

## **REPOSITIONING NIGERIA'S TEACHERS TRAINING INSTITUTIONS FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: NEED FOR INNOVATIVE INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY STRATEGIES.**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examines a comprehensive assessment of the repositioning of Nigeria's Teacher training institutions for 21<sup>st</sup> Century advocating for the use of innovative, instructional delivery strategies. It explains education, the meaning of teacher education, objectives of teacher education, teachers' training institutions' expectation from the nation, the nation's expectation from Teachers' training institutions and the status of teachers' training institutions. The paper outlines the challenges facing teachers' training institutions, what to be done to face the challenges of teachers' training institutions in Nigeria and strategies for repositioning teacher training institutions. It draws conclusions and some recommendations are made among which is that government should establish companies and corporations to manufacture and distribute school materials at subsidized rate to teachers' training schools.*

**Keyword;** *Teacher, Teacher Education, Training, Innovations, Institutional delivery, Strategies*

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### **Introduction**

The need to ensure qualitative teacher education in Nigeria is becoming increasingly imperative, particularly if the country is to achieve techno-scientific development soonest. This is because teacher education is the foundation for quality in education which is the key that opens all aspects of development. In Nigeria, Education For All (EFA) by 2015, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the regional level, the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD)

at the National level, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS), all impose enormous responsibilities on teacher education and by extension, the teaching profession (NCCE, 1995).

Education is an enviable tool for sustainable development and a vehicle for advancing the frontier of knowledge (Abdul-Kareem, 2001). In other words, education is severally conceived and inculcated by people of

varying backgrounds, ages, needs and aspirations for sustainable development. Education has been recognized as a process of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes to the learners. The effectiveness of any education system depends greatly on the educational attainment of teachers because no system of education can be qualitatively higher than the quality and commitment of its teachers. The fact remains that teaching and learning depend on teacher for there cannot be any meaningful socio-economic and political development in any country without teachers. It is on teacher's quality and devotion that rests the effectiveness of all the educational arrangements, development and growth.

### **Teacher Education**

Teacher education is essentially the training and/or production of would-be teacher, which encompasses production of pre-primary, primary and post primary school teachers (FGN, 2013). Oyekan (2006) defined teacher education as that form of education which is properly planned and systematically tailored and applied for the cultivation of those who teach or will teach particularly but not exclusively, in primary and post-primary levels of schooling. The National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013) acknowledges that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. This is because teachers are the foundation of quality in education. Hence, teachers' production, utilization and retention are very critical to effective education delivery in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of Teacher Education**

In line with the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013), the objectives of teacher education are:

1. To provide highly motivated, conscientious, efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
2. To further encourage the spirit of inquiry and creativity in teachers;
3. To help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and to enhance their commitment to national goals;
4. To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for the assignment and to make them adaptable to changing conditions;
5. To enhance teachers commitment to teaching profession.

In Nigeria, there are categories of institutions that train teachers. The institutions are; Colleges of Education, Institutes of Education, Universities' faculty of Education, National Teachers' Institute, and Schools of Education in the Polytechnics (Ekpiken & Ukpabio, 2014). Anyone who had his or her teacher education through any of these institutions is regarded as a qualified teacher.

Teacher education, according to Ogunyinka, Okeke and Adedoyin (2015), is the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period for the preparation of individuals who intend to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens. The heartbeat of manpower development and training for prudent use and sustenance of resources in nation building is teacher education.

The prevailing crisis in Nigerian education and its society as typified by unemployment, poverty, corruption, crime, indiscipline and underutilization of capacities in all facets of human life and national development, could be ascribed to the neglect of teacher education and pitiable plight of the teachers. All these conflictual relationships precipitate poverty-induced hardships across all segments of the Nigerian community. What structurally becomes very imperative in achieving the nation's quest for self-reliant society, imbued with vibrant economy and productive citizenry, is to put in place a comprehensive teacher education programme (Adewuyi, 2012).

### **Teacher Training Institutions' Expectation from the Nation**

Teachers are those who are professionally qualified and trained/educated to provide schooling for learners (pupils and students). Teachers are those nation uses to educate and train tomorrow's leaders. Therefore, teacher training institutions expect good treatment in terms of good accommodation,

incentives and conducive environment. They also expect good remuneration/salary that will motivate them to learn and demonstrate their skills and knowledge in teaching, provision of well-equipped and functional libraries, laboratories, and well-ventilated classrooms that can promote attainment of learning in the training institutions.

### **Status of teacher training institutions**

According to Nakpodia and Urien (2011), teacher education revolves around the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitude, behavior and skills needed in the performance of effective duties in the classroom and other social gatherings. In a more concise manner, teacher education, according to Ezugwu (2001), is the education given to student teachers in an institution such as teacher training college, colleges of education, faculties and institutes of education, so that they may be in good position to acquire, inculcate and impart the same knowledge to the pupils and other learners entrusted to their care. It is an organized programme aimed at developing the cognitive, affective and the psychomotor domains of those who are teaching or intend to teach. Much as efforts are being made to ensure high quality candidates into teachers training institutions, it seems that the standard and quality of teachers being produced at the various teacher education institutions are still very low with resultant effect on the inability of the nation to move forward as expected. Therefore, to attend to the growing concern of teacher training institutions quality and relevance, it is crucial to examine the need for innovative instructional delivery strategies in Nigeria.

### **Challenges Facing Teacher Training Institutions in Nigeria**

In spite of various recommendations and reforms targeted to repositioning teacher training institutions in the country for optimal performance, the challenges facing teacher education in Nigeria are still enormous. While some of these emerged with the changing socio-economic and political condition of the time, others evolved as a result of government's 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:

**Admission process:** The entry qualifications into training institutions, especially in colleges of education are not the same. While some colleges admit students with five 'O' Level credits with a pass in English Language and Mathematics, some admit students with lesser qualifications for Pre NCE and later transit to N C E 100 Level without any post UTME as against general requirements of five 'O' Level credits with English Language and Mathematics, JAMB score and post UTME examination. In the university where entry qualification is the same (Five credits including English Language and Mathematics), there is shortage of enrolment because most students do not have genuine interest in becoming teachers. Hence, the need to reduce the cut off mark for admission into teacher training institutions and the introduction of pre-degree and pre- NCE programme to boost students' enrolment. Therefore, the left over from other departments forms the best crop of students in education courses. No wonder, Oyekan (2006) as cited in Ajegene (2010), described them as 'dregs' from the education system, who could not secure admission into any other course considered more reputable and reward giving by the society.

**Poor funding:** Ajagene (2010) observes that finance is very crucial to the survival and success of every human organization. The quality of environment where teaching and learning take place in Nigeria is very shameful and worrisome. Many of our colleges of education and some state universities are just glorified secondary schools in terms of infrastructure. There are no adequate lecture halls, no functional e – libraries, well equipped laboratories and adequate furniture. The welfare of staff and the financing of schools, colleges and universities in Nigeria's teacher training institutions are not given priority; this has resulted into incessant strike action and total breakdown of law and order in our educational system.

**Non-professionalization of teaching:** In Nigeria, Teachers' Registration Council (TRCN, 2002) defines a teacher as a person who had undergone approved professional training in education at appropriate levels capable of imparting attitudes and skills to the learners. It was stated in the NPE (2004) and TRCN (2002) that the Nigeria certificate in education will be the minimum entry qualification of any person who wants to become a teacher in Nigeria. This has remained a policy statement that is yet to be implemented at all levels of our educational system, especially in private schools that are still filled with untrained teachers

**Knowledge-based curriculum:** Teachers' curriculum in Nigeria is knowledge based as emphasis has always been laid on cognitive domain of the learners while much has not been done in the area of affective and psychomotor domains (Olajuyigbe, 2003).

**Poor infrastructures:** Many teachers in industrial technology lack competence in practical skill due to poor infrastructural facilities such as inadequate of electricity and many teacher trainers in sciences cannot boast of ability to conduct simple experiment due to lack of well-equipped laboratories.

**Insufficient knowledge about the use of information and communication technology (ICT):** Information technology has turned the whole world to a global village, as people now share gains and progress thus prompting the introduction of computer studies into teacher training institutions. It is sad that some of the student teachers could not afford to have laptop not to talk of have practical access to ICT while on training. Thus, we still rely on chalk and talk method in training the trainers. Computer studies lessons are taught in abstract. Even where there are good ICT centers, there are no internet services. It must be noted that while theory brings knowledge, practice brings understanding and application of theory to true life situation.

**Wages and Salaries:** Teachers' salaries are no longer paid as at when due. In many states

of the federation today, teachers are faced with a situation whereby they are owed arrears of salaries. Strike action by teaching and non-teaching staff is now the order of the day in many of our teacher training institutions in Nigeria.

**Poor teaching and learning environment:** The existing infrastructures in our teacher training institutions are fast dilapidating with no visible conscious efforts on the part of government, parents and private individuals to salvage and rehabilitate them.

**The menace of corruption:** Corruption is another factor that hampers the implementation and attainment of educational goals on our teachers' training institutions in Nigeria. In some cases funds that are supposed to have been spent on the educational sector by stakeholders in the ministry are siphoned. Also, the internally generated revenue is being misappropriated by school administrators. Likewise, manifestation of corruption could be seen in the lack of provision of adequate data that would facilitate objective educational planning and decision making. Sometimes funds meant for educational development are sunk into political campaigns for the pursuit of personal ambition (Danladi, 2006).

#### **What to be done to tackle the Challenges of Teacher Training Institutions in Nigeria**

- Adequate Teacher Education Training with adequate provision of resources with re-introduction of Teacher Colleges.
- Quality assurance in terms of class size, number of teachers and instructional materials.
- >Proper governance of schools and implementation of Schools Management Committees (SMCs).
- Adequate budgetary provision (funding of educational sector).
- Employment of professionals (qualified teaching staff).
- Empowerment approach to education.
- Provision of child-friendly and teacher-friendly school environment.
- Admission of students to schools based on merit not political ground.
- Provision of special salary for teachers.

## Strategies for repositioning teacher training institutions for innovative instructional delivery in Nigeria

1. **Standardization of entry qualification/curriculum:** The quality of teacher education is a prerequisite to high standards of education. In Nigeria, the entry qualifications to teacher training institutions should be standardized to prevent intellectually and attitudinally deficient students from gaining admission. The same admission method should guide all colleges/universities that are training teachers. Four credits including English and Mathematics are ideal for those seeking admission to NCE and five credits including English and Mathematics for those seeking admission to degree programmes. If truly no education can rise above the quality of its teachers, there is need to groom the teacher trainees properly to enable us combat corruption, indiscipline, insecurity and unemployment that are prevalent in Nigeria. Teachers are often described as character molders and facilitators of knowledge. For this reason, to reduce the high rate of violence, cultism and insecurity which are wooden-soled shoe/cause an obstruction to successful innovation, courses like peace, civic and moral education that will give students a sense of value and dignity of labour for life should be introduced to teacher education programmes at both NCE and degree levels. This will help teacher trainees to be role models, since the quality of education imparted to the student teachers will have harmful/positive effect on their students who will be the future recipients or receivers of the curriculum.
2. **Funding:** In Nigeria, government at all levels should, as a matter of urgency, give maximum priority to teacher training institution package to prevent a total collapse of education in Nigeria. Adequate infrastructure should be provided while a total facelift should be given to capital project in teachers'

institutions. Government should give special grants and scholarship to students in teacher education programme to encourage others and to raise the damping morale of teachers. Teachers' salary scale should be approved for teachers to remove the inferiority between teachers and those in other lucrative/profitable courses.

3. **Private organizations in funding of teacher training institutions in Nigeria:** Involvement of private organizations in adequate payment of their education trust funds regularly to government purse will assist teacher training institutions to perform to expectation.
4. **Professionalization of teaching:** Teaching profession has suffered considerably in Nigeria from high attrition rates due to poor condition of service. So, teaching should be given full professionalization like law, medicine and engineering. Since untrained lawyer cannot defend a client in court and untrained doctor cannot operate any patient in the theater, untrained teachers should not be allowed to teach at any level of our education system. It must be well known that government has really worked on this in terms of staffing in colleges of education and faculties of education but it should be made longer to other institutions and faculties. In such a condition, anyone that imparts knowledge is a teacher. Then, any unqualified personnel on the job of imparting knowledge, irrespective of his/her profession should go for a teacher education programme to learn the methodology of teaching that will bring about innovative instructional delivery rather than teaching concepts. This will help to bring back the lost glory of the teaching profession and teacher training institutions as it will no longer be a dumping ground for all unemployed people. Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria should ensure the prompt registration of the qualified teachers and the induction of new ones as it operates in other professions.

5. **Integration of counseling education.**

Counseling education is a course that presents the knowledge of physical, emotional, cognitive and psychological development of man from early childhood or babyhood (an early stage of development to adulthood and reveals man as a unique individual who has his/her own role to play in the developmental process of his society. Therefore, there is the need to integrate counseling education into all levels of teacher training institutions. There is the need to re-introduce guidance and counseling as a subject combination in the NCE programme to reduce the inadequacy of counselors in our schools. In as much as government recognizes only university graduates as professional counselors, graduates of counseling education at NCE level can act as para-professionals at the primary and junior secondary schools. Introduction of guidance and counseling as a supportive service at primary school will assist counseling graduates at NCE level to catch them young and make pupils more focused at a tender age (Adeniran, Afolabi, Akinpade & Ogunnaiya, 2014).

6. **Vocational and entrepreneurship education:**

The position of vocational, technical and entrepreneurship education in our educational system cannot be undermined. It could shed more light/open more opportunity to improve industrialization that will eventually lead to transformation in Nigeria. Imarchiagba (1989) as cited in Kuza and Angbra (2010) stated that vocational and technical knowledge by graduates would help in the expansion and establishment of more industries in the society, ultimately promoting vocational education standard in Nigeria. From the knowledge and usefulness of these courses, it was stated in the NPE that the goal of vocational education shall be to provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advance craft and technical levels: provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills

necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development. To encourage this has prompted the introduction of entrepreneurship education into teacher training institutions. In order to achieve success in this area, there is the need to recognize the entrepreneurship course in the teacher training institutions. Learning a trade should be made compulsory in the course of teacher training to support/back up the theoretical knowledge acquired. If after learning and nothing is done with the knowledge acquired, one has gained nothing. If quality vocational education is put in place, the graduate could be great contributors to National economic development and reduce high rate of unemployment in Nigeria.

7. **Motivation, scholarship, award of bursaries and loans:**

It is desirable to have special scholarship and award for teachers training institutions in order to provide additional motivation for people who want to go into the teaching profession.

8. **Library Development:** High priority should be placed on investing in the E-library as the base for academic excellence and this should be made accessible to cater for the need of staff and students in the teacher training institutions in Nigeria.

9. **Establishment of Teachers' Registration Council Nigeria:**

The sustainability of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria will contribute to restoring the lost glory or dignity of teachers and enhance the social perception of social-standing of teaching.

10. **Information and communication Technology (ICT):**

More emphasis should be placed on information and communication technology (ICT) as a major tool for advancing teaching, learning and research and as such, substantial amount should be invested in ICT development in our teacher training institutions, especially colleges of education, because they are the one dealing with basic education which serves as bedrock of educational sector.

**11. Intervention through Trust-Funds:**

Intervention of government through Educational Trust Funds has come to the rescue of our teacher training institutions in staff training development and re-training, provision of infrastructural facilities and equipment, construction and equipment of lecture Theatre. This needs to be sustained.

**Conclusion**

Education has been described as consisting not of how much knowledge one acquired but of how knowledge acquired is effectively and persistently used or applied. Adeniran, Afolabi, Akinpade and Ogunnaiya (2014) noted that if education must serve the society, it must produce people who carry much more than certificates, it must produce individuals that have the right types of knowledge, ability and attitude necessary to work for the good of the society. The importance of a well-planned teacher training institution cannot be over emphasized. There is the need to make a total overhauling of teacher training institutions curricular such that it will not be seen as avenue for unemployed graduates. Although serious effort has been made in the formulation of policies, there is need to take the bold step of full implementation of the existing policies, using some of the rationale for innovation instructional delivery strategies for teacher training institutions in Nigeria suggested in this paper.

**Recommendations**

In view of repositioning Nigeria's teachers training institutions for 21<sup>st</sup> century for innovative instructional delivery strategies, the following recommendations for more efficiency are suggested.

1. Since the government is still the major source of funding teacher training institutions in Nigeria, there is need to change the pattern of funding so that provision for teacher training institutions should adequately match their needs.
2. There is need to ensure availability of accurate data on the system.

3. Government should establish companies, corporation to manufacture and distribute school materials on a non-profitable basis to teacher's training schools.
4. Finally, community participation and enrollment should be encouraged on teacher training institutions.

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