

IMPACT OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The issue of manpower development in Nigeria has been a long time problem. This paper therefore focused on the place of teacher education in manpower development. The analysis showed that teachers at all levels are seriously involved in the development of manpower in Nigeria. If therefore, the teacher who trains the personnel that are to develop a nation is to make the right contribution, the current training programmes should be revisited and reviewed. As at 1996, most teachers in the Southern states have TC II but in the Northern states, most are without TC II. In addition, no state had up to 50% of its primary school teachers with NCE or its equivalent qualification. This calls for concern and concerted efforts in correcting problems.

Introduction

For over 40 years after independence, Nigeria cannot boast of a stable political system, functional transportation, mechanized agricultural set up, constant power supply, an industrial economy and a dynamic educational system. Rather it is characterized with political instability unreliable transport and communication system, fluctuating power supply, a labour intensive agricultural system, low level of indigenous technology, an industrial sector that is dominated by agents of multi-national companies who export their profits and on educational system that is predominantly literary, bookish and dominated by ideologies and technologies of the developed world which in many cases do not suit Nigerian conditions. Although more developed than when it attained independence, Nigeria cannot claim a position among the developed nations of the world. This reason is not far from the problem of manpower development.

While Nigeria is slow at its pace of development, the developed countries continue to excel higher. If Nigeria is to find a place among the developed nation, the match in the twenty-first century demands that radical changes must be made towards manpower development. The pivot of such radical changes is the educational sector - the teacher education.

It is against thus background that this paper dwelt on how teacher education can be fashioned to enhance the development of manpower. In doing this, the concepts of development, the role-of education in manpower development and the contributions of teacher education in manpower development were discussed.

Education and Development

Education forms the bedrock of development. To be truly developed, a nation needs to be relevantly educated. Because of the tight relationship that exists between education and development, Mackinnon (1985) asserted, that education is development. Although these two terms are not synonymous, the fact is that education is the most important catalyst to socio-economic, political, scientific and technological development. Enoh (1996:362) for example, observed that education is the greatest stimulus for development because it trains the required manpower in which other developments depend. Any society whose citizens are less educated will be less developed.

The history of the development of any nation is tied with the history of its educational development. The industrial revolution in Europe, the technological advancement in Japan and America, are products of functional productive and educational systems. Thus it can be safely said that if education is rightfully placed in a nation development will follow. This is why societies worldwide are increasingly looking up to education to provide it with medical doctors, nurses, engineers, teachers, technologies, scientists, clergymen and other cream of people whose intelligence can be tapped to solve societal problems like poverty, hunger, unemployment, shelter, epidemics etc.

Education develops the individual and raises his productive capacity. In this way, he can make greater meaningful contribution both qualitatively and quantitatively to the development of his society. In the words of Zik in Enoh (199 6:362):

Education is for spiritual, social and mental emancipation. This means education is for rational and intellectual development. A rational individual is one who approaches matters with a concern and an ability to assess them by means of relevant reasoning, who understands the type of reasons that are relevant in various logically distinct areas, who possesses a certain distinct areas, who possesses a certain knowledge or information, as well as an ability to conceive of alternative ways of looking at things that which is familiar, and a questioning attitude.

An individual, who is rationally and intellectually developed, uses such skills to contribute to the development of his country. Essentially, educational development has direct bearing with the various components of development like science, and technology, economic growth, living standards, employment, agriculture, health, and individual capacity/freedom

It must however be noted that education is not given by nobody. It requires an individual called the teacher to plan and deliver the instructions in such a way that set objectives can be achieved and skills are largely acquired through the teacher training.

Education and Manpower Development

In our institutions of learning today, many teachers are either under - qualified or untrained (Nkom, 1996) At primary school level, many teachers whether in government or private schools are under - qualified and untrained when viewed against the provisions of the National Policy on Education (NPE 1981). The policy recognized that at the time of its inception many primary school teachers were either untrained or below Grade II certificate, and therefore promised that all such teachers would be assisted to acquire Grade II certificate shortly through in-service courses. Those who failed to do so were to be systematically eliminated. This policy further asserted that once the six - year secondary school had started NCE would be the minimum entry qualification to teach in primary school. In pursuance of this, 1998 was fixed as the effective date. Nkom (1996) cited that while most teachers in the Southern states have TC II, in the northern states, most are without TC II, as shown bellow.

Table 1: Staff Without TC II in States Rank Ordered in Percentages

¹ Rank	State	Percentage	Rank	State	Percentage
1.	Imo	0.03	17	Kogi	28.9
2.	Anambra	1.1	18	Kaduna	31.0
3.	Ogun	1.3	19	Adamawa	33.0
4.	Oyo	1.8	20	Plateau	34.0
5.	Rivers	2.1	21	Abuja	38.1
6.	Delta	2.6	22	Taraba	41.2
7.	Edo	3.0	23	Bauchi	46.0
8.	Ondo	3.6	24	Niger	46.7
9.	Lagos	3.8	25	Kano	56.6
10.	Osun	4.8	26	Borno	58.6
11.	Abia	5.6	27	Jigawa	59.2
12.	Akwa Ibom	9.3	28	Kebbi	59.5
13.	Benue	10.3	29	Yobe	68.9
14.	Enugu	14.7	30	Sokoto	72.2
15.	Cross rivers	20.3	31	Katsina	76.3
16.	Kwara	23.1			

Source: Nkom (1996:5) Staffing in Primary Schools in Nigeria.

In the case of the NCE minimum qualification by 1998, Nkom further noted that the chances of meeting the dateline is very slim.

Staff Without TCII in States Rank Ordered in Percentages

Rank	State	Percentage	Rank	State	Percentage
1.	Anambra	48.3	17	Taraba	16.3
2.	Ogun	35.0	18	Kaduna	15.1
3.	Ondo	35.0	19	Abuja	13.0
4.	Imo	32.3	20	Bauchi	12.0
5.	Kwara	31.0	21	Niger	11.2
6.	Benue	30.0	22	Cross river	11.1
7.	Oyo	29.0	23	Kebbi	11.0
8.	Kogi	26.5	24	Plateau	11.0
9.	Delta	22.9	25	Borno	10.0
10.	Abia	22.2	26	Akwa Ibom	9.3
11.	Enugu	22.1	27	Yobe	8.1
12.	Edo	22.0	28	Kano	7.2
13.	Osun	20.5	29	Sokoto	6.4
14.	Lagos	18.5	30	Jigawa	5.2
15.	Rivers	18.4	31	Katsina	3.9
16.	Adamawa	17.0			

As shown in the table above by 1996, no state had up to 50% of its Primary School Teachers with NCE or equivalent qualification. None of the northern states had up to 20% of its staff with NCE. Certainly no magic could have been made to make many of such teachers to acquire TCII and NCE in just two years (1996 - 1998).

The situation in the private nursery and primary school does not seem better. Many of such schools, in their bid to lower cost produce secondary school leavers who have little or no idea of how to teach.

At the secondary school level, the problem of teachers in most cases is that of teaching subjects one did not specialize in, because of the shortage of teachers in some fields, especially science, technological and vocational subjects. Teachers are made to teach subjects they did not specialize in, and would naturally lack the basic skills and adequate knowledge for teaching them.

This is particularly so when one takes into consideration the fact that many of such teachers are only subject specialists and not trained teachers. For example, many people who read business administration are posted to teach either mathematics or economics, those who read sociology are sent to teach social studies, while physics or chemistry teachers are asked to teach mathematics etc. The situation in the tertiary institution is even worse because besides the College of Education and the Faculties of Education, a bulk of staff in the tertiary institution are simply subject specialists. They do not possess teaching qualifications that expose them to educational foundation courses.

It is known that teachers are the producers of manpower in developed and developing societies. If there is a desire to develop a nation the subject of manpower development must not be swept under the carpet. This is where teacher education comes into play in educational sector and must be adequately financed and equipped for the nation's manpower development. The issue of trained teachers must be seriously looked into and in-service training must also be encouraged. This is to sharpen our *ability* and *capacity* in manpower production. As at today the nation lacks qualified or trained hands to man our various sectors of production. Teacher education should be given priority in terms of provision of adequate infrastructure at all levels. In so doing the tasks of manpower development will be made easier. It is therefore pertinent to note that, the place of teacher education in manpower development cannot be overemphasized because teacher education plays a vital role in manpower development. A vibrant teacher educational system enhances manpower development at all levels.

Facing the Challenges of Manpower Development

For the teacher education to rise up to the challenges of manpower development, some radical strategies will need to be undertaken. These include:

1. That as provided by the National Policy on Education, teaching should be professionalised in Nigeria as a matter of urgency. Thus implying that no one who is not professionally trained for the job will not be allowed to teach. This will also imply enforcing the minimum entry qualification and the establishment and enforcement of ethical standards.
2. Teacher - education programmes should be dynamic such that they can respond quickly to new challenges. In line with this-in service programmes that would help to update teachers knowledge should be truly put in place and not just in principle.
3. The Federal government should put in place policies that will enhance the development of manpower in every sector of our economy. This will bring about the much-needed development we have so much desired.
4. Training and re-training should be mandatory. This will ensure proper handling of equipment and infrastructure.
5. Incentives in form of financial or material reward and better conditions of service should be given to deserving staff members in any given place of work.

Conclusion

The development of manpower in any nation is tied to its educational system. The teacher is the main factor that makes the plan work. It is therefore important to prepare him adequately and make him fit for the job. By this means he will effectively prepare the personnel required for development.

Recommendations

The following recommendations if followed will go a long way to remedy the situation.

1. Enhanced and separate salary scale should be put in place for teachers at all levels.
2. Teacher education should be given serious attention in the area of manpower training by all stakeholders.
3. Additional allowances and timely payment of salaries should be given to the teachers at all levels.
4. All teaching staff in primary, secondary, colleges of education without teaching qualification should be given deadline to acquire teaching qualification or quit the profession.
5. There should be constant and consistent training and re-training of teachers at all levels. This could be done through workshops and seminars.

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