

ANALYTICAL STUDY OF TEACHER PREPARATION AND GENDER ISSUES REAPPRAISED

Ukpong, J.S., Bassey, E., Ekong, A., and Umar, M.

Department of Curriculum and Teaching

University of Calabar-Calabar, Nigeria.

E-Mail: ukpongette2006@yahoo.com

***Abstract:** The central focus of this paper is to critically examine the aspect of teacher preparation within Teacher Education Institutions among Nigerian Universities and Colleges of Education. Thus, the scholarship highlights and discusses the problems of quality in teacher preparation, the disenchanted position of government and other relevant agencies to supply the needed resource materials to aid equipped, competent and effective teachers to meet the expectations of Nigerians whose hope has been dashed accessioned by poor performances of students in both WAEC and NECO examinations in recent times. Profoundly, the paper identified the necessity of teacher preparation as one of the stalling machineries for National Development, hence the importance of preparing teachers to meet the global challenges becomes imperative, also penchant reflections on social dynamic of gender issues and women education in teacher education which is currently of concern to individuals, groups, and government were considered.*

Keyword: Teacher, Preparation, Gender and Issues.

Introduction

Teaching is becoming one of the most challenging professions in our society where knowledge is expanding rapidly and much of it is available to students as well as teachers at the same time. As new concepts of learning have emerged, teachers are to facilitate learning and make it meaningful to individual learners rather than just to provide knowledge and skills. Mbuk, (2000) stressed that the preparation of teacher has to be taken seriously by institutions and agencies concerned. She however, noted that poorly prepared teachers will certainly put up a dismal performance which will eventually impair the quality of education.

The aforementioned however underscores the need to critically examine the ways and manner in which teachers are prepared for their job because of modern developments and innovative technologies which have provided new possibilities to teaching profession, but at the same time have placed more demands on teachers to learn how to use these new technologies in their teaching.

According to Oyekan (2006) opined that a successful professionalization of teaching will make trained teachers to carry out their statutory functions with love and vision for meaningful individual and Nation development. It is imperative to know that a critical aspect of teacher preparation lies in methodically exposing the teacher – trainees to a serious programme of apprenticeship or internship. As pointed out by Venkataiah,

(2009) apprenticeship or internees are adult seeking skills for a new career. When he or she undergoes the training within the field experience for acquisition of those skills, he or she is called an internee. The truism is that in the field of education, teacher preparation, and indeed internship provides an opportunity for the student- teacher to identify himself or herself with the school where he or she would be working for completing his training or internship before the trainee is posted to the school he or she is taking teaching job.

The Conceptualization of Teacher Preparation

Teacher preparation refers to the process an individual goes through to acquire the relevant knowledge, skill, competencies and values, and fulfill other requirements that qualify him or her to be called a teacher. In his study, Joshua, (1997) opined that teacher preparation embraces the out of – school requirements expected by the school system as prerequisites to employment as a teacher. To this, it become expedient those teachers are train properly not only in pedagogical skills but in special training like civic duties and administrative strategy to man any other area of need other than teaching. It is worthy of note that the position of the teacher is so central that the Nigerian National Policy on Education notes emphatically that no educational system of any nation can rise above the quality of its teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

The implication of the aforementioned is that teacher translates policies into practice and programmers into action. Hence, he or she has to acquire distinguished, well planned and systematic training programme that will qualify him or her as a dispenser of knowledge, skills and attitude. According to Oyekan,(2006) emphasized that our steady march beyond the 21st century, which requires a comprehensive specialized training of sound competent manpower and wise utilization of vast natural resources, shall ultimately depend on the availability of effective and efficient teachers with purposeful leadership vision in all human disciplines.

Consequently, the present day sophistication in our classrooms as well as the scarcity of qualified teachers in Nigeria educational sub-sector in recent times, makes it imperative that proper attention be paid to the mode and method which teachers are been prepared into our primary, secondary and tertiary institutions since the strength of any educational system largely depends on the quality of its teachers and the way and manner they are trained or produced will also determine their operations and effectiveness in carrying out their teaching.

CONCISE ANALYTICAL STUDY OF TEACHER PREPARATION IN NIGERIA

The training of teachers at the early time was informal, in other word, the preparation of teachers at that time was intended to be a type of training for a specific job of teaching people to read and write, even though at present teacher education programmes at the various universities and colleges of education have evolved into full fledged academic studies, the impression still lingers on even till today. As pointed out by Esu (1999) the

missionaries pioneered teacher preparation to protect their religious interest against secular education.

Consequent upon this, the Christian missions argued that the form of education the "would be teacher" or pupil teachers received would influence their performance. To secure this type of protection of their religious interest, some of the voluntary agencies like Southern Baptist, the Presbyterian among others established their own teacher training schools but within their premises. According to Amadi, (1986) this will afford the white men (missionaries) the opportunity to study the students, to select and train the most promised ones as teacher evangelists.

In another development, **The Church Missionary Society (CMS)** provided the leadership for the education of teacher preparation when it established a training institution at **Abeokuta in 1859**.

Analytically, teacher preparation in Nigeria is viewed from the fact that education is the biggest industry, therefore the preparation of teacher for teaching needs utmost attention. At present, According to Durosaro, (2002) education sector employs more workers than can be found in all other sectors put together. The Education sector serves more clientele than any other industry. How teachers are trained or prepared should be the concern of every Nigerian citizen because education and indeed teachers are instruments or process of transmitting the cultural heritage stabilizing the present and improving or changing the future.

Teacher preparation has a number of implications in this new era of ICT and technologies. To this effect Bajuh (1999), gave the importance of the teacher as follows; no matter how well our thought about teaching subjects have been developed and documented, no matter how realistic we think our objectives are, the success of our education programmes depends on a great extent on the classroom teachers. It is the teacher in the final analysis, who translates our programmes, policies and thoughts into actions.

The Necessity of Quality in Teacher Preparation in Nigeria

While striving for educational excellence in Nigeria as it is stipulated in the National Policy on Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria, (2004) says Education in Nigeria is an instrument "Par Excellence" for effecting national development implies that Nigerian's socio-economic and political development is structurally depends on education because she is the producer of manpower or work force for the Nation.

However, it is an obvious fact that nothing is learned, not until it is taught. The implication of this is that adequate preparation of teacher for Nigerian schools is very essential to both our educational system and the survival of the nation political economy, considering the fact that medical Doctors, lawyers, politicians and other professionals who man various positions of endeavors are made or prepared by a teacher.

Besides, the necessity of quality and adequate preparation of teachers in Nigeria should also be driven on the fact that Nigeria has set for herself policies and programmes **towards vision 20-20-20 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS)** whose ideals are aimed at making Nigeria one of the largest economies in the world, and by 2015 Basic Education which is the central focal target of (MDG) be achieved as was declared in September 2000 by 149 Nations including Nigeria that every child receives Basic Education through Education For All (EFA) programme. Sequel to the foregoing, It becomes indisputable that the Federal Government and other relevant stakeholders in educational sub-sector give high priority to teacher preparation in Nigeria if we are to achieved these lofty programmes.

Ukpong and Esu, (2010), Durosaro, (2009) emphasized that teachers are the fulcrum on which the educational development of a nation rests. What this means is that adequate and quality teacher preparation determines the quantity and quality of personnel, the capacity and the pace of production in the industry and beyond, It also implies that production of manpower in different disciplines require teachers who are current in their different subject areas and techniques of teaching because of new innovations in computer education, e-learning, ICT and the driven force of globalization. Obviously, globalization is the key factor driving the changes we are witnessing and experiencing today through education. Obioma, (2010).

Consequently, we should realize that teachers are the main determinants of quality in education, but in a situation whereby adequate attention is not given to how they are produced into the schools system, the result will always led to mass failure we are experiencing in both WAEC and NECO examinations a crossing the country. To this effect salient issue in teacher education programmes needs thorough re-organization in their teaching strategy, teaching practice supervision and the content of teacher education curriculum has to be looked into by relevant stakeholders.

The Problems of Quality in Teacher Preparation Identified

Education is a capital-intensive industry or enterprise that develops human intellect, ability and value system. It is on this background that the quality of teachers becomes imperative not only to improve the future skills of the management and work force for economic, political and social re-engineering but to ensure progressive development of intellectual structure in Nigeria education system. In other word, if the quality of teacher preparation which was meant to achieve the nations education goals are not met, then there is a dwindling problems that may hampered quality of teacher education vice versa teacher preparation in Nigeria.

As it is well known in Nigeria, institutions that are known for the training, preparing and the production of quality teachers are universities and colleges of education. As aptly captured by Ukpong and Esu (2010) universities and colleges of education are primarily concerned with the relevant processes for the quality of teacher preparation of

professional teachers to meet the ever growing needs for teachers at both primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

This however, implies that teachers are the largest single group of trained professional in Nigeria. Hence teacher preparation and training demands a continuous development of knowledge and ability for quality output. In his advocacy, Okebukola, (2010) blamed the National Teachers Institute for indiscriminately unleashing poorly trained teachers into the country educational system through programmes that are undeserved with teaching subject which has no professional connection to the school curriculum or the school certificate syllabus. Again research shows that about 65% of poor quality teachers either in primary or secondary schools were trained through sandwich programme organized by Universities and Colleges of education and these programmers are run on part time basis hence lacking adequate and proper preparation of the would be teachers. In concomitant to the aforementioned, the true gravity of Nigeria educational problems in the production of quality and competent teachers are anchored on ways and manner in which these teachers are prepared. According to Esu, (1999) in order to produce more graduate and non-graduate teachers in the country "crash programme" was introduced into teacher education in 1968 and 1974 for secondary and primary schools, the resultant effect was the half baked teachers in schools teaching general knowledge in place of content and specialized subject areas. To the a forgoing the following problems has been identified in the preparation and subsequent production of teachers into Nigeria educational system to include the following: Inadequate control of entrants into teaching profession, Lack of adequately equipped training institutions, Mass production at the expense of quality, Poor and unqualified teachers in Nigerian schools, the morale of teachers and quality of funding, in view of the changing nature of the society, there is a need for periodic review of the teacher education curriculum to integrate ICT, and entrepreneurial skills among others.

At this point, we wish to X-ray some of the identified problems.

Inadequate Control of Entrants into the Profession

According to Akinbote (2007) the poor quality of products of the teachers colleges can also among other things be attributed to the quality of student admitted into the colleges. The lowering of the admission requirement into the colleges for whatever reasons, has not only affected the quality of products of the colleges but also the image and prestige of the teachers profession.

Mass Production at the Expense of Quality

The Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) which has now become the minimum teaching qualification in the country has led to the mass production of NCE graduates in the country. In order to keep their jobs, the Grade 2 teachers are scampering all over Colleges of Education and institutions to rectify their jobs. This has seriously affected

quality as short term programmes are organized that does not look into in-depth of the course content.

Lack of Adequate Equipped Training Institutions

All institutions involved in the training of teachers are expected to be adequately equipped with the right human and resources. The teacher is expected to initiate pupils into conduct and cognition; therefore, he should be better initiated into same. In addition, the teachers must be adequately equipped with the skills of improvisation highly desired in the classroom. This reality is that due to poor quality of some entrants and the issue of mass production, this aspect has been relegated to be low level of expectation. This has produced a situation whereby half-baked trainers produce half-baked teachers who will in turn be recycled in to the system, leading to the present state of defective teaching and learning.

Gender Issues Expanded

In modern times education has been seen variously as the only weapon for liberation for any country or nation of the world. Sequel to this, discourse on gender issues and gender education needs concerted effort by an enlightened society and governments to eliminate all forms of discrimination and obstacles to equality.

However, it is vital to understand that "gender" and issues are two different terms with different tendencies, influence and development. In this scholarship, gender is viewed as social connotation built on the assumption based on the biological nature of males and females. According to Nwagbara, (2003) gender refers to socially constructed roles and socially learned behaviors and expectations associated with males and females. To this end gender and constructions are different from place to place including cultural structure and tradition. On the other hand, "issues" denotes things in dispute, or something to be at the most important part of the subject that is being discussed, (Webster's new compact dictionary). But as stressed by Nwagbara, (2003) issues in gender emanate from discrimination, which remains pervasive in many aspects of life worldwide. To her, issues include certain rights and privileges which women are not enjoying either due to habitual practices, custom or tradition.

Consequent upon the foregoing, it means some of the issues in gender also been that of differential treatment for men and women, boys and girls as it is the case of basic rights. In terms of social responsibilities for instance, women are not allowed to own a land, manage a family affairs except with the concern of their husband, often in some societies when the man dies the woman turns to lose those properties. All these crises emanated from human knowledge of trying to be above another person in spite of equal landmark achievement in the society.

The situation described above brings us to understand that gender issues refer to culturally specific patterns of behavior that may be attached to the sexes. As societies continue to acknowledge that, there are biological differences and thus continue to

treat males differently from females, gender crises and gender inequality keeps evolving, hence, making gender issues a global problem.

Key Role of Gender Education of Women in Teacher Preparation in Nigeria

The key role played by women in the educational sub-sector in Nigeria in recent time cannot be over-emphasized, hence, it is believed that if gender issues are brought to the centre stage in education discourse and such policy advocacy is implemented without bias or discrimination, than the preparation of teachers for our schools in the society will be a potent drive for vision 20-20-20 and other programmes and policies of the federal government.

It is often said, if we educate a man, we educate an individual but if we educate a woman we educate a nation. In Nigeria, during the past and present, the contribution of Nigerian women for national development cannot be ignored, for instance, in this administration we have women with track records who contributes to the development of Nigeria, example is the minister of education, Professor Ruquyyatu Ahmed Rufai, professor Charity Abhimen Angya as vice chancellor Benue state university, Professor Eka Braide as vice chancellor of federal university of Nassarawa, and professor (Mrs.) comfort Ekpo as vice chancellor university of Uyo, Akwa Ibom state and a great number of women as Directors in the Research Institutes and Commissioners for Education in various state of the federation. These women and others have been able to raise their heads above the African Traditions of the past that negate women of access to education. Again, it shows that women have a lot to offer in terms of development; in fact they are to a greater extent agents of development in the preparation of teachers as they have gained worthy recognition in International circle.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this paper it has been observed that for the preparation of teacher to meet the aspiration of the Nation, it should be coordinated with proper monitoring team to see if sound and qualify personnel are there at different teacher training colleges. Again, it is important to put in place a sound programme that is designed to equip teacher with requisite knowledge, attitude, behavior and skills that require them to perform their tasks effectively in the school and classroom.

More importantly, the organization and operations of pre-service teacher education programme and in-service teacher education programme which are important components of teacher education programme should emphasis and enforce internship in teaching, to ensured effective production of and competent teachers who are to be abreast with modern content and pedagogy in the acquisition of the art and science of teaching is realized.

Consequently, the following recommendations are made.

1. Teacher education programme which is the path-way for teacher preparation and subsequent production of teacher has been grossly under-funded in Nigeria hence government and relevant agencies should consider the provision of adequate funding of teacher education programme as well as the provision of infrastructure and instructional materials.
2. There is need to review teacher education curriculum to ensure teachers are exposed to all the required course in education to make them competent professionals.
3. The recent policy of making the pedagogic content just 20% of the total credits to be offered by an education students/trainees needs to be revisited if we are to prepare teachers that are competent and professional.
4. Teacher Education curriculum should also place more emphasis on the use of instructional time, lifelong learning, assessment techniques and team teaching for both gender.
5. The preparation of special education teachers need to be given preference.

References

- Abioma, Godswill, (2010), *Reconstructing Teachers Education and Development in Nigeria for Global Competitiveness*. Keynote Address Presented at the 2nd International Conference Organized by Faculty of Education University of Calabar, Nigeria in Collaboration with Teachers without Borders, Seattle Washington, and United State of America. At the University of Calabar.
- Akinbote, O. (2009), *Problems of Teachers Education for Primary Schools in Nigeria; Beyond Curriculum Design and Implementation*. *Ibadan International Journal of Africa America Studies* Vol. 6, (2), July 2007.
- Amadi, I.E. (1986), *Teacher Education in Nigeria*. Calabar, Wusen Press Limited
- Ayini, B. Oko, P. and Ekwok, I. (2008) *Political and Economical Issues on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment for Sustainable Development in ANG book of Proceedings*, Calabar. Index Book Publishers Limited, Calabar.
- Bajah, S.T (1999), *Two Decades of Primary Science in Nigeria, A Critical Evaluation*. 23rd Annual Conference Proceedings of STM, Akure.
- Durosaro, D.O. (2009), *Teacher Education in Nigeria; Past, Present and Future Challenges*. Paper Presenting at University of Ilorin.

- Esu, A.E. (1999) Rethinking Teacher Education Programme in Nigeria. Abia. Published by Association of Teachers Educator of Nigeria. Journal, 1.
- Nwagbara, C (2003), Population/Family Life Educations, Women and Gender Issues in Nigeria, Owerri. TAIT Publications, Owerri.
- Okebukola, P. (2010), Teacher Education; The Challenges in Nigeria. A Paper Presented at 2010 Annual Conference of the Nigeria Institute of Education Kastina state Chapter.
- Solaru, T.T. (1964), Teacher Training in Nigeria. Ibadan, Ibadan University Press.
- Ukpong, J and Esu, A.E. (2010), Curriculum and Peace Education; Imperative for Basic Education in Nigeria. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 17, (2) pp 224-249.
- Ukpong, J, Esu, A. (2010), Developing Skill through ICT in Teacher Education; Panacea for Achieving Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Ukpong, J.S. *et al.* (2014), Analytical Study of Teacher Preparation and Gender Issues Reappraised. *J. of Education and Policy Review*, Vol. 6, No. 2, Pp. 10 – 18.
