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## ERA OF ECONOMIC RECESSION AND MANAGEMENT OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated era of recession and management of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. To achieve this, three hypotheses were formulated and tested. Quantitative research design was used for the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled “Recession and Management of Universal Basic Education Questionnaire” (RMUBEQ) was used to collect information for the study. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed that there was a significant relationship between regular payment of teacher salaries, provision of learning and teaching facilities, training of teachers and management of universal basic education in Nigeria. It was recommended that government should work hard to improve teacher working conditions by prompt and regular payment of their salaries, continue to provide adequate learning and teaching facilities and also provide appropriate and adequate training of teachers to support them in building confidence as well as enhancing their professional growth towards effective management of universal basic education in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Economic Recession, Management, Basic Education, Nigeria

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# MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

## INTRODUCTION

Universal basic education in Nigeria is regarded as a birthright for every child with the slogan “every child counts”. It is generally believed that good education is the bedrock to the success of any nation’s economic achievement and sustainable national development. Education is also described as a fundamental human right and no effective learning can occur without motivation of teachers (Tichaona & Thembinkosi, 2013). Basic Education is the education given to children aged 0-15 years. It encompasses the early childhood education (0-4) and 10 years of formal school.

The Government National Policy on Universal Basic Education objectives (FRN, 2013)

- (a) Developing in the entire citizenry a strong consciousness and commitment for education;
- (b) The provision of free, universal basic education for every Nigerian child of school age;
- (c) Reducing the incidence of drop-out from the formal school system, through improved relevance, quality and efficiency;
- (d) Ensure the acquisition of the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, communicative and life skills as well as ethical, moral, security and civic values needed for the laying of a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

Effective management of Universal Basic Education has become a serious issue especially in this era of economic recession. Managing universal basic education can be defined as the provision of resources and optimal utilization of these resources both human and material for attaining educational goals or the stated objective of universal basic education. Through the management function government as the manager plans, organizes, directs, coordinates and budgets for every aspect of education toward implementing of policies and efficient utilization of human and non-human materials in order to achieve educational goals. The recent economic recession in Nigeria since 2015 has affected Nigerians in so many ways such as decline in currency, inflation, decrease in purchasing power of people and the steady decline in the standard of living. Many families’ life dreams had been destroyed due to irregular payment of salaries, unemployment, poor feeding and the like. Several studies have been carried out on the effect of economic meltdown and global economic crises on education. Tinuke (2012), for example, investigated the impact of global economic recession on human resources management in Nigeria.

The era of economic recession has direct implications for all levels of education especially universal basic education in Nigeria with little progress to widen access to it. Nigeria education is facing numerous challenges in terms of irregular payment of teacher salaries, reduction in teacher training, high dropout rate, dilapidated classrooms and the like. Economic recession refers to a significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy (NBER, 2007). Economic recession is a period of general economic decline accompanied by high or persistent inflation, increased unemployment, reduced real wages, high interest rates and so on.

In response to irregular payment of salary and arrears of UBE teachers in many states in Nigeria during the last one year, the National Union of Teachers had undertaken or threatened strikes in many states such as Kwara, Niger, Benue, Kogi, Ogun, Osun to mention a few. Because of dilapidated school buildings, furniture and equipment in some schools in Kwara State, the public universal basic schools were forced to develop new ideas for raising funds from parents and the community, including collection of high tuition fees, parent teacher association levies which are likely to reduce enrolment especially in the era of irregular salary payment by State governments in Nigeria.

Tchaona and Thembinkosi (2013) conducted a study on the impact of the economic meltdown on the education system of Zimbabwe. Yet several areas on economic recession and education are to be covered by these scholars. These areas include era of economic recession, management of education, relationship between economic recession and management of universal basic education especially in Kwara State, Nigeria. Therefore, this study endeavors to fill part of the gap in the literature.



# MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

The theoretical frame work of this study was based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory as cited in Aguba (2009). Maslow proposed five levels of human needs ranging from low level needs to high level needs. Low level needs are externally satisfied (physiological needs and safety needs) while high level needs are internally satisfied needs (love needs, esteem need and self-actualization needs). This theory can be applicable in the management of universal basic education in that lower order needs which are physiological needs such as food, shelter, sex, warmth, clothing and safety needs in terms of safety from unfavorable environment, and the like can be catered for through regular payment of salaries while higher order needs such as love needs (belongingness, work group), esteem needs (recognition, power, self-respect, self-regard, good reputation, fame, social success, status, prestige) and self-actualization needs (in terms of fulfillment of one's dreams, ambition and aspiration) can be achieved by providing teaching and learning facilities and training of teachers in order to enhance appropriate management of education in Nigeria.

The Tichaona and Theminkosi (2013) investigation on the impact of economic meltdown on the education system of Zimbabwe involved a sample of 304 respondents (49 % male and 51 % of female). Data collected from a survey questionnaire were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The findings showed that government should improve teacher working conditions. This study is related to the current study in that it looked at impact of economic meltdown on education especially how it affects teachers' condition. The study, however, did not examine how economic recession affects education in terms of irregular salary payment, poor provision of learning facilities and training of teachers. The objectives of this study are to determine the relationship between payment of teacher salaries, teaching and learning facilities, training of teachers and management of public universal basic education in Kwara State.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In addressing the problem, the following research questions were raised:

- (1) How does regular payment of teacher salaries enhance management of public universal basic education in Kwara State?
- (2) Does provision of teaching and learning facilities improve management of public universal basic education in Kwara State?
- (3) Does training of teachers bring about effective management of public universal basic education in Kwara State.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated and answered:

- (1) There is no significant relationship between regular payment of teacher salaries and management of public universal basic education in Kwara State.
- (2) There is no significant relationship between provision of teaching and learning facilities and management of public universal basic education in Kwara State.
- (3) There is no significant relationship between training of teachers and management of public universal basic education in Kwara State.



# MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this study was quantitative research design. This design was considered appropriate because it gives the opportunity of obtaining the opinion of the sample population, analyze the data collected using appropriate data analysis technique and reach reasonable conclusion about the population from the findings of the study. This study focused on the public universal basic education in Kwara State, Nigeria. There are 1,406 primary schools and 330 junior secondary schools in the State. The target population of this study comprised all 14,216 primary school teachers and 3,302 junior secondary school teachers in Kwara State as at the time of study. Sample of 306 primary school teachers and 71 junior secondary school teachers making a total of 377 teachers were selected using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size of a given population. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 306 primary school teachers and 71 junior secondary school teachers. This was to ensure that all categories of teachers were given an equal chance of being selected.

The data collection instrument was a self-constructed questionnaire titled "Recession and Management of Universal Basic Education Questionnaire" (RMUBEQ). The instrument had two sections; section A elicited personal information of teachers, while section B elicited information concerning the era of economic recession and management of universal basic education. The 15 items in section B were arranged in three clusters. The teachers responded to the items on a four (4) point Likert-type scale as follows: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The criterion mean is given thus:  $4 + 3 + 2 + 1 / 4 = 2.50$ . The criterion mean depicts that any item that is above or equal to the criterion mean value of 2.50 is agreed while the one below the criterion mean value is disagreed by the respondents. To ensure content validity of the instrument, draft copies of the instruments were given to five experts in educational management and three experts in measurement and evaluation. Relevant corrections and adjustment were made based on their observations and recommendations.

Instrument reliability was ensured by using Cronbach's alpha; the instrument reliability index was .74. In order to ensure higher return rates, the corrected questionnaires were distributed with the help of eight research assistants to the teachers of sample schools. Effective administration of questionnaires was also aided by cooperation of colleagues and friends in the sample schools. The respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. This method facilitated on the spot collecting of the completed instrument and hundred percent retrieval. The data collected for the study were analyzed using SPSS version 20. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research hypotheses. The  $p$ -value was compared to the significant level (0.5) to determine the rejection or acceptance of the hypotheses.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This study provides a descriptive analysis of the extent recession and management of universal basic education. Simple frequencies and percentages were used in the description.

Table 1 presents the percentage and frequency response of teachers who responded to the research questionnaire on regular payment of teacher salaries in public universal basic education in Kwara State.



# MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

Table 1  
*Mean and Standard Deviations of Variables on Payment of Teacher Salaries*

S/N	Payment of teacher salaries	Teachers Response		Decision	
		mean	SD		
1.	Regular payment of salaries enhances effective management of UBE.	2.90	0.964	Agreed	
2.	Timely payment of arrears improves management of UBE.	2.95	0.913	Agreed	
3.	Teachers assisted by government to get loan from bank help in the management of UBE	2.93	0.972	Agreed	
4.	Teachers' pension regularly paid when due enhance management of UBE	2.87	1.027	Agreed	
5.	Regular payment of teachers allowance enhance management of UBE	2.84	1.003	Agreed	
	Grand mean	2.90	0.976		

(Mean  $\geq$  2.50 Agree, Mean  $<$  2.50 Disagree)

Table 1 shows that items number 1-5 have their various mean and grand mean values above 2.50 and high standard deviation score. Therefore, respondents agreed that regular payment of teacher salaries is necessary for effective management of public universal basic education.

Table 2  
*Mean and Standard Deviation of variables on learning and teaching facilities*

S/N	Learning and teaching facilities	Teachers		Response	
		Mean	SD	Decision	
6.	Well-equipped laboratory enhance effective management of UBE	2.87	0.946	Agreed	
7.	Library houses all books and needed materials help in achieving effective management of UBE	2.95	0.931	Agreed	
8.	Provision of a good and befitting classroom help in the management of UBE	2.87	0.983	Agreed	
9.	Availability of furniture stimulate students learning and management of UBE	2.78	1.032	Agreed	
10.	Provision of toilets and cleaning materials improve orderliness and	2.97	0.977	Agreed	



# MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

	safety of facilities.				
	Grand mean	2.89	0.967		

(Mean > 2.50 Agree, Mean < 2.50 Disagree). Researchers field work

Table 2 shows that items number 6-10 have their various mean and grand mean above 2.50 and high standard deviation scores. Therefore, respondents agreed that provision of learning and teaching facilities help in the effective management of public universal basic education.

Table 3  
*Mean and Standard Deviation of variables on Training of Teachers*

S/N	Training of teachers	Teachers		Response	
		Mean	SD	Decision	
11.	Provision of training helps teachers to possess a certain set of knowledge and skill to support their curricula	2.85	0.949	Agreed	
12.	Training support correlate with teacher confidence	2.95	0.947	Agreed	
13.	Training of teachers enhance their professional growth	2.93	0.980	Agreed	
14.	Training helps teachers to improve on integrating tools and resources needed in the classroom	2.84	1.002	Agreed	
15.	Training helps teachers to be more competent in their area of specialization.	2.92	0.954	Agreed	
	Grand mean	2.90	0.970		

(Mean > 2.50 Agree, Mean < 2.50 Disagree)

Table 3 shows that items number 11-15 have their various mean and grand mean above 2.50 and high standard deviation scores. Therefore, respondents agreed that training of teachers is appropriate and very necessary for effective management of public universal basic education.

### ***Hypotheses Testing***

The analysis method applied in the course of the research work was the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients to test the set hypotheses.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between regular payment of teacher salaries and management of public universal basic education.



Table 4  
*Regular Payment of Teacher Salaries and Management of Public Universal Basic Education.*

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	Cal-r	p-value	Decision
Regular payment of salaries	377	11.72	4.309				
				753	0.91	.000	Rejected
Management of UBE	377	2.90	0.976				

Table 4 indicates that the calculated  $r$ -value = .91 and  $p$  value is .000 at the 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is positive and significant relationship between regular payment of teacher salaries and management of public universal basic education. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between regular payment of teacher salaries and management of public universal basic education is rejected.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between provision of learning and teaching facilities and management of public universal basic education.

Table 5  
*Learning and Teaching Facilities and Management of Public Universal Basic Education*

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	Cal-r	p-value	Decision
Learning and teaching facilities	377	11.55	3.948				
				753	0.92	.000	Rejected
Management of UBE	377	2.89	0.967				

Table 5 indicates that the calculated  $r$ -value = .92 and  $p$ -value is .000 at the 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is positive relationship between provision of learning and teaching facilities and management of public universal basic education. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between provision of learning and teaching facilities and management of public universal basic education is rejected.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between training of teachers and management of public universal basic education.

Table 6  
*Training of Teachers and Management of Public Universal Basic Education*

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	Cal-r	p-value	Decision
Training of teachers	377	11.68	3.707				
				753	0.92	.000	Rejected
Management of UBE	377	2.90	0.970				



# MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

Table 6 indicates that the calculated  $r$ -value = .92 and  $p$ -value notation is .000 at the 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is positive and significant relationship between training of teachers and management of public universal basic education. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between training of teachers and management of public universal basic education is rejected.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of question one analysis and findings in Table 1 shows that regular payment of salaries is necessary for effective management of universal basic education in Kwara State. Results from hypothesis one revealed that there is positive and significant relationship between regular payment of teacher salaries and management of public universal basic education in Kwara State.

As for the second hypothesis, the findings in Table 2 show that provision of learning and teaching facilities helps in managing public universal basic education in Kwara State. Results from hypothesis two analysis showed that there is relationship between provision of learning and teaching facilities and management of public universal basic education in Kwara State. This finding agreed with Ihuoma (2008) that realization of education objectives required maximum provision and management of school facilities. The finding also conforms to Tichaona and Thenbinkosi (2013) that all learning institutions should be provided with proper learning and teaching facilities such as classroom, teachers' accommodation, and libraries.

Result of question three analysis and findings in Table 3 show that training of teachers is appropriate and very necessary in managing public universal basic education in Kwara State. Results from hypothesis three show that there is relationship between training of teachers and management of public universal basic education in Kwara State. This finding agreed with Abdullahi, Muritala, Ojo, and Lawal (2016) who maintained that giving opportunity to teachers to participate in workshops and attend seminars provided a guide to facilitate clear objective and application of new procedures in teaching by building up competency in terms of dynamic learning and knowledge renewal. Arbache and John (2007) find that an asymmetric relationship exists between education and other indicators of human development and growth. Primary school completion rates are maximally lower in countries experiencing economic recession and the completion rates are positively correlated with economic growth.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, we make the following recommendations:

1. Government should work hard to improve working conditions of teachers by prompt and regular payment of teacher salaries to improve management of universal basic education in Nigeria.
2. Government should continue to provide adequate learning and teaching facilities such as good classrooms, libraries, laboratories, staff rooms, furniture and the like to enhance effective management of universal basic education in Nigeria.
3. Government should also provide appropriate and adequate training of teachers to support them in building confidence, improve knowledge and skills as well as enhance their professional growth towards effective management of universal basic education.





# MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (MOJEM)

## CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the recent economic recession is having negative effects on education. Appropriate welfare packages are needed for teachers in terms of regular payment of salaries, arrears loan so as to achieve universal basic education goals to the maximum level. Teaching and learning facilities have serious influence on universal basic education goal achievement. In addition, teacher training predicted the future of universal basic education especially in entrepreneurship education that will make the students self-reliant. The findings of this study show that regular payment of teacher salaries, provision of learning and teaching facilities and training of teachers are the major criteria for achieving effective management of universal basic education in Nigeria.

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