

THE TREND OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND WAY OUT**BY****Sakirudeen, Buhari A.: Department of Educational Foundations, Kwara State College of Education (Technical), Lafiagi; E-mail: bshakirudeen@yahoo.com or bshakirudeen@gmail.com****&****Mariyam Abubakar Hamza: Department of Educational Counselling and Psychology, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria; E-mail Address: mariyamhamza46@gmail.com****Abstract**

Teacher education refers to professional education of teachers towards attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable so as to make them efficient and effective in their work, in accordance with National objectives. The origin and development of formal teacher education in Nigeria can be traced to the beginning of Western education in the pre-colonial Nigeria. The various church missions such as the Wesleyan Methodist, the Church Missionary Society, the Baptist, the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) and the Roman Catholic were not only the pioneers, but very active in the area between 1842 and 1860. Mean while the purpose of teacher education is to produce well-qualified professional teachers that can adjust to the changing needs of the students and developmental prospects of the modern society. This paper took an overview of teacher education in the pre-colonial era, during and after the colonial administration in Nigeria, it also considers the challenges and ways out of some of the challenges as recommendation. The paper therefore suggested that there should be a strong linkage between teacher, learning and professional development among others.

Keywords: *Teacher education, Challenges and Trends*

Introduction

Teacher education refers to professional education of teachers towards attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable so as to make them efficient and effective in their work, in accordance with National objectives. It includes training and or education occurring before commencement of service and during service. Teacher education means a deliberate, well articulated purposeful, organized and managed program or processes aimed at producing the desired qualities of teachers who will actualized the educational dreams of the society (Amaele & Amaele, 2001). Every society requires adequate human and material resources to improve its social organization, preserve the culture, enhance economic development and reform the political structures. Education is often seen as a prerequisite for quality manpower development and creation of wealth, a sure path to success in life and service to humanity (Barakat & Buhari, 2019). Thus, teachers have important role to play to adequately prepare the young for their roles in the society in order to achieve the set national objectives.

In the opinion of Abdul-Kareem (2001), education is an inevitable tool for sustainable development and a vehicle for advancing the frontier of knowledge. In this regard, Ogunyinka, Okeke, and Adedoyin, (2015) opened that education is severally conceived and inculcated by people of varying backgrounds, ages, needs and aspirations for sustainable development. The potency of education is more evident in its globalization trends imbued with instrumental values of nurturing productive citizens for sustainable development and democracy. Education has been recognized as a process of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes to the learners. Teachers' influence is always felt in every aspect of the society. The effectiveness of any educational system depends greatly on the educational attainment of teachers because no system of education can be qualitatively higher than the quality and commitment of its teachers.

The fact remains that teaching and learning depend on teachers for without quality teachers; there cannot be meaningful socio-economic and political development in any country. It is on teachers' quantity, quality and commitment that rest the effectiveness of all educational arrangements, development and growth. Even the educational planners may have the best educational policies and designs, the

government may vote the largest sum of its revenue to education, but the ultimate realization of any set of aims for education depends on the teachers (quality, quantity and attitude).

It is the teacher who will ultimately be responsible for translating policy into action and principles into practice in their interactions with their students as curriculum implementer. Ogunyinka, Okeke, and Adedoyin (2015), states that, the realization of the educational objectives depends on the quantity and quality of available teaching manpower. This can be influenced by the availability of adequate training and retraining programs for pre-service and in-service teachers. Hence, the efficiency of teacher training should be the main determining factor in the success or failure of education to meet the country's needs. The training is the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively. In the classroom, school and wider community, Education is the most powerful instrument for social and economic progress. It is the greatest power known to man for his\her own improvements.

Teachers are the heart and soul of the educational enterprises, indeed, the life of the school system depends on them. According to (Adewuyi and Ogunwuyi, 2002), teacher education is the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period for the preparation of individuals who intends to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens. It is informed by the fact that teaching is an all-purpose profession which stimulates the development of mental, physical and emotional powers of students. Such educated citizens would be sensitive and equipped with peaceful co-existence, environmental management, cultural integration and democratic process.

The prevailing crisis in Nigerian education and its society as typified by unemployment, poverty, corruption, crime, indiscipline and underutilization of capacities in all facets of human life and national development, could be ascribed to the neglect of teacher education and pitiable plight of the teachers. What structurally becomes important in achieving the nation's quest for self-reliant society, imbued with vibrant economy and productive citizenry, is to put in place a comprehensive teacher education program (Adewuyi, 2012). A coherent teacher education program should systematically embrace integrated curriculum innovations which reflect the social, economic and political environment of a modern society to solve societal problems (Ogunyinka, Okeke, & Adedoyin, 2015). Mean while in the opinion of Oyekan (2006), the purpose of teacher education is to produce well-qualified professional teachers that can adjust to the changing needs of the students and developmental prospects of the modern society. This paper took an overview of teacher education in the pre-colonial era, during and after the colonial administration in Nigeria, it also considers the challenges and ways out of some of the challenges

Objectives of Teacher Education in Nigeria

Teacher education, in principle, is adequately provided for in the National Policy on Education (NPE). The document states the purpose of teacher education in Nigeria as follows to produce highly motivated connections efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system; To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers; To help teachers to fit into the society life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives; To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country but in the wilder world; To enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession (NPE, 2013:48).

An Overview of Teacher Education in Pre-Colonial Nigeria

The origin and development of formal teacher education in Nigeria can be traced to the beginning of Western education in the pre-colonial Nigeria. The various church missions such as the Wesleyan Methodist, the Church Missionary Society, the Baptist, the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) and the Roman Catholic were not only the pioneers, but very active in the area between 1842 and 1860. Certainly, they contributed in no small measure to the development of teacher education in pre-colonial Nigeria. The

missionaries devoted their attention initially to the development of elementary (primary) education in the country, though African scholars have argued that the kind of placebo teacher education in Nigeria then was part of the imperialist design to limit colonial education to the basics, with the intention to produce educated Africans who (inadvertently) would participate in furthering imperial exploitation only perhaps due to the little stipend the missions relied upon from their overseas headquarters. Discussing the system of education (Adeyinka, 1971) opines that the missionaries trained their teachers through the apprenticeship pupil-teacher system. In such a system, the missionary teacher organized the school in his residence premises and some of his pupils lived with him as part of his family.

Fajana (1970) added that at about 14 years, pupils ought to have written and passed the standard examination. They were then recruited as teachers, but further received one hour instruction daily from the head teacher on teaching methodology. The duration of the course was two years, after which they would sit for the pupil-teacher examination. Besides being the foundation of teacher education, the significance of this system was that it enabled the student-teachers to receive further training and education while contributing their quota in the formal educational needs of the society through teaching other pupils. From this very humble beginning, the system has developed into a more complex one involving college institutions and universities.

The first teacher training college, known as the Training Institution was established in Abeokuta in 1859 by the Church Missionary Society (CMS). The school was later moved to Lagos in 1896 after the missionaries were expelled from Abeokuta due to some disagreements between the missionaries and the local population/authorities most of whom were not very receptive to the new religion and the form of education being introduced by the missionaries. Perhaps, the preponderance of British presence and security assurances in Lagos influenced the decision to relocate to Lagos. Subsequently, it was again relocated to Oyo where it became known as the St. Andrews College, Oyo. Later, in 1896, it was established as a Grade II Teacher's College (now Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo) and it ranks the oldest Teacher's Training College in Nigeria. In 1897, the Baptist Mission established the Baptist Training College at Ogbomoso, and in 1905 the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society founded an institution for the training of catechists and teachers in Ibadan. The latter opened with only four pupils, but the number of pupils increased to twenty by 1918 when the institution became known as the Wesleyan College, Ibadan.

As the missionaries made frantic efforts to provide teacher training institutions in the Western part of Nigeria, so were they trying to provide formal education and training for the early crop of teachers in the eastern part of pre-colonial Nigeria. According to (Fafunwa, 1974), under the apprenticeship system, homeless boys and children of converted village heads lived with the missionaries and were taught to become pupil teachers and catechists. This practice of using apprenticeship system to train teachers was very common in the Western part of pre-colonial Nigeria before and after the establishment of teacher training institutions. The training of teachers in the Northern part of Nigeria started with the opening of the schools in Nassarawa by the British government in 1909. Generally, the pre-requisite qualification for admission into a teacher training institution was standard. In addition, the candidate must have served as a pupil-teacher for two years, passed the pupil-teacher's certificate examination and would then qualify to act as an assistant teacher before starting another two-year training course in a teacher training institution (Fafunwa, 1974). At the end of the two years, the candidate would sit for and must pass a prescribed teachers' certificate examination and then became certified. With the development of the system, the need to review the principles and practice of teacher education arose, leading to the inauguration of the Phelps-Stokes commission to undertake the task.

In 1920 the Phelps-stoke commission education on African was set up. The commission Was led (chairman) by Thomas Hesse Jones and othern members were Dr. James Aggrey, Henry Stanley Hollenbenk etc. they were to cover West, East, central and South Africa. The Terms of reference of

commission includes: To inquire as to the educational work being done in each area to be studied at that time; to investigate the education needs of people with special reference to the religious, social, hygienic and condition; to ascertain in the extent to which item 2 above is being met; and to report fully the results of study.

Teacher Education and National Development in Contemporary Nigeria

According to Wanekezi, Okoli and Mezieobi (2011), education unlocks the door to modernization and sustainable development but that, it is the teacher that holds the key to the door. Thus, the teacher has the responsibility of translating educational policies into practice and programs into action. It is clear from the foregoing that the role of the teacher in sustainable development cannot be quantified, especially in training personnel in various areas of the workforce. For national development and peaceful co-existence to be attained, there is need to give priority to investment in human capital through teacher education and training. The Nigerian educational system needs to be responsive to the technological social and economic needs of the society and provide the type of human resources needed in the industrial and economic sector.

The issues of teacher preparation, supply, status enhancement, motivation and retention as well as continuous training and retraining are at the heart of education reform at all levels. The overarching goal of human capacity development for the efficient and effective delivery of the Universal Basic Education (UBE), Education for All (EFA), and related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is that by 2015 Nigeria will have human resources base to manage and implement the UBE scheme (National Action Plan, 2006). Thus, through strategic actions that according to Ogunyinka, Okeke, & Adedoyin, (2015) include the following, the objectives seemed realizable;

- i. Continued expansion of teacher training opportunities;
- ii. Continuous program of enhanced status and professionalism for teachers through training and retraining, reviews of current remuneration packages, and enhanced career opportunities;
- iii. Programs designed to address the capacity needs of schools and educational management;
- iv. Building the capacity of the inspectorate services to improve quality;
- v. Engaging civil society partners in the roles of quality assurance, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment work at all levels.

Professionalization of Teaching in Nigeria

The need and critical role of professionalizing the teaching profession, vested in the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), by virtue of the Teachers Registration Council Act, began in 2007 with the mandatory registration of all professionally qualified teachers. This action is equally matched with comprehensive training and in-service training seminars and workshops in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. More importantly, the TRCN has begun implementation of the NPE provision that all teachers in education institutions including universities shall be professionally trained (NPE, 2004). This was in a bid to ensure adequate supply of manpower in Nigerian schools in conformity with the goals of teacher education as specified in (National Policy in Education, 2013), the (National Action Plan, 2006) and the 10 Year Strategic Plan, among others. While the goal of the Strategic Plan is to design a teacher education framework, based on what teachers should know and do relative to Nigeria's new vision and mission, the National Policy on Education, 2004 in Makoju G.A.E. (2005) highlights the thrust of the ongoing reform noting that it aims to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system; Encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers; Help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals; Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession; and Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations (Makoju, 2005).

It is significant and noteworthy that these approaches contributed immensely towards addressing teacher education challenges through training and retraining, instructional material development and availability, periodic renewal of teacher licenses, capacity building for reformed inspectorate service and support to the TRCN's mandate and enhancement of teachers' status and incentives. Today, teacher education is much improved than it was before and a few decades after independence. The NPE, released in 1977 and revised in 1981, 1998 and 2004 clearly articulates the importance attached to teacher education and affirms that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. The policy makes it mandatory for all teachers in Nigeria to be trained and stipulates NCE as the minimum qualification for the profession. It also provides that teacher education shall continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and in the curriculum, even as it underscores the need for teachers to be regularly exposed to innovations in their profession. It further recognizes the need for in-service training as an integral part of continuing teacher education. Today, the statutory responsibility for teacher education in Nigeria is vested in Colleges of Education, Institutes of Education, Polytechnics, National Teachers Institute (NTI) and Nigerian Universities' Faculties of Education.

Nigerian Polytechnics and Colleges of Education award the NCE which is a sub-degree but professional teachers are expected to at least, have diplomas obtainable after three years of full-time study. The admission requirement for the NCE program is Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSSC) or its equivalent with passes in five subjects including English language, and the curriculum for NCE teachers is designed to produce teachers exposed to a range of courses covering all that is required to make them competent professionals. New courses such as Computer Education, Mathematics and general English have been made compulsory for all NCE students. Also, relevant themes such as Nigerian constitution, environment/conservation education, population and family life education, HIV/AIDS education, drug abuse and women's education have recently been integrated into the curriculum. On its part, the NTI was established in 1976 by decree No. 7 of 1976 to offer upgrading programs for teachers through distance learning. Over the years NTI has been providing in-service training for teachers during school holidays and weekends leading to the award of NCE, B.Ed. and Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) certificates.

Similarly, Institutes of Education in the various universities have also been involved through distance learning and offer of part-time courses for the training of teachers who earn NCE, B.Ed., and PGDE certificates on successful completion of studies. On the other hand, faculties of education prepare pre-service teachers for B.Ed., B.A. (Ed.), M.Ed., and PhD degrees. There are four major components of the degree program in the Nigerian universities namely: General Studies, Educational studies, Studies related to the students' intended field of teaching and teaching practice.

Challenges Facing Teacher Education in Nigeria

In spite of the various recommendations and reforms teacher education in Nigeria is not devoid of certain challenges. While some of these emerged with the changing socio-economic and political condition of the time, others evolved as a result of government neglect of the education sector especially as it concerns keeping pace with emerging realities, such as, servicing Nigeria's growing population, education demand and needs with matching supply of education services and facilities. Some of these challenges are specifically examined in Ogunyinka, Okeke, and Adedoyin (2015):

Poor Policy Implementation: Poor policy implementation is a challenge to quality delivery of teachers' education. The poor quality delivery is responsible for the abysmal low performance of teachers' graduates from the institutions of higher learning in Nigeria.

Poor Conditions of Service and Brain Drain Syndrome: In Nigeria, teachers' conditions of service do not hold enough incentives to attract and retain the best brains in Nigerian schools (Osokoya, 2012). As a result of the weakening attraction to the teaching profession, and by extension the resultant dwindling enrolment in the teacher education programs, those who remain in the profession maintain relatively low

social status with accompanying psychological problems. Consequently, within the remaining pool, some teachers either seek opportunities in other sectors (within the economy) with better service incentives or even migrate to other countries where teachers' conditions of service are much better, in search of greener pastures.

Quality Assurance and Internal Efficiency Issues: The academic and emotional qualities of intending candidates for teacher education are critical for quality assurance and internal efficiency in teaching professions. In Nigerian tertiary schools, a trend has been evolving to the effect that candidates who apply to higher institutions for teacher education are those who have either been denied admission in their choice areas of study, or are basically unqualified for admission into such popular professional courses as medicine, law, engineering, architecture etc. Some Nigerian scholars have noted that most of the teachers upgraded to Teachers Grade II by NTI were very deficient not only in the academic subjects they teach, but also in techniques of teaching (Obanya, 2008; Enuhora, 2003). Perhaps, the most unpleasant challenge is one posed by the ongoing Pivotal Teacher Training Program (PTTP) which is currently being executed by the NTI introduced to address the gross shortage of qualified teachers at the inception of UBE in 1999, it was apparently in search of cost effective alternatives towards bridging the shortage gaps in the system. Structured as a 15 month course including 12 weeks school experience and three-month internship in a primary school, the PTTP's mode of teaching combines face-to-face contact at weekends/holidays with self-instruction course materials and school teaching experience, after which the candidates are certified and deemed qualified to teach.

Insufficient Knowledge and Use of Information Communication Technology (ICT): Another major challenge to teacher education in Nigeria is that of insufficient knowledge and use of ICT in a globalizing world. The knowledge, and use, of computer technology as well as the internet is a necessity for all teachers to guarantee the relevance of the system and its products in the 21st century. Many schools in Nigeria still operate the traditional education system with little or no adaptation to ICT. To benefit from the ubiquity of information and to facilitate communication among professional networks, school teachers need, not only be trained and re-trained in ICTs, but facilities must be provided by government to enable teacher and their students access to these remain uninterrupted, more so that the world is gradually becoming a global village. For our future teachers to be able to operate effectively and efficiently, they must imbibe the new technologies and methodologies of the modern times (Osokoya, 2012).

Conclusion

Teaching, whether as an activity, an occupation or a profession is the task of teachers. Technically, a non-professionally trained and educated teacher cannot teach. This is so because teaching is not merely imparting dislocated facts but conscious and deliberate efforts at inculcating desirable change in behaviour. Effective teaching could be enhanced if the education system makes adequate provisions for the teacher and the learner. This could be done by producing, recruiting and retaining the right caliber of teachers, Prompt and adequate payment of salaries and other entitlements, provision of necessary learning environments/facilities and adequate supervision of schools among others.

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