

## A PROSPECTIVE TEACHER EDUCATION FOR AN EXPEDIENTLY MANAGED UBE PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

Teachers are the implementers of all policies and programmes in the nation's educational system. They are indispensable in this task. Therefore, they must be kept abreast with the times in order to meet issuing challenges in the job else the nation will be eclipsed by ignorance. This paper attempted an investigation into the opinions of teacher educators drawn from all levels of the Nigerian educational system as it concerns having a befitting teacher programme for realizing the Universal Basic Education (UBE) objectives. To achieve this purpose, a 12 item questionnaire was administered to a purposive sample of 7,500 respondents drawn from the 10 states of the South East and South South geopolitical zones of Nigeria at all levels of the educational system. The research questions were analyzed using means and standard deviation. All the respondents had the opinion that befitting teacher education be put in place for an expediently managed UBE programme. This was indicated by mean scores ranging from 1.6 to 3.3 with standard deviations of 0.30 to 0.61. Five recommendations were made

### Introduction

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) scheme launched in September 1999 by the Obasanjo regime is a laudable programme that has come to stay. It is a scheme that is meant to alleviate Nigeria of its literacy and technological problems. It will also help to place the nation on the path to achieving industrialization and commercialization if properly implemented. The UBE scheme seems to be a precautionary programme built on the

failed Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme.

Despite this, the lapses that prevailed during the Universal Primary Education (UPE) are still having incursions in to the new scheme. A few of such lapses are inadequate statistics of the recipients of the programme, inadequate manpower, mismanagement of funds and inadequate facilities. Others may include insufficient generation of electric supply,

technical know – how etc. Odjegba (2005) opined that, of all nagging technological problems in Nigeria, the worst of them is electricity supply, which has made it absolutely impossible for any substantial advancement in the industrial section. In other words, given all the technological equipment necessary for advancement in the nation, electricity generation remains the major determinant factor for any progress to be reckoned.

At the nexus of all these lapses is the teacher who is not only absolutely inadequate in all ramifications in respect of implementing the programme but unprepared for it due to the shabby treatment being meted to him/her by his/her employers.

These upsurging predicaments are merely due to improper planning coupled with unreasonable fire – brigade approach adopted by the Federal Government towards achieving the plan specifications. This goes to substantiate the fact that poor planning constitutes myriads of problems during the implementation stage, thereby stalling the implementation process. (Okwori 2004:10).

If any factor was to be considered fundamentally for the UBE scheme among others, it should have been the teacher because he will intend bring professionalism to bear in the scheme. Akintola (1997) concluded that reforms in every school curriculum is the teacher's major concern and without proper training of the teacher in the type of change required, there will be no beneficial change in anticipation. In his own opinion Hallak (1999:11) noted that since teachers help

the society to become what they should be, it is therefore extremely important to produce good teachers in sufficient quantity and quality to enhance viable educational programmes.

Kanno (2004:26) also said that qualitative and quantitative teacher education can be attained if priorities are laid down towards inculcating the basic skills, strategies and techniques necessary for the teacher through quality teacher education programmes. The National Policy on Education also stated that the purpose of teacher education programme is to produce high quality teachers – competent, conscientious teachers for all levels of our education. (FGN 2004:39) Contributing to their own views. Keys and Case (1990) said that professionalism is a make-do proficiency in all that it concerns such a profession without any reservations.

From the foregoing, all the authors tended to emphasize the importance of producing a quality teacher in its quantities through viable educational programme to sustain educational projects like the Universal Basic Education etc.

### **The Nigerian Teacher before the Introduction of the UBE**

Before the establishment of the UBE programme the Nigerian teacher has been trained and fully equipped with different skills, competencies and techniques to cope with the challenges in the education sector. For decades he/she has been responsible for the manpower needs of the nation until tomorrow. His/her background training was basically on literary and grammar studies with little or

no technical knowledge. This background was not taken into consideration before embarking on programmes involving technical knowledge.

Eventually, this ignominy and disrespect of the teacher as the major implementer of educational policies and programmes to their logical conclusions is responsible for the hydra-headed problems being encountered today in the UBE programme. Mkpa (1991) pointed out that no educational system can rise above its teacher. Tabotndip (2007:302) opined that no matter how much material resources are harnessed for educational programme, no objective will be achieved without the involvement of the teacher who is the expert in the job.

As if the entire nation was and still in a slumber, many institutions producing teachers are still toeing the old lines of literacy and grammar studies to the detriment of the current demands of technological knowledge. Most of the institutions either have antiquated technical facilities or none at all. Even where there are, there are no experts to man them to the benefit of the recipients.

An added disadvantage is the closure of the entire teacher training colleges' hitherto own and run by the different state to the favour of the National Teacher Institute. This move has some deficient peculiarities as can be found in the socio-economic, religious and cultural factors of the people. It is quite impossible for the institute to determine the teacher need for each state. The wholistic approach of the National Teachers Institute from a distance can only but remain

unsatisfactory in terms of producing the quantity and quality needed by the different states. The distance between the states and the institutions might have some detrimental factors in terms of organizing the teaming population of students during lectures, examination etc.

More to this, day-studentship being organized by the institute may produce poor quality teachers and hence a magnified problem for our educational sector. To remedy the situation, it were better the Federal and State Governments come to a consensus of having at least on Teacher Training College in every state and constantly supervised by the National Teachers Institute for the purposes of uniform standards.

### **The Nigerian Teacher after the Introduction of the UBE**

The Nigerian teacher today has become deficient in his profession due to technological changes. In order to have the teacher meets his/her professional expectations he/she needs training and re-training without any compromise about sponsorship. This will be the only answer to catching up with the computer age and the global trend of events. Tabotndip (2004:5) said that any nation of today that can not boost of functional skills can only move to the global market to buy and to sell.

The teacher should therefore have the following skills added to his/she normal curriculum in order to meet up the demands of the time.

- Indebts computer knowledge
- Languages – Foreign and National

- Other technological skills of repute
- Cultural skills for identification, nationalism etc
- Nutrition and human management skills
- Income generation activity skills
- Primary health care skills.

In fact, all these skills put in place with a reasonable disposal income can improve the situation for the better. Morrison (1970:162) said *Its is difficult to pay teachers for their job but what is needed is to keep them talking and chalking daily towards achieving the boisterous objectives of the nation.*

### **Purpose of the Study**

The over all purpose is to establish a befitting teacher education programme to take care of the Universal Basic Education and other policies to be enunciated later. Specifically the study is intended to:

1. Ascertain from the opinions of the pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary teacher educators whether there should be separate teacher training institutions from teachers in the system.
2. Determine what minimum qualifications and academic impact of teacher educators is required at all levels.
3. Find out the kind of locations, physical facilities structures are required.
4. Determine the degree of remuneration that will sustain the teacher educators in the job.

### **Research Questions**

- i. Should there be separate teacher training institutions for teachers in the system. (Pre-primary, primary and tertiary institutions) in Nigeria?
- ii. What minimum qualifications and academic input of teacher educators is required at all levels?
- iii. What kind of locations, physical facilities, structures are required?
- iv. What degree of remuneration will sustain the teacher educators in the job?

### **Method**

This study was carried out in the ten states of the South-East and South-South geopolitical zone of Nigerian through research assistants for a duration of six months. The period was good enough to catch up with the kind of respondents necessary for the study. These respondents included teachers in the pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions as well as teachers on practice in the sessions. It avoided all those who were not at the time teacher educators.

A questionnaire of 12 items was designed to elicit information from the respondents at all levels of the educational sector. A purposive sample of 7500 respondents was used for the study. A four point rating scale of SA (4), A (3), D (2), and SD (1) was used to weigh the reactions of the respondents. The questionnaire was administered by the research assistance for six months duration.

A cut-off point was determined by the mean of the nominal values assigned to the options and using an interval scale of 0.05 arrived at 1.55. Consequently any response with a mean of 1.25 or more was regarded as agreed and any mean below this was regarded as disagreed.

The Standard Deviation (SD) of each of the item was calculated to determine how far the respondents deviated from one another in their opinions on these items in question. Spearman rank order correlation coefficient of 0.85 was obtained. The value when compared to Crombach Alpha of 0.80 was very satisfactory. Reactions from the respondents on the questionnaire terms are organized in a table below.

S/No.	ITEM	MEAN $\bar{X}$	SD t	Decision
1.	The present Nigerian teacher should be trained and retrained to meet the challenges of the profession today	2.5	0.4	Agree
2.	There is the need to re-establish teacher training colleges in every state and supervised by the National Teachers Institute (NTI)	1.9	0.40	Agree
3.	The institutions should train up to the First Degree	2.3	0.42	Agree
4.	The institutions should be fully equipped with ICT Facilities	3.0	0.48	Agree

5.	They should also have up to date equipped libraries	3.3	0.61	Agree
6.	They should have adequate language laboratories	2.2	0.35	Agree
7.	They should have weekend workshop and seminar centres for retraining teachers	2.4	0.42	Agree
8.	The institutions should offer free education with bonds placed on the products	1.6	0.31	Agree
9.	There should be a special salary structure for the teachers like in other professions	3.1	0.48	Agree
10.	House, Car and Medical allowances should be put in place for these teachers	2.5	0.46	Agree
11.	Retired teachers should be promptly and adequately paid	2.2	0.35	Agree
12.	The should be room for further studies	1.9	0.30	Agree

From the table above, it is clear that all the respondents tended towards the same direction of having an over haul of the teacher education programme for the benefit of the UBE and other educational policies. This was indicated by items 1-10 having means scores above the cut off point of 1.25.

### Discussion of Results

In respect of training and retraining of teacher educators to meet the challenges in the educational sector all the respondents agreed that it was necessary as indicated by items 1, 2, 3, and 5 having mean scores of 2.5, 1.9, 2.3 and 2.4 with standard Deviations of 0.40, 0.42 and 0.42 respectively. Fullan and Stiegelhauer (1991) noted that the educational system remains unchanged if the teachers are not abreast with the changes in time and space. They also agreed that a decentralization of the training institutions supervised by the National Technical Institute would be an advantage to the system because it will take care of the socio-cultural peculiarities of different states of the nation. Educational programmes should be properly monitored for the purposes of realizing the objectives (UNESCO 2001).

As it concerns equipment and facilities all the respondents agreed that there should be put in place to enhance teaching and learning experiences towards effective realizing of the UBE objectives. This was indicated by items 4,5,6 and 8 having means scores of 3.0, 3.3, 2.2, 1.6 with standard deviations of 0.48, 0.61, 0.35 and 0.31 respectively. Ezeocha (1990) opined that properly organized equipment and facilities simplify the teaching and learning task making the entire exercise very interesting and less stressful.

Items 9, 10, 11, 12 with mean scores of 3.1, 2.5, 2.2 and 1.9 and standard deviations of 0.48, 0.46, 0.35, and 0.30 indicated that all the respondents agreed that teacher educators should be adequately remunerated with a special

salary structure and motivated with credit facilities, allowances such as House, Car loans, including medical care allowances. This consideration will sustain their interest in the job and support their lives in general.

From the foregoing, there is the necessity to overhaul the entire system in the country in order to meet the educational demands of globalization otherwise such a nation becomes obsolete in structural and general output.

### Recommendations

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria should pay priority attention to the teacher education programme and generally review it.
2. It should also establish teacher training colleges in every state and supervised by the National Teacher Institute.
3. A special salary structure should be implemented for teachers' nationwide.
4. Adequate equipment and facilities should be provided in all teacher training institutions.
5. Allowances and credit facilities should be provided for teachers to enable them meet up in the areas of housing, health care and mobility.

### Conclusion

The teacher is the implementer of all policies and programmes of the educational system. He/she needs a

continuous up-date in his job in order to meet up with issuing challenges.

To achieve this he/she must be motivated and also be provided with the necessary equipment and facilities to function well.

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