

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR JOB CREATION AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The paper examined how teacher education could serve as an instrument for job creation and sustainable national development in Nigeria. This was begun with an introduction, which gave definitions on the concepts in the topic. This was followed with background, which centred on concepts of national development and teacher education. Then the goals of teacher education were enumerated. Brief explanations on teacher education today, the role of the teacher, teacher education for job creation and also National development. Then, conclusion and recommendations followed. One of the recommendations was the re-introduction of teacher training colleges.

Introduction

Teacher education according to Umar (2003), “is pre-service and in-service programs meant to produce professionally qualified teachers and to enhance the quality of teachers already in service”. (P.58). It is that aspect of education which deals with the acquisition of practical and applied skills in the teaching job (Magama, 2004). It entails theoretical and practical knowledge acquired in the process of becoming a teacher (Ringim, 2005). Teachers are the operators of the machine called education which produces the manpower for all sectors. Through teaching individuals are trained for skill acquisition which eventually enable them to create jobs for various sectors of the economy. As teachers are the producers of the manpower to all sectors, the production

of the required manpower or educated workforce and this can not be possible without the effort of teachers. Therefore, the society relies heavily on teacher education programmes to meet the demand for human resources.

Background

National development could be termed to be the process of change in a nation, which leads to making it to become larger, stronger or more impressive, successful or advanced, or causing it to change in this way. According to Dike (2005).

“the concept of national development (economic, political and social) is to bring with it valuable and positive

changes that improves the living standards of the people, as it creates employment opportunities and equality of opportunities and reduces poverty, among other things” (P.1)

He further portrays that, the achievement of the objectives in this definition depends on the character and attitude of the leader responsible for the management of the society. The development of a national depends to a very much extent on human development. Hence, there is a popular saying that, ‘great people make great nation, and that, great nation is the one which produces great people’. Therefore, to develop humans, requires them to be educated. Education then serves as a basic means of educating people. To be educated, there must be good teacher; who are on their part produced through teacher education. The school system at any level, is the major agent of education. This is because, it provides an avenue or avenues for interaction between the learners and the teachers on all aspects of knowledge. Then the teachers are the masters of knowledge. This was rightly stated in the National Policy on education by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) that, “no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers,...” (P.39). this admits that, teacher education is considered to be a process of developing skilled teaching manpower to enable them provide good quality and relevant education to learners at whatever level they operate within the education level; aimed

purposely for the development of the nation.

Goals of Teacher Education

According to National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), the following are the goals of teacher education;

- “a) produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teacher for all levels of our educational system;
- b) encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- c) 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) enhance teachers’ commitment to the teaching profession”. (P.39)

The goals are putting teacher education t appoint of producing someone who is intelligent, tactful, skillful, dynamic and innovative; and whom, the societal development could depend upon.

Teacher Education in Nigeria Today

In Nigeria today, there are a lot of improvements in teacher education in terms commitment by the government and also the academic and professional qualification of the teachers. There are a lot of innovations being introduced in the education, with the main intent of making existing teachers to be professionally qualified, and also on training teachers-to-be, able to shoulder arrays of national development agenda. According to Durosaro (2006), the following are the types and qualifications of teachers required at various education levels;

- a. Pre-primary education-Grade II Teacher with NCE teachers as heads.
- b. Primary education-NCE teachers and graduate teachers as heads.
- c. Junior Secondary schools-NCE and University graduates.
- d. Senior Secondary Schools – NCE and University of graduates with professional qualifications.
- e. Technical Colleges, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. – University graduates with post-graduate qualification in their disciplines together with professional qualifications, practice industrial exposure and experience.
- f. University – University graduates with post graduate qualifications

together with professional qualifications and experience.

Teacher Education and the Role of the Teacher

According to Oke & Jekayinfa (2003), the teacher education is designed and targeted at making the teacher able to perform well after training. This training centre on the acquisition of skills, attitude, competence and anticipated roles to be performed in the school system. Therefore, the training focuses on four areas; these are, practical experience, educational psychology, educational studies and methodology and special subject curriculum. The practice experience is acquired through teaching practice. Educational psychology enables the understanding child's needs, interest, abilities, growth and development, personality and personality adjustment. Others are, guidance and counseling and also measurement and evaluation. Educational studies pertain to collection of subjects in the teacher education such as philosophy of education, history of education, educational planning and administration, sociology of education and general principles of education. Methodology pertains to acquisition of skills in particular subject or subjects that he will later teach in the schools. These are therefore acquired through methodology and curriculum development programme which are related to the subject(s).

When properly trained, the teacher becomes an educator and instructor; who is required to transmit the academic, social and technical skills, valued by the society

to the learners. The teacher also becomes and assessor and evaluator of the efficiency of the educational processes in attaining the goals of education. He also becomes a model and behaviour modifier to the learners. He will also serves as an agent of socialization, and also a custodian of the societal cultural values.

Teacher Education and National Development

According to Ibrahim (2005), “the knowledge, skills mind, character, etc. especially by formal schooling, teaching, training and the knowledge of ability gained is education” (P.9). Education to him therefore involves learning to develop positive idea, for national development. Development at national level is the combination of growth and change in the nation’s structure, in a positive direction, both qualitative and quantitative. One area of national development is that of manpower for political development. Also, through teacher education manpower who can manage the government in all facets of life are realizable. To cite an example, an economic development is an effect of series of successive programmes designed to raise the nation’s economy. Thus, a country needs to decide, which development will be attained and desired among other alternative within available facilities. Therefore, a country decides on priority programmes, as advised by experts. Eg. Vision 20-2020 and 7-point agenda.

According to Ibrahim (2005) also, one aspect of development is the ability to effectively administer the facilities that have been proved through development

efforts; which require some skills. Teacher education enables man to be more useful to himself and his society, appreciate more on the aesthetic and intrinsic value of facilities around him, through acquiring integrated view of life. All these are telling us that, things like industrial revolution and any meaningful development cannot be possible through ignorance; teacher education enables the transmission of all forms of education.

Conclusion

Teacher education serves as a means of making a teacher to be job creator among other qualities, which will at long-run leads him to produce individuals who will work in all sectors of human endeavours, to actualize national development. Therefore teacher education serves as in instrument of job creation for national development in Nigeria.

Recommendations

National development is a necessity to every nation, which requires a lot of capital; and the root of this development is the establishment of good and dependable teacher education. Any money spent on this course, is an amount will spent. In view of this, the following recommendation are proffered:

- i. Teacher education programme should be commenced at Senior Secondary as other professions, by re-introducing the scrapped Teacher Training Colleges. The pre-requisites for entry into such college should be, passing placement

- examination and possession of leadership qualities. The products of the college should be examined as before, by National Teachers Institute (NTI); and on passing, be awarded TC II. These should then be employed to serve for at least 2 years and then proceed to pursue their NCE on in-service-bases. This will serve for 2 purposes, grassroot production of teachers and creation of more job opportunities to teaming youths in the country.
- ii. Teacher education training should be rationalized by ensuring that, whenever a new minimum standard is introduced, it should be allowed to at least spend 5 years, before a new one is re-introduced. This will enable implementation of the intentions of the new minimum standard.
- iii. More funds should be allocated to teacher education, so as to ensure effective implementation of policies and programmes. This is because, education serves as a means of social mobilization and socio-economic development; which will at the long-run leads to national development. Therefore, any money spent on its cause is money wisely spent. There is need to make the profession attractive and sufficiently competitive to attract the best, and thereby raise the image of the teacher.
- iv. Workshops, seminars and symposia should be organized periodically to among others, sensitize teachers on national development programmes of government and how they can teach toward the direction. This will help them work with good direction on the societal demands. If these and others taken, then teacher education could serve as an instrument of accountability, patriotism and tolerance for national development.

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