

DEVELOPMENT AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Teacher education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein. In this era of global competitiveness, it is imperative that teachers are adequately prepared to function effectively in a challenging global environment. The article discussed history of teacher education in Nigeria, classification of teacher education, goals of teacher education as stated in National Policy on Education. Some of the challenges discussed are in the area of societal and economic/financial values, fall in standard of education, poor quality control, brain drain syndrome are attributable to a large extent, to lack of incentives to improve performance of teachers', inadequate provision of teaching facilities, textbooks and library facilities to equipped the teachers', mass production of poor quality of teachers dominates academic contents realm, poor recruitment, screening and selection of teachers for job among others. The following recommendations are government should make funds available to revive teacher education in Nigeria, provide teaching facilities that would enable the teachers to keep abreast on the latest technologies in education, strict adherence to rules and regulation on recruitment, selection and retention of teachers and follow up on the agencies that manage quality control management on Teacher Education.

Keywords: *Teacher education, Teacher quality and job performance*

Introduction

The Nigeria educational system largely depends on the quality of the teachers' Teachers' quality should become a priority in both government and other educational reform efforts, hence the need for professional staff development of teachers is highly of the importance. Some major problem affecting teaching profession in Nigeria usually in public secondary education is how and manner teachers' specialized on improvement, quality and performance. Generally, there's difficulty in attracting and retaining quality personnel into the teaching profession. Some have blamed this problem on government, stressing that government has not done enough to professionally develop and motivate teachers such as to lead to their commitment towards optimal productivity (Oluwakemi, 2012). The present day education system faces the problem of lack of or inadequate training of teachers with reference to secondary schools in Nigeria, and with particular reference to the study area. Adejor, Akogwu and Ameh (2010), stated that training is the teaching and learning activities carried on for the primary purpose of helping members of an organization to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes, needed by a particular job. Teacher education is the bedrock of quality education in both primary and secondary schools. Given the fact that the academic progress of a student is largely dependent on the teacher, it follows that the extent of the teacher's knowledge and competence, to a high degree, influences the academic performance of students. Teacher is seen as the character modifier. There is need for him to be creative and imaginative. As a result of this, teachers' are expected to be intelligent and well qualified and must have pedagogical skills and desirable traits.

Teaching is a noble profession that comes with so much responsibility and duty towards students. Teachers' do not only teach and impart knowledge but inspire and motivate students for life and take important steps in life. Teachers' are the most important group of professionals that are needed for the nation's development. As stated in the National Policy on Education, no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. It is in recognition of this that the federal government mandated National Teacher's Institute (NTI) to train and retrain teachers in Nigeria (NPE, 2014). According to Osokoya, (2010), The National Teacher's Institute (NTI) was established in 1976 by Decree No. 7 of 1976 to offer upgrading programmes for teachers through distance learning. Over the years NTI has been providing in -service training for teachers during school holidays and

week-ends for the award of NCE, B.Ed. and Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) certificates.

According to Rose-Arikpo, Anthonio and Ikpi (2014) defines Teacher education as an institutionalized procedure designed for professional training of those who engage in the act of teaching in preparation of competent teachers who are knowledgeable in specialized area of knowledge and professional practice. Teacher education is a programme that is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein. In this era of global competitiveness, it is imperative that teachers are adequately prepared to function effectively in a challenging global environment. The minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) NPE 2014. The prominent role of teacher education has been adequately highlighted in National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014). The policy stressed at section 70(a) that “since no education system may rise above the quality of its teacher, teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development. Owolabi (2005) pointed out that policy of teacher education deal with roles of relevant authorities on a continual basis to enhance the quality of teacher education. Government policies on education emphasized that teachers training and retraining is highly necessary.

History of Teacher Education in Nigeria

The idea of teacher training took its root from the need to train people to lead the missionary crusade of propagating the gospel during the early Christian missionary era (Isaac & Haastrup 2012: Ajayi and Ayodele 2002). The first teacher education training college was established by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) Abeokuta in 1859, and was known as “The Training Institution”. The school was moved to Lagos in 1867, when the European Missionaries were expelled from Abeokuta. In 1896, it was moved to Oyo to become St. Andrew’s College, Oyo town. It started with only ten students to receive training and graduate to serve the C.M.S. Yoruba missions as at this early stage of teacher training, a teacher was to serve under missionaries as a catechist, a pastor, a priest.

In 1833, the Baptist mission established a theological seminary in Ogbomoso which was later changed to Baptist training college in 1897. In the same year, the Methodist mission also established a training institution in Lagos. While the Roman Catholic mission started St. Gregory College in 1896. In 1905, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society opened a training institution combining the training of catechists with that of teachers. The Wesleyan Methodist, the first to arrive, confined themselves to the south-western part of Yoruba land with their strength concentrated in Lagos, Abeokuta and Ibadan. The church Missionary Society (C.M.S), by far the largest, concentrated in the Yoruba land and Niger Delta (Osokoya 2010). The United Presbyterian church from Scotland concentrated effort in Old Calabar. The Southern American Baptist, found strength in Lagos, Abeokuta and Ogbomoso while the Qua Iboe mission from protestant Ireland, established themselves along the Qua Iboe river. These missions on arrival founded schools with curriculum heavily weighted on the three Rs- reading, writing and arithmetic. Mission schools were inadequately funded as the missions enjoyed virtually no financial support from the home missions. Schools were run on the limited funds subscribed by the local congregations (Osokoya 2010). One other feature of missionary teacher education programme is that the programme was mainly concerned with the provision of teachers for only the primary school level and there was no consideration whatsoever for the training of secondary school level teachers until after the achievement of political independence. This could be as a result of the fact that there was no secondary school at this early stage or because the missionaries were not interested in developing the natives general, during this early period, there was no official education policy to guide the various missions which resulted in to lack of a common criterion for employing teachers and lack of uniformity in the condition of service of teachers (Taiwo 1999).

After independence in 1960, government effort was directed towards eliminating the number of untrained teachers and also increasing the number of trained teachers in schools. With the introduction of educational courses in universities and the establishment of four Advanced Teachers’ Training College, teacher education relieved great impetus as well as became the key to the educational development of teachers in Nigeria. During the early years of teachers’ education programme in Nigeria, teachers began with a study in method courses (professional courses) followed by specialized training for few optional subjects in teacher training college where they acquired appropriate professional spirit. It was from here that teachers moved into college of education or university for in-depth knowledge in their various fields. Today, there are more than three

institutions concerned with the preparation of teachers for all levels of formal education. Such institutions fall into four categories. For example, teachers training colleges which has been phased out in many states, Colleges of Education, the Polytechnics and Universities.

Classification of Teacher Education

In Nigeria educational system, teacher education programmes are classified into three levels

- a. Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE)
- b. Bachelor's Degree in Education Programme
- c. Post-Graduate Degree in Education Programme (Rose-Arikpo *et al* 2014)

The goals of teacher education as stated in Nigeria Policy on Education shall be to:

- Produce highly motivated conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system;
- Further encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- Help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals
- Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations; and
- Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession (NPE, 2014).

Challenges of Teacher Education in Nigeria

Teacher's education in Nigeria has come under pressure in recent times. The guiding philosophy of teacher education is to produce student teachers with sharp intellectual minds capable of further critical intellectual inquiry (Ololube, 2014). Some of these challenges are in the area of societal and economic/financial values. Recently numerous studies have revealed that there's fall in standard of education, poor quality control, brain drain syndrome are attributable to a large extent, to lack of incentives to improve performance of teachers', inadequate provision of teaching facilities, textbooks and library facilities to equipped the teachers', mass production of poor quality of teachers dominates academic contents realm, poor recruitment, screening and selection of teachers for job among others.

1. **Falling in standard of education:** (Rose-Arikpo *et al* 2014: Meziobi (1996:66) outlined the main sources where the problems are drawn from, for examples, Students with low cut off points in the University Matriculation Examination (UME) now Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) who compared with credential gained entry into law
2. and medicine, (b) Those who could not make it into other discipline of first choice but would now be taken to teacher education rather than stay at home. (c) Those who applied for admission into other discipline but for no choice found their names in education list of admitted applicants. (d) Those who initially thought of using education as a stop gap to other discipline but failed to accomplish this desire. (e) People who are not educable as teachers but found themselves into the teacher education institutions or programmes on account of political expediency, god-fatherism, government or catchment area policies. (f) Those who failed their pre-degree/remedial examinations and are sponsored by either the university or government to enroll in teacher education programme. Under this situation, there's low or no interest in teacher education, those set of students just found themselves in the discipline of which there's lack of commitment and relatively high labour turn over.
3. **Poor quality control:** teacher education has been experiencing poor quality control in Nigeria. Maintaining the required standards to ensure that quality education is given to teachers has not been completely attainable (Abanobi & Abanobi 2017). Some government agencies are responsible for regulating teacher education programmes, they are National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) which coordinates and regulates colleges of education ensuring that the number of qualified lecturers and the required infrastructure for effective running of the institution are available. Nigeria University Commission (NUC) which is responsible for accrediting university programmes in the faculties and institutes of education (IOE) in the universities. The National Teachers Institute (NTI) responsible for pre-service and in-service training programmes for teachers who wish to get Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), and most recently Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) programmes. Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) is responsible for maintaining teachers register and code of conduct for teachers. Even though these bodies have been given the responsibility to monitor and maintain

standards in the various schools responsible for providing teacher education, they have not been doing their work as expected. There's lobbying in getting some programmes accredited, poor monitoring and supervision on the part of the officials, inability to perform their duties causes damage to teacher education in Nigeria.

4. **Brain drain syndrome:** teacher education in Nigeria is supposed to improve at both the primary and secondary school levels looking at the national policy guidelines. Quality of education in Nigeria is reduced in the recent years because of the brain drain phenomenon which led to the drift of more-able and more experienced teachers' leave for better corporate job where they were offered better remunerations and recognized professionally. This brain drain syndrome is attributable to a large extent, to lack of inability of teacher education to keep pace with the scientific and technological revolution to the changing needs of society, very poor equipped working environments, and inadequate social recognition. Even the teachers that stayed on the job those not commit their time in molding and shaping the student hence, result to poor quality delivery on the part of the teachers. The reliance on inexperienced teachers in the various educational fields in the country definitely affects the quality of students' work, and of course, the future of the teaching profession. This vicious circle contributes to the low status of education in the universities, colleges of education as well as secondary and primary schools.
5. **lack of incentives to improve performance of teachers:** teacher education in Nigeria suffers poor enrolment. The condition of service over the years has made teaching very unattractive. Teachers' conditions of service are not enticing enough to attract and retain the best brains in Nigeria. The best brain that could have been useful in the profession has opted out for more valued and well-paid jobs leaving the brain drain teachers thus bastardized or reduced to nothing in their profession hence, poses threat to teachers' productivity. Government has always paid lip-service remuneration policy and this tend to ruin the teaching profession.
6. **Inadequate provision of teaching facilities, textbooks and library facilities to equipped the teachers':** for teaching to be effective, teaching techniques requires Utilizes text books/notebook and other guides effectively. Most teachers are not provided with the required number of current textbooks in core subject areas. Parents cannot afford these textbooks for student teachers. It is the library that should help them out. Otu 2012: Akpan (2007) however, reports that the libraries in many schools were not functional. And it has been observed that the libraries available in most of our teacher's institutions cannot boast of modern textbooks. The inability of students' teachers to have access to necessary modern textbooks, effective use of a variety of available materials for teaching aids, makes clear, practical demonstrations has adverse effects on the quality of teacher education in the country makes teachers are faced with series of challenges enrolling in professional development programmes (Hervie & Winful, 2018). The inadequate provisions of teaching facilities are serious challenges to the teacher's capacity to function effectively and produce functional educational results. For example, institutions teaching science and technology generally lack adequately equipped laboratories and technical workshops. Where these materials are provided, there are problems of inadequate electricity and water supply.
7. **Mass production of poor quality of teachers dominates academic contents realm, poor recruitment, screening and selection of teachers for job:** The quality of teachers produced, right from the period of training is generally poor due to lack of commitment. Udofot (2005) observed that trainee with low academic qualifications go into teacher education perhaps because they lack alternative professional choices. This is so because of the poor entry academic standards of the trainees. This is usually done at the expense of attention to the professional preparation of the student-teachers. At the end, the student-teachers leave the institutions poorly prepared for the classrooms.

Conclusion

Teacher Education needs extraordinary attention on planning of education because, the quality of education in any country is one of the major keys to national development. Certainly, no organized education can rise above the quality of its teachers. Therefore, among the purpose of Teacher Education in the National Policy on Education remains Teacher Education shall continue to be emphasized on educational planning and development. Also, teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in their profession and provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment. the following conclusions emerged that Teacher's education in Nigeria has come under pressure in recent times of which there's need for intervention in all spheres. Teacher education being the bedrock of quality education in both primary and

secondary schools is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are:

- (a) government should make funds available to revive teacher education in Nigeria;
- (b) provide teaching facilities that would enable the teachers to keep abreast on the latest technologies in education;
- (c) strict adherence to rules and regulation on recruitment, selection and retention of teachers and;
- (d) follow up on the agencies that manage quality control management on Teacher Education.

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