
The Need to Regenerate Teachers through In-service Training for National Development: The Why and How Paradigm

By

SOOTER TOMBOWUA

*Department of Early Childhood Care and Education,
College of Education,
Katsina-Ala.*

And

TERKIMBI MANASSEH HEMEN

*Department of Educational Foundation and Management,
College of Education,
Katsina-Ala.*

Abstract

The fact still remains that the teacher holds the key that would open the doors to highly scientific, technological, industrial and globalized world where productivity and self-reliance as well as national development will be achieved. This paper examines the teacher's preparedness to face challenges in terms of knowledge and skills acquisition. The paper also identifies some problems militating against the teacher's continued growth on the job, thus rendering him unprepared to face challenges. It also recommended among others that information generation, processing, storage and technology for academic and research purposes should be intensified in equipping teachings with necessary skills and knowledge. The paper concludes that in-service education is vital in achieving sustainable development.

As the world is undergoing rapid social, political and economic changes, there is the urgency for manpower that is dependable and diligent and which can inspire the young citizens and prepare them for life in the ever changing world. Education is believed to be the only instrument for this preparation in the changing world. Perhaps this is why Bosah (2005), posited that the driving force behind development or improvement in living conditions in all nations of the world and in all fields of human endeavour has been traced to education at the centre of which is the teacher. It is only

Journal of Resourcefulness and Distinction, Volume 5 No. 1, April, 2013

Sooter Tombowua and Terkimbi Manasseh Hemen

the teacher that fosters the worth, development and the interaction of persons and ideas to make them live a worthy life.

Considering the enormous responsibility of teachers especially in formal education, it is imperative that we examine the preparedness of the Nigerian teacher to face the challenges of changing needs and new dimension in knowledge acquisition. Since there has been an assumed progressive in scientific and technological development world over, the teacher has always had the need to catch up with new changes through in service education.

In Nigeria, Opinion have been expressed concerning in-service training needs for teachers. The most recent evidence available is the UNICEF/UNESCO survey according to Ali (2011) which discovered that fewer than 20% of a sample drawn from six geo-political states had participated in any form of training. The survey also indicates a lack of policy on professional development. The report maintained that professional development provision was absent in more than 50% of States and Local Government Educational Authorities (LGEA) development plans.

It is in this regard that the Education Tax Fund (ETF) boast in a recent publication that, since 2008, 4157 Lectures from public Universities, polytechnics and Colleges of Education have been sponsored for Masters, and PhD course out of which 1, 109 are studying overseas (Ali,2011). These are efforts to meet the In-service training needs of teachers. There remains a lot more to be done in the regard.

It is agreed that, there is need for in-service training, there is also the need for Nigerian teachers to be recognized and have new improved” pay package. However, the fear that the Nigerian teacher is yet to appropriately appreciate how enormous the task of teaching learners is, particularly in tackling poverty, becoming self-reliant and contributing to Nation building. We hope to highlight the enormity of this task and suggest ways of coping with the times.

The Nigerian Teacher

In its simplest form and to a layman, a teacher is anybody who can handle chalk, talk to the learners in an originated classroom situation and who can also transcribe his speech in a note form on the chalk board for learners to copy; viewed against this background, anybody could be a teacher. Within the context of the contemporary Nigerian society, the nomenclature of the teacher is varied depending level of operation. Thus at the primary school level, he may simply be called “teacher.” At the secondary school level he may be addressed as “tutor” and the tertiary level, he is referred to as “lecturer” or “university Don.” Despite the difference in nomenclature, the duties performed by this kind of persons are basically similar if not the same (Ada, 2002). Therefore, a “teacher” is any person who has received some professional

The Need to Regenerate Teachers Through In-Service Training for National Development: the Why and How Paradigm

training in a prescribed teacher training institution and who teachers at any educational setting by which means he/she earns a living.

In-service Education

Ortese and Odey (2002) define in-service education as “any structured educational experience undergone by a teacher in service.” According to them, it could also be refer to as “experiences which are specifically designed to improve professional expertise and the competence of serving teachers.” It is noted that the world “improve” presumes a deficiency or a lapse in the performance of the teacher. This lapse or deficiency may have arisen from the teacher’s lack-luster attitude towards self improvement strategies like sustained interest in extensive reading or from the speed with which new discoveries and developments in his field are brought about.

Similarly, Ali, (2011) saw in-service education as the training the teacher received after he had attained a certain level of proficiency to carry out the profession of teaching. He further maintained that, under in-service education, a teacher has already started work and requires express permission to pursue training programme to improve his/her knowledge base.

In-service training is therefore, occasional by perceived needs of the serving teacher to improve his input capacity. At school level, workshops, conferences, exchange visits, demonstration lessons among others are geared towards the teacher’s capacity building. For instance recommendation is made a three-tier model of in-serving training where teacher at the university, state and local Government levels will benefit from seminars, workshops, conferences, etc to upgrade their working knowledge and skills. Apart from this, a number of Universities have mounted in-service programme in the faculties of education for manpower development of serving teachers. Such universities includes, university of calabar, Jos, Nusukka, and Benue state, University sandwich programme among others. (Ortese and Odey, 2002).The programme is supposed to improve the serving teacher’s skills in service delivery.

In-service Training of Teachers: The Why and How Paradigm

A number of factors have necessitated the in-service training of teachers in this century for the desired quality of education and national development Tarrant (1980:4) for instance, reported that Nigerian teachers required in-service education in the early 70s to be able to cope with the new curriculum which was introduced after series of national conferences on education. According to Farrant, Teachers Education programmes were stepping up in the wake of universal primary Education (UPE) to cater for the growing number of children enrolled. The National policy on Education (NPE) was also a major fall out of these conferences. The policy document recognized the need for the continuing education of the teacher and thus spelt out specific measures

Sooter Tombowua and Terkimbi Manasseh Hemen

in 'section 8 (teacher education). According to the policy (FRN, 2004,) teacher education will be given greater emphasis in all our educational planning because no education can rise above the quality of its teachers. The policy further stated that Government will give greater emphasis on the job and ensuring their growth and development through teachers' upgrading schemes. This policy is based on the fact that government realizes the inevitability of the change in methodology and in the curriculum. The teacher, according to the document will always have areas of inadequacy no matter how efficient his in-service training had been. The document further pronounces the establishment of a National teachers' institute in Kaduna, Colleges of Education, and institutes of Education among others to provide regular in-service training for serving teachers.

Moreover, the demands of the education industry have led to the employment of untrained teachers. It is on record in Nigeria that many who teach do so because they find no other jobs (Ortese and Odey, 2002). They are not only untrained for the job, but are also psychologically unprepared to bear the low status position of the profession they mistakenly find themselves in. Such teachers would gain from on-the-job training to reduce the number of untrained teachers in the service and change their attitudes towards the job and thus improve the fallen standard.

In-service education is crucial to Teacher Education that it is ensured in section 8 of the NPE (2004). According to the policy statement, government will give greater emphasis to in-service education by financing teachers' upgrading schemes, and training teachers on the job. Specifically, section 8:74-75, (P.34.) stated that;

“Teacher education will continue to take cognize of changes in methodology and in the curriculum. Teachers will be regularly exposed to innovation in their profession. In-service training will be developed as an integral part of continuing teachers education and shall also take care of all inadequacies”.

The socio-economic and political situation in Nigeria has contributed in rendering the Nigeria teacher unprepared to face the challenges of this century. Self interests have eaten so deep into the fabric of Nigerian society that employees channel their energies and talents towards self aggrandizement rather than collective goals. Situation like these require re-orientation for attitudinal change. For instance, it is no longer news that school teachers have to “make ends meet” by spending half of the school period selling virtually everything to their pupils and colleagues. After school hours, they compete with their pupils or pupils' parents hawking in the streets or doing some other business

One of the greatest worries of today's Nigeria is the so called fallen standard of education. Parents, government and educationists have pointed accusing fingers at lack

The Need to Regenerate Teachers Through In-Service Training for National Development: the Why and How Paradigm

of implementing policies, language of instruction, over-population in our classroom, lack of and poor quality teachers among others (Ali, 2011).

The introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in the year 2000 has prompted greater challenges for the teacher. There is need to educate teachers on the demands and needs of the UBE programme to enhance its proper implementation in schools and as well as content with the numerous challenges posed by the programme. Workshops, seminars, conferences are, therefore needed to be mounted for teachers on UBE.

The introduction of information and communication technologies as tools and medium of teaching and learning requires teachers to undergo fresh training in the use of such devices as computers, internet, services, on-line services, CD ROM, data base in education (Adama and Bell 2002, Osofian 2002). These are the technologies used for continuous assessment, data processing, research, information gathering and distance learning. Teachers knowledge of this is now a must. In-service training is a viable approach to acquiring these skills of education, and for survival in the real world. Such skills range from creativity, problem solving, learning how to learn, among others. However, not all teachers can impart such skills to learners. In-service training provides the opportunity to train teachers on how to empower learners with these skills of tackling poverty, becoming self-reliance and achieving nation building.

Teacher Education programmes at all levels fall far below expectations. Pre-service training is not enough to launch the teacher into the challenges of today's world. Ezewu has this to say:

“Teacher Education which is now inadequate cannot serve the needs of Nigerian educational system in the year 2000... there is an envisaged unprecedented rate of social, economic, political and technological changes in the 21st century. These changes will likely introduce new problem areas requiring new knowledge and skills to deal with them. We envisage knowledge explosion... this will need new breed of teachers to cope with the situation”.
(Ezewu, 1999:7-8).

It is therefore, obvious that there is need for in-service education for teachers. Thus, attempts have been made to provide opportunities for in-service education. These attempts, according to Ortese and Odey (2002) have fallen short of expectation due to education, some problem such as lack of funds, high cost of education socio-political instability which disrupts the school calendar, inability to keep pace with new discoveries and developments in various field of study, frequent policy changes, absence of private sector participation in in-service schemes for government teachers, corruption in institutions of learning among others. However, these trends need to be corrected.

Regenerating Teachers for National Development

The relevance and adequacy of the Nigerian teacher in the implementation of the curriculum of the Nigerian education system has been an issue of concern traced to the teacher education programmes. Even though there are other factors that may effect students performances. Ada (2002) linked the success of any education system to a “tree.” Teacher education is its roots, tertiary education is the stem, secondary, primary, special and technical education, administrators, students, among others are branches and leaves. If the root is harmed, the stem shrinks, the branches wither, the leaves fall, and the tree dies. There are evidence to show that the tree of our education system is harmed. There has been wide cry of falling standard of education.

In-service education is a viable approach to acquire knowledge and skills of education and survival in the real world. Such skills range from creativity, problem solving, learning how to learn, among others. This enables the teacher to improve on his/her skills and performance.

The Nigerian educational system of today requires massive orientation, redirection, rebirth and reconstruction. There is need to have a positive vision of Nigeria this time around, of course using teacher as a veritable tool. The government is making efforts towards educational reconstruction. However, reconstruction cannot be achieved if our education system fails to produce knowledgeable people. We need to have a disciplined society. There is need to cultivate the attitudes of self-reliance. Our neighbours should be treated with a sense of humanness, justice, equity and fair play. Creativity is essential. Thus optimal development of individual’s potentials is required. It is the teacher that is at the centre of all these processes and activities. Therefore, his educational development and training is of importance expertise and the competence of the serving teacher.

Conclusion

The need for in-service training for teachers cannot be overemphasized. This need has been made even greater in the face of rapid economic and technological advancement of this country. The destiny, survival and sustainability of any nation rest squarely on the shoulders of those whose duty it is to search for, collate, and impact knowledge from generation to generation.

It is, therefore, pertinent that Nigerian teachers be equipped to face these challenges. This is the only way to ensure their continued positive contribution in the growth and sustainability of a nation such as Nigeria.

Recommendations

In view of the emergent socio-political, economic and educational change and demands which may be more pronounced nowadays, as well as the level of

The Need to Regenerate Teachers Through In-Service Training for National Development: the Why and How Paradigm

unpreparedness of the Nigerian teachers to cope with such demands, the following recommendation are made towards providing in-service training to equip teachers with the necessary skills, knowledge approaches to enable learners to become more productive and be self-reliant in order to be able to build the Nigerian nation.

1. Teacher Education should also prepare teacher in other careers of educational service programmes such as continuous assessment, guidance and counseling.
2. In-service education should include information generation, processing, storage and technology for academic and research purposes. These includes computer education, research skill, use of internet and website.
3. Autonomous in-service re-training centres such as NTI should be established in all the states of the federation so as to draw such service closer to teachers.

References

- Adamu, S.H and Bello, A.S. (2002). Computer education in Nigeria schools: Problems and Prospects. *Nigeria Journal of Computer Literacy*. (1).96-102.
- Ali, A.I (2011). *An overview of in-service education for teachers (INSET) in Nigeria*. Being a paper presented at a train the Trainers (TOT) workshop on school-Based Teacher Development (SBTD) programme for Lectures of colleges of Education in Benue state. June 28 &29.
- Ada, N. (2002). The Nigerian Teacher: Issues and Challenges in the 21st Century. The Benue Valley; *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* .(1), 62-69.
- Bosah, H.O.N. (2005). Repositioning the teacher for improved effectiveness in Nigeria schools. In H.O.N. Bosah, C.O Obiagwu & K.A. Azubuike (eds) *Refocusing Nigerian Education System for the nascent democracy* Onitsha: Ofona Publishers.
- Edem, D.A (1987), *Introduction to educational administration in Nigeria*. Ibadan: spectrum.
- Ezewu, E.E.(1997) Teacher education in Nigeria in the year thousand. In B.G. Nworgu (Ed) perspectives on Teacher Education in Nigeria. *Association For Promoting Quality Education in Nigeria*, No 1-13.
- Farrant, J.S. (1980), *Principles and practice of education*. (New Ed), Hong Kong: Longman.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), *National Policy on Education*. (4th edition). Lagos, NERDC.

Sooter Tombowua and Terkimbi Manasseh Hemen

- Ortese, T.P. & Odey, J.G. (2002) Human Resource Development in education for National survival: the need for in-service Training for teachers in the 21st century. *Benue state journal of education*, 4 (2).20-29.
- Osofizan, A.O. (2002), Automating the 6-3-3-4 Educational system. In *Nigeria Journal of computer literacy*, 3 (1).79-87.