

TRAINING AND UTILIZATION OF TEACHERS IN NIGERIA FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study examines the need for effective planning of the training of teachers and their appropriate utilization for our country's development. The planning, training and utilization of teachers is very complex and sensitive. The planners must be very careful in planning so as to guide against unemployment due to excessive training of teachers and to avoid insufficient training of teachers to avert shortage of teaching personnel in schools. Educational planner therefore should possess the required training, knowledge, skills and experience to enable them to follow and apply established principles of planning. For the time past, teaching field was regarded as no man's land as educated men who were not educationists were employed to teach, and these untrained personnel were either auxiliaries, technicians or instructors. Time has come for the government to employ only the trained teachers to teach in the schools. The problems facing the planning, training and utilization of teachers and possible remedies are stated in this write up with conclusion.

Introduction

The planning of the training and utilization of relevant manpower for national development is not only essential but also a necessity in all sectors of economy including education sector. The planning of the training and utilization of professionals has been a chronic global problem especially in our country Nigeria.

Due to the corrupt minds of the people in the personnel departments, existing vacancies in institutions of learning, industries and banks are

reserved and given to relations that have no iota of training or adequate orientation in the required discipline for such jobs. The employment in every sector of our economy is highly politicized. This paper concentrates on the planning of the training and utilization of teachers to ensure national growth and development.

Manpower training in education sector has been a problem right from the era of the -colonial masters. At first, people were poorly trained by the missionaries to be interpreters and to teach catechism. The training of teachers became a necessity as it was discovered that no nation can rise above the quality of her teachers.

The Meaning of Planning

Planning is the process of assessing the future requirements for a specific task to be achieved and making provision for its realization in the present. It is concerned with what is to be done in the future, how, when and by whom it will be done. Aghenta (1993) said that planning is concerned with goals, means and ends, process and controls. He further viewed planning as a conceptional designing on which decisions and actions by individuals and groups are made. It is a mental and dynamic process which is constructed flexibly so that modifications can be made when necessary.

Education planning is the application of rational systematic analysis to the process of education (Coombs 1970). Careful planning is obligatory and mandatory to enable the educational system to fulfill its traditional roles in the society.

Meaning of a Teacher

A teacher is a person who had undergone an appropriate level of training and is capable of imparting knowledge, attitudes and skills to learners (Oon, 2002). The word teacher covers those persons in schools who are responsible for the education of pupils (Thomas, 1969). Teachers are those people that are employed to perform highly specialized service of instructing the young or the youths in an official schools (Okeke, 1984). However, a teacher is any person who helps a learner or learners to acquire knowledge and skills that make the learner to become an experienced, matured, and disciplined citizen.

Meaning of Utilization

This concept simply means effective use of available materials to solve relevant problems. It is a useful application of resource personnel, instruments, equipment in the right time, techniques and skills. It means using resource wisely and equitably for production to maximize output, profit and to ensure the achievement of a predetermined goals.

There could be positive and negative utilization. Utilization is positive when manpower available are judiciously employed and placed on the right position to perform the right job based on their professional backgrounds, skills and experience.

Negative utilization is a situation whereby the wrong employees (with no relevant qualifications for the jobs) are placed on the right position. In other words, it a situation whereby a square peg is placed on a round hole professionally. It is a situation where the qualification and experience of the employed has no bearing with the job content. Such person do not effectively function because he is promoted or placed in a level of incompetence. The negative utilization of available manpower frequently occurs in our society today to the detriment of our economy. He will be there as

rubber stamp and at the end of the day nothing positive may be done and if anything is done at all, it may be done wrongly.

Purpose of Training Teachers

The National Policy on Education (1981) in Nigeria states the purpose of training teachers as follows:

To encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity

To produce highly qualified teaching

personnel that will help to transmit the cultural heritage from one generation to the other.

To ensure that the potential teachers are provided with professional background adequate for their teaching assignment and to make teaching to conform to a specific standard.

To acquaint them with teaching skills.

When the training of teachers is well planned, we will produce and develop teachers with imaginative, creative and humanistic minds that will help them to function as disciplined, cultured, employable and matured citizens who will in turn help to move the country forward socially, politically and economically.

The trained teachers help to solve the problems such as illiteracy, poor attitude to science and technology and poor attitude to work.

Trained teachers are needed to cope with the new and complex dimension of educational system. They are trained to ensure mobilization and optimum utilization of available resources to enhance effective teaching and efficient learning. There is no known developed country where people are deployed or employed to work in fields which they lack training and expertise, but in Nigeria, there is high staff turn over of teachers as they move from teaching field to other sectors for greener pasture such as the bank and other lucrative jobs. For example, in 1981, a TC II holder was made Marketing Manager of

Okpilla Cement factory with the resultant effect that led to instant closure of the said factory. In reacting to wrong personnel position in our economy, Allele -Williams (1992) observed that the right educational planners should be responsible for the planning of our educational activities and not to be left in hands of untrained personnel.

Trained teachers are needed for political growth, rapid economic development and socio cultural transformation for an improved standard of living. They are also needed for the expansion of education and for the realization of national objectives.

The purpose for planning to have adequate number of competent teachers moved from the low level of training catechists and Bible interpreters by the early missionaries to the establishment of well planned, organized and controlled teacher training Colleges of St. Andrew College at Oyo; Teacher Training College at Ogbomoso, St. Charles Teacher Training college at Onitsha among others.

The products of these teachers colleges with their TC III, TC II and grade I certificate were given immediate employment. Further plans were, made by the Federal and State governments to establish Colleges of Education for the award of NCE and established departments of education in the existing Universities so as to meet the increasing demand for education.

With the new planning strategies, the holders of teacher's grade II after the abolition of TC HI were required to update their knowledge through Teachers Colleges and department of education in the Universities. Presently, NCE holders are made to teach in the junior secondary schools (JSS), while university graduates are assigned to teach in the senior secondary schools (SSS)

Problems of Training and Utilization of Teachers

The teachers are trained for the purpose which is simply the impartation of knowledge that will lead to the acquisition of skills (by the learner) necessary for national development. Nevertheless, there are many factors that militate against the realization of the objectives. Such factors that pose problem to planning of the training and utilization of teachers are as follows:

In most cases, the planners of the training and utilization of teachers are not trained as educational planners and they lack the necessary information flow. The educational planners in most cases are political appointees that are deployed from their professional areas "to education. They are then promoted to levels of managerial incompetence. They frustrate not only themselves but also the system thereby, making the training and utilization of teachers of no much effect in our national development. The planners lack statistical data needed for adequate planning. They may lack knowledge or information of the manpower required, manpower available and what is currently needed based on subject areas.

The planning for the training of teacher is in most cases based on trials and errors and unguided estimates. It should be noted that experience acquired through mistakes is very costly. The unguided estimates will not only lead to wrong generalization but in most cases, to absolute failure. When this happens the purpose of planning will be defeated.

During the recruitment exercises, the knowledge of the subject areas, experience and performance of the applicant at the interview are set aside for political recommendation. Success at interview is determined by the degree of influence of the applicant or applicants.

The planners may not be aware of what is going on in each system so as to adequately make provision for it.

Lack of funds for the planners to collect necessary data from various Ministries of Education hinder adequate planning and training of teachers for national development.

There are still room for non-trained teachers in the classrooms while many of the trained teachers' are unemployed.

The utilization of trained teachers is hindered by many trained graduate teachers with beautiful certificates and degrees that cannot teach effectively due to lack of sound academic foundation and examination malpractice.

The planners in most cases set aside the effect of environment in their planning. The learning environment determines the degree of effective teaching and efficient learning. Oskoya (1975) referring to Rousseau said that environment is a stimulator of knowledge. In most schools, the environment is not conducive, instructional materials are inadequate, books in the libraries are out dated and the laboratories are ill-equipped.

The delay in the payment of teachers' salaries with delayed promotion is not motivational. The unemployment of trained teachers discourages the potential teachers. The planners have no way of taking care of the poor attitude of the trained teachers towards teaching profession.

The dilemma in the planning of the training and utilization of teachers for national development is that many graduates from various education departments are at home jobless and frustrated. They see the investment in teachers' education as investment in frustration. Many are still being produced into the non-existent market.

There is a gap between the training and utilization of the teachers leading not only to unemployment but wastage of professionals.

Many people believe that University degree holders can do or perform any function in any field with good result. This belief in transfer of knowledge without any loss of competence is dangerous and should be avoided.

In some schools, historians are made to teach either economics or commerce. This has the same social and academics implication as making people that read psychology outside education to be principals of schools.

Recommendation

The writer wishes to recommend as follows:

- That the training and utilization of teachers should be in the hands of well trained and experienced educational planners.
- The planners in education sector should have at their disposal well guided statistical information about manpower requirement in the education sector to avoid over production or under production of trained teachers.
- The practicing teachers should be motivated by prompt payment of salaries and regular promotion as and when due so as to encourage the potential teachers to enter into the teaching profession.
- All personnel that are in charge of training and utilization of teachers should constantly update their knowledge through workshop and seminars.
- Teachers' salaries should be enhanced to reduce the rate of labour brain drain in the profession.
- The teachers' salary structure (TSS) should be enviably implemented.
- The personnel department in-charge of employment should shun political recommendations and employment by influence and endeavour to employ the best "brains" to teach our children
- The government should provide infrastructure and instructional materials for effective teaching and efficient learning.

- Libraries should be well equipped with current books and not outdated ones of 1900. The laboratories in schools should equally be equipped.
- The environment for teaching and learning should be conducive both in the public and private schools.
- There should be enacted minimum standard for learning environment which chief inspectors of education (CIES) and other assigned agents should enforce.
- The educational planners must make provision for diversified curriculum for professional teachers so as to take care of different talents of the learners.
- Courses of low demand especially in the sciences should be encouraged by the award of scholarship and the courses of popular and high demand such as history, philosophy should attract least admission.
- The planners of the training of teachers should know the current trends and be able to forecast future needs for the educational system so as to have a realistic appraisal of the country's means of achieving educational goals and these means include human resources, funds and materials.
- In the process of training and utilization of teachers for national development, the planners should consider the country's economic and political situations, employment problems, students interests and the needs of the society.
- There should be conscious effort by the government to organize remedial programmes to strengthen the cognitive base of the educational planners.

Conclusion

The training and utilization of teachers in Nigeria for national development is a necessity for economic prosperity. The reduction of

poverty cannot be accomplished unless our people are trained to have at least minimum of primary education of good quality. There is no means of having education of good quality without well trained and dedicated teachers. Trained teachers help to produce good quality education for national development since they play major roles in our national development through the training of our children. The training of teachers therefore should be an on-going process through seminars and workshops.

It is time for us to make use of the available trained teachers and allow the technicians and the instructors in our education sector to relocate their bearing to the sectors of their professions.

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