

TEACHER EDUCATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper focuses attention on the relationship between teacher Education and national development. It also identified factors affecting qualitative teacher Education in Nigeria. These includes, political under development, financial constraint, lack of modern instructional materials in training institutions, and so on. Recommendations on how Teacher Education could lead to national development were also made. These include, integration of Teacher Education programme with technological needs of the country, education policy should be structured in - line with national development, better conditions of service for teachers at all levels and so on.

Introduction

The concept of Teacher Education is made up of "Teacher" and Education" fafunwa (1983: 22) defines education as:

Comprising all effort, conscious and direct incidental and indirect, made by a given society to accomplish certain objectives that are considered desirable in terms of the individual's needs as well as the need of society where (he programme is based.

Teaching is the act of imparting knowledge to a learner. In simple terms, it is the guidance of leaning activities (Ukeje, 1998: 2). The person who imparts knowledge or in charge of directing guidance of learning activities is called a teacher. The education is the professional training given to (those teachers) in charge of the up bringing of children of adulthood in a nation's educational system. Such training is provided by specialized institutions where members are prepared to receive specialized knowledge and skill as well as ethical principles. (Ukeji, 1998).

Brief History of Teacher¹ Education in Nigeria

In the traditional education system, formal training was not provided for individuals and as such, no body was called a teacher before 1843 in Nigeria. The concept of teacher education was a product of the introduction of formal education. The Christian mission by 1952 had 4,324 primary schools, 29 secondary and 49 Teacher colleges, (Ejiogu 1988), The number of teacher colleges were more than that of secondary schools, an indication of the importance of Teacher Education to national development. On January 27th to 29th 1890, the teacher certificate examination took place. Grade I, II and IV took place one day each. Grade I took three days, (Ocho, 1998:22). The result was, three sat for Grade I all failed. Grade II I live had been recommended and for grade I V, only three passed, two being females.

The first Department of Education in Nigeria established in 1903. After the creation of the colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1906, an Education ordinance covering the new territory was introduced in 1908.

Teachers under the mission were mandated to devote all their time to school duties during school hours, a way of ensuring that evangelist-teachers did not make school education an appendage to evangelization (Ocho, 1998:23). In 1909, Manns Vischer, established the first government teacher training college in Kano. By 1927, Government teacher training colleges were established in-Ibadan, Umuahia, Warri, Buea, Kalsina and Toro (Six colleges) with a total student enrolment of about 180 men while the total enrolment in voluntary agency teacher training colleges was about 390 men and 41 women In the National Policy on Education (1981:35) teacher education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all our educational planning because no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. As a result, the purpose of Teacher Education according to the National policy on Education includes:

- a. To produce highly motivated conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all level of our education system.
- b. To encourage further- the spirit of "enquiry and creativity in teachers.
- c. To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives.

- d. 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 life of their country, but in the wider world.
- e. To enhance teacher's commitment to the Teaching profession.

Analysis of the purpose of teacher education as stated above reveals that the gateway to national development is a qualitative Teacher Education in developing countries. At this point, one may raise the following questions. What are the present problems affecting Teacher Education in Developing Countries? What are the effects of these factors on national development?

Factors Affecting the Quality of Teacher Education in Nigeria.

Achievement of national development in developing countries will be difficult if a gap is allowed to exist between teacher education and a well planned scientific programme for national development. Today, in poor countries or developing countries, it seems that certain factors affect the quality of Teacher Education. These include, political under-development, financial constraint, lack of modern training equipment in schools, poor conditions of service given to trainers of Teachers and teachers, low entry qualification into teacher training institutions, lack of on the job training organized for teachers by government, duplication of training institutions resulting in the struggle for students, lack of research incentives for training institutions and inadequate involvement of professional teachers in development planning programme.

Political under-development. This is a common symptom in developing countries. In order to satisfy the demand of an illiterate populace, social demand approach to educational planning is commonly adopted. In using this approach schools are built all over the country. To meet up with manpower requirement, teachers are crashly produced using various techniques without consideration for quality of human and material resources needed for quality teacher education. In short teacher education is used as a means of scoring political points.

Financial constraint. In order to satisfy social demand for education, existing teachers colleges are abandoned for establishment of new substandard institutions. This results into starvation of funds, leading to a failure in the standard of men and materials such as qualified teachers and modern instructional materials. Qualitative manpower cannot be trained without adequate finance. Ill-trained teachers cannot contribute positively through teaching towards national development. This is because their products may face the problem of academic malnutrition.

Financial inadequacy results in lack of adequate modern training/instructional facilities in our teacher training institutions. In most states in Nigeria, teacher training institutions are few and have no boarding facilities for students. The traditional curriculum of teacher training colleges is not being fully implemented.

The highest institution for the production of teachers are the universities. It is sad to note that research institutes and universities in charge of Teacher Education are not adequately provided with research grants, for development to be achieved through education, i.e. qualitative teacher education there is need for adequate research grant for teacher training and other institutions in developing countries. Research in science and technology should be married to those in education in order to attain development.

The gap between planning and implementing of National Development Programme could be reduced if professional teachers are involved in the planning of National Development programmes. It is against realities of actual development i.e. ability to invent new technology, if economic or scientific or technological programmes depend on foreign nations. The only way to remove dependence on developing is that, there should be positive integration of scientific, technological and economic development with teacher Education Programmes. It should be noted that price-oriented adjustment mechanisms, diminishing marginal returns to any given factor of production and the exogenous nature of productivity improvement through technological change are part of the neoclassical theory of economic development. National development means an increase in output and changes in the technical and the institutional arrangements by which it is produced and distributed (Kindleberger and Lerrick, 1977:3). From Hernck's definition of development, teacher education and national development mean the role of teacher Education in total development of a country, it implies how the type of education or training given to teachers, in training can assist them produce people who can positively increase output through self-discovered and utilized technology.

As stated in the National Policy on Education (1981:38) "no education system can rise above the quality of its teacher for all levels of our education system" Also, no country can achieve development

above the quality of its Teacher Education. Hence, there is need for developing countries to re-structure their Teacher Education Programme. The paper structures in operation in some countries like Nigeria should vigorously put into practical use i.e. the 6-3-3-4 system.

The Way Forward

Qualitative Teachers Education leads to qualitative education, which leads to national development. For Teacher Education to lead us into national development, solutions should be provided for all factors affecting qualitative Teacher Education discussed earlier in this paper. In addition, the following steps should be taken by developing countries.

A re-structuring of education policy in line with nation demand. Most of the National Policy on Education of developing countries are based on what they inherited from their Colonial Masters, in terms of content and instructional materials. There is need for a radical change.

Better conditions of service should be given to teachers. This will attract students with higher entry qualifications into Teacher Training institutions. Teaching should be given its full professional recognition in developing countries. This will raise the morale of teachers. There should be positive integration of Teacher Education programmes and technological needs of developing countries. The curriculum content of Student Teachers in developing countries should be equal in content with non-education students in universities.

Conclusion

A qualitative Teacher Education will result in national development. There is need for integration of Teacher Education with national development planning programmes to enhance technological development in Nigeria.

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