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 Teacher Production Policy: Issues and Challenges

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**ABSTRACT**

*A policy is a guide or guideline for the effective administration and management of the process of teacher production. This is referred to as National Policy on Education in Nigeria which shapes the nature and purpose of Teacher Production process, it has been observed that there are issues and challenges facing the Administration, Management and Implementation of the policy guideline which affect the training, graduation and qualification of teachers. Therefore this paper as attempted to state the issues like quality of students admitted at Teachers Education Programme, Teachers condition of service, public images about teachers and inadequate facilities and equipment and recommend the way out.*

**Key words:** Teacher Production, Challenges Issues

**INTRODUCTION**

Education has consistently remains the point of reference as far as human well-being and development is concern. It is hub and hope for the socio-economic, political, and social and religion life of the people. Abdulkareem (2001), is of the view that education is an inevitable tool for sustainable development and a vehicle for advancing the frontier of knowledge, in other words, education is the key that unlocks all opportunities and processes of development; it is then the indicator of the level attained by each society. A policy on the other hand, is a guide, a course or principles of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual. It is a deliberate system of principles to guide decision and achieve rational outcomes.

Public policies are bye products of legislation process or from decision made by the elected officials, such as ministers and school trustees or public servant and school administrators.

For the purpose of this presentation, policy is seen as a guide or guideline for the effective administration and management of the process of teacher production. It is also the bench mark for measuring the success or failure of the teacher production

mechanization. In Nigeria, the National Policy on Education according Rafiu (2013), is the national guideline for the effective “administration, management and implementation of education at all tiers of government. The National Policy on Education therefore, is a statement of intentions, expectation, goals, prescriptions, standards and requirements for quality education delivery in Nigeria. NPE came into being since 1977 and has been severally revised as the basis and source of inspiration for teacher educators. The Policy has spelt out the guideline for the production of teachers in Nigeria to include the following:

1. Teacher Education programmes shall be structured to equip teachers for the effective performance of their duties, Information Technology (IT) training shall be incorporated into all teacher-training programmes.
2. At the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) and Degree levels, education programmes shall be “expanded to cater for the requirements of technical, vocational, business and special education. Teacher education shall continue to take cognizance

of changes in methodology and in the curriculum. Teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in the profession. In addition, the goals of Teacher Education according to the policy shall be to:

- a. Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficiency classroom teachers for all levels of the education system.
- b. Further encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity teachers.
- c. Help teachers fit into the social life of the community the society at large and enhance their commitment national goals.
- d. Provide teachers with the intellectual and profession background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations; and
- e. Enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession.

### ***Background of Professional Teacher Education Development in Nigeria***

It is pertinent to have a cursory look at the background of professional Teacher Education Development in Nigeria. The advent of Christian missionaries marked the beginning of Teacher Education in Nigeria. It was traced to the efforts of Christian Missionary Society of Nigerian (CMS). Which initiated the teacher education system in 1833, when it established a teacher training institution in Abeokuta? These missions produced teacher evangelists on a limited curriculum with the assistance of the colonial government through its education code and ordinances to complement the efforts of the missionaries.

The 1947 constitution divide the country into three regions and decentralized educational administration by classifying education as regional service. In the 1950s, eastern and western regional governments introduced the universal free education. Existing educational facilities were expanded without corresponding expansion of teacher education programme. Hence, the need for qualify teacher becomes imperative. Similarly, Nwagwu (1987) emphasized the need to have well-trained and

qualified professional teachers in sufficient number to man the schools. Before 1960, grade 1 Teacher Certificate was the highest teaching qualification in Nigeria. However, the Ashby commission's report of 1960 was a great landmark in the history and evaluation of Teacher Education in Nigeria, because the idea of Advanced Teachers Colleges emerged from the recommendations for a two year Grade 1 Teacher's College which were affiliated to the institutes of Education of universities. The Government modified the two year proposal to three years, which gave rise to new programme and a new certificate-Nigeria Certificate in Education (N.C.E). Initially, five Advanced Teacher Training Colleges were established at Lagos (1960, Ibadan (1966), transferred to Ondo in 1964, at Owerri (1963) now Alvan Ikoku College of Education: at Kano (1964) and at Abraka (1968). The Federal Government decided to establish Advanced Teacher Colleges in States that did not have nay. This development strengthened and expanded the scope of teacher education. Experienced Grade 11 Teachers become attracted and saw the programme as an avenue to higher education. Thus, Grade 11 referred Teachers get qualified, since according to the Federal Government of Nigeria in its National Policy on Education (2013) Nigeria Certificate of Education would be the minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession.

It is worthy of note that, today all universities, regardless of their nature and pre-occupations have or maintain a Teacher Education Programme. The name may differ slightly, yet the central focus is the production of well trained and qualified teachers. The following institutions, among others, shall give the required professional training provided they continuously meet the required minimum standards".

- (a) College of Education;
- (b) Faculties of Education;
- (c) Institutes of Education;
- (d) National Teachers' Institute;
- (e) Schools of Education in the Polytechnics
- (f) National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN);
- (g) National Mathematical Centre (NMC).

### ***Issues in Teacher Production***

The school system is a composite of three basic elements: students, teachers and the curriculum. The efficiency and effectiveness of any educational system depends on the cohesion between the three elements. The inefficiency or weakness from any of the three will result in reduced productivity within the educational process as a whole. Indeed, the teacher is the most significant of the three and he is the basic element affecting the educational process more than the other two.

1. The quality of students admitted to be trained as teachers in the Colleges of Education are those who could not get admission into university or have poor results.
2. In the universities also, the students who could not make it in other fields are usually transferred to the Faculty of Education. The scenario implies that, only the poor or candidates who could not get the admission requirement found their way to the College of Education. Then, how can teacher trainers succeed in producing the best teachers out of poor and sometimes unqualified students? Other issues associated with teacher education programme in Nigeria are the lack of adequate funding. This is translated into non-availability of instructional materials. Inadequate teaching-preparation programme, i.e the conduct of microteaching practice, teaching practice supervision and general orientation on the art of teaching. Short period of teaching practices is a minus as far as the provision of teachers with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment in the society is concerned. Lack of commitment from teachers, instructors, lecturers and school administrators constitute a major setback in the process of teacher production. Today our graduates have been producing plays and songs all expressing the unhealthy relationship that exists between the lectures and students. Remember Mr. Lecturer.

The issue of facilities and resources for preparing school teachers is critical. The status of current materials for preparing school teachers is pathetic. These are inadequate, obsolete, dilapidated and unsuitable for producing a competent teacher who can operate in this century. This state of affairs raises concern about the quality of teachers serving in the school system and has negatively affected the image of these teachers (self-esteem and how the society views them) and their integrity. While these teachers may appear incompetent and not reflecting the expected image of what a good teacher should be, the causes of this state lies elsewhere. They are victims rather than villains of the teacher preparation programme.

Globalization of teacher education is a new development that is affecting the whole world. This is the process of sharing experiences, ideas and technologies globally in administration of teacher education through the use of technological appliances, exposures and expertise. This process tends to bring its own unique demands in the teacher education programme which no one nation can competently manage. These demands are varied in nature and sometimes traumatizing. Among these demands are increased cost of financing teacher education, development and provision of suitable facilities and resources, reviewing of the existing teacher education curriculum, administration of suitable media programmes in teacher education programme and, introduction of new and sophisticated information and communication technology (ICT) systems which the developing world including Nigeria can ill afford.

### ***The Challenges***

In spite of the various recommendations and reforms that targeted repositioning teacher education in the country for optimal performance, the challenges facing teacher education in Nigeria are still numerous. While some of these emerged with the changing socio-economic and political condition of the time, others evolved as a result of government neglect of the education sector especially as it concerns keeping

pace with emerging realities, such as, servicing Nigeria's growing population, education demand and needs with matching supply of education services and facilities. Some of these challenges are specifically examined as follows;

Poor policy implementation is a challenge to quality delivery of teachers' education. The poor quality delivery is responsible for the abysmal low performance of teachers' graduates from the institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. (Anyakoha, 1994) argued that our policies are written by knowledgeable writers who have foresight and believe strongly in what they write for the future but the problem comes when it comes to translating theory into practice by implementers. However, several factors could be adduced as inhibitors to smooth implementation of educational policies and thereby resulting to poor quality delivery. Such as government underfunding of education and injudicious utilization of available funds by implementation agencies: vice chancellors, rectors, provosts, deans of faculties, heads of department etc. when funds meant to deliver quality education is misappropriated or embezzled, the education which learners receive becomes worthless.

In Nigeria, teachers' conditions of service do not hold enough incentives to attract and retain the best brains in Nigerian schools (Osokoya, 2012). As a result of the weakening attraction to the teaching profession, and by extension the resultant dwindling enrolment in the teacher education programs, those who remain in the profession maintain relatively low social status with accompanying psychological problems. Consequently, within the remaining pool, some teachers either seek opportunities in other sectors (within the economy) with better service incentives or even migrate to other countries where teachers' conditions of service are much better, in search of greener pastures.

The quality or standard of education in Nigeria has reduced in recent years because of, among other factors, the brain drain phenomenon, (i.e., the drift of many brilliant, intelligent and more experienced teachers and university lecturers to countries where

they were offered better remunerations and conditions of service). This syndrome is, to a large extent, attributable to inadequate incentives, poorly equipped education system in an increasingly hostile working environments, inadequate social recognition, delay in payment (and sometimes denial) of teachers' salaries, among others. The reliance on inexperienced, and in some cases unqualified teachers and lecturers in the various educational fields and institutions in the country definitely affects the quality of students' work, and of graduates who are eventually employed to service the educational manpower needs, as well as the economy. This vicious circle contributes to the lowering status of education in the universities, colleges of education as well as secondary and primary schools (Osokoya, 2012), even as the trend impacts on the economy negatively.

The academic and emotional qualities of intending candidates for teacher education are critical for quality assurance and internal efficiency in teaching professions. In Nigerian tertiary schools, a trend has been evolving to the effect that candidates who apply to higher institutions for teacher education are those who have either been denied admission in their choice areas of study, or are basically unqualified for admission into such popular professional courses as medicine, law, engineering, architecture etc. The usual shortage of applicants seeking admission into programs that would prepare them as teachers in universities and colleges is a pointer to why admission and placement in education programs is not as rigorous as it is in other programs earlier named. This is mostly opposed to the international standards for teacher selection. For example, the International Labor Organization (ILO) recommends that teachers should be selected on the basis of moral, intellectual and physical qualities. Also, in more developed countries like the United Kingdom, applicants are compulsorily expected to possess certain intellectual qualities and personal characteristics before they are admitted for training (Lassa, 1998). In contrast, the

Nigerian Universities, College of Education and Polytechnics conduct students' admissions based primarily on obtaining the minimum academic requirements while other internationally recognized pre-requisites such as emotional stability, physical fitness or qualities, moral uprightness and communication proficiencies are hardly given considerations.

In addition to the above, the low quality of teachers produced through in-service training by NTI is a serious challenge to teacher education in the country. Some Nigerian scholars have noted that most of the teachers upgraded to Teachers Grade II by NTI were very deficient not only in the academic subjects they teach, but also in techniques of teaching (Obanya, 2008), (Eukora *et al*, 2003). Perhaps, the most unpleasant challenge is one posed by the ongoing Pivotal Teacher Training Program (PTTP) which is currently being executed by the NTI. The PTTP is an intensive program of the federal government designed to raise teachers to implement the UBE program. Introduced to address the gross shortage of qualified teachers at the inception of UBE in 1999, it was apparently in search of cost effective alternatives towards bridging the shortage gaps in the system (FGN, 2003). Structured as a 15 month course including 12 weeks school experience and three-month internship in a primary school, the PTTP's mode of teaching combines face-to-face contact at weekends/holidays with self-instruction course materials and school teaching experience, after which the candidates are certified and deemed qualified to teach. Critics of the program have, however, condemned the program's low academic quality, its products and more fundamentally the poor standards of admission requirements into it (Eukora *et al*, 2003), (Osokoya, 2012). The weight of these quality assurance issues is concomitantly brought to bear on the internal efficiency of Nigeria's education system, hence deepening the crisis in the sector.

Another major challenge to teacher education in Nigeria is that of insufficient

knowledge and use of ICT in a globalizing world. The knowledge, and use, of computer technology as well as the internet is a necessity for all teachers to guarantee the relevance of the system and its products in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Many schools in Nigeria still operate the traditional education system with little or no adaptation to ICT. To benefit from the ubiquity of information and to facilitate communication among professional networks, school teachers need, not only be trained and retrained in ICTs, but facilities must be provided by government to enable teacher and their students access to these remain uninterrupted, more so that the world is gradually becoming a global village. For our future teachers to be able to operate effectively and efficiently, they must imbibe the new technologies and methodologies of the modern times (Osokoya, 2012).

It is imperative to note here that the major issue confronting education in Nigeria is politicization of the education policies as well as inadequate funding. Lenshie (2013), observed that politicizing education in Nigeria is the leading barrier to the implementation of education policies which out rightly impedes socio-economic, political scientific and technological development. Also, Peter (2015), pointed out that Nigeria's educational dilemmas stemmed from politicizing educational issues whereby much attention is been paid to personal, sentiment and other primordial issues. Politicizing education is a serious problem to educational policy implementation because however good the policies are, once they are receded by sentimentalities of those responsible for implementation; there is likelihood that such policies will not see the light of the day.

There is lack of coordination between the three National Agencies Reasonable for Teacher Education in Nigeria. Namely National Teachers Institute, National Commission for Colleges of Education and Teachers Registration Council.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It is an accepted fact that an effective system

requires equitable and adequate input, process and output for it to performance its assigned function, thus teacher production mechanizing must be well natured and coordinated in order to produce the righty type of teachers that would man our educational system.

- a. The National on Education should be reviewed to take care inherent in adequacies that relates to teacher production process, by in cooperating the provision of funding, effective administration management of the teacher producing institutions.
- b. There should be effective enforcement of the provisions of the National Policy Education, especially as it relates to teacher Education.
- c. There should be adequate provision of in-service training to teachers in order to keep them abreast with recent scientific findings and innovation in teacher education programmes.
- d. There should be effective collaboration between the National Teachers Institute, Teacher Registration Council and National Commission for Colleges of Education in order to ensure teachers are professionalized.
- e. Teachers must/should be aware of the threats of globalization and thus work hard to face the challenges.
- f. The government should provide all the necessary enabling environment to ensure all the theories studied during the Teacher Education Programme by providing and equipping all teacher producing institutions with adequate facilities and equipment.
- g. Teachers must create positive self-image and believe that, they are critical input operators or a base line for socio-economic development of the nation.
- h. Teachers of all categories should unite and advocate for better condition of

service.

- i. National Commission for Colleges of Education and the Colleges of Education should ensure that only the best and qualified students are admitted.

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