



JOURNAL OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION

(JORDE)

Vol. 5, No. 2, 2015

SPECIAL EDITION ON INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION

**AN OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF UYO, UYO
AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA.**

INNOVATION IN TEACHER EDUCATION FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA

Onyeagbako Stella Okwuchi
Antiabong O. Ekong
Nnabue Tochukwu Paul

ABSTRACT

No nation can remain permanently in the forefront of development leadership if its education ceases to be qualitative, and the link between quality education and sustained development cannot be over emphasized. The philosophy of Nigeria education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizens. It is disheartening that the end product of Nigerian education particularly secondary education is at variance with the national policy on education and aims of education. A look at the Nigeria education reveals that quality instruction is lacking thereby preventing the realization of the lofty goals of the national policy on education. The issue of quality in education is one of the problems facing Nigerian education system. Education without quality can even be more dangerous than no education; in fact without quality, education has no value. This paper examined the present condition of affairs in Nigerian education system vis-à-vis teacher education and the mode of transmitting knowledge. There is obvious need for re-programming and innovation in teacher education to make teaching relevant to our needs in the new millennium.

Introduction

Functional and qualitative education is viewed as a condition through which national development is attained. The level at which the door of education is opened to the entire citizenry, does not matter but the kind of education offered to the recipients matters a lot. The importance of education can never be over-emphasized because it yields both direct and indirect benefits to the individual and the society.

Education is the process by which one passes from ignorance to knowledge, from incapacities to power and from impulse to ideas (Uyanga, 2008). Education generally plays a crucial role in the life of human beings. As an agent of change, education presents solid vehicle for the transformation and empowerment of individuals and the society. Universally, education is acknowledged as veritable tool for transforming individuals and making them effective and functional members of the society, and for achieving national goals.

Secondary school level of education is the bridge between the primary and tertiary levels. The importance of secondary education made the federal government to state the broad aims of secondary education as preparation for useful living within the society and for higher education. The underlying principle here is that the secondary education is available to all those who can benefit from it. However, it appears that the secondary schools are not living up to expectation in discharging its obligations.

Onyeagbako Stella Okwuchi is of the Faculty of Education, Imo State University, Owerri. Dr. Antiabong Ekong lectures in the Department of Vocational Education, University of Uyo, Uyo. Nnabue Tochukwu Paul is a teacher in the International Secondary School, Orlu., Imo State.

Omorie (2005) lamented, that the products of today's secondary system can neither usefully live in the society nor move into higher institutions without their parent's aid or forgery. They cannot think for themselves or respect the views and feelings of others. It must be stressed that education cannot be an instrument par excellence for achieving national development where the secondary level is not effectively managed to accomplish its aims and objectives. Adebayo (2007) opined that the extent to which the Nigerian education would succeed in achieving its set goals and objectives depends considerably on a dedicated, knowledgeable and inspired teaching force. He further said that the future of any nation or society depends upon the quality of education it provides for its citizens and upon inspired, satisfied and dedicated teachers. Hence, no nation can rise above the quality of its educational system, her teachers, and behind every reasonable growth in the educational system are qualitative and quantitative teaching staff.

Having realized the importance of teachers in providing quality education at this level of education, it is importance to have an effective, efficient and quality personnel training in the education sector that can guarantee quality learning outcomes and national development. Looking at the quality product that Nigerian secondary schools turn out, there is no doubt that the quality of education offered to and received by students is low in terms of cognitive, affective and psych-motor domains of development. It is generally believed that the quality of education received by our children these days is low when compared with the quality of education received in the past generation. There is an ocean of difference between the education of the present and that of the past generation. The underlying rationale is that if the things of the present are not satisfying the needs of the present, workable strategies must be sought to ensure improved conditions. Therefore, the need for innovation in teacher education for quality education in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Concept of Innovation

Mintron (2000) used the term "innovative" and referred to ideas or practices that are new within the context of the school. More clearly stated, an innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption (Rogers, 1995). Another definition of innovation involves the introduction of a novel factor perceived as new by a given school and community supported by a driving force and implemented as a practical advance that deviates from established or traditional forms (Unruh and Alexander, 1974). Innovation implies the introduction of something new that departs from what has been traditionally known to exist. An innovation therefore seeks to transform or alter a condition of practice, which is known to be somewhat deficient and to introduce something better that accommodates the identified deficiency.

Purpose of innovation

The purposes of innovation includes but not limited to the following;

1. To ensure that what we teach is relevant to the aims and objectives of our students/pupils, the values of our culture and the resources at our disposal.
2. To create the awareness that knowledge changes in response to books we read, discoveries we make or experiences we have.
3. To prove that education is dynamics, it changes along with the society.
4. To enable country/citizens discover unique system suitable for particular needs and aspiration.
5. To foster the desire to encourage traditional culture, to involve the community, to share education fairly and make it more democratic.

6. To develop educational rethinking structures so as to make ideas more complete, active and concrete (Mkpa, 2006).

Teacher Education in Nigerian

The Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (2013) referred to teaching as a profession where goals of teacher education were identified and they include the provision of teacher with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and made adapted to changing situations and also enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession. It also stated that all teachers in educational institutions shall be professionally trained through teacher education programmes, structured to equip and prepare them for effective performance of their duties.

Quality education according to Okereke (2006) provides learners ample opportunities and experiences for the acquisition of skills and understanding to be able to cope with the society and life in general as well instilling in the learners the ability to perform duties or tasks. For effective teaching and learning, quality teachers must be engaged to handle and implement education programmes. Therefore, the importance of quality teacher education that will yield quality teachers in our schools cannot be over emphasized because it is the most important school related factor influencing students' achievement.

For Nigeria to meet the demand of quality teacher education, the lecturers in our colleges of education, and universities must be competent, trained and qualified teachers before they can be employed. Quality education produces quality teachers who are able to move the nation forward. If education of teachers still falls largely on those that find themselves in education department by mistake, then they will keep on ascribing low status to teachers. Okereke (2006) noted that if candidates that have the zeal to teach are admitted, and are educated well, they will come out as quality teachers.

On the other hand, Dareng (2006) noted the shabby and haphazard attention to teaching practice in Universities. In his view, teacher education programmes are better organized and implemented by colleges of education than the Universities. The reason is that education students in Universities are like interlopers in other faculties outside their own and therefore do not fully belong to those faculties that offer courses in their teaching subjects. Sometimes these students are merely tolerated by the faculties, and concludes that the student – teachers should be taught the way they should teach and only professionally qualified lecturers who are educationists and not educators could do this.

Quality Education

Quality in education deals with standard, efficiency excellence, relevance, appropriateness and values. It involves some conditions and levels from which it can be measured in school business. Quality in education refers to the worth of its inputs, teachers and evaluation procedures, which translates to the output. Quality education according to Amaele (2000:5) is a must do affair if a society expects quality manpower for rapid development and transformation. Hence, he argued that "equality education is expected to address critical issue like the dignity of labour, quality leadership and committed citizenship, industrial harmony, political stability, religious tolerance, self-reliance and others".

Ndiomu (1989) explained quality education as that which is relevant and adapted to the need of the society, arguing that such needs must meet the standards in health, growth and physical survival in complex and global world. What every human community desires, needs, expects

and demands is quality education. Quality education in the context, referred to that which produces the best of the individual members of the society morally, intellectually, physically and even spiritually. The child must be fully developed to become a relevant, honest, dedicated, committed member of his/her environment to make the best contributions within and outside his/her immediate environment.

When quality is used to describe the type of education received at any level of our formal school system, what comes to mind is the degree of conformity to the expectations of that type and level of education. The knowledge, skills, competence, performance and character which required at that level would be expected to be supplied by the individuals who have received education at that level. Conformity to requirements with regard to education according to Uvah (2005) means:

- i. Adequate curriculum
- ii. Appropriate teaching methodologies
- iii. Adequate and sufficient trained teaching staff
- iv. Conducive teaching and learning environment and experiences.

Quality education entails that the product of the system (the educated) should perform to the expectations of the set standard of the people. He (the educated), should be a creator of employment, a producer of goods and or services and not a mere job seeker and consumer of ready made goods and services. Quality cannot be sacrificed for quantity. The child deserves the best education which is qualitative, or nothing. Hence, Omoregie (2005) contended that education without quality can even be more dangerous than no education. He emphasized that without quality, education has no value.

The Current Situation of Secondary Schools

It is common knowledge that the educational system in Nigeria is in a deplorable state. This of course is a reflection of the larger society. Some of the general ills are lack of commitment, and unconducive learning environment, apathy, unmotivated teachers and learners. Most teachers lack the patience and commitment to groom students. Rote learning becomes the order of the day with little or no meaning. The students lack confidence and effective communication skill. Facilities are deficient in quantity and quality. Gross indiscipline, cultism, robbery, examination malpractice, immodest dressing and other ills are rife in our school system (Amadi, 2006). There is among teachers, nonchalant attitude to monitoring and supervision.

The school environment is in an advanced stage of dilapidation. The infrastructures are crumbling. The premises have no aesthetics to boast about. The classrooms are without doors and windows and the roof is leaking profusely. Some of the students lack seats and learning materials. They are counted lucky if they have comfortable staff room furniture. This is the painting of a teacher's plight in most of our schools. This engenders frustration for the teacher and stifles enthusiasm in the students.

Teachers in Innovation

The teacher makes the school. Success in education depends on teachers with training, correct judgement, job competence and professional pride. Quality education which is the ultimate aim of any educational innovation hinges primarily on quality teachers and engaging learners in prescribed learning activities aimed at bringing about desired changes in learners behaviour (Okeke, 2007). This is the heart of any innovation.

If the dismal condition of affairs in the Nigerian educational system must be reversed, serious innovation must be carried out especially in the area of teacher education in the general level of the academic achievement and moral behaviour of the children must be tuned up, the quality of the teacher and his teaching must be improved. When the school environment is beautified and made conducive for studies, students will readily and happily identify with their alma matter and will even in later life try to contribute to the school development (Okeke, 2007). When the teachers, students and the whole environment are transformed by what is taught and learnt in a conducive atmosphere, the whole society will be affected and will benefit.

The students' performance is determined by the teachers' attitude to work, the curriculum and the mode of transmission of information. Unfortunately, the Nigeria system of pedagogy is based mainly on the teaching and listening method of teacher and students. Little or no attention is paid to reading and understanding; seeing, touching and making use of logical thinking. The learner is rarely exposed to explore and make use of his initiative and develop latent talents. Rather, the Nigeria system of education expects the teacher to emphasize and insist on examinations and quizzes, labeled as assessments. Copious notes are reeled out to students and these do their best to learn by rote what they try to regurgitate at those examinations whether meaningful or not (Okeke, 2007).

Teachers are obliged to focus on the goal of preparing their students for external examination like UTME, WAEC, NECO, NABTEB and other organized and centralized assessments. These examinations have been watered down by teachers and students who always find ways of conniving and collaborating with supervisors and examiners to acquire the desired certificates by hook and crook. After all, paper qualification is the bane of our society. This has led to the flourishing of 'special', 'miracle' or 'magic' centres where examination malpractice is officially organized and paid for. Certificates are acquired at the end of the day yet no competences are developed or skills acquired.

Re-programming the teachers

The task of the teaching profession is not merely to teach one's subject matter – English Language, mathematics, physics, biology, economics etc. This conception of the teacher's job is faulty, for the teachers job goes beyond this. Human personal development must primarily be the teacher's concern and this goes beyond the acquisition of facts of a particular subject or certificate of a discipline. Human personal development must primarily be the teacher's concern and this goes beyond the acquisition of facts of a particular subject or certificate of a discipline.

Uzoka (2006) continued, "human personal development is the enhancement of personhood, the nurturance of those intangibles of personality ... which makes one professional in a particular field preferable to another. It is the development of social and psychological competences in individuals such that they acquire maturity and self-confidence and are thus empowered to be able to negotiate their way successfully at work, in marriage and other social encounters that life presents" (Okeke, 2007).

Human personal development is therefore the enhancement of character and intellectual evolution that enables students, men and women on graduation to be able to make useful contributions to national effort. This should be the outcome of the new programme. The new premise being advocated is that the teacher teaches not merely the subject matter but himself/herself. The teacher transmits those intangibles which students incorporate in their

psyche aside from facts and figures of a particular discipline. Teachers are for long remembered for the long lasting influence on the student's behaviour, their nuances, their mannerisms, idiosyncrasies and above all, values and attitude (Uzoka, 2006). These are the facts that often hinder or help the students recall of facts or induce interest or disinterest in particular subject area. It is therefore of paramount importance to try to inculcate in our teachers the marks or qualities that make them enviable and edifying role models that they are.

The Way Forward

Re-programming the teachers will require first and foremost a significant re-tooling or innovation of our teaching training schemes and curricular with emphasis on critical personality changes in our teaching profession (Adelamo, 2001). Ways of re-training the teachers.

1. Renewed curriculum in the training to instill in the teachers the proper ethics of the profession. The present ethical and moral decay in which teachers wallow cannot enhance the goals of education. Extorting or accepting material gratification from students and parents, sexual harassment, non attendance to lectures or lesions, negotiated grading or sorting, examination malpractice etc are current aberrations in the teaching profession. Those who have their role as models of excellence must retrace their steps to regain their elevated status.
2. Orientation, workshops and seminars for teachers at all levels of education pedagogic training should be undergone because brilliance in scholarship is not enough evaluation of an effective teacher. Teachers need to regularly renew and update their knowledge. There are constant changes and innovations stemming from science and technology.
3. The schools led by their heads must champion the re-orientation of our thwarted values. Even though the adult society has set the pace in fraud, bribery, forgery, dishonesty, poor work habit, cheating etc, the school should make efforts through teachers and role modeling to show students that those evils destroy the main fabric of the society, and so need to be done away with.
4. Head of departments and institutions should help and encourage teachers to teach more effectively and with commitment.
5. Established unions in education, ANCOPSS, ASUU, NUT etc are enjoined to join hands in the reform effort and adopt a professional stance.

Conclusion

This paper examined the current trends in the teaching profession. Teachers need to recognize their position as indispensable stakeholders in education even in the face of the prevailing climate of anti-intellectualism. The teachers stakeholders status imposes on educators a mandate of hope. It is to promote this mandate that a number of possible actions have been addressed to keep the flame alive, to re-vitalize education and to promote once more, the primacy of the intellect. Quality education hinges firmly on quality teachers and thus teacher education is at the heart of any education reform and innovation.

References

- Adebayo, F.A. (2007). Quantity and quality of teachers in the public and private secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. *Journal of Education Management*. Vol. 6, 143 – 150.
- Uzoka, A .F. (2006) Beyond UBE free and compulsory education up to secondary school level: an imperative for poverty alleviation in Africa. *Paper Delivered at the 4th African Convention of Principals Conference Abuja 14-18 August 2006*.
- Amadi, R.N. (2006). Catholic Secondary and Vocational Education in Nigeria: A Re-assessment Paper Delivered at First Summit on Education by the Catholic Bishops Conference at Abuja. 7th – 9th February.
- Amaele. S. (2005) The child and the right to quality education: An appraisal of the Nigerian Situation. *African Journal of Educational Studies*,3, (2), 2341.
- Daring, M. (2006). Teacher training and development in the 21st Century: 5th *Nawacs Conference*, Owerri.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERDC.
- Ike, P.O. (2010). Challenges of Teacher Education in Nigeria. *Issues on Contemporary Nigeria Education*, 220 – 224.
- Mintron, M. (2000). Policy entrepreneurs and school choice. Washington, DC; George-Town University Press.
- Mkpa, M.A. (2006). *Curriculum studies innovation*. Owerri: Divine Mercy Publishers.
- Ndiomu, C.B. (1989) Standard and the National Policy on Education associated hydra headed problem. In: *J. N.Omatseye (ed.) Quality in education, Benin City. Supreme Idee Publisher*.
- Okeke, T.U. (2007). Re-programming teacher education for economic empowerment and development Nigerian. *Journal of Educational Management*. Vol. 6, pp 159 – 164.
- Okereke, S.I. (2006). Contributory factors to quality teacher education in Nigeria. *CO Conference*, Ago, Iwoye.
- Omoriege, N. (2005). Re-packaging secondary education in nigeria for great and dynamic economy. Paper Presented at the 2nd Annual National Conference of Association for Encouraging Quality Education in Nigeria (ASSQEN). 9th – 11th May.
- Rogers, E.M. (1995). *The diffusion of innovation (4th ed.)*. New York: Free Press
- Unruh, G.G. & Alexander, W.M. (1974). *Innovations in secondary education*. New York; Holt; Rienhart & Winston
- Uyanga, R.E. (2008). The principal and education reform agenda of the Nigerian Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs). In P.N.C. Ngwu (Ed.). *The Principal and Education in Nigeria*. Pp 94

– 102. A Publication of the Mandatory Continuing Professional Training (MCPT) Programme of the All Nigerian Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS).

Uzoka, F. M. E. (2006). AHP-Based system for strategic evaluation of financial information: *Information Knowledge System Management Journal*, 5(1), 49-61