

NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION: POLICY AGAINST POLICY, VISION AGAINST MISSION - IMPACT ON NIGERIA'S TEACHER EDUCATION

JOYCE OSIEGBU IGBINEDION

*Department of Educational Foundations,
Federal College of Education (T),
Asaba.*

Abstract

The focus of the paper is on the disparity between FRN (2004) stated visions for Teacher Education and the actual implementation of such statements. The paper examines three policy statements in FRN (2004) concerning Teacher Education which were partially implemented or overturned by subsequent policy statements. Evidence of the state of implementation of policy statements is drawn by comparing FRN (2004) policy statements with NCCE (2002) guidelines for Colleges of Education. The reality of the level of implementation was also observed from the resource situation in three (3) Colleges of Education in Delta State. Evidence revealed that in reality, FRN (2004) intents to produce high quality teachers for all levels of the nation's educational system; encourage the spirit of enquiry, creativity and make the teachers able to adapt to changing situations cannot be achieved with the present non-committal state of implementation of stated policies. The paper concludes that the falling quality of school graduates at all levels of education in Nigeria is sequel to lack of commitment to implementation of policies on Teacher Education. The paper makes recommendations on how the gap between stated policies and implementation can be bridged because as the teacher is, so the students are.

Keywords: Policy Implementation, Vision, Mission, Teacher Education.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) is a blue print for managing Nigeria's education sector. It was written in 1977 sequel to Nigeria's quest for functional and development-oriented system of education. Subsequently, further editions of the policy on education (NPE) emerged in 1981, 1998 and 2004. The 2004 edition has been expanded to include adjustments and innovations in the education sector from 2005 to 2012 while retaining the philosophy, objectives and goals of all the sub systems of the educational sector.

Since the inception of the new national policy on education, many challenges have arisen that are inhibiting the implementation of the policy statement, a situation which is seriously threatening the realization of stated educational goals. The challenges to the implementation of the policy on education are highlighted by Makinde (2005) as:

corruption, lack of foresight, taking national decisions by military fiat and inadequate funding. Bureaucracy in governance is also a challenge to policy implementation. In order to facilitate implementation and attainment of educational goals, the FRN (2004) set up other establishments as parastatals under the Federal Ministry of Education for each segment of the education system as shown:

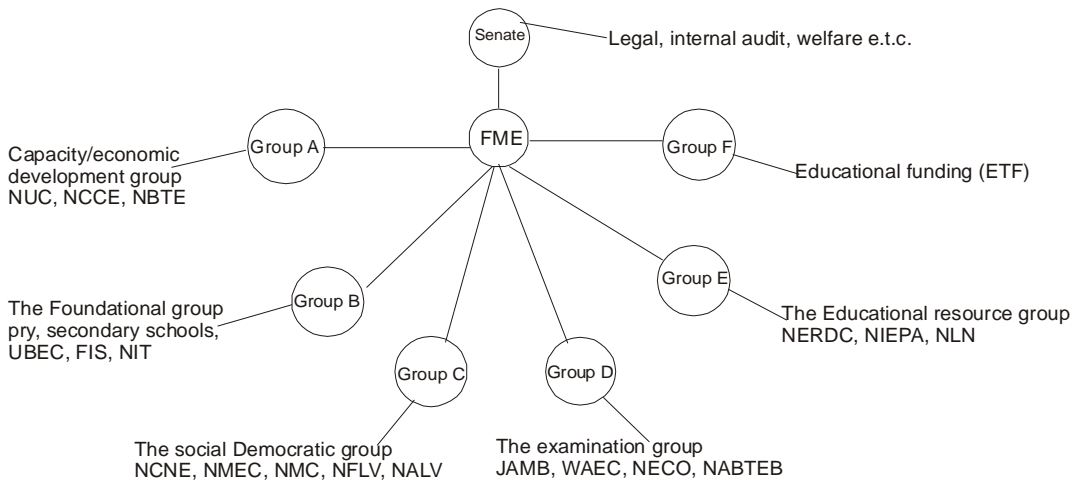


Figure 1: Parastatals under Federal Ministry of Education (FME). Source: FRN (2004)

The Full Meaning of the Abbreviations are Presented Below

- NUC - National Universities Commission
- NCCE - National Commission for College of Education
- NBTE - National Board for Technical Education
- UBEC - Universal Basic Education Commission
- FIS - Federal Inspectorate Service
- NTI - National Teachers' Institute
- NCNE - National Commission for Nomadic Education
- NMEC - National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education
- NMC - National Mathematical Centre
- NFLV - Nigerian French Language Village
- NALV - Nigeria Arabic Language Village
- JAMB - Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board
- WAEC - West African Examination Council
- NECO - National Examinations Council
- NABTEB - National Business and Technical Education Board
- NERDC - National Business and Technical Education Board
- NIEPA - National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration

NLN - National Literary of Nigeria

ETF - Education Trust Fund

These different bodies, initially established at different times in the nation's educational developmental process, were regrouped in 2006 (FRN, 2014) with a view to providing slimmer, streamlined and focused institution. The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), falls into group A in this later educational reform. With NCCE in group A are NUC and NBTE and they are charged with the general responsibility of enhancing management, transparency, productivity, capacity/economic development and supervision of higher or tertiary education. Specifically the NCCE is charged with the management, regulation and supervision of a total of "88 NCE-awarding institutions including eighty (80) Colleges of Education and the National Teachers' Institute which provides training for serving Grade II teachers to upgrade them to NCE status (FRN 2004:67). As the governing body for Colleges of Education, the NCCE is also to ensure conformity to minimum academic standards, monitor and evaluate academic programmes, the implementation of policies on teacher education in the Colleges of Education. The NCCE therefore, was aptly described in FRN (2004) as a focal point of the reform of the education sector whose mandate is very challenging because of the importance of teachers in the education system.

Whenever monitoring bodies are established, they are expected to produce a framework or policy strategies with which to accomplish their mandate. These could be described as sub policies which must tally with the vision and mission of the parent body which, in this case, are the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Federal Ministry of Education. The purpose of this paper is to examine some policy statements on teacher education in Nigeria as stated in FRN (2004), against the sub policy of NCCE (2002). The paper will specifically ascertain the extent to which the policies on teacher education have been implemented in three Colleges of Education namely; Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba; College Of Education, Agbor and College of Education, Warri all in Delta State. The paper will also highlight the impact of none or partial implementation of policy statements on teaching and learning in the Colleges of Education which has implications for quality education.

The problem of this paper is the consequences of non-implementation, partial or counter-productive implementation of educational policies. Makinde (2005) identified policy implementation as a major problem of developing countries. Igbo (2012) agreed with Makinde by positing that the call to re-examine the functionality of Nigeria's education system is a result of the inconsistencies and obvious ineffective implementation of educational policies. Ineffective implementation of policies result in frustration of educational plans, unproductive teaching and learning sessions, poor quality school graduates and eventual dislocation of educational goals. The paper,

therefore, wonders to what extent the educational policies in the Colleges of Education in Delta State have been implemented.

The paper will answer the following questions:

1. What are the NCCE (2002) strategies for accomplishing the FRN (2004) vision of producing high quality teachers for all levels of nation's educational system?
2. Have these strategies been successful?
3. What is the impact of the policy of Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) on teacher education in the Colleges of Education in Delta State from 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 academic sessions?
4. To what extent has the policy on equipping teachers with knowledge to adapt to changing situations been implemented? The innovation in the educational system is the ICT-based teaching and learning.
5. The library, according to FRN (2004:38) is the heart of the educational system. To what extent has the policy of developing the library to promote the spirit of enquiry been implemented?

It is envisaged that the findings and recommendations of this paper will be significant to educational planners and administrators as well as students.

The methodology employed for the research was the ex-post facto design, the instrument for data collection was the inventory checklist and calculations were done by use of percentages and ratios. The four Colleges of Education in Delta State were the population of the study out of which three samples were selected by purposive sampling technique namely: College of Education, Agbor; College of Education, (Technical), Asaba and College of Education, Warri. The checklists were filled by the respective heads of departments or their representatives.

Explanation of Concepts Policy Implementation

A policy is a guide which is drawn to achieve rational outcomes. It is a road map or a blue print for achieving intent. A policy statement is the same as a vision statement. Food and Agricultural Organization, (FAO) (2013) defined policy as a definite course or method of action selected by government, institutions or group of individuals from among alternatives and in the light of given conditions to guide and usually to determine present and future decisions. A policy is, thus, a decision which is designed to carry out a course of action.

Policy implementation as Makinde (2005) puts it, refers to the activities that are carried out to ensure that such intent or visions are translated to outcomes (mission). The intent (policy) is the vision and the outcome is the mission which translates to goals that are to be achieved if implementation is carried out effectively and efficiently. Vision against mission, therefore, implies that the intent has been or is being over-ruled

or set aside by the mission. It also means that unintended outcomes are being achieved due to defective implementation. The Business Dictionary (2014) distinguishes vision from mission by stating that a vision is the cause and the mission is the later effect. Vision pursues and mission accomplishes. When vision is against mission, it also implies that intents differ from outcomes.

Teacher Education

Teacher education is a form of organized learning experiences which equip its recipients with skills for the impartation of knowledge and influencing a change in behaviour in a learner or group of learners. Teacher education as defined in Maduewesi and Ezeoba (2010) is the set of events and activities which are intended to help would-be teachers acquire appropriate knowledge, skills, the right kind of attitude, habit and competencies needed to enable them enter the teaching profession and become resourceful, effective and efficient teachers. The minimum entry qualification for entry into the teaching profession in Nigeria is the Nigeria Certificate for Education (NCE) which is awarded, mostly, by the Colleges of Education. The goals of teacher education as stated in FRN (2004) shall be to:

- i. produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
- ii. encourage, further, the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- iii. help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and enhance their commitment to national goals;
- iv. provide teachers with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations; and
- v. enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession.

Policy Against Policy, Vision against Mission - Impact on Teacher Education

In pursuance of the stated goals or mission of teacher education FRN (2004) reiterated that no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers hence, teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development. The primary assignment of NCCE was to ensure the attainment of the goals of teacher education. The NCCE's strategy for achieving the first goal of teacher education was to boost the dwindling enrolment into the Colleges of Education by introducing a standardized pre-NCE curriculum "to make up for the abysmal applications into the Colleges of Education via JAMB". According to NCCE (2002), the Colleges had relied heavily on the pre-NCE mode of entry for enrolment into the Colleges of Education. The entry qualification into the Colleges of Education as stated by the NCCE (2002) is summarized thus: SSCE, NECO or GCE O'level with passes in five (5) subjects including English language, three (3) of which must be at credit level at the same sitting or four (4) credits at two sittings; TC II with credit or merit in three (3) subjects; TC II with at least, five (5) years post qualification experience with or without

the number of credits/merits in at least four subjects; successful candidate in the pre-NCE final examinations who, in addition, take and succeed in a selection examination organized by an accredited body. It is to be noted that these entry qualifications have been arranged in a descending order. In order words, those who are admitted through the pre-NCE mode have less than three (3) credits at a sitting or less than four (4) credits at two sittings.

The observation of Akindutire and Ekundayo (2012) that the present education system promotes the reservation of intellectually and financially deficient students for the teaching career is given credence by this strategy of NCCE (2002). In a study, Akinbode (2007) found that majority of the student teachers are not good materials for teacher education. Akinbode revealed that 34.25% or 411 out of 1200 students sampled came through the pre-NCE mode while 372 or 31.00% had three credits at a sitting. 789 or 65.75% came in through JAMB with scores, sometimes, as low as 100. The quality of these students cannot be compared with the six (6) credits and above in SSCE, NECO, GCE O'level at a sitting; and a JAMB score of 250 and above that is required for intending students of Medicine! Delta State Colleges of Education continued to draw heavily for enrolment into the Colleges through the pre-NCE mode of entry as shown in Table I up to 2007/2008 session:

Table I: Percentage of Entrance into the College of Education through the Pre-NCE Mode in 2007/2008 Academic session

Year	Name of Colleges	No of students' enrolment by direct entry mode	No of Pre-NCE mode of entry	% through pre-NCE mode
2007/2008	C.O.E, Agbor	1677	483	28.80
	C.O.E (T),	900	350	38.88
	Asaba	1000	500	50.00
	C.O.E, Warri			

Source: Calculated Field work 2013

The low entry qualification into the Colleges of Education negates the FRN (2004) quest for quality and efficient teachers for the nation which is the first goal of teacher education. It is not surprising that a provost of a College of Education, lamented that teacher trainees could neither read nor write (Akinbode, 2007).

Apart from the teacher trainee's illiteracy, majority of them cannot express themselves in oral English language which is the nation's official language. It is understandable, therefore, that Akinbode described teaching as the nation's most scorned profession. In 2013 in neighbouring Edo State, the State Governor, Comrade Adams Aliyu Oshiomhole, attempted to restore credibility to the education system by undertaking a check on the quality of primary school teachers. In the full glare of the

National Policy On Education: Policy Against - Policy, Vision Against Mission - Impact On Nigeria's Teacher Education-Joyce Osiegbu Igbinedion

state's television station, it was seen by the viewing public that some of the primary school teachers could not read. Teachers like that can neither be effective nor efficient. The primary school remains the foundation of the nation's education system and a house built on a whobbly foundation cannot stand the test of time.

The NCCE counter policy of substituting quality for quantity was succeeding in teacher education until the 2009/2010 academic session when there was a policy turn-around of replacing the Monotechnic, Polytechnic, College of Education Matriculation Examination (MPCME) with the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). The first UTME was conducted by Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in 2010 (Exametry, 2013). From 2009/2010 academic session, the enrolment by the pre-NCE mode and the general enrolment into the Colleges of Education began to dwindle. By 2012, the pre-NCE mode had nose-dived because many potential students gladly withdrew from school either to prepare for JAMB, retake their failed O'level examination in preparation for university education or to continue with their petty trading. Table 2 indicates the enrolment in the Colleges in Delta State for 2011/2012 academic session.

Table 2: Fresh Enrolment by Direct and Pre-NCE Mode

Year	Name of Colleges	Fresh enrolment	Pre-NCE mode	% of admission by pre-NCE mode
2011/2012	C.O.E, Agbor	630	19	3.16
	C.O.E (T), Asaba	570	60	10.52
	C.O.E, Warri	750	120	16.00

Source: Calculated Field work (2013)

Data in table 2 reveals that enrolment into the Colleges by direct and Pre-NCE mode reduced significantly when compared with the fresh enrolment figures of 2007/2008, 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Impact of UTME on Fresh Enrolment from 2009 - 2010

Year	COE, Agbor		COE (T), Asaba		COE, Warri	
	Direct mode	Pre-NCE	Direct mode	Pre-NCE	Direct mode	Pre-NCE
2008/2009	2454	422	711	75	1898	600
2009/2010	1987	145	780	260	2021	700
2009/2010	1846	70	1200	200	1953	800
2010/2011	1641	43	1005	150	1928	900
2011/2012	630	19	570	60	750	120

Source: Field work, 2013

Data on table 3 is an overview of the downturn in students’ enrolment from the academic sessions after the UTME. Table 3 is a confirmation of the study of Akinbode (2007) which revealed that majority of students enrolls into the Colleges of Education because no other school has offered them admission. The situation in the College of Education today, after the enforcement of the UTME in 2010, is that students use the college as a stepping stone and run off as soon as they are offered admission elsewhere. There is need, therefore, for policy makers to avoid hasty and myopic policy turn-around and summersaults that wipe away the gains of previous policies. The new UTME is now sounding a death knell to teacher education and unless urgent and adequate steps are taken to arrest the situation, the teacher colleges will soon be completely emptied of students.

Another FRN (2004) policy statement that deserves much attention is that on the College Libraries. The second mission of the new policy on education is that the spirit of enquiry will be encouraged through well developed libraries. The schools’ libraries need to be equipped to promote research because of the importance of research and development in education. The NCCE (2009) made strategic statements to enrich the College Libraries for the attainment of these goals. One of the requirements of the minimum standards, for example, is that the library should provide accommodation for, at least, 25% of its potential users. This implies that if there are 1000 potential users, the library should provide sitting space for, at least, 250 of such possible users. Moreover, the library should also provide 10,000 volumes of books for 500 students and 500 volumes of books should be added annually to the library collection. The state of implementation of this policy leaves much to be desired. The Colleges of Education in Delta State fall short of the NCCE minimum requirement for the establishment of libraries. The libraries are bereft of modern standard volumes of books in quality and quantity. The capacity of the school’s library can hardly accommodate 25% of the

students' population let alone 25% of all its potential users. Data in table 4 shows the size of the Colleges' libraries.

Table 4: Seating Capacity of Libraries in Colleges of Education

Year	College	Students' Population	Library Capacity	%
2011/2012	C.O.E, Agbor	2239	270	10.50
	C.O.E(T), Asaba	981	200	20.40
	C.O.E, Warri	1953	700	36.00

Source: Computed field work, 2013.

Data in table 4 reveals that the capacity of the Colleges' Libraries that should accommodate its users is far below the stated vision of the FRN (2004) and NCCE (2009). This is an indication of lack of will power or commitment on the part of policy implanters to work hard at fulfilling vision and mission statements. NCCE (2009) stipulates that 10% of the school's budget is to be allocated to the libraries but from the state of the libraries, it is doubtful whether this is being implemented. The present trend of recycling ideas in research work and poor quality text books that are produced today is a true reflection of the state of libraries in tertiary institutions.

One of the most recent developments in the education sector is the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for teaching and learning and for other processes in the educational system. The uses of the ICT in education include cyber students' registration, Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI), virtual libraries and JAMB's Computer Based Test (CBT). The Federal Government of Nigeria, in March 2001, set up the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). The vision of the NITDA is to make Nigeria an IT-capable country as well as use Information Technology (IT) as an engine for sustainable global competitiveness. The mission statement of the NITDA is to make Nigeria an IT capable country in Africa and a key player in the information society by 2005. 2005 has long come and gone, Bara, (2011) lamented that Nigeria has not made any headway in terms of implementing the objectives stated in the national policy on ICT. The FRN (2004) statement that the government shall provide facilities and necessary infrastructure for the promotion of ICT in education makes it imperative that stakeholders in the education venture should act quickly and provide the necessary facilities for teaching and learning with ICT equipment, especially the computer. Moreover, in May, 2013, the JAMB migrated from Pencil and Paper Test (PPT) to the Computer Based Test (CBT). The first JAMB CBT was taken on 18th May, 2013. Accordingly to the Sun Newspaper (2nd February, 2013), out of the 1.1m candidates that registered for JAMB's UTME only 4,000 selected the CBT option despite JAMB's provision for 150,000 candidates. In 2013 and 2014 the

CBT will be optional but in 2015 it will be compulsory for all candidates who wish to write the UTME to use the CBT. Under normal circumstances, the preparation for the use of computer equipment for CBT should be in teacher training institutions. The simple reason is that when the teachers are taught computer operations, they will transfer such knowledge to the respective first and second cycle schools. The provision of NCCE (2002) for computer education is one (1) computer for a group of five (5) students that is 1:5. It is also stated by NCCE that every computer science student must be exposed to five hours of lecture per week. This strategy is faulted in the sense that a computer that is used by five students for five hours a week is already being subjected to stress. By simple multiplication, the students will jointly put in twenty-five (25) hours of learning on the same computer. This subjects the computer to strain and stress. Even though this standard is low, it is regrettable that the situation in the Computer Science Departments of the Colleges covered by this study is below the minimum requirements of the NCCE as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Ratio of Computer to Students Population

Year	Name of College	Students' Population	No. of Computers	Ratio
2011/2012	C.O.E, Agbor	600	50	1:12
	C.O.E (T), Asaba	438	15	1:29
	C.O.E, Warri	139	44	1:3

Source: Computed field work, 2013.

Data in table 5 reveals a computer: student's ratio of 1:12 and 1:29 in College of Education, Agbor and College of Education (T), Asaba. There is a wide gap between NCCE stipulated standard and the reality in these two colleges. However, College of Education, Warri is working in line with the NCCE requirements.

The impacts of non-implementation or partial implementation of policies on teacher education are highlighted below:

1. Continued poor quality of education in the country (Akintola, 2007);
2. Teachers that are poorly trained will produce poorly trained students;
3. Continued down-grading of the Colleges of Education which are already being regarded as glorified secondary schools;
4. Teaching, as a profession, will continue to be ridiculed and scorned by the public;
5. Continued desertion of the Colleges of Education by potential students and academic staff.
6. Unemployable graduates from teachers' training colleges.
7. Dislocation of educational goals and birth of more social vices created by the yawning gap between stated policy and practice.

Conclusion

The findings of the investigation of the extent of implementation of the policy on teacher education is that the pre-NCE mode of entry is not academically adequate, to produce the kind of efficient teachers Nigeria needs for all the levels of its educational system. Although the Colleges relied heavily in the pre-NCE mode for enrolment in previous years before the enforcement of the UTME in 2010, the poor quality of the teachers produced in the teachers' colleges is a cause for concern to all stakeholders. The level of implementation of the policy on the College libraries cannot inspire the spirit of enquiry. A library that accommodates only 10.6% of its students' population and lacks modern tools does not truly encourage research. Nigeria's vision of becoming an IT-capable country in Africa is yet unrealistic with a computer to students' ratio of 1:26 in the teachers' colleges. Urgent steps should, therefore, be taken to improve on the level of implementation of the ICT programmes in the Colleges or the JAMB's compulsory CBT by 2015 will also remain elusive. There is no overemphasizing the fact that unless Nigeria makes a concerted effort to re-organize teacher education by implementing stated policies, Nigeria's vision 20/20/20 will remain illusive and the teaching profession will remain repugnant to the nation's teeming youths. Moreover, the Colleges of Education may soon close down for lack of patronage. Nigeria's 21st century education system desires quantitative as well as qualitative teachers.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered for bridging the gap between policy and practice:

- i. Occasional evaluation should be carried out to check the uniformity and level of implementation of policies in schools, this is apart from the accreditation exercise
- ii. Education is an important instrument in the development of the nation. Policies on education should not be changed to score political points. Policies should be allowed to stand for, at least, ten (10) years before any amendment is allowed on their statements. This will checkmate policy summersaults that nullify the vision and mission of stated policies.
- iii. The parastatals under the Federal Ministry of Education that are established to effect policy implementation should be reduced. A Nigerian factor that has constituted a strong challenge to progress is the nation's peculiar character of duplicating posts in government offices. It is usual to hear, in government offices, rank titles like Director, Deputy Director, Assistant Deputy Director, Vice Deputy Director and similar nomenclatures. This questions the seriousness of the nation's civil service and impugns on the budgetary allocation for education.

- iv. Stakeholders should ensure that strategies adopted by governing bodies for institutions do not negate the vision and mission statements of the parent body.
- v. Appointees to boards of educational institutions should be drawn from the academia only. Members of the academia know and understand the educational sector better than business tycoons, traditional and political fathers. It is envisaged that these members of the academia will adopt appropriate strategies to meet the nation's aspiration of development and economic self-reliance through functional education.
- vi. Government should pay a monthly stipend to students in the Colleges of Education. This will attract first class brains into the profession instead of institutionalizing mediocrity by conscripting people of low academic minds into the teaching profession.

References

- Akindutire, I. O. & Ekundayo, H. T. (2012) "Teacher Education in democratic Nigeria: challenges and the way forward" in *Educational Research Journal* 3(5) pp 429 – 435 retrieved from <http://www.interestjournals.org/ER>
- Akinbode, O. (2007). Problem for teacher education for Primary School in Nigeria: beyond curriculum design and implementation in *Essays in education* 22 (fall) retrieved from http://www.usca.edu/essays/vol_222007/akinbode.pdf
- Bara, E. P. (2011): "Critical examination of Information and Communication Technology Policy" in *Library philosophy and practice* retrieved from www.webpage.uidaho.edu/baro.htm
- Business Dictionary (2014) retrieved from www.businessdictionary.com/definition
- Exametry (2013): The role of JAMB in Nigeria's education system retrieved from <http://www.examtry.com>
- FAO (2014). Corporate document repository. Retrieved from www.fao.org
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). National policy on education and major reforms and innovations recently introduced into the Nigeria educational system between 2005 and 2012. Abuja, *Federal Ministry of Education* pages 37, 38, 67, 88.
- FRN (2002) National Commission for Colleges of Education minimum standards for NCE teachers: *A Summary of Minimum Standards For NCE Teachers* 3rd ed p ii, Abuja.

National Policy On Education: Policy Against - Policy, Vision Against Mission - Impact On Nigeria's Teacher Education-Joyce Osiegbu Igbinedion

Igho, R. O. (2002). Functionality issues in the provision of education in Nigeria” in Okafor, P. C. (ed). *Knowledge review* 66 (2) University of Benin, Benin City.

Maduewesi, B. U. & Ezeoba, K. O. (2010) “Teacher education in Nigeria in the 21st century challenge and prospects” in Iloputaife, E. C. Maduewesi, B. U. and Igho, R. O. (eds) *Issues and challenges in Nigeria education in the 21st century*. Onitsha, West and Solomon Publishing Co. Ltd. Page 2.

Makinde, T (2005). Problems of policy implementation in developing nations: the Nigeria experience in *Journal of Social Science* 11(1) pages 63 - 69 retrieved from <http://www.krepublishers.com//02-journals/JSS>

NCCE (2009) Minimum standards for establishing libraries in Colleges of Education, Abuja.

The Sun Newspaper (2nd February, 2013) “JAMB and Computer Based UTME” retrieved from [sun.newsonline.com/...jamb and computer](http://sun.newsonline.com/...jamb%20and%20computer).