

# REPOSITIONING TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: A NEED FOR COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO ITS CURRICULUM PLANNING

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## **Abstract**

Education as a concept is dynamic in nature and often reflects the current trend of events in the society. Based on the above context, the theme of (his paper focuses on the imperative of repositioning teacher education in Nigeria and the need to advocate for collaborative approach to its curriculum planning through which emergent issues such as population education, family education computer education, science and technology education etc. could be incorporated into the contents of appropriate subjects in Nigerian schools. Finally, relevant suggestions and recommendations that would facilitate effective re-positioning of teacher education programmes in Nigeria, if properly implemented, was proffered.

## **Highlight**

The phenomenon of globalization and advancement in science and technology, computer education and information explosion in all spheres of knowledge has necessitated the concept of repositioning of teacher education in Nigeria in all its ramifications such as its curriculum planning, contents, pedagogies, instructional materials and maintenance of facilities.

Teacher education in Nigeria is dynamic in nature and it is not static nor stagnant, therefore, its curriculum content should reflect the contemporary need and aspirations of the society in order to facilitate utilitarian and functional teacher education programmes in Nigeria. This can be realized through collaborative approach for the curriculum planning for teacher education in Nigeria.

Moreover, there are a lot of challenges facing teaching education in Nigeria such as: over population in (the classroom, inadequate instructional materials, poor remunerations of teachers; irregular promotion of teachers, coping with the under-aged pupils and indisciplined students; meeting up with the task of using new methods of teaching such as computer aided instruction, etc. All these make repositioning of teacher education in Nigeria to become highly necessary.

## **Definitions of Terms/Concepts**

The phrase "RE-POSITIONING" simply means a careful and systematic replacing, restructuring, readjusting, improving and upgrading of a programme, agenda, plan of action, according-outcome or findings, etc. According to Adamu (2004), teacher education can be defined as a specialized knowledge, skills and training that are prepared and imbibed to the would be teachers in order to prepare them for their professional and social roles in the society.

However, collaborative approach to curriculum planning as Okam (2002), enumerated it as: "an elaborate process which involves taking inputs from different professionals, members of the public, parents, teachers, administrators, public/students, religious organizations, civil servants/government officials, farmers, voluntary organizations, etc. as a joint effort in formulating relevant educational objectives policies, guideline for its implementation to meet the overall needs of the society for the betterment and improved standard of living of all its members at large".

## **The Aims and Objectives of Teacher Education**

The aims and objectives of teacher education as stated in (the national policy on education (IWX). revised edition by the federal government of Nigeria are as follows:

- i. To produce highly motivated conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system.
- ii. To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers,
- iii. To help teachers to fit well into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives,
- iv. 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 wider world,
- v. To enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession with full dedication to duties

and statutory roles assigned to them from time to time.

### **The Current Challenges Facing Teacher Education in Nigeria**

There are myriads of challenges facing teacher education in Nigeria as asserted by Abdullah! (1998), Abdulkareem (1999), Adesina (2000), and Adeyika (2002). These challenges includes: -

- i. Entrance of teenagers into schools,
- ii. Student's poor attitude to work,
- lit. Large number of public and over crowdedness in the class,
- iv. Inadequate instructional materials and poor condition of facilities in the schools.
- v. Emergence of new concepts and over expansion of school curriculum to cover issues in population education, peace education, environmental education, citizenship education, family education, sex/gender education, computer education, etc.

For the purpose of lucid elaboration, each of the above identified challenges to one after the other for detail discussion. For example, the first prominent challenge that is facing teacher education is to re-train the young graduate-teacher on how to cope and handle the teenagers such as pupils of (2 to 4 years) entering schools at the pre-nursery, nursery and primary schools level. The teachers need to be re-orientated on how to impart knowledge to them, on how to motivate their interest towards learning activities.

To-addition, the second challenge facing teacher education in Nigeria is not the students poor attitude to work; these days most students are truants, lazy and some of them would not do assignments given to them by their respective subject teachers. Consequently, they have poor academic performance as a result of their lukewarm altitude to class work. Most of them involve themselves in academic fraud such as examination malpractices, impersonation. Result forgery, etc. Therefore, teacher education needs to be repositioned to groom young teachers on how to solve the above identified problem.

Another challenge that is facing teacher education in Nigeria is the problem of large in number of pupils and over crowdedness in the class, in some classes the population size of pupils extremely 60,70 to 100 pupils which is extremely too much for a teacher to handled effectively. Therefore, with the current trend of technology advancement, teacher education should be re-positioned to train teachers on how to use multimedia devices to teach in such a large class, Similarly, the use of computer aided instruction could also be very appropriate in the above type of situation.

Furthermore, Ukeje (2003), identified poor economic depression in Nigeria as the fourth challenge to teacher education in Nigeria, because it has led to decrease in budgetary allocation to education and thus, resulting into inadequate instructional materials and poor condition of facilities in the schools. In contrast, teacher education in the developed countries like Britain, united states of America, France, Japan, etc. are advancing in the new concepts of globalization and computerization of knowledge. In Nigeria, poverty, unemployment, political instability, inflection, currency devaluation are the factors affecting effectiveness by teacher education in Nigerian, it therefore, needs urgent repositioning to make it functional and utilitarian.

### **Repositioning Teacher Education in Nigeria**

Deducing from the great challenges facing teacher education in Nigeria as enumerated earlier in this paper, it's quite expedient and paramount to reposition teacher education programmes in Nigeria to enable it meet up the societal demands and aspirations of professionals in the field. For example, the need to enrich the curriculum content of teacher education programmes to include new concepts such as population education, environmental education, family education, health education, sex/gender education, citizenship education, moral education, computer education, etc. all these serves as crystal imperativeness of repositioning teacher education in Nigeria.

Similarly, Denga (2004), reiterated that, the desire to fully professionalized teaching as a reputable vocation in Nigeria as it is been carried out by the Teachers Registration Council in Abuja and thus encouraging the auxiliary teachers to acquire necessary relevant qualifications that will enable them to be registered as a professional teacher is part of the reasons that makes repositioning of teacher education in Nigeria to be very essential.

In the opinion of Bello (1998), other circumstances that make the process of repositioning of

teacher education programmes in Nigeria to be inevitable includes the following: -

- i. To ensure high standard performance of professional teachers in Nigeria to be comparable to what is obtainable in the developed countries such as U.S.A, Britain, China, France, Japan; etc.
- ii. To re-train teachers to become computer literate and enhance their ability of imparting knowledge effectively,
- iii. To remove discrepancies in the admission requirements of NCE holders into degree programme in education,
- iv. To agitate for better conditions of service for teachers in terms of welfare remunerations, retirement benefits, etc.
- v. To upright and enhance teachers, commitment to the teaching profession and minimize the syndrome of brain drain in our educational sector.

### **Collaborative Approach to Curriculum Planning of Teacher Education in Nigeria**

Denga (2004), explained that, the cooperative or collaborative approach to curriculum planning of teacher education programmes in Nigeria is an all embracing process with inputs from the teachers, the pupils, the parents, the professionals, the government, the clergymen, the industrialists, etc. in a concerted effort to evolve a dynamic curriculum geared towards the realization of the societal goals and aspirations through the teacher education in the country.

Moreover, the collaborative approach to curriculum planning begins with the coordination of different suggestions and ideas of numerous groups of people that serve as inputs into the planning of a specified type of education. All their pieces of information need to be synthesized into policies and philosophical ideologies to form the general aims and objectives of a functional teacher education programme in Nigeria.

The next stage to the formulation of aims and objectives is the identification of necessary learning experiences that could be use to realize or achieve the stated aims and objectives of the teacher education programme in Nigeria.

After that, it now leads to the organization and integration of these learning experiences through different subjects of learning under the teacher education programme. This will be subjected to both formative and summative evaluation to identify areas of problems that need adjustment or amendments. The cyclical circle fluid of a balanced curriculum goes on continuously in clock wise direction until it attains perfection with necessary inputs of improvements.

### **Recommendation**

In order to facilitate an appropriate and better repositioning of teacher education in Nigeria, the following relevant and useful suggestion and recommendations are hereby proffered:

- i. That curriculum planning for teacher education programmes in Nigeria should be done through an elaborate collaborative approach.
- ii. That teacher education in Nigeria should be repositioned to enhance its validity, reliability and functionality in the Nigerian society.
- Hi. Teacher education needs to incorporate all new concepts of computer education, conflicts resolution and peace education, population education, family education, environmental education, human rights education, etc. into their contemporary curriculum contents.
- iv. That teacher education needs to be structured in a way that will ensure uniformity on its-standard throughout Nigeria and that would be comparable with what is obtainable in the developed countries.
- v. That teacher education should be organized in a strategic techniques that would accommodate the auxiliary teachers and re-trains them to become professionals.

### **Conclusion**

In a nutshell, the clamour for repositioning teacher education in Nigeria could not have come at a more belter period than now, in order to make it possible for it to accommodate new concepts such as computer education, population education, sex/gender education, environmental education, peace

education, human rights education, etc. into its contemporary curriculum contents to facilitate its utility in the Nigerian society particularly and the entire world at large.

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