Assessing the Quality of Public Primary and Junior Secondary Education in Kwara State, Nigeria (2009-2019)

SALAHU, Moshood Olayinka
Department of Politics and Governance
Kwara State University, Malete
moshoodsalahu@gmail.com
&
AMBALI, AbdulRauf
Department of Politics and Governance
Kwara State University, Malete
ambali63@gmail.com

Abstract
Given Nigeria's quest for development and its determination to make education accessible to all school-age children in the country, the government has intensified effort in the implementation of the Universal Basic Education Program in terms of funding and provision of policy guidelines. However, despite the various efforts by governments at different levels in the country to see to the success of the program, its implementation has not been as successful as expected. As its main objective, this paper assessed the quality of basic education service delivery in Kwara state, using selected public primary and junior secondary schools in the state. The study engaged the use of primary and secondary data for its analysis. The primary data were elicited through structured questionnaires administered in the selected schools, and responses from some critical stakeholders through focus group discussion within the basic education sector in the state. Data were analyzed using simple percentage. The study discovered that inadequate number of qualified teachers, non-availability of instructional materials, inadequate budgetary provision for routine supervision and inspection; insufficient number of education inspectors and supervisors; politicization of appointment of inspectors and non prescription of sanctions for non compliance to policy guidelines are among the main issues affecting the quality of education service delivery. It therefore recommends strict adherence to policy guidelines; sanctions for non-compliance; provision of adequate infrastructural facilities and instructional materials; and de-politicization of appointment of inspectors among others as possible ways of tackling these challenges.

Keywords: Universal Basic Education, Public Schools, Implementation, Quality

Introduction

With globalization and the world's increasing focus on a knowledge based economy, education has become more important than ever. It has also led to the global recognition of the rights of individuals to an education that respects their capabilities and socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. It is increasingly being emphasised that education is the backbone of sustainable development. Education stimulates and empowers people to participate in their own development. A plan for sustainable development must address the issue of education because it plays a critical role not only in expanding further educational opportunities, but also in fostering basic intellectual abilities such as literacy that are crucial to success in a world where power and survival is closely linked with knowledge (Egbosi and Offor, 2016; Rossiter, 2016; UNESCO, 2015; World Vision, 2016). For this reason, primary education must receive a great amount of attention in developing nations. Primary education is the bedrock upon which other levels of education are built. By implication, whatever happens at this level can either make or mar the entire education enterprise (Egbosi and Offor, 2016). This is why the quality of basic education has continued to receive serious attention in recent times.

Nigeria is an example of one country which has demonstrated its strong commitment to the possibility of improving its universal basic education. The call for the implementation of a better educational framework in the country is attributed to allowing its citizens to take advantage of the economic opportunities which might come along their way but have always been limited because of inadequate education. After the country's achievement of democracy in its history, the national government has

premised on the fact that parents are in the best position to give adequate data on their children's performances and the number of pupils in their children's class, as it is assumed they monitor the performances of their children every term; while Focus Group Discussion was adopted for eliciting data on the other indicators. The members of the FGD are selected among the officials of the Kwara State's Quality Assurance Bureau and the Inspectorate Division of the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board, in assumption of the fact that the issues of Instructional materials; Teachers' qualification, and Availability of Laboratory and Workshops as indicators of quality of basic education are better understood by these critical stakeholders.

Area of the Study The study was conducted in Kwara State, Nigeria. Kwara State is one of the six states in the North-Central geo-political zones in Nigeria, which includes Kogi, Niger, Nassarawa, Plateau and Benue States. It shares boundaries with Kogi, Niger, Oyo, Osun and Ekiti states in Nigeria. The people of Kwara State are mainly public servants, farmers, traders, and artisans. There are 16 local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) in the state. There are one thousand, four hundred and eighty-six (1,486) primary schools and four hundred and three (403) junior secondary schools in the State. These schools are centrally managed by the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board (KWSUBEB) with head quarters in Ilorin, the State capital.

Population of the Study: The target population for this study is generated from the total population of parents and guardian for the two identified clusters as presented below in table 1. The population figures are generated from the Parent Teachers Association, PTA's record domiciled in the state's Ministry of Education.

Table 1: Total Population Calculated Through Cluster Population

S/N	CLUSTER POPULATION	
1	PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS	143,609
2	PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS	152,315
TOTAL POPULATION		295,924

KWARA STATE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

From table 1 above, the total population of our targeted respondents is 295,924.

Sample Size: To arrive at our sample size, the study adopted the use of the Taro Yamane formulae. The Yamane formula for determining the sample size is given as:

$$n=N/(1+Ne2), \text{ Where}$$

n= sample size, N = population size, and e = Margin of error (MoE), e = 0.05

Therefore, $n=295,924/[1+295,924(0.05)2]$

n= 399.5,

approximately, n=400.

Sampling Procedure: A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted in selecting the sample for the study. In the first stage, the state was divided into three senatorial districts for representativeness, placing the sixteen local government areas as they exist under their senatorial districts. The total number of all public schools engaged in the provision of basic education in the state was determined. Following-on to this is the determination of the same category of schools in each LGA. Under each senatorial district, the researcher selected the local government areas with the highest and lowest number of schools. This translates to two local government areas from each senatorial district, making a total of six local government areas in all, out of the sixteen local government areas in the state. The local government areas with the highest number of schools in each of the three senatorial districts are: Ilorin West with 289 schools, Edu, with 287 schools and Ifelodun with 256 schools; while Ilorin East, Kaiama and Oke Ero are the three local government areas with the least number of schools in each senatorial districts, with 206, 138 and 58 schools respectively.

At the second stage, all schools in each of the six local government areas selected were clustered into two categories of clusters. This was necessary because we have two different categories of schools with quite distinct features. Therefore for adequate representativeness, the need for clustering arises.

been increasingly pressured to allow the people to have access to high quality and adequate public services, which includes universal basic education. The government prioritizes this need for the framework for universal education basically because of the need to produce educated and highly knowledgeable citizens who can prove to be highly influential and significant in the overall growth of the national economy (Salihu and Jamil, 2015).

The determination of the Federal Government of Nigeria to make education accessible to all school-age children in the country, led the Federal government, on the 29th January, 1974, to announce the introduction of Universal Primary Education Programme, throughout the country, with effect from 1975. The UPE programme was formally launched by Lieutenant-General Olusegun Obasanjo on February 13, 1976. In order to effect the implementation of the programme, the Federal Government laid down three guiding principles, namely: policy guidelines; funds for the implementation; and management of the primary schools (Aghenta, 1984).

However, by 1979, it was clear that the Federal Government could not bear the financial burden alone. It proceeded to shed some of the responsibilities to the State and Local governments which also could not cope. By 1999, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme was introduced. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme is a nine (9) year basic educational programme, which was launched and executed by the government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty as well as stimulate and accelerate national development, political consciousness and national integration. The UBE Programme is Nigeria's strategy for the achievement of Education for All (EFA) and the education-related Millennium Development Goals (UBEC, 2012).

In its quest for development, Nigeria has intensified effort in the implementation of this policy program in terms of funding and provision of policy guidelines. For the purpose of this paper, our focus is on assessing the quality of basic education provision in public primary and public junior secondary schools in Kwara State.

Statement of the Problem

The provision of basic education in Nigeria has been faced with many and diverse problems, which includes: shortage of infrastructural facilities; controversies over ownership of schools; issues relating to staffing; low teachers' morale; poor characters of pupils and the politics of primary school management. According to Salihu and Jamil, (2015), the Universal Basic Education scheme has demonstrated low level of success, if not significant failure, which include insufficient funding, inadequate resources and learning equipments, failure for technology integration, incompetency of teachers due to lack of training and education, huge student population, and poor planning and implementation. The combination of these problems has resulted into the inability of the universal basic education to fully achieve its desired objectives for now. These problems lingered on for decades. However, the Nigerian governments over the years have continued to put some strategies into place to reposition the public primary and and junior secondary education subsector in Nigeria. Some of the strategies include resuscitation of monitoring, and inspectorate divisions of ministries of education; and the establishment of the Quality Assurance Bureau within the various states' Ministry of Education, to improve the quality of public primary and junior secondary education. However, despite government concerted efforts at all levels towards a successful implementation of the UBE policy guidelines in this direction, it was observed that instructional materials were grossly inadequate and that less than forty percent of pupils had basic textbooks and writing materials. Most public primary and junior secondary schools in Kwara State lacks basic facilities such as workshops for basic technology and laboratory for basic science (ESSPIN,2017).. It was equally observed that though the teaching staff situation improved in quantity and quality as more teachers were being trained, but that 42.8% unqualified teachers were still found in the primary schools across the state (UBEC, 2012, ESSPIN, 2017).

Moreover, the quality of junior secondary school grandaunts in terms of performance has continued to decline over the same period of time in the state, which to a large extent contributes to the poor quality of students coming into our universities in the state. It is against this background that this

paper seeks to assess the quality of basic education provision in Kwara state, using selected public primary and public junior secondary schools across the three senatorial districts of the state.

To achieve this, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

i. What are the main trusts of the Universal Basic Education policy guidelines?
ii. How qualitative is primary and junior secondary education in Kwara State?
iii. What are the challenges facing the implementation of basic education policies in the state?
iv. How can we improve on the quality of primary and junior secondary education in the state?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to assess the quality of primary and junior secondary education in Kwara State.

The specific objectives include, to:

i. examine the main trusts of the Universal Basic Education policy guidelines.
ii. assess the quality of primary and junior secondary education in Kwara state.
iii. explore the challenges facing the implementation of basic education policies in the state.
iv. suggest ways of improving on the quality of primary and junior secondary education in the state.

Literature Review

Primary Education

Primary education begins at around age 5 to 6 for the majority of Nigerians. Pupils spend six years in primary school and graduate with a school-leaving certificate. Subjects taught at the primary level include mathematics, English language, Christian Religious Knowledge, Islamic knowledge studies, agricultural science, home economics and one of the three main indigenous languages and cultures: Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo. Private schools also offer computer science, French, and Fine Arts. Primary school students are required to take a Common Entrance Examination to qualify for admission into the Federal and State Government Secondary schools, as well as private ones (UBEC, 2012).

Before 1976, education policy was still largely shaped by the colonial policy of the British Colonial Period. In 1976, the Universal Primary Education program was established. This program faced many difficulties and was subsequently revised in 1981 and 1990 (UBEC, 2017). The Universal Basic Education came as a replacement of the Universal Primary Education and intended to enhance the success of the first nine years of schooling The UBE involves 6 years of Primary School education and 3 years of Junior Secondary School education, culminating in 9 years of uninterrupted schooling, and transition from one class to another is automatic but determined through continuous assessment. This scheme is monitored by the Universal Basic Education Commission, UBEC, and has made it "free", "compulsory" and a right of every child (UBEC, 2012). Therefore, the section 15 defines UBE as early childhood care and education. Section 15 of the UBEC law stipulates a 9-year formal schooling, adult literacy and non-formal education, skill acquisition programs, and the education of special groups such as nomads and migrants, girl child and women, Al-majiri, street children and disabled people (Aderinoye, 2007; USDMN, 2010).

The curriculum at the lower basic level, that is primary 1 - 3, provides for elective and compulsory subjects. The same is applicable to the middle basic level, primary 4-6 and the upper basic levels, JSS 1 - 3. The compulsory and elective courses are to ensure that UBE graduates acquire an appropriate level of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life coping skills. They are expected to acquire appropriate ethical, moral and civic values that would establish, strengthen and fortify scientific and reflective thinking in them- equipping them to cope with life challenges in whatever form.

According to NERDC (2007), among the core compulsory subjects for the lower basic level are – English language , one major Nigerian language (Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa), Mathematics, Basic Science and Technology, Social studies, Civic Education, Culture and Creative Arts, Religious Studies, Physical and health education as well as Computer Studies/ICT. A learner at this level is expected to offer at least one but not more than two of the following electives – Agriculture, Home Economics and Arabic.

At the middle basic level, learners are expected to take as core courses all that were offered at the lower basic in addition to French Language. The conditions in relation to the electives remain as in the lower basic.

Junior Secondary Education

Students spend six years in Secondary School, that is 3 years of JSS (Junior Secondary School), and 3 years of SSS (Senior Secondary School). The Junior Secondary education is free and compulsory. It leads to the Basic Education Certificate Examination, BECE, which opens the gate to Senior Secondary School (UNESCO, 2014). After the BECE, students can also join a technical college. The curriculum for these also lasts 3 years and leads to a trade/craftsmanship certificate (UNESCO, 2012).

The core compulsory subjects for the upper basic level are – English language, one major Nigerian language (Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa), Mathematics, Basic Science, Basic Technology, Social studies, Civic Education, Culture and Creative Arts, Religious Studies, Physical and health education as well as Computer Studies/ICT; and at least one but not more than two of the following electives – Agriculture, Home Economics and Arabic. At this upper level of basic education, some significant changes are evident in the curriculum. Basic Science is separated from Basic Technology so that learners can achieve more in-depth knowledge in each of them. While the electives remains as in the other levels, a learner may offer all the electives if he so desires but it is however compulsory for him at least to at least offer one of the elective courses (NERDC, 2007).

Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme Of 1976

According to the report of a commissioned research work titled 'The Impact Of The Universal Basic Education Program Delivery In Nigeria', submitted to the Universal Basic Education Commission, in July, 2012, 'The determination of the Federal Government to make education accessible to all school-age children in the country, led the Federal government, on the 29th January, 1974, through the Head of State, Major-General Yakubu Gowon, to announce the introduction of Universal Primary Education Program, throughout the country, with effect from 1975. It is evident from the report that the UPE program was formally launched by Lieutenant-General Olusegun Obasanjo on February 13, 1976.

This Scheme attracted many children to primary schools which resulted in explosive enrolments. In order to effect the implementation of the program, the Federal Government laid down three guiding principles, namely:

1. The Federal Government will lay down the policy guidelines for UPE.
2. The Federal Government would provide the necessary funds for the implementation.
3. The state governments would be the agents of the scheme. They would see to the day-to -day administration and management of the primary schools.

The curricular activities in all primary schools included Science, Agriculture, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education, Religious and Moral Education, Aesthetics, Creative and Musical work. Others included Local Craft, Domestic Science, and Social Norms and Values (Aghenta, 1984).

However, by 1979, according to the 2012 UBEC report, it was clear that the Federal Government could not bear the financial burden alone. It proceeded to shed some of the responsibilities to the State and Local governments which also could not cope. This was the genesis of the problems of basic education in Nigeria.

By 1983, disastrous consequences had set in and salaries of teachers were outstanding in most states for between 2 and 8 months. In fact in some states, primary schools had become permanently closed. The Federal Government, realizing the gravity of the situation, set up not less than 4 committees in quick succession to look into the problems and make recommendations. Decisive actions were taken based on some of the recommendations of those committees. The Federal Government of Nigeria under decree 16 of 1985 gave the management of primary schools to the three tiers of government, Federal, State and Local governments. To add impetus to this shared responsibility, the National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) was set up through Decree No. 31 of 1988. NPEC gave primary education a new lease of life. More reformations took place after the introduction of NPEC, but the problem of primary education still persisted despite much efforts from the Federal, State and Local governments (UBEC, 2012).

Universal Basic Education

The Universal Basic Education idea was conceived to comprise of 6 years of primary education and 3 years of junior secondary school education. It was to be free as well as compulsory. It was meant to include adult and non-formal education program at primary and junior secondary education levels. This provision was to enable adults and youths who were not in school to benefit, involve and share in the interactions generate-able at this very important level - which has compressed three former levels - primary, secondary, adult and non-formal education levels. The universalization of the basic education at the levels was in answer to united Nation's call as amplified in the Millennium Development Goals (UNDP, 2004). Accessing quality education by all is the import of its universalization otherwise the "poor may never really be part of the interactions and there are many in the category within Nigeria (Adirika and Okeke, 2010). The time-bound MDGs benchmarks required every nation to enable access to qualitative, credible, independent, well-articulated, scientific and future oriented curriculum. Nigeria's introduction of the Universal Basic Education is a direct result of a globalized effect on the nation's education (Adirika and Oluwatayo, 2013).

The Universal Basic Education program is meant to address problems of access, quality and equity at the primary and junior secondary levels of the Nigerian educational system. Since Nigerian children are expected to enter the primary school at the age of six, the UBE covers the first six years of primary and the first 3 years of a six-year secondary education programme known as the junior secondary school. It is therefore a 9-year programme for children between the ages of 6 and 15. Youths and adults, who were not able to fit into the regular school but have joined adult literacy and non-formal education classes, are also integrated into the UBE effort irrespective of their ages (UBEC, 2008).

As a dynamic response mechanism, the UBE curriculum is geared towards meeting global educational agenda related to Education for All (EFA). The curriculum has adequately provided for contexts and contents to buttress human rights, scientific and technological pursuits as priority, nationality, natural law; all of which are capable of not only transforming social consciousness but also equipping learners with skills that would make them effective citizens of a new world order (UBEC, 2008).

Implementation of Universal Basic Education In Nigeria

The implementation process of the program has been on since 1999, but progress was hampered by lack of an enabling law to execute certain aspects of the program. But a big relief came when the UBE Bill was signed into law on 26th May 2004. The UBE Act 2004 makes provision for basic education comprising of ECCE, Primary and Junior Secondary Education. The financing of basic education is the responsibility of States and Local Governments. However, the Federal Government has decided to intervene in the provision of basic education with 2% of its Consolidated Revenue Fund. For states to fully benefit from this Fund, criteria were established which states are to comply. The Act also provides for the establishment of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) to co-ordinate the implementation of the programme at the states and local government through the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) of each state and the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs). The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) was formally established on 7th October 2004 (UBEC, 2012).

According to the act that established the commission, the vision is to be a world class education intervention and regulatory agency for the promotion of uniform, qualitative and functional basic education in Nigeria, while its mission is to operate as an intervention, coordinating and monitoring agency to progressively improve the capacity of states, local government agencies and communities in the provision of unfettered access to high qualitative basic education in Nigeria (UBEC, 2012).

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed method of survey research design and focus group discussion, FGD. This is necessitated by the fact that the major indicators of quality of basic education, which include Teacher: Pupil ratio; Pupils Performance; Instructional materials; Teachers' qualification and Availability of Laboratory and Workshops cannot be measured using the same instruments. The study adopted the use of survey questionnaires to measure the Teacher: Pupil ratio and Pupils performance, administered on the parents of pupils through the Parents Teachers Association's platform. This is

The different clusters are:

i. Public Primary Schools
ii. Public Junior Secondary Schools

From the above clustering system, we have 12 clusters from the six local government areas selected. In each of these clusters we selected one big school and one small school, which give us a total of 24 schools selected from the 12 clusters. The 400 questionnaires were distributed in the 24 schools selected in proportion of their populations. In all, a total of four hundred (400) questionnaires were administered across the six local government areas selected.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument for data collection was a researcher-made questionnaire titled "Assessment of Quality of Primary and Junior Secondary Education Questionnaire" (AQPJSEQ). The questionnaire was made up of two parts. Part one was the biographical data of the respondents such as gender, age and job designation. Part two contains 2 relevant items on quality of basic education.

Method of Data Collection: The researcher, through the help of six research assistants who are teachers on the PTA platform administered copies of the questionnaires on the respondents. These research assistants were trained on the purpose of the study, the number and location of the respondents and how to politely administer and retrieve copies of the questionnaire. At the end of the exercise, 29 questionnaires from the public primary and 3 questionnaires from the public junior secondary schools were not returned. The percentage return rates are 85.5% for the public primary schools and 98.5% for the public junior secondary schools. On the whole 32 copies were lost while 368 copies representing 92% of the copies administered were collected, collated and used for data analysis.

Method of Data Analysis: The data generated from the copies of the questionnaire were analysed, using simple percentage. The results from the analysis of these data were supported by the findings from the focus group discussion.

Universal Basic Education Policy Guidelines

In order to achieve success in the implementation of the universal basic education program, the Federal Government of Nigeria put in place some policy guidelines. Section 9, sub-section (c) of The Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education and Other Related Matters Act, 2004, otherwise known as the UBE Act of 2004 provided that the UBE Commission is to "prescribe the minimum standard for basic education throughout Nigeria".

Among so many other policy guidelines, the Nigerian Policy on Education stipulates that schools are to be located in such a way that the average number of pupils does not walk more than two kilometers [2km] to get to the nearest school, provided that, there are pupils within the radius of 2km to fill a two-stream school (12 learning groups of 40 pupils for semi-urban schools and at least a total of 60 pupils for small rural schools.

The guideline also classified schools into three categories. These are:

i. Rural schools- these are small schools with less than 200 pupils but a minimum of 60 pupils.
ii. Semi-urban schools- relatively big schools of not more than 1000 pupils in small towns.
iii. Urban schools- these are big schools of more than 1000 pupils, usually in big towns or cities.

The National Policy on Education equally stipulates that the Teacher- Pupil ratio should be 1:40, which is the mandatory, however, 1:35 is regarded as optimal and ideal for pupils to receive maximum attention from teachers.

On teachers' qualification, the guideline state that minimum entry requirement is NCE and registration with the Teachers Registration Council Of Nigeria [TRCN]. In addition to these, at least one capacity training course in every two years. For the Junior secondary school, the minimum standard is a degree in education, as mandatory, while the ideal is a Master degree in education.

The maximum number of pupils per class for pre-primary, primary and junior secondary schools, according to the guidelines, stand at 20 pupils, 40 pupils and 45 pupils respectively.

For quality assurance, Quality Assurance Manual is designed to aid three to four years routine monitoring cycles for each school. Follow-up monitoring (one month/annual cycle) for school/LGEA/SUBEB.

Workshop to take care of technical and vocational skills should not be less than 140meter square, big enough to accommodate light fabricating machines and equipment for acquisition of technical skills, since the philosophy behind the 9 years basic education is the graduation of students who are well grounded in technical and vocational skills into the labor market at the end of their junior secondary school years. Also as stipulated by the guidelines, the area covered by the school science laboratory should not be less than 140 meter square. These guidelines among others are expected to guide and make the implementation of the UBE program more successful.(UBEC, 2010)

Analysis of Data from Questionnaires on Quality of Primary and Junior Secondary Education in Kwara State

The issue of quality remains very pivotal to the success and sustainability of the Universal Basic Education. This is not without prejudice to other aspect of the policy guidelines. Since UBE policy is a strategic policy to actualize Education for All [EFA] as well as sustainable development, the question of quality must therefore remain cogent towards the realization of this goal. In realizing the basic objectives of this study, data elicited via questionnaires are presented below:

Summary Of Data Solicited Via Questionnaires

[QUALITY OF PRIMARY AND JUNIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION]

QUESTION 1: How many pupils/students are in your child's class?

Table 2

QUESTION 1				
RESPONSE	**PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS**		**PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS**	
	FREQUENCY	**%**	**FREQUENCY**	**%**
Below 20	34	19.6%	62	31.7%
Between 20 & 40	39	22.9%	97	48.8%
Between 41 & 60	54	31.8%	38	19.5%
Between 61 & 100	44	25.7%	0	0%
Above 100	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL 171	100%	197	100%	

Researcher: 2019

The above table indicates that 200 questionnaires were distributed across the 12 public primary schools across the three senatorial districts, for which 171[85.5%], were returned. The same number [200] of questionnaires were also administered across the 12 public junior secondary schools, for which 197[98.5%] were returned. This suggests that respondents [parents] from public junior secondary schools in Kwara State seem to be more serious about their children and wards when compared to their counterparts in the public primary schools.

Table 2 contains the responses to question 1, which deals with number of pupils per class and by extension, the Teacher- Pupil ratio. According to the policy guidelines, the maximum number of pupil per class for primary schools, according to the guidelines, stand at 40 pupils, and equally stipulates that the Teacher- Pupil ratio should be 1:40, which is the mandatory, though, 1:35 is regarded as optimal and ideal for pupils to receive maximum attention from teachers.

However, the above table indicates that in terms of implementation, the public junior secondary schools comply much more than the public primary schools. This is indicative in the fact that 80.5%[48.8% +31.7%] of pupils within the public junior secondary school subsector are in classes not exceeding 40 pupils. But for the public primary schools, most pupils are accommodated in classes that are well above 40 pupils, which suggest non compliance on the part of public primary schools, with 57.5% [31.8% + 25.7%] of the pupils in classes of 41 pupils and above.

QUESTION 2: Which of the statements below best describe your situation?
Statement 1: I do engage the service of private tutor to coach my children at home after school hours.
Statement 2: I don't engage the service of private tutor to coach my children at home after school hours.

Table 3
QUESTION 1

RESPONSE	PUBLIC PRIMARYSCHOOLS		PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS	
	FREQUENCY	%	FREQUENCY	%
Agree with statement 1	92	54%	76	38.5%
Agree with statement 2	79	46%	121	61.5%
I Don't know	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL 171	100%	197	100%	

Researcher: 2019

Table 3 deals with Question 2 on the quality of teaching in public primary and junior secondary schools in the state. From the table, out of 171 respondents from the primary schools, 92 respondent (54%) alluded to the fact that they engaged the service of private tutor to coach their children at home after school hours, while 79 respondents representing 46% of all respondents from public primary schools in the state agreed with statement 2, they do not engage the service of private tutor to coach their children at home after school hours. However, for the junior secondary schools, majority of the respondents (121), 61.5% also agreed with statement 2. This suggests that the quality of public primary education in the state with respect to qualitative teaching service delivery is poor especially when compared to the junior secondary schools. The responses of the majority of respondents from the junior secondary schools (61.5%), implies that teaching service delivery in the public junior secondary schools is good.

The number of pupil per class, the Teacher-pupil ratio and Quality teaching service delivery are very important elements in the implementation of quality assurance, as such, the two tables indicates that in terms of ensuring that qualitative services are delivered, through maximum attention from teachers to pupils, the public junior secondary schools in the state are more compliant. By implication the quality of basic education provision in the public junior secondary schools in Kwara State is good, which is expected to encourage parents to seek for basic education for their children and wards from this category of schools in the state.
However, the unimpressive quality of basic education provision by the public primary schools as presented and explained above does not support parents quest to seek for basic education for their children from the public primary schools in the state.

Summary of Views of Education Inspectors Through Focus Group Discussion on Issues Affecting Quality of Basic Education in Kwara State
The quality dimension of basic education is very important in the provision of basic education in the state, hence the prominence accorded to it. To this end, responses were solicited from education inspectors from the Kwara State Quality Assurance Bureau and the Inspectorate division of the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board on issues affecting the implementation of basic education guidelines. As critical stakeholders in the education sector of Kwara state, the summary of their views is captured as follows:

i. Budgetary provision for routine monitoring and evaluation, supervision and inspection is inadequate.
ii. Late release of fund for quality assurance activities by the state government.
iii. Inadequate number of qualified teachers especially in core subjects such as English, Mathematics and Basic science.
iv. Inadequate or non availability of instructional materials in schools, most especially schools in the rural communities.

v. Inadequate infrastructural facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, toilets and other recreational facilities to support the number of pupils and students in schools.
vi. Number of inspectors and supervisors in the state Ministry of Education and Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board is insufficient for the number of schools in the state.
vii. Politicization of appointment of education inspectors and supervisors.
viii. Sanctions are not prescribed for non- compliance to policy guidelines.

Discussion of Findings

With respect to number of pupils per classroom and the Teacher-pupils ratio, which are key elements of quality assurance, the study discovered low level of compliance in its implementation on the part of public primary schools, while recording a higher level of compliance on the part of public junior secondary schools in Kwara state. The study equally discovered that in terms of quality of teaching service delivery by teachers, the public junior secondary education in the state is rated high, while their primary counterparts are not doing well enough.

Through the focus group discussion, the study discovered that inadequate number of qualified teachers especially in core subject areas such as English Language, Mathematics and Basic science; inadequate or non availability of instructional materials in schools, most especially schools in the rural communities; and lack of adequate infrastructural facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, toilets and other recreational facilities to support the number of pupils and students in schools, have continued to lower the quality of basic education in the state in recent times.

It is also the views of education inspectors and supervisors, as discovered by this study that inadequate budgetary provision for routine supervision and inspection; late release of fund for quality assurance activities by the state government; insufficient number of education inspectors and supervisors in the state; politicization of inspectors and supervisors' appointment and non prescription of sanctions for non compliance to policy guidelines are among the main issues affecting the implementation of the quality assurance aspect of the education policy guidelines

Conclusion and Recommendations

Though, the study discovered, with respect to number of pupils per classroom and the Teacher-pupils ratio, which are key elements of quality assurance, that there was a high level of compliance on the part of public junior secondary schools in Kwara state, it equally discovered that this same issue with respect to the public primary schools remains a challenge. This quality assurance challenge, couple with other issues of quality raised in the course of this study are serious challenges facing the implementation of basic education policy in Kwara state.

However, to improve on the quality of primary and junior secondary education service delivery in the state in the face of the aforementioned challenges, this study suggests the following as panacea to this perennial problem in the state's education sector:

1. Policy guidelines on Teacher-Pupil ratio and number of pupil per class should be strictly adhered to and sanctions should be prescribed and carried out for non-compliance, especially at the level of public primary education in the state. There is also the need for the government to appoint more qualified teachers especially in core subject areas such as English Language, Mathematics and Basic science.
2. Adequate instructional materials should be made available by the government to teachers and pupils. Also, infrastructural facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, toilets and recreational facilities should be provided in these public schools.
3. Rigorous monitoring, evaluation and reforms is needed to create the required dynamism to achieve education for all in the state. To achieve this, sufficient funds should be made available and release in time by the Kwara state government for routine inspection and supervisions.
4. There is the need for the government to appoint more quality assurance officials (inspectors) at the level of the state Ministry Of Education and the state Universal Basic Education Board. However, it is very important for those who are in-charge of recruitment of staff to de-politicize the appointment of inspectors and supervisors. Appointment should be given to those who really deserve them.

References

Aderinoye, R. A. (2007). Expanding Access to Adult Basic Education in Nigeria: The Intervention of Open Distance Learning, International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, Volume 4, Number 11.

Adirika, B. N. (2000). Language Education in the UBE: Critical Consideration for Implementation. Nigeria Journal of Curriculum Studies (1) 80-88.

Adirika, B. N.& Okeke, O. I. (2010). Safety Nets in Pursuit of Equity in Girl-Child Education: A proposition, International Journal of Forum for African Women Education Nigeria 2. (2) 104 - 109.

Adirika, B. N and Oluwatayo, G. K. (2013). The Nigeria Universal Basic Education Programme: The Status Quo And The Way Forward. Research Journal in Psychology and Educational Studies. 2(6) 325-332.

Aghenta, J.A. (1984). Education in Nigeria. A paper presented at the international conference on comparative education in Nigeria, organized by CESAC, University of Lagos.

Egbosi, I. B. and Offor U. I. (2016). Application of Access Principle to Primary Education Management in Anambra State of Nigeria, IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME) Volume 6, Issue 4 Ver. I (Jul. - Aug. 2016), PP 43-50

ESSPIN (2017), Education Sector Support Program In Nigeria- End-of-Programme Report 2017: Building lasting change, DFID-UKAID

Nigerian Education Research Development Council. (2007).The 9-year Basic education curriculum at a glance. Lagos: NERDC Press.

Rossiter, J. (2016). Scaling up access to quality early education in Ethiopia: Guidance from international experience Young Lives Policy Paper 8, January 2016 © Young Lives. Retrieved from http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/pdf/outputs/YoungLives/YL-PP8.

Salihu, M.J. and Jamil, H. (2015). Policy of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria: An Examination of Its Effectiveness on Implementation and Management, American International Journal of Contemporary Research, Vol. 5, No. 6; December 2015

UBEC. (2017). Universal Basic Education in Nigeria - Centre for Public Impact". Retrieved 2017-09-26.

UBEC. (2012)."About Universal Basic Education Commission". Retrieved 30 August 2012.

UNDP. (2004). Nigeria Millennium development goals report.

UNESCO. (2015) . Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and challenge. EFA Global Monitoring Report. Paris: UNESCO. [28].

UNESCO .(2014). "World Data on Education" UNESCO-IBE. 2014. Retrieved 24 July 2014.

UNESCO .(2012). "Vocational Education in Nigeria". UNESCO-UNEVOC. 2012. Retrieved 24 July 2014.

Universal Basic Education Commission. (2008).Training manual on the 9-year basic education curriculum. Abuja: UBEC.

Universal Basic Education Commission. (2010). Minimum Standards For Basic Education in Nigeria

Universal Basic Education Commission (2012).Impact Assessment of the Universal Basic Education Programme Delivery in Nigeria, 1999-2009.

USDMN. (2010). "Nigeria Education Profile" Archived 2010-03-17, U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Nigeria.

World Vision. (2016). Current Situation & Use of Primary School Libraries: A snapshot across provinces in Cambodia. Retrieved from www.wvi.org/publication/current-situation-use.

5