TEACHER EDUCATION IN KATSINA STATE: THE 21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES

Musa Ladan

Abstract
The National Policy on Education (FRN 2004), clearly asserts that ‘no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers’. Production of highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers is of paramount importance in educational development. This paper therefore, looked at some challenges (teaming number of unqualified teachers, low quality of the teachers, ineffectiveness of some of the programs, lack of accreditation etc.) and other issues in teacher education peculiar to the 21st century in Katsina State.

Teacher and teaching have not been given the attention they deserve in Katsina State. Neglect, abandonment, inadequate funding, are few of what characterize the profession. All these problems are persisting despite the general awareness that there can be no meaningful formal education in the absence of qualified teachers. Olutade (2006), defined a qualified professional teacher as someone who has undergone approved professional training in education at a College of Education or Faculty of Education in a University. Since no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers, teacher education is supposed to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and developmental efforts. This, according to Mbachu (2008), should include complete professionalization of teaching and adequate funding.

The interaction of teachers and pupils is the most important aspect in learning process; hence all teachers in educational institutions should be professionally trained. Teacher education programmes should therefore be structured to equip teachers for effective performance of their duties. Lassa (2000), stated that the national objectives of teacher education could be reduced to three major thrusts which are to be achieved in the production of effective teachers. These he stated as follows:

- Possession of a body of knowledge and understanding
- Possession of professional skills and techniques
- Possession of certain positive qualities.

For a professional teacher to be a dispenser of knowledge, he/she must be familiar with contemporary content of education, methodology and techniques, personality of the teacher and the characteristics or qualities of the learner (Mbachu, 2008).

Teacher education is therefore, a fusion of sound academic knowledge and profound knowledge of pedagogical principles. Producing teachers with these qualities in Nigeria as a whole and in Katsina State in particular stands to face some challenges peculiar to the 21st Century.

Concept of Teacher Education
Anaekwe and Nnaka (2000), defined teacher education as a particular academic curriculum that is designed wholly for the professional preparation of teachers, school administrators and guidance and counselors. Achiuonye (2007), stated that teacher education is a specialized training given to would-be-teachers in a formal school system, so as to nurture them for the great tasks ahead. As teaching is viewed as a process of imparting, instructing, motivating, modeling, advising and instilling knowledge, teacher education must therefore be structured to adequately train those to impart the knowledge to the pupils.

According to Maduewesi (2005), teacher education is a well-articulated, credible and well funded education programme. This means that in teacher education programme, there is need for adequate teacher preparation, training and re-training in order to ensure qualitative education.
According to National Policy on Education (2004), the goals of teacher education are:

a) To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system.

b) To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.

c) To help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals.

d) Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations.

e) To enhance teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession.

All these are theoretical pronouncements. To make sure they are achieved, certain institutions and structures must be put in place. According to the National Policy on Education, the following institutions among others, shall give the required professional training, provided they continuously meet the required minimum standards:

i. Colleges of Education

ii. Faculties of Education

iii. Institutes of Education

iv. National Teachers Institute

v. Schools of Education in the Polytechnics

vi. National Institute for Nigeria Languages (NINLAN)


For Nigeria’s philosophy of education to be achieved, there must be teachers who will expose the learners to the contents and bring about the expected change in behaviour. The teacher education programme in this respect, becomes an indispensable tool for the actualization of the National Policy on Education. In Katsina State, teacher education programme is through:

i) Institutions of higher learning in the state which include Federal College of Education Katsina, Isa Kaita College of Education Dutsin-ma, Umaru Musa Yar’adua University Katsina and Katsina University. Others that offer education programmes include the National Teachers’ Institute and Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic.

ii) In-service training for teachers in the service of the State Ministry of Education.

Katsina State Education System

Katsina, as one of the 36 states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, has a system of education that is based on the provision of the National Policy on Education. The state education programme is follows:

i. Pre-primary and primary education – under State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB).

ii. Secondary education – under the State Ministry of Education.

iii. Tertiary education – under Department of Higher Education.

Based on the 2009/2010 school census, the state has a total number of 2,175 Primary Schools, 172 Junior Secondary Schools and 160 Senior Secondary Schools. The students/pupils enrolment as of the same census year from pre-primary to senior secondary level, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary</td>
<td>19,338</td>
<td>18,557</td>
<td>37,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>802,128</td>
<td>479,027</td>
<td>1,281,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSS</td>
<td>98,485</td>
<td>50,009</td>
<td>148,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSS</td>
<td>71,777</td>
<td>22,746</td>
<td>94,523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Katsina State Ministry of Education (2010).
**Teacher Education In Katsina State: The 21st Century Challenges**

**The Challenges**

Several issues are still standing as bottlenecks to effective teacher education in the state. These among others include the following:

1. **Teaming number of unqualified teachers as new entrants into the state teaching service.** Despite the fact that many of the teachers already in the service are non-qualified new entrants with Bachelors’ Degrees and Diplomas are joining the service without teaching qualification. According to statistics from the state’s ministry of education based on the 2009/2010 schools census exercise, the qualified teacher - pupil ratio is very wide.

   **Table 2: Qualified Teacher – Pupil Ratio**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Total No. of Qualified Teachers</th>
<th>Qualified Teacher/Pupil Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-primary</td>
<td>1,281,155</td>
<td>6,399</td>
<td>1:200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>148,494</td>
<td>2,567</td>
<td>1:58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSS</td>
<td>94,523</td>
<td>1,482</td>
<td>1:64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSS</td>
<td>1,524,172</td>
<td>10,448</td>
<td>1:146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Katsina State Ministry of Education (2010).

   From the table, it is clear that the gap is widest at the primary school level. Furthermore, considering the ratio of total enrolment (for primary, JSS and SSS) to total number of qualified teachers (1:146), it is also clear that the task is really challenging for the state government to see that all the affected teachers are made to become qualified through in-service training or other means.

2. **Some teacher training programmes in the state are ineffective.** Apart from the NCE Programme offered by Federal College of Education Katsina and Isa Kaita College of Education, Dutsin-ma, other programmes offered in the state include a three-year Diploma Programme in Arabic and Islamic Education by Danfodio College of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Katsina. Many of its graduates are now in the state teaching service even though the education curriculum content is not sufficient enough to meet the minimum requirement for certification by Teachers Registration Council.

3. **Lack of accreditation of some programmes.** In this case an example is an education programme conducted at the postgraduate diploma level by Isa Kaita College of Education, Dutsin-ma between 2002 – 2005. Even though the programme was said to be affiliated to Usman Danfodio University Sokoto, lack of accreditation by appropriate authorities made the programme to be stopped. Many of those who enrolled ended up with unrecognized certificates.

4. **Low quality of the teachers.** Termly inspection reports have shown that many teachers that are said to be qualified cannot adequately display their teacher-training experience while in the classroom. No much difference is recorded between the qualified and non-qualified teachers in terms of application of teaching techniques due to low quality of the teachers.

5. **Unattractiveness of the teaching profession brought about by poor condition of service, the teaching profession is very unattractive.** Many professionally trained teachers are not serving as teachers, but are rather found in other sectors of the civil service.

**Conclusion**

As effective teaching is the basis of successful learning, teacher education really needs much commitment and professionalization. Lack of effective teacher education has made some teachers uncommitted, uninspired, lazy, unmotivated, immoral or anti-social.

There is therefore the need for the government to widen the means and access to teacher education for general upliftment of education in the state.
Recommendation

The following recommendations are offered with a view of finding a way of confronting the observed challenges:

i. The state government should dedicate itself more in recruiting teachers with teaching qualification with a view of professionalizing the teaching profession.

ii. More chances should be given to those teachers without teaching qualification to acquire the minimum teaching qualification through in-service training.

iii. More teacher training programmes should be introduced in the states higher institutions of learning.

iv. Teaching profession should be more professionalized and attractive so that trained teachers will not be abandoning it.

References


