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## QUALITY TEACHER PRODUCTION AND PREPARATION FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHER EDUCATION REFORMS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper focuses on quality teacher production and preparation. The paper discussed on status of teacher education, reforming teacher production education and emphasis on teacher quality. However, it recommends that the entry requirement, re-train and instructional materials are to be adequately prepared for effective teacher education reforms.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a means to solving problems, preventing problems and advancement of individual and the society. The notion: ‘No education system can rise above the quality of the teacher is universally held. Thus, good teachers are requisite for better education. Teacher education on the other hand, is that education tailored towards professional training of those in the business of teaching. This involves the teacher education programme in preparing competent teachers who are knowledgeable in all fields of knowledge and professional practices. A good teacher education programme must seek to assist the individual teacher to grow and develop a person to provide him with the necessary skills to become not only on effective teacher, but also an enviable community leader. For a teacher to be educated, it involves being exposed to academic and professional knowledge which will better place him to impart such knowledge in the areas of skills, attitude and cognition. This paper therefore, discuss issues involved in teacher production and preparation in terms of their status, problems encountered and why emphasis was put on teacher quality.

## **STATUS OF TEACHER EDUCATION**

A number of factors had been militating against a clear - cut policy for the preparation and production of qualified teachers within the educational system in this country. One source of concern in this area was that teachers were often weak in knowledge. There is a worldwide increasing demand for a more academic approach to the content of teacher education than obtains at present, partly in the belief that the teacher should have a grasp of a subject matter and partly because many believe that teaching is an art that can be learnt on the job and which, therefore, need not occupy too much time during initial training. But one can also quickly add that in a world of rapid turnover in information, academic content keeps getting updated, thus requiring constant mental alertness and close reading. Basically, teachers must, at least, know everything in the school syllabus that they intend to teach and much more. They must continue to grow in learning throughout their career well beyond the few years they spend in initial training programme. Adaralagbe (1982) who noted that, “our major problem is the difficulty in our teacher education programmes relevant at the level for which they are design. We tend to concentrate on teaching a million bits and pieces of information as a coherent whole. Our approach to student seems to put the freeze on individuality and autonomy, inquiry and creativity”.

The belief that, merely recruiting a large number of NCE and graduates into the primary schools tantamount to injecting quality into the schools, even where their subject specializations bear very limited relevance and appropriateness to the primary school curriculum. For example, Adeyanju (2004) cited that, some findings challenge our belief that if an NCE graduate read Hausa and Islamic studies or took a double major in technical education, home - economics, or any such subjects, we are happy to count him/her as having possessed the “minimum standard” for teaching the several subjects in the primary school curriculum. Unfortunately, you may found these NCE graduates very ill -prepared and therefore weak in many respects. Many schools are filled with such teachers. It is perhaps time to re-examine this mindless preoccupation with broad paper qualification and to scrutinize the appropriateness of the content of teacher preparation as well as the placement of those we deem qualified to teach what we prepare them to teach. According to Jibril (2005) Teacher education goes beyond ordinary teacher preparation and training. Although it is the concern of teacher education to prepare, train and groom would - be teacher in designated setting for teacher education yet those routinely expectations of teacher education which are taken for granted do not often satisfy the need for commitments and devotion to duty of the teachers. The quality of teacher

education products is certainly a serious question. Quality teacher education is a great challenge nation and the production of quality teachers would solve the problem if necessary attention would be given. Thus, every administration in this country is rightly guided, as to the policy for recruiting teachers into the various levels of the school system. Recruitment pre - supposes that there is a pool of individuals from which qualified applicants can be sourced and selected. The over - crowded classrooms, particularly in the rural areas without teachers, implies that any responsible and responsive government should recruit all available hands with minimum academic qualification to “teach” these children. Whether they actually **teach or cheat** is another problem entirely. Ohanado (1997) observes that “majority of teachers in our educational systems are not motivated. They are not efficient if we use student performance in both public and private examination as the yard stick for measuring efficiency.” There is need therefore to focus the basis in teacher education; i.e teacher preparation, teacher production which should greatly enhance better result and excellent performance. A basic truth is accepted widely that the quality of education largely depends on the quality of the teacher. Lack of commitment among teachers is the bane of quality teacher education today. For instance, primary education has been reduced to mere school attendance and fake certification in the sense that examinations are largely written for pupils by teachers nowadays instead of adequately preparing pupils to write exams by themselves. This malaise is everywhere at the primary or secondary school system today. This further calls for the need to consolidate teacher preparation and teacher production in order to have an effective reform in teacher education, since it is obvious no adequate training can take place without competent teachers to handle the training programme, teacher education programmes must of necessity be on the priority list of the ministry of education. The services of the teacher are indispensable to any nation and he, more than any other existing professional influences in the lives of the nation’s youth and nation’s future. According to Fafunwa (1969) “if the Africa teacher is to cope adequately with the monumental task that lies ahead of him, he has to be well trained for his job”

### **Reforming Teacher Production Education.**

The importance of teachers and teacher quality is universally acknowledged, though quality is hardly ever rewarded commensurately. Consider the following grandiose claims, for example.

“Only the teacher can lay a solid foundation for national development, economic growth, and political stability alike depend on how well he does his work. He is Nigeria’s ambassador to the

future, and he deserves full rights and privileges from his country men” (Eric Ashby. 1960).

“Teachers are the key to the effectiveness of any school ----- Their development is a top priority in any move to change schools”. (Ford Foundation, 1985).

The above are only a sample of very many such flattering acknowledgment of the teachers central role in national development. Among other things, outstanding teachers possess high intelligence, knowledge, commitment, multiple approaches to problem solving, and a contagious enthusiasm about books and learning, as well as sharing knowledge. Experts on teacher education know that no initial teacher education programme can guarantee these attributes. Besides the static qualities of intelligence and personality, others (dynamic qualities) must be systematically nurtured. In the United States, for example, fresh products of teacher education are not thereby considered well - formed but are allowed two or more years of teaching in a school under a senior school - based mentor for ultimate assessment for certification.(see Holland, 2003, Newman, 1988, Izumi and Evers, 2002).The objectives as stated in the Nigerian constitution of (1989) and the second National development plan (1970 - 74) are still being pursued till date and these are still appropriate for the future. As teacher education programme are guided by the National policy on education, the purposes are clearly stated namely:-

- a) To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teacher.
- b) To encourage a spirit of enquiring, creativity in teachers.
- c) To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large to enhance their commitments to the national objectives.
- d) To provides teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments to make them adaptable to changing situations
- e) To enhance teacher’s commitment to the teaching profession

Though statements of objectives have invariably served to structure educational systems and processes, they are sometimes so idealistic that they become incongruous with what goes on in practice. For instance, disjunctions occur not only between different categories of professional teachers but also within the levels at which they were trained and the levels within which they teach. Some experts believe that other ways of ensuring quality performance in teachers are to raise the entry requirements into teacher education programme, cut class size, teach efficient time utilization,

reduce teaching load, provide adequate and appropriate instructional materials, promote efficient interactive, collaborative supervision and appropriate monitoring etc. In Nigeria much emphasis is placed on workshops, conference attendance, inducements of various forms, e.g promotion, recognition, and enhanced salary scale etc rather than the former. Teacher education is the foundation of quality in the schools. To bring about desirable educational reforms in teacher education, requires adequate preparation of the teaching personnel. For the education and training of teachers to be effective and property oriented, there is need for a sound knowledge of the trends and changes in the practices and process of organized education. Teacher education cannot be viewed in isolation because the changes taking place in every aspect of the business of organised education have also necessitated changes in teacher education. There are changes in the aims and objectives of education, changes in organizational patterns, changes in the contents of education, changes in methods and techniques of teaching. These changes have invariably necessitated corresponding changes in the programmes and processes of teacher education and training all the world over. Qualitative teaching is a goal of teacher education, and one of the qualities of the good teacher is the ability to administer qualitative teaching to the students. Qualitative teaching takes place into consideration the availability of various resources for teaching and an effective application of these resources in the classroom. Consequently, teachers of today have to be properly and adequately prepared in order to meet effectively the challenges of the times. If teachers are the hub of any educational system, then there is need to examine various aspects of teacher education with a view of suggesting solutions to the general problems facing the education and training of teachers. To achieve these, the concepts are first examined. The concepts of research, teacher education and teacher effectiveness. Some research efforts in teacher education in Nigeria in the following areas; teacher effectiveness, teaching practice, methods of teaching, teaching training programme and duration of teacher training.

### **Why emphasize on teacher quality?**

The rationale behind emphasizing teacher quality is that wherever any wrong is to be adequately and effectively righted it would be important to go to the basis and remove every impediment that forms the foundation for such wrong. Therefore, to have a quality in teachers, reforms of teacher production must be carried out. Teacher's to be employed in our schools must be the right caliber of teachers that can deliver. They must be able to raise the younger learners at that level to be thoroughly knowledgeable and develop properly to face life challenges.

Oyeyinka and Adeniyi (2006). Suggested resuscitation of grade II teachers training programme as a requisite for effective teacher education in order to have effective and quality teacher education. They mention further the need for a better academic and professional demand that will keep teachers sharp and on their toes. They maintain that teachers should be well remunerated, treated well and paid relevant allowances like rural and training allowances to motivate them. Harry (1991:109 - 110) observes that “the crucial and most difficult task involved in teacher education is to generate a supply of teachers that will match - in - quality, and type the need of the schools. Such matching is particularly difficult and from an analytical point of view, especially interesting at a time of rapid change in the ideologies and practice of schooling.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1 The entry requirements for entrants into teacher education should not be lowered to suggest that teacher education is for the academically in capable.
- 2 The entrants must be those interested and willing to do the job, and not those whose hearts are elsewhere.
- 3 The scrapped grade II teachers training colleges and pivotal should be resuscitated as the base for teacher education, as the first level of training to qualifies the entry into (N.C.E) programme.
- 4 The teacher needs more than ever to re - train in order to keep abreast with the current innovations in his or her discipline and the teaching profession.
- 5 Teacher education programmes should place more premium on instructional materials production, group dynamics and techniques, diverse learning activities, and demonstrable teacher resource fullness.

Conclusively, if teachers are to be adequately prepared to work effectively in the classrooms and schools envisioned by reformers, policy makers must establish a coherent and more effective approach to professional development. Teachers and policy makers must abandon long held conventions about continuing education for teachers and begin to understand professional development as an essential and integral part of teachers’ work.

To buttress this equipment, section 58 on teacher education in the National Policy on education acclaims that “all teachers in our educational institutions shall be professionally trained” section 56 (b) also specifies that “the minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the

Nigeria certificate of education (NCE). Section 59 - 65 also specifies other good packages for the teacher for example:-

- 6 Exposure of teachers to innovation
- 7 Recognition of teaching as a legal profession
- 8 Appointment of professionally and academically qualified personnel as head teachers.
- 9 Provisions of promotional opportunities
- 10 Transfer of teachers from state to state
- 11 In - services training of teachers
- 12 The implementation of some of these sections however are yet to see the light of the day.

## **CONCLUSION**

This paper has briefly shown what teacher education is. It has highlighted status of our teacher education, inserting some of the problems involved in both the teacher production and teacher preparation. The paper analyzed and review some findings of some educationist, on how reforms should be carried out on teacher education programme to enhance on effective and qualitative teacher production; for quality teacher education is a great challenge to the nation. Recommendations towards having a good impact on teacher education were preferred.

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