

## THE CHALLENGES OF INTERNATIONALIZATION IN NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

Preparing quality teachers has in recent times become a global issue as all nations strive for excellence at all levels of their teacher preparation programmes. To have competent twenty-first century global teachers means that the teachers are competent and have the knowledge, skills and disposition to be effective and intercultural teachers in the era of globalization. Internationalization of teacher education calls for transformation in the policy, curriculum, resource, management and evaluation of the general service delivery system. Unfortunately, there are challenges that show very slow manifestation to internationalization of teacher education programmes. This paper identifies poor facilities and limited resources including ICT and e-learning, no clearly defined national policy for internationalization with respect to higher education, inadequate manpower resource and failure of teacher education curriculum to address present global demands as some of the challenges. Strategies for positioning teacher education for global realities include among others the inclusion of technology in teaching and learning, exchange programme with foreign teacher education institutions for the purpose of reinforcing capacity building in addition to refocusing curriculum content and development to prepare students to face global competitiveness to be in tandem with the international standard.

**Keyword:** Teacher education, Internationalization, Globalization, Teacher quality.

The critical role of teachers in preparing young people for a new global reality has long been recognized. Tshireletso in Haugen (2014) posited that we live in a global society and it is opportune to train our teachers to have internationally accepted skills and competencies for a teacher of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will enable the teachers who are equipped to pass down these abilities to learners who will be competitive in the modern world which is now more interconnected and interdependent. Because of this, preparing quality teachers has become a global concern as all nations strive for excellence at all levels to prepare quality teachers who will be of international standard.

Internationalization of education is the imparting of knowledge, skills and value which have universal appeal and application (Vaghess, 2008). It implies that a curriculum becomes cross-national and intercultural in nature. Internationalization of teacher education on the other hand according to Quezada (2010) refers to the ways in which teacher preparation programmes are implementing strategies and structures that facilitate the development of greater global competencies in pre-service teachers. Changes in technology have facilitated dramatic shift in communication and commerce among others. These changes require that today's students have the knowledge, skills and disposition to engage responsibly and effectively as citizens in this increasingly globalized context. In spite of these changes, most teachers are not equipped to educate students for this changing and increasingly global world. To address this, internationalization of teacher education programmes

becomes imperative to ensure that pre-service teachers are properly equipped and positioned to function effectively in a globalized world.

Despite the global importance of internationalization, literature has noted that teacher preparation programmes in Nigerian colleges and university campus (that is faculty of education) are among the least internationalized despite recent attention to internationalization of higher education (Schneider in Quezada 2010). Also Trust Africa Policy Brief (2013) states that higher education in Africa still faces various challenges and one of the ways to transform higher education (which teacher education is inclusive) is by improving cross university collaboration through exchange of resources, students and scholars among universities. To internationalize higher education is to link the local academic community to the global community of scholars and educators. Iheonunekwu, Nzegbulem and Nzeadibe (2015) posited that it involves the transfer of knowledge and expertise in teaching and learning and the methods of operating modern universities across border. Cross border tertiary education can take place in several forms as students and teachers travelling to study and teach in foreign countries. Knight (2015) also added that it involves educational institutions partnering with foreign institutions to offer joint educational programmes, operating campuses abroad and educational courses being supplied across borders through e-learning or distance learning.

Creating globally competent teachers and teacher education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century as observed by Quezada (2010) demands that schools, colleges of education and faculties of education position teacher education programmes in such a way so that graduands have global teaching experience. It also entails that teacher education curriculum include global perspective and that there are opportunities to have faculty think and teach from a global perspective. These will however involve tackling the challenges in the area of policy and educational curriculum implementation strategies, inadequacy of human and material resources including funding and appropriate strategy for internationalization.

There is need for the internationalization of teacher preparation programme. Luke (2008) posited that this will help teacher educators to lead the way in developing partnership and creating international programmes for progressive teachers, counsellors and administrator candidate so that they may become more cosmopolitan educators. This paper discusses internationalization of higher education with emphasis on teacher education. It identifies challenges that affect internationalization of teacher education programme and suggests strategies for positioning teacher education in a globalized era

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Meaning of Internationalization and Internationalization of Higher Education**

#### **Meaning of Internationalization**

Knight (1999) cited in Douglas and Nielsen (2012) defined internationalization as a matter of integrating transnational elements into the purpose, function or delivery of post-secondary education. It means that colleges and universities are internationalizing their behaviour when they reshape their purpose to attract international students, to deploy their programme across national border and concentrate on internationally advantageous educational programmes among others. While Knight (2004) sees internationalization as the inclusion of an inter-cultural and global dimension into the curricular and teaching and learning process; Lagunde, Castro & Franco (n.d) identified internationalization of having the effect of enabling citizens to be able to interact with open mind with the citizens of different nations, including our country mates and critical thinking skill collaboration.

In addition, it also has the effect of inclusion of technology in the teaching and learning environment and online learning. Also, it involves training and equipping teachers in handling local and foreign students in addition to improving instruction and quality education. There is also a demand to upgrade the institutional financial capability and facilities. It is also expected to keep citizens abreast and updated with the current trends and issues in education, economic exchange, etc.

### **Internationalization of Higher Education**

Internationalization of higher education is a process to introduce intercultural, international and global dimensions in higher education to improve the global, function and delivery of higher education and improve the quality of education and research (de Wit, 2011). It means that our higher education is congruent not with other foreign countries, but making our graduates internationally competitive and in compliance with world class standard in education. It also involves being able to develop global citizens and accept multicultural differences in addition to living in solidarity with people of other nations.

The implication is that institutions will improve and upgrade their facilities in order to be at par with higher education in other countries to produce quality graduates. Varghese (2008) added that this involves changing the orientation of courses offered in the domestic universities which sometimes are referred to as “internationalization at home”. This may also take place without the presence of any foreign provider at home.

### **Teachers Education: Meaning and Objectives**

Teacher education is the form of education which is specifically geared towards the production of teachers who will teach essentially in the primary and secondary schools. (Eneasator 1997) Okafor (1998) expanded the scope of teacher education to include the preparation of school administrators, school supervisors and school counsellors. According to the National Policy on Education (NPE 2004:40), the following are among the institutions that have been charged with the responsibility of professional training of teachers; colleges of education, faculties of education and institutes of education in universities, national teachers’ institute and school of education in the polytechnic among others. These bodies have tried to carry out their statutory functions, one of which is producing the teachers needed for the different levels of educational system. In the era of globalization and internationalization, there is the need to position them to be able to produce global and competent teachers that can stand the test of time.

Wikipedia (2010) sees teacher education as a concept which refers to policies and procedure designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom. Omoniva (2010) and Maduewesi (2010) also posited that the teacher must master the subject matter and impart some knowledge to the students as well as be properly groomed in the methodologies of teaching. It is in recognition of the importance of teacher education in the educational process that the Federal Republic of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (NPE 2004) stated that the goals of teacher education shall be:

- 1 To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system.
- 2 Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations not only of life of their country but in the wide world. This underscores the need for producing globally competent teachers.

Globally, the effective ways and means of positioning teacher education for internationalization and for quality service delivery has become a subject of consideration especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Cochram-Smith&Zeichner (2005) stressed the need for teachers to be positioned to teach students to world class standard, this being the linchpins in educational reforms so as to position teachers in the global economy. In addition is the need for professional development of teachers which Odoemenam (2011) noted will bring teachers to date with new knowledge in skills and methodologies.

### **Internationalization of Teacher Education: Rationale/Purpose**

Teacher education programmes are greatly enhanced and more relevant when international and global dimension are included in programming and curriculum design and implementation. According to NAFSA Report (n.d) in Global Teacher Education,internationalization of teacher education is integral to the fabric of a programme. It is aimed at producing teachers who are globally competent in future. It also supports and enhances students' achievement across all content areas at all levels. Also, internationalized teacher education programme will produce learners who demonstrate global competencies through awareness and curiosity about how the world works. The report added that the internationalization of teacher education produces a global competent teacher, who possess the competence, attitude and habits of mind necessary for successful cross-cultural engagement at home and abroad.

Knight (2005) stressed that internationalized teacher education programme is expected to produce teachers who demonstrate the following characteristics:

- 1 Investigate the world beyond the immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted and age-appropriate research.
- 2 Recognize perspective, others and their own, articulating and explaining such perspective thoughtfully and respectfully.
- 3 Communicate ideas effectively with diverse awareness, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological and cultural barriers.
- 4 Take action to improve conditions, reviewing themselves as players in the world and participating reflectively.

In order to position teachers effectively for the 21<sup>st</sup> century globalized world and internationalization, Kissock& Richardson(2007) challenged teacher educators to break down their virtual wall of silence and begin preparing educators for the global interdependent world in which they will work and their students will live, by opening the world to integrating a global perspective throughout the curriculum. They added that the teacher education curriculum should include global perspective and that these should be opportunities to have faculty think and teach from a global perspective. The result of a study by Lagunde et al as cited in Balagtus et al (2012) showed that although internationalization was mostly evident among the teacher education institution (being assessed in the study) in the curriculum and instructional dimension; however, it was found that college and universities due to lack of enough resources to support the changes in policy improvement of facilities and innovation of education programmes being offered in their institutions manifest very slow level of internationalization. These therefore underscores the need for innovation and reforms that may take place in curriculum, development, policy, teaching and community service.

Teacher Preparation Programmes that have been comprehensively internationalized ensure that the following occur: (Haughen, 2014)

1. General education course work helps each prospective teacher to develop deep knowledge of at least one world region, culture, or global issue and facility in one language in addition to English.

2. Professional education course teach the pedagogical skills to enable future teachers to teach the global dimensions of their subject matter.

3. Field experience of faculty and students support the development of pre-service teachers, global perspectives and contribute the broader research base of aligned strategic plan.

4. More teachers are prepared to teach less commonly taught languages and language education pedagogy is updated based on current research and best practice.

5. There are incentives, not barriers, to faculty at all levels engaging in this work.

Also, Longview (2008), in its report identified the following as critical for comprehensive, sustainable internationalization of today's teacher education programmes:

a. Programmes and course are creating and utilizing formative and summative assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of new strategies in developing the global competence of prospective teachers.

b. Teaching is integrated into the student experiences to enhance instructional practice and facilitate connections to the world.

c. Pre-requisite for language study are in place and opportunities to build further proficiency and language application exist during students' course study

.Key partnership locally, regionally exist and large reform initiative tie back to campus and colleges strategic plan

### **Challenges/Constraints to Internationalization of Nigerian Teacher Education**

The Federal government of Nigeria in its National policy on Education (2004:39) stated that "teacher education shall continue to be given a major emphasis in all educational planning and development since no educational system may rise above the quality of its teachers". Teacher education is therefore very crucial in the nation's educational system because it is through the instrumentality of the teacher that the curriculum finds its actualization.

However, the transition of the world from one of the separate units to a globalized integrated whole as noted by Emetarom (2011) requires a new vision for the teacher's role and pedagogical preparation to overcome the challenges of globalization and internationalization. The following are some of the challenges:

#### **1. Policy issue and implementation**

A major issue is the absence of a defined national policy with respect to internationalization of higher education. Adeoye, Anyikwa and Arant (n.d) posited that the status of the National policy with respect to internationalization of higher education is not clearly defined as there is no national policy on internationalization of higher education in addition to the absence of internationalization as part of government's foreign policy. Also, they added that there is no national framework for monitoring and evaluation of higher education in Africa in addition to lack of awareness of guiding principles of internationalization of higher education and that it is not part of African government foreign policies. Stressing on the poor implementation of educational policies, Ogbonnaya (2003) confirmed this when he pointed out that the manner of implementation of educational policies is a serious problem and advised that leaders should demonstrate a high level of commitment towards the success of internationalization of tertiary education by giving it a strong backing. Policy somersault,

and faulty policy implementation as identified by Enyi (2011) appear to be the hallmark of the educational system at virtually all levels. He stressed the need for adequate enlightenment of the general public on the scope, objective and operation of policies. Also, defective policy administration as identified by Enyi (2001) is closely tied to inadequate financial resources. He maintained that several budgeting constraints have led to a slow pace of policy implementation.

The National Policy of Education (NPE, 2004) in its goals of teacher education (No.2) stated the need to position teachers not only to make them adaptable to changing situation in their country but in the wider-world. This underscores the need for internationalization but the issue is whether any foreign policy has been put in place to integrate this in internationalization or whether this aspect has been implemented. One of the main thrusts of the goals of the National Policy on Higher Education (FRN, 2004:36, no a) is to promote national and international understanding and interaction. However, a major problem has been that of poor implementation. The monitoring of learning achievement (MLA) conducted by the Central Bank of Nigeria as cited in Ajadi (2013) in its report, stated that the poor academic performance in Nigeria higher education was due to inconsistencies in government policies. This stresses the need for government to be more serious in policy implementation if the aim of internationalization is to be realized.

## **2 Lack of adequate material resources/funding**

Internationalization of higher education (teacher education inclusive) would require an adequate supply of human and material resources and the ability to help academic staff to cope with global demand. Lagunde et al (n.d) posited that colleges of education and universities due to lack of enough resources to support the changes in policy or improvement of facilities and innovation in the education programme being offered in their institutions manifest very slow pace of internationalization.

Availability and management of fund constitute a major condition for a successful implementation of internationalization. Enyi & Odoemenam (2010) and Ogbonnaya (2007) pointed out that funds are crucial for the implementation of quality education programme as lack or inadequacy of it cripples any programme or project. A major setback has been the fact that Nigeria government has not allocated up to 26 per cent of the nation's GNP to education as recommended by UNESCO. The highest allocation ever is that of 2006, 10.43% which is not up to at least half of 26% that should be allocated to education (Ezenwa, 2015). The implication is that not being able to ensure long term financial sustainability of tertiary education will make the education sector ineffective.

## **3 Lack of adequate human resources manpower development**

Internationalization of teacher education would require adequate supply of academic and management of human resource in order to help academic to cope with global demand. Emetarom (2011) stressed that the transition of the world from one of separate units to a globally, integrated whole requires a new vision of the teacher role and pedagogical preparation to overcome the challenges of globalization for sustainable development. To be able to position the teacher effectively, Amale (2003) stressed the need to position the teacher properly in the era of globalization through properly equipping him/ her with modern trends and innovation. This is needed to update the teachers' knowledge and enhance their competence and effectiveness in the teaching and learning encounter.

**4 Curriculum review and diversification**

The failure of teacher education curricular to address present global demands according to Ofojebe, Chukwuma & Aniekwe (2011) has necessitated the need to revive the ICT curricular of teacher training institutions to reflect emerging societal needs and global trends. There is the need for the teachers to be equipped in line with the global standard through diversification/ review of pre-service curriculum

**5 Lack of appropriate strategy for internationalization**

High level of competence and technical knowhow are needed for designing a comprehensive internationalization strategy with the country's needs, ensuring quality across borders and enhancing the international comparability of the tertiary education especially teacher education.

**6 E-Learning facilities, poor ICT facilities and orientation**

ICT is necessary to boost research, e-learning/teaching, e-library and general education in teacher education. Problems encountered (Ofojebe, et al 2011) are inadequate provision of ICT facilities including non-availability of ICT infrastructure and resources (both human and material), poor orientation and maintenance culture. Despite the fact that ICT creates enabling environment, allows free access to flow of information and knowledge for capacity building, majority of teacher education institution are found lacking in this area making actualization of quality service delivery and educational sustainability difficult and internationalization elusive.

**Conclusion**

Teacher education is very crucial in the nation's educational system because it is through the instrumentality of the teacher that the curriculum finds its actualization. Teachers serve as the think tank of any nation and since education has been globalized, with no nation as an island of its own, there is the need to position teacher education in an era of globalization. Teachers' education as a citadel of learning has the aim of knowledge impartation, training, knowledge preservation and retrieval as well as knowledge application. To be able to achieve these, it must have a global view of what it is doing otherwise it may not have relevance to the essential factors of today's development indices. There is therefore the need for innovations and reforms that may take place, policy and implementation, curriculum development and generally positioning teacher education programmes in line with modern realities for effective internationalization.

**Strategies for Positioning Teacher Education to New Global Realities and Relevance**

Creating globally competent teachers and teacher educators for the 21<sup>st</sup> century through internationalization of teacher education is important to provide opportunities for teachers and teacher educators to think and teach from a global perspective. The following are recommended for positioning teacher education for global realities and relevance:

1 The internationalization process requires staff with doctoral and post-graduate degrees relevant in the area of need. The government institutions are therefore challenged to route more money and support into staff development and also project beyond institutions to attract foreign collaboration. In addition is the improvement of academic staff through the employment of professionals along with good remuneration.

2 Teacher education institution in Nigeria should strengthen linkages through exchange programmes with foreign teacher education institutions for the purpose of reinforcing capacity building.

3 There is need to design a comprehensive internationalization strategy to be in line with the country's need with regards to teacher education and also to ensure quality across borders.

4 Refocus curriculum content and development to suit the trend in science technology advancement and prepare students to face global competitiveness. Also open education resources should be encouraged by the Federal Government of Nigeria with a policy back up such that curriculum content of courses offered in tertiary institutions should be in tandem with the international standard.

5 Teacher education institutions should implement government directives in ICT initiative for tertiary institution through establishing studentsresources centres and campus wide wireless connectivity. In addition is the computer acquisition by staff through strengthening and expanding their e-learning skills and establishment and upgrade of website and video driven lectures.

6 Resources are needed to produce highly sophisticated manpower. This implies that tertiary education should be adequately funded. At least the UNESCO standard of 26% of annual National budgets should be strictly adhered to if the deplorable state of equipment, facilities and infrastructures can be stemmed.

7 Communication linkage is a critical factor in the internationalization of higher education as that opens every institution to the larger audience and the wider world. Effective communication linkage will encourage cross-country higher education collaboration and cooperation through exchange of resources, programmes and scholars of tertiary institutions.

8 There is need for articulated rationale and goal for internationalization. This should be done in recognition of international dimension in institutional mission statements, planning and policy documents. This presupposes the need for internationalization to be integrated into institution-wide and department/college level planning, budgeting and quality review system.

9 Recruitment and selection procedure that recognizes international expert and standard

10 All bottlenecks in funding teacher education programme namely conference, seminars, workshops, symposia should be reviewed. The intervention of TETFUND is a welcome development. Though inadequate, it is also cumbersome since it does not pay in arrears. Capacity building in masters and Ph.D programmes outside Nigerian institutions is important as this is a way of facilitating internationalization.

11 Need for transformative leaders who could work to improve issues in worldwide academics. Avant (2011) identified such leaders as not only having high expectation to accomplish their responsibility but are conscious about operating in a world dominated by national interest and they act as visionaries to facilitate global community.

12 School administration should carefully consider all the dimension of internationalization in the formulation or modification of their quality assurance policy.



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