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Intent to Action: Overcoming Barriers to Universal Basic Education Policy Implementation in Nigeria

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Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

I. incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

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Dedication

To HIM who is an embodiment of all wisdom and knowledge be glory forever and ever. Amen.

To my covenant friend, sister and love: Oluwafunmilayo Adedeke Stephen-Bolaji (nee Ojomo), you are part of this dream.

To my guys, Iteoluwakishi Abraham Stephen-Bolaji and Ireoluwade Gabriel Stephen-Bolaji, while you were still with HIM, He already predestined both of you to share in this glory.

To everyone who is curious to learn in order to survive the treacherous trap and snare of ignorance and poverty.

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List of Abbreviations

CIEFFA	International Centre for Girls and Women's Education in Africa
CMS	Church Missionary Society
COE	Commissioner of Education
CRF	Consolidated revenue fund
CS	Central State
EFA	Education for All
ES	executive secretary
FTS	federal teachers' scheme
GT	Glad Tidings
ICT	information and communications technology
LGC	local government council
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MOE	Ministry of Education
NAR	net attendance rate
NERDC	Nigerian Education and Research Development Council
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NPEC	National Primary Education Commission
PS	Pacesetter State
SBM	School-Based Management
SBMC	School Based Management Committee
SPEB	State Primary Education Board
SUBEB	State Universal Basic Education Board
UBE	Universal Basic Education (programme)

UBEC   Universal Basic Education Commission

UN   United Nations

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF   United Nations Children's Fund

UPE   Universal Primary Education (programme)

USAID   United States Agency for International Development

Abstract

Nigeria's first nationwide 'free and compulsory' primary schooling was introduced in the 1970s with the Universal Primary Educational policy. This policy was engulfed by chaos during its implementation, which invariably left behind many school-age children nationwide (Denga, 2000). The ushering of the democratic dispensation in 1999 witnessed the launch of a new scheme that came to be known as 'Universal Basic Education' (UBE). It is over a decade now since this new programme was implemented, yet there has been little demonstrated success or achievement. Although the programme was designed to address sectoral issues such as access to education, student retention, equity and education quality enhancement, the issue of access remains the biggest challenge. Access to basic education among Nigerian children of school age is still at the low level of 60%. More than eight million children of school age (six to 15 years) are still not in school (NUT, 2008; UBEC, 2004). The hope of meeting the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aim to achieve compulsory universal basic education for all children by 2015, is in serious doubt in Nigeria because of the issue of access.

It was against this background that this study investigated the bureaucratic structure of the UBE at the system level of policy implementation, and how this has affected access to UBE in Nigeria. This study used document analysis and interviews with the bureaucrats responsible for policy implementation in two geo-political zones and the Federal Capital Territory to assess how the level of alignment has affected the achievement of UBE implementation at the federal, state and district levels. It became evident from the data that the challenge of access in UBE implementation is attributable to bureaucratic and political issues. This study informs understandings of how education policy implementation operates in Nigeria. This study addresses the gap in the literature regarding the implementation of

education policy and its effect on UBE policy. Recommendations have been developed for UBE implementation that seek to enable enhanced access to education among Nigerian children.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research study explored the bureaucratic mechanism of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy implementation in Nigeria towards achieving 'Education for All' by 2015. This chapter presents the background information on Nigeria as a country and the developmental process of its education system since colonial dispensation. As indicated by the map in Appendix 1, Nigeria is located in Western Africa on the Gulf of Guinea and has a total area of 923,768 km^2, making it the world's thirty-second largest country. It is comparable in size to Venezuela, is about twice the size of California, and is one-third of the size of Western Australia. Nigeria has a varied landscape, with the most expansive topographical region being that of the valleys of the Niger and Benue River. The country is comprised of three large ethnic groups: the Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani and Igbo. The country's official language is English, which is widely spoken, especially among educated people. Nigeria is a former British colony that has particular similarities in terms of educational structure with the Commonwealth of Nations. Nigeria gained her independence in 1960.

Since colonial dispensation, education in Nigeria has played a unique role in the developmental process of the nation. Adesina (1986) acknowledged that much has happened to the country's educational system—there have been changes, innovations and reforms all aiming to make education accessible to citizens. The characteristic zeal with which Nigerians yearn for education has accounted for the policy initiatives by the government, which have regarded education as an instrument par excellence for effective national development (NPE, 2004, p. 2). Despite the interest placed on education, there remain some challenging and contentious issues dominating the education sector—one of which, according to Omoyale (1998), is the issue of ineffectiveness in achieving education policy objectives in Nigeria since 1842.

The government's goal of reforming basic education since the introduction of Western education in Nigeria in 1842 has not been achieved because of the inept approach of the bureaucratic mechanism towards implementing educational policies (Adesina, 1986; Omoyale, 1998). Attesting to this was the launch of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme in 1955 and 1976. The 1955 policy initiative in the education sector was to provide free and compulsory education. It operated according to peculiar regional circumstances. In the north, education was free, but neither universal nor compulsory. In the east, it was bandied as a vote-catching slogan, but quickly abandoned, apparently due to lack of 'resources', since the term was interpreted narrowly to mean financial resources. In the western region, it laid the foundation for an educational road map for the other two regions established by the 1950 MacPherson Constitution (Illo & Bolaji, 2007; Obayan, 2012). The premium placed on education resulted in the citizens of this region being the most educated. An overarching assessment of the policy a few years after implementation revealed that it had failed due to the lack of a structural mechanism for implementation to address the issues of overcrowded classrooms, inadequate infrastructure and dearth of qualified teachers. The resultant effect was that it left behind an influx of school-age children because of the lack of facilities to accommodate them.

The UPE policy of 1976 was launched across all the states of the federation and sought to address the issues that affected the 1955 educational policy. The policy was designed to expand access to education and increase the number of schools in the country. It also aimed to provide all school-age children free education in order to bridge the education gap and reduce the rising levels of illiteracy in the country. The implementation was launched with much promise, yet failed to achieve its goal of eradicating illiteracy because of inadequate planning and lack of an implementing mechanism, as identified in the previous policy. For example, Fafunwa (2004) mentioned that when the schools were opened to

register students, instead of the 2,300,000 children expected, 3,000,000 arrived to be registered. Among the other factors identified by Fafunwa (2004) were the lack of qualified teachers and lack of consultation with local communities regarding providing education suited to children's particular circumstances. It could be said that the policies failed largely due to the challenge of implementing the strategy and the bureaucracy's inability to turn policy into practice. Aluede (2006) affirmed that the intent of the 1976 UPE was to make education free, compulsory and accessible to the citizenry; however, within a short period, the programme was aborted due to poor implementation at its inception.

The ushering of the democratic dispensation in 1999 witnessed the launch of a new scheme that came to be known as 'Universal Basic Education'. It has been over a decade since this new programme was implemented, yet there has been little demonstrated success or achievement. Despite a significant increase in terms of funding, financing, time and energy invested in this programme, coupled with international intervention to ensure effective and efficient implementation, the challenges have been great. Although the programme was designed to address sectoral issues such as access, student retention, equity and quality enhancement, the issue of access remains the biggest challenge.

Access to basic education among Nigerian school-age children remains at the low level of 60%. More than eight million children of school age (six to 15 years) are still not in school. The hope of meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aim to achieve compulsory universal basic education for all children by 2015, remains in serious doubt in Nigeria because of the issue of access. This study explored the effect of the bureaucratic structure of implementing the UBE programme introduced in 1999 in relation to Nigerian youth's access to basic education. The concept of access in this study is explicitly discussed in the background section of this study. The focus of this study is on the implementation of education policy in Nigeria since its return to democracy in 1999.

Background to the Study

Nigeria's first nationwide 'free and compulsory' primary schooling was introduced in the 1970s with the UPE policy. The policy was engulfed by chaos during its implementation, which invariably left behind many school-age children nationwide. UPE was faced with the challenges of poor quality and inefficient education delivery (Denga, 2000). Sectoral issues of access, equity, student retention and quality enhancement were more pronounced in the system. Student absenteeism and dropout syndrome were serious problems, especially in primary schools, and there was ample evidence of poor performance of students as they moved up through the system. Table 1 shows the enrolment trends between 1990 and 1998, which indicate that there were increases in access to schooling by both genders until 1995, when there was a notable decline in attendance. In addition, throughout the entire period, there was inequality in the enrolment of boys and girls.

Table 1

Enrolment Trends of Boys and Girls between 1995 to 1998

Year	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
1990	76.4	59.1	67.7
1991	86.6	69.1	77.1
1992	90.3	71.9	81.1
1993	93.6	74.7	84.1
1994	89.4	83.2	86.5
1995	85.5	74.9	80.6
1996–1998	76.0	66.0	71.0

Source: Adapted from the statistics of primary and post-primary education in Nigeria, Lagos Federal Ministry of Education (1994/1995) and Lawal (2007).

The dropout syndrome (the dropout rate of Nigerian children from school) prompted national, state and community advocacy. While attempts were made to encourage more girls to complete primary school, economic pressures appeared to influence the early withdrawal of boys, especially in the southern part of Nigeria. The emerging indices were that, while boys previously tended to drop out at the secondary school level, they were then (in 1997)

doing so at the primary level. This was an indicator of the country's economic decline, as well as an indicator of the utility value of the education system (UNICEF Report, 1997).

From a comparative education perspective, the 1999 UBE policy for 'free and compulsory' primary education had a similar philosophy and similar implementation strategies to the UPE policy. It was considered an educational policy 'extension' of the former, but with a national focus. The UBE reform was a response to the global UN MDGs (MDG, 2006) and the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (EFA), of which Nigeria is a signatory (Okiy, 2004). The reform programme aimed to remove distortions and inconsistencies in basic education delivery; reinforce the implementation of the policy; and provide greater access to, and ensure the quality of, basic education throughout Nigeria. In summary, it was intended to:

- ensure uninterrupted access to nine years of formal education by providing free, compulsory UBE for every child of school-going age

- reduce school dropout and improve education relevance, quality and efficiency

- enable children to acquire literacy, numeracy and life skills and values for lifelong education and useful living

- provide midday meals to enhance children's access, retention and completion of the school cycle

- emphasise curriculum diversification and relevance to effectively and adequately encompass individual and community needs and aspirations

- distinguish junior secondary/high schools from senior secondary schools

- realign/integrate junior secondary education with primary education

- individualise teaching methods

- introduce the rudiments of computer literacy

- ensure appropriate continuous teacher professional development

- encourage community ownership of schools, including participation in the decision-making processes of schools (UBEC, 2004, p. 4).

These stated objectives attracted much-needed assistance from international agencies, such as the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and many others, in the form of grants and loans to ensure the implementation of the reform. This support was provided because the stated basic education reforms, in terms of structure and formulation, were realistic objectives, even when compared with developed countries such as Australia and Great Britain, whose educational policies are considered optimal (UBEC, 2004). This is also the case of the comprehensive school system of the United States, in theory and practice.

Regarding the Australian education system, the *Australian Encyclopaedia on Education* (2010) stated that the International Assessment of Education for 2006 ranked the Australian education system sixth on a worldwide scale. In addition, the Education Index—published with the United Nations (UN) Human Development Index in 2008—listed Australia as 0.993—among the highest in the world (Encyclopaedia, 2010). This feat has been attributed to the country's vigorous approach to educational policy, apt policy implementation and success in turning policy to action. Education in Australia remains primarily the responsibility of the government, with the support of strong legislation. This is especially the case for the basic/compulsory education that is generally specified as education up to the age of 15 or 17 (varying according to the state/territory). It remains a challenge in Nigeria for the country's education policy to achieve an equal level of functionality and relevance.

Sunnal and Rufai (1998) highlighted that Nigeria—as a populous, relatively wealthy Sub-Saharan nation—struggles with the problems that face all nations in the region: a rapidly

increasing population, a slow growing economy and many unschooled adults. These problems are true characteristics of this region. Nigeria has expanded its educational opportunities since gaining independence, yet unequal participation remains among its children. Other developing countries, despite being faced with their own obstacles, have succeeded in improving their education systems. For example, Vietnam, which was once considered a poor country according to the UN Index, has made equal access to education a high national priority. From a global perspective, the country has been experiencing more productive labour forces that have increased its per capita wealth generation (Holsinger & Jacob, 2009). Tanzania in East Africa has 97.3% of its school-age children enrolled in schools, with a commitment of the government to attain 99% in 2010, as outlined in the MKUKUTA targets (Implementation Report, 2007). Another example is Liberia—a West Africa sub-region that was engulfed in violent internal conflict for 14 years, ending in 2003. This conflict devastated the country's infrastructure and caused economic collapse, with a significant portion of the population being internally displaced or becoming refugees. However, within seven years of the conflict ending, the country had achieved 85% access to basic education (EEPCT, 2011).

Access to educational opportunity in Nigeria.

In its State of the World's Children Report for 1999, UNICEF (1999, p. 12) highlighted that about four million Nigerian children are denied access to basic education, and the majority of those 'lucky' enough to enter schools are given sub-standard education. Reiterating the problem of access to education in Nigeria, NUT (2004) and UNESCO (2006) opined that there are over eight million Nigerian children under the age of 14 who are in some form of labour because of their inability to access the basic education programme. The inability to access education primarily because to support family income, but due to lack of infrastructure and enabling environment to accommodate the children.

Table 2

The Labour Roles of Nigerian Children Under 14 Years with No Access to Education

Categories of occupation	Percentage %
Street vendors/hawkers	64
Feet washers	8
Car washers	6
Scavengers	5
Shoe shiners	4

Source: Nigerian Union of Teacher's Bulletin (2004) and UNESCO (2006) Information Sheet on Child Labour in Nigeria.

Although all Nigeria's educational institutions are generally in dire need, the most troubled level of education is the universal basic education sector—or what Illo and Bolaji (2007, p. 82) referred to as the 'bedrock' of any educational system. The Demographic and Health Survey conducted in 2003 (cited in Popoola-Lapo, Bello & Atanda, 2009) revealed that only 60.1% of all children of primary school age were attending school at the time of the survey. Boys had a higher net attendance rate (NAR) (63.7%) than did girls (56%). In urban areas, the NAR was 69.5%, while it was 55.7% in rural areas. Ogunjimi, Ajibola and Akah (2009) found that, of the 42.1 million children below 14 years of age, only 25.8 million (61.2% of the total population) attended school. Olarenwaju and Folorunsho (2009) reiterated that basic school net enrolment or attendance between 2000 and 2007 was 63%. The dropout rate for girls was 44%, while that of the boys in secondary school was 39%. Thus, it can be seen that level of access in terms of enrolment, attendance and progression in basic education by Nigerian children is very low.

As outlined, education plays an important role in achieving high economic growth and freedom. When educational opportunities are not provided early, educating during adulthood becomes problematic. Nearly two billion children in developing countries are inadequately educated or receive no education at all. One in three children does not complete the fifth grade (Tulder, 2008). Accessibility to education is crucial to end global poverty in

developing countries because, with education, employment opportunities are broadened, income levels are increased and maternal and child health is improved. In countries with solid education systems, there are lower crime rates, greater economic growth and improved social services. In areas where access, attendance and quality of education have seen or witness great improvements. In contrast, according to Gray (2000), any society that shows any level of adolescent/youth alienation from educational opportunities will inevitability have a high level of crime. Dike (2001) attributed the challenge of access to education in Nigeria as the cause of the social ills in Nigerian society. Thus, access to education remains pivotal to the nation's development. This important fact led to the undertaking of the current study. The following section discusses how the concept of 'access' is employed in this study.

Access: Conceptual Clarification

In this study, 'access' refers to a word with many different meanings and applications. The universal meaning of the word 'access' refers to the ability of all people to have equal opportunity to a service or product from which they can benefit, regardless of their social class, ethnicity, ancestry or physical disabilities. Education remains a service that fits the above definition as a basic utility. Several authors have also explained the concept of access in education in terms of equitability (Akinpelu, 1981; Glenester, 1979), while Bereday (1960) viewed it as equity. The theory of equity propounded by Mann (1975) and upheld by Sheppard (1992) is supported by the concept of fairness. To the African Union Commission and its International Centre for Girls and Women's Education in Africa (CIEFFA), access in education is not merely enrolment or physical access, but also attendance, progression and successful completion of school. The concept has been further developed by CIEFFA/AUC (2009) by distinguishing five dimensions of access to education: economic access, physical access, sociological access, physiological access and cultural access. According to Lewin (2007), 'access' is a word with little meaning unless it results in more, rather than less,

equitable opportunities to learn, especially for children from poorer households, children with disabilities, children of different ethnicities, and children of both genders. Lewin stated that 'access' refers to equality with less variation in quality between schools.

This understanding guides interpretations of 'access' as referring to secure enrolment and regular attendance, progression through the grades at appropriate ages, meaningful learning that has utility and reasonable chances of transitioning to senior secondary school. Achieving this objective has been a herculean task in Nigerian education experience (Isichei & Bolaji, 2009). UNICEF (2010) reported that Nigeria maintains the unenviable world record of harbouring the largest number of out-of-school children, after Pakistan. This factor drove the development of this study, which was designed to investigate the effect of bureaucratic mechanisms on implementing UBE in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

It has been over a decade since the Nigerian government's reform of basic education occurred. The modest performance of basic education in Nigeria in terms of access— retention, completion and achievement—in the past decade is cause for concern. The World Bank appraisal of the basic education reforms in Nigeria reached an overall unsatisfactory outcome, with risk to development outcomes significant and bank performance unsatisfactory because the performance of the borrower (Nigeria) was also rated as unsatisfactory (World Bank Report, 2008).

Nigeria education's stagnant trend over the past four years poses a challenge to the country's ability to fulfil the goal of EFA by 2015, as espoused in the policy of UBE. The current exclusion of a large majority of young people from the system represents a waste of national resources, and constitutes an imminent threat to the stability of the country's already volatile political landscape (USAID Mission Report, 2009). The overall appraisals of other international agencies also point to problems in the implementation strategy of UBE. The

ratings in terms of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness were unsatisfactory and negligible. The donors' (the World Bank, USAID, UNESCO and UNICEF) remarks were centred on policy formulation and a systematic implementation process that were not systematic, thereby causing increased institutional confusion. Previous research has clearly shown that there is a problem with implementing the basic education programme in Nigeria, particularly as it relates to access in UBE (Olarenwaju & Folorunsho, 2009; Ogunjimi, Ajibola & Akah, 2009; Obayan, 2011). While the intentions and goals of the UBE policy are worthy, the implementation strategies have been inadequate. This study provides an opportunity to explore the challenges confronting the bureaucratic implementation process of basic education in Nigeria.

Rationale and Significance of the Study

The rationale for this study was premised on the resolve of the federal government to eradicate illiteracy and improve education access in order for children to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, before proceeding to higher education (Edukugho, 2006). Taking into consideration the specific objectives of UBE, the overarching question investigated by this study was the extent to which the bureaucratic alignment of implementation has affected access to basic education in Nigeria. A critical look at the organisational structure of the commission revealed a hierarchical bureaucratic mechanism of policy implementation (Figure 1). At the highest stratum was the UBE Commission (UBEC) in charge of central administration and coordinating human resources, controlling financial expenditure, supplying learning resources, and monitoring curriculum innovation and adaptation processes. At the state government level was the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), delegated with management duties of supervising schools, teachers and resource distribution to facilitate instruction and learning for students. The Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) facilitated the implementation task at the grassroots level, as

did the School Based Management Committee (SBMC), whose duties were to serve as the watchdog of the government during the implementation task. A significant issue considered by this study was how this hierarchical bureaucracy affected the implementation process in achieving the stated national objectives.

Figure 1 shows the structure of the three tiers of education policy implementation in Nigeria that provided insights for this study in terms of understanding the effect of bureaucratic alignment on UBE policy implementation.
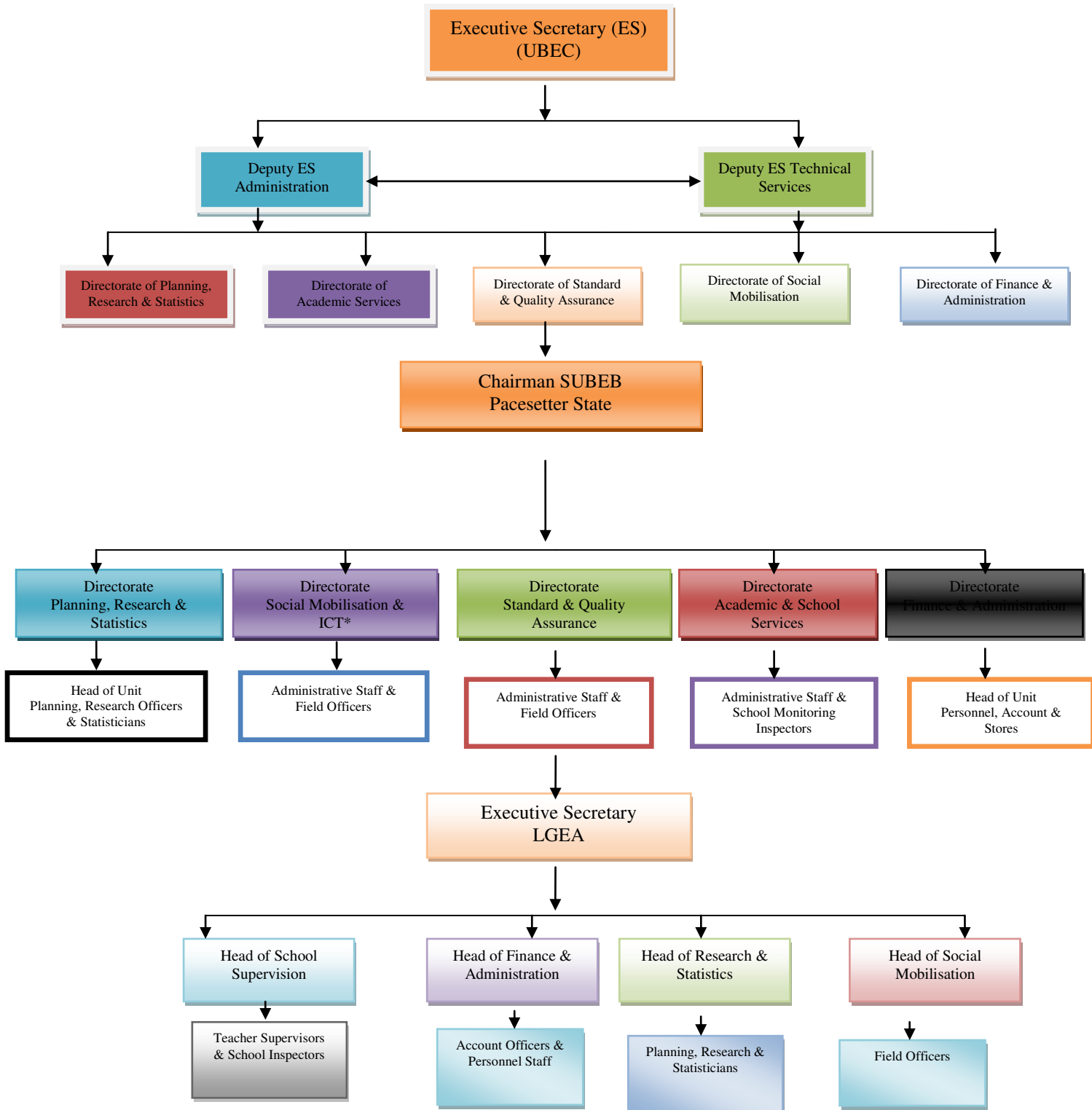
Note: *ICT = information and communications technology

Figure 1. Organisational chart of the UBE policy implementation.

This study is significant in light of the decline in trends in education access—enrolment, attendance and progression—in Nigeria, as shown in Table 1. The findings of this study contribute to an understanding of why progress towards the goals of implementing basic education reform in the area of access to education has been slow in Nigeria. The findings of this study make a substantial contribution to the existing literature by providing much-needed knowledge on improving access to basic education in Nigeria. Improving access to education is central to alleviating poverty and achieving the MDGs in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the bureaucratic implementation process of UBE and its effect on access in terms of the enrolment, attendance and progression of Nigerian children in the UBE programme. This study sought to understand the efficacy of their operations and how this has affected the UBE programme in Nigeria during its decade of implementation. This study sought to understand how the level of fidelity within the bureaucratic paradigm of the implementation process has affected access to basic education in Nigeria. This study recommends an approach that may help operationalise improvement in access to basic education in Nigeria at the system level of implementation.

Research Questions

The research questions driving this study were:

1. In what ways did the level of fidelity within the bureaucratic policy implementation process affect access to basic education in Nigeria?

2. How did the actions of the bureaucrats affect access to basic education in Nigeria?

These research questions guided the exploration of issues facing the bureaucracy in implementing the basic education programme in Nigeria, including the effect of organisational communication and interpersonal relationships on the implementation process. The research questions also guided the researcher in gathering adequate and appropriate data

to investigate the effect of economic, sociocultural and political conditions on the policy implementation process of basic education in Nigeria. In addition, the research questions guided the analysis of the data to reveal the knowledge and skills of those charged with UBE policy implementation.

Overview of the Research Thesis

This research investigated the effect of the bureaucratic structure of basic education policy implementation during the decade of implementation in Nigeria. The study involved an assessment of the alignment of the bureaucrats in UBEC, SUBEB and LGEA, at the various levels of educational administration that affected achieving access in the UBE programme. Chapter 1 of the study presents the introduction, background, statement of the problem being addressed, rationale, significance and purpose of the study. In addition, it outlines the research questions that drove the study. Chapter 2 focuses on reviewing the existing literature on the effect of bureaucratic structure on implementing basic education policy in Nigeria. It explains the actions and responsibilities of bureaucrats—otherwise known as civil servants—in policy implementation. It also provides insight into the issues and failures of past policy implementations.

Chapter 3 explains the theoretical and conceptual framings driving the study. Chapter 4 discusses the phenomenological concept of qualitative research; research design, procedure and sources; and justification of using qualitative research as the appropriate and suitable method for the study. Chapters 5 and 6 present the analysis and findings from the data collected in the forms of interviews and document study in all three geo-political zones. Chapter 7 discusses the current status of basic education programmes and the needed operational model to achieve unfettered access to realise the MDGs, in which education and poverty reduction are the focus. Chapter 8 presents the conclusions and discusses the implications of the research findings. Recommendations are made to inform future policy

development and implementation. The next chapter presents a review of the literature associated with the current study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter focuses on reviewing the existing literature related to the effect of bureaucratic structure on basic education policy implementation in Nigeria. It explains the actions and responsibilities of bureaucrats—otherwise known as civil servants—in policy implementation. It also provides insight into the issues affecting policy implementation. The chronology of presentation in this chapter as it relates to the policy implementation of basic education in Nigeria is as follows: education policy in general, education policy in the Nigeria context, the general policy implementation process, the Nigerian policy implementation process and the bureaucratic structure of UBE policy.

Education Policy

Over the past several decades, political leaders and governments around the world have come to assign an increasingly central role to education; thus, virtually all aspects of educational enterprise are now the object of policy. In line with this, Plank, Sykes and Schneider (2009) stated that, because policy has assumed an increasingly pivotal role in the educational system, scholars have turned more of their attention to the processes through which rules and regulations are adopted, and the consequences these have on teaching and learning. This is supported by Murphy, Mufti and Kassem's (2008) position that a good understanding of the policy process is extremely important. Understanding education policy is particularly important, especially for those with an interest in the development of education in a society. This is because policies are often designed to bring to life the perspectives, realities and tools for negotiating the political order of education and to improve education systems in a changing society. Policies are instruments that can be channelled for the improvement of education and coherence in knowledge generation (Cooper, Cibulka & Fusarelli, 2008).

Lennon (2009) defined policy as a plan or course of action by a government, political party or business designed to influence and determine decisions, actions and other matters. In other words, it is the dynamic and value-laden process through which a political system handles a public problem. Kogan (1975) concurred that policies in education, as in any other sphere of social life, are important statements of values. A policy encapsulates a government's expressed intentions and official enactments, as well as its consistent patterns of activity and inactivity. Thus, education policy refers to the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of an education system. According to Fitz, Davies and Evans (2005), the realisation of control and power in and through pedagogic discourse and social reproduction makes education policy a crucial issue. Pielke (2004) stated that it is a process that seeks to answer questions about the purpose of education, the objectives (societal or personal) that education is designed to attain, the methods for attaining these objectives, and the tools for measuring their success and failure. Murphy et al. (2008) referred to education policy as the process that determines the nature and form of education, based on what is taught and how it is taught. It is a key determinant that indicates the level of government effectiveness and regulatory mechanism to achieve policy objectives—so also the gap between policy intention and realisation often results in policy failure.

While the above literature presents the conceptual definitions of policy and education policy, the need to understand how educational policy develops is also warranted. According to Burton (2006), education policy is the product of a range of ideological theories about a society that a range of individuals and organisations hold, including politicians, members of think tanks, civil servants, business and trade union leaders, pressure groups, international organisations and political parties. Lennon (2009) agreed that the development process of policy involves a sequence of steps through conceptualisation, start up and evaluation. He argued that there may not be a definitive order through most processes; however, some policy

development processes revolve around social issues or problems. This is because most policy incurs some form of controversy and societal issues that fall outside the realm of public policy. This understanding indicates that policies are not initiated without reason, but are to address issues that are essential to the development of individuals and society.

A new trend in policy development is to use analysis to determine policy effectiveness without any form of controversy. Kogan (1975) presented this claim of analysis being a new trend in the policy development process. Analysing new and existing policies for their effectiveness is based on the idea that most policies are created by politicians with a personal agenda (Fowler, 2004). Thus, monitoring, evaluating, forecasting and predicting an outcome of a policy in light of its strengths and weakness is a hallmark of the values of policy development. In the same context of policy analysis, Fenshaw (2009, p. 4) argued that analysis of policies should be geared towards research findings in the context of:

1. which category of people will be the policy focus

2. whether the policy will be advantageous to the majority or minority

3. how the policy will accommodate disadvantaged minorities in the society

4. what the role of the authority will be in relation to the policy

5. whether the bureaucratic mechanism will be able to access the policy

6. whether there will be a missing link between policy development and system implementation

7. how effective and efficient the mechanism for monitoring the performance of the policy will be.

These are the underlining assumptions that help to specifically understand the effect a policy tends to promote on education practice.

In line with Fenshaw (2009, p. 4) is the view of Lavis (2010) that posited that public policymakers must contend with:

- the particular set of institutional arrangements that govern what can be done to address any given issue

- pressure from a variety of interest groups about what they would like the policy to address for any given issue

- a range of ideas (including research evidence) about how best to address any given issue.

For example, in reference to a report in Canada, a variety of efforts have been undertaken to address the factors that were found to increase the prospects for research use. These included the production of systematic reviews to meet the needs of public policymakers, and encouraging partnerships between researchers and policymakers to enable their interaction around the tasks of asking and answering relevant questions.

This informs the urgent need for public policymakers to address attitudinal barriers and capacity limitations so that, in the future, knowledge-translation processes—particularly efforts to push and facilitate user pull—can be undertaken on a sufficiently large scale and with sufficiently rigorous evaluation so that robust conclusions can be drawn about the effectiveness of policy objectives. In light of the above understandings, there is a need to explore the education policy in Nigeria in order to determine how policymakers have fared in addressing issues regarding policy decisions.

Education Policy in Nigeria

The educational initiative in Nigeria is reflected in the philosophical foundations of the country's educational system, which are hinged on building a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens (NPE, 2004, p. 4). It is against this background that basic principles about the school system, nature and demographic distribution, environment, circumstances of the people and what they are struggling to

achieve, their adaptable evolutionary relevance or adequacy, and individuals' parental and social background are considered before creating policies. Thus, educational policy development in Nigeria is always influenced by the philosophical, social, economic, political and religious tendencies of different periods, with distinct systems considered adequate for the survival of groups or for the provision of what each group may understand to be a good life. Figure 2 below summarises how the Nigerian educational system has evolved overtime.
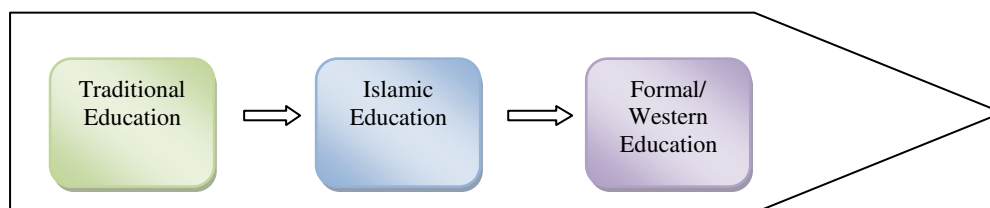
Figure 2. Philosophical foundations of Nigerian education.

Source: Adapted from the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004, p. 2).

Traditional education.

Traditional education was the first system of education in Nigeria before the advent of religious (Islamic) education. Different ethnic groups exist in Nigeria and, as stated in the introductory chapter, each has its own culture, values, traditions and method of education. Traditional or indigenous education is an informal system of education given to children by parents, siblings and the whole community from birth through to maturity and until old age (Balogun, 1981, p. 15). Adesina (1988) defined it as the teaching and learning process of native people. It is the kind of education given to children or adults outside the school setting, without a syllabus and with an unplanned scheme of work . It emphasises social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and spiritual and moral values (Bolaji, 2004, p. 74; Lawal, 1999).

Islamic/religious education.

This type of education was designed specifically for the propagation of religious instruction in accordance with the wishes of the students' parents. Although the aims, content and methods of education in this system are different from the formal education system, this does not affect the ability of the Islamic system to create scholarly achievements and quality outcomes. According to Taiwo (1980), there are three stages in Islamic schooling: elementary, interpretation and advanced stages. These stages seek to equip learners with the requisite knowledge of Islamic education and beliefs.

Western/formal education.

Formal education in Nigeria is traceable to the efforts of the European missionaries from around 1842. Education at this time was regarded as of fundamental importance for the spread of Christianity, and the missionaries who came to Nigeria combined evangelical work with education. Consequently, early mission schools were founded by the Methodist Church of Scotland Mission, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Roman Catholics. By 1882, the CMS had 17 elementary and infant day schools for boys and girls in various parts of Lagos. Nine of these schools were under the direction of the Lagos Church of England School Board, while others were managed by the Local Board of the CMS (Bolaji & Illo, 2007).

The subjects taught in the majority of the elementary schools included scripture, English compositions, English grammar, arithmetic, geography, music, singing, reading, writing, dictation and (for girls) sewing (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 56). The philosophy of Christian Missionary Education was to convert the local 'heathens' to the Christian faith through the instrumentality of education (schools). The converts needed to be literate in order to read the Bible because, for the missionaries, it was through reading and understanding the Bible that humans were assured of their eternal salvation. According to the early missionaries, a good

Christian was someone who was versed in reading the Bible, sang from hymnbooks, recited from the catechisms, and could read and write. Bolarin (1994, p. 45) stressed the position of the early missionaries that the African culture—including the African religion—was inferior to theirs and, as such, they sought to change the way of life of all Africans they encountered.

However, the spread of Western education in the north was not as smooth as it was in the south. This was because the north had implemented the Islamic system of education for many years before the introduction of Western education; thus, efforts made by different missions to establish primary schools in the north were not very successful. Fafunwa (1974, p. 69) noted that, during this time, schools were places where students went as pagans and Muslims, and came out as converted Christians. This accounted for the resistance of the northerners to embracing this new faith. They resisted this interference and refused to send their children to the Christian mission schools. The issue of eternal salvation, which remained the dominant philosophy of Christian education, had to be gained through the Bible. Thus, for quite some time, school education was left in the hands of the church missions. Figure 3 below explains the synopsis of reforms in Nigerian education since colonial dispensation.

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│         1842 Missionary Education Programme           │
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│              1887 Education Ordinance                 │
│                         ⇩                             │
│          1920 Phelps-Stokes Education Commission      │
│                         ⇩                             │
│             1943 Elliot Education Commission          │
│                         ⇩                             │
│    1946 Arthur Richard Constitution and Education Policy │
│                         ⇩                             │
│  1950–1955 Macpherson Constitution and Education Policy │
│                         ⇩                             │
│                1959 Ashby Commission                  │
│                         ⇩                             │
│               1961 Oldsman Commission                 │
│                         ⇩                             │
│                1969 Curriculum Conference             │
│                         ⇩                             │
│                   1976 UPE Policy                     │
│                         ⇩                             │
│           1977 National Policy on Education           │
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│            1999 UBE Policy on Education               │
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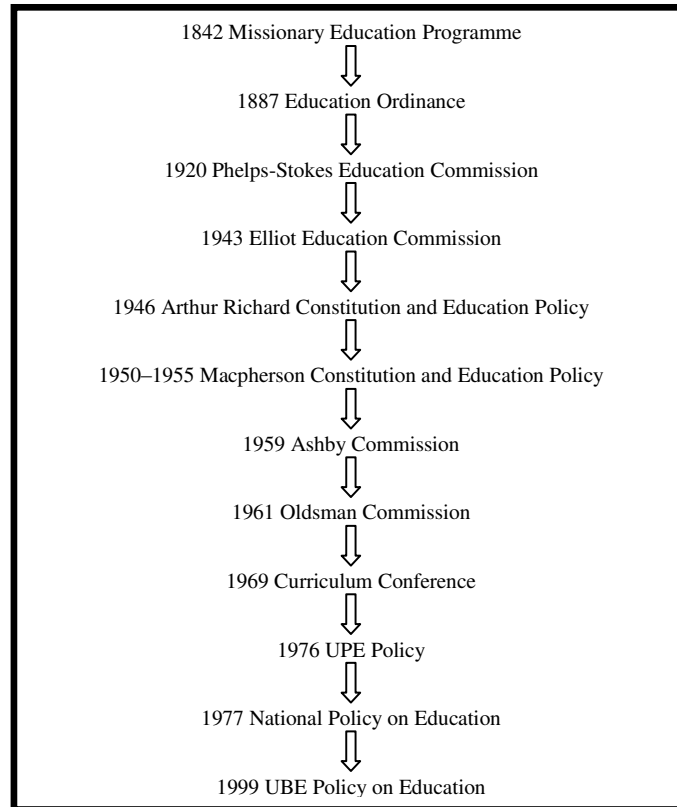
Figure 3. Synopsis of reforms in Nigerian education since colonial dispensation.

Source: Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (FGN/NPE, 2004, p. 2).

1842 and 1887 education ordinances.

The 1842 Missionary Education Programme was the first education intervention in the aftermath of abolishing slave trading in Africa, in response to various appeals from ex-slaves for formal education. The Methodist Missionary was the first to establish a school with a policy centred on educating Nigerians. The students were meant to be able to read and interpret the Bible.

The second education policy intervention was the 1887 Education Ordinance. According to Taiwo (1980), this was the first effective attempt by the government to promote education and control the expansion of education by missions. The ordinance is believed to have developed the principles that have become the foundation of the education policy in

Nigeria. Some of the principles included the constitution of a Board of Education, comprising the governor, members of the Legislative Council and the Inspector of Schools; having the power to implement governmental decisions; and having the ability to make, alter and revoke rules to regulate the procedures of schools.

1920 Phelps-Stokes Commission.

The Phelps-Stokes fund was an American philanthropic organisation established in 1911 by Miss Caroline Phelps-Stokes. The Phelps-Stokes Commission was established in 1920 to promote African education, with the support of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, to undertake a full investigation of the needs and resources of Africa in terms of the quantity and quality of education provided. This commission was financed by the Phelps-Stokes fund and consisted of relevant individuals who had experience or linkage with African education. In the findings of this commission, it was observed that the education policies of the government and missions were inadequate and, to a considerable extent, did not meet the needs of the African people. The appropriation for the implementation of education policy was negligible in comparison to the great needs for effective policy implementation. For example, in 1918, only 1% of government revenue was allocated to education in Nigeria (Bolaji & Illo, 2007, p. 68; FGN, 2004, p. 4; Noah, 1995, p. 98).

1943 Elliot Commission.

In 1943, the Elliot Commission on Higher Education was established. The commission was to report on the organisation and facilities of the existing centres of higher education in British West Africa, and to make recommendations regarding future university development in the area. In its report of June 1945, the commission observed that 'the need for educated African in west Africa in general already far outrun the supply, present and potential', and recommended that there should be a university college in Nigeria.

Consequently, the university college, Ibadan, was established in 1948, affiliated with the University of London, with students of Yaba Higher College becoming its foundation stock.

The City Council for Higher Education in the British Colonies stated that polytechnics be established as a regional, instead of territorial, college; thus, the government in Nigeria appointed a commission to conduct a survey to specify the scope and nature of polytechnics in the country. The report submitted in April 1949 made a strong case for improving technical education to meet the requirements of industry and commerce, and to pay attention to teacher training. In response to these needs, three colleges were established, one in each of the three regions: the Nigerian College of Arts Science and Technology in Zaria (1952), Ibadan (1954) and Enugu (1955) (Adesina, 2004; Fafunwa, 1974, p. 67; FGN, 2004, p. 5; Taiwo, 1980, p. 96).

1946 Richards education policy.

The Richards education policy of 1946 was promulgated by the British Parliament in Westminster. Although it placed effective power in the hands of the Governor-General and his appointed Executive Council, the Richards Constitution (named after Governor-General Sir Arthur Richards, who was responsible for its formulation) provided an expanded legislative council that was empowered to deliberate on matters affecting the whole country, including education. Separate legislative bodies—the Houses of Assembly—were established in each of the three regions to consider local questions and advise the lieutenant governors. The introduction of the federal principle, with deliberative authority devolved in the regions, signalled recognition of the country's diversity, which was reflected in the education policy in Nigeria. Although realistic in its assessment of the situation in Nigeria, the Richards Constitution undoubtedly intensified regionalism as an alternative to political unification (FGN, 2004, p. 5).

1951 Macpherson education policy.

The decade of the 1950s in Nigeria was marked by the crucial transition from colonial to independent status (Abernethy, 1952, p. 125). In 1951, the country adopted a Federal Constitution named after its author—Sir John Macpherson. Through its provisions, the regional Houses of Assembly ceased to be potent advisory bodies as they had been since their formation in 1946. The 1950s ushered in a revolutionary phase in the history of education in Nigeria. This period witnessed the introduction of the free education scheme in the western region, and marked a radical departure from the existing educational patterns, not only in western Nigeria, but also across the entire country. This pace-setting epoch, whose proposals were presented in 1952, was launched in January 1955. It was featured as a cardinal programme of the Action Group in western Nigeria and continued to be the official policy of the western region government until 1966, when a military *coup d'état* suspended all political activities and, concomitantly, the education programmes of the respective regions (FGN, 2004, p. 4).

1959 Ashby Commission.

One of the greatest reforms in the history of Nigerian education was the report of the Ashby Commission of 1959. The task of the commission was to advise the Nigerian government on the country's needs in the field of post-school certificate and higher education over the next 20 years. The report of the commission showed that the estimated needs for both intermediate and high-level labour for the next decade outstripped the actual supply rate, as well as the estimated capacity of the existing institutions (Abiri, 2003). The commission made far-reaching recommendations that cut across the length and breadth of the Nigerian educational system, and had great effects on the development of education that continue to be felt today. Among its recommendations were an output of 2,000 graduates each year by 1970, an enrolment of 7,500 students in universities by 1970 and substantial growth beyond this

figure by 1980, a proposal on establishing a National Universities Commission, and that enrolment in universities should reflect national needs in terms of technical and non-technical fields. The commission also recommended 'crash courses' for Teaching Certificates 1 and 2 in order to address the acute shortage of qualified teachers (FGN, 2004, p. 6).

1961 Oldsman Commission.

The strong desire to bridge the gap of education development between the southern and northern regions led to the establishment of the Oldsman Commission. This commission was given the responsibility of studying the financial and administrative problems that were constraints to creating universal primary education. It was also to consider the form that the local contribution to the cost of primary education should take, as well as who should control primary education. After extensive deliberation, the commission arrived at the following: involvement of the LGEA, establishment of local education committees (who were given the responsibility of supervising the administration of the primary education sector in the region) and transfer of existing non-governmental schools to the local education authority (FGN, 2004, p. 3).

1969 curriculum conference.

The review and restructuring of Nigerian education policy led to the 1996 curriculum conference, which was well attended by both professionals and non-experts. A report was generated during the curriculum conference, organised by the Nigeria Educational Research Council as part of its search for an appropriate education philosophy for Nigeria. The needs of youth, needs of society, and substance of the curriculum were the three main categories discussed during the conference. A national education philosophy was discussed and enunciated, with four general goals proposed: (i) the inculcation of the right values, (ii) the training of the mind about the world, (iii) the acquisition of appropriate skills and (iv) the acquisition of relevant data.

A paper on the purpose of elementary education identified the social foundations of meaningful education and urged greater emphasis on moral education. For the new Nigerian secondary schools, diversification of curriculum, encouragement of self-reliance, and training to think independently were all expressed goals. The functions of a Nigerian university were stated to be research, teaching, critiquing and contributing to national policy, and community service. The teacher was seen as the key person in the scheme. Women's education was promoted as being on an equal level to that of men. It was generally agreed that the present education systems had failed to train students how to lead a good life (FGN, 2004, p. 3).

1977 National Policy on Education.

The aftermath of the national curriculum conference of 1969 initiated another seminar by the federal government and headed by Chief SO Adebo—the former Permanent Representative of Nigeria at the UN, and Chairperson of the National Universities Commission—with the aim of reviewing the recommendations developed at the conference. At the seminar, the proposed 6-3-3-4 system of education was adopted. This formed the genesis of the Nigerian educational blueprint—the National Policy on Education (NPE), which was first published in 1977 and revised in 1998 and 2004.

The NPE was divided into 12 sections (NPE, 2004). The first section dealt with the philosophy of Nigerian education, while the second section considered pre-primary education. The third extensively discussed primary education now basic education, while the rationale behind secondary education was also spelt out. The new policy pre-supposed that every eligible child would attend a full six years of primary education, followed by three years of junior and three years of senior secondary education, then a four-year university course (6-3-3-4). The document also mentioned the issue of higher education that encompasses the post-secondary universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and federal advanced teacher training. Technical education was not neglected in the policy. Emphasis

was also placed on special education, teacher education, educational services, administration, planning and financing education.

This was a well detailed and comprehensive document for every individual and stakeholder in the field of education. Philosophically, this policy marked a paradigm shift away from the British idealist view of education to the pragmatic American tradition, which Nigeria has been following since post-independence. This indicates that Nigerian education is indeed an 'amalgam' of different education styles (NPE, 2004, p. 2).

1976 UPE.

The year 1976 marked another landmark in the history of education in Nigeria. This was the year before the NPE was made public. The year witnessed the re-launch of the free and compulsory UPE programme by the military government of Nigeria. According to Denga (2000), UPE was designed to achieve universal access to education, which has been the prime target for Nigeria since the middle of the 1970s. Before the scheme was implemented, there was an explosion in enrolment from 6,200,000 in the 1975/1976 session to 14,800,000 in 1992. Obayan (2011) explained that the policy document was supported by detailed implementation guidelines developed with external technical assistance. There was also a technical secretariat to monitor its implementation. This document has been subject to revisions by successive governments and has remained the major education guideline instrument for the country. The UPE of 1976 affirmed the government's commitment in this regard (Bolaji & Illo, 2007, p. 81; Oni, 2008).

A review of the available literature attested to the fact that the 1976 UPE policy was designed to provide free and compulsory education for all children between ages six to 11 and over, both at the state and federal levels (Imam, 2012; Maduewesi, 2005; Omatseye, 2007). As adequate in scope and quantity, the policy aimed to correct the education system's imbalances by making education accessible to all children. Popawski (2009) concurred that

UPE was introduced to enable free education for all and to overcome the hurdles caused by imbalanced development during colonial rule, disproportion between rural and urban areas, and inequality between male and female citizens. However, the assessment of the UPE policy a decade after its introduction revealed that educational outcomes indicated that the objectives were not fully realised (Omotayo, Ihebereme & Maduewesi, 2008; Yusufu & Ajere, 2008).

1999 Universal Basic Education

Between 1979 and 1999, Nigeria had both a military regime and democratically elected government. In terms of Nigeria's historical progress in education, nothing much can be said about the efficiency, effectiveness and progress of education, even with the formulated blueprint document of NPE. While some laudable efforts were made to reposition the education system's efficiency, much was left incomplete. The year 1999 ushered in a new democratic dispensation with the emergence of Chief Aremu Olusegun Obasanjo—a onetime former military head of state—as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The need to save Nigeria's education led to the launch of UBE within four months of Obasanjo assuming office—even before it was discussed in Parliament House. This indicates the period's urgency to revive the education system. The UBE scheme launched in 1999 was in agreement with the vision of the World Conference of Education for All at Jomtien. The challenge of the newly introduced scheme was how to provide equal access to free and compulsory qualitative education to Nigerians at all levels of the education system.

The previous sections provided the chronological details of how the current education system in Nigeria emerged from the pre-colonial dispensation to the introduction of Western/formal education, and the series of commissions that were established to finetune the process of education and the post-independence education initiatives. Following this, it is imperative to examine the variety of factors that caused many education programmes, such as

UBE, to fail in the past. Among these factors were inadequate public enlightenment and social mobilisation to enable full community involvement. In addition, the overwhelming and unanticipated sudden education expansion led to a profound shortage of learning facilities, including lack of space, teachers and funds to implement the system. The education-conscious Nigerians began to lose faith in the UPE scheme and thus disparaged the government's effort to finance a system that many had concluded was a nightmare. Various levies were reimposed on parents by some state governments in a bid to salvage the scheme, which led to complaints from parents and the public because of the cost imposed on them from a programme that was purported to be free. In addition, the teachers' morale suffered. All this occurred despite the excellent objectives and philosophy of the programme, which were enunciated optimistically in the NPE published in 1977. Patrick (2000) stated that, in an attempt to avoid the problems that impeded the realisation of the objectives of the past educational programmes necessitated the introduction of UBE in 1999.

The insights from the above, coupled with the recent education policy initiative of the government in reinventing the provision of accessible basic education, attest to the government's aspiration to realise the national objective of building a democratic society. There is wide acknowledgement that formulating a policy is not a difficult task in Nigeria, yet translating intention into practice has always been the major challenge with policy issues. These are key determinants that indicate the level of government and regulatory mechanism effectiveness in achieving policy objectives.

The overriding aim of policy analysis is to yield a favourable outcome in policy implementation, with policy implementation crucial to achieving policy objectives. Nigeria's desire to achieve the international community's goal of universal basic education for both genders at all levels of education by 2015, coupled with the public outcry for a meaningful and qualitative education in Nigeria, led to the launch of UBE in 1999.

Ige (2011) highlighted that UBE is a programme that was launched by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1999 to achieve a particular vision. It is expected that, at the end of nine years of continuous training (six in primary school and three in junior secondary school), every child should have acquired the basic literacy, numeracy, communicative and manipulative skills to enable him or her to succeed in society. Such acquisition should reduce the dependence on white-collar jobs and promote positive contributions to national development. Each child is also expected to display good moral, ethical and civic values within society. UBE is also expected to serve as prime energiser of a national movement to actualise the nation's UBE vision, while trying to work with all stakeholders to mobilise the nation's creative energies to ensure that EFA becomes the responsibility of everyone. The programme aimed to equip each child with the adequate knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable him or her to develop to the fullest capacity, and derive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from membership in Nigerian society, as well as fulfilling his or her civic obligations (FGN, 2004).

Specifically, the UBE programme was aimed at developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its rigorous promotion. In doing so, it aimed to:

- drastically reduce the incidence of dropout from the formal education system
- cater to the learning needs of young people who, for various reasons, have to interrupt their schooling, via appropriate forms of complementary approaches to provide and promote basic education
- ensure the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, manipulative, communicative and life skills, as well as ethical, moral and civic values.

Oni (2008) argued that the emphasis on basic education is because the basic education segment has always been regarded a vital stratum in a nation's education system. This is

because it is the first stage or foundation of education. While it is debatable which of primary, secondary, post-secondary and higher education sub-systems is the most important, nobody disagrees that primary education is the stage patronised by most learners. While not all beneficiaries of primary education reach other levels, all beneficiaries of other levels of education must first pass through primary school. Primary school is the foundation of the entire education edifice, which underscores its importance. Other major benefits of the primary education system are the acquisition of literacy and enlightenment. Lack of these skills lead to many problems, including poverty, ignorance, squalor, religious bigotry and political servitude; an enlightened citizenry makes possible the creation of a peaceful and prosperous society.

Understandably, governments have long understood the importance of primary education. This recognition has, among other things, motivated different governments on various occasions over more than half a century to make primary education free and proclaim it universal. The universality of education dates back to 1950, yet its desired objectives are yet to be attained in Nigeria, given the increasing number of children living on the street, which has continued to attract global attention. The phenomenon of street children has increased in most major urban streets in Nigeria (Aransola, Bamiwuye, Akinyemi & Ikuteyijo 2009; Oloko, 1999). To understand the implementation structure of the new education policy proposed by the Federal Government of Nigeria, it is crucial for this study to have a good grasp of what the policy implementation process seeks to achieve.

Policy Implementation

Policy implementation research is not a new concept. It is referred to by different names in different geographic regions, but the underlying concepts are similar. A study of 33 applied research funding agencies in nine countries found 29 terms used to describe some element of effort to change knowledge into action (Graham, Harrison, Stratus, Tertroe &

Casewell, 2006). 'Implementation research' is the popular term in the United Kingdom and Europe (Foy, Eccles & Grimshaw, 2001), while 'knowledge translation' is the most commonly used term in Canada (Graham et al., 2006). The concepts underlying this study are considered important in terms of the benefits of policy research to individuals, to providing more effective services and products, and to strengthening government efficiency.

The current situation in this field of investigation suggests that there is a dilemma of implementation research as being an outdated discipline. Hence, the relevant arguments need to be set forth. Bhattacharyya, Reeves, Garfinkel and Zwarenstein (2009) and Hill and Hupe (2002, p. 111) pointed out that there is nothing in the changing state–society interface towards more cooperative and negotiated networks that preclude an implementation perspective. In contrast, given these new systemic features, representative governments still exist whose translation of policy into practice, even in a broad sense, is a challenge and legitimate concern. The multitude of reports on implementation issues produced by governments and various international agencies each year attests to their endemic nature. Developments towards supranational governing structures, such as the European Union or international agreements and conventions on many policy issues, also typically pose formidable implementation challenges. From another perspective, the criticism concerning bias towards failure cases in implementation research is probably less relevant today than it once was (O'Toole, 2000).

In brief, there is no shortage of implementation challenges, regardless of the form or level of governing structures. Moreover, the need to understand these challenges more fully is no less in demand today than during the first half of the 1980s. The resilience of this research field, despite differing trends in policy studies, attests to the enduring importance of implementation phenomena in all spheres of human society.

Once a decision is made regarding a policy, a method of putting it into effect is required. This implementation is a complex process whereby the means must make the goals achievable. Hill and Hupe (2002, p. 45) agreed that policy implementation is a process with a "series of sub-national decisions and actions directed towards putting a prior authoritative federal decision into effect". Fischer (2007) stated that policy implementation implies the establishment of adequate bureaucratic procedures to ensure that policies are executed as accurately as possible. Implementation is the undertaking of a policy decision, usually incorporated in a statute, but also potentially taking the form of important executive orders or court decisions that identify the problems to be addressed and stipulate the objectives to be pursued (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1983). Therefore, the essential characteristic of the implementation process is the timely and satisfactory performance of the necessary tasks to meet the intent of the policy. The most revealing and fundamental of policy implementation research not only considers the expressed intent of policymakers, but also examines how policy works and the causes of policy failure or success in the real world. In accordance with this, Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) argued that implementation is the linear process of achieving set goals, although it is not limited to only this. What makes the achievement of those goals difficult is the concern of policy implementation research.

Buttressing the above position, Ward and Penny (2003) asserted that analysis of education policy goes beyond the policies themselves; however, to focus on the gap between policy intention and realisation is a constraint in policy implementation. They observed that policy failure occurs when there is no alignment or fidelity between policy intent and realisation. Dionco-Adetayo, Makinde and Adetayo's (2004) study revealed that sound policies are often formulated, but fail at the level of implementation. Chabal and Daloz (1999) identified the social, economic and political environment in which policies are created as being the causes of policy failures. Fourle (2004) identified two potential failures of policy

implementation: theory failure, a process when policy is implemented as intended, but fails to have the desired effect; and program failure, when policy is not implemented as it is intended. Fullan (2003) discussed the moral implications and imperative of policy formulation, and careful, faithful implementation. Farani (2010) agreed with the above positions by stressing that moral value and seemingly ineffective bureaucracies are issues that also undermine policy realisation in developing countries. Fredua-Kwarteng (2008) identified four elements as central to effective education policy implementation: sustainability of education policy, flexibility to implement policy at the community school level, the support of key stakeholders, and curriculum adapted to suit local needs. It is important to consider here how this understanding of the policy implementation process has affected public policy issues in Nigeria.

Policy Implementation in Nigeria

The poor performance of the education sector in Nigeria is worrisome. Okoroma's (2006) findings blamed the distortions in the education system on ineffective implementation engendered primarily by lack of political will, lack of continuity of programs and corruption. The situation has hindered national development and, until urgent action is taken to review Nigeria's educational system, its national aspirations will continue to be compromised. Makinde (2005) stressed that there are various problems facing developing nations in terms of implementing policies. Apart from discussing the general overview of policy implementation problems in both developed and developing nations, Makinde's focus was on Nigeria, with a number of examples taken from the Nigerian experience. He cited the Better Life Programme and Family Support Programme embarked on by Nigeria's successive governments since independence. Some implementation problems identified in his study included corruption, lack of continuity in government policies, and inadequate human and material resources, all of which often led to an implementation gap—that is, a widening

distance between the stated policy goals and the realisation of such planned goals. The study concluded that it is apparent that policies are regularly created in developing nations; however, most of the time, they do not achieve the desired results.

Ejere (2011) attested to the above position that, over the years, successive governments in Nigeria have not been lacking in creating policies, programmes and initiatives, but in implementing those policies. The effect of policy implementation to improve the quality and standards of the services government deliver to the people, effective performance management system and efficient monitoring and evaluation within government, to assess the progress made in the key priority areas have not been implemented. Eboh (2011) reiterated that the Nigerian economic policy is at a critical juncture and there are many complicated challenges around which public debate is currently raging. These include questions about fiscal consolidation, the business environment, infrastructure development, budgeting and public spending, public subsidy and market deregulation, revenue allocation formula, minimum wage and education institutional reforms.

Achieving the desired goal of any public intention is the hallmark of policy realisation. It is widely claimed that achieving policy objectives lies in implementation—a determinant factor in assessing the effect of any public policy. In this sense, the bureaucratic structure in policy implementation plays a significant role in achieving the desired outcome in policy studies. Thus, bureaucratic alignment in policy realisation positively or negatively affects policy decisions. Bureaucracies play a central role in implementing public policy by applying programme rules to individual cases (Keiser, 2011). In so doing, they create the policy that the public actually experiences. Therefore, an understanding of public policy requires an understanding of the determinants of bureaucratic behaviour. While the dominant paradigm for understanding bureaucratic behaviour focuses attention on how the incentive structures' of elected officials create constrain of bureaucratic behaviour, scholars have

recently argued that policy analysts should refocus their attention on the central bureaucratic task of information processing to best understand why public bureaucracies implement policy the way they do (Workman, Jones & Jochim, 2010). Agencies charged with implementing programs are not monolithic black boxes, but are comprised of sub-units all with their own structures and cultures (Keiser, 2011). In order to understand why bureaucracies shape public policy the way they do through policy implementation, it is necessary to pay attention to how different units within the bureaucracy respond differently to information in the task and political environment, and recognise that information is often ambiguous. Okechukwu and Ikechukwu (2012) stressed that public bureaucracy exists in any society to enable effective and efficient service delivery.

Aminu, Tella and Mbaya (2012) emphasised that, in Nigeria and the world in general, the term 'bureaucracy' is most frequently used to refer to organisations. This is because public bureaucracies are entrusted with public property, and charged with responsibilities for the specific method of allocating resources within a large organisation. A similar term might be 'bureaucratic decision making'. Further, bureaucrats are also referred to as 'civil servants' that primarily operate to help formulate and implement the government's policies. Understanding bureaucracy in the Nigerian context refers to all the organisations that exist as part of the government mechanism to implement policy decisions and deliver services that are valuable to citizens. Suleiman (2009) identified the civil service and public bureaucracy as components of the public sector in Nigeria. Therefore, the civil service is one of the agents of development in any nation. The transformation of any society or system depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of its civil service, and this is particularly the case in developing countries (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011). This indicates why society requires the civil service not only to implement development goals and administer government policies on a daily basis, but also to play significant roles in formulating development strategies, policies and

programmes that will stimulate accelerated social and economic change. These desired changes are naturally expected to include a reduction of unemployment, an increase in social products and a more equitable redistribution of income. Yet these desires remain unfulfilled in the face of unemployment and poverty.

In Nigeria today, the civil service has come to be regarded as a contemporary institution with the purpose of creating an efficient way of organising any large human organisation. The civil service can also be seen as a complex organisation with a body of seemingly permanent officials appointed to assist political executives in the formulation, execution and implementation of government policies in ministries and extra-ministerial departments within which specific government work is undertaken. Ejere (2011) argued that civil servants are very important for improving the government's competitive and comprehensive strength in a country. Both developed countries and developing countries are facing opportunities and challenges. Good government administration is a system that includes procedures, efficiency and effectiveness, with efficiency being the link between procedure and effectiveness. Procedure is the character of government administration, and every civil servant must follow specific procedures to handle tasks. Effectiveness is the result of government action, and should satisfy the requirements of the public. The judgement for effectiveness is low investment and large output—otherwise known as efficiency. The efficiency of the government is the responsibility of civil servants. Enhancing strength and innovation requires a more capable, powerful and productive government management, and needs civil servants with more quality and efficient operational abilities. The public judges a government from different aspects. Civil servants' attitudes and behaviour influence policy directly. Without efficient implementation, a policy may arrive too late to solve the problem. The administrative efficiency of civil servants directly influences the process of political and economic development in a country. The globalisation of economies has challenged the state

administrative mechanism. The problem of the construction and administrative efficiency of civil servants has received attention in government reform. Downs (1967) stated that:

> It is ironic that bureaucracy is primarily a term of scorn. In reality, bureaus are among the most important institutions in every part of the world. Not only do they provide employment for a very significant fraction of the world's population, but they also make critical decisions that shape the economic, educational, political, social, moral, and even religious lives of nearly everyone on earth … The ability of bureaus to outlive their real usefulness is part of the mythology of bureaucracy.

Okotoni (2001) summarised the role of the federal bureaucracy as coordinating federal ministries, advising political officials, formulating and implementing government policies, gathering and supplying data for policymakers, and ensuring continuity of public relations services. All these roles are so crucial to the smooth running of any administration that one may conclude that bureaucracy is indispensable in public policy formulation and implementation. Thus, to ensure that outcomes remained aligned with declared intentions and specified performance indicators, and to ensure that the implementation of transformation initiatives were translated into meaningful outcomes for the people of Nigeria, a bureaucratic structure was established by the Nigerian government to track the performance of all relevant stakeholders, ministries, departments and agencies.

All these bureaucratic structures perform one basic function—to implement the basic education policy. Despite the important role of the civil servant in Nigeria in achieving many of the government's policies and programmes, few of these policies and programmes are fully or successfully implemented or achieved. In numerous instances, many have been marred by poor implementation strategies (that is, bureaucratic procedures). This has occurred because the civil service has a way of placing obstacles in the way of policies that are being formulated by political officials, especially for policies about which they hold

divergent opinions or that are not of direct benefit to them. It is important to consider whether this can also be said about the UBE bureaucratic structure of policy implementation.

Education Administration in Nigeria

The administration of basic education in Nigeria has passed through different stages, with different authorities exercising control throughout time. The church missionaries who introduced Western or formal education to Nigeria in 1842 handled the management of the primary education system. After much criticism from different quarters about the system's crudity and lack of proper coordination by the missionaries, the British government intervened by establishing various education ordinances. In addition, the colonial government in Lagos made intermittent attempts to assist some of the missions in the administration of schools between 1870 and 1876 (Bolaji & Illo, 2007; Olaniyian & Obadara, 2008).

The education ordinance of 1887 gave credence to the principle of control in the administration of education in Nigeria. The ordinance was significant because it marked the enactment of the first purely Nigerian education ordinance as a result of separation of Lagos from Gold Coast, after which it became the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos. This ordinance was promulgated to increase the betterment of education administration. Prior to 1925, the British government had no clearly defined policy on education for its African colonies. It was the Phelps-Stokes report that forced the British colonial government to demonstrate its interest in African education. Thus, the principles on which the education systems of the colonised countries are currently based was established by the 1925 Memorandum on Education. However, from 1946, Nigerians were able to influence the administration of their educational system as a result of the Richards and Macpherson Constitutions of 1951, which created regional governments in the northern, eastern and western regions. Despite the level of involvement of Nigerians in the management of education, the missionaries and voluntary

agencies were still in control of staff recruitment and supervision, and of funding their own schools, with only grant-in-aid assistance from the government.

Prior to Nigeria's independence, primary education started developing at different rates in different parts of the country. The UPE was introduced as the first of its kind in 1955 in the then western region, followed by the eastern region in 1956, and later by the federal government in September 1976. This programme indicated the government's policy to favour the education of the masses on the basis that every Nigeria child has the right to a minimum of six years of education in order to function effectively as a citizen of a Nigeria that is free, democratic, just, egalitarian, united and self-reliant, with full opportunities (Fafunwa, 1974). After Nigeria gained independence in 1960, there was increased clamour for government takeover of schools from the missionaries and voluntary agencies, at least to be able to revert to the old system and tailor it to meet the needs of the new nation. Adesina (1977) reported that it was contended that absolute takeover of schools would improve curricula, teacher quality and centralised provision of instructional resources, thereby minimising inequalities and providing a centre of leadership for educational innovation. As a result, there was government takeover of schools in 1970.

In 1988, the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) was established with Decree 31 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to manage primary education. However, this was later changed by the federal government under Decrees 2 and 3 of 1991, which placed the full responsibility of the administration of primary education in the hands of local government. With Decree 96 of 25 August 1993, the NPEC was re-established with the State Primary Education Board (SPEB) and LGEA, and was once again in control of primary education. The LGEA was assigned to manage the daily administration of primary schools in its area of jurisdiction, while the SPEB was charged with the administration of primary schools in the state. The local government councils (LGCs) appointed education secretaries

who reported directly to the SPEBs. Unfortunately, these arrangements have resulted in general conflicting pressures on the education secretaries due to the different roles played by the SPEBs and LGCs. There are also areas of overlapping bureaucracy due to the functions of different levels of management that were unaddressed.

The NPEC was the overseer of the SPEB of all the states of the federation, while the federal government supervised this commission. From this arrangement, it is obvious that the management of primary education is no longer a one-government affair, but involves all tiers of government. According to the provision of this decree:

> the National Primary Education Commission receives the National Primary Education Fund as established by this decree from the Primary Education Board of each state and the Federal Capital Government Sponsored Special Primary Education Projects in accordance with the formula prescribed in this decree as the Transitional Councils, from time-to-time prescribe (FGN, 1993, p.5).

This was the condition of primary education funding and administration from 1993 until the newly democratic government came into power on 29 May 1999. Replacing UPE was the current UBE, which was launched 1999. This is also free and universal; however, in addition, it compulsorily accommodates children from primary school through to junior secondary school. Various responsibilities are assigned to all levels of government (federal, state and local), which is not much different to what existed before.

This information provides insights into the administration of the education system in Nigeria since colonial dispensation. This information was used in this study to determine whether there has been a noticeable change in the management of education following the introduction of the UBE programme over a decade ago.

Bureaucratic Structure of UBE

Since political independence, various policies have been implemented to improve the state of education in Nigeria. The failure of the UPE of 1976 was the major reason for the introduction of the UBE. The UBE scheme aimed to provide a foundation of education for students and serve as the basis for developing further education. It included formal, non-formal and informal approaches that were geared towards the development of human potential for lifelong education (Obe, 2007).

The UBE was launched by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1999 to achieve a particular vision. It was expected that, at the end of nine years of continuous training (six in primary school and three in junior secondary school), every child should have acquired the basic literacy, numeracy, communicative and manipulative skills to enable him or her to succeed in society. Such acquisition should reduce the dependence on white-collar jobs and promote positive contributions to national development. Each child was also expected to display good moral, ethical and civic values within society. UBE was also expected to serve as a prime energiser of a national movement to actualise the nation's UBE vision, while trying to work with all stakeholders to mobilise the nation's creative energies to ensure that EFA becomes the responsibility of everyone. The programme aimed to equip each child with the adequate knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable him or her to develop to the fullest capacity, and derive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from membership in Nigerian society, as well as fulfilling his or her civic obligations (FGN, 1999).

Specifically, the UBE programme was aimed at developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness for education and strong commitment to its rigorous promotion. In doing so, it aimed to:

- drastically reduce the incidence of dropout from the formal education system

- cater to the learning needs of young people who, for various reasons, have to interrupt their schooling, via appropriate forms of complementary approaches to provide and promote basic education

- ensure the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, manipulative, communicative and qualitative skills.

The bureaucratic structure of the Nigerian education system is the responsibility of the three tiers of the government—the federal, state and local/district governments of the federation—as shown in Figure 1. It is the constitutional responsibility of every government to provide free, compulsory and universal basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age (UBEC, 2004). In agreement with this, the federal government's role in implementing the UBE is to ensure quality control, maintenance of uniform standards and general coordination of programme implementation. The UBEC is the federal arm of the bureaucratic implementation of the UBE, and operates as an intervention to coordinate and monitor agencies to progressively improve the capacity of the states, local government agencies and communities to provide unfettered access to high quality basic education in Nigeria (UBEC, 2009). Towards the realisation of the UBE objectives, the agency allocates funds to state and local governments and to other relevant agencies implementing UBE, in accordance with the approved formula by the board of the UBEC (UBE Act, 2004). Meanwhile, the state governments have the constitutional and legislative responsibility to manage UBE, with the district complementing their roles and with 2% of the federal consolidated revenue as a grant for implementing UBE (FGN, 2007).

These insights into the bureaucratic structure of implementation led to the need to examine how this bureaucratic system implements basic education in Nigeria. This system is hierarchical, with the UBEC at the federal level, and the SUBEB, LGEA and SBMC at the state level. The states and local governments are saddled with the responsibility of

implementation, with the success and failure of the policy depending on the bureaucratic alignment of both the state and district levels of policy implementation. According to the open system theory, bureaucratic organisations interact with their environment (Perrow, 1972; Rourke, 1984; Thompson, 2001). However, the ways this interaction occurs and its influence on bureaucratic decisions is mediated by the structure of the organisation. The organisational structure influences what types of stimuli from the environment reach individual bureaucrats, and places constraints on bureaucratic decisions and actions (Scott, 1992). Organisational alignment determines what types of information are collected by the bureaucracy, who pays attention to the information, and how decisions regarding policy information affect the target audience for whom the information is intended (Jones, 2005; Jones & Baumgartner, 2004; Simon, 1947). The need to ensure that government intentions in relation to education are adhered to led to the establishment of the SBMC.

The concern of scholars globally is that, despite the clear commitment of governments and international agencies to the education sector, efficient and equitable access to education remains elusive. There is evidence that merely increasing resource allocations does not increase the equity or improve the quality of education in the absence of institutional reforms, such as an adequate feedback mechanism to assess the effect of policy implementation (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2007). Reversing this trend requires governments to introduce a range of strategies to improve the financing and delivery of education services, with emphasis on improving quality and increasing quantity (enrolments) in education. One such strategy is to decentralise education decision making by increasing parental and community involvement in schools, which is popularly known as 'School-Based Management' (SBM). SBM is the decentralisation of authority from the central government to the school level (Caldwell, 2005). In the words of Malen, Ogawa and Kranz (1990):

School-Based Management can be viewed conceptually as a formal alteration of governance structures, as a form of decentralization that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the redistribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvement might be stimulated and sustained.

The argument in favour of SBM is that decentralising decision-making authority to parents and communities fosters demand and ensures that schools provide the social and economic benefits that best reflect the priorities and values of those local communities (Leithwood & Menzies, 1998; Lewis, 2006).

SBM programs transfer authority over one or more of the following activities: school supervision, monitoring of school supplies, school staff, curriculum development, procurement of textbooks and other educational materials, infrastructure improvement, and monitoring and evaluation of teacher performance and student learning outcomes. This aligns with Opara (2011) when he asserted that the principle of continuous close monitoring and supervision of the learning programme for a decade of implementation is crucial to know the effect of the policy on the citizenry. Thus, in SBM, responsibility for, and decision-making authority over, school operations is given to parents and sometimes to other school community members. However, these school-level actors must conform to or operate within a set of policies determined by the central government. SBM programmes exist in numerous forms, both in terms of who has the power to make decisions and the degree of decision making that is devolved to the school level. While some programs transfer authority only to principals or teachers, others encourage or mandate parental and community participation, often as members of school committees (or school councils or school management committees).

The theoretical justification for this level of bureaucratic structure in policy implementation is premised on the fact that good education is not only about physical inputs—such as classrooms, teachers and textbooks—but also about incentives that lead to better instruction and learning. Education systems are extremely demanding on the managerial, technical and financial capacities of governments; thus, as a service, education is too complex to be efficiently produced and distributed in a centralised manner (King & Cordeiro-Guerra, 2005; Montreal Economic Institute, 2007). Hanushek and Woessmann (2007) suggested that most of the incentives that affect learning outcomes are institutional. They identified three in particular: (i) choice and competition, (ii) school autonomy and (iii) school accountability. The idea behind choice and competition is that parents who are interested in maximising their children's learning outcomes are able to choose to send their children to the most productive school (in terms of academic results) that they can find. This demand pressure on schools improves the performance of all schools, if they want to compete for students.

Similarly, local decision making and fiscal decentralisation can have positive effects on school outcomes, such as test scores or graduation rates, by holding the schools accountable for the 'outputs' that they produce. The 2004 World Development Report, 'Making Services Work for Poor People', suggested that good quality and timely service provision can be ensured if service providers can be held accountable to their 'clients' (World Bank, 2003a)—in the case of the education sector, this would mean students and their parents. In the context of developed countries, the core idea behind SBM is that those who work in a school building should have greater control over managing what goes on in the building. In developing countries, the idea behind SBM is less ambitious in that it focuses mainly on involving communities and parents in the school decision-making process, rather than putting them entirely in control.

The argument against the basic theory of SBM is that there is a necessary interdependence between governments, school administrations, teachers' classroom behaviour and parental attitudes; thus, putting SBM into practice involves ensuring that all of these actors work together in a system of mutual dependence. However, devolving power to the school level means that some groups outside of the school, such as district or local education offices, are likely to lose some of their power; thus, changing the status quo. Obayan (2011) argues that in some cases, local community members have taken over one or more school councils and then used them for their own political ends (such as increasing community control over city resources and having a say in non-educational matters), rather than for the education of children. As a result, SBM may make local school councils redundant (Cook, 2007). In addition, SBM often requires teachers to play greater roles in the governance and management of the schools where they teach. While this enlarges the scope of their job, it also requires more time and energy and can sometimes limit their traditional freedom to do what they choose inside the classroom. Not all teachers appreciate having to take on additional managerial roles and responsibilities, even when these changes are marginal (Cook, 2007; Whitty & Power, 1998; Wylie, 1996).

Obayan (2011) also acknowledged the implication of politics in given directives to enforce school management committees in schools. This is the negative politics surrounding policies that means that the 'free education' offered by most state governments is understood as not including any form of contribution (such as funds, materials, ideas, labour and so forth) from parents and communities. In most cases, the public reaction towards school involvement is lukewarm (Obayan, 2011).

In summary, Nigeria's education politics have changed very little over the years, with the return to democratic rule not seeming to have erased the political memories of the past. Regimes may have changed, but the political players have not. Reforms have been introduced

in different directions and there have been increases in numbers, as well as increases in spending; however, the demand for education has not been sufficiently stimulated. In addition, where this demand has been stimulated, it has not yet been met. This legacy of bad politics makes it difficult for education policies to be implemented effectively.

The above information stimulated the researcher's interest in understanding the bureaucratic intricacies in the implementation of education policy to enable access to the UBE programme. This study was undertaken with the intent of understanding how the UBE policy has affected Nigerian citizens' access to basic education. As discussed in the following chapter, the theoretical and conceptual framework steered the direction of this research study in investigating the effect of bureaucratic structure on implementing the UBE policy in Nigeria.

Summary

This chapter reviewed relevant literature to explain the historical development of educational policy and its implementation in Nigeria. The literature positioned educational policy and policy implementation in a global context. Further, the literature review highlighted the Nigerian perspective since independence. The bureaucratic structure of policy administration and implementation were explored and synthesized to revealed why the bureaucratic role in policy implementation remains an issue in Nigeria. The subsequent chapter provides impetus to the direction of this research study.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The emergence of policy implementation studies in the 1970s was in reaction to growing concerns about the effectiveness of wide-ranging reform programmes in the United States. Until the end of the 1960s, it had been taken for granted that political mandates were clear and that bureaucrats implemented policies according to the intentions of decision makers (Hill & Hupe, 2002, p. 46). However, the process of translating policy into action attracted more attention because policies seemed to lag behind policy expectations (Barrett, 2005). This necessitated the need to put forward theoretical frameworks to ensure that policies were executed as accurately as possible. This understanding informed the theoretical framings for this study, which centred on organisational theory—particularly the bureaucratic concept of implementation influenced by Max Weber (1968) and the top-down theory by Meter and Horn (1975, p. 447).

Organisational Theory

Bureaucracy is the combination of organisational structure, procedures, protocols and regulations implemented to manage activity, usually in large organisations or governmental settings (Pulzl &Treib, 2007). As opposed to adhocracy, bureaucracy is often represented by standardised procedure (rule following) that guides the execution of most or all processes within the body, as well as the formal division of powers, hierarchy and relationships. It is intended to anticipate needs and improve efficiency (Jablin & Putnam, 2000). Traditionally, bureaucracy does not create policy, but enacts it. Law, policy and regulation normally originate from a leadership that creates the bureaucracy to implement them (Parson, 2003, p. 85). In practice, the direct responsibility for organisational bureaucracy is the interpretation and execution of policy and the leadership that creates it, such as a government executive

(Reed, 2001). Thus, the concept of implementation implies the establishment of adequate bureaucratic procedures to ensure that policies are executed as accurately as possible.

Max Weber (1864 to 1920) was one of the most influential users of the word 'bureaucracy'. He was well known for his study of the bureaucratisation of society, and many aspects of modern public administration derive from his work. For example, a classic, hierarchically organised civil service of the continental type is called 'Weberian civil service' (Warner, 2007). Weber (1930, p. 54) described the ideal type of bureaucracy in positive terms, considering it to be a more rational and efficient form of organisation than the alternatives that preceded it, which he characterised as charismatic and traditional domination. According to Weber (1949, p. 46), the attributes of modern bureaucracy include impersonality, concentration of the means of administration, a levelling effect on social and economic differences, and the implementation of a system of authority that is practically unchallengeable. Weber (1958, p. 89) submitted that analysis of bureaucracy concerns:

- the historical and administrative reasons for bureaucratisation

- the effect of the rule of law on bureaucratic organisations

- the orientation and occupational position of the status group of bureaucratic officials

- the attributes and consequences of bureaucracy in the modern world.

He identified the seven characteristics of bureaucratic organisations as follows:

1. official business is conducted continuously

2. official business is conducted with strict accordance to the following rules: the duty of each official to do certain types of work is delimited in terms of impersonal criterion, the official is given the authority necessary to undertake his or her assigned functions, and the means of coercion at his or her disposal are strictly limited and conditions of their use strictly defined

3. every official's responsibilities and authority are part of a vertical hierarchy of authority, with respective rights of supervision and appeal

4. officials do not own the resources necessary for the performance of their assigned functions, but are accountable for their use of these resources

5. official and private business and income are strictly separated

6. offices cannot be appropriated by their incumbents (inherited, sold and so forth)

7. official business is conducted on the basis of written documents (Weber, 1968, p. 124).

Weber's work on bureaucratic organisational theory is not void of criticism. According to Gannon (2003), each of Weber's seven characteristics can degenerate to situations in which:

- competences can be unclear and used contrary to the spirit of the law

- a decision itself may be considered more important than its effect

- nepotism, corruption, political infighting and other negative behaviours can counter the rule of impersonality and create a recruitment and promotion system not based on meritocracy, but on oligarchy.

Kaelber (2003) asserted that a phenomenon such as an organisational bureaucracy creates ever-increasing rules and procedures, with their complexity rising and coordination diminishing. This can facilitate the creation of contradictory and recursive rules, as described by the saying, 'the bureaucracy is expanding to meet the needs of the expanding bureaucracy'. This prevents people using common sense because everything must be done as written by the law.

Despite a decline in adapting Weber's scholarship in policy studies, Weber's theory of bureaucracy remains an inspiration for many sociologists and other scholars of contemporary research on organisation–environment relations. It is undeniable that

organisational theory was profoundly influenced by Weber's work (Eliaeson & Palonen, 2004). The rationale for choosing Weber organisation theory for this study was informed by the need to understand how bureaucracy is capable of attaining the highest degree of efficiency (Weber, 1968, p. 223). Hinings and Greenwood (2002) and Lounsbury and Ventresca (2005) asserted that the time is ripe to more explicitly revisit the work of Weber as a way to understand how organisations may be changing in tandem with broader societal and global shifts, as well as to more generally reconnect the study of organisations to broader societal concerns. Despite an empirical decline in terms of citations and depth of engagement with Weber's work, Lounsbury and Carberry (2005) argued that there is a need to revitalise Weber's work in contemporary organisational research. For example, they cited current efforts to understand issues related to policy implementation, hierarchical bureaucracy, globalisation, post-industrialism and varieties of capitalism in the information age. They stated that Weber's historical analyses of capitalism and the structure and social reality of modern economic organisations and administrative systems—including bureaucracy—emerge from specific historical processes relating to markets, trade, technology, political and legal structures, religion, and sociocultural ideas and institutions. Thus, they claimed that Weber's ideas are as relevant today as they were during the transitions to the industrialisation, urbanisation and rudimentary forms of market capitalism that occurred in his lifetime.

The relevance of Weber's theory to this study is based on the fact that bureaucracy is an extremely efficient system of administration (Derlien, 1999). Further, there is a belief that the emergence of bureaucracy contributes to a levelling of social differences because official positions within a bureaucracy are filled according to technical qualifications, rather than personal loyalty to a master. An understanding of Weber's organisational theory reveals the dynamics of organisations, such as in government agencies and business firms, from

traditional counterparts, such as patriarchy, feudalism and gerontocracy, notably, the presence of a formally rational bureaucracy (Weber, 1978, p. 930). According to Heugens (2005), Weber's description helps understand the multifaceted bureaucratic structure of organisations in policy implementation. Pattison (2000), in an analysis of the cultural and organisational dynamics underpinning the 1992 impeachment of Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Melo, Mische argued that the hierarchical nature of the bureaucratic structure made it ultimately possible for pro- and anti-impeachment organisational coalitions to form as a result of discursive positioning in the field of Brazilian politics. In other words, it showed how a wide variety of organisational forms, their interconnections and alliances, and their discursive claims about the particular kinds of projects in which they were engaged shaped the effective implementation of the impeachment dynamic.

The argument has been that the Nigeria's bureaucratic structure is similar to the bureaucratic organisation advocated by Weber. Ikoya and Ikoya (2005) stated that the Weberian approach to understanding organisational bureaucracy in policy implementation studies can yield an integrative insight and provide useful information to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation in Nigeria. Thus, it was the intention of the current study to draw on Weber's theory of organisational bureaucracy to explore how the interconnections and alliances between bureaucratic mechanisms of the educational agency at both federal (UBEC) and state (SUBEB) levels of policy implementation have influenced access to basic education in Nigeria.

Top-down Theory

This theoretical framework is guided by three bodies of literature: organisational theory, studies on the effect of public policy, and studies of intergovernmental relations (Meter & Horn, 1975, p. 160). Top-down theories assume that policy implementation starts with a decision made by a central government. Parsons (2003) pointed out that the theory is

based on a black-box model of the policy process inspired by system analysis. The theory assumes a direct causal link between policies and observed outcomes, and tends to disregard the effect of implementers on policy delivery. Nakamura and Smallwood (1980) conceived of implementation as the hierarchical execution of centrally defined policy implementation. Top-downers essentially follow a prescriptive approach that interprets policy as input, and implementation as output. Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), Meter and Horn (1975), Bardach (1977) and Sabatier and Mazmanian (1986) are considered classical top-down theorists. The emphasis of these theorists is on the implementation outcome of the policy. They argued that policy objectives are established by policymakers, and they considered implementation as an interaction between the setting of goals and the action geared to achieve them. In this view, implementation research is seen as a task of analysing the difficulties in achieving policy objectives.

The focus of a study of implementation is to determine whether the implementation outcomes correspond to the objectives established in the initial policy decisions. It was based on this premise that Sabatier and Mazmanian (1986) stressed the need for a clear understanding of the separation between policy formulation and implementation. It is in line with this thought that Meter and Horn (1975, p. 165) suggested a model in which six variables were linked dynamically to the production of the outcome performance of policy objectives or effective implementation:

1. policy objectives are clear and consistent

2. policy implementation encompasses those actions by the public, groups or private individuals that are directed at achieving the objectives set forth in prior policy decisions

3. the implementation process is structured adequately

4. implementing officials are committed to the programme's goals

5. interest groups and (legislative and executive) sovereigns are supportive

6. there are no detrimental changes in the socioeconomic framework conditions.

These six variables guided the researcher in understanding the Nigerian UBE policy objectives and its implementation.

The rhetorical question about whether top-down policy implementation theory is a redundant issue is supported by Lester and Goggin's (1998) plea in *Policy Currents*, titled 'Back to the Future: The Rediscovery of Top-down Theory Implementation Studies'. These initiatives triggered various immediate responses from other policy scholars (deLeon, 1999; Kettunen, 2000; Lester, 2000; Meier, 1999; Potoski, 2001; Schneider, 1999) to be followed by more comprehensive reflections on the subject matter (deLeon, 1999; deLeon & deLeon, 2002; Lester & Stewart, 2000; O'Toole, 2000; Schofield, 2001; Sinclair, 2001). The fact that *Public Administration* devoted its spring issue of 2004 to a symposium on implementing public policy by featuring a number of articles by both 'new' and 'old' scholars—such as Schofield (2004), Schofield and Sausman (2004), Barrett (2005) and O'Toole (2004)—is another noteworthy event. Equally important in this respect is the publication of two recent books by Hill and Hupe (2002) and Painter and Pierre (2005). The first is a textbook that seeks to summarise implementation research and link it to the policy research topics that have replaced it during the last 15 to 20 years. The second is a new and substantially revised edition of the *Handbook of Public Administration* that contains several state-of-the-art articles on policy implementation research by seasoned scholars such as May (2003) and Winter (2003).

Top-down strategies have been widely used to introduce and implement government decisions in Australia (Hamilton, 1996; Horton, 2003). The Australian public sector agency, Infra Agency, found that the approach could effectively communicate a broad vision of change (Ryan, Williams & Waterhouse, 2008). Taiwan education has also adopted top-down

management for years, with the approach positively assisting Taiwan's education sector to flourish in recent years (Huang, 2000; Ministry of Education, 2005; Su, 2003). Heckscher, Eisenstat and Rice (1994) pointed out that the strengths of top-down management are that it uses the power of the top not only to create shared commitment, but also to explain rationales and strategies for change. Most importantly, the central planning and bureaucratic procedures of top-down management are often considered in parallel with market mechanisms (Hurwicz, 1973). Moreover, they are often recognised as the best way to promote the necessary equilibrium and efficiency of complex systems that are composed of numerous individuals and units (Milgrom & Robert, 1992). According to Vandenberghe (1999), most of the coordination of public education systems significantly relies on both central control and top-down decision-making procedures. In relation to education, the strength of top-down management particularly lies in the fact that upper management levels carry substantial responsibility for implementation to district levels (Sayed, 2002; Vandenberghe, 1999).

The top-down approach to organisational change receives further support from the growing popularity of transformational leadership theory, which offers assurance that individuals in positions of high authority can change their organisations. Transformational leaders are thought to bring about strategic change by recognising a need for change, creating a new vision, and then institutionalising the change (Eisenbach, Waston & Pillai, 1999; Kotter, 1996). The successes in implementing and achieving effective change are predicated on leaders' ability to facilitate positive relationships between employees throughout the organisation and communicate the purpose and process of the change to stakeholders (Bass, 1990).

Top-down change strategies have been criticised for assuming that organisational transformation is a linear and uniform process (McNulty & Ferlie, 2004), for ignoring the procession and ongoing nature of large-scale change (Dawson, 1994; Greenwood, Williams

& Shaw, 1990), and for failing to acknowledge the uniqueness of individual organisations (Hirsch & Lounsbury, 1997; Miller & Banaszak-Holl, 2005). Critics argued that those at lower levels may not share the senior management's commitment to change and that, when problems and obstacles are encountered during implementation, senior management's enthusiasm alone is insufficient to sustain the change momentum (Herbst, 1976). Cummings and Worley (1993) argued that organisational members seek to preserve the status quo, and that successful change is unlikely without overall commitment. However, despite these criticisms and the availability of alternatives, planned change in many organisations relies heavily on the top-down approach, even in developing countries (Ikoya & Ikoya, 2005). The top-down element is essential for developing and communicating the senior management's overall vision of change and for sustaining high-level support. Figure 4 below shows the elements of both organizational theory and top-down adapted for the study.

Organisational theory	Top-down theory
Official business is clear and continuous	Policy objectives are clear and consistent
Official responsibility is hierarchical	Implementation process is hierarchical
Officials undertake their assigned functions	Implementing officials are committed to the goals
Official business is conducted on the basis of written documents	Policy decisions are designed to be as they are stated

Figure 4. The elements of the organisational bureaucracy theory and top-down theory of policy implementation.

Justification for the Theories

The stated common elements of both theories stress the bureaucratic paradigms centred on policy implementation. The complementarities of both are entrenched in the underlying assumption that both theories emphasise the hierarchal structure in bureaucratic implementation—that is, that policy decisions reached at the 'top' of a political system work

'down' to the implementers. The theories are parsimonious enough to enable clear understandings or predictions that consider whether Nigeria's hierarchical bureaucratic structure will enable the country's government policy on education to be implemented effectively. According to Bardach (1997, p. 86), neither theory focuses on the whole policy process, but merely on what happens after a bill becomes law. Thus, both theories are concerned about the levels of intricacies of the implementation process that is completing the basic policy decision. These theories will be explored to explain the significance of implementation study in analysing the implementation of the basic education policy programme in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

It has been argued that policy in education, as in any other sphere of social life, has been operational statements of values. Stressing this position, Kogan (1975) argued that an education policy authoritatively allocates values. Hence, values and authority lie at the heart of exploring converting policy intent into action. It was based on this understanding that the questions raised by Fenshaw (2009, p. 2) underpinned the theoretical framing for this study:

1. On which category of people would the policy focus?

2. How would the policy accommodate disadvantaged minorities in society?

3. What would be the role of authority in relation to the policy?

4. What would be the role of the bureaucratic mechanism in policy implementation?

5. How effective and efficient would be the mechanism for monitoring policy performance?

These questions raised by Fenshaw (2009, p. 2) were the key subsets of the two theories that informed the creation of the conceptual framework for this study. They were crucial because they enabled the researcher to understand the missing link in the policy implementation process, especially as it related to the implementation of the UBE policy in Nigeria.

Previous studies have shown that implementing educational reform programmes designed to improve the quality of the education system in Nigeria have been more rhetorical than substantive in their effect on the organisation of schools and society (Denga, 2000; Edukugho, 2006; Okiy, 2004). While schools and classrooms may change, the extent and direction of change has not always been consistent with the intentions of policy initiatives (Ikoya & Ikoya, 2005). The corollary of this perspective is that teachers and schools are portrayed as the major impediments to change, whereas there is a need to look beyond schools for policy actualisation. It was imperative for this study to explore the level of fidelity between policy intent and policy realisation. According to Adamson (2000), there are indeed gaps between the intentions of policymakers and bureaucratic implementation. These gaps have been especially pronounced in reforms attempting to change the prevailing styles of teaching and learning (Morris & Morris, 2000), and provide justification for the focus of this study, which is to understand the reasons for these gaps, which have often been barriers to change. However, Goodson (2000) asserted that the gap between education policy and its implementation often results in what he referred to as a form of 'implementationist myopia'.

In the Nigerian context, the gaps between policy objectives and bureaucratic implementations were identified as challenges confronting every facet of human development. For example, in the education sector, the processes of translating policy to action were discovered to be undermining the meaningful implementation of educational reform. The basic education policy in Nigeria comprises well-stated aims and objectives that are devoid of any form of ambiguity, with a clear intention to eradicate illiteracy and provide access to children to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, before proceeding to higher education (Edukugho, 2006). The enormous responsibility of achieving this goal was placed on the bureaucratic structure of system implementation, with resources adequately allocated to align with the aims and objectives of the policy. This was also in acknowledgement of the

fact that access to education and training has been a global challenge (Otero, 2007). However, while the goals were worthy, the implementation has been lacking. Based on this premise, this study examined the effect of the bureaucratic structure of implementation on improving access to basic education within a decade of the most recent policy's implementation.

There are claims that policy implementation is influenced by a range of contextual factors, such as organisation communication and interpersonal relations; economic, social and political conditions; the specific roles of bureaucrats; the alignment/fidelity level of bureaucrats on policy implementation; and knowledge interpretation of the policy. This study examined how these factors can affect and be used to improve access to education during the policy implementation of the basic education programme in Nigeria. Femshaw (2009) provided a direction for this study's exploration in the sense that the critical analysis of the organisational structure of the Nigerian commission responsible for implementing the basic education reform programme revealed a bureaucratic and mechanistic organisation. At the highest stratum was the UBEC, in charge of central administration and coordinating human resources, controlling financial expenditure, supplying learning resources, and monitoring curriculum innovation and adaptation processes. At the state government level was the SUBEB, delegated with the management duties of supervising schools, teachers and resource distribution to facilitate instruction and learning for students (Figure 1), assisted by the LGEA and SBMC.

This implies that the policy implementation process in Nigeria is purely an administrative process. Once the policy has been enacted by the decision makers, power ultimately rests with bureaucratic structures that define clear policy objectives and are capable of hierarchically guiding the bureaucratic process of putting these objectives into action. This bureaucratic structure helps understand where the authority lies in policy

implementation of basic education reform in Nigeria. This bureaucratic structure assisted the researcher to understand the effect of organisational communication and interpersonal relations of the agencies on policy implementation. Therefore, based on this understanding of bureaucratic paradigm, this study unravelled the intricacies undermining the effectiveness of implementing the UBE programme in Nigeria by examining questions such as:

- How was the policy implemented?
- What was the mechanism for responding to implementation tasks?
- What effect did the level of fidelity of the bureaucrats have on access?
- What was the perceived level of knowledge of the bureaucrats in policy implementation?
- How have the bureaucrats interpreted and executed the policy?

The study of agency bureaucratic structure also revealed the level of fidelity between the central and state attitudes towards the policy implementation programme in Nigeria.

This research employed the model in Figure 5 to underpin the exploration of the process of implementation of the universal education programme in Nigeria by taking a critical look at the implementation document. It also looked at the organisational bureaucracy of the educational agency, in the light of problems identified while discussing alternatives such as how it can actually work. There were propositions, suggestions and recommendations regarding how the implementation should look and what needs to be changed. The researcher sought to understand the relationship between political direction and policy implementation by looking at the budgetary priorities in accordance with the government's political objectives. The researcher focused on the financial accountability and efficiency of individuals at all levels of the agency bureaucratic mechanism. In addition to assessing the level of autonomy of the agency, evaluation of the strategic objectives of government is necessary in order to know the effect of policy frameworks on performance appraisal, and the

extent to which they have been achieved within the period under study. To support this, enquiries were made regarding why they have not been achieved.
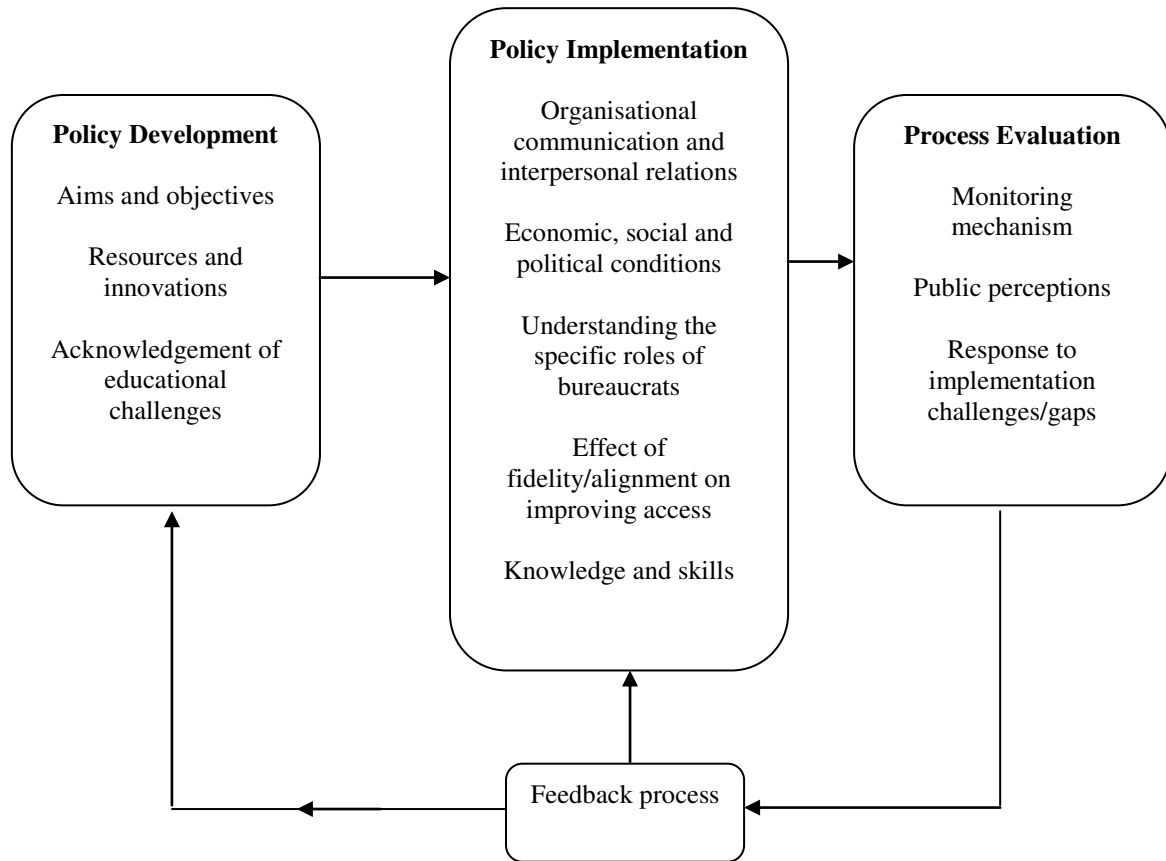
Figure 5. The model of the policy implementation process adapted for this study. Source: Adapted from Van Meter and Van Horn (1975, p. 463).

The conceptual model in Figure 5 provides an overview of the critical issues explored in this study. This model served as a guide to understanding the challenges facing the implementation policy for basic education in Nigeria. This model assisted the researcher to focus on the essential components of the implementation processes of basic education in Nigeria. The conceptual framework guided the researcher in acquiring adequate knowledge of the timely and satisfactory performance of the tasks related to the policy implementation of the basic education programme in Nigeria.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Introduction

This study focused on understanding the effect of bureaucratic structure on the implementation of the basic education policy in Nigeria. The methodological approach selected for this study was designed to reveal the level of alignment of bureaucrats responsible for implementing policy at the federal, state and local education district levels. The research approach provided the opportunity to understand and report the reflections of bureaucrats across the states on the challenges of policy implementation. The case study was compiled using both descriptive and interpretive methods, which enabled different views to be expressed by the interviewees on UBE implementation in Nigeria. This chapter describes the research approach, research design and selection of research participants. This chapter also elaborates the data sources used and procedures for data collection and analysis.

Research Approach

Two research paradigms were identified by Best and Kahn (1993): logical-positivism and phenomenological inquiry. Logical-positivism dominates education research and is based on the same assumptions that underpin research in natural sciences—the description of scientific research and testing of hypotheses. The second paradigm of phenomenological inquiry draws its strength from qualitative research. According to Lincoln (2008), this has not only gained a foothold as a method of research, but has established a stronghold in education and the social and clinical sciences. Patton (1990) asserted that it remains a viable approach for 'naturalistic inquiry, inductive analysis, holistic perspective, qualitative data, personal contact and insight, dynamic systems, unique case orientation, context sensitivity, emphatic neutrality and design flexibility' (p. 67). This background informed the choice of the qualitative research approach to study the effect of bureaucratic mechanisms of policy implementation on access to basic education among Nigerian children.

The rationale for the research approach was premised on finding answers to the research questions that underpinned the study, as stated in Chapter 1. The qualitative approach provided a much-needed clear understanding of education policy implementation and was essential to gaining insight into the peculiarity and uniqueness of UBE. The approach also provided a reflection on how policy ideas and expectations were disseminated, interpreted and implemented by the bureaucrats, as stated in the conceptual framework for the study (Figure 5). This understanding aligned with the view of Sabatier (2007), who stressed the importance of conceptual frameworks in research. This information was used by Sabatier to inform using both the top-down approach and organisational approach to understand the bureaucratic mechanism of policy implementation in Nigeria. This idea reflected the current bureaucratic structure used to implement the UBE programme in Nigeria, which favours top-down bureaucracy.

The justification of the top-down theory was based on the view that a top-down approach is best for a society in which the dominant program is well structured, like Nigeria's bureaucratic organisation. This approach made the research study a top-down activity, which is unlike a bottom-up approach, where one is interested in the dynamics of local implementation, and where there is no single dominant program. With a bottom-up approach, the diffuse lowest-level behaviour is analysed first because, for this diffuse behaviour, gathering data can be challenging, as multiple sources must be consulted and analysed (Birkland, 2010, p. 271; Lincoln, 2008; Riehl, 2001). The research approach employed in this study assisted the researcher to understand the intricacies of gathering information, even at the district level of policy implementation. This confirmed Sabatier's (2007) view that gathering data poses challenges when the researcher has to include lowest-level behaviour, as well as focused, top-down activity. In this study, interviews were conducted with the key

personnel at the federal, state and district levels who were responsible for implementing the UBE policy.

A qualitative research method employed in this study complemented and strengthened the organisational theory and top-down theory. This method was determined by the research questions, conceptual framework for the research activity, and methods developed to collect and interpret data. The approach was selected to investigate the complex issue of implementing UBE as a qualitative case study approach, with its interpretative documentary analysis. This reflected the position of Denzin and Lincoln (2000) that the qualitative research approach is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. The qualitative approach exposed how policy ideas and expectations were disseminated, interpreted and implemented among the bureaucrats responsible for policy implementation in Nigeria. It helped understand the inherent intricacies of equitable access to the UBE programme in the Nigerian context.

Qualitative Research Method

The field of educational research has developed through the contributions of the research methodologies or paradigms mentioned earlier (logical-positivism and phenomenological inquiry). These paradigms have influenced educational research in terms of both theory and method. The qualitative research approach is based on the second paradigm—the phenomenological position—and, as stated earlier, is a paradigm that has not only gained a foothold, but established a stronghold in education and the social and clinical sciences. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) explained the difference between logical-positivists and phenomenologists' views of research. They suggested that the former see knowledge as separated into parts that are examined individually, with the investigator being separable from what is to be known. In contrast, phenomenologists see knowledge as being 'constructed', and the 'knower' as being unable to be completely separable from what is

known. Shaohua (1998) concurred that qualitative researchers regard reality as being multiple and constructed, and the meaning of events as multidirectional, rather than believing in one-way causal links and a unidirectional meaning of events, as perceived by positivists. As such, phenomenologists look for patterns emerging from the data they collect, while positivists form hypotheses and then collect data to test them.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) asserted that qualitative researchers pay considerable attention to the complexity of an event and its context, and try to 'eliminate all of the unique aspects of the environment in order to apply the results to the largest possible number of subjects and experiments' (p. 16). The emphasis in qualitative research is on 'understanding through looking closely at people's words, actions and records' (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 17) and allowing the researcher 'in an historical or descriptive way to more closely represent the situation as experienced by the participants' (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 2). This approach enabled the researcher to examine closely the responses of the interviewees to the UBE policy implementation. It deepened the researcher's understanding of the factors that mitigated the effectiveness of the policy, as identified by the interviewees. This emphasis made the qualitative paradigm relevant to the study because of its strength in establishing the research participants' intentions and actions. In addition, this approach can reveal intricacies in the equity or lack of equity in the ways resources are distributed (Greene, 1997). Riehl (2001) asserted that this method involves research that uses observational, communicative and documentary strategies in a natural setting in the effort to understand the social world. As such, it was the most appropriate approach for this study.

Research Design

The research design was a case study in which data were collected through document analysis and interviews. The choice of document analysis for this study was pertinent because the study was primarily concerned with identifying and selecting relevant reports and

evaluating information. This approach was essential for this study because of its nature as a variable tool for selecting and evaluating evidence in academic research. Duffy (2005) stated that the document analysis approach is dynamic in nature because it can be used as the central or exclusive method of research. It can also be used to examine the reliability of the evidence gathered from interviews (Duffy, 2005, p. 97). Johnson (1984) further explained that document analysis is useful in research that focuses on organisation policy or evaluating government reports. Hakim (2000) and Elton (2002) viewed document analysis as examining information that came into existence during a particular period of study. They identified the following as examples of information in document analysis: the records of legislative bodies, government reports, educational agency reports and national databases on performance. This provided the lead for the researcher to seek and review documents on UBE from the UBEC, SUBEB and LGEA, and from the Legislative Committee on Education (Appendix 2).

The approach provided insight for this study into a decade of implementing the UBE programme in Nigeria. The document analysis approach assisted the researcher to focus on past records of policy implementation documents, evaluation reports, statistical data on enrolment and the implementation strategies of the programme. It helped the researcher know the bureaucratic structure of UBE implementation, which has generated serious interest and community debate in Nigeria. The method enabled the researcher to generate the keynotes from the research findings that formed the key issues in the discussion chapter. It helped in understanding the present state of UBE in the two regions identified in the study, and led to the anticipation of future problems relating to issues of UBE implementation in Nigeria. This study was undertaken in a spirit of critical enquiry, with the goal of determining the factors that have prevented the nation from increasing the effectiveness of the bureaucratic implementation process in basic education in the Nigerian education system.

The main source through which data were collected for the study was interview. Gubrium and Holstein (1997) defined interview as a universal mode of systematic enquiry. Fontana and Frey (2008) referred to interviewing as a powerful way in which researchers try to understand their fellow humans. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the bureaucrats who were in charge of policy implementation in two geo-political zones of the federation. The insights gained gave the researcher the opportunity to ask questions about the role of each participant in UBE policy implementation. It also gave the researcher an opportunity to seek clarification on issues such as who has the power of command for implementation tasks, and why there is disparity in the level of implementation across the states. Thus, the study looked not only at documents for its findings, but also employed semi-structured, one-on-one, taped interviews. Bitchener (2010) posited that interviews are a procedure for gathering oral data that sometimes or often is not anticipated in research. They provide greater breadth because of their qualitative nature (Fontana & Frey, 2008). Thus, using one-on-one interviews as a data collection method for this study assisted in finding out information from individuals, government bureaucrats, policymakers and other stakeholders who held the responsibility of implementing the UBE in Nigeria.

According to Burns (2000), personal interviews with participants enable researchers to obtain the true views of the respondents because a certain level of confidentiality is provided or assured. More importantly, for the current study, unlimited amounts of information and knowledge on UBE issues were made possible through one-on-one conversation. This approach permitted flexibility and a more valid response from the respondents about their perceptions of reality on the issue of the study. McCulloch and Richardson (2000) highlighted the usefulness of interview as a research method of data collection, particularly when important documents are unavailable. They overruled the assumption that, because documents exist, they are available for research—some documents

are regarded too confidential to be released; however, enquiries in the form of interviews can be made about these documents (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000).

The semi-structured interviews conducted in this study were based on interview guide questions. Each question was tailored in such a way that the respondents had a good understanding of the content of the questions, and were able to answer them accordingly. The interviews were divided into three sections. The first section was designed to elicit information about the past education policy and the factors that necessitated the need for change. The second section allowed the researcher to examine the level of involvement of the respondents in the implementation process of the 1999 UBE policy. The third section centred on the bureaucratic alignment of the implementation process, as well as the channels of feedback and public perceptions of this process.

The interviews involved 28 officials of UBE at both the federal and state levels of implementation: the UBEC's executive secretary, directors of implementation, chairperson, and officials in charge of implementation in the two states from the two geo-political zones of the federation, as well as the executive secretary of the local education district. The rationale behind the choice of these individuals was because of their expertise, experience, position and direct involvement in the implementation of the UBE policy in Nigeria. They were in a position to provide the information that was vital to the conduct of this study. The target participants were carefully chosen because of their influence and managerial positions (a career ladder that was established in both the federal and state education system). Most importantly, the respondents were able to provide detailed information on the missing link between policy formulation and implementation. The interview data assisted the researcher to gain an in-depth knowledge of the level of fidelity between policy intent and system implementation to provide access to the UBE programme in Nigeria.

Synopsis of the Interview Guide

With interview being the main source of data collection, it was important to have a structured interview guide with 12 interview questions that were divided into four components (Appendix 3). The interview guide was rooted in the conceptual framework and research questions (Figure 5). Below were the three structures of the interview questions. The first section centred on policy development, with the questions eliciting responses from the interviewees on previous policies and failures. Importantly, it also ascertained the interviewees' knowledge of policy development and implementation. The second section focused on how the policy had been implemented, the effect of the policy on access, the disparity in education attainment across the geo-political zones, the level of alignment among bureaucrats, and the bureaucrats' specific roles in implementing the policy. The responses revealed the missing link in the implementation of the UBE policy. The third section of the guide encompassed the evaluation aspects of the UBE policy. The respondents revealed the feedback mechanism, channel of responding to public perceptions, innovations that were evident in the new policy, and perceived challenges or constraints in policy implementation.

Table 3 below reveals the positions of the participants used in this study. As stated earlier in this chapter, the participants were drawn from the echelon of bureaucratic structure of UBE policy implementation across the regions. The responses elicited from the participants reflected the state of UBE policy implementation without any form of distortion.

Table 3

Distribution of the Study Participants

Key personnel interviewed	Number interviewed
UBEC:	
Deputy Executive Secretary (Technical Services)	1
Director of Planning, Research and Statistics	1
Director of Social Mobilisation	1
Director of Academic Services	1
Director of Quality Assurance	1
Director of Finance and Administration	1
Total	6
Pacesetter State: SUBEB	
Pacesetter State: Executive Chairman	1
Director of School Services	1
Director of Social Mobilisation and Orientation	1
Deputy Director of Social Mobilisation and Orientation	1
Director of Planning, Research and Statistics	1
Director of Standard and Quality Assurance	1
Director of Administration and Finance	1
Pacesetter State: LGEA Supervisors	4
Total	11
Central State: SUBEB	
Director of Planning, Research and Statistics	1
Director of Standard and Quality Assurance	1
Director of Junior Secondary School	1
Director of Social Mobilisation	1
Director of Administration and Finance	1
Central State: LGEA Supervisors	6
Total	11
Grand Total	28

Data Analysis

The data analysis of this study was premised on the understanding of the qualitative research methodology discussed earlier in this chapter. Based on this understanding, the data collected were analysed to assess the effect of the bureaucratic mechanism of policy implementation and the specific role of the individual in charge of policy implementation at the UBEC, SUBEB and LGEA in two geo-political zones, as well as any other factors that affected the implementation of the policy. Data were analysed from documents and semi-

structured interviews. The interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed in full. The analysis began by reading and re-reading the discussion transcripts so that the researcher became familiar with the data and could recognise the general key issues as they began to emerge. The main ideas emerging from each source were compared and contrasted in order to extract major key issues. The method of analysis was consistent with the views of Silverman (2011) and Punch (2010), who suggested organising excerpts from transcripts into categories and searching for patterns and connections within the categories to identify themes.

This insight enabled the researcher to focus more on the key issues. These issues were further broadened from the interviews as the participants reflected on their ideas about what influences the effective implementation of the UBE policy. During the process of data analysis, the researcher also made notes and recorded his thoughts as he identified common concepts within the data and recognised links between ideas (Miles & Huberman, 2002). These notes assisted in formulating the key issues and making sense of the data. Creswell (2009) suggested member checking as a method of validating the accuracy of data interpretations; thus, some stakeholders were later contacted to ensure that the data summaries were accurate and reflected their opinions. Figure 6 shows below the data analysis plan of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

Research question analysis	Method of collection	Data
In what way does the level of fidelity within the bureaucratic policy implementation process affect access to basic education in Nigeria?	Interview and document Appendices 1 and 2	Thematic and document analysis
How do the actions of bureaucrats affect access to basic education in Nigeria?	Interview	Thematic analysis

Figure 6. Data analysis plan.

Researcher's Constraints

There were a number of constraints faced by the researcher during this study. First, the process of finalising interviews with participants involved considerable time locating the individuals and securing appointments, as well as travelling long distances on occasions to achieve this task. In addition, the proposal and the integrity of the research supervisors were subject to academic scrutiny before being given the audience and consent to undertake the research. The researcher was informed that they had turned down many research scholars from foreign universities because of lack of an in-depth proposal and inability of scholars to defend their proposal, which often reflects negatively on the research supervisors. However, there was overwhelming acknowledgement by the bureaucrats at the Glad Tidings—consisting of professors, Doctor of Philosophy students and seasoned intellectuals—that this proposal was one of the best, and the supervisors were commended for a job well done.

In addition, there were situations in which the target interviewees could not complete the interview due to the schedule of their office. However, they instructed their deputies to fill in the gaps instead. In addition, there were two instances when the heads of ministries' views could not be distanced from their actions to enable them to give objective responses because of their functions as both policy initiators and sometimes policy executors.

Another barrier to completing the interviews was the researcher's near misses in several accidents that claimed lives on the Lagos-Ibadan Express road in the course of travelling to interview appointments in one region (the Pacesetter State). On another occasion, on 26 March 2011, the researcher was about to finish an interview with one of the bureaucrats at Glad Tidings to enable him to attend an interview appointment with a World Bank official at the UN building, regarding the position of international donors on basic education, when the building was hit by a bomb. Reportedly, 18 international officials were killed and 50 severely injured. This led to the closure of the office and cancellation of the

interview with the World Bank official. All these factors were taken into consideration as possible constraints in this study.

Ethical Considerations

A study of this nature invariably presents ethical dilemmas because it involves human participants and collecting confidential data. The ethical procedures for this research were informed by the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007*)* and the *Conduct of Ethical Research Involving Human Subject* (1999), which were the research ethics policies and procedures of Edith Cowan University, Western Australia. It was in line with this procedure that the research gained ethics approval from the Ethics Committee of Edith Cowan University, Western Australia. Ethics clearance was also obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee at Edith Cowan University and the UBEC, SUBEB and LGEA to conduct one-on-one interviews with the officials and collect documents for analysis.

All participants who indicated willingness to be involved in the research were assured of confidentiality. A letter of consent was written and given to all participants, containing a description of the study, and the rights of withdrawal were explained to all participants. Additionally, prior to each interview, the researcher restated the rationale of the research and assured participants of confidentiality. Further, permission was sought from the participants to record the conversation using a tape recorder. This recording enabled the researcher to describe accurately what transpired during the interviews in order to eliminate bias. Further, as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) suggested, the participants were made aware that the research report could be accessed locally and abroad.

To ensure that the bureaucrats who were at the level of bureaucratic structure of basic education—such as the deputy executive secretary, chairperson of SUBEB and directors— could not be identified, their data were reported in aggregate form. In reporting the data in

this paper, the researcher has indicated who the informants are; however, it is not possible for the reader to track which comments were made by which informants. In this way, the researcher has maintained the level of anonymity required by ethics. The participants were appreciated for their time and involvement in the interviews. This supports DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree's (2006) concept of acknowledging contributions that informants make towards the success of a research activity. In line with the above statement, this Researcher used pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality of data sources in this research study.

Summary

This chapter established that case study research was the most appropriate method to study the effect of bureaucratic alignment in UBE policy implementation. The chapter also ascertained that the qualitative approach grounded the research in the social reality and everyday actions of the participants. Through using semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence, data were gathered about the experiences of the informants. While the limitations of qualitative research are acknowledged, this study also capitalised on the strengths associated with this method of enquiry. This allowed for an insider's view of the experiences of key personnel in the education service. The findings of this study are presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5: Education Before 1999 and its Aftermath

Introduction

This chapter reports the outcomes of this research study undertaken to examine the decade of implementing basic education in Nigeria. The perceptions of the participants about the state of education prior to and after the introduction of the policy provided an understanding of the sectoral issues affecting education development in Nigeria. This study was undertaken due to the need to understand the effect of fidelity within the bureaucratic structure implementation of the basic education programme. The administrative structures of basic education implementation processes in Nigeria, as mentioned in the preceding chapters, were the UBEC, SUBEB, LGEA and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Nigeria. These structures have been at the forefront of the national intervention in the drive to achieve EFA and the MDGs.

The descriptive analysis in this chapter provides an understanding of the influence of the bureaucratic structure of implementation on access to the basic education programme. The key findings emerged from interviews with bureaucrats in three regions—the Pacesetter State, Central State and Glad Tidings—who were responsible for policy implementation and factual evidence. The intention was to understand the state of Nigerian education in its entirety both before and after the introduction of the UBE programme in 1999.

Pacesetter (PS) State

The bureaucratic structure of basic education implementation in the PS State was under the purview of the SUBEB and an LGEA in each of 33 local government areas. At the state level, the board was comprised of a chairperson and education board members who were politically appointed. The chairperson was responsible for the implementation process, with five directors who were career officers supervising each of the directorates (Figure 7). The administrative structure, otherwise known as SUBEB, responsible for the

implementation of basic education in the zone, was comprised of the following structural components: Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation; Directorate of Social Mobilisation and Information and Communications Technology (ICT); Directorate of School/Academic Services; Directorate of Quality and Standard Assurance; and Directorate of Planning, Research and Statistics. This structure of implementation was similar to what operated in all the districts.
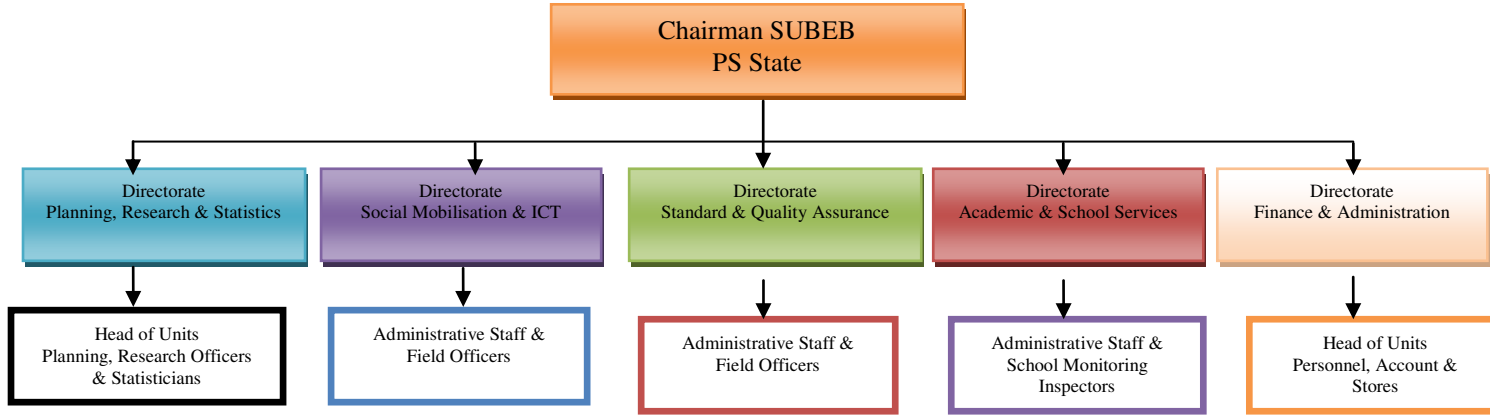
Figure 7. Organisational chart of SUBEB.

At the LGEA level, also known as the district level (Figure 8), the bureaucratic structure of basic education implementation included the executive secretary (ES), who oversaw the implementation processes and to whom all units and departmental heads were answerable. The ES was a political position and the units were headed by the bureaucrats— otherwise known as career officers. The district bureaucrats served as the heads of departments in the following sections: Social Mobilisation; Planning, Research and Statistics; School Services; and Finance and Administration. The bureaucrats were responsible for implementing basic education at the district level. They were the communication channel for the state-level bureaucracy because they were closer to the grassroots—they were the link between the state and schools in each district. This administrative structure was typical to what operated in all 33 local districts that comprise PS of Nigeria. Figure 8 below illustrates the basic education administrative structure that was operating at the district level of policy implementation.

LGEA bureaucratic structure of policy implementation.
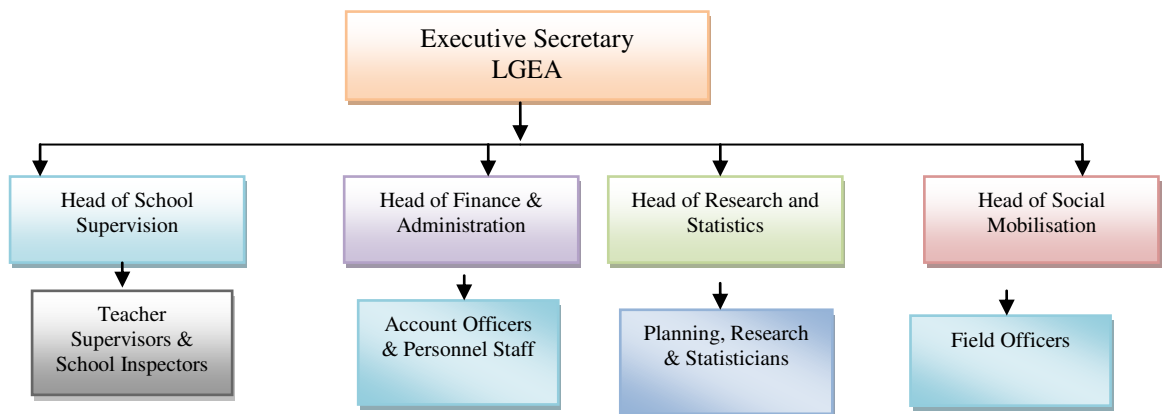
Figure 8. Organisation chart of a LGEA.

Pre-1999 in PS.

The 10 participants interviewed in PS had a common understanding of the issues affecting the education sector before the introduction of UBE. The bureaucrats agreed that education was at an undesirable standard before government intervention. They identified the

following as issues with the previous education system: lack of control and monitoring, inadequate supervision, dropout syndrome, public trust (which led to withdrawal of students from public schools), unequal access to education, and lack of infrastructure facilities and instructional materials. Other key factors perceived as constraints included issues of administrative consonance, political instability and paucity of funds. The participants also believed that the constitutional stipulation of education and lack of an implementation body for the education sector were issues affecting education before 1999. Each participant's description of education revealed their in-depth of knowledge of the challenges to basic education before UBE. The views of the participants in PS were helpful in understanding the level of decline witnessed before the government intervention.

According to DPS6, education was in a worrisome state before the UBE policy because the mechanism of control that could ensure quality of education—particularly in the primary sector—was lacking. He admitted that educational output in the late 1960s was far better under colonial administration in terms of the quality of control and school monitoring than the present situation. DPS10's view was premised on the inadequate supervision and monitoring of education policies and programmes. This participant stated that the government's inability to establish a monitoring and supervision strategy to follow through education policy as it related to teaching and learning in the classroom was the major issue affecting the state of education. To DPS2, the inert attitude of teachers to teaching and lack of trust in government policy were responsible for the problems facing the education sector. He stressed that the state of education before UBE encouraged the dropout syndrome witnessed across all LGEAs of the state. This statement gave credence to the parental belief that there was no reason to send a child to school if the child came home without any cognitive learning. This comment was made as a result of the strike actions by teachers as a way of

demanding better pay. This indicates why large numbers of children of school age can be seen on the streets hawking items for their parents.

According to DPS2, the lack of trust in government policy discouraged parents from enrolling their children in public schools. Parents had no confidence in public schools, and believed that if they placed their children in public schools, they would not attain the desired results; hence, they preferred to enrol their children in private schools. DPS8 stated the challenge of access to education. This view was premised on the state of public schools across all districts of the state, which created a form of inequality in access to education. Parents who could not afford to send their children to private schools had no other option than to send them to a public school. This affected the level of performance of the children in public schools compared to their private counterparts due to the quality of instruction. DPS1's position was very direct in pointing out the poor condition of the state of education before 1999. DPS1 stated that:

> Before the introduction of UBE in 1999, education was in deplorable condition. There were not enough facilities in schools, no infrastructural and infrastructural facilities and instructional materials in our schools, classrooms were overcrowded. The environment was not conducive enough for the pupils did not have furniture, textbooks, and so the enrolment was not encouraging. There were not teacher's textbooks as well, and this sort of discouraged parents from enrolling the children in the public schools.

DPS3 stressed the challenge of administrative consonance as the major factor responsible for the decline in the state of education, with education policies often conceived as a political programme of the political party in power. This participant stated that the present policy on basic education was also politically driven. The political motive to implement policies on education was responsible for making policies on education

unsuccessful. DSP9 observed that political instability was the major problem affecting the sector prior to UBE, with the military misadventure in the politics of Nigeria not giving priority to education. Education before the introduction of UBE in Nigeria was not encouraging because priorities were not in consonance with administration—they focused more on business and trying to prevent external aggression. The military did not care about education at that time, and the result of this military involvement in governance in Nigeria adversely affected the education sector. The position of DPS5 identified paucity of funds and human capacity development as factors affecting the primary education sector. Training and retraining of teachers for primary education as an essential component was not receiving the attention it deserved before UBE in 1999. The photographs presented in Appendix 4 illustrate the reflection of the PS bureaucrats regarding the state of education before the intervention.

In addition to the PS bureaucrats' perspectives about the issues that caused the poor condition of education before UBE, the participants noted another challenge to the success of education initiatives as the constitutional stipulation that gave autonomy to the three tiers of government to legislate on education matters. Before 1999, this constitutional stipulation placed education under the concurrent list of the government, encouraged the establishment of federal and state educational institutions or schools, and left the administration of primary education to district/local government. Under this system, the federal government paid little or no attention to the administration of the primary sector. The view of the DPS1 was that neglecting this sector to be affected by the whims of the political office holders in each district affected the sector adversely. Thus, the lack of regulatory body to administer primary education across the geo-political zones of the federation was another issue that hindered the sector. The position of DPS4 expressed the opinion of the PS bureaucrats:

education was not really on the high level or the priority on the high scale, but … they were still able to put in place some strategies that we had National Primary Education

Commission (NPEC), which at that time had its headquarters in Kaduna State, but the problem we had then was that their activities were limited to Abuja-FCT [Federal Capital Territory] and they did not give room for the states to be involved to a large extent. You can imagine that if somebody had to see to the delivery of supplies to Port Harcourt, there were no state representations that hindered primary education development.

> **Key finding 1:**
> The perceptions of interviewees about basic education in Nigeria revealed that the state of education before UBE was undesirable. The participants' descriptions of the state of education indicated their background knowledge of issues that have affected the sector, and informed the need to understand the challenges undermining the effectiveness of implementing policies on education in Nigeria, especially in the primary sector.

Central State (CS)

The bureaucratic structure of UBE implementation in CS was similar to the PS structure shown in Figure 7. The only difference was that, in CS, there were six directorates of implementation, rather than five. The head of the administrative echelon was the executive chairperson—a political position—and a coordinating office that conveyed government intention on policy to the bureaucrats. There were six directorates in CS—Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation; Directorate of Social Mobilisation; Directorate of Planning, Research and Statistics; Directorate of Finance; Directorate of Personnel/Administration; and Directorate for the Junior Secondary—with one solely responsible for junior secondary schools. Each of the directorates was headed by a career bureaucrat. The administrative structures at the LGEA (district level) were also similar in function and responsibility to PS (Figure 8) in policy implementation. They were the ES—a political appointment position— and three departments: Department of Social Mobilisation, Department of School Services

and Department of Finance and Administration. All these departments were headed by bureaucrats or civil servants. Figures 7 and 8 above reflect the organisational structure of the CS bureaucratic policy implementation.

Pre-1999 in CS.

The eight bureaucrats interviewed in CS revealed that the state of education before UBE in 1999 was at its poorest. Each of the participants had different views on the factors responsible for the failure in the education sector during the period of study. Among the issues identified were lack of efficient administration, lack of amenities, an inadequate workforce, lack of capacity building, lack of resource materials, lack of public trust and inequality in access. The reflections of the participants provided insights into understanding the challenges confronting education in the region before the UBE policy.

DCS1 referred to the state of education in CS before 1999 as 'epileptic' because there was no uniformity in education administration. The LGCs were allowed to operate education however they wanted, with qualifications, competence and experience not considered when appointing an administrator in charge of education services. There were cases of abuse of office by LGCs in terms of the appointment, promotion and discipline of education officers. These unethical practices in the daily administration of primary education by the district council hampered the effectiveness of the sector until 1999. DCS2 mentioned the insensitivity of the government to issues affecting education as the major impediment facing the sector before UBE. Education was not one of the priorities of the government because it was not an economic stronghold of the nation, like the agricultural sector that generates revenues for the government. It was because of this that the education system was left unattended before UBE.

DCS3 stated that education before 1999 was at its poorest. Junior secondary schooling was under the orthodox school, and, as the bureaucrat in charge of implementing the junior

secondary schools aspect of the policy, DCS3's insight into the state of education was profound. He argued that there were issues with quality of teachers, teacher incentives, lack of infrastructure, dearth of learning materials, and computer studies being introduced to schools without providing any computers for students to use. In addition, there was no proper supervision or monitoring of schools. The inspectorate division of education was ill equipped to monitor teachers' punctuality, performance and quality of instruction. It was during this period that teachers across the regions of the federation were disenchanted due to poor remuneration; thus, this period witnessed lack of commitment on behalf of teachers to the teaching profession.

DCS4 asserted that, before the introduction of UBE, there was great decline in the basic education sector, in the form of poor infrastructure, lack of furniture for students and teachers, most buildings being dilapidated or uninhabitable, and poor service delivery in the teaching and learning process. School buildings were without windows and there were instances where structures that should have been abandoned because they posed danger to human safety were used as classrooms. According to DCS7, this state of deterioration was responsible for the low enrolment in public schools. It was also reflected in the refusal of parents to send their children to public schools because of the precarious state of infrastructure. DCS5 stated that the state of public schools created the challenge of unequal access to education across the region because parents who could afford private schools withdrew their children from public schools to attain better service delivery, while those who could not afford private schools were forced to send their children to the inadequate public schools. Private schools were regarded as the best because of the infrastructure, suitable environment for learning, and adequate supervision and monitoring.

Another problem identified by DCS6 was that of inadequacy in both human and material resources. Inadequate provision of textbooks for both teachers and students was a

serious challenge in the primary education sector, while there was a shortage of teachers for the essential subjects. In addition, the teachers employed in the service were disengaging in order to attain better paid jobs, and were unwilling to go to remote areas where their services were highly needed. Appendix 5 reflects the positions of the CS interviewees on the state of decay in the education sector. DCS1's view was very insightful in this regard:

Many teachers have gone on greener pasture, teachers are no more in the school. You will find one headmaster and a teacher—what is that? It is a mockery of the whole thing. Pay the teachers well, encourage them, and they will deliver.

Despite their different views on the factors perceived to be responsible for the state of education in CS before the UBE programme, there was also agreement on the education issues across all levels of bureaucrats, including gender discrimination, the lack of an implementation mechanism and political factors. They stated that gender discrimination was very pronounced in the region, with parents preferring to send their male children to school because of the belief that females would marry and thus there was no benefit to educating them. This cultural issue created a separation in genders in the region. The participants also agreed that a major challenge was the inability of the sector to have a decentralised management that consisted of bureaucrats across all regions of federation to ensure adequate compliance to government decisions on issues affecting the education sector. This factor manifested in the form of inconsistency in government positions on education during the period under study. The participants argued that this was the major factor affecting the education policies in the 1950s and thereafter. School management was supervised by people who either lacked the requisite knowledge of what was expected of them, or could not interpret what the documents of implementation required.

More importantly, the politics in decision making affected education in the regions in number of ways, including in the appointment of people in education offices, employment

opportunities, staff appraisal and promotion, and so forth. There were about four ethnic groups in the state: the Pearl, Olive, Orange and Oak Clans. The appointment of any member of these groups into an education position became an opportunity for the group to entrench itself in the system, without consideration of the other tribes. This influenced the appointment of teachers, as well as staff promotion and discipline. For example, there were cases of teachers who required disciplinary action because they were not undertaking their work correctly; however, because they had links in administration, they were able to avoid any negative consequences. In addition, other teachers were unduly promoted, three or four steps higher than their contemporaries. As pointed out by the participants in CS, all these were the circumstances confronted by the education industry before the UBE programme.

> **Key finding 2:**
> The bureaucrats' insights on issues that undermined the development of education in the region before the UBE programme highlighted that all was not well with the education sector. The bureaucrats' reflections also revealed their in-depth knowledge of the issues that demand urgent attention for the education sector to be able to positively influence the lives of Nigerian citizens.

Glad Tidings (GT)

GT represented the administrative structure employed by the Federal Government of Nigeria to implement the basic education policy—otherwise known as UBEC. This agency was responsible for coordinating all aspects of the UBE programme implementation, with the mission statement to:

- create a world-class education intervention and regulatory agency to promote uniform, quality and functional basic education in Nigeria

- operate as an intervention, coordinating and monitoring agency to progressively improve the capacity of states, local government agencies and communities to provide unfettered access to high quality basic education in Nigeria.

In GT, the bureaucratic structure of policy implementation (Figure 9)—unlike PS and CS—comprised only six directorates: Directorate of Social Mobilisation; Directorate of Standard and Quality Assurance; Directorate of Academic Services; Directorate of Finance and Administration; and Directorate of Planning, Research and Statistics. The head of the commission was the ES, who was assisted by two deputies—the Deputy ES (Technical Services) and Deputy ES (Administration). These three positions were political positions. All six bureaucrats interviewed at GT provided much-needed information on the state of education before the intervention by the federal government to revamp the sector. Overall, GT was directly involved in ensuring uniformity and total compliance to basic education implementation in all states of the federation, from the Federal Capital Territory to the district levels.

Bureaucratic structure of GT.
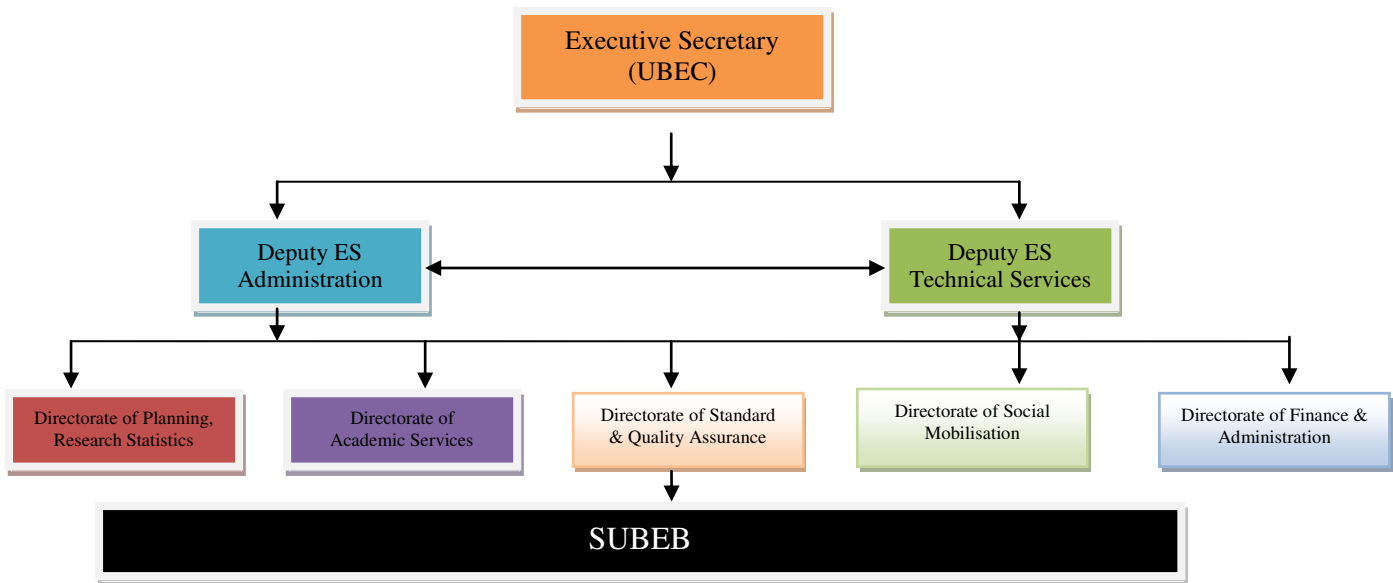
Figure 9. The administrative chart of GT policy implementation.

Pre-1999 in GT.

Like PS and CS, the six GT bureaucrats also acknowledged that government intentions for education before1999 were haphazardly implemented because the custodians of government decisions on education had insufficient knowledge of what to do. However, each participant had different views on the factors that undermined the effectiveness of education policy before the introduction of basic education. Some recurring issues were related to inconsistence in policy implementation, the process of control/administration of the education sector, political instability, inadequate funding, and lack of basic amenities to aid meaningful learning outcomes.

GT1 perceived that lack of uniformity in education policy across the states of the federation was responsible for the education sector's lack of influence on the citizenry. The inconsistencies were pronounced in the different systems of education operating in the different states. For example, in the north, there were seven years of primary education, five years of secondary education, two years of higher school certificate (HSC), and three years of

university, which the researcher attended. In contrast, in the south, there were six years of primary education and then modern schools, followed by secondary schools, while, in the east, there were about eight years of primary education. These irregularities in policy decisions, coupled with education being controlled by the regional government, and the federal government playing little or no role in educational administration, were issues that affected the sector. GT1 stressed that:

> [The] era of public disenchantment toward government policy was very noticeable, which resulted in low enrolment at all levels. At that time, less than 10% in secondary school pupils were attending schools. There were so many irregularities with the structure of administration.

In line with this was the issue of lack of control/administrative mechanism for the education sector, especially for primary education, as mentioned by GT4. He reiterated the philosophical assumption underlying the education system in Nigeria based on providing education for all citizens, with several previous efforts having been undertaken to create this, without success. The control on primary education was not explicit regarding who should be held responsible for the failure in the sector. As a result, the system was operated by local districts, which seems contrary to the constitutional stipulation. Concentrating primary school administration to the districts, before the new policy, contributed to the decline in the sector. According to GT6, political instability was another major problem that affected education before 1999 because, before the rebirth of the democratic dispensation in 1999, the country had been under military rule for over two decades. Rather than focusing on education, this government was preoccupied with issues of economic benefit and fostering peace across borders in the wake of the civil unrest that pervaded the country at the time.

GT2 stated that a lack of or inadequate funding was the major impediment characterising the state of education before 1999. He stated that there was no established

funding commitment to support elementary education, while the constitution stipulation was that state and local governments were responsible for primary education. To him, this was the reason for the decline in achieving substantive progress in the area of education. According to GT5, the decline witnessed in the education sector before UBE was more a result of infrastructure. There were inadequate structures, and those available were not suitable for meaningful academic engagement. Dilapidated structures were noticeable in all regions and at all levels of education. GT5 asserted that the situation was bad, with the structures dilapidated and the situation worsening, while the public demanded federal government intervention. Similar to the views of GT5, GT3 centred on the lack of human resources for effective teaching and learning, especially in the primary education sector. He stated that the education sector before 1999 was in a poor state because there were no teachers due to the government being unable to pay the teachers' salaries. Those teachers who were employed in the sector were owed a backlog of pay from the government.

> **Key finding 3:**
> The GT bureaucrats' reflections on the state of education in Nigeria were insightful for understanding the issues undermining the system. The descriptions by the participants clearly revealed the desire on behalf of the government to revitalise the provision of basic education.

Pre-1999 Factual Evidence

Relevant documents to understanding the state of education before UBE include the *2006 National Assessment of Universal Basic Education Programme* (2009 final report), *UBE Act and Other Related Matters* (2004), *Federal Government Approved Guidelines for Disbursement of Fund* (2006), *UBEC Annual Reports* (2009, 2010) and *UBEC Reports Submitted to the Presidential Task Team on Education* (2011). The common elements in these documents attested to the fact that education was at the stage of collapse before the

government intervention. The sector was characterised by limited resources in its drive for development, and subsequently lacked the capacity to accelerate social, economic, scientific and technological progress (NAUPEB, 2006). The UNDP Human Development Reports (Table 4) provide an accurate statement of the nation's development. This report informed the initiative of the government to provide a road map and acted as a catalytic agent to instigate the development of the education programme.

Table 4

UNDP Human Development Index of Selected Countries 2008

Index	Value	Ranking out of 182 countries
Human Development Index	0.511	158
Life expectancy at birth (years)	47.7	167
Adult literacy from age of 15	72	112
Combined gross enrolment ratio (%)	53	150
GDP per capita (PPP US$)	1,969	141
Human Poverty Index	36.2	114 (out of 135 countries)
Possibility of surviving until age 40	37.4	146
Adult illiteracy	28	112
% of people lacking improved water source	53	142
Proportion of children underweight	29	112

Source: Adapted from 2008 UNDP Human Development Index of Selected Countries Nigeria Included.

Although the above table does not reflect the rate of literacy of school-aged children (aged six to 11), it proves that Nigeria—a potentially rich country and major exporter of petroleum, with huge human potential—has remained underdeveloped. The country's earnings from petroleum have not been translated into improved living standards for the people, as seen in the country's low rating on most of the indices used for the UNDP Human Development Reports. The other challenging areas mentioned in the document are as follows:

lack of access to education, problems with quality, gender disparity, lack of funding, and lack of an enabling law for UBE policy implementation.

The documents defined 'access' as the inability of the government to enable 100% attendance of school-age children to graduate from primary education institutions, possessing literacy, numeracy and basic life skills in order live meaningfully in society and contribute to national development. This confirmed the position of the bureaucrats in PS that huge numbers of school-age children engage in some form of hawking or street trading because of the failure of the system to provide access to education. It also supports the information in Tables 1 and 2, which stated that access to education at the elementary level stood at 60.1%, and that over 63% of school-age children are involved in child labour. In addition, the challenge of quality was highlighted in the document analysis. The analysed documents revealed the challenges of quality of teachers' qualifications, instructional delivery, and encouraging teaching and learning environment. It was discovered that, prior to UBE in 1999, teachers in the education sector lacked the minimum teaching qualification—the Nigerian Certificate of Education—across the regions of the federation. Similarly, the school environment was not encouraging for students' learning and retention. This affirmed the position of the bureaucrats across all regions on the issue of infrastructure (Appendices 4 and 5). It also explained why private schools are more successful than public institutions, which has also contributed to the unequal access to education among the citizenry. The documents also pointed out the issue of discrimination based on gender disparity as a challenge to inclusive education. This affirmed the position of the bureaucrats in CS, who mentioned this as a problem in the region before UBE.

The available evidence also demonstrated the issue of funding of the education sector as a reason for policy failure in the past. In cases where funds were made available for educational projects, the bureaucracy involved in accessing it was another hindrance to

achieving effectiveness and efficiency in the education sector. Similarly, the inability of the government to provide a document outlining the operations of administration of the education sector across all states of the federation was considered an impediment to realising previous educational objectives. This education law, as stated in the documentary evidence, was not the same as the NPE of 1977 that was revised in 1998 and 2004. The enabling law in this context refers to a document that would empower public involvement in the daily administration of the sector, ensure the funds allocated to the sector were used for the intended purpose, and explicitly state the functions and operations of all bureaucratic organs responsible for policy implementation in terms of requirements for bureaucrats' appointment, promotion and appraisals. This was one of the reflections of the participants in the three regions interviewed on the state of education before the introduction of UBE.

Similar to the above was that there were no structural bodies across the states and the districts of the federation were given the responsibility of managing basic education in Nigeria. The one body that was in operation—the NPEC—was a child of circumstance that had no positive effect on education. It failed because it was centrally controlled, had no state or district recognition, and negated the constitutional stipulation of educational administration across the regions. More importantly, there was no enabling law backing the commission because it was established by military decree.

Key finding 4:

The analysed documents were explicit on the state of education. The findings from the participants and documents revealed that the barriers to education in Nigeria were both bureaucratic and political. The evidence explained why achieving successful outcomes in education policy implementation in Nigeria remained a challenge.

Summary.

The organisational structures shown in Figures 7, 8 and 9 revealed the bureaucratic arrangements of basic education policy implementation in all states of the federation. It showed the expected level of alignment that should exist among the bureaucrats and implementation agencies. The description of the state of education before the introduction of UBE 1999 was illuminating. It revealed the inconsistencies and insensitivities of the tiers of government in the primary education sector. It provided important information on the state of infrastructure (Appendices 4 and 5), lack of instructional materials, decline in public enrolment and lack of adequate training for teachers. It also explained why apathy towards public policy from the citizenry persists. It provided insight into understanding the negative effect of political instability on education policies and programmes. The investigation also indicated the interviewees' depth of knowledge regarding why education has been unable to meet societal aspirations. Finally, it indicated why it is necessary to revitalise the education sector for the betterment of the citizenry.

There were commonalities in the reflections of the participants across the three regions on the state of education before the introduction of UBE. An overview of each region was crucial to understand their agreements and disagreements. In both administrative echelons in PS, the participants agreed on issues affecting the primary education sector before the implementation of basic education. Their different perceptions on issues affecting education were also discussed. For instance, DPS1 saw falling enrolment as the major

challenge in the education industry before 1999, while DPS3 stressed the lack of administrative consonance as the problem. In all, their views were enriching in understanding the state of education prior to the introduction of UBE.

Regarding the administrative structures in CS, the interviewees presented different views on the issues facing education outside their common areas of agreement, and on the factors responsible for the decline in the education industry. The interviewees' reflections can be summarised by the following: issues that affected administration, lack of amenities, inadequate workforce capacity building, and dearth of resource materials. GT was the coordinating agency for implementing basic education policy. The interviewees' agreed that factors such as lack of an administrative master plan for education, inconsistency in policy implementation, inadequate funding for the sector and lack of infrastructure affected the sector before 1999. Despite their perceived understanding of issues, they also shared what they considered as major impediment to effectiveness of the basic education sector.

Overall, the administrative structure of bureaucratic implementation in the three regions appeared quite similar, but was different in their implementation portfolios. Despite their different notions on the state of education before the introduction of UBE in 1999, there were also areas of agreement across the regions. Issues affecting infrastructure, lack of administrative consonance, an insufficient workforce, falling enrolment, problems with enabling law, and a lack of public trust were highlighted by the interviewees across the regions. Following on from identifying these implementation constraints as the major problems encountered by previous policies, it is now important to examine whether the UBE policy has been able to address the identified problems.

UBE in 1999

The bureaucrats across the three regions reflected that the UBE policy was designed to provide a solution to the numerous issues affecting the development of education in

Nigeria. According to the participants, the policy blueprint is an indication of the government's readiness to address the challenges facing education in order to reposition the sector to achieve the societal aspiration for effective national development in all ramifications. The UBE programme was designed to address the following areas: create a statutory administrative body to oversee policy implementation, turn policy into a practice mechanism, create a template of implementation, instigate training and retraining programmes, create a platform for implementation feedback, and develop adequate monitoring and supervision of the structure and evaluation process through public perception. This section outlines the perceptions of the interviewees across all regions of the federation regarding how the UBE implementation has evolved after a decade.

The 28 bureaucrats across the three geo-political regions who were interviewed revealed that the development of the UBE was an indication that the government was ready to transform the education sector in Nigeria. The UBE policy informed the public on the implementation stages of basic education across the regions, which was not the case with the previous policy. The views of DPS1and DPS2 expressed the position of the other participants about certain aspects of the policy that got them fascinated about the government intention on education. According to DPS1, the emphasis on ICT technology in the teaching and learning process was promising because, being a scientist, the introduction of ICT would create international opportunities for learners. To DPS2, the nine years of free and compulsory education to enable children to have a sound and qualitative education was novel, coupled with the new integrated curriculum being tailored towards the all-round development of children, which was instructive in all areas of students' cognitive development, ability and performance. Being in charge of academic services, it explained that a child who seems to be unsuccessful in an arts subject would be successful in the sciences, and a child who seems to be unsuccessful in both sciences and arts would be successful in technical subjects.

According to the interviewees, the creation of boards of implementation across all states specifically for basic education implementation was another indication of the government's determination to manage the sector. The boards were to be responsible for the administration of primary education through to junior secondary school. They stressed that, unlike the previous education commission (NPEC), the boards had structure in all the states and local districts, with eye of the public through the school management boards consist of resourceful individuals whose experience cut across all human spectrums including education. In addition, the calibre of people appointed to the board with the goal of converting policy into practice was another milestone that emphasised the seriousness of the government towards UBE implementation, according to the interviewees.

The uniformity in the implementation template for the UBE policy was another point attested to by the bureaucrats. This uniformity sought to ensure total compliance at all levels of implementation. This implies that the template was designed by considering the cultural and geographical diversities of the country. It explained the tenacity of the government towards eradicating the dichotomy in terms of educational opportunities associated with regions. This template was seen as a way of dealing with the ethnical polarisation that made previous policies unsuccessful. Of the three tiers of policy implementation, GT played a significant role as the coordinating agent to ensure that the template was adhered to strictly. The interviewees reflected that, unlike the PS and CS bureaucrats, the GT bureaucrats were not involved in implementing the policy template, but operated to monitor both the states and local districts. This signified decentralisation of the administration of education by the government, aimed at ensuring that the policy achieved its desired outcome across the states. The position of GT6 was explicit in this regard:

It is an intervening agency, a cleaning house to disburse funds to states that meet up requirements of matching grants and also monitor that the fund is judiciously utilised.

We also provide free textbooks to pupils in the states … we also intervene in special education and early childhood where we have model early childhood primary schools, we have example in Rivers state. The state SUBEB(s) are in charge of primary education and also the LGEA(s).

The policy was also detailed in the aspect of training and retraining programmes. As pointed out by the interviewees, the training segment of education was one of the numerous challenges confronting the previous education system. The interviewees stated that the UBE policy emphasised training and retraining, which they considered another positive. Other areas addressed by the policy included creating a platform for implementation feedback and developing an adequate monitoring and supervision structure and evaluation process through public perception.

Document evidence.

The hallmark of the policy was the promulgation of the UBE law—known as the *Universal Basic Education Act*—submitted to the legislative arms of the government in 2000, and enacted in 2004. Previous to this, there were no documents to be referred to as such, even in regard to previous education policies in Nigeria. This Act meant that UBE was not a governmental empty promise, but an intention backed by law. Among other things, the Act emphasised the constitutional rights of the states and local governments to manage basic education, and of the federal government to assist, intervene or act in partnership with the states and local governments. It stressed the need for unity among the three tiers of government, and imposed a constitutional duty on them to eradicate illiteracy by providing free and compulsory basic education for a duration of nine years. It imposed a duty on the parents or guardians of every child between the ages of six and 12 to ensure that the child not only attended, but also completed, the compulsory period of schooling. The failure of parents

to do this would lead to punishment of between one and two months of imprisonment, or a fine.

The Act also enforced the services to be provided in schools, including providing books, instructional materials, classrooms, furniture and food for students. To ensure that the services remained free, the law made it a criminal offence for any person to receive fees from the parents or guardians of children. The Act gave credence to the decentralisation of education through establishing UBE implementation boards across all the regions (Figures 7 and 8), with the coordinating agency at the federal capital (figure 9). It also stipulated the sources of funds available to the commissions/boards for the implementation of UBE, with federal government block grants of no less than 2% of the government's consolidated revenue fund. The block grant given to the state government depended on the contribution of each state, with the governments required to contribute 50% of the total cost of any given project. The dispersal of funds to the states was through the state boards (SUBEBs), who became responsible for administering these funds. The law mandated the commission to set a standard effective monitoring mechanism, establish an education data bank, support capacity building for teacher development, and disseminate curricula and instructional materials in order to attain the required standards in the provision of basic education in Nigeria.

Summary.

The UBE policy was well positioned to provide solutions to the challenges facing the education sector in Nigeria. This was based on the perceptions of the interviewees across the three regions of the federation, and based on the information presented in the UBE Act. Both the bureaucrats and Act pointed to the fact that the UBE policy sought to create basic education via:

- creating a statutory administrative body to oversee policy implementation
- implementing a mechanism to turn policy to practice

- creating a template of implementation

- providing training and retraining programmes

- creating a platform for implementation feedback

- developing an adequate monitoring and supervision structure and evaluation process through public perception.

Having identified implementation constraints as the major issue that made previous policies unsuccessful, it is now important to examine how the UBE policy has been implemented during the decade since its launch.

What About UBE Implementation?

The reports across the three geo-political zones of the country attested to the fact that the UBE programme has taken effect via a series of actions to enable implementation. One major achievement in its implementation was the establishment of a template that empowered the three tiers of government to exercise jurisdiction in matters relating to implementing basic education. As stated by the bureaucrats, the uniformity in the template sought to ensure that no state or district was left behind in providing education opportunities for its citizens. Despite the uniformity in the template of the implementation across the regions, the nomenclatures of operations were slightly different. This indicates why UBE implementation differs across the states. However, all interviewees identified common areas of success, including turning policy into practice, monitoring the implementation task, swift responses to implementation issues, increased public trust and increased enrolment.

The understanding of policy to practice according to the data connotes the bureaucrats' knowledge or ability at interpreting/analysing policy in the direction of what the policy should be and the processes involved in achieving the desirable outcome. The view of DPS2 expressed the general notion of the interviewees regarding their knowledge of turning policy into action in the state:

It involves series of actions and it is on stages. The first one, the state has what is known as state development plan; the local government have their own action plan and the schools also have their own, known as post-school development plan. The stakeholders come together to deliberate on that action plans—what development do we wish to take place in your school this year? Stage two is now the implementation of the action plans. We have the stakeholders that are charged with the responsibilities of each of the actions—SUBEB at the state level, LGEA at the local level, the federal government, and the parents (SBMC) also have their roles to play in the implementation and development of the action plan.

Seeking to ensure effective monitoring control of all aspects of policy led to the establishment of school management committees in all regions. According to the data, the understanding in this regard was premised on the fact that the standard in public schools was very low; therefore, setting standards without an effective monitoring mechanism for implementation was meaningless. This action led to involving certified educationists, retired public administrators, and community leaders with experience in administration to serve as watchdogs for the bureaucrats in their localities. According to the bureaucrats, the level of achievement recorded within a decade of policy implementation could be attributed to this mechanism of implementation. Aside from being the channel for policy monitoring, it was also the means of responding to the implementation task. The position of DPS5 captured the reflection of the other interviewees:

The social mobilisation and communication department operates through what we call the 'school-based management committee', and is like an observer. They look at the school, they report to us whether teaching is satisfactory or not, and things like that, and when policies are not acceptable, they feedback that department, and the department feed the board. Like I said earlier on, the school management committee

come up with their suggestions, they react to government policies and make their demands, and government looks into them and do whatever it deems fit. We rely more on the information from the community. Like I said, they own their schools, they have our phone numbers and we rely on that, then we move there when there are complaints and, of course, we have constant dialogue.

According to the interviewees, the implementation process revealed that there remained an issue of public trust. The bureaucrats' understanding of public trust as a tool or determinant for assessing the effectiveness or efficiency of a government policy was very insightful. It provided an understanding that the participants were well equipped to evaluate the effect of the policy on the citizenry. This challenge was attributed to the government's inability to undertake people-oriented programmes in the past. According to the interviewees, a lack of public trust led to a preference for private schools over government-owned schools, even after the introduction of UBE. From the responses of the UBE implementers, it was shocking to learn that more than half of the bureaucrats' children aged under 12 years were not attending public schools. The views of the bureaucrats across the three regions attested to this fact.

To be specific, my children are not in public schools and I am here working [but] I do not believe in the system. Nothing was obtainable because the transit opportunity is not there. (DPS7)

As a supervisor, I cannot enrol my children in public schools because of the poor standard, so also our leaders—they cannot even attend our public hospitals. When they have simple ankle sprain, they will fly to Europe for treatment, for instance … the late president attended village hospitals in Saudi Arabia and Germany before he eventually died, and they will come back to tell us that they have provided everything

we need in our hospitals to work. So also they tell us about schools, but their children are abroad attending the best schools there. (DPS8)

The problem we are having is this, from the inception that government came to introduce this programme, people did not have interest in public school. People don't have the confidence in the system because teachers have to go on strike for years, for months, and the children are in classes unattended to and people began to withdraw their children from public schools. (DPS1)

The system of polity in Nigeria is affecting the implementation, it has been such a way that we have round pegs in square holes and it is not really helping us. Most of the parents now send their children to private school for primary education. The enrolment is dropping again because of government interference and again the teachers are not adequately paid—this is not what UBEC stated in the policy. We have incessant strike actions due to *lassie faire* attitude of the state government. (DCS1)

The apathy is because they believe that quality of delivery is high in private, not minding that they are out to make money without even providing best condition of learning for the pupils. They believe it has to do with fashion and class. (GT6)

Despite the challenge of the public's perceptions regarding implementation, the bureaucrats agreed that there has been increase in the enrolment of children across all public schools in the regions. According to the implementers, this increase has been more pronounced in rural areas. They stressed that, despite the child-friendly schools and

improvement in instructional materials, the enrolment rate has not been affected as expected, except in senior secondary school:

> Despite the fact we have child-friendly schools, the materials are there, the enrolment rate is not affected as expected, except secondary schools these days. The transition rate is increasing, I can say that. (DPS1)

> I can only feel the improvement of enrolment in the villages and less developed areas where there are little or no private schools. And it is the illiterate parents and poor parents that take their children to public schools. At least, I could remember teachers run after school-age children 15 to 16 years ago to come and enrol in schools in order to safeguard their job to avoid being retrenched by the government due to high ratio of teachers to pupils. There is increment in the number of enrolment now because of the population explosion mostly from illiterate and poor parents. (DPS9)

> The enrolment is not poor, there are crowds in the classes and the infrastructures are not there. Please try to go round to see things yourself—you will see what we are talking about. You can imagine a building that came down just within two days of completion. Thank God it was a weekend … there would have been casualties. (CS7)

The following tables, Tables 5a and 5b, present the data of enrolment in PS from 1999 to 2009.

Table 5a

PS Student Enrolment 1999–2009

Year	Male	%	Female	%	Total %
1999	420,132	8.33	422,823	8.22	16.55
2000	421,284	8.35	423,474	8.23	16.59
2001	422,279	8.37	425,874	8.28	16.65
2002	426,376	8.46	436,208	8.48	16.94
2003	471,965	9.36	471,651	9.17	18.53
2004	472,631	9.37	472,376	9.18	18.56
2005	469,848	9.32	470,072	9.14	18.46
2006	462,730	9.18	479,774	9.33	18.50
2007	489,456	9.71	513,197	9.98	19.68
2008	491,342	9.74	513,899	9.99	19.73
2009	494,628	9.81	514,567	10.0	19.81

Table 5b

PS Student Enrolment 1999–2009
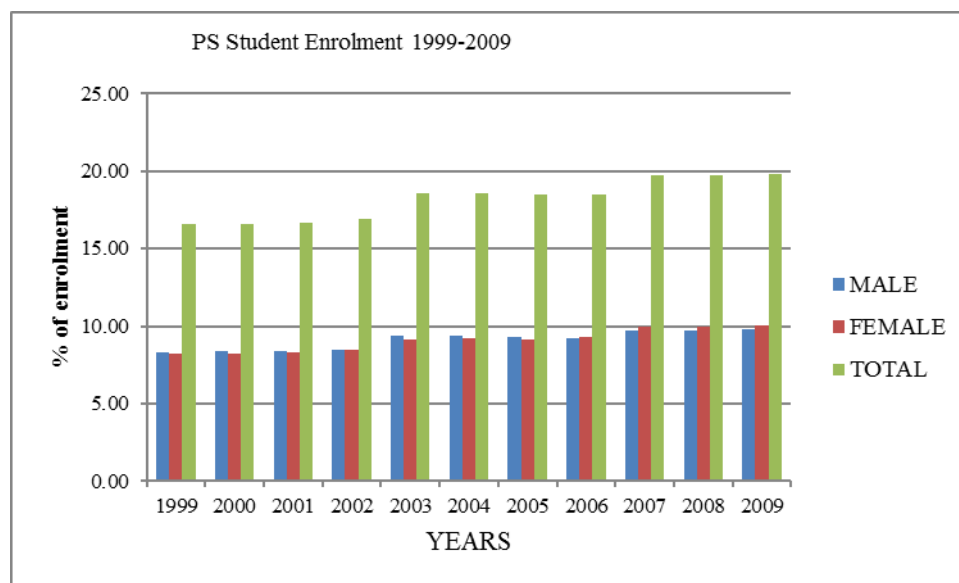
Source: UBEC, Abuja—Enrolment Data for PS from 1999 to 2009.

The following tables, Tables 6a and 6b, present the enrolment data of all schools across all districts in the CS from 2005 to 2009.

Table 6a

CS Student Enrolment 2005–2009

Year	Male	%	Female	%	Total %
2005	504,794	21.36	490,022	20.84	42.20
2006	450,087	19.04	454,034	19.31	38.35
2007	420,462	17.79	417,250	17.75	35.54
2008	415,024	17.56	414,492	17.63	35.19
2009	573,260	24.25	575,164	17.63	48.72

Table 6b

CS Student Enrolment 2005–2009
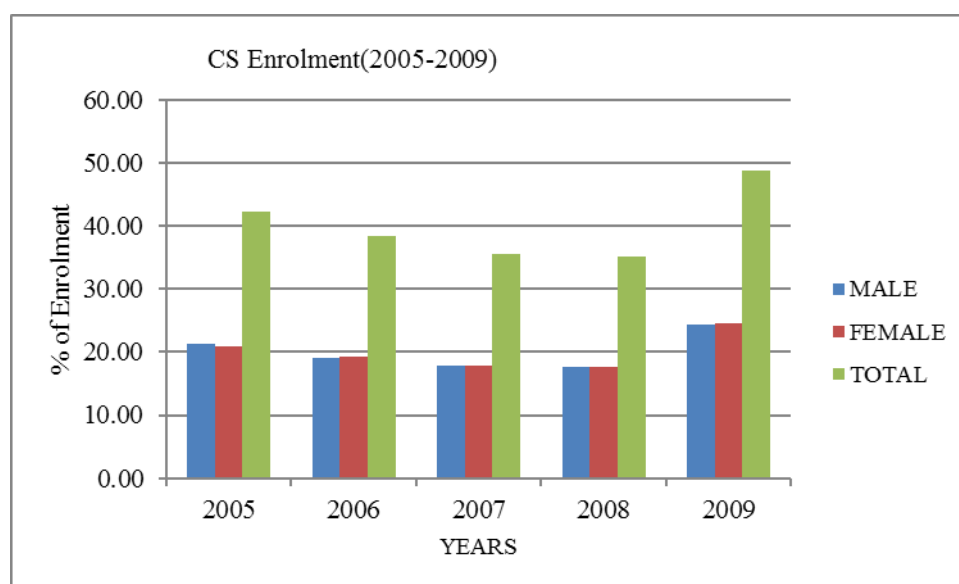
Source: UBEC, Abuja—Enrolment Data for CS from 2005 to 2009.

The documentary evidence indicated that there has been increase in enrolment in public schools in the studied regions, compared with the data in Table 1 in Chapter 1. Although this increase has been marginal, it indicates that the policy has been able to achieve, to an extent, the desired outcome of ensuring access to basic education across the regions.

Outside the common areas of agreement, state–district alignment and state performance index were issues identified by the bureaucrats as factors that made the implementation of basic education in the regions a success. State–district alignment in this sense refers to the level of fidelity of formal and informal interactions, monthly meetings,

monthly reports on the implementation task, and decentralisation strategy adopted by the state to implement the UBE template. This statement according to the PS officials reflected in the enrolment tables above. The implementation synergy of the bureaucrats in PS to increase enrolment made the state the best performing in UBE implementation in two consecutive periods (2005/2006 and 2007/2008). This recognition was part of an annual award instituted by the Federal Government of Nigeria, known as the 'Performance Index Award', in recognition of states' performance in achieving UBE implementation.

In contrast to the above, UBE in CS was not a success. The participants in CS identified three reasons for the unsuccessful policy implementation in the region: lack of alignment among the bureaucrats, the power of control between the state board of implementation and Ministry of Education (MOE), and the challenge of disarticulation. These challenges made the implementation of UBE in the state inadequate when compared with PS. The issue of internal friction in the form of lack of cooperation among the directorates at the SUBEB also adversely affected UBE implementation in the state. For example, the Directorates of M&E believed that part of their responsibility was to advise the Directorates of PPR&S on school planning or where to locate schools, as stated in the template; however, this advice was often not considered. According to CS1:

> Ours is the main link, our job is to monitor—staying in the office does not do us any good. When we bring our report back, the management sit on it to take decisions after we would have briefed other directorates. For example, it is of no use for the Directorate of Planning, Research and Statistics to build schools in the bush indiscriminately because a commissioner comes from there, or it is a top-notch constituency. It is the M&E that we say, we need buildings here, this school is overcrowded, etcetera. We make reports of these things, but because we are teachers,

I do not think it makes meanings to them. Even if PR&S will monitor buildings, they should invite one of us to go with them.

Internal frictions were also noticeable among the LGEA bureaucrats, which was a result of the appointment processes of the district heads. There was also the issue of disagreement between the state bureaucrats and district bureaucrats on UBE implementation. The LGEA bureaucrats believed that their views on monitoring and supervision of UBE activities in school had not been given adequate attention by the state's SUBEB, which had affected school enrolment. For example, in 2009, the district reported that there was a lack of teachers for core subjects in some schools, yet nothing has been done in that regard. The power of control in this context refers to a lack of alignment that resulted in frictions between the MOE and SUBEB on UBE implementation in CS. The friction was because the old/traditional schools were still enrolling, even though they were no longer expected to enrol students after the introduction of UBE. The policy also stressed that there would be no more common entrance examination for students as a condition for admission; however, the MOE still had not complied with the directive of the UBE, a decade after implementation. CS7 stated:

There is a controversy—the primary schools tried to provide accommodation for the junior secondary school classes, which has incorporated into UBE, but the Honourable Commissioner of Education said he does not recognise [the] UBE policy of no more common entrance examination in primary six … which runs contrary to UBE edict. In fact, UBE have been made for the poor ones, which is the case in CS.

This problem of disarticulation (a situation where traditional schools do not want to hand over the administration of junior secondary schools to the UBE) and the power of control between SUBEB and the state MOE. The view of CS7 was instructive in the sense

that it revealed the power intricacies preventing the effective implementation of UBE in CS, more importantly, being the bureaucrat who oversees the transition process of students from Grades 6 to 7 without any form of examination, except through the continuous assessment, as specified in the UBE template.

Other issues that were often mentioned by both the state and district bureaucrats in the process of implementing UBE in CS ranged from teacher posting, the discipline of teachers, and political influence affecting implementation. Each of these factors have affected the operational efficacies of the bureaucrats in CS. CS7 stated:

> If a supervisor gets to a school and discovers a teacher has not written lesson note for a month or three months, and we attempt disciplinary action on such a teacher, then you will begin to see several calls and letter to pardon such teacher. Politics is affecting us. When teachers are transferred to where they are most needed, they will contact people on the corridor of power [and] … find their way back to the town which is already overstaffed, at the expense of rural areas which are short staffed.

The view of GT3 confirmed the problem of power of control in CS, which adversely affected the level of achieving UBE policy in the state. According to GT3:

> There is a friction between the Ministries of Education and SUBEB in CS. This is due to political frictions. They ought to work together. I know the Chairman of SUBEB and Commissioner for Education in CS, and I do encourage them to work together, so CS is not a good example of UBE's implementation.

Similarly, the GT bureaucrats agreed that there were issues with UBE implementation in some states, which necessitated their involvement in monitoring and supervising UBE across the states. Prior to 2005, there were outcries that the states were charging fees in schools; however, this issue was not investigated until sometime in 2008, when it was discovered

through monitoring that many states were charging illegal levies in schools. This was reported to the federal government and these states were sanctioned.

The views of the GT bureaucrats and the insight gained from the documents posited that a major challenge facing UBE across the regions was the inability of states to access their fund base, as spelt out in the regulation governing fund disbursement and the issue of politics. The *UBE Act (2004)* and *Approved Guidelines for Disbursement of Funds (2006)* were explicit in this regard. The document stated that:

> There are three sources of funds available to the commission for the implementation of the UBE: federal government block grant of not less than 2% of its consolidated revenue fund (CRF), funds or contributions in form of federal guaranteed credits and local and international donor grants. The block grant is disbursable to state governments. However, for any state to draw from the fund, it must contribute 50% of the total cost of any given project. Disbursements of funds to state governments shall be through the states UBE Boards, which shall be responsible for the administration of such funds. (UBEC, 2004, 2006)

Failure of a state to supply its own counterpart funding rendered it unable to access the federal government's share of the funds for UBE implementation. The document obtained from the UBEC, which managed the fund, indicated that the matching grant statutory allocation to states from 2005 to 2012 stood at $198.5 billion. Of that figure, the states had so far accessed ₦154.5 billion, leaving a balance of ₦44.1 billion in custody of the UBEC. The breakdowns of un-accessed grants are as follows: ₦21 million not accessed in 2006, ₦1.3 billion in 2009, ₦3.59 billion in 2010, and ₦22.8 billion yet to be accessed in 2012. In addition, in 2012, only two states accessed the intervention fund after paying their counterpart fund, in line with the UBEC guidelines to access the grant. In light of the above,

no meaningful effect could be achieved once the states refused to access the funds meant for the implementation.

In GT, the reactions of the bureaucrats on the progress of the policy centred on the realisation of the UBE template, which was based on the approved action plan submitted by the states. The participants also reiterated that the implementation of the policy was the responsibility of states' SUBEBs and local districts' LGEAs. The view of GT6 expressed the understanding of the other interviewees about their role in implementation. He submitted that GT:

> is an intervening agency, a cleaning house to disburse funds to states that meet up with the requirements of matching grants and also monitor that the funds is judiciously utilised. We also provide textbooks to pupils in the states free. We also intervene in special education and early childhood where we have model early childhood primary schools. The state SUBEB(s) are in charge of primary education and also the LGEA(s).

Key finding 5:
The evidence from both the bureaucrats and analysed documents revealed that bureaucratic issues such as disarticulation, inadequate monitoring, lack of alignment among implementers, power of control and the food project were the obvious factors responsible for the undesirable outcome of UBE policy implementation in the states.

Summary

An overview of the findings helped understand the influence of bureaucratic alignment on policy implementation across the three regions. The participants stated that the UBE programme has taken effect via a series of actions at the federal, state and local district levels of policy implementation. There was uniformity in the template of implementation; however, the nomenclatures of operations were slightly different. This indicated why

progress on implementation differed across states. For example, in PS, much of the progress recorded on UBE was because the bureaucrats had a good understanding of translating policy to action, which was also reflected in their performance index. The same could be said about CS because they were all certified educationists seconded from the classroom to help implement the UBE policy. However, it seems that the knowledge of the bureaucrats about educational issues had no bearing on the realisation of the UBE objectives because of the lack of alignment between the bureaucrats at both levels on policy implementation, which was noticeable in their responses to issues on UBE implementation. Other factors that undermined the effectiveness of the policy in CS were issues of control between SUBEB and MOE and the problem of disarticulation of schools.

One notable remark about a factor that has enhanced the efficiency of the commission in discharging its responsibility was that the GT bureaucrats were seasoned intellectuals—certified educationists with the ability to translate policy to action. The observable reality from the findings on the effect of the policy across all the states was that the magnitude of influence of the UBE policy on the citizenry was not aligned with the huge investment in programme. This was based on the available data for enrolment, which revealed that the effect was more felt in the rural areas than urban cities. This explains the role of bureaucrats in discharging their responsibilities towards the basic education implementation programme.

SBMC was pivotal to UBE across all the regions because it was an instrument to enable monitoring of the implementation task. It was the underlying factor for the recorded progress in PS, unlike in CS, where the SBMC was underused—probably because of the internal and external frictions that pervaded the state implementation board. The SBMC mechanism employed people with good knowledge about education, and GT acknowledged their professional expertise. According to the interviewees, public perceptions regarding the implementation of basic education in Nigeria remain a challenge that has been entrenched in

the subconscious mind of the populace over a long period because of the past failed promises of the government.

Chapter 6: The Chronicles of Change after UBE Implementation

Introduction

This chapter discusses the changes that have occurred since the implementation of basic education in Nigeria. The year 1999 was significant in the history of the country because it ushered in a democratically elected government after over four decades of military administration. The year also marked the beginning of a new education policy implementation. The UBE policy was provided in answer to the demand for rejuvenation of the education sector, particularly for basic education. As stated in the preceding chapter, UBE in this context provided nine years of compulsory education for children aged six to 15, consisting of six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary education. For the current study, the views of the bureaucrats in charge of implementing this policy were essential in understanding the shift that has occurred during the decade since the implementation of UBE in Nigeria.

The Changes

The 28 participants interviewed across the three geo-political zones of the federation stated that there have been noticeable shifts in basic education during the decade since policy implementation. The interviewees identified changes in the following: teacher training programmes, infrastructure, instructional materials, self-help project schemes, 'adopt-a-school' programme, curriculum development, continuous assessment, and school food projects. The training and retraining of teachers across the three regions was attested to by the interviewees. They stated that this training exposed teachers to different aspects of teaching methods and instructional delivery, and also in teaching to the learning processes used by the students. According to the interviewees, identifying students with difficulties in learning was made possible as a result of the teacher training skills acquired under the basic education policy. According to DPS8:

to a reasonable extent, the UBE implementers have tried in that area, they are trying in the area of teacher training, but there is still room for improvement. At one time or the other, the SUBEB, local government, UBEC and other agencies alike are trying in this aspect, but we need more to match the population of the pupils.

Other bureaucrats such as DPS6, DCS3 and GT4 also affirmed the above position. They stated that:

More than 18,000 teachers in PS have undergone one training or the other, either through the UBE or NTI, which we call 'MDGs programme'. They have undergone training in their various fields of studies … this has greatly improved their standards. That is why, today, almost all our teachers can compete very well with teachers from other states based on the number of years they have put in, in terms of exposure, training and research. Some of our teachers even went to South Africa recently. About 20 or 25 of them were picked from different local governments and zones, and we call them 'master trainers', and, after they might have completed their own training, they now come to their local governments and gather teachers to retrain them. We call them 'train the trainer' program. With this, we have been having lots of improvements; therefore, personally to me, the present policy is better. (DPS6)

Teachers also go for in-service trainings, seminars and workshops, which usually come up in August every year. UBEC now takes up the responsibility of human development, unlike before, when it was left for teachers to develop themselves. Teachers are well motivated and this makes it possible to have degree and master's holder in primary school now, and even there is a PhD [philosophical doctorate] holder teaching in primary school. (DCS3)

The first area of implementation which has helped us is in this training and retraining of teachers. We now have science teachers having their own training programme organised. Then there are training programmes for social studies teachers, there are training programme for mathematics teachers and language teachers at different levels—that has been an improvement. (GT4)

The interviewees stated that substantial progress had been achieved in relation to infrastructure and school facilities. They were of the opinion that government interventions were noticeable in the construction and renovation of existing dilapidated classrooms, and the provision of lavatories and furniture for teachers and students (Appendix 6 illustrates these interventions). The interviewees reflected that habitable learning environments were one of the factors responsible for parents' preference of private schools over public schools. The participants noted that the majority of private schools across the regions had good architectural layouts and facilities that were child-friendly. They also reflected that reversing the trend of low patronage of public schools was the reason for the action of the government towards classroom construction. Similarly, the provision of instructional materials was noted by the interviewees as an innovation. They acknowledged that instructional materials in the form of textbooks (especially in core subjects such as mathematics, English language, social studies and integrated science), whiteboards, computers and other learning aids were provided. The researcher witnessed these improvements during visits to the three geo-political regions.

There were some criticisms by the eight interviewees in CS regarding the relevance of the textbooks to the curriculum. However, DPS6 and GT4, from the two other regions, understood the effort of the government towards providing instructional materials and relevant textbooks for the basic education curriculum:

The present policy is the one that can be proud of to anybody, anytime, based on the achievements on ground. The first thing I will like to say on this is that, apart from the massive construction of classrooms, apart from the furniture there, enough instructional materials are being distributed to all the schools. (DPS6)

If any SUBEB complains about irrelevance of books, they are wrong because they give attestation letters before supplying them, telling us the books they want, whether it is Longman, Oxford, Heinemann, Macmillan, etcetera, but due to one pressure or the other, they want to change, which is not possible. They cannot have different publishers for different classes and we centralised it because states were doing things that were unconventional, where they photocopied books of publishers just in order to placate their political friends. At times, publishers do go to states to mount pressures by inducement urging them to write letter to UBEC to patronise them after the states must have submitted their attestation letters with the name of a certain publisher already. (GT4)

According to the participants, another notable shift was in relation to self-help projects instituted across all the regions. The interviewees acknowledged that this programme was embraced because it allowed them to discover the level of advancement of education in all the states. The interviewees posited that some of the states that were regarded educationally disadvantaged had communities that were in need of basic infrastructure for teaching and learning. The self-help project received accolades across all strata of society because it encouraged and promoted community involvement in school administration. The participants testified to the fact that over 130 schools had benefitted from self-help projects, which assisted communities to bridge the gap in the areas of basic amenities (such as

boreholes and conveniences) because the money went directly to the communities. As stated by GT5:

UBE allowed us to discover the level of advancement of states in education, those states who are said to be educationally disadvantaged really had pockets of backwards communities in their state educationally, and we now used the money to initiate self-help projects in such communities to bridge the gap, because the money in self-help goes down directly to the backward communities, and we have about 120 to 130 schools in a state, with the least being 50 from a state. In a self-help project, communities can give their counterparts funding in kind. Each community gets ₦600,000, we released it in two instalments—first, ₦480,000 and later, we released the balance, but the money has been jerked up to ₦1,000,000.

At the same time, the 'adopt-a-school' programme—also known as the NGOs/Donors Intervention—was another innovative idea that accompanied policy implementation. This was premised on the government's realisation that it could not fund the education sector sufficiently without private intervention. According to the interviewees, 'adopt-a-school' was a way of indicating that schools belong to everyone. This led to the involvement of individuals, corporate organisations, philanthropists and international donors to assist in school transformations. The interviewees stated that this scheme was evident in the areas of school renovation and construction:

This is 'adopt-a-school' programme [is] because government believes that it cannot do it alone—we have to involve all other stakeholders … Old students of schools are encouraged to come and contribute, philanthropists, NGOs, religious organisations are all asked to contribute and it is paying off … We have a particular school—called CAC Primary School Olugbode Town—in PS [where] a philanthropist is putting up a three-storey building, constructing 15 classrooms constructed from scratch, equipped

with computers, renovated the existing structures of that school, erected boreholes and various educational materials, and what have you. We also have Zenith Bank coming in. When you get to Mokola in PS, you will see their symbol on what they have done in a school there. (DPS1)

The bureaucrats identified the new curriculum that was specifically designed for UBE as a great innovation. This curriculum was developed by the Nigerian Education and Research Development Council (NERDC) and designed to assist students to discover their innate abilities and potential through practical skills acquisition, rather than through theoretical knowledge. The new curriculum was premised on the need for an integrated education curriculum centred on building self-reliance through creativity. According to the interviewees, the education curriculum prior to the UBE policy did not reflect the aspirations of the nation towards creativity (or a sound and qualitative education), unlike the nine years of basic education curriculum, which was able to accommodate these factors. The view of DPS2, the director in charge of school/academic services, was very insightful in this regard:

> There are so many innovations. For instance, before the implementation of UBE, we have 6-3-3-4 system of education as it were, but with the introduction of UBE, we now have nine years of free and compulsory basic education … So the belief of the government is that six years is not enough for basic education—a child needs to spend nine years at a stretch before a child can have a sound and qualitative education … with this UBE, we have some core subjects which we do not have in the past. The UBE curriculum is being tailored toward all-round development of the pupils. A child that is not good in art will be good in the sciences, and a child that is not good in the sciences or arts will be good in the technical subjects.

In line with the new curriculum was a new method of assessment. The participants stated that the new method of assessing performance in and out of the classroom was a shift

away from the old system of evaluation. Prior to UBE, performance was assessed solely in the cognitive domain, which is why the affective and pyschomotor domains were ignored. The new method centred on continuous assessment and was all encompassing; thus, it enhanced the ability of teachers to understand their students' level of progress through classes. DCS5 summarised this clearly:

> Pupils can progress easily to higher school because it is based on continuous assessment. Pupils are enabled to read and write at least by the time they get to JSS and they will be certified because that is when they have major assessment and evaluation in form of examination. This is new and it is a welcome idea.

The interviewees also posited that the increase in enrolment witnessed across the regions after the implementation of UBE (see Tables 5 and 6) was a result of the food programme that came with the policy. Initially, this was seen as an insignificant component in UBE implementation, and the participants reported that they could not have predicted that this aspect of the policy would boost the level of enrolment in schools. This statement was based on the outcome of a pilot study by 10 PS bureaucrats about the effect of the food programme in UBE. The conclusion was that poverty remains a factor in achieving access to the basic education programme. The view of DPS1 revealed that the school food programme has been essential in increasing the enrolment of students:

> In PS, seven pilot schools were selected. We are giving them free feeding and we find out that gradually there is increase in enrolment, You find out that poverty is contributing to lower enrolment in the schools. About two weeks ago, we carried about 150 bags of rice to the school and government is releasing money to test what will be the impact of feeding on these pupils in schools. And we find out by ourselves that children are improving. The enrolment is increasing and we did not put the schools in urban areas, but rural areas, and we find out that one of the reasons why

there had been low enrolment is poverty. So in PS State in particular, since the introduction of free feeding in seven pilot schools, we have already got increased enrolment to schools.

Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence was used in this study to ascertain whether all the interviewees' statements associated with UBE implementation were true. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the documents analysed were the *2006 National Assessment of Universal Basic Education Programme* (2009 final report), *UBE Act and Other Related Matters* (2004), *Federal Government Approved Guidelines for Disbursement of Fund* (2006), *UBEC Annual Reports* (2009, 2010) and *UBEC Reports Submitted to the Presidential Task Team on Education* (2011). The following were the key areas of focus in these documents: teacher training programmes, federal teachers' scheme, infrastructure, instructional materials, self-help project scheme, 'adopt-a-school' programme, curriculum development, continuous assessment and school food programme. The reasons for shifts in these key areas of the policy became clear during the course of the documentary reviews.

The UBEC Reports (2011, p. 56) revealed that, between 2005 and 2008, 1,317,858 teachers and non-teaching staff were trained as part of the teacher professional development scheme, which was a focal point of the UBE. The reports established that, in 2009, the commission funded the training of 175,767 teachers across the regions, while, in 2010, the training of teachers and education managers across the regions stood at 153,920. These training sessions were made possible by the teachers' development funds, which were 10% of the CRF. The training ensured that the necessary skills and pedagogy for improving teacher efficiency in classroom situations were implemented effectively.

The UBEC Reports affirmed the shift in the area of the federal teachers' scheme (FTS), which was specifically designed to reduce the perennial shortage of qualified teachers

in public schools, especially in the core subjects. The scheme also addressed the issue of qualified teachers in the basic education sub-sector being able to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools across the regions. Although the basic education policy implementation dates back to 1999, the FTS document revealed that FTS was introduced in 2006, and, since the introduction of the scheme, two groups have concluded their participation in the scheme. The UBEC Reports (2009, 2010) revealed that the scheme has significantly contributed to the engagement of about 40,000 qualified teachers, of which 25,668 teachers were given permanent jobs in 27 states, including the Federal Capital Territory. As of 2011, when these data were collected, the number of participants serving in the scheme in 32 states and the Federal Capital Territory stood at 26,484.

The documents also confirmed changes in the infrastructure and instructional materials available across the regions. The documents showed that, between 1999 and 2011, significant achievements were made in the following: 35,965 classrooms were constructed, 57,038 classrooms were renovated, 1,400,650 pieces of furniture were provided for students and teachers, 12,347 conveniences were provided, 825 boreholes were installed and 75,570,540 instructional materials (textbooks and play materials) were provided. Table 7 presents the areas of policy implementation in terms of infrastructure development and instructional materials.

Table 7

Education Facilities Provided 1999–2011

Year	Deliverable	Quantity
1999–2011	New classrooms constructed	35,965
1999–2011	Renovated classrooms	57,038
1999–2011	Furniture for students and teachers	1,004,650
1999–2011	Toilets	12,347
1999–2011	Boreholes	825
1999–2011	Instructional materials	77,570,540

Source**:** Adapted from the UBEC Report (2011, p. 12) submitted to the presidential task team on education.

A study on the availability of instructional materials for students and teachers, according to NAUPEB (2009), affirmed that textbooks and other instructional materials were made available for schools. The national assessment study on four core subjects (integrated science, social studies, mathematics and English language) to ascertain the percentage of students who had relevant textbooks revealed that 67.30% of students had integrated textbooks, 66.03% had social studies textbooks, 47% had mathematics textbooks and only 35% had English language textbooks. Ownership of writing materials for schoolwork across the regions stood at 62.86%. The study also showed that the majority of teachers of the four core subjects used textbooks. The frequency and percentage of the use of workbooks, individualised programmed instructions, commercial kits, worksheets or materials and audio-visual materials stood at 37.93 to 40.52%. The results showed that 37.93 to 41.38% of mathematics teachers, 40.52 to 42.24% of English language teachers, and 40.52 to 40.95% of integrated science teachers and social studies/SOSE teachers used textbooks 'often' or 'very often' in their teaching. Table 8 below reflects the percentage of instructional materials available to students and the teachers.

Table 8

Students and Teachers' Use of Textbooks and Other Resources for the Four Core Subjects

Core subject use	Students' use (%)	Teachers' use (%)
Mathematics	47	37.93–40.52
English language	35	40.52–42.24
Integrated science	66.03	40.52–40.95
Social studies/SOSE	67	40.95–40.95

Source: Adapted from NAUPEB (2009, p. 112).

The UBEC Annual Reports (2009, p. 47; 2010, p. 89), on the self-help project and 'adopt-a-school' programme affirmed the collaboration between UBEC and local communities as part of the mandate towards effectively implementing basic education across the regions. As stated earlier, the self-help project was designed as a strategy to involve the community and private sectors in basic education delivery through the initiation, execution, administration and ownership of designated school projects. Projects under this arrangement were initiated and funded partly by the beneficiary communities and the collaborating partners. According to the documents, the implementation strategy ensured that communities provided counterpart contributions that were no less than 10% of the total cost of the school-based project. The communities' contribution was in the supposition of land for the school projects. As discussed in the reports, the school community referred to any people or group of people or corporate organisations who had a direct interest in the school and could influence the daily activities of the school. The UBEC Annual Report (2009, p. 67) recorded that, in 2007, 6,434 communities benefitted from the self-help project, while, in 2008, 4,225 communities' initiated projects were executed.

According to the documents, the new curriculum was a response to the global reforms in social and economic contexts. This initiative was based on the aftermath of the follow-up conference in Beijing in 2001, requiring stringent efforts by the E-9 countries (the nine countries in the world with the largest concentration of illiterate school-age children), including Nigeria, to drastically reduce illiteracy within the shortest possible time. It was in

line with this that the National Council on Education directed NERDC to develop a school curriculum for the effective implementation of basic education. The following achievements were recorded with the new UBE curriculum: establishment of national early childcare minimum standards, approval of an integrated early childhood curriculum for children aged three to five years for pre-school child growth and early stimulation, and production and distribution of nine-year curriculum materials to all primary and junior secondary schools in the states. The new curriculum was designed to cater for the all-round development of children, with an emphasis on creativity, technical knowledge, science, technology and arts. According to the document, it was specifically designed with the intent that no child would be left behind—an ideology tailored after the American experience.

NAUPEB (2009, p. 112) noted that the school food programme was a strategy for increasing enrolment across the regions. The food programme—otherwise known as the 'midday meal programme'—made the UBE policy popular in all regions in Nigeria. A pilot study conducted in 2009 to elicit responses to the provision of a midday meal in some selected schools across the regions showed that 33.78% (2,335) students were given a free meal each day, while 50.82% (3,513) were not. Among the students who were given midday meals, about 38% (2,593) said they liked the food, while 18% (1,264) did not. In addition, 40.23% saw the food as an encouragement that improved access to education, especially in rural areas where the socioeconomic status was very low, which is the reason improvements in enrolment under UBE have been more pronounced in rural areas than in urban cities.

Key finding 6:

The available evidence indicates that UBE policy implementation has recorded notable shifts across all regions. These shifts were centred on school renovations, construction of classrooms and providing learning materials. However, these shifts have had little or marginal effect on enrolment, as revealed in both the interviews and the document analysis.

UBE Objectives: An Appraisal

The introduction of the UBE programme by Nigerian governments at the federal and state levels was a conscientious effort to provide sound and qualitative education for all children of school age (six to 15 years), irrespective of their cultural and geographical backgrounds. However, the evidence from the interview and documents on the basic education implementation revealed that there were some distortions and inconsistencies in basic education delivery across the regions. In addition, the societal expectation based on the UBE policy objective to ensure greater access to, and quality of, basic education throughout Nigeria was yet to be achieved. According to the data, other aspects of the UBE policy objectives yet to be fully operationalised were as follows:

- reducing school dropout and improving the relevant factors of teaching quality and efficiency
- providing midday meals to enhance children's access, retention and completion of the school cycle
- disarticulating the junior secondary/high schools from the senior secondary schools
- realigning junior secondary education with primary education (UBEC, 2004).

> **UBE policy objectives**:
>
> Ensuring greater access to, and quality of, basic education throughout Nigeria
>
> Reducing school dropout and improving the relevance of education
>
> Improving quality and efficiency
>
> Providing midday meals to enhance children's access, retention and completion of the school cycle
>
> Disarticulating the junior secondary/high schools from the senior secondary schools
>
> Realigning junior secondary education with primary education (UBEC, 2004).

As stated in the preceding chapters, UBE has taken effect via a series of actions; however, ensuring uninterrupted access to basic education remains a challenge yet to be addressed by stakeholders. DPS1's overall assessment of the UBE policy a decade after implementation was that the programme had not been fully implemented. This view represented the opinion of the other interviewees in the two regions of policy implementation:

> From my own assessment, I believe that the implementation of any form of education in Nigeria was faulty, even the one we are running presently that is Universal Basic Education. There is nothing wrong about the policy, but the problem is the implementation of this UBE programme. So what has been happening before still remained up until year 2010, and that is why some people are still clamouring for change. In fact, at the workshop I attended at Caliphate State, some people are still clamouring that we should go back to the old system because there has been no impact, so I believe that the problem we are having about any form of education in Nigeria is implementation. (DPS1)

The UNESCO Report on the basic education programme supported the opinions of the interviewees, as expressed by DPS1. According to UNESCO (2012), despite the federal government's commitment and efforts to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the UBE programme, Nigeria still has some of the worst education indicators globally. The UNESCO Report (2012) stated:

UNESCO report on the 2012 Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (GMR), said Nigeria has some of the worst education indicators globally. The report indicated that Nigeria has the largest population of out-of-school children. The report showed that Nigeria has about 10.5 million out-of-school children. The EFA global monitoring report revealed a high level of gender inequality and inequity which is very pronounced in certain parts of the country. The report also indicated that education costs are generally prohibitive in Nigeria among others. These indicators showed that Nigeria might not achieve the goal of Education for All, barely three years to 2015 global time line in spite of the commitment and efforts of the Federal Government toward attainment of same.

Prior to the UNESCO Report, the data analysis revealed that there has been contention between the state and federal governments on issues related with UBE implementation and control. From the one-on-one interviews with the policy implementers, the documentary evidence and the researcher's observations based on the spot assessment of the implementation task, it could be established that implementation across all the states of the federation has been uneven. The bureaucrats across the regions attributed this problem to the following key issues: lack of political will on behalf of the state governments, insincerity on behalf of the bureaucrats in charge of implementation, and lack of purpose to see through the effective implementation of the midday meal programme.

It was widely acknowledged by the bureaucrats across the regions that lack of political will to see through the UBE implementation on behalf of the state governments was an issue affecting the implementation of the programme. The reflection of the bureaucrats pointed to the fact that ensuring adequate compliance with the UBE policy implementation in the states has never been a major goal of some governors in the states. GT6, who was in charge of implementation services across the regions, stated:

> The problem lies with the governor—the priority and political will of the governor. We were in BS State recently and what we see was an eyesore, and the governor claimed he is using his personal money to renovate schools, when you have not made use of public money that is there for you. The state did not access the money and even NS State. We hope the new government will change the situation.

Another issue raised by the interviewees in the overall assessment of the UBE policy implementation was the insincerity of bureaucrats across the states of the federation. The interviewees stressed that lack of sincerity hampered the effectiveness of UBE implementation in terms of school supplies. There were accusations and counter-accusations by the CS and GT interviewees on the issue of textbooks, and the facts remain unclear. For instance, based on observations of school supplies—especially the textbooks that littered the SUBEB offices in the two regions—the researcher asked why the books that were meant to be distributed to the schools had not been delivered. The CS bureaucrats stated that they had not been distributed because they were not relevant to the curriculum. Another factor for delay in delivering books to the schools was the bureaucracy encountered at the district level when collecting the books from the SUBEB. Issues of inconsistency with publishers and practice among the policy implementers were identified as challenges regarding school supplies. DCS8 was in charge of supplies in the districts; thus, this participant's view was very insightful:

Yes, they bring the books [but they are] not enough and not relevant. And when they ask you to come to SUBEB for the books, before you get the books, you have to pay the storekeeper, or else you will not get the books. And here in our LGEA, our storekeeper will have to invite the schools several times for the books because there is no transport for us to take it down to schools. And they often bring different books in different academic sessions. Today they bring Oxford, tomorrow it is Macmillan, and they will tell you it is free and you will see that the books are inadequate. The books that are not meant to be sold find their way to the bookshops.

The GT bureaucrats refuted the submission of the CS bureaucrats on the issue of textbooks. GT1's view on the issue of textbooks informed the understanding on the far-reaching decision-making process of the board before publishing textbooks for schools. It also reflected the process for the approval of the publishers on the issue of school supplies. GT1 also revealed the motive behind the comments of the CS bureaucrats:

We provide books that the states say they use. It is on record. We have evidence from our procurement unit in our head office; they are just trying to play politics. The state governments only want us to patronise their publisher friends and we also make provision for distribution of books that is #1m per distribution to each class. If the books are piled up in their SUBEB offices, it means they are not sincere with the distribution. Initially, the state governments gave the contracts to their friends who went … and we get it at lower prices at lower rates since 2009 for primaries one to six, though not yet for all the children. At least one textbook to three pupils. We do this with support from Millennium Development Goals office.

While this issue of the school supplies was yet to be resolved, the federal government's determination to ensure that the UBE programme was a success in all ramifications endeared the security operatives to arrest syndicates selling free textbooks that

were meant for students in four major states of the federation. According to UBEC Reports, the investigation conducted on this practice implicated the SUBEB officials who were responsible for implementing the policy. The Minister of State for Education's supervisory role included monitoring the distribution of books. The UBEC affirmed that the officials responsible for basic education implementation were involved in selling the free textbooks meant for the students across the states of the federation:

> Minister of State for Education, regretted that State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) workers were involved in selling books meant for free distribution. He said that beginning from now, independent monitors would be drafted to monitor the distribution of textbooks to individual schools across the country. The minister added that the Federal Ministry of Education and security partners would work hard towards ensuring that all saboteurs in the book distribution chain face justice. (UBEC Reports, 2011)

Another contentious issue was the food project specifically designed to increase enrolment, as stated in the UBE objectives. The interviewees viewed the stoppage of the food project as showing lack of consistency on behalf of the government on UBE deliverables. The interviews and document analysis attested to the fact that the food initiative of the government on UBE was applauded because it was an opportunity for children to access both education and food. The interviewees testified to the fact that the initiative was responsible for the surge in enrolment, especially in rural areas. This view was based on the outcome of a study conducted on the effect of the food programme, in which it was widely acknowledged by students that the programme was a good way of motivating them to enrol in school (NAUPEB, 2009). According to the interviewees, the food programme lasted less than one year before it was stopped, which was not because of lack of funding, but due to

mismanagement and abuse by the states. GT1 explained why the food programme was stopped:

> Government thought of feeding initially—that is, a meal a day to encourage enrolment and the health of the pupils. I was part of the planning committee and we budgeted ₦20 for day's feeding per child. We then felt it was expensive because we will spend about ₦80 billion if we have 20 million pupils, and we do not collect up to this amount in a year. The federal government was trying to boost our agriculture sector in which communities are expected to provide some food items locally. But some state governors started importing food by giving out contracts to their cronies from South Africa and the government stopped it.

Key finding 7:

Political issues have been identified as a factor undermining the realisation of UBE objectives. This was reflected by the interviewees' statements and the documents analysed. Lack of political will, the politics of access, the unethical behaviour of the implementers and public perceptions were all constraints against the realisation of UBE implementation in Nigeria.

Summary

The interviewees' comments about the changes that have occurred during the decade since the introduction of UBE were revealing. The reflections of the interviewees across the states provided necessary insights regarding why the intervention in education was crucial for the sector. According to the interviewees and reviewed documents, the shifts in the provision of infrastructure (Table 8)—enabling learning environments, training and development programmes for teachers, and various pilot schemes introduced by the government—provided insights into the government intentions regarding the policy. As stated by the

interviewees, the intervention of the government in the education sector through UBE has brought some degree of stability to the education sector.

One of the areas identified was administration and the involvement of other stakeholders in implementing basic education in the states. Another notable area of intervention was the area of funding (unlike in the past) that finance was considered as a factor in failure of policies. The counterpart funding policies of the government are acknowledged as a shift with UBE. The finding, based on the appraisal of UBE, was that there remain some issues that demand urgent attention. These issues included inconsistency in the supplies of instructional materials, lack of political will on behalf of the governments across the states of the federation, insincerity among the implementers, and failure of the food programme due to lack of a coordinating mechanism to ensure effective implementation.

The UNECSO Report (2012) on the EFA global monitoring report on basic education was disturbing. The report indicated that the government was yet to address the basic challenges of access, equity, quality, gender and poverty, and that education costs were generally prohibitive in Nigeria, among other issues. These indicators showed that Nigeria might not achieve the goal of EFA, with less than one year before reaching the 2015 global timeline, despite the commitment and efforts of the federal government to achieve successful UBE implementation.

Chapter 7: Discussion

Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings reported in Chapters 5 and 6 on the UBE implementation programme in Nigeria. The findings are discussed against the backdrop of the key information from the preceding chapters aligned with the conceptual framework and review of the literature. The chapter examines the present status of policy development and implementation, and discusses the issues affecting the implementation of UBE in the regions (PS and CS) and federal capital (GT) of the federation, against the realisation of the objectives of UBE policy. The issues as reflected in the findings are captured in three sub-sections as follows: intent, insight and reflection; power of control, race to outwit and supremacy struggle; and rhetoric without willpower.

Intent, Insight and Reflection

The issue that has been a subject of debate among policy scholars in Nigeria is about government intentions to implement policy initiatives. Since the rebirth of democracy over a decade ago, the Nigerian government has not failed in the duty of initiating policy. This statement affirmed the position of Ejere (2011), in the review chapter and finding from data KF2, KF3. The reason for this is that the government is interested in all-round development of the country's endeavours, including education. This probably informed the interest of the government in revitalising the education sector that had suffered institutional failure in the past. However, intention without corresponding insight and reflection to achieve a positive policy outcome makes this intention an illusion. The findings from both the documents analysed and the interviews with the bureaucrats pointed to the same direction of thought—that government intention is informed by the need to ensure that Nigerian citizens have unrestrained access to education opportunities. The UBE policy is the intention of the

government that has the support of both bureaucrats and the citizens. However, despite this overwhelming support, the intended outcome is yet to be achieved.

The unrealised intention was attributed to a lack of insight on behalf of the implementing officials. Several disparaging comments were made in this regard because of belief that the implementers were responsible for salvaging the sector. The findings from the data revealed that the challenge with turning policy intention to practice was not a result of lack of insight, but of the implementation process (KF3, KF4, Okoroma, 2006). Insight in this study connotes bureaucrats having the required skills, expertise and knowledge to drive, understand and channel the policy to achieve the intended outcomes. The findings revealed that the bureaucrats did have the required knowledge of policy initiative and roles in implementing government decisions (KF2). The bureaucrats' perceptions of policy intention as an action or procedure towards achieving the intended outcome was important to understand that they have a good understanding of what is meant by the word 'policy' (Ejere,2011; KF 2). The participants understanding of the methodical approach through which UBE policy evolved, as well as the procedure for successive policy implementation, were insightful and suggested they had sufficient knowledge of the policy issue.

Thus, the lack of performance associated with government intention—as it related to the development and general wellbeing of citizens—should not be attributed to lack of in-depth understanding of policy by the bureaucrats, but rather to the process of implementing the policy. Implementation in this context means the process, procedure and alternative means of reaching specific goals, including spending priorities and administrative mechanisms as established in the review chapter. The direction of this discussion is that policy development is not really an issue in Nigeria. According to the data, the bureaucrats were knowledgeable about implementing policy decisions (KF3). The interviewees' in-depth understanding of policy was evident in their discussion of the issues facing education

development in Nigeria (KF1, KF2). The overall understanding is that policy implementers have the requisite knowledge for policy decisions, but the challenge has always been the implementation.

Lavis (2010); Ejere (2011); and Buse, Mays and Walt (2005)—explored in the literature review—confirmed that public policymakers understand the institutional arrangements that govern what can be done to address issues. These include pressure from interest groups about what they would like done, and a range of ideas (including research evidence) about how best to address any given issue. It also affirmed that policymakers seemed knowledgeable on the issues that the policy sought to address. This meant that policy formulation and execution were distinct activities—clear and logical objectives for committed and skilful officials to implement. The interviewees' reflections on policy issues attested to the fact that policy initiative fails during the stage of implementation in Nigeria. However, the reason that policies fail remains an unresolved issue. The participants' reflections pointed to the challenge of inefficient or inadequate planning, with lack of facilities, an inadequate workforce, and unethical behaviour in spending being the outcomes of this weak planning.

Inefficient or inadequate planning.

The efficiency and effectiveness of policy delivery lies with the educational institutions and supervising organs (Eboh, 2011; KF1; Makinde, 2005; Okoroma, 2006). Prior to the introduction of the UBE policy, the Nigerian education sector suffered from a weak administrative institution. This ineffective and weak administrative organ lacked the ability to think outside the box in planning and ensuring adequate compliance to the rules and regulations when implementing education policy. According to the data, education administrations in the past were under the purview of local administrators, with little or no requisite knowledge towards repositioning the sector or effecting the changes needed. For

example, inadequate planning was the major cause for the failure of the UPE of 1955 and 1976. The UPE policies designed to improve access to education, in order to improve literacy and numeracy among school-aged children in Nigeria, were aborted shortly after implementation due to this factor. Obayan (2011) and Fafunwa (2004) concurred that the previous policies were quickly abandoned due to lack of planning.

The UPE policies were designed primarily to provide educational opportunities to citizens, expand access to primary education and increase the number of schools in the country. The policy was geared towards giving all children between ages six to 12 free primary education in order to bridge the educational gap and reduce the rising levels of illiteracy in the country. The implementation began with much promise, but failed to achieve its goals of eradicating illiteracy, largely due to inadequate planning (the consequence of an inadequate mechanism of implementation). The lack of an adequate implementation plan was obvious in the underestimation of the number of classrooms provided in the previous policy. For example, when the schools opened to register students, instead of the 2,300,000 children expected, 3,000,000 children arrived to be registered.

The realisation of policy objectives is not related to how strong a policy is, but to providing an adequate implementation plan, which depends largely on the administrative institution mechanism. This was lacking with the previous education policies in Nigeria. It was as a result of this lack of planning that these previous policies encountered the numerous problems mentioned earlier, including lack of facilities, an insufficient workforce and misplaced spending priorities.

Other indices.

The lack of facilities was an indicator that policies in Nigeria often fail before implementation. Excellent school facilities are basic ingredients for good education programmes and are essential to achieving targets and improving literacy. The fact that some

schools have surplus facilities and others lack them is an indicator of poor educational planning in schools. For instance, the failure of the UPE policy of 1955 was a result of the dramatic increase in enrolment in schools that was not supported by a structural mechanism from the government to address issues of overcrowded classrooms and inadequate infrastructure. The UPE policy also left behind numerous school-aged children who could not be enrolled in the schools because of lack of facilities to accommodate them. In addition, a determinant factor of a successful policy lies with the quality of the workforce at the implementation level. In Nigeria, there was lack of qualified teachers, with the majority of the teachers recruited being trainees who underwent a one-year 'crash course' in the teachers' colleges established by the government of the time. The few teachers who were adequately trained left the sector because they were not sufficiently remunerated. This lack of remuneration did not result from the country having insufficient wealth to afford a trained workforce, but was from misplaced priorities in terms of spending.

The challenges hindering the realisation of the UBE policy objectives were similar to those encountered by the UBE policy. The UBE policy was well articulated and designed to achieve greater access to, and quality of, basic education throughout Nigeria. It was an achievable programme that would eradicate illiteracy among Nigerian school-aged children if well implemented. Achieving this objective is tied to good administrative coordination, as suggested in the data. Jenkin, Frommer and Rubin (2006) and Powell, Davies, Bannister and Macrea (2009) supported the position of the interviewees that policymakers are aware that good implementation process structure, good coordination and good communication are essential tools to achieve desirable outcomes in any policy intention. The overarching discussion in this section is to establish that the bureaucrats had sufficient insight into policy intention and the required skills to achieve the desire outcomes in the education policy. However, translating this knowledge into action to achieve these outcomes remained a

challenge, which has been attributed to the implementation process (Ejere, 2001; KF1, KF2, KF3).

The power of control, bureaucrats' motives, implementation mechanisms and compliance are some of the underlying issues affecting policy implementation in Nigeria. The observable factors hindering the effectiveness of the education policy implementation were lack of political will, lack of continuity of programmes and corruption. Okoroma (2006), Makinde (2005), Anderson (2011) and Weissart and Weissart (2006) ascertained that the problems facing developing nations are shrewd in implementation of policies. The success of any policy objective is hinged on resource allocation because it is an enticement to both implementers and target groups to comply with policy rules, monitor compliance and ensure an understanding of both objectives and design. All these factors enable policymakers to address social problems through better policies and regulation.

This study provides a way to begin understanding that bureaucracy is the barrier to implementation. In line with this is Fenshaw's (2009) subset of the two theories driving this study, and the identified six variables by Meter and Horn (1975), which stressed the importance of bureaucratic structure to enable efficient and effective policy implementation. They argued that the role of authority in relation to policy is essential for policy to be successful. They stated that the role of the bureaucratic mechanism in policy implementation is to provide creed that gives a sense of direction for the organisational structure to implement the basic education programme to achieve a meaningful outcome. The arrows in Figure 10 below reveal the three stages of education policy development in Nigeria. This diagram reveals the policy development stages of education in Nigeria, and reiterates that the previous policies on education failed not because they were not well articulated, but as a result of implementation. This indicates a lack of reflection on behalf of the policy implementers.

Successful policy implementation is the responsibility of the implementing officials. Having a good understanding of policy intent and insight into the direction of policy is insufficient to create successful policy. It is unfortunate that what is needed is the critical factor lacking among the bureaucrats—the power of reflection and the ability to think outside the box without losing direction in achieving the intended goals. The ability to speculate and change the direction of policy at an interface when noticing indices that can impede the expected favourable outcome of any given seems to be lacking in policy implementation in Nigeria.
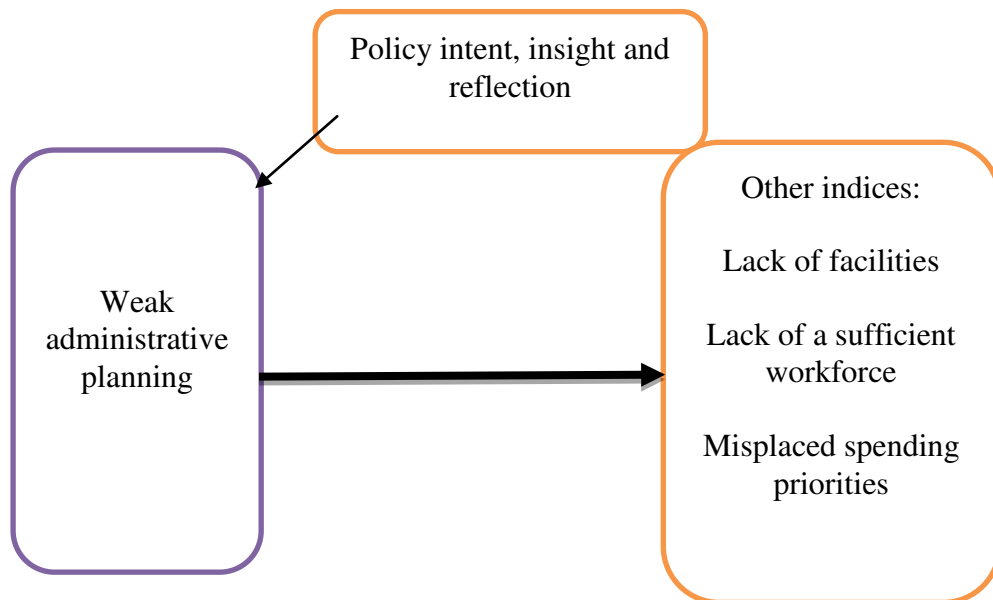
Figure 10. Intent, insight and reflection: The findings of this study.

Conceptual understanding:

The UBE policy intention in Figure 10 clearly refutes the belief among policy scholars in Nigeria—as indicated in the conceptual framework driving this study—that the bureaucrats lack the required knowledge and skills to complete policy implementation. It reveals the reflection of the interviewees regarding why previous policies on education have failed in Nigeria. The major factor identified was weak administrative planning, while other issues included a lack of facilities, lack of human resources, and misplaced priorities for spending. This supports the fact that the bureaucrats have sufficient skills and insight regarding the direction of policy intention. What seems to be lacking is the power of reflection to achieve the desired outcomes in educational policy. The power of reflection means the ability to speculate and change the direction of policy at an interface when noticing indices that can impede the expected favourable outcome, which seems to be lacking among the implementing officials.

Power of Control, Race to Outwit and Supremacy Struggle

The findings revealed that the UBE policy has taken effect via a series of actions across the regions, as stated in the preceding chapters, yet the goal of ensuring uninterrupted access is a challenge that remains unachieved. The findings point to the fact that the UBE implementation is faced with bureaucratic challenges (KF4; Jones, 2005; Thompson, 2001). These bureaucratic issues are centred on the power of control, the race to outwit and a supremacy struggle among the implementing officials. This reveals that the enormous responsibility that is placed on the bureaucratic structure of the UBE implementation is not what it seems to be within the context of the UBE policy outcome. While the importance of policy implementation and service delivery at all levels of government cannot be overstated, the agency responsible for implementing government decisions is a determining factor for policy actualisation. This is because policy implementation is dictated by rules and guidelines as a lay down mechanism that is devoid of any ambiguity or bureaucratic friction. In other

words, the success of any policy outcome is that of collective responsibility, rather than that show of statesmanship that was obvious in UBE. The crux of this discussion is that bureaucratic support in policy implementation is crucial to a favourable outcome of any government initiative. This is particularly the case for a public policy, such as an education policy, because it raises issues beyond boundaries and the implementing agencies.

The bureaucratic challenge was obvious in the manner in which the implementers approached the implementation process. There was a battle for control within the bureaucratic echelon that impeded the board of implementation's service delivery, responsiveness and agility. The coherence of vision and commitment to implementing the government intention—which should be the crucial element in driving change—was lacking with the UBE policy implementation (KF 4). The challenge of control was noticeable in the overlapping bureaucracy—a situation in which both the SUBEBs and MOEs in the states oversaw the implementation of UBE tasks, which is a duty that should be the sole responsibility of the SUBEB. Exercising jurisdiction over UBE implementation by SUBEB officials was met with great resistance from the state MOE officials. The UBE implementation in CS was a failure because of this issue of friction. This arose because the UBE bureaucratic structure was ambiguous in terms of structure of control. There was no direct statement or constitutional guideline suggesting that the state SUBEBs were under the supervision or dictate of the MOEs across states. However, the policy encouraged a complementary role between the SUBEBs and MOEs, where deemed necessary, but not against the overriding interest of the SUBEBs. The UBE Act stated that the UBE recognises the constitutional right of SUBEBs and LGEAs to manage basic education, and the federal government as an intervening agency to assist and/or act in partnership with the states and local governments (UBE Act, 2004, p. 21).

The observable reality is that the relationship between the two bodies (SUBEB and MOE) in the regions was not in consonant with the realisation of the UBE aspiration. Commissioners of Education (COEs) in the states tended to lord over SUBEB in the implementation programme of UBE, which, according to the UBE Act (2004), should not be the case. This issue of rivalry between SUBEBs and MOEs made the bureaucrats in CS feel their hands were tied in terms of policy implementation (KF 5). Overlapping bureaucracy was also evident in regulating examinations across the board in CS. For instance, it was the responsibility of SUBEB to conduct unified examinations for all schools in the states; however, this was not the case in CS because of interference from the COE. As stated in Chapter 6, bureaucrats across the regions—particularly GT bureaucrats—knew of this rivalry between SUBEB and COE in the state. This prompted one of the GT bureaucrats to remark that CS was not a perfect example of a state of UBE implementation. It was clear that all was not well with implementing basic education in CS. However, this issue was not specific to CS, with other states across the federation also experiencing pockets of friction due to other duplicated agencies in education policy implementation (KF 5; Keiser, 2011; Perrow, 1972; Rouke, 1984; Thompson, 2001). The apparent functionality in PS was created by an interpersonal relationship that existed between the SUBEB and MOE chairperson.

These incidences of bureaucratic challenge cannot be completely resolved as long as there is no clear, unambiguous and explicitly stated bureaucratic role defining the SUBEBs and MOEs in the states with regard to UBE implementation. In this situation, achieving meaningful progress in basic education delivery is an illusion. In support of these findings, Ejere (2011) and Santcross, Hinchliffe, Williams and Onibon (2009) admitted that public policy implementation is a function of government bureaucracy. The effectiveness of policy implementation is largely determined by the efficiency and competence of governmental implementing agencies. Nigeria does not possess the required executive capacity to

effectively implement the UBE programme because of the overlapping functions of bureaucratic agencies. The Nigerian education sector suffers from weak capacity at the institutional, organisational and individual levels. They observed that a weak institutional framework that has multiple agencies with overlapping roles and responsibilities remains unreformed. Policy actualisation needs more capable, powerful and productive civil servants with more quality and efficient operational abilities that are complementary in nature because the public judge a government from different aspects, and civil servants' attitudes and behaviour influence policy directly. The effect of overlapping bureaucracy has been responsible for the increase of school-age children living on the street—a situation on most major urban streets in Nigeria that has continued to attract global attention (Aransola et al., 2009; Oloko, 1999; Oni, 2011).

In policy implementation, the leadership commitment and interpersonal relationships among the implementing officials largely determines the overall outcome of any government policy (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011). Of interest across the regions is the pace at which directorates within the same SUBEB tend to outwit or outdo one another in implementation tasks. The bureaucratic structure of policy implementation—as stated in Figures 7, 8 and 9—has directorate divisions, with each division having a specific role and responsibility to perform in order to ensure UBE is adequately implemented (KF 5). However, the struggle to outwit one another has made UBE implementation very slow. This creates a situation in which one division begins an implementation task ahead of the expected timeframe in order to give the impression of being the best directorate, while other divisions are looked down on. This has occurred particularly in the aspect of capacity building for teachers in both PS and CS. Instead, what is needed is a complementarity role of these divisions to ensure that the policy objectives are realised.

Okechukwu and Ikechukwu (2012), Keiser (2011), Workman et al. (2010) and FGN (2008) agreed that public bureaucracy exists for the convenience of effective and efficient service delivery; however, this has not been the case with Nigerian bureaucracy because of fragmentation and conflicting roles and responsibilities. The large number of government agencies and directorates participating in implementing the UBE programme nationwide is bound to create coordination and communication problems. The level of alignment among implementation officials plays a central role in implementing public policy because it creates the policy that the public actually experiences. An understanding of public policy requires an understanding of the determinants of bureaucratic behaviour because this behaviour helps policy analysts study how the level of alignment among bureaucratic officials aids or hinders implementation. Agencies charged with implementing programs are not monolithic black boxes, but are comprised of sub-units with their own structures and cultures. In order to understand why bureaucracies shape public policy the way they do through policy implementation, it is important to consider how different units in the bureaucracy respond differently to information in the task and political environment, and recognise that information is often ambiguous.

Similarly, the struggle for supremacy between the three tiers of bureaucratic implementation is another challenge undermining the UBE policy (KF 4; KF 5; KF 7). This was obvious in the perceived relationship that existed between the federal, state and district levels. The theories explored in this study underscore the bureaucratic paradigm of policy implementation in Nigeria, which gives credence of might or supremacy to the federal, state and district governments in ascending order. This 'battle of supremacy' created a gap between the tiers. The district/local government was of the opinion that, because they were closer to the grassroots and knew the societal expectations of education provision, the recommendations sent to the state and federal governments on UBE should be given due

relevance; however, the reverse seemed to be the case. This indicates why directives to the districts across the region have not been treated with a level of urgency. In the findings, it is undeniable that the mistrust created by rivalry and supremacy has negatively affected the implementation task. However, the magnitude of conflict varies across the states. For example, in PS, there exists a lack of trust centred on hierarchy. The authority to control implementation issues affects the states' SUBEBs and LGEAs to the extent that SUBEB officials do not rely on reports provided by LGEAs to inform their decisions on UBE implementation in the state. This conflict between the directorates is because some consider themselves superior, with greater ability to implement policy objectives. In addition, at the district level in CS, the different groups try to outwit each other during UBE implementation because of the internal wrangling among the bureaucrats in the LGEAs over the appointment of the ES.

Based on the varying perspectives of the different tiers of government in policy implementation, the experience of how to implement government programmes for UBE has not been effective because of the struggle for supremacy (KF 7). The reason given by the districts is that the tasks often involved turning a policy idea into effective outcomes, and the skills and effort required to do this are not fully appreciated by the other tiers of government. This has caused UBE implementation to fall short of expectations. These defects in implementation rob the community of the full benefits of the UBE policy and waste community resources. The literature in this study also ascertained that the efficiency of the government in realising policy objectives is the responsibility of the bureaucrats at all tiers of the government. In other words, policy actualisation needs more capable, powerful and productive civil servants with more quality and efficient operational abilities that are complementary in nature because the public judge a government from different aspects, and civil servants' attitudes and behaviour influence policy directly. The effect of this conflict for

supremacy in the bureaucracy has been responsible for the increase of school-age children living on most major urban streets in Nigeria, which has continued to attract global attention (Aransola et al., 2009; Ejere, 2011; Oloko, 1999; Oni, 2011).

Across the three regions, the effect of the undue interference, race to outwit and supremacy struggle in the basic education administration made the UBE policy an issue of no significant value within the context of societal expectations. The lack of administrative alignment left the issue of school disarticulation unresolved and aborted the food programme that was designed to facilitate increasing enrolment and access to education opportunities across the states. Similarly, the bureaucratic conflict also affected the mechanism of monitoring the UBE implementation task. For instance, the findings on disarticulation revealed a bureaucratic bottleneck in which the disarticulation of schools and transition from primary to secondary school affected UBE implementation. The power of control and problem of disarticulation were interwoven because it was the inability of the state SUBEBs to reach a level of compromise with the MOEs in their respective states that made the disarticulation of schools impossible. Thus, the struggle for control on both sides of the divide (SUBEB and MOE) made the transitional process (disarticulation of schools)—a major objective of UBE—unrealisable.

Problem of disarticulation.

The findings revealed a bureaucratic bottleneck in which the disarticulation of schools and transition from primary to secondary school affected UBE implementation. Disarticulation in this study means the transition or upwards movement of learners from one level to another (for instance, from basic six to basic seven). The disarticulation issue had not been effectively implemented across the regions because the orthodox schools were unwilling to allow students of the UBE to transit to senior classes, despite the directive of the government in this regard. As long as disarticulation is not being effected, the issue of

transition from one level of education to another in the UBE programme will remain an issue. Akowe (2011), Onyukwu (2011), UNESCO (2009) and Nation (2009) concurred that transition has been a recurrent issue with the UBE programme.

A crisis of confidence existed among the state bureaucrats over the modalities for implementing the proposed UBE (nine-year basic education) by the federal government because it involved the disarticulation of junior secondary schools from senior secondary schools. The fact is that in the attendance and transition of school-age children, 50 years after independence in north–south education, imbalance remains an unresolved issue even with UBE because of bureaucratic challenges in basic education implementation. It is disheartening to know that less than 60% of primary school children transit to secondary school under the UBE programme in CS, and less than 70% in PS. The gross enrolment ratio at the primary level was 89% (95% male and 84% female). The net enrolment rate (as a percentage of children in the six to 12 age group) was a much lower 61% (64% male and 58% female), which implied that there has not been any significant effect of the UBE policy on enrolment and transition since its introduction in 1999. The data affirmed the above submission, as indicated in Table 9.

Table 9

Statistics on School Attendance in PS and CS 2008–2011

Region	Male	Female	Total	Gender parity
Basic education school attendance and transition:				
CS	71.7	69.2	70.5	0.97
PS	77.8	75.2	76.6	0.97
Secondary school attendance and transition:				
CS	50.1	41.6	46.0	0.83
PS	68.5	68.9	68.7	1.01

Source: Adapted from National Population Commission Statistics on school attendance (NPC Report, 2011, p. 98).

Table 9 represents the percentage of the school-age population who attended and transited in both primary school and secondary school from 2008 to 2011 (the gender parity is the ratio of both males and females who attended and transited from primary and secondary school). The consequence of the problem of transition from one level of education to another, as seen in the table, is dropout syndrome—the central reason for the establishment of UBE. Table 10 presents the data outlining the negative consequences of dropout of school age children in the two regions under study.

Table 10

Statistics on Dropout of School Children in CS and PS

Dropout rate School grade Background (year of school)	1	2	3	4	5	6
CS	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.3	15.0
PS	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	4.7

Source: Adapted from National Population Commission Statistics on dropout (NPC Report, 2011, p. 99).

Table 10 shows the pattern of dropout rates in the two regions. It indicates that the dropout rates in CS were highest in Grade 6 (15%) and lowest Grade 3 in CS, while in PS they were lowest in Grade 5 and highest in Grade 6. This also confirms the information from the bureaucrats and analysed documents that the distortions hampering effective implementation of basic education are yet to be resolved. The power of control must be addressed to achieve meaningful outcomes in any aspect of public policy, education inclusive. If not properly addressed, the implication is that policy may run out of time and be too late to solve the problem. The administrative efficiency of civil servants directly influences the process of political and economic development in a country. Basic education

should not suffer institutional failure because of a power struggle between implementation officials.

Food project.

Outside the issue of disarticulation, the bureaucratic challenge has also negatively affected the food project—a mechanism to increase enrolment and take children off the streets in Nigeria. If adequately implemented, this objective would have enabled children with low economic status who could not afford private school attain access to education in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the food project was cancelled because of lack of transparency in ensuring effective use of funds, and lack of implementation. This contributed to a decline in school enrolment and transition. The public is yet to come to terms with the fact that this meal is no longer part of the UBE implementation objectives, especially for a country where the majority of citizens earn less than one dollar per day.

The policy was considered a way to develop healthy eating habits among children in Nigeria public schools—central to their mental and physical development—and to promote growth and reduce the many risks associated with immediate and long-time health issues. The data revealed a general acceptance of the students of the provision of this meal, and that it was a factor that motivated students to attend school, and led to huge success in enrolment across the states of the federation. Revoking the food programme makes a mockery of the original idea of implementing the UBE policy. Other countries have successfully undertaken similar programmes. Examples include India's long tradition of a school food programme since 1920; the *National School Lunch Programme Act* in America, which dates back to 1946; and Brazil's food programme that is written into the country's constitution and includes over 37 million children every year. The literature examined in this study supported the findings that a school meal has been part of education objectives globally (Akanbi &

Alayande, 2011; Anaduaka & Okafor, 2013; Schirm & Kirkendall, 2010; Yunusa, Gumel, Adegbusi & Adegbusi, 2012).

The suggestion is that students under the UBE scheme should be entitled to a meal every day because of the level of poverty in the country. Thus, it is disappointing that the government made the funds available for the food programme, but without a proper mechanism for supervising and monitoring the project. One of the child-related challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa is malnutrition, which continues to be a public problem in developing countries where the low socioeconomic conditions lead to insufficient food being available. Malnutrition affects the cognitive development of children, which contributes to low attendance at school because poor health invariably leads to withdrawal from education. Nigeria and Ethiopia have a high rate of malnutrition because the diet commonly offered to young children is of low quality and often lacks adequate nutritional value (Adewara & Visser, 2011; Grantham-McGregor, 2001; Ogbimi & Ogunba, 2011; Olusanya 2010). The cancellation of the meal project presents a danger to the country, especially for those people in low socioeconomic status communities.

Monitoring mechanism.

The ineffectiveness of UBE has resulted from inadequate monitoring and supervision during implementation. The findings ascertained that a lack of monitoring and supervision has affected the level of advocacy and public enlightenment of the government intentions to provide free and compulsory basic education, especially in the remote regions of Nigeria. The data identified the factors creating this, such as lack of logistics, insensitivity of officials to the importance of UBE policy supervision and lack of funds to remunerate the officers responsible for monitoring UBE programmes in rural areas. One notable issue across the regions was that the supervision and monitoring of the UBE programme was seriously lacking. This seemed to be responsible for the unethical practices recorded in the

implementation programmes, especially in the area of school supplies. The lack of alignment between the bureaucratic officials made monitoring UBE a cumbersome task because of the geographical structure or location of schools. Some schools even within a district/local government were not easily accessible, especially during the rainy season, because of the poor condition of the roads. In some instances, it took close to three days to reach a school for supervision; in another instance, monitoring officials had to paddle a canoe to reach schools in the riverine districts. The view of DPS5 is relevant to place the issue of monitoring in proper perspective:

> the constraint is the issue of roads when you put teachers in some areas. For example, where they have to go by boat … I know of two communities like that, even in a district in PS, and badly enough in those areas the quality of houses there are not acceptable to teachers we post there, so they just have to manage … [they] come back home and they continue to complain of risks. This means that, without adequate logistics, school monitoring may not be effective.

The education bureaucracy in Nigeria was not achieving its stated objectives, and the problem in the system was growing deeper due to the lack of an adequate mechanism for effective monitoring and supervision. The situation of UBE policy monitoring and supervision was weak and the task huge. The constraints on effective supervision and monitoring of the UBE scheme could be attributed to the inadequate vehicles for monitoring, inadequate number of qualified monitoring officers, inadequate office accommodation, lack of funds, lack of transport and time factors.

In this study, educational supervision was concerned with those activities that maintain and promote the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools. Supervision is an action directed towards improving the teaching-learning process. Supervision is concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of the UBE scheme. The focus on supervision is

because there has been no inspection and supervision of schools during the decade of UBE. Supervision of schools is the heart of quality assurance in education. Again, this is where the work of districts and SBMC becomes relevant. The available literature also ascertained that a problem affecting UBE is that of effective supervision and monitoring (Adeyanju, 2010; Anaduaka & Okafor, 2013; Edho, 2009; Ezenkwesili, 2013; Nation, 2011; Obinaju, 2001; Ochoyi & Danlandi, 2008; Onoyase, 1991; Wike, 2011). However, as long as there is lack of synergy among the officials within and across districts, little or no effect will be achieved in terms of monitoring and logistics.
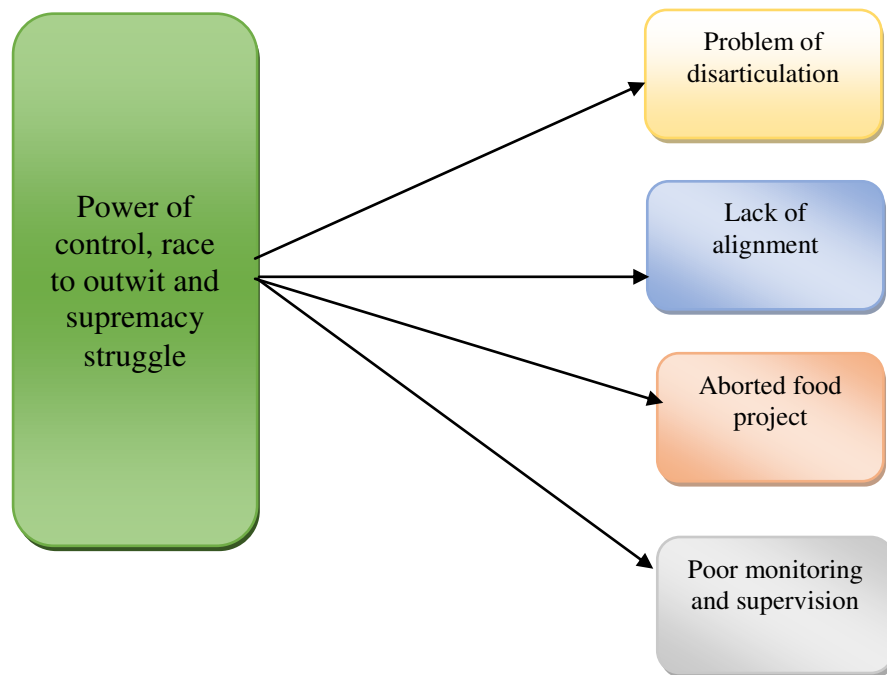
Figure 11. Illustration of the bureaucratic issues that emerged from this study.

Conceptual understanding:

Figure 11 emerged from the discussion of the overall effect that bureaucracy has had on UBE policy implementation. It provides clarification of why achieving successful outcomes in UBE has been problematic. In purpose and intent, the UBE policy is an achievable venture; however, bureaucratic challenges—otherwise known as power of control, race to outwit and supremacy struggle, as revealed in Figure 11—limit the policy's effectiveness. Addressing the highlighted factors is crucial to achieving the UBE objectives, centered on providing unfettered access to basic education.

Rhetoric Without Willpower

Beyond the rhetoric of creating policy initiatives and establishing a bureaucratic mechanism to achieve a favourable policy outcome is the issue of leadership commitment and willpower to ensure that the policy achieves its intent. The best tools, templates and techniques make little difference without the commitment and will from the political administration. This reiterates the importance of leadership and willpower in implementing policy, and a culture of commitment and responsibility to ensure the actualisation of government decisions. These factors must be led from the top of the organisation. The findings from the data provided understanding of the effect of politics on the implementation of UBE policy in Nigeria. Politics and policy are two inseparable actions—while the former focuses on achieving and exercising control, the latter is the principle guiding what should be achieved. Both are rooted in management, financial and administrative mechanisms arranged to reach explicit goals. This reveals the negative effect that rhetoric without willpower has had on UBE implementation across the regions. Rhetoric without willpower has manifested in multiple actors working according to their own interest, rather than the collective interest, which could be termed 'politicisation' or 'political interference'. According to the findings, in the process of implementing UBE, myriad political wills of different stakeholders have come

into play in the form of unethical behaviour—largely from the people who should have been focused on achieving and exercising control. The consequences of these stakeholders' actions have revealed the problems of lack of trust, politics affecting access to education, and politics influencing the appointment of bureaucrats during policy implementation.

These varying political wills were not only exerted by many high-level bureaucrats, political office holders and political parties, but also by myriad local-level politicians and officials in local/district government administrations. Not all these political wills were focused on the same outcomes and, even if they were, numerous other factors affected the translation of policy intent into practice in UBE. This is a clear indication that diverse political wills can often be enacted in contradictory ways to affect policy intent and outcome. This indicates why interviewee GT6 stated that politics were the bane of public policies and programmes in Nigeria. UBE is a well-formulated policy that is yet to be properly implemented to achieve its stated objectives because of the lack of political will to do so. With specific reference to the Nigerian education sector, policies change with every successive government—an example being the previous UPE programmes that suffered implementation failure, which were the forerunner to the UBE programme. This reiterates the position of the interviewees on the disparities in UBE implementation across the regions:

> the problem lies with the governor in each of the states—the priority and political will of the governor. We were in BS recently and what we saw was an eyesore, and the governor claimed he was using his personal money to renovate schools, when you have not make use of public money that is there for you. The state did not access the money. (GT6)

The position of GT6 affirmed the views of the other interviewees, as stated in preceding chapters, that the implementation of UBE lies with the states. It also provides insight into understanding where the priorities of the government lie in UBE policy

implementation. Based on the analysed data and interviews, the mechanism for accessing funds to implement the UBE policy was straightforward, without ambiguity or bureaucratic bottleneck once the contributory counterpart funds were made available to the federal government by the state. Thus, the refusal of the state government to access the funds could be considered will without intention. This is because they would rather use the counterpart funds to oil their political wheels and political patronages instead of implementing the UBE policy. This action is detrimental to the development of education.

The political structure in a state determines the direction of policy implementation. The focus of the parties in Nigeria has been to foster control and maintain hegemony in their respective states. More important is the fact that the political parties in each of the states have the power to deliberate on the system of administration to employ for policy implementation. For example, the party in control of PS was different from that of CS. This was also a reason for the degree of disparity in enrolment, as stated in the preceding chapters. While political control tended to affect policy performance, the state governors seemed to lack the political trust to achieve the goals of the UBE programme. The analysed documents in this study revealed that Nigeria's EFA Development Index is less than 0.8. Nigeria is among 16 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that are far from achieving the EFA goals. The country's basic education level was ranked 132 of 133 countries surveyed. The poor performance of the basic education programme in Nigeria, in terms of achieving its specified objectives, has arisen primarily from implementation failure that is attributed to the lack of political will. The problem of political will is due to the different political parties in control of the states. This is supported by the literature explored in this study that the UBE, like UPE before it, has experienced implementation difficulties as a result of lack of political will on behalf of state governments (Ejere, 2011; Jaiyeoba, 2007; Nation, 2008).

Will without intention has had a strong effect on UBE implementation, and has informed the lack of trust from citizens towards the government initiative. Nigeria is struggling as a result of the influence of poor governance in the education sector. Poor governance, according to the findings, means significantly slow progress towards EFA and undermines the quality of basic education services. This also informs the understanding that, like in many developing countries, policies in Nigeria usually emanate from the political system, rather than the demands of the citizens. The analysed data revealed that Nigeria has more primary-age children out of school than any other country in the world, due to the unwillingness of the state governments to implement UBE. Lack of political will and commitment at all levels of government has also manifested in ineffective political leadership, commitment and firm resolve, which are essential for the programme to succeed. The literature concurred that the state governments that were expected to play a pivotal role in implementing the UBE programme were yet to give sufficient attention to effect the UBE implementation decisions (Ajayi, 2007; Edho, 2009; Egonmwan, 2002; Omokhodion, 2008; UNESCO, 2009).

The slogan 'Education for All' remains a myth, not a reality, in Nigeria because the government has not done enough to sensitise people to the UBE programme and law. Despite the availability of public policies that aim to improve living standards for Nigerians, the states lack the political will to positively realise such policy objectives. Although the objectives of government policies seek to benefit the public, the cable that holds the top echelon of government hostage jeopardises the implementation of public policies, education inclusive. It appears to suggest that policies or programme that do not involve the targeted beneficiaries in their formulation and execution will struggle to be sustained. This is because the target groups are hardly involved in policy design or implementation—they are onlookers, rather than participants. Nation (2008), Egbulefu (2009), Eminue (2005) and

Anifowose and Enemuo (2008) agreed that programme sustainability is problematic with uncommitted or disinterested targets, which is typical of the UBE policy in Nigeria.

Unethical behaviour.

As stated in the earlier part of this discussion, the negative implications of political will without intention have encouraged the unethical behaviour revealed by this study. Numerous mismanagements were observed, especially in the area of funds allocated to the implementation programme (KF 3; KF 4; KF 5; KF 7). Instances of diverting the funds intended for the UBE project to personal use were daily occurrences among public officials. Some officials of SUBEB—like others in public offices across the country—would delay or even deny teachers access to services if the teacher refused to offer gratification. Teachers' files could be declared missing, but resurfaced after they had tipped the officer in charge. This corrupt attitude of office holders often discouraged teachers and created unnecessary bottlenecks and hindrances to UBE's success. The interviewees mentioned that books meant for distribution to the schools were often insufficient or irrelevant. They stated that when LGEA officials went to SUBEB for the books, they had to pay the storekeeper or not receive the required books. Bureaucrats, teachers and school administrators joined politicians in this unethical practice, which has restricted the supposed efforts to curb corruption. Another hidden cost, as mentioned earlier, is school administrators demanding bribes in order to register a child in school. Meanwhile, in the state SUBEBs, cases of corruption were in the form of awarding contracts without following due process; promoting staff; dispensation of justice; misuse of public offices, positions and privileges; embezzlement of public funds; book publishing; publications; documents; valuable security and accounts.

The state control over UBE policy implementation is a cause for concern because of cases of misappropriation of both political office holders and implementers. The UBE policy was inaugurated to increase access to basic education, and there were demands for more

teachers in all states of the federation. The federal government responded to this by providing funds to recruit more qualified teachers; however, some state governors used these funds for electioneering purposes. In addition, a former regional television boss alleged that the previous government in NS awarded fictitious contracts for UBE implementation in a bid to finance political campaigns. Similarly, the data revealed that the stunted development in the UBE in PS, CS and other states to perennial systemic corruption in government and their external political patrons, which has left the sector in a state of total collapse. The systemic corruption of politicians has led to the near collapse of education infrastructure in the state. The literature explored in this study also pointed to corruption and misappropriation of public funds as factors derailing basic education implementation. Corruption in Nigeria has been widely studied, and the subject receives a large amount of international attention, often because Nigeria consistently ranks among the most corrupt countries in the world, according to Transparency International. With the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission recently estimating that US$500 billion was stolen or lost between 1960 and 2007 in Nigeria, this reputation is not undeserved (Achebe, 1983; daCosta, 2008; Diamond, 1993, pp. 215–225; Ezekwesili, 2013; Olagunju, 2013; Olarenwaju, 2013; Smith 2007).

Corruption is a major threat to the present education policy and should be decisively investigated if the UBE programme is to be achieved. It has adversely affected infrastructure, funding, standards of education and every sector of society in general. Corruption penetrates the implementation process, which has mutated public policies and made the desired goals unachievable. Most public policies are being formulated with funds appropriated for their implementation, but corruption has continued to disrupt the implementation process—it is a social malaise that has permeated every policy. Due to corruption, Nigerians are still affected by poverty, despite efforts being made to alleviate it. The resources appropriated for the implementation of public policies are criminally diverted to private ends, hence frustrating

the implementation process. Paki and Inokoba (2006); Kanu and Aknwa (2012); Etuk, Ering and Ajake (2012); Osondu (2012); Onuoha (2012) and Olagunju (2012) affirmed that most Nigerian public policies only exist as avenues through which corrupt politicians drain state resources. As a result of the state enjoying autonomy and independence, those who control state power use it to enrich themselves, which is detrimental to policy implementation.

This unethical practice has seriously undermined the provision of quality education in Nigeria. The overall goals of the education sector enunciated in the UBE policy cannot be achieved by stakeholders without strict adherence to rules and regulations. Corruption is the major challenge in the UBE programme. A number of public office holders in Nigeria are more concerned with amassing wealth than doing their jobs. These bureaucrats are so undisciplined that they divert significant resources intended for the education system to their personal accounts. The consequences of this unethical practice have manifested in the politics of access, lack of trust, and appointment of bureaucrats to positions of implementation. It is instructive to know that the unethical behaviour explored in this study is the major issue affecting UBE implementation across the states. The four consequences mentioned and identified in Figure 12 below are the results of the unethical behaviour that has undermined the realisation of the UBE policy objectives.

Politics of access.

Access in this study connotes enrolment, attendance and transition in UBE. From the findings, access in UBE could be referred to as marginal, especially when compared with the government's huge investment in education during the decade of UBE implementation in Nigeria. The effect of the UBE policy has been more felt in rural areas than in urban areas. UBE started very well, with enrolment increasing, especially in remote areas; however, when politicians interfered, enrolment dropped. This accounted for the marginal success of the UBE policy. The success of UBE recorded in rural areas was premised on factors such as the

food project, provision of school supplies and administration of schools, prior to the politicians affecting the management of the policy. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the federal government's lack of consultation with the other tiers of government (states and districts) and stakeholders was a factor that led to only marginal improvement in access in the UBE policy. There were situations in which the federal government formulated policies without consulting the local governments, then directed them to implement these policies without providing adequate information.

Despite the fact that UBE emphasised free and compulsory education, there were hidden costs of education that negatively affected access. These hidden costs included purchasing uniforms, textbooks, notebooks, pencils and pens, and many children were unable to access school because of these expenses. In addition, some state governments required tax payments from parents as a condition of enrolling children in schools. The insight from the data is that no matter how few the costs associated with education may be, there will be parents who cannot afford it, which will keep children out of school. Due to economic hardship, many school-age children are forced to undertake menial jobs, such as hawking or truck pushing, to augment the family income. Based on the analysed documents, there has been a continuing drop in school enrolments, and the reason for this is that, more than a decade after the introduction of UBE, basic education remains an expensive undertaking, rather than the free social service declared by the government (KF 7).

The compulsory component of the UBE programme largely depends on the extent to which it is made truly free. This further explains the relevance of planning in implementing policy decisions devoid of political interference. The understanding of the effect of the UBE policy of free education is that it is a policy that allows a great inflow of students into schools. While enrolment rates in schools appeared to increase after the announcement of fee-free schooling, polarisation remained strong, with transition to the best secondary schools

restricted to a small subset of schools. This implies that access to primary schooling may have improved, but not significantly—a clear indication that the quality of what students can access has deteriorated, which is primarily a failure in adequate planning. This is a factor that the analysed data identified as a challenge to UBE.

Planning is of paramount importance in the formulation of policies to promote improvements in access to, and quality of, basic education and in no matter what your venture might be. Therefore, the design of the methods of policy implementation is critical to implementation success. Wrong choices of methods can affect implementation and cause policy failure because the instruments, methods, knowledge, technology, equipment, models and modes of delivery used in implementing a policy determine whether implementation and performance are successful (Almond, 2001; Beebeejam, Rees & Richardson, 2012; Ikelegbe, 2005; Somerest, 2010). In most cases, the Nigerian states downplayed the crucial issue of the implementation design of public policies. This translated to the advent of public policies without clear-cut mechanisms of implementation. As a result, policy objectives were often misinterpreted or abandoned.

Rhetoric without willpower has also caused the public to distrust government intentions in terms of public service deliverables. The findings revealed that public perceptions of government decisions remain a large problem as a result of the failure on behalf of the government to keep promises made in the past. It has become impossible to sell government intention to the public because of the inconsistency in policy implementation, especially for education policy. The low patronage of public schools, even in urban areas, was a result of the lack of trust. This could be attributed to the incursion of politicians into the administration of the UBE policy, which has also made private schools more appealing than the public schools. According to the data, there was a strong increase in access to public schools in the first two years of UBE because it was administered by seasoned school

administrators, without undue interference. The decline in enrolment in public schools over the years has been an effect of the general perception towards government policy initiative.

Public opinion exerts a significant influence on policy outcomes in the sense that it measures the degree to which the public think it should be the government's responsibility to ensure effective implementation of the policy. If public support affects policy, there would be positive alignment between the people and the government. Increase in public perception produces an increase in policy output, while lack of public perceptions can result in policy failure. The literature supported the fact that public trust remains substantial even when the activities of political organisations and elites refuse to consider public opinion on policy matters (Brooks & Manza, 2006, 2007; Burstein, 2003; Kenworthy, 2009). Public perception determines the effect of policy outcomes and serves as a gauge to measure the success of policy. The assessment of the public's perceptions of the UBE policy clearly revealed that the policy has not achieved its desired outcome in relation to access to education.

Politics in appointment.

The effect of lack of political will was also seen in the appointment of UBE officials. The insights from the data indicated that appointing, promoting and disciplining errant officials were factors responsible for the ineffective implementation of UBE across the states. The implementing bureaucrats in the states unethically appointed people to positions of authority (educational offices) without giving adequate consideration to their qualifications. This was a cause of division, acrimony and insubordination among bureaucrats in CS. There were records of people given undue promotion because they belonged to a particular ethnic group in the state. In addition, there were cases of teachers indicted for misconduct and unethical behaviour who were not reprimanded due to political interference by the UBE administration (KF3; KF4; KF5; KF7).

Policy decision has an element of political influence; however, achieving policy objectives should be the priority of the government. This means that maintaining neutrality in appointing bureaucratic officials largely determines whether a policy will be achieved. Political consideration in policy implementation is more biased than focused on the national interest. The views of Sossin (2006); Matheson, Weber, Manning and Arnould (2007); and Aminu et al. (2012) explored in this study affirmed the negative implications political consideration has on policy decisions. Hence, neutrality in public administration is a precondition for ensuring that, regardless of political orientation, citizens are treated fairly. This is delivered by emphasising professionalism, merit and competence among public servants. These values are important to ensure the level of justice and continuity in public administration—a significant determinant of how much trust citizens place in their government. Public servants must also be accountable to the government for the effective delivery of its programme, while the responsiveness of the administration to the government within the law and constitution is key to the effective implementation of government policies. Thus, it will be impossible to achieve policy success in UBE without aligning political consideration with the will of the people.
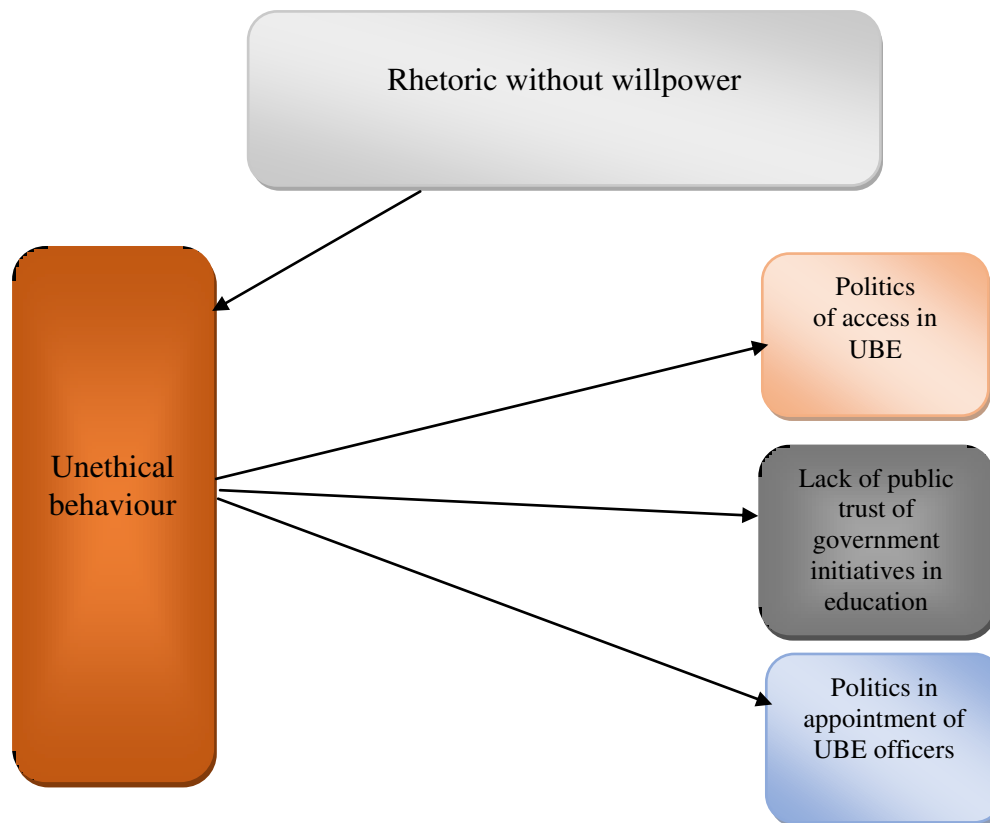
Figure 12. Illustration of rhetoric without willpower in UBE policy.

Conceptual understanding:

Rhetoric without willpower is attributed as a factor in the failure of past policies. In UBE, this has again manifested in the form of unethical behaviour by the people who exercise control over UBE implementation. This unethical behaviour has had far-reaching effects on UBE, as evidenced in Figure 12. There is no doubt that politics play a considerable role in achieving government intentions; however, the degree of political involvement in implementing the UBE policy has affected its level of success. The ultimate solution to achieve the UBE objectives enshrined in the policy is premised on the level of commitment of all stakeholders, including political office holders.

The Synthesis

This section maps this study's findings regarding the challenge of implementing education policy in Nigeria. The findings are discussed against the backdrop of the adapted model of policy implementation process created by Meter and Horn (1975) (Figure 5). It also provides the needed information on the outcomes of the study, as informed by the two research questions driving the study discussed in Chapter 8. The findings are synthesised in terms of policy, bureaucracy and politics across the organisational structure of educational policy implementation in Nigeria (Figures 7, 8 and 9).

Policy.

The policy, as stated in the blueprint of implementation, aimed to remove distortions and inconsistencies in basic education delivery and reinforce the implementation of the policy, as well as provide greater access to, and ensure the quality of, basic education throughout Nigeria. In summary, it was intended to ensure uninterrupted access to nine years formal education by:

- providing free, compulsory basic education for every child of school-going age

- reducing school dropout

- improving education relevance, quality and efficiency

- providing midday meals to enhance children's access, retention and completion of the school cycle

- disarticulating junior secondary/high school from senior secondary schools

- encouraging community ownership of schools, including participation in decision-making processes in schools (UBEC, 2004).

The findings captured as intent, insight and reflection revealed that the policy has yet to become a reality in Nigerian education experience because of the inconsistencies in implementing the policy objectives. The current study has revealed that formulating policy

initiatives for educational reform in Nigeria is not an issue—the challenge has always been how to effectively implement the policy objectives (UBEC, 2004). Several previous studies in Nigeria have also focused on the challenge of implementation (Adamolekun, 1986; Aminu et al., 2012; Okotoni, 2001).

Bureaucracy.

The power of control, race to outwit and supremacy struggle capture the bureaucratic challenges of implementing the UBE policy intention, which have negatively affected access in terms of the enrolment, attendance and progression of Nigerian children in the UBE programme. This affirms that the primary goal of introducing UBE—to enhance access to education (EFA) in response to the UN's MDGs (MDG, 2006) and the Jomentien Declaration on education, of which Nigeria is a signatory (Okiy, 2004)—is yet to be realised. The findings in this study revealed that the bureaucratic operations of implementing UBE have not been effective in addressing lack of access to education (Akowe, 2011; NPC, 2011; UNESCO, 2009).

Politics.

Rhetoric without willpower indicates that politics play an integral role in achieving policy intentions. As revealed in the current study, politics have adversely affected the realisation of the UBE objectives in Nigeria. Thus, politics have made the achievement of the educational policies in Nigeria fall short of the desired outcome (Somerest, 2010). The political issue in implementation was multifaceted in nature, including intra- and inter-ministerial jurisdictions. Politics within the bureaucratic structure at the SUBEB level, LGEA level and between SUBEB and the MOE militated against achieving policy intentions across the states (Aminu et al., 2012; Ezekwesili, 2013). The effects of this problem were evident in the factors discussed under the bureaucratic issue.

Effective Policy Implementation

To effectively provide unfettered access to education under the UBE policy, a number of policy goals must be met. The model of policy implementation (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975) adapted for this study is relevant to ensuring that every child of school age has access to education, particularly in terms of implementing and evaluating policy decisions.

Implementation goal.

The bureaucratic structure of implementing UBE policy decisions in Nigeria affects the implementation task due to the top-down hierarchical organisational behaviour, with layers of bureaucracy between the federal, state and district levels. Apart from the fact that the bureaucratic structure makes responses to implementation tasks very slow, it also gives room for lack of alignment and unhealthy interpersonal relationships, which inhibit implementation communication and understanding of policy matters. The data collected on this study affirmed the challenge of alignment within the structure of implementation. Despite bureaucrats' understanding of policy intentions, the problem of communication within the organisational structure was a major factor affecting the success in implementing the UBE objectives.

The policy is clear enough that the bureaucrats understand their roles in UBE implementation. However, lack of alignment towards implementation and poor communication is responsible for the slow pace in implementing government decisions, as seen in the distribution of school supplies and lack of appropriate and relevant textbooks. According to the data, attaining school supplies has been a serious task, with the loose supervision of school materials creating room for the unethical practice reported in CS, where books intended for schools were found in private bookshops across the states.

Evaluation goal.

As stated in the findings, the monitoring mechanism of UBE policy implementation has been very weak. Ensuring adequate compliance to the rules and regulations of implementing policy decisions has not been achieved because of lack of supervision and monitoring. The bureaucrats at GT noted that, since the introduction of UBE in 1999, no research study of this nature has been conducted to evaluate the efficacy of UBE policy implementation. The current study, based on its findings, revealed that the challenge of public perception and lack of response to policy decisions are issues that are yet to be addressed in the UBE. Few of the achievements recorded in UBE have been attributed to the effort of SBMC, which has served as the link between the SUBEB and the school. The districts that are responsible for this initiative gave excuses based on lack of logistics and remunerations for monitoring of schools, especially schools in rural areas, considering that most of these schools are in locations that are difficult to access due to the poor condition of roads.

It has been established that the barriers to UBE implementation are within the implementation and evaluation goals, as identified in the implementation model. The hierarchical structure of implementing UBE policy in Nigeria, as stated in the model, revealed that the layers of bureaucracy and duplication of bureaucratic functions are major factors responsible for the issues that have prevented effective policy implementation. Such issues include lack of alignment, poor interpersonal relationships, politics, lack of monitoring and poor public perception. The model of implementation is the most appropriate for policy implementation of UBE in Nigeria, with emphasis on the implementation and evaluation issues raised in this study (Figure 13).
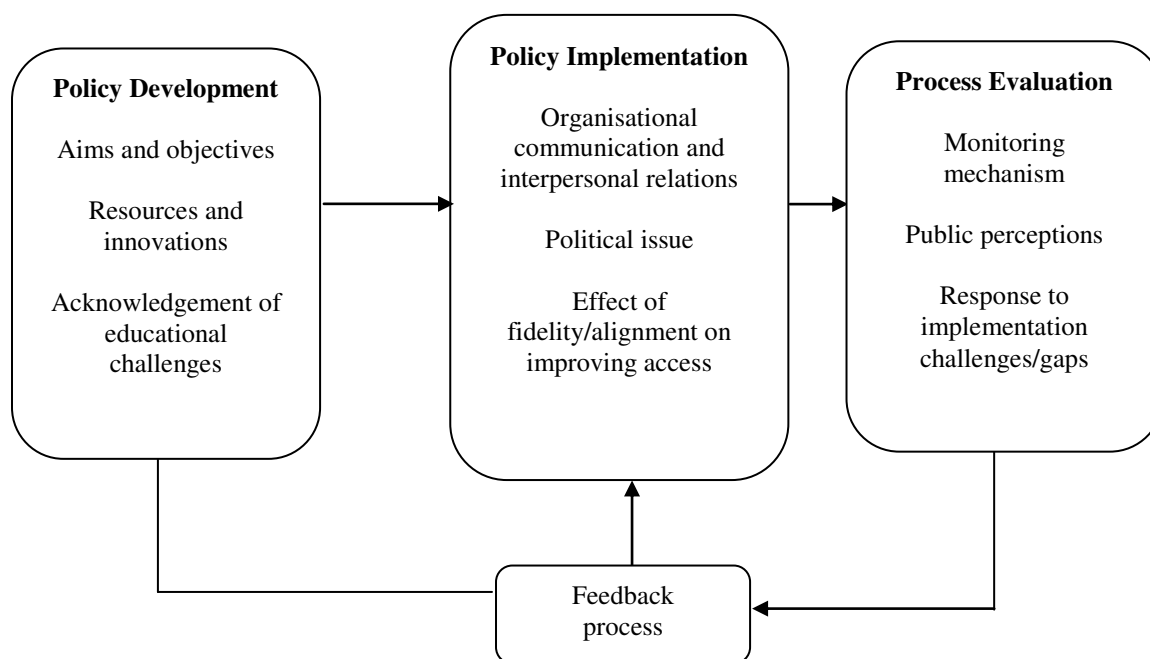
Figure 13. Model for implementing UBE policy in Nigeria.

This study has shown that bureaucrats are the bedrock of successful policy initiative because they are the link between the government and schools. This study has revealed that, for any policy of the government to be successful, the level of involvement of the system level of implementation is crucial. The small achievements recorded in terms of infrastructure in schools across the states show that bureaucrats' roles cannot be jettisoned in the implementation of any policy. Thus, achieving or improving access in UBE policy implementation is tied to addressing the problems with implementation and evaluation, as stated above. This synthesis assisted the conceptualisation of the policy implementation process and its effect on achieving access in the UBE policy. The researcher has drawn on the Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) model of policy implementation to understand how the level of alignment within the bureaucratic paradigm of implementation process affects access to basic education in Nigeria.

This model is appropriate for creating a shift in implementing the UBE policy. This model has explained the three key areas (interpersonal relationship/alignment, supervision and feedback mechanism) that are crucial to effectively implement UBE. One of the key areas is communication. This study has identified the challenge of interpersonal relationship alignment as a result of poor communication among the implementers, which is an essential ingredient for effective implementation of policies. It is through communication that orders to implement are adequately clarified; thus, implementation instructions that are not adequately communicated may cause serious obstacles in realising a policy task. However, while inconsistencies in policy directives affect policy decisions, so do precise directives that leave no room for implementers to exercise discretion and flexibility in making decisions on implementation issues. The model also explains the important role of bureaucratic structure for monitoring policies.

The fact that communication among bureaucrats is central to effective implementation, ineffectiveness in policy implementation may arise if adequate attention is not paid to the monitoring mechanism to see through policy decision especially in the developing nations such as Nigeria that requires the cooperation of many people. It may also result in wastage of scarce resources, inhibit change, create confusion, lead to policies working at cross-purposes, and result in important functions being overlooked. Stripped of all technicalities, implementation problems in most developing nations result from a widening gap between intentions and results. This explains why the adopted model is suitable for UBE implementation. This model has revealed the crucial role of feedback mechanisms in policy implementation in Nigeria, which has been downplayed by bureaucrats. As discussed in Chapter 2, the SBMC is appropriate not only for attaining feedback on policy decisions, but also for other areas of evaluating the processes or goals of public policy. If adequately explored, this model would assist in achieving the policy intentions in Nigeria.

Summary

This chapter grouped the emerging issues into three topics—intent, insight and reflection; power of control, race to outwit and supremacy struggle; and rhetoric without willpower—otherwise known as a policy issue, a bureaucratic issue and politics. This was done to give clarity to the work and help distinguish the factors accordingly, although these factors are also related to one another. The key findings from Chapters 5 and 6 informed the line of discussion in this chapter against the backdrop of the conceptual framework and interpreted literature review. The chapter examined the present status of policy development and implementation, and discussed the factors affecting the implementation of basic education in the three regions of the federation, against the realisation of the objectives of UBE. The discussions were based on the ability to overcome the perceived challenges facing UBE in order to improve access to education in Nigeria. The emergent issues in the study revealed that there has been no attempt to solve the identified factors affecting the success of UBE implementation. As stated in the findings, there has been only marginal improvement in the provision of infrastructure. Otherwise, based on the findings and literature review, the factors that made the previous policies unsuccessful are the same issues hindering the UBE objectives.

Based on the data, it remains concerning that over 14 million Nigerian children are yet to attain access to education, despite the huge investment to provide unfettered access to basic education. This has resulted from inadequate planning on behalf of the government, and non-alignment among the bureaucrats with the responsibility of translating the policy intent to action. The findings revealed that the challenge was not that the government lacks policies, programmes and initiatives, but that the strategies for implementing policies have been lacking, based on the background information provided on the stages of education policy development in Nigeria. The research participants also pointed out that policy developers

understand the rudiments of policy development, but failure occurred at the implementation stage. This explains why the role of the authority in relation to policy is essential for policy to be successful. This implies that policy failure is not a result of lack of adequate knowledge of policy creation, but that of poor implementation caused by lack of reflection on behalf of the implementing officials.

The refusal of the states to accord the UBE the level of seriousness it deserves, despite broad acknowledgement that the UBE policy was well formulated and articulated, was another barrier. The unsatisfactory progress of the UBE policy, according to the findings, was due the lack of political will to implement. This study has made it very clear that the problem lies with the governor in each of the states, with the priority and political will of the governors having not been effective in turning the policy to action. This seems to have accounted for the disparity in UBE implementation across the regions. According to the data, the funds to recruit teachers and undertake the other activities needed to boost education have often been diverted or used for political purposes. Thus, the non-alignment of bureaucrats with policy implementation remains a central issue in UBE.

The insight from the findings established that the attitude of policy implementers has affected UBE implementation performance. The struggle for control due to overlapping bureaucracy between the SUBEB, MOE and LGEA has created a bottleneck in the progress of UBE in Nigeria. This was evident in the areas of monitoring and supervision, lack of alignment (which clouded reason in advising governments appropriately on aspects of the food project), and disarticulation of schools—all of which are the negative effects of bureaucratic rivalry. This underscores the fact that the administrative efficiency of civil servants directly influences the process of political and economic development of a country.

Overlapping bureaucracy has been identified as a factor leading to the increase in numbers of children on the street, which has continued to attract global attention because the

phenomenon of street children has continued increased in most major urban streets in Nigeria. Basic education should not be allowed to suffer institutional failure because of the power of control on behalf of implementation officials. The findings indicated that the efficiency of the government in realising the policy objectives lies in the hand of civil servants. In other words, policy actualisation needs more capable, powerful and productive civil servants with more quality and efficient operational abilities to provide the necessary boost to UBE policy realisation. The recommendations for improving access in the implementation of UBE are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 8: Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusions

Introduction

This chapter presents the outcomes of this study on the effect of the bureaucratic mechanism on UBE policy implementation in Nigeria. This chapter includes an overview of the study and conclusion. It highlights the contribution to knowledge and limitations of the study, reports on the implications of the study, and provides recommendations for the effective implementation of the UBE policy in Nigeria.

Overview of the Study

As reiterated above, this study explored the effect of the bureaucratic structure of policy on achieving unfettered access in the UBE policy in two geo-political zones (PS and CS) and the Federal Capital Territory (GT) in Nigeria. The data for this study were drawn from the regions (PS and CS) and the Federal Capital Territory (GT) in Nigeria. The data were captured through interviews with the bureaucrats responsible for implementing UBE in the states identified, and from documents analysed to gain factual evidence in understanding the efficacy of various administrations in terms of policy implementation. This study employed a case study that was designed to gather the data required to answer the two research questions.

The study's participants were bureaucrats whose positions cut across all the bureaucratic levels of UBE policy implementation in Nigeria, as stated in Chapter 4 (Table 3), which comprised the ES of UBEC, the chairperson of SUBEB, directors at both the UBEC and SUBEB, and supervisors at the LGEAs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the participants, coupled with document analysis that included reports on education policy documents and national, state, district and legislative reports. The documents were analysed to clarify policy initiative and the extent of its implementation during the period of study. The interviews were used to gather qualitative data on the extent

of coherence in purpose, policy and programme implementation. The study drew on the perspectives of the implementation model in Figure 13 to arrive at the findings.

Conclusions

The findings from the data from the interviews and documents were analysed and interpreted in relation to the literature review, and then generalised to develop the conceptual understanding that informed the conclusions. The conclusions in the following sections are based on the two main research questions of this study.

Research question one: In what ways did the level of fidelity in the bureaucratic policy implementation process affect access to basic education in Nigeria?

The analysis of data revealed that the level of alignment that manifested in the form of power of control, race to outwit and supremacy struggle among the bureaucrats was responsible for the uneven implementation of the UBE policy across all the states in Nigeria. It provided clarification why achieving successful outcomes in UBE has been problematic. The UBE policy, in its purpose and intent, seems to be an achievable venture, except for this bureaucratic challenge. The findings established that the bureaucrats had sufficient knowledge of the policy and good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in implementing the government intentions regarding the UBE programme. However, the bureaucrats lacked the required skills and knowledge to turn policy intent to action. Although the majority of bureaucrats were on secondment from other government ministries and parastatal, with little in-depth knowledge of how to implement education policy, they were able to grasp what the policy required in terms of implementation (KF1, KF2, KF3 and KF4). The ability to actualise the UBE policy was evident in pockets of achievements recorded in the area of infrastructure across all the states; however, the lack of alignment in the implementation task on behalf of the bureaucrats marred the effective implementation of the UBE objectives (KF4 and KF5).

The power of control, race to outwit one another in implementing policy decisions, and rivalry for supremacy were the bureaucratic bottlenecks that made impact on access of any huge significant. The disposition of the bureaucrats towards the UBE implementation task frustrated the intentions of policymakers. As identified in the data, the important roles of the bureaucrats in Nigeria in achieving many of the government's policies and programmes, especially in education, cannot be overemphasised. However, their effect has been limited because of the lack of alignment that seems to affect the bureaucrats' disposition to the UBE. The bureaucrats' disposition placed obstacles in the way of the policies being formulated by the policymakers, especially those policies about which the bureaucrats held divergent opinions or were not of direct benefit to them. As such, the power of control, race to outwit and supremacy struggle identified in this study were tactics employed to thwart UBE policy implementation. The findings revealed that the bureaucrats were not always altruistic or acting according to professional norms because of their many conflicting roles. It is critical in Nigeria to separate personal interest, prejudice and the influence of primordial values in the conduct of official business by bureaucrats.

These reasons indicate why policy fails in Nigeria. If bureaucrats are not favourably disposed towards a policy, they may not approach its implementation with the enthusiasm that the policy requires, as the case with UBE. Thus, the zeal with which bureaucrats in Nigeria implement policy depends on how they see the policy as affecting their personal, ethnic and organisational interests and aspirations. Positive effects will induce enthusiastic implementation, while the contrary may mean that implementation is resisted, thwarted or even sabotaged. The bureaucratic bottleneck identified in the data was in the form of certain primordial interests that affected implementation tasks because of the sectional or personal interests of the bureaucrats. Interest or influence was obvious in the area of promotion to leadership positions. The bureaucratic structure was based on political patronage or loyalty,

and not on relevant experience and seniority, as was the case in CS. For example, the appointment, promotion and appraisal of staff were undertaken in a negative and particularistic manner related to ethnic affiliations in the states. The result of this was the ineffective implementation of policies that prevented the realisation of the UBE goals and objectives. Another example of such political control was in the area of location of schools: bureaucrats were not even allowed to take decisions or actions on basic routine administrative matters without the consultation and consent of relevant political authorities. The extent to which politics influence bureaucratic activities will continue to determine and shape the ability of policies to be properly and effectively implemented by the education bureaucracy in Nigeria.

Thus, bureaucrats promoted under such circumstances were seen to be more morally bound to their official decisions and actions, and to the preferences, control and endorsement of their political leaders. The undue political influence on UBE policy implementation suggested that the political leaders in Nigeria formulate policy and control the implementation of the policy. Their actions were mostly motivated by personal or political interests. The implication of this is that bureaucrats cannot effectively implement policies and meaningfully contribute to national development as long as policy remains controlled by political authorities. As discussed earlier, the view of Meter and Horn (1975) deepened the understanding of the effect of bureaucratic alignment on policy implementation. As stated in the six variables by Meter and Horn (1975), the interest and commitment of bureaucrats to implementation is an essential factor to realise implementation. This study has established that the challenge with UBE implementation was not a result of lack of clear understanding of policy objectives, but lack of alignment—power of control, race to outwit and supremacy struggle—among the bureaucrats undertaking the implementation tasks.

Research question two: How did the actions of the bureaucrats affect access to basic education in Nigeria?

The intent of the UBE policy initiative was to ensure that all school-age children in Nigeria attained uninterrupted access to education. This study's data established that lack of alignment of the bureaucrats responsible for implementing the policy negatively affected the realisation of access to education. As stated in the discussion chapter, bureaucratic issues in the form of control, as in whose jurisdiction it was to implement UBE: the SUBEBs or the MOEs in all the states. Overlapping bureaucracy without direct constitutional guidelines about where authority lay in implementing government decisions on UBE made access to education unachievable (KF7). The data also showed the issue of alignment within the bureaucratic mechanism of policy implementation as a problem that militated against the realisation of UBE objectives in all the states, despite the substantial financial investment of the government. The lack of alignment in this study was in the form of an unhealthy class struggle among the bureaucrats. This manifested in a situation where some individuals considered themselves superior in terms of implementing policy objectives. In the districts in CS, there were two groups trying to outwit one another in UBE implementation because of internal wrangling among the bureaucrats in the LGEAs over the appointment of the ES (KF7). Lack of adequate monitoring, the aborted food project and the problem of disarticulation (the process of transition from basic to senior classes) were other administrative challenges that made achieving access in UBE impossible (KF7).

The action of the bureaucrats led to the existence of willpower without intention—otherwise known as political issues—in UBE policy implementation. This was notable in the data analysed. During the initial stage of policy implementation, there was significant improvement in the area of enrolment, transition and upwards movement from one level of education attainment to the next. However, the appointment of politicians as the

administrative heads of SUBEBs in all the states slowed the pace of implementation (KF7). The lack of political will by the governor to implement government intentions eventually weakened policy implementation. The lack of political will had three aspects. First was the refusal of the governors to contribute funds, and their unwillingness to access the allocated funds for UBE implementation (KF7). Second was the unethical practice of both the politicians and bureaucrats in charge of implementing the UBE policy. For example, there were pockets of indictments of some of SUBEB and UBEC officials in relation to misappropriation of funds, and financial inducement in award of contracts and school supplies (KF7). These first two challenges were responsible for the lack of public trust in government policies and programmes (KF7). Even when the government's intentions were genuine, the public distrusted them, which increased the preference for private schools, regardless of the cost and quality of education. This led to the situation in which even the officials responsible for implementing government decisions were not keen to send their children to public schools. The third issue regarding political will was the inconsistency of the government towards policy initiatives. It was obvious that judging the government based on their policy initiative or intention is really not an issue as the data showed, but the intricacies at implementing the policy remains a dilemma in Nigerian experience.

Thus, the implementation of the policy intentions of the government resides not at the school level, but at the system level, of policy implementation. This study has provided information to demonstrate that providing access in the UBE policy depends largely on having focused, responsible and purposeful political leaders at the heads of the various government tiers (federal, state and local/district government) and honest and dedicated bureaucratic leaders at the board levels of education/organisation bureaucracies. The democratisation process in Nigeria should be a platform to aid and hasten visionary and

purposeful leaders who will be more inclined to ensure that policies effectively address societal problems in Nigeria.

This study showed that bureaucratic and political issues remain a large challenge in policy implementation in Nigeria. It is necessary to ensure that bureaucrats have dedication and commitment to implementing policies, devoid of conflicting interests, and to significantly diminish the unethical tendencies of public bureaucrats to ensure the proper use of allocated funds for implementing policies. Allowing bureaucrats to exercise control and authority over implementation tasks means there should be a conscious effort by the government to reduce political influence over bureaucratic activities in Nigeria. This will help the bureaucrats to and bureaucrats in authority are allowed to exercise real control and authority and to be able to function freely and apply some basic ideals of Weberian organisational concept, as stated in Chapter 3 on bureaucracy, in their administrative processes and procedures.

The data showed uneven implementation of policy across the states as a result of lack of adequate supervision and monitoring. Effective implementation requires adequate monitoring of the implementation task, which is achievable through decentralisation. The trend in policy monitoring favours decentralisation, which this study identified as a means to enhance the efficiency and responsiveness of bureaucrats to societal needs at both the state and district levels. This is expected to bring major changes in the institutional and managerial roles of UBE implementation in Nigeria. The overall objective of the UBE policy is to provide unfettered access to basic education. As showed in this study, realising this objective requires adequate supervision and monitoring of the UBE policy. Given the number of education policies that have been formulated in Nigeria since independence, the nation should have great levels of access to education among Nigerian school-age children, which should have enhanced the social, economic and political development of the nation.

However, the reverse has been the case, which indicates that there has not been effective implementation of those policies by bureaucrats due to the lack of adequate monitoring of policy implementation tasks.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study has contributed to the existing understanding of policy initiatives and implementation programmes in Nigeria, and explored the issues that inhibit effective policy implementation at the system level. It has generated a model to frame investigation of policy implementation based on the implementation and evaluation processes advocated by Meter and Horn (1975). This new conceptual model clearly revealed that policy objectives are achievable once the issues associated with the bureaucratic structure of policy implementation are considered and adequately addressed before undertaking any policy initiative. The evidence from this study revealed that one of the determinants of achieving effective policy implementation is the level of alignment of the bureaucrats at the federal, state and district levels.

Several studies have been conducted in the past in the areas of school achievement or academic performance, and teaching efficacy and performance; however, none has investigated the effect of the bureaucratic structure of policy on ensuring that educational policies achieve their desired outcomes. Thus, this study has generated new understanding regarding the education implementation agencies in Nigeria, with the aim of ensuring that education policies will be assessed to gain societal perceptions of the implementation tasks. This would enable all stakeholders at the level of policy formulation to develop a response to the policy and achieve its purpose. The current study is important to address the challenge that lack of access poses to developing an educated workforce in Nigeria, and developing countries in general. This supports the national objective of Nigeria to provide equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens in and out of the formal school system.

Limitations of the Study

This study had some limitations. First, the data for the study were obtained from interviews and document analysis with participants within a particular context; thus, they cannot be considered representative of the entire population of the country. Second, the study was restricted to the bureaucrats at the UBEC, SUBEB and LGEA levels in two geo-political zones of the country, and had no input from private stakeholders whose contributions to education have been well commended. Thus, the data were only a reflection of the views of the public officials in charge of policy implementation in Nigeria.

Implications for Further Research

This study explored the effect of the bureaucratic mechanisms of policy implementation at the system level of policy implementation. Further study is suggested to investigate the effect of the SBMC on policy implementation of UBE in Nigeria. The Canadian Joint Consortium Report (2010) acknowledges the role of stakeholders in policy implementation in schools. This is because if implementation strategies are well developed with due cognizance of the role of the stakeholders at the district or school level, local stakeholder groups may be more inclined to become involved in ensuring the intended goals at the school–district or provincial level are achieved. Involving stakeholders in implementing policy is an innovation in realisation because they understand the landscape, as well as the intended level of policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation. SBMC as reflected in the data, are retired professionals and local based community stakeholders quite knowledgeable about issues affecting policy implementation in their locality. This means that they would be able to provide adequate information towards improving access to educational opportunity in Nigeria.

According to Blau and Presser (2013), school based management is an important area of educational research because it is a tool for effective policy implementation and decision

making. School management systems emphasize information flow and communication between teachers, students, and parents at ensuring that government intentions are achieved. This aligns with Opara (2011) when he asserted that the principle of continuous close monitoring and supervision of the learning programme for a decade of implementation is crucial to know the effect of the policy on the citizenry. Thus, in SBM, responsibility for, and decision-making authority over, school operations is given to parents and sometimes to other school community members. However, these school-level actors must conform to or operate within a set of policies determined by the central government. SBM programmes exist in numerous forms, both in terms of who has the power to kame decisions and the degree of decision making that is developed to the school level. While some programs transfer authority only to principals or teachers, others encourage or mandate parental and community participation, often as members of school committees (or school councils or school management SBMC committees). Thus, an understanding of the role of SBMC in policy implementation is required because this organisation is the middle link between bureaucrats and schools. Moreover, its view on implementation would enable understanding of how to effectively implement policy decisions in Nigeria. In addition, the effect of international donors on UBE policy implementation was not explored in this study. Thus, further study could include the role of private stakeholders in policy implementation, since the policy provides the opportunity for private initiatives in educational policy involvement.

Recommendations

This study found that the current UBE policy implementation has not achieved its intended outcome due to myriad issues. Therefore, a number of recommendations are suggested to bureaucrats and the agency responsible for implementing the UBE policy. The following recommendations are essential to address both the bureaucratic and political issues that have made providing access in UBE policy implementation unrealisable:

1. There is a need to review the constitution to give the federal government the exclusive right to administer UBE in Nigeria. This will ensure that the current overlapping bureaucracy in UBE administration in the states and LGEAs will be eliminated. It will also ensure that the issue of disarticulation and unwillingness of the states to provide funds for UBE implementation will cease.

2. A review of the constitution would also enable the federal government to create regional offices in the six geo-political zones of the country, against the current state. It would facilitate effective monitoring and supervision of policy implementation tasks. The regionalisation of UBE administration would ensure that bureaucrats with skills and knowledge of education administration were appointed to head the regions, supported by politicians operating education administration in the states.

3. Community involvement through SBMC should be encouraged to enable efficient monitoring and supervision of basic education in every locality. This is because the few states that explored using SBMC to assist policy implementation recorded pockets of achievements in UBE implementation.

4. The distribution of school supplies should be undertaken through the SBMC members who are distinguished and retired administrators in their localities, with histories of honesty, integrity and truthfulness. This would ensure that any unethical practices in distribution are avoided.

5. In order to encourage increases in enrolment, the food project should be revisited. The regionalisation of education would ensure that the objectives of this project would be achieved.

6. Periodical appraisal of the policy implementation of UBE should be encouraged in order to identify areas of strengths and weakness in the policy.

The need to make education accessible to all school-age citizens in Nigeria is becoming increasingly critical and urgent because no nation can rise above its educational attainment. The pace at which this can be realised is hinged on the ability of the government and capability of the bureaucrats to effectively implement the UBE policy. Over the years in Nigeria, numerous policies have been formulated and implemented; however, it is of great concern that no significant improvements have resulted, and Nigeria continues to remain in the category of a developing country. This suggests that the formulation of policies is not the issue in Nigeria, but rather their effective implementation, given that only effectively implemented policies can generate national development.

This study has revealed factors the factors affecting Nigeria's policy implementation, and these were summarised under bureaucratic and political issues. The factors that militated against the realisation of educational policy in Nigeria included the ineffective and unethical behaviour of the political leaders in public bureaucracy, the pervasive and deep-rooted corruption in the public bureaucracy, and the influence of primordial demands and values on the bureaucracy that negatively affected the implementation processes. Adherence to the recommendations of this study regarding ways to avoid these factors will ensure the development of Nigeria towards providing important education opportunities to its citizens.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Map Indicating Location of Nigeria

Appendix 2: List of Documents Analysed for the Study

The following list of documents enabled the researcher to capture the history of access (enrolment, transition and progression) to basic education in Nigeria since its introduction in 1999:

1. federal government implementation and evaluation reports on the UBE programme from both federal and state MOEs from 1999 to 2010

2. statistics on the enrolment, attendance and progress of students from 1999 to 2010 academic sessions from the UBEC Commission and Federal Ministry of Statistics

3. UBEC implementation and evaluation report sheets of UBE from 1999 to 2010 from the ES and state chairperson in two states of two geo-political zones in Nigeria

4. Federal Ministry of Finance reports on budget implementation of basic education in Nigeria from 1999 to 2010 financial years of UBEC and each state of the federation

5. reports from the Legislative Committee on Education from 1999 to 2010

6. reports from international agencies such as World Bank, UNESCO and USAID on UBE since 1999

7. the policy document on UBE launched in 1999.

Appendix 3: Interview Guide for the Study

Policy development

1. What was the state of education before the introduction of UBE in 1999?

2. What was your level of involvement in the enactment of UBE in 1999?

3. Based on your knowledge and experience, what would you say is the major innovation in the new policy in comparison to the previous policies on education?

4. (i). What were the challenges and perceived constraints of implementation during this period?

4. (ii). How have they changed in more recent times?

Policy implementation process

5. (i). How has the new policy been implemented?

5. (ii). What effect has it had on the enrolment, attendance and progression of children in school?

6. Access to basic education in some states is higher than in others. What do you think contributes to these differences?

7. How do you know what your specific role is in implementing policy?

8. How have organisational communication and interpersonal relationships affected your role in implementing policy?

Evaluation process

9. (i). What is the channel for attaining feedback on implementation tasks?

9. (ii). What is the particular channel for feedback on the implementation tasks for which you are responsible?

10. How do you attain a sense of public perceptions and reactions to the current implementation process?

11. What mechanism is in place to respond to the public observations or comments on the policy implementation process?

12. (i). What challenges and constraints are facing the implementation of the new policy?

12. (ii). What innovations have been evident?

Appendix 4: Photographs of the State of the School in PS before 1999

English Language Comp...

Fill in an, a, or the where necessar...

of the following sentences:

1. The man who came here is __a__ d...

2. He bought __a__ pen and __an__ umb...

3. The earth moves round __the__ sun

4. The Nile flows from Lake Victor...

5. There is __a__ university in Ile-Ife...

6. The Koran is __an__ important reli...
   book

7. A black goat belongs to our f...

Appendix 5: Photographs of the State of the School in CS before 1999

Appendix 6: Photographs of the Government Interventions

Appendix 7: Letter Requesting Permission for Study

Attention: 24 January 2011
The Executive Secretary,
Universal Basic Education Commission,
Federal Republic of Nigeria,
7 Gwani Street Zone 4, Abuja-Nigeria.

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY INVOLVING YOUR ORGANISATION

As part of my doctoral study, I am conducting a document analysis research study on 'Policy Implementation of Basic Education in Nigeria'. Therefore, I write this letter to request your permission to enable me have access to policy documents and to conduct one-on-one interviews with you and your directors who are directly involved with the implementation of basic education in Nigeria.

I am a Nigerian and a Lecturer of Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija-Epe, Lagos-Nigeria. I am currently on study leave for my doctoral degree programme in Policy Studies at Edith Cowan University, Mount Lawley Campus, Western Australia.

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of how the level of fidelity within the bureaucratic paradigm at system level implementation can affect access to basic education in Nigeria. Basic education programme enshrined in the National Policy on Education (NPE) document is pivotal to the nation's educational development.

This study is significant in that it can contribute to the much-needed knowledge on improving access in the basic education programme among Nigeria youth. Improving access to education is central to prospects for alleviating poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria in 2015.

Therefore, I require your assistance in respect of the policy implementation documents for a decade of implementation of basic education (1999 to 2009). Please find attached the research proposal, which indicates the extent of your organisation's involvement in this study.

A written approval of this request will be appreciated, which will be presented to other agencies of the government that are directly involved with implementation of the basic education programme in Nigeria in order to facilitate my gaining access to their documents.

Yours faithfully,

BOLAJI, Stephen 'D
sbolaji@our.ecu.edu.au or stephendelebolaji@gmail.com

Appendix 8: Letter of Consent for the Study

LETTER OF CONSENT

Dear Sir

I am conducting a research project titled *Intent to Action: Overcoming Barriers to Educational Reform in Nigeria*, with a focus on the policy implementation of the Nigerian Universal Basic Education programme in the last decade.

The research study is designed to be conducted through semi-structured, one-on-one, taped interviews with participants. The purpose of this discussion is to obtain deeper information on the factors militating against access to the Universal Basic Education programme in Nigeria.

It is expected that this research will benefit the nation, policymakers and stakeholders in education, as well as advisors and researchers.

Participation is voluntary and participants can pull out at any time without prejudice. Your participation has nothing to do with any formal or informal assessment in your workplace.

No names are required and individuals remain anonymous in any report. The research information will be analysed without mentioning the names of the interviewee.

I anticipate that there are no risks associated with this research other than inconvenience related to time committed.

You can obtain a copy of the interview or ask any questions about the study by contacting me on +61416513204 (Australia) or +2348029541014 (Nigeria) or sbolaji@our.ecu.edu.au or stephendelebolaji@gmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation. It is appreciated.

Your consent to be part of this study is given on the conditions mentioned above.

BOLAJI, Stephen D. (BA.Ed, M.Ed)
PhD student of Edith Cowan University, School of Education,
2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley, Western Australia 6050

For independent contact, please contact my supervisors:

A/Prof Jan Gray	A/Prof Glenda Evans-Campbells
Edith Cowan University	Edith Cowan University
School of Education (Mount Lawley)	School of Education (Joondalup)
jan.gray@ecu.edu.au	g.evans_campbells@ecu.edu.au

If you wish to consult an independent person, please contact researchethics@ecu.edu.au.

Please fill the attached form and return to me if you are willing to participate in the study.

Thank you.

Appendix 9: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

I have read the information above regarding the research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I am aware that I can contact the student or his supervisors if I have further questions or concerns.

I agree to participate in the study, realising that I may withdraw at any time.

I understand that participation may involve answering questions through interview.

I agree to have my voice recorded.

I also agree to participate in this research knowing that data gathered for this study may be published, provided that my name, position and institution are not identifiable.

I hereby agree to participate in this research project conducted by Stephen Dele BOLAJI.

_____   _____

Participant name and signature   Date