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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION (UBE) POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC UPPER BASIC SCHOOLS IN SOUTH-SOUTH GOE POLITICAL ZONE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined Relationship Between Universal Basic Education (Ube) Policy Implementation And Teachers' Performance In Public Upper Basic Schools In South-South Goe Political Zone, Nigeria. The study focused on how Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy implementation and resource availability under the UBE policy relate to teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools. Two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprised 20,834 head teachers and teachers from 3,211 Public Upper Basic Schools across the six states of the South-South Geo-Political Zone: Akwa Ibom (3,804), Bayelsa (3,557), Cross River (3,267), Delta (3,147), Edo (3,477), and Rivers (3,582). The sample of the study comprised 2,083 respondents (321 head teachers and 1,762 teachers), representing 10% of the total population, selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. A total of 2,063 copies of the questionnaire (99.0%) were returned duly completed and found useful for

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analysis. A researcher-developed structured questionnaire titled RUBEITPPUBSQ was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by an expert in Educational Management and a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.87 was established. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed significant positive relationships between UBE policy implementation (r = 0.57) and resource availability (r = 0.53) with teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone. Both null hypotheses were rejected at 0.05 level of significance. It is recommended that UBEC and State Universal Basic Education Boards should strengthen UBE policy implementation guidelines and ensure adequate, timely distribution of resources to Public Upper Basic Schools across the zone.

Keywords: UBE Policy Implementation, Resource Availability, Teachers' Performance, Public Upper Basic Schools.

Introduction

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme stands as Nigeria's most ambitious and enduring commitment to democratizing access to quality foundational education. Enacted through the UBE Act of 2004 and coordinated nationally by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), the programme provides a nine-year continuum of free, compulsory, and uninterrupted formal education, spanning Early Childhood Care and Development Education for children aged three to five, six years of primary education, and three compulsory years of junior secondary schooling. For teachers in Public Upper Basic Schools across the South-South Geo-Political Zone in a region defined by substantial oil-related revenues, varied riverine

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geography, and complex socio-economic dynamics in the UBE programme constitutes both the policy architecture and the resource framework within which their daily professional responsibilities unfold.

UBE policy implementation refers, as Abdullahi (2025) explains, to the process of translating the provisions, objectives, and strategies of the Universal Basic Education programme into concrete actions, programmes, and activities at the school level. It encompasses infrastructure development, curriculum delivery, teacher deployment, funding mechanisms, and monitoring and evaluation systems. Without effective implementation, the most well-intentioned policy provisions remain inoperative. The legal architecture of UBE implementation is grounded in the 1999 Constitution, the UBE Act of 2004, and the National Policy on Education (2013), which together distribute educational responsibilities across the three tiers of government. The Federal Government through UBEC plays a coordinating and supportive role; State Governments implement the programme through State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs); and Local Government Authorities manage primary schools at the grassroots. This decentralized framework means that the quality of UBE implementation and by extension, the working and performance conditions of teachers varies significantly across states and localities.

The implementation of UBE policy manifests through several interconnected dimensions. Infrastructure provision encompasses the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms, provision of furniture, establishment of libraries

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and laboratories, and development of other physical facilities. Curriculum delivery requires that restructured curricula be supported by appropriate textbooks, teaching guides, laboratory equipment, and technological resources. Human resource management involves teacher recruitment, posting, remuneration, and conditions of service. Funding and financial management govern the counterpart funding arrangements through which federal, state, and local governments contribute to programme financing. Monitoring, evaluation, and quality assurance provide feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement. Together, these dimensions create the enabling environment within which teachers either perform effectively or are constrained by implementation failures.

Resource availability constitutes the second core variable of this study and refers to the adequacy, accessibility, and quality of material, financial, and human resources provided to support teaching and learning in Public Upper Basic Schools. Josiah (2011) establishes the foundational principle that the quality of education in any nation is determined by the provision of sufficient human and material resources, alongside the efficient utilization of those resources. Educational resources essential for effective UBE implementation and teacher performance include physical facilities, instructional materials, financial resources, and human resources. The availability of textbooks is particularly critical: textbooks provide the content foundation for instruction, and when they are insufficient in quantity or quality, teachers must devote

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excessive time to developing alternative materials or resort to lecture-based instruction that limits student engagement.

In the South-South Geo-Political Zone, the resource availability profile is particularly paradoxical and policy-relevant. As Nigeria's principal oil-producing region, states in the South-South Zone generate and receive substantial revenue through the federation account, creating a theoretical fiscal advantage over most other zones. However, Ekwutoski and Ogbonnaya (2023) found significant variations in resource distribution between urban and rural schools, with teachers in riverine and creek communities frequently operating under materially inferior conditions compared to their urban counterparts. This paradox between fiscal capacity and school-level resource reality places resource availability at the centre of the policy reform agenda for the zone.

The significance of examining both UBE policy implementation and resource availability as distinct but related correlates of teacher performance lies in their mutual dependency and complementary contributions to the educational ecosystem. Where UBE policy implementation is coherent, well-funded, and consistently enforced, teachers are more likely to have access to functional school facilities, adequate instructional materials, and the professional environment needed for effective performance. This study therefore sought to empirically assess the relationships between these two variables and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools across the South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

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Statement of the Problem

Despite the constitutional provisions and policy commitments underlying the UBE programme, teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone continues to face challenges rooted in implementation deficiencies. The seeming lack of strict adherence to constitutionally prescribed UBE implementation principles characterized by the passive roles played by Local Government Education Authorities and the persistent centralization of implementation mechanisms at the federal and state levels has created systemic gaps that directly constrain teachers' working conditions and instructional effectiveness.

Furthermore, the resource availability profile of the zone, despite its substantial revenue base, has not consistently translated into adequate school-level provision of textbooks, functional classrooms, laboratories, and teaching aids. These deficits constrain teacher performance regardless of individual teacher qualifications or motivation, creating a structural disconnect between policy ambitions and classroom realities. This study was therefore undertaken to empirically determine the extent to which UBE policy implementation and resource availability relate to teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

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1. What is the relationship between Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy implementation and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between resource availability under the UBE policy and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between UBE policy implementation and resource availability and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy implementation and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.
2. Examine the relationship between resource availability under the UBE policy and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone.

Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy implementation and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.

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Ho2: There is no significant relationship between resource availability under the UBE policy and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone.

Methodology

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. This design was considered most appropriate because the study sought to determine the current relationship between UBE policy implementation, resource availability, and teachers' performance by collecting and analyzing data from a representative sample of head teachers and teachers in Public Upper Basic Schools.

The population of the study comprised 20,834 head teachers and teachers from 3,211 Public Upper Basic Schools across the six states of the South-South Geo-Political Zone: Akwa Ibom (3,804), Bayelsa (3,557), Cross River (3,267), Delta (3,147), Edo (3,477), and Rivers (3,582). The sample comprised 2,083 respondents (321 head teachers and 1,762 teachers), representing 10% of the total population, selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. According to Gay (1996), for descriptive research, a sample of at least 10% of a large population is considered adequate to ensure representativeness.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed structured questionnaire titled "Relationship between Universal Basic Education (UBE) Policy Implementation and Teachers' Performance in Public Upper Basic Schools Questionnaire" (RUBEITPPUBSQ). The questionnaire comprised two

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relevant clusters: Cluster (i) with items 1–6 on UBE policy implementation and Cluster (ii) with items 7–12 on resource availability. The instrument was structured on a 4-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The instrument was validated by an expert in the Department of Educational Management, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, and a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.87 was established. A cut-off mean of 2.50 was used for decision-making. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while PPMC was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance using SPSS.

Results and Findings

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data to answer the two research questions and test the two null hypotheses of the study.

Research Question One

What is the relationship between Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy implementation and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria?

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Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Relationship between UBE Policy Implementation and Teachers' Performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	The UBE policy has provided clear guidelines that enhance teacher teaching effectiveness in the classroom.	862	784	260	157	3.18	0.83	Agree
2	Implementation of UBE programmes has positively influenced teacher instructional delivery methods.	820	810	278	155	3.16	0.83	Agree
3	The UBE policy framework supports teachers in achieving their teaching objectives effectively.	878	774	260	151	3.21	0.82	Agree
4	Teacher teaching performance has improved as a result of UBE policy interventions in their school.	835	790	265	173	3.16	0.83	Agree
5	UBE policy provisions have enabled teachers to adopt modern teaching strategies in their classroom.	848	792	258	165	3.18	0.83	Agree
6	There is a strong connection between UBE policy implementation and teachers' overall teaching effectiveness.	855	786	260	162	3.18	0.83	Agree
	Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation					**3.18**	**0.83**	**Agree**

Cut-off Mean = 2.50 *Source: Field Survey (2026)*

Table 1 shows that items 1–6 recorded mean scores ranging from 3.16 to 3.21, all above the cut-off mean of 2.50. The cluster mean of 3.18 with a standard deviation of 0.83 indicates that respondents generally agreed that there is a positive relationship between UBE policy implementation and teachers' performance. The uniformity of standard deviations confirms homogeneity in respondents' responses. This implies that the UBE policy, through its guidelines, frameworks, and intervention provisions, positively relates to teachers' classroom effectiveness and overall instructional performance.

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Research Question Two

What is the relationship between resource availability under the UBE policy and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Relationship between Resource Availability under the UBE Policy and Teachers' Performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (X̄)	Std. Dev.	Decision
7	Adequate textbooks and instructional materials are provided through UBE to support teachers' teaching.	790	804	292	177	3.11	0.84	Agree
8	The availability of UBE-provided facilities (classrooms, laboratories, libraries) enhances teachers' teaching performance.	818	800	278	167	3.16	0.83	Agree
9	Teachers have access to sufficient teaching aids and equipment through UBE programmes.	802	808	284	169	3.13	0.83	Agree
10	The quality of UBE-provided resources positively affects teachers' ability to deliver lessons effectively.	824	798	275	166	3.17	0.83	Agree
11	Timely availability of UBE resources enables teachers to cover the curriculum as expected.	810	804	280	169	3.14	0.83	Agree
12	Teachers' teaching performance is hindered when UBE-provided resources are inadequate or unavailable.	856	786	265	156	3.19	0.83	Agree
	Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation					**3.15**	**0.83**	**Agree**

Cut-off Mean = 2.50 *Source: Field Survey (2026)*

Table 2 shows that items 7–12 recorded mean scores ranging from 3.11 to 3.19, all above the cut-off mean of 2.50. The cluster mean of 3.15 with a standard deviation of 0.83 indicates that respondents agreed that resource availability under the UBE policy has a positive relationship with teachers' performance. The findings confirm that when UBE-provided resources which

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textbooks, classrooms, laboratories, and teaching aids are adequate and timely, teachers are better positioned to perform their instructional responsibilities effectively. Conversely, resource inadequacy is acknowledged by respondents as a direct constraint on teaching performance.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy implementation and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.

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Table 3: PPMC Analysis of the Relationship between UBE Policy Implementation and Teachers' Performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria

Variable	N	r-cal	r-tab (critical)	df	p-value	Sig. Level	Decision
UBE Policy Implementation & Teachers' Performance	2,063	0.57	0.195	2,061	0.001	0.05	Significant

df = N – 2 = 2,061; r-table at α = 0.05 (two-tailed) = 0.195; r-cal > r-tab: Reject Ho1.

Table 3 reveals that the r-calculated value of 0.57 is greater than the r-table critical value of 0.195 at 2,061 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, with p = 0.001 < 0.05. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between UBE policy implementation and teachers' performance is therefore rejected. The moderate positive correlation (r = 0.57) indicates that the more effectively the UBE policy is implemented through clear guidelines, structured frameworks, and targeted interventions, the better teachers perform their instructional responsibilities.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between resource availability under the UBE policy and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in South-South Geo-Political Zone.

Table 4: PPMC Analysis of the Relationship between Resource Availability under the UBE Policy and Teachers' Performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria

Variable	N	r-cal	r-tab (critical)	df	p-value	Sig. Level	Decision
Resource Availability under UBE & Teachers' Performance	2,063	0.53	0.195	2,061	0.001	0.05	Significant

df = N – 2 = 2,061; r-table at α = 0.05 (two-tailed) = 0.195; r-cal > r-tab: Reject Ho2.

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Table 4 reveals that the r-calculated value of 0.53 is greater than the r-table critical value of 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance, with $p = 0.001 < 0.05$. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The positive correlation ($r = 0.53$) confirms that the adequacy, quality, and timely provision of UBE resources include textbooks, classroom facilities, laboratories, and teaching aids significantly relates to the quality of teachers' instructional performance.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis of the two research questions and testing of the two hypotheses, the following findings were discussed.

The first finding revealed a significant positive relationship between UBE policy implementation and teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone ($r = 0.57$, $p < 0.05$). This finding is consistent with Ogunniran Moses Oladele (2021), who assessed the effectiveness of UBE policy for educational development in Nigeria and found that effective UBE implementation particularly through full participation of government, professionals, and the public significantly enhanced educational quality and teacher effectiveness. The finding also corroborates Abdullahi (2025), who demonstrated that effective management of UBE was more successful when there was teacher training, provision of school facilities, and home-grown school feeding, all of which enhanced teacher effectiveness. The positive correlation confirms the theoretical framework of Systems Theory (Bertalanffy, 1968), which posits that the smooth functioning of the UBE sub-system characterized by clear guidelines, coordinated implementation, and

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aligned resource provision directly enables the performance of the teachers who constitute the human core of that sub-system.

The second finding revealed a significant positive relationship between resource availability under the UBE policy and teachers' performance ($r = 0.53$, $p < 0.05$). This finding corroborates Josiah (2011), who established the fundamental principle that the quality of education in any nation is determined by the provision of sufficient human and material resources alongside their efficient utilization. The moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.53$) suggests that while resources are important, their relationship with performance is mediated by how resources are allocated, managed, and utilized at the school level. Saba (2007) further confirms this finding by conceptualizing school facilities and equipment as a pillar in support of effective teaching and learning, affirming that resource adequacy is a structural prerequisite for teacher effectiveness. Ekwutoski and Ogbonnaya (2023) found that resource adequacy for UBE implementation significantly influenced teachers' ability to deliver their curricula effectively in Ebonyi State, a finding that resonates with the significant relationship identified in this study.

Conclusion

The study concludes that UBE policy implementation and resource availability are significantly and positively related to teachers' performance in Public Upper Basic Schools in the South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. The UBE programme, as envisioned by the UBE Act 2004, carries the

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potential to substantially improve the conditions, motivation, and effectiveness of teachers — but this potential is realized only when implementation is comprehensive, well-resourced, and consistently applied across all six states of the zone. Despite its substantial revenue base, the South-South Zone has not consistently translated fiscal advantage into improved school-level resource availability, making both policy coherence and equitable resource distribution urgent priorities for educational reform.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria, through UBEC, should strengthen the clarity, consistency, and monitoring of UBE policy implementation guidelines. SUBEBs and LGEAs should be held strictly accountable for adherence to established UBE implementation standards through regular performance assessments, in line with the constitutionally prescribed decentralized framework for UBE delivery.
2. State Governments in the South-South Geo-Political Zone should urgently improve the adequacy, quality, and timely distribution of UBE-provided resources — including textbooks, classroom furniture, laboratory equipment, and teaching aids — to Public Upper Basic Schools across all six states. Resource allocation systems must be strengthened to ensure that UBE materials reach individual classrooms rather than remaining stockpiled at state or LGA offices.

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