

JUSTIFICATION FOR COMMERCIALIZATION OF COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Ugbong Benedict Igboh, Ph.D
Department of Educational Foundations,
Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa,
Cross River State.

And

Nkechinyere Promise-Adele
Department of Primary Education,
Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku,
Rivers State.

Abstract

Education in Nigeria is seen as the vital transformational tool and a formidable instrument for socio-economic empowerment. The major goal of education in Nigeria is the provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of Education. Teachers are key to the actualization of any nation's educational goals and objectives. Therefore, any amount budgeted towards institutions that have the mandate to train teachers is an investment in the right direction. This position highlighted some observations relating to the current situation with Teacher Education in Nigeria, such as gross underfunding of Colleges of Education, inadequate provision of facilities and equipment for the training of will-be-teachers, among other factors. Concept of Commercialization of Education is highlighted, and the justification for commercialization of teacher education in Nigeria is discussed. Conclusion and recommendations were drawn based on the main thrust of the paper.

Keywords: commercialization, college, education, justification, teachers.

Education in Nigeria is seen as the vital transformational tool and a formidable instrument for Socio-Economic empowerment. It is an instrument for National Development and Social Change. It also maximizes the creative potentials

and skills of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the society. Ocho, (2005) describe Education as the process through which individuals are made participating members of their society. It is the system through which

man becomes a moral agent capable of living in society and contributing towards the growth and development of the society. It is a process through which the young acquires the ability to be useful to himself and others. It is a process through which man realises his potentials and uses it for self-fulfilment in the service of himself and others. The National Policy on Education stipulated that “one of the major goals of Education in Nigeria is the provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system. It is therefore, a capital intensive social service, which requires adequate financial provisions from all tiers of government for the successful implementation of educational programmes.

Within the framework of education, teachers are at the focus of any human resource development and also the major agent through which the curriculum of Education finds its fulfilment and actualization, Ndu, Ocho and Okereke in Ugbong, (2011). Therefore, for the objective of education of any nation to be realized, it is very obvious that the teachers must be adequately trained in order to translate the educational objectives and philosophy into reality. The critical importance of teachers as the key agents of curriculum implementation has been recognised by the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in its National Policy on Education. The Policy observed that “teacher education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all our educational planning because no

education system can rise above the quality of its teachers” (FRN, 2004:8). Ukeje in Ugbong, (2011) also lends his support to the statement in the National Policy on Education, when he observed that “teachers are the hub of any educational system, and as the wheel rotates around the hub, the educational system rotates around the teacher. Indeed, no educational system can be better than its teachers”.

Therefore, teachers’ training is a key to the sustenance and development of the educational system and the actualization of the educational objectives. This thus, implies that institutions (Colleges of Education) and Faculties of Education in Nigeria need to be adequately funded with the provision of adequate teaching and learning facilities to ensure qualitative training of the- will- be- teachers.

It is observed by the authors that the provision of funds, facilities and other relevant resources to teachers training institutions (Colleges of Education) and Faculties of Education has become a burden on both Federal and State Governments for the training of qualified and competent teachers in Nigeria. Education generally is often faced with budgetary constraints especially as it relates to provision of adequate funding to Colleges of Education that have the mandate to train enough qualified and competent teachers for Nigeria Basic Education and post-basic Education.

Current Situation in Teacher Education

Teachers Education or teacher training refers to the policies, procedures and provision designed to equip teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider community (Ocho, 2005).

The authors observed with displeasure that teachers training institutions (Colleges of Education) both Federal and State owned are grossly underfunded for the institutions to meet its mandate of training qualified, competent and enough teachers for Basic Education and Post-Basic Levels of Education. Facilities and equipment to be used in the training of the- will-be teachers are inadequate in Colleges of Education. Also, effective monitoring and evaluation of programmes in teachers' education is not comprehensive enough to ensure the training of competent teachers. The issue of frequent strike action by lecturers which usually result in half-hazed training of the-will-be teachers cannot be over-emphasised. This is as a result of government's inability to meet with the demands of the workers in the institutions. On the products from the institutions, it will not be out of place to state that most of the graduands from Colleges of Education are not performing up to the expectations required of them as competent teachers.

Also, in a study carried out by Okoli, Ugbong, Margaret and Hannah, (2017) on Comparative Study of Turn-out Pattern of NCE Graduates from Federal and State Colleges of Education in South-

South between 2012-2016 found that only 30% of students that enrolled graduate from the Colleges. The implication of this is that the expected number of teachers to be engaged in the school system is in short supply. Also, a survey on the existing Colleges of Education in Nigeria and its ownership showed that (i) there are 21 Federal Colleges of Education, 49 State owned Colleges of Education, 70 Privately owned Colleges of Education, 14 Other NCE awarding institutions and 9 Polytechnics offering NCE. The data above simply indicated that Colleges of Education in Nigeria are mostly owned by individual which is an index of commercialization.

The implication of the above scenario calls for commercialization of colleges of education in Nigeria to cope with the needs of teachers in our school system and to eliminate the challenges faced by Colleges of Education in the training of teachers in Nigeria.

Concept of Commercialization of Education

Commercialization refers to the creation, marketing and sale of educational goods and services to schools by external providers. This can also be referred to as the commodification of education. Commercialization of education can also be liberally defined as a process of private ownership and management of educational institutions whereby investments are made with the motives of earning profits. Richard (2016), considered commercialization of education as the practice of altering or disrupting the

teaching and learning process in schools from kindergarten through colleges, by introducing advertising and other commercial activities in order to increase profits. Commercialization of Education according to Swapnali (2016) is a trend of decreasing emphasis on the humanities and increasing attention to the demand of the students. He further advanced that it is a tendency which gives emphasis on to make education profitable as well as business oriented.

Commercialization of Colleges of Education generally will result in state-of-the-art-facilities for all students as money will no longer a constraint. Also, the colleges will be free to enter into agreement with corporate organisations that can help improve and upgrade their training and learning infrastructure through corporate funding.

Justification for Commercialization of Colleges of Education in Nigeria

The rationale for commercialization of Colleges of Education and Education in general in Nigeria are discussed below according to Swapnali (2016);

Employment opportunity:

Commercialization of education provides employment opportunity. It provides job opportunity as well as hundred percent job guarantees to the students. Many private institutions offer various job oriented courses, various degrees, diplomas, certificate course etc. Which help the students to engage in job. Due to the presence of commercialization of

education various organization such as GATS (General Agreement on Trade in services), the students gets the opportunity to doing professional course at the local branch Campuses of foreign institutions. Like that the teachers, lectures also engaged in the job in foreign countries. This also reduces the unemployment problem of the country.

Economic development:

Commercialization of education helps in the process of economic development. Commercialization in education helps in increasing the rate of literacy, Gross Domestic Product, Gross national Income, per capita income, provides job opportunity etc. Which is the major indicator of economic development of a country? This indicator also helps in the human resource development. So commercialization of education contributes in the economic development of a country.

To face the global challenges:

Commercialization of education helps to face the global challenges of the world. The global challenges are as modernization, industrialization, privatization, globalization, information and communication Technology, Emergence of International knowledge Network. Role of English language etc. Commercialization of education helps the students in acquiring appropriate knowledge about the advantages in technology. The challenges, how to adopt it, and it also provide demand for training that can be applied in the real word. For

this number of institutions of education system have transformed this structures and curriculum to meet the new global challenges.

Personality development:

Commercialization of education will help in the personality development of the students. The commercialization of education provides formal education to students. For the personality development of the students they provide moral education which included the development of commercialization skill, soft skill, how to maintain their physical health, how to face interview, how to withstand entrance examination, how to adjust with the society etc. In the school syllabus, the subjects of moral science are included. This is helpful for the students in the entire life.

Quality of education: Commercialization of education places emphasis on quality education. The concept of quality education in broader term which indicates the quality of the learner, quality of the learning environment, quality content, quality process and quality outcomes. The commercialization of education makes effort to provide quality education to the students and also offer more demanding courses in the modern society. Generally, every parent wants that their children take the quality education which will help them in their future life as well as in the development of society. A person who gets good education will become a more dependable worker, better citizen and strong consumer. The commercialization institution provides good learning

environment, good infrastructure facility, good teachers, etc. for achieving quality education.

Increased private institutions: Due to the presence of commercialization of education a number of private institutions were increased in various regions. When the private institutions increased day by day the tendency of commercialization also increased, commercialization can't take place without privatization. The various private institutions provide technical, medical and professional courses for the benefit of the students, along with that the institution also provides proper infrastructural facility. So it helps the student in facing an international platform. An incensement of private institutions will increase the job opportunity and both the qualitative and quantitative development of education. So commercialization of education helps in this process.

Social development: Commercialization of education gives emphasis on the social development. For the development of the nation, social development is very necessary. In private institutions students are provided the social education on how to adjust with the society, knowledge of the various culture, knowledge about social interaction, provide knowledge to the students to preserve their culture, knowledge of the norms, social customs etc. So the commercialization in education provide appropriate opportunity to the students to establish a relationship with the culture traditions, norms etc. of the

society. Through the education, it is helpful for the child to develop the innate social qualities including socialization, social interaction to participate in the program of the school, etc. So commercialization of education will help in the social development and it also will provide education according to needs of the society.

Fulfillment of expectations of parents:

Commercialization of education helps in fulfillment of expectation of parents by providing education in the private institutions. Every parent tries their very best to provide quality education to his ward and to fulfill their dreams, they spend a huge sum of money so that their ward is able to study in the best educational institution. This institution makes efforts to fulfill the dreams of the student. The education institutions, coaching centers etc. make a new educational industry, where after completion of the course the student is engaged. They provide competitive environment to the student so that they can get achievement. When parents admit their children they become sure that their children's future will be bright, because the parents have the faith of proper education as well as proper environment of the institutions.

Development of professional efficiency of teachers: Commercialization of education helps give attention to the development of professional efficiency of teachers. In the private institutions they appoint highly qualified teachers, smart teachers, and also provide proper training to the teachers for their professional

development. The institution provides opportunity to develop to their professional efficiency through seminars, workshop, study circle, conference, etc.

In summary, Commercialization of Colleges of Education specifically will; Help in the actualization of teacher training curriculum. This is because in the private sector there is close monitoring of the workers which will cause them to be dedicated to their duties, also afford the colleges of education opportunities to enter into agreement with corporate organizations to provide teaching and learning facilities that will enhance qualitative teacher training to the- will-be -teachers, incessant strike actions usually experienced by lecturers will be drastically reduced as the private sector will not tolerate such actions by workers, dearth of teachers in the school system will be improved and controlled, ensures that academic programmes will be smoothly run and as such, students shall graduate within the specified period, and it will enhance effective planning of the educational system.

Conclusion

Colleges of Education in Nigeria and Faculties of Education in Universities are the major institutions with the mandate of training will-be-teachers and re-training of teachers. Statistics have shown that these institutions which are saddled with the responsibilities of training competent and enough teachers are grossly under-funded leading to inadequate teaching and learning facilities and equipment among other challenges. This is connected to the

fact that both State and Federal Government budgetary allocations is too merger to cater for the provision of qualitative and quantitative Teacher Education. Based on this reason(s), the writer advocated for the commercialization of this level of Education to afford it opportunity to enter into corporate organisations to provide the required funds and facilities to enhance quality teacher training, effective monitoring and to eliminate the identified variables hindering Colleges of Education from becoming a World Class Teacher Training Institutions.

Recommendations

This paper discussed the justification for commercialization of Teacher Education in Nigeria in order to enhance qualitative training and turning out of competent teachers to meet the needs of Basic and Post-basic education in Nigeria. Based on this, the following recommendations are made;

- 1) The existing Colleges of Education should partner with corporate organisations for funding and provision of required teaching and learning facilities and equipment.
- 2) Government should ensure close monitoring of the colleges to ascertain that the managers of these institutions are operating according to guidelines of its operation.
- 3) Graduates from the colleges should be employed by government to close the gap of teachers' shortage.

References

- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos. Nigeria; NERDC.
- Ocho, L. O. (2005). *Issues and Concerns in Education and Life*. Enugu; Nigeria.
- Okoli, Ugbong, Margaret and Hannah (2017). Comparative Study of Turn-out Pattern of NCE Graduates from Federal and State Colleges of Education in South-South, Nigeria, 2012-2016. *TETFund Technical Report Publication, College of Education, Akamkpa, Cross River State, Nigeria*.
- Richards, J. (2016). *2014 U.S. Education Technology Industry Market: Prek-12*. Washington, D. C.: Software and Information Industry Association.
- Swapnali, B. (2016). Commercialization of Education: A Critical Analysis. *International Research Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies*. 1(12), 71-76. Scholar Publications, Karimganji, Assam, India.
- Ugbong, B. I. (2011). Selected School Climate Variables and Teachers' Attitude to Work in Post-Primary Schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Ebonyi State University, Abakalike, Ebonyi, Nigeria*.