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Re-Modelling Teacher Education for Community Development in Nigeria: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Approach

By

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**ABSTRACT**

*The dynamic nature of education is what makes Teacher Education a changing one the world over. Teacher education is regarded as a tool for effective and successful educational system, and education process should be geared toward individual and community development. Therefore, this paper titled re-modelling teacher education for community development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is developed to consider the concept of teacher, teaching, teacher education and community development. It also considered the issues on teacher trainer (s), teacher/teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, teacher education and community development. It takes into cognizance the challenges of teacher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which includes among others inadequate funding, lack of motivation, globalization and lack of emphasis on the importance of involving community in the curriculum. Conclusion and suggestions were made on how best could teacher education be re-modelled to meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. This article will be of great relevant to teachers, policy makers, curriculum planners, designers and developers as well as the movers and shakers in the curriculum field.*

**Key words:** Teacher, Teacher Education, Community Development and 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**INTRODUCTION**

Development is about change for the betterment of individual or the society at large, and this cannot be possible without education. Education is a key to development, which is dynamic in nature. To comprehend change, one should go places, interact with different types of people, read or study widely, and generally look at life, events and ideas objectively. All these will not be possible without education. According to El-Yakub and Audi (2015), education is the most vital instrument for human development. They stressed that the political, social and economic development of any community depend on it. Therefore, for any community to meet its needs politically, economically and socially, it must apprehend education. However, the 21<sup>st</sup> century era is a period of scientific and technological development which is geared towards the development of all human endeavours most especially education. Umar and Gumel (2012) opined that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a force that has changed many aspects of the way we live. If one was to compare such fields as medicine, tourism, travel, business, law, banking, engineering and architecture, the impact of ICT across the past two or three decades has been enormous.

The world has now become a global village where everything is done at ease with the help of modern technology. In the past few years it seems that the trend in education has changed and continuously changing in the developed and developing world. Cuban, and Elliott cited in Steketee (2005), stressed that Even though a wide cross-section of society today has accepted Information and Communications Technology (ICT) as an entrenched characteristic of its culture, education has been slow to adopt it as an integral tool within the classroom. Despite this fact, the situation is changing from what it used to be; where learners are spoon feed, controlled by the teachers and few individuals are considered to be “experts”, to where learners take control of their learning and everybody in the community becomes part and parcel of decision making in the educational process. The 21<sup>st</sup> century education process is rapidly changing the world into a more modern and advanced one. Education as a tool for development is a dynamic process and the place of teacher education in making this process a successful and effective one cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, this paper intends to look at re-modelling teacher education for community development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### ***Community Development***

Education is an integral part of the community and sometimes serves as its measuring scale for its development. Community usually signifies a group of people living together in a particular area or location and interacting with each other on daily basis. This people may have the same culture, religion, race etc. which makes them follow a simple rule(s) for a successful living. Mahuta (2007) considered community as boundaries, location of certain people and social organization of people. This people share the same ideas, feelings and heritage. Community can be described as relationships that exist among the individuals and the activities in their locality that matters to them. Education is one of these activities which frequently occur in the community. In fact, no community will answer its name in this 21<sup>st</sup> century era without good/effective education system. Development on the other hand, is about growth and expansion of a particular thing in a positive way. Obuekwe and Ikechi (2016), opined that development can be considered as the improvement in the standard of living and quality of life of people in terms of their welfare, use and preservation of their environment which is geared towards the re-structuring and growth of their economy for better life. Development is a process of change, and change for the better. Ikpe in Obuekwe and Ikechi (2016), stressed that every development involve change, but not every change is developmental; and that for any change to be developmental, it must be directional, and should proceed towards a certain end which is an improvement on the early stage. Development is therefore a process whereby the direction of action and the movement or rather the action itself should clearly be noticed in concrete not in abstract.

### ***Teaching***

Teaching is a process of learning new things or building on the existing one. To teach means to give someone information, to give lesson particularly in school to show someone how to do something (Lawal, 2012). This means that teaching as a process involves leading, directing, facilitating and organizing activities by the teacher for students to harness all the learning opportunities. To teach means to impart knowledge to or instruct (someone) as to how to do

something; or cause (someone) to learn or understand something by example or experience (Smith, 2016). Teaching in this regard is about giving information or guiding someone to use all the necessary avenues to learn new ideas or to improve on the existing one. When someone instruct or transfer knowledge, it means that person is teaching.

However, teaching should prepare students to become great thinkers and be able to dominate their learning environment. Teaching should encompass both instruction in procedures, a process to guiding students to the information they will need, and challenging them to engage in thinking about concepts they construct in their minds. (Question Everything, 2014). All of these processes are needed in order to teach students to become fully functional thinkers.

### **Teacher**

For a very long time, a teacher is regarded as a person who transfers knowledge, norms and values of one generation to the other. Teacher is considered as the custodian of knowledge, a person who controls and get the technical know-how of the teaching and learning process. In contrast, a teacher of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is someone who sees passion in the job, who looks more of a professional than an intruder. Teachers are more like supporters and organizers of the teaching and learning process. The teacher is a guide, who shows his students the pathways of the various distinctions of learning. He decides which route to follow and is the one who make the route interesting and enriching to students (Umar, 2003). A teacher is regarded as the organizer, facilitator, driver, and the coordinator of all teaching and learning activities. In this new world order, a teacher is a person who have versatile knowledge of ICT and the modern trend of teaching and learning.

### **Teacher Education**

Teacher education is a great determinant of the success or other -wise of education system of many nations the world over. Teacher education according to Afe cited in Sunday (2012) refers to the policies and practices designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider society. Teacher education is concerned with the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and the wider community.

However, Wikipedia (2010), identified three stages of teacher education. These are initial teacher education, induction and Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The initial teacher education is the pre-service course given to a teacher trainee before entering the classroom as a fully responsible teacher. In Nigeria, the pre -service teacher training is provided by accredited teacher education institutions or units which are managed by different organizations/bodies. Induction is the training, support and assistance giving to newly employed teachers through mentoring and teacher development programmes organized within the school/cluster setting. Sunday (2012) opined that induction in most cases, is done by mentoring, peer network and input from educational experts. Continuing Profession Development (CPD) on the other hand involves the training of practicing teacher and is mostly referred to as in -service training. In -service training is usually the training that is given to teachers during the course of employment. In-service teacher education is seen as an effective means of augmenting the inadequacies of pre-service training.

Therefore, the process of in-service training aids the continuous updating of teachers' knowledge, skills and interests in their chosen field. In contrast, Kolawole (2016) clearly shows the demarcation between teacher education and teacher preparation, though he stressed that teacher preparation encompasses teacher education. He explained that teacher education on one hand is the education that would –be teacher receives in the process of becoming a teacher. Teacher preparation begins with who should become a teacher, how would such an individual be trained (prepared) in terms of content and procedure and how should that person be exposed to the continuous professional development programmes on a regular basis. Looking at the Kolawole opinion, it can be noticed that the former is to do with the pre –service training whereas the latter is about the induction and continuing professional development programmes.

### ***Teacher Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is the age of scientific and technological development which cut across all human endeavours. The place of technology in education is highly placed, and no education system can be a success without effective teacher education. Based on this premise, teacher education has been changing considering the global technological trend of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning is about information, communication, procedures and manipulations of such information and procedures to bring about result(s). It process should allow the learners to use materials in an activity –based situation under the guidance of the teacher. Teachers need to have an idea on how to use technology to support students learning. Teachers need the skills to construct and manage class-room activities efficiently, communicate well, use technology, and reflect on their practice to learn from and improve it continually (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Teacher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be geared towards preparation of teachers with the above mentioned skills and many more in order to apprehend the global trend in education.

Teacher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should prepare teachers who are ready to support the learners to learn at their own pace and in their own ways. For this to be achieved, technological gadgets should be an integral part of teacher education, and more so the technical know-how on the application of these technological equipment in teaching should be part of teacher education. Esu and Achibong (2014) explained that the need to restructure the education curricula, trained and retrained teachers for special purposes like the use of Information and Computer Technology (ICT) and other related technologies is of paramount importance. Teacher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should not only be concentrating on training teachers on how to use simple technological gadgets like computers, projector, magnetic tapes, magic boards and so forth which mostly involve theoretical aspect, but rather encourage and support teachers to manipulate these technological materials to build their career. In this regard, Agwu (2016) opined that teachers should be taught how to practically use technology to encourage inquiry, perspective taking and meaning making. Therefore, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century education teacher training should be more of practical application on the use of technology by teachers in teaching and learning process, rather than reading to pass examinations/ mastery of basic concepts. Teachers should be taught how to practically use specific computer skills to create power point presentations and excel/spreadsheets which will help in the computation of statistical data like students' results and bio –data.

However, in Nigeria teacher education has changed over the years. The history can be traced back to the missionary movements and the setting up of Phelps-stroke Commission in 1925 and Ashby Commission in 1959 (Fafunwa in Sunday, 2012). The Phelps-stroke report gave rise to Elementary Training Colleges for training Grade III for junior primary schools and Higher Elementary Training Colleges for training Grade II teachers for the senior primary school. The Ashby Commission report on the other hand led to the establishment of more Universities and the introduction of Bachelor's degree in education either as B.A. (Ed.), B.Sc. (Ed.) or B.ED. This report was modified and advanced teachers colleges were introduced which later changed to colleges of education for the purpose of producing grade I teachers with Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) to teach at the junior secondary schools. Furthermore, the Federal Government of Nigeria in May, 1993 via Act 31 established the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) as an agency of the Federal Ministry of Education which was mandated among others, to register and license qualified teachers to practice (Sunday, 2012). It can therefore be said that Nigeria has made efforts to established and modify its teacher education for the production of qualified teachers.

The institutions/organization concerned with teacher training are trying to cope with the current trend of technological age. Institutions / organizations concerned with teacher education in Nigeria includes among others; Colleges of Educations, Faculties of Education, Institute of Education, National Teachers Institute, Schools of Education in the Polytechnics, National Institute of Nigerian Languages, National Mathematical Center etc. These institutions are managed and controlled by different bodies in order to provide the community with qualified and competent teachers.

Moreover, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher education, the issue of teacher professional development programmes are of paramount importance. This is why Nigerian government at federal, state and even local level are collaborating with non-governmental agencies/international organizations to achieve this. Many teacher professional development programmes have been employed in Nigeria for the betterment of teaching and learning. Some of the most recent and popular ones includes; the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA), Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) and of course the recent and current Teacher Development Programme (TDP). All these programmes are aimed at improving teacher education for a better education system in Nigeria.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is the age of technology, and teaching and learning is pre dominantly affected by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT has become the order of the day in every classroom, school and the entire education system the world over. The role of the teacher is not to force the students learn, but rather to support, help and guide them learn. During lessons teachers should never mind if students haven't fully grasped the subject matter, as they are there to support them learn in their own ways. Schools in this era are shifting away from the conception of the lesson as a rigid, subject-specific unit of time that takes place within the four walls of a classroom, instead embracing the idea that a lesson can be many things (Hampson, M.; Patton, & Shanks, 2016). Therefore, teacher education should embrace modern technology in order to improve the quality of its teachers. As teaching and learning is diversified so too does the role of the teacher. What teachers need is someone, or something to help explain technology tools that can help them become better teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. To this end, there are several web-based

technology tools that teachers can use to increase their use of technology (Zimmer, 2010). These tools can be used independently, in collaboration with students, and/or in collaboration with other educators. For a teacher to become a 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher, he must appreciate the use of internet technological tools. Some of this tools include; Twitter, Blogger, Diigo, Glogster, Prezi, Dropbox, LinkedIn, Evernote, Quizlet, Wallwisher, TitanPad, Skype, Wordle, Weebly, Wikispaces etc. Using these tools by the teacher does not mean that the teacher automatically become a 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher. For a teacher to become an effective 21<sup>st</sup> century one, he must integrate these tools into classroom situation and share it with students and other educators.

### ***Issues of Teacher Education and Community Development***

Education is an important ingredient for individual and community development. Teacher education is a complete process of preparing a person whose profession is teaching in order to contribute his quota in preparing learners to help in developing themselves and the community at large. Ekpiken and Edet (2014) opined that teacher education is the complex and complete procedure of educating or preparing persons whose profession is teaching in order to play their roles as teachers towards contributing to national development. Teacher education is aimed at producing professional teachers who can implement the curriculum to achieve the educational goals for community development. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) vividly states that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers and that the purpose of teacher education is to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers. Therefore, teachers occupy very strategic position in the educational system and are centres of community and national development. In this regard, Achimugu in Ekpiken and Edet (2014) opined that for our education system to be sustained, teacher education reform should produce highly motivated and efficient classroom teachers to fit into the social life of every community, enhance their commitment to national goals of development.

For teacher education to be part of community development, the community should have a say in the teacher education programmes generally. This means that the members of the community should be part of decision making in the whole education process. There should be accountability in teacher education. The community supposed to know what is going on in teacher training and development within the teacher education institutions and beyond. The community should as well contribute to the development of the teacher education institution within their environs financially and physically by devoting their times to meeting and frequent visits.

The teacher education programmes should inculcate the habits of creating programmes which will help in developing the community in terms of security, good health habits, community projects, community /schools interaction meetings and so forth in order to create a very good rapport between the schools and the community. Harris in Achimugu (2000) said that teacher education and teachers are looked upon as foundation and as the builders of the nation. Teacher education programmes will not know about the need of the community in relation to teacher production without finding out through interaction with the community. Some communities might be in need of English teachers, mathematics teachers, science teachers, or even history teachers as the case may be. For better community development, it is very important for teacher education programmes to involve the community in all its ramifications.

Generally, teacher education contributes to the development of the community in areas of supply of manpower to the various sectors of national economy, and enhancing self-employment/commitments of the community members. The production of professional and committed teachers will aid effective community development.

### ***The Challenges of Teacher Education***

By and large teacher education is expected to be highly placed in every community because of its importance in national development. In the past, teachers were highly recognized and placed in every community, they had good salary and were also part of decision making. For a very long period of time, a lot of water passed under the bridge and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century teacher education is neglected to the background. Teachers especially at the lower level are not given what they deserved and the education system generally is neglected by the government at the various levels. Studies have shown that education expenditure has declined sharply. The budgetary allocations to education have been less than 10 percent of the total federal budget from 1995 to 2006 (Palladan & Maigari, 2010). It is therefore very important for all the stake holders to put all hands on deck in making sure that education budget increased very year for the betterment of teacher education for community development.

However, one of the major challenge of teacher education in Nigeria is that of inadequate funding. The funding of education is the responsibility of the three tiers of government which include the federal, state and the local governments. In addition, the fact that federal budgetary allocation is nothing to write home about, the issue of lack of proper utilization and accountability also contribute a lot to making the funds inadequate. Palladan and Maigari (2010) opined that lack of clear vision leads to misplaced priority, inequality, poor policy choices and corruption. In addition, Reliefweb, (2015) stressed that lack of accountability inherent in current practices leads to inefficiency in use of resources. Therefore, good vision and proper accountability in regards to funding of education in Nigeria are great challenge in funding of education.

Another challenge to teacher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria is that of globalization. Teacher education needs to appreciate and apply Information and Communication Technology in every aspect of its activities. Durosaro (2006), explained that for our future teachers to have currency and operate effectively and efficiently, they must imbibe the new technologies and methodologies of the advanced countries of the world. In this world of technology, no teacher education system can be successful without the use of modern education technology equipment which ease the teaching and learning process. The use of this technological gadgets needs security, electricity supply and good maintenance culture. This can be a great challenge attached to the use of technological gadgets in Nigeria.

Lack of motivation for teachers is also another challenge to teacher education. Teachers are neglected by the government and the community. Most of the prominent members of the community do not like their children to become teachers. This might not be unconnected to the poor condition of service and lack of good salary. The teachers' conditions of service are not enticing enough to attract and retain the best of brains in Nigeria (Durosaro, 2006). He added that because of the low social status accorded teachers in the country, our children do not wish to enroll and be trained as teachers. The few who enroll do so because they have no choice. It is even a popular

saying in Nigerian stream of civil service that teaching is a job for seeking job, job without job and job for marking time.

Another important challenge to teacher education is lack of involving the community in teacher education. Many of the teacher education institutions are not involving the community in their activities. This can be in terms of community services, meetings, events and happenings within the institution and even giving scholarships to the youths of the community where they are located. As the institutions are part of the community as such the community needs to know what is going on in the schools.

## CONCLUSION

Teacher education has changed over the years and Nigeria as a developing country is trying its best to adjust to these changes in order to meet the global standard. The 21<sup>st</sup> century education is more of technology where information about everything is accessed easily. Classrooms, laboratories and workshops are now more modern and effective in terms of education delivery. For Nigeria to achieve its educational goals and re-model teacher education for community development, it must adjust to the global standard of teacher education which apprehend the application of technology in education, and the involvement of the community in all teacher education activities.

## SUGGESTIONS ON THE WAY FORWARD

For Nigeria to re-model its teacher education for community development, the following suggestions were made:

1. The three tiers of government should properly fund education and put an eye on how the fund is being utilized. This can be achieved by involving the community in the whole process.
2. Government and other stake holders in education should support pre –service, in –service and professional development programmes for teachers in the area of information technology. Teacher education programmes should encourage the use of modern technology in teaching.
3. Teachers should be highly recognized by their employers and the community. They should be well paid and the condition of service need to be reviewed.
4. There should be a very good rapport between teacher education institutions and their immediate community. The communities deserved to know what is going on in teacher education institutions so that they can contribute actively towards the production of professional teachers who will aid the development of the community.

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