

## ***Teachers' Perception of the Achievement of the Objectives of Universal Basic Education Programme (UBE) in Rivers State***

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### **Abstract**

*This study was to investigate teachers' perception of the achievement of the objective of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Rivers State. The research adopted a descriptive design with survey type, with two questions and one hypothesis. The population of the study constitutes both male and female basic education teachers. The sample of the study was made up of 600 teachers drawn from twelve (12) LGAs in Rivers State through stratified random sampling techniques based on location of schools. An adopted questionnaire of 30 items, subdivided into 5 sections was used in data gathering. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.82. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that the objectives of the UBE are achieved in Rivers state. The study also revealed that location of school affects the achievement of the objectives of UBE. The objectives are more achieved in urban schools than rural schools and the mean difference was significant. The study recommends, among others, that there should be adequate staffing of schools, proper supervision and monitoring of basic schools.*

**Keywords:** Teachers, Location, objectives, Universal, Basic, Education, UBE.

### **Introduction**

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme is part of Nigeria's effort to uphold and renew its commitment to the provision and promotion of basic education for all (Ilogho, 2016). The UBE is a school quality programme aimed at repositioning education; especially at the basic level so that it will play its role as a positive instrument of change for development. According to Asuru (2006), the UBE as an intervention

programme is a positive and timely response to salvage the basic education and indeed the entire educational system from collapse by enhancing its quality through the provision of inputs (human and material).

Assessment according to Okpala and Onocha (1994) is the process of fashioning data into interpretable form using data collection methods. Assessment sometimes is interchangeably used as measurement and evaluation. Assessment and evaluation help stakeholders (teachers, policy makers, publishers of educative materials) to ascertain the effectiveness in bringing about learning and character development in the learner.

According to UBE (2002: 6) the objectives of UBE programme include:

- Developing in the citizens a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion;
- The provision of free, universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school going age;
- Reducing drastically the incidence of drop-out from formal school system (through improved relevance, quality and efficiency);
- Catering for the learning needs of young persons who for one reason or another, have had to interrupt their schooling through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to the problem and promotion of basic education; and
- Ensuring the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills, as well as the ethical, moral and civic values for laying a solid foundation for life-long living.

The UBE Act 2004 states that without prejudice to the provision of item 30 of part II of the second schedule and item 2(a) of the fourth schedule to the 1999 constitution dealing with primary education, the Federal government intervention under the Act shall only be of assistance to the states and Local governments in Nigeria. One of the main strategies of the UBE programme is to enhance school quality in all ramifications as a means of promoting learning outcomes. Ilogho (2016) opined that UBE is set out to make basic education both teacher and pupil-friendly. UBE from inception is saddled with the responsibility of bringing basic education to the grassroots (Da-ue & Obilor, 2019). Its mandate is to make basic education free and compulsory for all children of school going age irrespective of their religion, tribe and political affiliations. This could be accomplished by improving school quality through the provision of requisite materials to enhance teaching/learning. The teacher will be re-trained, adequately motivated and equipped for service delivery. Schools will also be renovated, equipped and furnished to enhance learning and make pupils develop interest in schooling. Furthermore, basic education will be free and made compulsory in addition to the provision of basic materials for pupils (UBE, 2004).

Research carried out by some scholars has revealed positive correlation between the home and school related factors in influencing school performance of children. A school can be more effective or less effective depending on the quality of its inputs. School quality, according to Fuller and Heinemann (1989), is defined as the level of material inputs allocated to the school on a per pupil basis, and the level of efficiency with which fixed amounts of material inputs are organized and managed to raise pupils achievement. In Nigerian setting, it is instructive to add that the urban schools attract more qualified and experienced teachers and other support staffs because of the availability of infrastructure, social amenities and prospects of better jobs (Moyebi, 2015). This is different from what obtained in the rural areas which are mostly devoid of the trappings of modernity (Arubayi, 2005). World Bank report as cited in Ilogho (2016) that the urban children consistently outperformed their rural counterparts in both school attendance and attainment. According to the report, poor access to and low quality of schools were perhaps, the reasons for rural-urban difference in school attainments. Most rural schools are not given adequate attention, unlike the urban schools, in terms of provision and maintenance of facilities (Agi & Eremie, 2018).

If the child is the centre of the educational system, the teacher is the pivot of the educational process despite its location. The importance of the teacher in any educational programme cannot be overstressed, especially in the achievement of the objectives of the universal basic education programme. The success or failure of it will depend on the teacher because of the nature of the programme. Atanda (2009) stressed that the number and quality of teachers must be meticulously planned to ensure adequacy of teachers, quantitatively and qualitatively. No UBE programme that is implemented can rise above the quality of its teachers. The training and retraining of teachers is one of the most important elements on the operation and success of the UBE.

The need for UBE was predicated on the premise that the state of basic education in Nigeria is pitiable (Ogbonna, 2002). UBE was a timely effort to combat and possibly eradicate illiteracy and salvage the basic education system of the country from total collapse in Nigeria. UBE is expected to ensure the improvement of school quality and help redirect the minds of the youth towards a strong consciousness for education with an attendant positive effect on cognitive and affective gains. The programme had started in Rivers State 2000/2001 school year as in other states of the federation. Rivers State is one of the states that have poor school quality as a result of some of the peculiarities of the state as one of the core Niger Delta states (Asuru, 2006). This is the 19<sup>th</sup> year of the programme and it is expected to yield some results, hence the need to assess the achievement of the objectives of UBE. Assessment of educational programme implies the process of determining the programme performance for the purpose of improving service delivery. It is therefore necessary to undertake periodic assessment of the UBE programme in the state in order to identify the extent which the programme objectives are achieved. The main purpose of this study is to analyze the assessment of the

achievement of the objectives of UBE as perceived by teachers in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the aim of the study is to determine the extent to which UBE objectives are achieved in Rivers States and to find out if location of schools affects the achievement of the objectives of UBE.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent have the UBE objectives been achieved in Rivers State?
2. To what extent have the UBE objectives been achieved in urban and rural schools in Rivers state?

### **Research Hypothesis**

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the extent of achievement of the objectives of UBE in urban and rural schools in Rivers State

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive research design of the survey type. The target population for the study was all public basic education school teachers in the 23 Local government Areas of Rivers State. The population constitutes both male and female teachers. There were 16,182 teachers in basic education schools out of which 7439 are primary school teachers and 8,743 are junior secondary school teachers, according to the Rivers State Universal Basic Education Board (RSUBEB, 2016) as cited in Agi and Eremie (2018). The sample for the study is made up of 600 teachers drawn from 12 Local Government' Areas (LGA) in Rivers state. The multistage sampling technique was used to obtain the sample for the study. The 12 LGA were chosen from the three senatorial districts in Rivers state. The LGA were divided into urban and rural through stratified random sampling technique using location of school as the basis (urban=350 and Rural=250). Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 50 teachers from each LGA.

The instrument used for the study was a questionnaire adopted from Ilogho (2016) which contained 30 items in 5-likert response mode of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was subdivided into 5 sections based on the objectives of UBE. The adopted instrument was face and content validated and the reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha which yielded a coefficient value of 0.82. The subsections reliability coefficients were also determined and coefficient values are 0.81, 0.82, 0.81, 0.77 and 0.80. Therefore, the instrument was considered to have good reliability measures.

The questionnaire was administered and collected by the researchers. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. A decision rule was taken on a criterion mean of 3.0; mean scores above this criterion value were considered as

'Achieved' while those below were regarded as 'Not Achieved.' The null hypothesis was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

**Presentation of results**

**Table 1:** Demographic information of Respondents

S/N	Location of school	No of Respondents	%
1	Urban	350	58.3
2	Rural	250	41.7
3	Total	600	100

**Research Question 1:** To what extent have the UBE objectives been achieved in Rivers State?

In order to answer the research question, item by item analysis was carried out on data from Rivers State and the result is presented in table 2.

**Table 2:** Item by item analysis of responses on the assessment of the achievement of the objectives of UBE in Rivers State

S/N	Item	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1	There is creation of consciousness in education of pupils by the UBE scheme	80	420	10	50	40	3.5	Achieved
2	The children and adult now attend school in large numbers	60	80	20	350	90	2.6	Not Achieved
3	Children and Teachers enjoy learning at school now	70	90	10	250	150	2.9	Not Achieved
4	Schools are now teacher friendly and pupils friendly	150	350	10	70	20	3.2	Achieved
5	There is development in the citizens a strong commitment to schooling	120	380	8	50	42	3.4	Achieved
6	The UBE has improved the attitude of pupils towards schooling in the State	100	400	5	60	35	3.0	Achieved
7	The UBE programme has helped to bridge the gap of the educational imbalance in the state for all school going age	60	80	20	350	90	2.6	Not Achieved

8	Free education for every Nigerian child of school going age	200	350	15	20	15	3.7	Achieved
9	There are enough classroom and furniture	100	400	5	80	15	3.5	Achieved
10	Schools are adequately equipped with textbooks and instructional materials	120	380	10	70	20	3.4	Achieved
11	Pupils have free textbooks in all the subjects	100	400	6	54	40	3.0	Achieved
12	There is high rate of enrollment of pupils in the schools	250	200	10	80	60	3.3	Achieved
13	There is no more delay in the payment of teachers' salaries, allowances, and other fringe benefits	150	350	8	82	20	3.2	Achieved
14	There is provision for enlightenment programme for boys and girls' parents at the primary school level	150	350	10	70	20	3.2	Achieved
15	In Rivers State, due to the UBE programme, large proportion of the citizens are literate	100	400	5	70	25	3.0	Achieved
16	There is provision of attitude improvement programme as part of basic education	15	150	15	250	150	2.8	Not Achieved
17	UBE programme is understood by all teachers	150	350	10	60	40	3.0	Achieved
18	There is effective participation of teachers in the UBE	60	90	10	250	140	2.6	Not Achieved
19	Teachers are upgraded in qualification through a recognized and institutionalized course of study	250	200	2	128	20	3.3	Achieved
20	The UBE programme cater for the learning needs of young people who have had interruption in their school through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to provision and promotion of basic education	30	60	10	350	150	2.7	Not Achieved
21	There is provision of funds for research, evaluation and monitoring	40	160	10	250	40	2.4	Not Achieved

22	Reducing the incidence of dropout from the formal school system through improved relevance, quality and efficiency through the UBE programme in the State	250	200	2	130	18	3.2	Achieved
23	Teachers undergo seminar and workshop regularly	150	350	5	60	35	3.2	Achieved
24	There is provision of government intervention programme to help those who have already dropped out of school	80	90	10	250	170	2.4	Not Achieved
25	There is provision of attitude improvement programme as part of basic education at the primary school level.	250	200	2	130	18	3.2	Achieved
26	UBE is committed to ensuring the acquisition of appropriate level of literacy, numeracy, communicative and life skills, as well as ethical, moral and civic values for laying a solid foundation for life-long learning.	250	200	5	125	20	3.3	Achieved
27	There is provision of centres for adult education, women empowerment and nomadic education	50	150	10	240	150	2.7	Not Achieved
28	There is provision for adequate centre for learning and developing skills	250	200	2	130	18	3.2	Achieved
29	There is provision of educational statistics relevant for proper planning of educational programme	60	90	10	250	140	2.6	Not Achieved
30	Re-training teacher has received the desired attention from local, state and federal government	40	160	5	240	155	2.8	Achieved

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Table 2 shows that there is creation of consciousness in education of pupils by the UBE scheme. Item 2 and 3 indicate not achieved. This means that children and adult are not attending schools in large numbers and children and teachers are not enjoying learning in school. Again, the table revealed item 4, 5 and 6 are achieved. Also items 7-12 (objective 2 of UBE) show achieved except item 7 (the UBE programme has helped to bridge the gap of the educational imbalance in the state for all school going age). Items 13-18 (UBE objective 3) showed achieved for all except item 16 and item 18 which showed not achieved. Item 19 showed achieved because it is above the bench mark of 3.0. Items 20 and 21 showed not achieved while items 22 and 23 showed achieved (UBE objective 4). This implies this objective is achieved. Items 24-30, showed not achieved while items 25-28 showed achieved. This implies the UBE objective 5 is not achieved in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent have the UBE objectives been achieved in urban and rural schools in Rivers state?

**Table 3:** Item by item analysis on the opinion of teacher's assessment of the objectives of UBE in Rivers State based on location of Schools

S/N	Statement	Location	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1	There is creation of consciousness in education of pupils by the UBE scheme	Urban	120	180	5	20	25	3.5	Achieved
		Rural	80	90	20	30	30	3.0	Achieved
2	The children and adult now attend school in large numbers	Urban	150	180	10	46	34	3.2	Achieved
		Rural	90	100	10	32	18	3.0	Achieved
3	Children and Teachers enjoy learning at school now	Urban	90	80	10	20	30	3.0	Achieved
		Rural	30	40	20	100	60	2.9	Not Achieved
4	Schools are now teacher friendly and pupils friendly	Urban	100	120	10	60	40	3.1	Achieved
		Rural	80	90	20	30	30	3.0	Achieved
5	There is development in the citizen a strong commitment to schooling	Urban	120	180	6	19	25	3.6	Achieved
		Rural	98	112	8	22	20	3.2	Achieved
6	The UBE has improved the attitude of pupils towards schooling in the State	Urban	146	174	20	36	44	3.2	Achieved
		Rural	88	102	9	32	19	3.0	Achieved
7	The UBE programme has helped to bridge the gap of the	Urban	55	78	13	113	109	2.8	Not Achieved
		Rural	64	66	8	102		2.8	Achieved
8	Free education for every Nigeria child of school going age	Urban	144	116	14	46	30	3.7	Achieved
		Rural	99	84	8	22	26	3.4	Achieved



9	There are enough classroom and furniture	Urban	155	125	10	33	46	4.2	Achieved
		Rural	78	98	14	44	36	2.9	Not Achieved
10	Schools are adequately equipped with textbooks and instructional materials	Urban	116	144	14	30	46	3.7	Achieved
		Rural	88	102	9	32	19	3.0	Achieved
11	Pupils have free textbooks in all the subjects	Urban	145	128	8	22	24	3.4	Achieved
		Rural	54	64	8	102	22	2.8	Not Achieved
12	There is high rate of enrollment of pupils in the schools	Urban	123	137	9	46	55	3.2	Achieved
		Rural	55	84	2	101	8	2.7	Not Achieved
13	There is no more delay in the payment of teachers' salaries, allowances, and other fringe benefits	Urban	135	115	12	36	52	3.5	Achieved
		Rural	99	84	8	22	26	3.4	Achieved
14	There is provision for enlightenment education programme for the boys and girls' parents at the primary school level	Urban	136	124	12	38	40	3.1	Achieved
		Rural	55	60	9	112	11	2.6	Not Achieved
15	In Rivers State, due to the UBE programme, large proportion of the citizens are literate	Urban	105	124	6	68	42	3.0	Achieved
		Rural	54	64	8	102	22	2.8	Not Achieved
16	There is provision of attitude improvement programme as part of basic education	Urban	105	124	6	68	42	3.0	Achieved
		Rural	55	84	2	102	9	2.7	Not Achieved
17	UBE programme is understood by all teachers	Urban	145	128	8	22	24	3.4	Achieved
		Rural	88	104	12	24	22	3.2	Achieved
18	There is effective participation of teachers in the UBE	Urban	105	124	6	68	42	3.0	Achieved
		Rural	85	102	12	46	35	3.0	Achieved
19	Teachers are upgraded in qualification through a recognized and institutionalized course of study	Urban	115	124	9	62	40	3.1	Achieved
		Rural	85	102	9	42	68	3.0	Achieved
20	The UBE programme cater for the learning needs of young people who have had interruption in their school through appropriate forms of complementary approaches to provision and promotion of basic education	Urban	65	84	12	124	55	2.8	Not Achieved
		Rural	85	64	9	84	48	2.5	Not Achieved

21	There is provision of funds for research, evaluation and monitoring	Urban	65	84	12	124	55	2.8	Not Achieved
		Rural	45	64	9	102	40	2.8	
22	Reducing the incidence of dropout from the formal school system through improved relevance quality and efficiency through the UBE programme in the State	350	115	120	15	66	44	3.4	Achieved
		250	85	112	3	32	68	3.2	
23	Teachers undergo seminar and workshop regularly	Urban	110	120	12	78	50	3.2	Achieved
		Rural	85	88	15	62	40	3.2	
24	There is provision of government intervention programme to help those who have already dropped out of school	Urban	60	88	12	122	108	2.7	Not Achieved
		Rural	85	64	9	88	40	2.6	
25	There is provision of attitude improvement programme as part of basic education at the primary school level.	Urban	65	84	12	124	55	2.8	Not Achieved
		Rural	85	64	9	84	48	2.5	
26	UBE is committed to ensuring the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral and civic values for laying a solid foundation for life-long learning.	Urban	115	120	15	68	42	3.5	Achieved
		Rural	80	112	9	32	68	3.1	
27	There is provision of centres for adult education, women empowerment and nomadic education	Urban	140	120	9	56	55	3.4	Achieved
		Rural	45	64	9	102	40	2.8	
28	There is provision for adequate centre for learning and developing skills	Urban	120	112	12	66	50	3.2	Achieved
		Rural	80	112	9	32	69	3.0	
29	There is provision of educational statistics relevant for proper planning of educational programme	Urban	125	120	12	58	47	3.0	Achieved
		Rural	85	64	12	88	41	2.5	

30	Re-training teacher has receive the desired attention from local, state and federal government	Urban	125	120	12	58	47	3.0	Achieved
		Rural	85	64	12	88	41	2.5	Not Achieved

Table 3 showed that in urban schools items 1-6 are all achieved, while in the rural schools items 1-5 are achieved except item 3. This implies the objective one, “developing in the citizen strong consciousness and strong commitment to education and its vigorous promotion,” is achieved in both urban and rural schools, though better achieved in urban than rural schools. Item 7-12 (UBE objective 2), in urban schools, items 8-12 are considered achieved except item 7, while in rural schools, items 8, 9 and 10 are achieved. Items 13-18, showed in urban schools, items 13, 14, 15, 17, 18 are achieved and item 16 is not achieved. In the rural schools, items 13, 17 and item 18 are achieved and items 14, 15 and 16 are not achieved. Items 19-24 record achieved in items 19 and 23 for both urban and rural schools and not achieved for the rest. Items 25-30, showed achieved for urban schools. In rural schools only item 26 is achieved and all others not achieved. This implies that the objectives of UBE are achieved more in urban schools than rural schools.

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference in the extent of achievement of the objectives of UBE in urban and rural schools in Rivers State.

In testing hypothesis one, the t-test comparing differences was employed and result shown in table 4.

**Table 4:** Summary Table of t-Test Analysis Showing Teachers Opinion of the Extent of Achievement of the Objectives of UBE in Urban and Rural Schools in Rivers State

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Urban	350	96.75	4.62				
Rural	250	83.31	7.76	598	24.46	1.96	Significant

Table 4 showed that t-calculated of 24.46 is greater than the t-critical of 1.96, the hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is significant difference between the urban and rural schools in the achievement of the objectives of UBE in Rivers State.

### Discussion on findings

The result reveals that UBE objectives are achieved in Rivers State. This result is in line with Asuru (2006) who opined that these achievements in the objectives of UBE are due to the various educational programmes of Rivers state ranging from construction and

rehabilitation of classrooms, provision of textbooks, making sure any child of school going age is in school during school hours, arrest is made if found loitering and are dealt with accordingly. The provision of free transportation for children helps in the level of achievement of the objectives of UBE. Arubayi (2005) stated that the distance travelled to schools by some pupils has some relationship with the school attendance, punctuality to schools and absenteeism. This implies that the free education and transportation offered in the state has contributed to the high achievement of the objectives. The UBE was meant to reverse the ugly trend of children not going to school because of parent's low socio-economic background. The learning environment in the public schools in Rivers state was very poor as rightly noted by the Rivers State Ministry of Education (2004) in Ilogho (2016). However, UBE in Rivers state has reversed the trend in the sense that the learning environment has improved greatly in the state (Rivers State Ministry of Education, 2013) as cited in Agi and Eremie (2018). Now there exist good buildings, electronic libraries, employment of more teachers, and provision of free transportation buses (Ilogho, 2016). All these go a long way in improving education and the high achievement recorded in Rivers state in the achievement of the objectives of UBE.

In the analysis of data, based on location of school, there is significant difference between urban and rural schools in Rivers state in the extent of achievement of the objectives of UBE. These findings are in agreement with Asuru (2006), Ilogho (2016), Agi and Eremie (2018), Moyebi (2015) and Atanda (2009). These researchers have in their different works expressed that there was significant difference between urban and rural schools in the extent of achievement of the objectives of UBE. They stressed the fact that in urban schools there exists greater access to public library, bookstore and laboratories; hence the schools are less isolated. Another point stressed was the inadequacy of teachers in the rural schools and the willingness of teachers to be posted to rural communities. Most rural schools are not given adequate attention in terms of provision, maintenance of facilities and adequacy of teachers, qualitatively and quantitatively.

### **Conclusion/recommendations**

The findings of the study indicate that implementation of the objective of UBE programme is achieved in Rivers State, and that location of schools affects the implementation of the achievement of the objectives of UBE programme in Rivers State significantly. The lack of qualified teachers in the rural areas and other reasons accounted for the low achievement of the objectives of UBE. Although there has been some improvement in the quality of manpower of teachers in the rural schools, yet no motivation and payment of fringe benefits. Based on the findings, the researchers recommend that, there should be adequate staffing of schools and professional teachers should be posted to schools irrespective of the location of school. It is further suggested that government should increase the incentive of the rural teachers, so as to attract qualified and professional teachers to stay in the rural areas.

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