



STATUS OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA AND TEACHERS' QUALITY: IMPLICATIONS FOR QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY

¹Florence U. Akudo (PhD)

Email: fu.akudo@unizik.edu.ng

Phone No: 08036661864

&

²Ifeanyi Francis Ikedimma (PhD)

Email: if.ikedimma@unizik.edu.ng

Phone No: 08032976335

¹⁻²Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University,
P.M.B 5025, Awka, Anambra State

ABSTRACT

The goals of teacher education are, among others, to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system. Teacher education therefore is a professional education of teachers towards attainment of attitude, skills, knowledge and competencies considered desirable, so as to make them efficient and effective in their work in accordance to the needs of society any point in time. The transition of the world from one of separate units to globally integrated whole requires a new vision of the teachers' role and pedagogical preparation towards overcoming challenges of the changing society. This paper discussed the status of teacher education and teachers' quality and their implications to quality service delivery. It examined the history of teacher education in Nigeria; federal government's view on teacher education; challenges confronting quality service delivery in teacher education; highlighted the implications of re-engineering teacher education for quality service delivery. It was recommended, among others that the Ministry of Education should ensure that all programmes and operations of the teacher education are rich in digital and emerging technologies. This could be done by revamping the content of National policy on Education to that has to do with teacher education. This will help to equip Nigerian teachers with globally revered skills, knowledge and competencies needed to move the education industry forward.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Teachers' quality, Quality service delivery

Introduction

Teacher education is as indispensable as education itself. This is because it prepares those who make education sustainable by continually producing the main facilitators of learning. This is understandable, giving the fact that the fundamental purpose of teacher education is not only to give teachers skills which will improve their results, but also to equip our trainee-teachers at all levels with the capability of self-learning, in order to be creators, originators and inventors of information rather than consumers of information. Teacher education is a professional education



of teachers towards attainment of attitudes, skills, knowledge and competencies which will improve their results. It is an avenue to equip trainee-teachers at all levels with the capability of self-learning, in order to be creators, originators and inventors of information rather than consumers of information. Teacher Education is a professional education of teachers towards attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable so as to the needs of society at any effective in their work in accordance to the needs of society at any point in time (Osuji cited in Amah, 2019). Adding to this, Olaitan, cited in Umaru (2021), observed that teacher education is set up to inculcate the right kind of attitude relevant to the ever-expanding horizon of knowledge and personal attitudes such as self-discipline, understanding, sympathy, and a pride in the profession. Teachers' divine educational programmes because they are the actual implementers of educational policies and curricula. If teacher is weak or incompetent, the result will be weak or dysfunctional educational outcomes. For teachers' survival of the globalized world, there is need for the mastery of some basic survival skills like skills in science and technology, agriculture, entrepreneurship, ICT and global competitive ness. This will enable them to meet global learning needs.

In Nigerian Universities, Federal Ministry of Education (2013) observed that adequate preparation is made to improve professional teacher education through the establishment of Institutes of Education and Faculties of Education. Similarly, other institutions that offer professional training for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) and National Mathematical Centre (NMC) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013.40). The importance of teacher education cannot be overemphasized. Afe, cited in Ajeyalemi (2023) maintained that the focus of any education programme should be on the teacher who is crucial in translating policy into practice. Equally, Ofojebe (2006) posited that any nation that is serious about manpower development must pay particular attention to the education of teachers than that of any other field because the teachers are more directly related to the development of manpower through the impact of knowledge, skills and expertise needed to equip one useful living in the society.

Quality Service Delivery on the other hand is the best way of providing something in order to achieve desired result. Nwaka (2010) opined that it is conforming to customers, clients or stakeholders' expectations. Quality service delivery requires a look at outcome and what an institution accomplishes. According to Ajeyalemi (2023), nothing is as important to learning as quality of the competencies of the teachers. This is what propelled Chapman and Austin, cited in Vladimir (2022), to maintain that quality service delivery points to the questions about whether school graduates are well prepared, whether they have the knowledge, skills and attitudes that they and the society expected as a result of the educational processes they underwent. Since we live in a changing world and as result of research findings, new information, knowledge, approaches, methods of instruction and resources emerge. Teachers are expected to keep abreast of such innovations so as to produce functional citizens who will contribute to the development of the society.

But it has been observed from studies that most graduates from teacher education institutions are incompetent as teachers (Ajeyalemi, 2023). Obanya (2016) also noted that Nigerian teacher education system have been criticized for failure to produce the type of teachers that could impact knowledge to significant improvements. In training the trainers in Colleges of Education



and Universities, there is so much emphasis on disciplinary concepts and mere information to the exclusive of abilities such as critical thinking, problem solving, time management, entrepreneurship, ICT and the organization of information known as management information system (MIS). These Emetarom (2010) identified to be critically needed to navigate the challenges of the global labour market but they are frequently not developed in the would-be teachers who are less productive in their workplaces. It is believed that a functional teacher education in Nigeria, like any developing country, can help its citizens to explore the networking of the world's global village. This can be achieved through a globally-oriented and modernized teacher education.

It is therefore against this background that it has become expedient to discuss the state of affairs of teacher education in Nigeria and increase awareness on the best options to adopt to successfully achieve quality service delivery. The paper therefore starts by tracing the brief history of teacher education in Nigeria. This is followed by discussions on federal government's views on teacher education in Nigeria. It examined the challenges confronting quality service delivery in teacher education programme and finally highlighted the implications of re-engineering teacher education for quality service delivery in teacher education.

Brief History of Teacher Education in Nigeria

Formal Western education in Nigeria began in 1843 while teacher education institutions started springing up in Nigeria since 1895 when the Hope-Waddel Training Institute was established in Calabar, followed by S. Andrew's College, Oyo, in 1896. The British Colonial administration became involved in teacher training in 1914 when it establishing one institution in Bonny. In the Northern part of Nigeria, one was established in 1909 at Nasarawa and another in 1921 at Katsina. By 1925, fourteen institutions had been established in the country. Up to 1960 when Nigeria attained her independence, many teacher training institutions had been established by the Christian missionary agencies and few by the government to produce Element Teachers (Grade III) and Higher Elementary Certificate Teacher (Grade II). Also, there was Grade I Teachers Certificate which was obtained through one of two ways: A Grade II teacher who passed two Advanced Level General Certificate. Secondly, a Grade II certificate holder could attend further training in one- or two-year post Grad II Colleges of Agriculture, success in which would earn one the award of the Teachers Grade One Certificate (Adesina, cited in Ojo & Olaguwon, 2014:179).

Following the Ashby Report of 1960 which was set up for Post-School Certificate and Higher Education, Advanced Teacher Training Colleges (Now College of Education) were established as from 1962 to produce well-qualified non-graduate teachers to teach lower classes in the secondary schools. When the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) started an experimental B.A. and B.Sc. degrees in Education in 1960, it attracted sever criticism. However, the UNN blazed a trail because at present there are about 53 federal and State Universities having Faculties of Education, and 62 Colleges of Education and Polytechnics. In all these institutions, B.A/B.Sc. degrees in Education are offered. For graduate teachers who did not read Education, there is Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGCDE) through which such teachers are groomed to attain both academic and professional competence in Education.



There has been a controversy ranging between the proponents of the B.A/BSc Education and B.A/BSc plus PGDE as which is a more appropriate teacher education programme (Mkpa, cited in Ojo & Olaguwon, 2014) favour the B.A/B.Sc. Educational programme, which combines professional teacher education courses with the courses in a teaching subject simultaneously over a period of four years. But the proponents of the B.A/BSc plus PGDE options stress that the other option does not allow for an in-depth study of the teaching subject area. That is, in the bid to combine the two field's depth is compromised. The PGDE option, the proponents hold, allows for an in-depth study of the teaching subject over a period of four years after which one extra year is devoted entirely to professional education. However, the two options are being used in teacher education in the country.

Federal Government's Views on Teacher Education in Nigeria

The overall views of federal government with regard to teacher education as stipulated in the Federal Government of Nigeria (2013: 39) are that teacher education shall be to:

1. produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
2. encourage further inquiry and creativity in teachers;
3. help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
4. provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments and make them acceptable to changing situations;
5. enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession.

Based on these goals, it was expected that teacher education programme which is the nation's overall educational network should have substantial bearing with the nation's educational policy as well as underlying philosophy

Challenges Confronting Quality Services Delivery in Teacher Education in Nigeria

Several factors contributed to infective service delivery in teacher education. These include:

- a. **Lack of commitment to the job:** Having been rejected as misfit in other professions, most teacher took teaching as a last resort. Besides, sequel to poor remuneration, teachers are forced to neglect their professional duties. Most of them hang on their works and augment their incomes through secondary jobs, in its extreme form, dereliction of duty takes the form of absenteeism, and negligence of duty. Thus, Nwagwu (2018), observed that the single most difficult problem in many developing countries is trying to ensure that teachers actually come to school most days.
- b. **Lack of Requisite Skills to meet Global Needs:** The needs of the society have continued to change and there is so much talk about technological, entrepreneurial, information communication Technology (ICT) and agricultural development as well as global competitiveness. But the curricula in our teacher education Institutions do not significantly, reflect these emerging societal and global concerns. One conspicuous phenomenon of our time, which has become a common target of pursuit by both "developed" and "developing" nations, is globalization. Globalization will always be a mirage if teacher education is not geared towards



producing teachers who are globalization friendly, effective and efficient. The reason is not far-fetched because teachers serve as the think tank of any nation and since education has been globalized, with no nation as an island of its own, the world has come together through technology, and nations are now interconnected with ease. Supporting this, Emertom (2010) stated that if teachers and teacher trainees are ignorant of changes in their disciplines and thereby stick to outdated teaching content and training processes, they are not only irrelevant but dangerous for the achievement of the teacher education goals and hence the whole nation is doomed.

- c. **Recruitment of Mediocrity in Teacher Education:** The best products from teacher education institutions cannot afford to teach seeing what it is to teach in Nigeria. This has led to a situation whereby those without very good abilities or qualities stepped into teaching. Usman (2007) cited an example of a situation where an N.C.E holder in physical and Health Education is teaching physics, chemistry and biology in senior secondary school classes. There are also several case where those without any teaching qualification fill the teaching filed. Examples are where those who studied food science are teaching biology, chemistry etc. this has repudiated the status of teacher education in Nigeria to worthless and adversely affect quality service delivery.
- d. **Attraction of the Least Qualified:** The societal attitude toward teaching and teachers dissuade promising and intelligent students from enrolling in teacher education. Okoro, cited in Nwagwu (2018), argued that many who do in today's realities according to go to teacher training institutions like Colleges of Education etc., may not necessarily be the best materials. Also, most entrants to education faculty tend to be relatively low performing liberal arts candidates who lack competitive entry qualifying scores in Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) for other better-known professions like medicine, law, engineering and management sciences.

Implications of Re-engineering Teacher Education for Quality Service Delivery

The success of any education system is dependent on the quality of teachers who implement it. Re-engineering teacher education calls for transformation in the policy, curriculum, resources, management, evaluation and the general delivery system in teacher education (Offorma, 2010). It aims at taking education and educators out of the dysfunctional situation to the leading edge of developmental process. When teacher production is reviewed, the following results become imperative:

- a. There should be transformation towards a knowledge driven economy.
- b. There should be reform in the procedure for teacher training.
- c. There should be remarkable positive and beneficial changes in the knowledge, skills attitude and behaviour of teacher trainees.
- d. Modern technologies, appropriated developed learning materials, media and resource that can be used for individual study should be made available.
- e. The recipient of teacher education would be qualitatively functional both in national and international standard and thus be able to meet the challenges of the era of globalization.



Suggestions

In order to make teacher education effective and improve the quality of education service delivery in Nigeria, the followings are advocated:

1. The Ministry of Education should ensure that all programmes and operations of the teacher education are rich in digital and emerging technologies. This could be done by revamping the content of National policy on Education to that has to do with teacher education. This will help to equip Nigerian teachers with globally revered skills, knowledge and competencies needed to move the education industry forward.
2. Teacher education curriculum should be revised and enriched with appropriate and current ICT curriculum content that will make the teacher trainees knowledgeable enough to handle computers effectively.
3. Government should increase the subvention to teacher education and also make teachers' salary and allowances to be attractive in order to retain teachers in the teaching industry and also attract able and committed people to teacher education service.
4. The government through the teacher education institutions, should provide and fund compulsory in-service training to inculcate the use of multimedia technology in the art of teaching.
5. Teachers Registration council of Nigeria (TRCN) which is the body in charge of teacher's registration, certification and control should be up and doing and see that mediocrities are not recruited in the teaching industry. While those already in the system should be re-trained or shown the way out of the system.
6. Government should promote the development of a national teaching and leadership quality evaluation tool to assess teaching and learning in teacher education.
7. Teacher education institutions should implement government directive ICT initiatives for tertiary institutions through establishing students' resource centers and campus-wide wireless connectivity, computer acquisition scheme for staff: establishment and upgrade of website: video-driven lectures.
8. Teacher education institutions in Nigeria should strengthen linkages through exchange programmes with foreign teacher education institutions for the purpose of re-enforcing capacity building.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the success of any educational system is dependent on the quality of teachers who implement it. Since the federal government of Nigeria states that no education system may rise above the quality of the teachers who operate it, teacher education therefore requires adequate attention. Given the laudable impact of ICT on teaching and learning, it becomes imperative that both teacher trainees and in-service teacher become knowledgeable about the use of ICT to support their teaching. No teacher can survive this modern trend without at least, an elementary knowledge of ICT because he/she will absolutely and will not be as productive as expected. For instance, he/she may find it difficult to access global research findings in his/her area. It is therefore imperative that teachers must acquire the basis training on the use if ICT in pedagogy. It is



pertinent to emphasize, however, that the benefits accruing to students from the use of ICT in teaching is greatly dependent on the level of acquisition of ICT skill by the teacher and the teacher's attitude to use of ICT in teaching. This will bring about positive change for quality service delivery in teacher education.

REFERENCES

- Ajeyalemi, D. (2023). *The issues of quality and quantity in Nigeria's teacher education*. Retrieved on 3/09/2023 from <http://www.yahoo.com>.
- Amah, S. S. (2019). Teacher education curriculum in Nigeria in the perspective lifelong education. *Journal of International Social Research*, 2(8), 10-17.
- Emetarom, U. G. (2010). *Globalization and the management of teacher education for sustainable national development*. A lead paper presented at school of Education Biennial Conference, Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2007). *Current policy reforms for teacher education*. Paper presented at the Federal Ministry of education INUC National workshop on "Tertiary Education Financing: which way forward?" University of Lagos, 23-24 April, 2007.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National policy on education*, 6th ed. Lagos: NERDC press
- Maduewesi, B. U & Azubuike, N. O. (2007). Optimization of services delivery in Nigeria teacher education: Problems and prospects. In B.G. Nworgu (ed) *Optimization of services delivery in the education sector: Issues and strategies*. Nsukka: University Trust Publishers.
- Nwagwu, N. A. (ed.) (2018). *Teachers and teaching in Nigeria: Issues, challenges and prospects*. Benin City: Nigerian Academy of Education.
- Nwaka, N. G. (2010). *Optimum service delivery: An effective tool for school administration*. A Keynote address presented at carol standard convent, Ichi on this annual teacher's seminar/workshop on September 8, 2010.
- Obanya, P. (2016). The place of teacher education in manpower development in Nigeria. In J. Maduewesi and P. E. Eya (eds.) *Perspectives in teacher education*. Onitsha. West and Solomon Publishing Co. Ltd.
- Offorma, G. (2007). *Re-engineering teacher education for quality service delivery*. A lead paper presented at school of Education Biennial Conference, Nwafor Orizu College of education Nsugbe.
- Ojo, A. O. & Olaguwon, T. (2014) (eds). *Curriculum implementation and professionalizing teacher in Nigeria*. Lagos: Central Educational services.
- Okebukola, F. A. (2007). *Innovations and best practices teacher education in Nigeria*. A lead paper presented at the 1st international conference on Teacher Education, Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, June 25, 2007.
- Umaru, A. I. (2021). *The status of teacher education in Nigeria: A challenge for improvement*. Retrieved from www.eric.ed.gov/ERIC on 10/09/2022.
- Usman, S. A. (2007). Optimization of service delivery in teacher education sector. In B. G. Nworgu (ed.) *Optimization of service delivery in the educational sector: Issues and strategies*. Nsukka: University Trust publishers.
- Vladimir, C. T. (2022). *Higher education in the developing world: Changing contexts and institutional responses*. London: Greenwood press.