

REPOSITIONING THE TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION THROUGH EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract

This paper examines teacher education in Nigeria and its roles and objectives in enhancing qualitative education. It also assesses educational technology and its relevance to teaching learning as a means of repositioning teacher education. The problems of education and the roles of teachers in Colleges of education were also considered. The paper further examines the professional and social roles of the teacher and prefers some suggestions to enable educational planners reposition teacher education in Nigeria.

Introduction

Education is the pivot on which national development revolves. It is the springboard for socio-political, economic and cultural development that enhances the production of skilled man power for national development. It is one thing to be knowledgeable in a particular discipline, another to impart the same knowledge to others. Here comes the importance of teachers being adequately trained to pursue and achieve the desired national objectives. The higher demand for education, partly due to population increase and partly due to the need to accumulate both basic and specialized knowledge to enable one live a reasonable life in the society, has increased considerably at all levels of our educational system. Added to this, the socio-cultural and physical survival of the society compete with the survival of the individual freedom and initiative. Individual freedom and survival is threatened by technological and automation revolution which render one obsolete. The only logical solution is for the individual to keep on learning and unlearning.

In view of the position of the trained teacher as the king-pin of quality education, the above poses great challenges for him/her to carter for this growing population. The national policy on education states that no education system can rise above the quality of the teacher (NPE 2004). Adeshina (1981) in his contribution posited that the quality of education in any country depends to a large extent, on the quality of the teacher, so the teaching profession should be given the attention and priority it deserves for effective implementation. Sequel to the above, this paper seeks to assess teacher education and how possible it can be repositioned in order to achieve optimum result for national development. The paper further evaluates the role of educational technology in effective teaching learning process. It finally examines the problems of training a teacher and proffer possible remedies.

Teacher Education

Teacher Education refers to the type of training/education given to would-be teachers to enable them impart knowledge effectively in a typical classroom situation. Teacher education in Nigeria and indeed other parts of the world is structured to equip teachers adequately with knowledge and skills for effective performance of their duties. Principles of education and methodology of instruction that are viable in Nigeria schools are intended to equip the prospective teacher with methods and strategies of effective teaching. One of the objectives of Nigeria certificate in education [NCE] programme is that at the end of the programme students should be able to select and effectively used appropriate teaching media, methods and strategies for maximum learner achievement (Eya Pand Igbokwe F.N 200).

Every educational system in the world requires highly skilled teaching personnel for its sustenance. Teachers are therefore, regarded as the most vital instrument to achieve educational goals. This is because every educational development depends on the level of mastery of the subject matter, capability to use various media employed as well as the efficient delivery ability of the facilitators. National policy on education [NPE 2004] sums it up that "teachers education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all our educational plans because no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers (NPE, 2004).

Objectives of Teacher Education

The National Policy on Education (NPE200:P39) states that the purpose of teacher education should be:

- I. To provide highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teacher at all levels of our education system.
- II. To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.

- III. To help teachers to fit into the life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national goals.
- IV. To provide teacher with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situations.
- V. To enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

The document went further to provide strategies for its accomplishment which include;

- a) The professional training of all the teachers in educational institutions.
- b) The structure of teacher education programme to equip teachers for effective performance of their duties.

The required training should be given by the following institutions;

- i. Colleges of Education
- ii. Faculties of Education in Nigeria Universities
- iii. Institute of Education
- iv. National Teachers institute
- v. School of Education in the Polytechnic etc Educational Technology

According to the Associate ship certificate in education series [ACES 1985] technology is a systematic integrated process for analyzing problems, implementing, managing, controlling and evaluating solution to the problems This therefore portray technology as a systematic application of scientific or other organized knowledge to practical tasks. When these are directed to solve educational problems, it is known as educational technology [ACES 1985]. Educational technology therefore means all educational resources (including research, information on human learning and communication principles) and planning strategies (including identification of educational needs, identification of resources, procedure, analyses, assessment, and evaluation) to solve educational problems or improvement of educational quality. (Barde A I, Mohammed R J, Mustapha F E, Ezugwu K 2003). The Association for Educational Communication and Technology (AECT 1979) define technology as complex integrated process involving people, procedure, ideas, devices, and organization for analyzing problems and devising, implementing, evaluating and managing solutions to those problems involved in all aspects. From the foregoing, therefore, it can be adduced that educational technology is an integrated and systematic method of designing, planning, implementing and evaluating the total process of learning and teaching in terms of specific objectives, research information on human learning and process of communication.

Role of Educational Technology in Teaching Learning Process

Communication gap in the classroom situation as a result of ineffective use of instructional media has been identified as a task before most teachers and an area often neglected by most institutions that prepare teachers. Through the introduction and effective use of instructional recourses, educational technology has advanced solutions to most of these problems of education. The problem calls for a change in approaches, techniques, materials, facilities, administration, resources and system that will provide opportunities for such meaningful interactions among the various elements of education that will resolve the difficulties Adewoyin (1991) as cited in Barde et al [2003]. Educational policy makers acknowledged that educational technology can solve educational problems when in 1977, the National Policy on education [NPE] laid emphasis on the role of educational technology under educational services. The objectives of education services include;

- (a) The development and assessment of educational programmes from time to time, as well as improving on them where and when necessary
- (b) To provide the necessary tools, such as innovative materials to enable teachers function competently and children [students] to enjoy learning.

The blue print and white paper on it proposed that aspects of educational technology to be taught as courses in teacher educational programme [NPE, 1998].

Many research findings have shown that educational technology contributes to pupils understanding factual learning, performance of learning habits and skills, motivation and interest etc. The impact of educational technology in teaching learning process is acknowledged by the fact that learning itself is a complete affair and teaching a tender venture. Before the advent of printing press, direct purposeful experience, supported by verbalization were the chief methods of teaching and learning, so exposing the learner to the instrument of learning [media] will go a long way in concretizing the concept being taught.

The Problems of Education in Nigeria

Education in Nigeria has been saddled with many problems some of which the Institute of Education

University of Ibadan listed in their material production project, 'Associateship Certificate in Education (ACE) series,' they include;

- i. Shortage of adequately qualified teachers at all levels
- ii. Inadequate training of teachers
- iii. Poor and inadequate funding
- iv. Inadequate equipment, materials and laboratories
- v. Insufficient school facilities
- vi. Bookish and examination - orientated curriculum
- vii. Out dated methodology based on primitive educational tool technology of chalk and chalkboard and books.
- viii. Learning by rote-ACES production project (1985)

Supporting the above argument, Balogun [1982] further summarized the problems into four as follows;

- (a) Increase in population to be educated
- (b) The need for specialization
- (c) The survival of the society and
- (d) Poor funding.

The resultant effect of these problems are poor learning achievements of pupils as indicated by the examination measurement; and high rate of drop - outs. Educational technology is centred on system approach to solve any educational problem at any given time. It involves identification of education problems, needs, resources, procedures, and continues evaluation. It is a systematic way of designing, executing and evaluating the total process of learning and teaching in terms of specific objectives.

To accomplish the task of solving educational problem, educational technology designs and uses various media for effective teaching-learning activities.

The Roles of Media in Teaching-learning Process

The use of media, as part of the process in Educational Technology cannot be over emphasized. It has the following qualities;

- i. Media increase the rate of learning and, at the same time, allows the teacher to use more time on other gainful activities.
- ii. It encourages involvement of teachers in curriculum design and development; effective lesson planning from objective determination and evaluation. If the aim of education is behavioural change, lesson or curriculum development system makes it easier to achieve the desired change. Here learners are involved in the process of learning. This will enhance the achievement of behavioural objective and gives instruction a more scientific base.
- iii. Individualizing education as alternative paths and variety of resources are being made available. Learning can therefore take place at learner's choice, iv. Learning becomes real and immediate media utilization emphasizes understanding and practical education, and discourages rote learning.
- v. Media makes access to education more equal to learners. Equipment could be moved to any place over any distance. Provision of various media helps the child to discover himself and his proper ability.

The Roles of Teachers in Colleges of Education

Educationalists have tried to solve education problems by grouping children of similar abilities together, but teachers who have the skill of successfully teaching these kids of classes are few. paying attention to the progress of individual child is not an easy task; however, the skillful and well trained teacher can meet the needs of individual pupils which otherwise could never be met. UPE teacher Education Project TEP (1977).

Teachers in colleges of education are vested with responsibility of training the student teacher to meet the requirement of the minimum standards of "NCCE for Nigeria certificate on education NCE. Denga [2001] categorises the role of teachers into two main groups viz;

(A) Professional Roles of the Teacher are Stated Below

- i. Teaching; Depending on the skill acquired
 - ii. Planning; He has to plan and target the objective
 - iii. Role as manager; He establishes and maintains classroom enrolment for effective teaching and learning
 - iv. Counseling; He finds the problem of the learner and advises them on how best to go about their academic and non-academic problem.
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- v. Discipline; he shows leadership style by making the learner keep to norms and values of the society
 - v. Evaluation; He assesses the task given to the pupils, their project and other related tasks.
 - vii. Research; through research, conferences, workshops etc to perfect knowledge and skills.

(B) Social Roles of the Teacher

- i. As a mediator of culture, the teacher propagates the cultural heritage for the society, its tradition and values etc.
- ii. As a liaison officer, a teacher serves as the link between the school and society [Denga 2002 p.30-39]. With these responsibilities, the teachers in training must be adequately equipped to face the challenges ahead.

This can be achieved by involving various Educational media in the training of teachers Educational Technology should be given prominence in colleges of Education in Nigeria. The study of Edu 212- Educational Technology and Edu 213 - Micro-Technology should be made to spread throughout the 3-year NCE programme. The placement of the two courses in the same [Ist] semester do not give the student-teacher enough opportunity to be adequately imbibed with the use of media and practical teaching in order to make teaching learning activities an interesting, concrete and real experience.

Suggestions on How Educational Technology can be Used to Reposition Teacher Education in Nigeria

Considering the responsibilities reposed on teachers in the society, the teacher in training must be adequately equipped to face the challenges ahead. This will go a long way to reposition Teacher education in Nigeria with the aid of Educational Technology. This can be achieved by; i. Spreading **EDU 212**, Introduction to Educational Technology and **EDU 213** Microteaching theory and practice which are presently offered at 200 level across the 3-year NCE, programme. This will give the student teacher enough opportunity to learn, digest and be adequately equipped for the use of different instructional media for effective teaching learning process. ii. Educational planners should base their plan on making education more interesting, concrete, real, and permanent by introducing the use of media at every level of teaching-learning encounter.

- iii. Since the world has become a global village through the use of information technology, every college of education should be made to ensure that teachers in training are adequately trained to meet the requirement of the changing world.
- iv. All centres for Educational Technology in tertiary Institutions should be made to be in charge of computer centres in such institutions because of the relevance of computer assisted instructions as a medium of teaching and learning.
- v. All educational technology centres in colleges of education in Nigeria should be adequately equipped with multi-media for effective teacher education.

Conclusion

More attention should be paid to how the teacher delivers his lesson, how the learner enjoys and concentrates on what is being taught. Methodology and the media used should be improved for effective teacher education.

Teachers have great roles to play and technology highly significant in teaching learning process. This therefore shows that teachers who must teach other teachers must be qualified. He must know how to use

different media to impart knowledge. [EDU 212 & EDU 213] should be made to spread from NCE 100, NCE 200 and NCE 300. It is only in this way teacher Education can be at advantage to reposition education in Nigeria for the better.

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