of basic education, and government involvement in basic education especially financially aspect.

The Strength and Weakness of Universal Basic Education In Sokoto State.

Table 1. Pre-Primary Enrollment in Sokoto from 2003 - 2018.

Year	Number of schools	Number of pupils
2003	2196	71637
2004	2102	56879

2005	2102	60494
2006	2204	71241
2007	2204	70154
2008	2204	71324
2009	2204	70134
2010	2204	72142
2011	2204	71893
2012	2204	70982
2013	2204	72062
2014	2204	72883
2015	2204	71756
2016	2204	71675
2017	2204	71958
2018	2204	71996

Source: Sokoto State Ministry of Education and Sokoto State Universal Basic Education Board.

The above table shows that the enrollment rate dropped from 71,639 of year 2003, to 56,879 in year 2004 but moved up a little in year 2005 to 60,494.

This shows the low level of enrollment in Sokoto State.

Table 2. Completion Rate and Drop Out Rate in Basic Education in Sokoto State between 2004 and 2018.

Starting year	Enrollment	Completion Year	Number	Drop-out Rate
2004	104670	2009	93765	10.42%
2005	108071	2010	103525	4.21%
2006	75101	2011	–	–
2007	92685	2012	–	–
2008	95013	2013	–	–
2009	107843	2014	102015	5.4%
2010	107843	2015	105100	2.54%

2011	–	2016	–	–
2012	–	2017	–	–
2013	–	2018	–	–

The table above reveals that the government of the state is really making effort to reduce the number of drop out in the state. This may be due to payment of teachers salary and provision of educational facilities and resources to make learning more comfortable in the state. The research even showed that training and in-service training is done for the teachers from time

to time. Although, the number of teachers that have access to this training may not be as expected, but the state government has started and there is always room for improvement.

Source: Sokoto State Ministry of Education and Sokoto State Universal Basic Education Board.

Table 3. Availability of Teachers For Basic Education in Sokoto State 2004-2018.

Year	Student Enrollment	Numbers of Teachers	Teachers Pupils Ratio
2004	612887	–	–
2005	630426	7137	1.88
2006	438608	6063	1.72
2007	538121	10786	1.50
2008	557231	12737	1.44
2009	576704	12737	1.45
2010	633856	14064	1.45
2011	–	–	-
2012	–	–	–
2013	–	–	–
2014	639224	14064	1.45
2015	652431	14066	1.46
2016	–	–	–
2017	685755	14134	1.49
2018	–	–	–

Source: Sokoto State Ministry of Education and Sokoto State Basic Education Board.

The table above reveals that the government of the state is not committed to the provision of enough and adequate teachers for the state. The number of students are not in the ratio that will make learning successful in the state. The government of the state should employ more teachers to be commensurate to the number of students in the state.

Apart from the fact that there is shortage of educational personnel, especially teachers in the state, other problems of Universal Basic Education in Sokoto State include, shortage of public schools in the locality, and this cause discouragement from sending children to school because of the far distance

that children have to trek before getting to the school due to insecurity. Another problem is the payment of some fees that the school administrators fixed to run the activities of the schools which are at high side for some parents. Basic Education is expected to be free, but the administrators of schools collect fees under different umbrellas like, Parent Teachers Association (PTA), lesson fees, rehabilitation fee and so on. Lack of textbooks and early marriage especially among the girls prevented most female children in Sokoto State from completing basic education. While parents ignorance more than any other factors prevent the parents from sending their children to school.

Government involvement in training of Teachers, that is in-service training to support the full implementation of UBEC in Sokoto State.

Table 4. Teacher In-Service Training in Sokoto State, Between 2004-2018.

Year	Number of Teachers	Number Trained	% Trained
2004	–	-	–
2005	7137	–	–
2006	6063	–	–
2007	10786	–	–
2008	12737	-	–
2009	12737	–	–
2010	14064	–	–
2011	–	–	–
2012	14094	4666	33.11%
2013	14164	3566	25.18%
2014	14064	3661	26.03%
2015	14066	2353	16.73%
2016	14066	3407	24.22%

2017	14134	3409	24.12%
2018	14154	3068	21.63%
			Average per year= 24.4%

Suggested way forward

General orientation or awareness campaign on UBE to parents and tutors about the general objective of basic education should be carried out.

This awareness should be done through the State Universal Basic Education Board.

Teachers should be recruited by the government for the basic education.

That is, teachers should be available in the pre-primary, primary as well as junior secondary schools in the normal teacher-pupil ratio of 1:30.

Facilities and material resources should be provided by the government for the schools.

Dilapidated buildings should be refurbished by the government. Since government alone can not shoulder the responsibility of education, parents, philanthropist and stakeholders should assist by providing educational resources and equipment to schools to make the schools comfortable for learning.

More in-service training should be organized for the teachers by government from time to time with motivation to encourage more participation of teachers in the training.

Conclusion

As a result of the outcome of the study, it is concluded that the government of Sokoto State has a lot to do so as to encourage the parents, teachers, as well as the students on the importance of basic education and make them stay in school. Since the government alone cannot fixed the problems of education, stakeholders, philanthropists and the

parents should rise up to the task by contributing their quotas to basic education needs in Sokoto State.

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