

PROMOTING TEACHER EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

The study examined promoting teacher education for national development in 21st century. It is a well-known fact to note that without teacher, there will be no nation. Therefore, the development of a nation lies on quality and efficient education. Education becomes a strong instrument for bringing up the youths or helping them to lead out of poverty or elevate their latent potentials towards national development. It was observed from the study that teachers are not well motivated even recognized by the government. Based on the observation, it was recommended that there must be proper funding of education by the three tiers of government in Nigeria and teachers must be well motivated.

Keywords: Teacher, Education, National development, Teacher education

Introduction

No teachers no future, a nation without teachers is a society without future direction. The role of teachers in a given country cannot be over-emphasized, because a teacher is a vessel for development. The kind of teacher a nation has, shows the kind of picture of the future of that nation. According to Oxford dictionary (1999), a teacher is a person whose duty is to impart knowledge or instruct someone on how to go about something; meaning that competent and intelligent people should be allowed into this profession because of the responsibilities attached to it. It is disheartening to see today that many incapable people make their ways into teaching after trying out other professions. They end up in disrupting the growth of the nation by bringing in negative attitude and influence to the wards in their care.

A teacher is comparable to a business man whose interest is profit maximization. All efforts of business people are geared towards making profit. Also, a teacher should be profit conscious. In the sense that he thinks of possible ways by which his pupils are going to profit by his encounter with them (Olaitan and Ogusiobo, 1981).

The Concept of Education

The concept of "Education" has been variously defined differently by authors or scholars based on their academic background. Salami (2015) defined education as the combination of the teachers, learner, and something considered to be desirable and purposeful to be learnt through methods or techniques in order to influence others' behaviours. Okafor (2014) viewed education

as a process of acculturation through which the individual is helped to attain the development of his potentialities and their maximum activation when necessary according to right reason and to achieve his perfect self-fulfillment. Also, Taiwo (1980) succinctly explained education as the combined efforts of the community to raise its economic, social and political standards of life. Nduka (1982) opined that it a process of cultural transmission and renewal. Perhaps, the most germane definition of education, especially in the light of the above topic, was given by Hegel (the philosopher) in which education was defined as the progressive perfection of humanity from simple, uncultivated, primitive state of mind through hard discipline of labour and toil to the consciousness and exercise of freedom.

In general terms, the word education can be said to be an English derivative of the Latin word “educare” which means to “bring up” “lead out” “raise” or “elevate”. Education, therefore, becomes a strong instrument for bringing up the youths or helping to lead out or elevate their latent potentials thereby making them useful members of the society. However, the above meanings, and definitions of education revealed a number of attributes of informal and non-informal education. They are the process of teaching an individual to be able to read, write, calculate and develop his skills to its fullest capacity. In addition, formal education usually takes place in a selected and controlled setting often referred to as a school.

Teacher Education in Nigeria

Education is an innovative activities involving a process of regeneration, promotion and continuation organized education as a whole. Teacher education, therefore refers to structure, institutions and process of which men and women are trained and prepared for the task of influencing learning in others. The theoretical and practical problem of all levels of education therefore centre on teacher education, while the system of teacher education to a greater extent determines the functional value and the characteristics of institutionalized procedure.

Teacher education, according to Salami (2009), is a set of activities, programme deliberately planned, organized and intended to prepare candidates for the occupation teaching. Ajaye (2006) was of the opinion that teacher education is a set of activities, programme and deliberately planned and organized to which teacher’s trainee are exposed to prepare them in their placement into the teaching profession.

Teacher education meant to help individual candidate to acquire the skills disposition, knowledge, habits, attitudes, values, norms and ethics that will prepare them for their professional practice as teacher. Furthermore, it is a process of professional socialization to acquire the requisite knowledge and also the sense of occupational norm typical of full qualified practitioner. The need for teacher education is aptly articulated by the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education. The goals of teacher education in Nigeria include the following:

- i. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education systems.
- ii. To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity the in teachers.
- iii. To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment of national goals.

- iv. To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country but in the world at large.
- v. To enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession.

National Development

Development in relation to nationhood represents the emergency of a nation from a primitive state through progressive advancement in sustained socio-political, economic growth and stability to improve standards of living of the citizenry. The economists perceived national development in economic terms by employing the concepts of Gross National Product, Gross Domestic Product and Net National Product respectively. The basic indices of national development are therefore seen in the sustained of the nation's geo-political, socio-economic growth and systems that guarantee improve standards of living for the citizens. In most civilized countries of the word, the most important instrument for achieving a sustainable national development is education. This view is also true of Nigeria as it has been documented in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 1981 Revised) thus the Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument per excellence for effective national development. It is pertinent to note that a nation's education is precipitated on her culture and the transmission of her cultural values.

The Role of Teacher Education in National Developments

The responsibility of teachers in the society is built on their acceptance of ambivalent roles within the education system. The teacher is a member of a society that plays a major role in the development of a country. The role of teachers towards national development can be seen below:

- i. **Instructional Role:** Teachers are transmitter of knowledge, value, norms, skills, which are supposed to be assimilated by the learners. In doing these, the teacher plans, motivates, coordinates, sensitizes and organizes human and material resources to achieve educational objectives.
- ii. **Administrative Role:** Teacher as an administrator is a disciplinarian, an evaluator, a resource person, a record keeper, a leader and manager. He plays a full role as a member of the school management team. The teacher by this administrative role is a manager of crisis. This also gives the teachers the executive authority in the school as policy implementer.
- iii. **Leadership Role:** The teacher has managerial and leadership responsibility in educational institutions. The manager must have understanding of the problems intrinsic to his professional role and its organization setting. As a leader, he must make decisions that are in the organization's interest.
- iv. **Academic Role:** Teacher works as a facilitator of learning using interactive classroom models to help students learn and apply concepts, solve problems and develop critical thought processes. He engages in instructional analysis and material development to facilitate learning.
- v. **Legislative Role:** The participation of the teacher in decision making, making laws and order that govern behaviour in schools and enforcing it, gives the teacher the legislative authority.

Education and National Development in 21st Century

Education is not just the ability to read and write, but it also enriches the mind, thus bringing about refinement of behaviours. It changes attitudes and improves professionalism. It is only through education one can contribute meaningfully to the development of one's country and activities in one's environment. It is only through education that diseases and hunger plaguing the country can be eradicated. According to Eke (1992), illiteracy are generally regarded as a region of instability, economic and political underdevelopment. Oni (1992) perceived that where adults in any given country are ill-informed, poor and diseases ridden, dependent and crippled by illiteracy, the future of the children in such places become precarious and susceptible to inheriting all the ills accompanying illiteracy.

Adieseshiah (1990) argued that according to UNESCO publication, Nigeria ranks fifth in the table of countries with the highest population of illiterates. As aptly put by Akinpelu (1990), if modernization of the economy and the democratization of the political culture are to be meaningful, sustainable literacy is the key. Thus, any meaningful efforts at reducing or elimination economic poverty and social underdevelopment must be at a proportional effort at eradicating illiteracy. Furthermore, peace, stability and economic development is closely tied to the mass literacy of the people. When the people are educated and developed, they would develop the indices of national development and modernization.

Conclusion

Sound teacher education training programmes and adequate teacher remuneration need to be taken into cognizance if education is to be responsive to the needs of national development. This is because there is no form of education that can rise above the quality of its teacher.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- i. There must be adequate provision of skilled personnel and resource materials in all levels of schools in Nigeria.
- ii. There must be stable political climate in educational policies in the country.
- iii. There must be uniformity in policy implementation across the states.
- iv. There must be proper funding of education by the three tiers of government in Nigeria. The teachers' salaries and allowances must be paid as at when due in order to motivate them to do more.

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