

# Innovations

## Teacher education reforms and issues in Nigeria

**Edionwe, Nosakhare Ph.D**

Department of Business Education, Faculty of Education  
Delta State University, Abraka

**Dr. Mrs. R. C. Onyemeluwe**

Department of Business Education, Faculty of Education  
Delta State University, Abraka

**Corresponding Author: Edionwe, Nosakhare Ph.D**

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### **Abstract**

*The topic of teacher education has gained attention around the world in general and in Nigeria in particular. The concept, basis, and historical context of teacher education, together with the Sustainable Development Goals and teacher education, issues in teacher education, and potential improvements in teacher education are all examined in this paper with particular focus on the situation in Nigeria. This study employed an exploratory methodology and relied on secondary data gathering techniques, including data extraction from conference papers, public records, textbooks, journals, magazines, and other sources. The study's conclusion is that, in order to fulfill the high ideals and aspirations of our dreams, teacher education in Nigeria needs to be rebranded. This requires the urgent participation of all stakeholders in the country's education sector.*

**Keywords:** 1. Teacher education, 2. reforms, 3. issues, 4. sustainable development goals

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### **Introduction**

It is stated that education is as old as life itself. This is the case because a person is continually being taught, instructed, or given directions by important people in her life from the moment she is born and throughout her whole existence. As a result, she is continuously learning primarily from people, but also from events, experiences, etc. The term "teaching" is typically used to refer to the people tasked with the duty of molding members of society toward acquisition of formal education (mostly in schools), as well as other forms of information, values, and skills. According to Okoh (2003), teaching is the conscious and intentional effort made by a mature or experienced person to impart information, knowledge, skills, and other things to a less mature or experienced person with the hope that the latter will learn or come to accept what he is taught on sound foundations. Teaching is an intentional, interpersonal, and engaging activity that aids in the learning of others and influences how they may behave. It consists of a sequence of encounters between a teacher and a student, with the express purpose of altering one or more of the student's cognitive or affective states (Azare & Iliyasu, 2010). The practice of teaching in the context of credentials, roles, compensation, ethics, and regulation is referred to as the teaching profession. Teacher education refers to the training or preparation of the teacher to be well qualified to give his services to the society.

The fact that the greatest philosophers of all time were also brilliant educators, and their philosophy was mirrored in their educational system, shows how closely philosophy and education are related. No instructor, no matter how good in practice, can escape assumptions conscious or otherwise about what he stands for. These

presumptions are, as we all know, the foundation of theory rather than practice, and they serve as the foundation for the idea of a teacher. The instructor might be imagined from this premise as a superb individual who sets a good example for the pupil, both intellectually and morally. The educator must possess superior knowledge, human insight into the needs and abilities of the students, and moral greatness in their own actions and convictions. In order for the learner's intellect to find, evaluate, unite, synthesize, and create applications of information to life and behavior, he must also exercise significant creativity. In essence, the teacher acts as a role model for developing lifelong virtues like tolerance, patience, and persistence in the pursuit of a goal.

In the 1950s to the beginning of the 1980s, teachers and the teaching profession, according to Achimugu (2005), were given great standing in society because they carried out their responsibilities to support national development with a strong feeling of efficiency and responsibility. The three main elements that contributed to this high level of commitment were their favorable social, economic, and professional environments. Parents in particular and society at large therefore accorded teachers a great deal of respect, dignity, and honor during that time. The teacher was regarded as a keeper of information as well as a powerful and inspirational figure in the community. Some parents would desire their children to become teachers because of how highly regarded and rated he was in comparison to other professionals. In reality, many people in those days had a strong ambition to become teachers.

Unfortunately, events throughout the years have demonstrated that the standing and view of teachers by society, as well as the teaching profession, have plummeted in Nigeria and many other nations around the world (Hall & Langton, 2006; Hargreaves et al, 2007). It is possible that the social origins of teachers and the environment of teaching and learning are to blame for the poor status and perception of teachers and the teaching profession. Due to this, stakeholders in education and the general public now have diverse perspectives on teachers and the teaching profession. And these inevitably have an impact on how teachers are trained and placed in the classroom. As a result, teacher education is currently a hot topic both globally and in Nigeria in particular. The concept, objectives, justification, and historical context of teacher education, along with the sustainable development goals and teacher education, as well as the challenges of teacher education and suggested reforms in teacher education, are all examined in this study with particular focus on the situation in Nigeria.

### **Research Methods**

For this study, pertinent data were extracted from conference papers, public documents, books, journals, magazines, and other sources using the secondary technique of data collecting. On the other hand, the study adopted an exploratory research approach. This is due to the fact that it piques the researchers' curiosity and drives them to fully comprehend the issue. This makes it possible for the researchers to learn more about the context of the study.

## **Review of Related Literature**

### **Teacher Education**

The two fundamental ideas of "teacher" and "education" are combined to form the term "teacher education." The type of education known as "teacher education" aims to generate teachers with the appropriate number, caliber, and traits. Teaching and learning environments are crucial, but teachers are at the heart of the issue of education's quality and relevance. A key determinant of the educational quality being sought is how well they are educated and equipped for their jobs. People who have never participated in a teacher education program are frequently appointed as teachers in several nations. A situation like this is not typical; rather, it is an emergency brought on by the severe lack of qualified teachers in many nations throughout the world. Nowadays, educational authorities are probably less likely than they were ten or twenty years ago to use this expedient situation. Instead, initiatives are made to prioritize the establishment of frameworks that will ensure the preparation of high-caliber instructors (Emeh & Enufoha, 2004). Thus, the process of training that deals with the art of obtaining competences and professional progress is known as teacher education. It is a crucial practice that improves teaching and learning abilities. It is a way to give instructors the abilities and information they need to

not just do their duties as teachers well, but also to openly encourage their own professional development. Thus, the goal of teacher education in Nigeria is to generate classroom instructors who are highly motivated, sensitive, conscientious, and successful. These instructors will manage students skillfully and professionally to improve educational outcomes.

In Nigeria, the National Policy on Education document accurately states the objectives of teacher education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). These include: i. developing highly dedicated, diligent, and effective classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system; ii. fostering teachers' inquisitiveness and creativity; iii. assisting teachers in integrating into their communities and society at large and strengthening their commitment to national goals; and iv. giving teachers the academic and professional background necessary for their assignment and preparing them for it.

The UNESCO (1966) stated the following as the purpose of teacher education: to develop in each student his general education and personal culture, his ability to teach and educate others, an awareness of the principles which underlie good human relations, within and across national boundaries, and a sense of responsibility to contribute both by teaching and by example to social, cultural, and economic progress. These goals appear to support or strengthen this statement. The objective of teacher education in Nigeria, as well as anywhere else in the world, is to prepare professionals for pre-service and/or in-service positions with adequate and relevant subject matter content (knowledge, skills, and dispositions), pedagogy (art, strategies, and teaching activities), and 21st Century skills (for adaptation to the changing society and knowledge economy).

### **Rationale for Teacher Education**

A real tool for educational advancement is teacher education. The Federal Republic of Nigeria strategically alludes to this significance. According to the Nigerian government's National Policy on Education, no country can achieve economic, social, and technological advancement and self-sufficiency without a strong educational system to build on its successes. The caliber of the teachers who work inside the system, however, determines what constitutes a good educational system. And this is what Ibukun (2004) highlights when she claims that the caliber of a program's professors determines how effective the program will be. Any educational modernization strategy must center on the teachers. This is because having good teachers in every classroom is the single most crucial component of a successful educational system. The facilitator of learning is the instructor. When the event is a "teaching-learning encounter", she serves as the "event manager". She is the building block on which a learner, an individual, and undoubtedly a nation are constructed. Therefore, regardless of how excellent the curriculum is, how sophisticated and up-to-date the learning environment is, or how brilliant or talented the students are, the learning outcomes ultimately depend primarily on the instructor.

The success of a school system's educational programs is determined by the caliber of its instructors, and a country's teacher quality can be used as a reliable barometer of its level of progress. The caliber of the teachers dictates the caliber of the school, which in turn defines the caliber and advancement of society. For this reason, every effort should be made to ensure that there are efficient, qualified, and well-equipped instructors in our classrooms. Perhaps the most important component of a quality education is effective instruction. In fact, no matter how many good teachers a student may later encounter, the negative and dishonorable repercussions of just one ineffective teacher may threaten his/her entire academic success. Therefore, the best teachers have the biggest impact on students' learning. And effective instruction isn't by coincidence. There are teachers that have a natural ability to make students learn, but successful teaching requires having the necessary knowledge, skills, competence, and commitment, as well as understanding of the academic material, the learning process, and child development.

The function of the teacher is large and extremely difficult in every country. The caliber of a school system's instructors, who carry out government goals and missions, determines the caliber of education provided there. The degree to which he or she can promote effective learning depends on the caliber of the training received, which is obviously anticipated to be in tandem with the classroom obstacles he or she may encounter upon completing his or her training. So, this is the justification behind teacher training programs. This thus clarifies why we need to construct and outfit teacher-training institutes in order to prepare or train qualified teachers to

meet the needs of the general public in terms of education. It makes sense, then, that Nigeria's successive administrations have worked hard since independence to prioritize education in each of their separate programs in an effort to protect the nation from the problems associated with a lack of skilled labor. More academic institutions were established as a result of these efforts, which had the following effects: an increase in the literacy rate; the production of low- and high-level labor needed for the labor market; and the preparation of more in-service and pre-service teachers.

### **Historical Perspective of Nigerian Teacher Education**

In 1895, the Hope Waddel Training Institution in Calabar was founded, and immediately after that, in 1896, St. Andrew's Teacher Training College in Oyo was formed to grant Teachers' Grade III Certificates. A Teachers' Grade II Certificate was later enhanced by the College. In 1914, the British colonial authority created a facility in Bonny that piqued its interest in teacher preparation. One was founded in Nasarawa in 1909 and another in Katsina in 1921 in the northern region of Nigeria. The nation had fourteen institutions in place by 1925. At the time of Nigeria's independence in 1960, the government had only developed a small number of teacher training programs. These programs produced instructors who could teach students in grades III and II of the Higher Elementary School Certificate. Additionally, there existed a method for obtaining a Grade I Teachers Certificate that required a Grade II teacher to satisfactorily complete an inspection of his two teaching subjects or to pass two Advanced Level General Certificate of Education (GCE) subjects.

Following the government's adoption of the suggestions made by the Ashby Commission, which was established in 1959 for the Post-School Certificate and Higher Education, Advanced Teachers Colleges (ATCs) were established starting in 1961. The Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) was given to graduates of the Advanced Teacher Colleges, which were established to generate trained sub-degree instructors to teach at the lower levels of secondary schools. The ATCs later evolved into Colleges of Education (COEs), which continue to provide NCEs. The demand for teachers to teach in secondary schools' upper courses arose as teacher education became more standardized. To meet this requirement to train and create certified graduate teachers, faculties and institutes of education were established in numerous universities throughout Nigeria. Some Nigerian polytechnics also established schools and departments of education to train NCE instructors who would only instruct vocational courses.

In the 1970s, as schools received less attention and increasingly haphazard planning and implementation of educational policies became the norm, the hope for a better future that had been raised upon the Nation's independence progressively dissipated. Since many of the government administrators guiding the nation's educational ship lacked the necessary expertise and perspective, teachers and their value and usefulness meant very little to them. As a result, the previously great educational foundation built by heroes of independence fell apart, leaving the teaching profession with low morale and complete bewilderment. The confidence and fervor for becoming a teacher or entering the teaching profession were continuously and gradually eroded by education managers' lack of subtlety and administrative competence, as well as the occasional policy summersault. The list of issues affecting education prompted the Federal Government to convene the National Curriculum Conference in 1969, which ultimately led to the creation of the National Policy on Education, which outlined the roles, objectives, and methods for implementation of various levels and facets of education in Nigeria, including "teacher education".

The number, diversity, and quality of teachers in the country significantly increased after the implementation of the Teacher Grade I, II, and III Certificate programs. For many people who had yearned for the chance to receive teacher training, it was a rare opportunity. Government decided to streamline teacher preparation in order to leave the preparation of Grade II teachers in the hands of the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) and bring the production of NCE teachers under the control or supervision of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), in order to consolidate the gains of these category of teachers and even improve on it (NUC). These organizations were each given the duty of monitoring, directing, and controlling the academic activities related to teacher education that fell under their purview. In an effort to fulfill the nation's teacher shortage, it was anticipated that this structure would guarantee standards in teacher development.

Much has changed in Nigeria's turbulent history of the teaching profession in general, and teacher education in particular, over time. While governments, administrators, students, parents, the general public, and teachers themselves have generally criticized the teaching profession, teacher education has been marked by a variety of both positive and negative events and advancements. Adeyemi College of Education in Ondo, Alvan Ikoku College in Owerri, Federal College in Kano, and Federal College in Zaria were the nation's first four colleges of education to offer degree programs in education affiliated with universities of their choice. This innovative technique was later adopted by other educational institutions. About 70% of the colleges of education in the nation were collaborating with their chosen universities to offer degree programs as of the end of 2015. Some colleges that haven't started offering degree programs are clamoring or making a lot of effort to join the league. It must be underlined that the degree students are actually housed in the Colleges, are mostly taught by the College personnel, and are provided with services using the College facilities while degree programs are being administered by COEs in conjunction with universities. Exam administration, administration, scoring, and the transmission of results to Senates are normally all within the sole control of universities. Since the majority of the labor is done in and by colleges, several stakeholders wonder why advanced colleges can't operate programs and grant degrees without consulting universities. The now-defunct Presidential Technical Committee on Consolidation of Federal Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria proposed in 2007 that some Colleges of Education across the country's geopolitical Zones be given autonomy to provide degrees in specific fields (Asagha, Ibrahim & Ogirima, 2013).

Universities often have complete control over exam administration, scoring, and transmission of results to Senates. Many stakeholders question why advanced colleges can't operate programs and confer degrees without contacting universities given that the majority of the work is done in and by colleges. Some Colleges of Education from across the country's geopolitical Zones should be allowed authority to grant degrees in particular subjects, according to a 2007 proposal made by the now-defunct Presidential Technical Committee on Consolidation of Federal Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria (Asagha, Ibrahim & Ogirima, 2013). The caliber of the outcomes delivered by these diverse schools has come under scrutiny as a result of the development of teacher training programs at the sub-degree and even degree levels. As a result of the oversupply of workers in the field of teacher education, many graduates of universities, polytechnics, and colleges who have trained teachers are now forced to scavenge the streets for work like their peers in other professions, while others are underemployed or exploited in some private establishments. Along with the proliferation of institutions offering teacher education, there are a plethora of regulatory and/or overseeing organizations, which can occasionally make it difficult to grasp what each one does. The particular functions of the NUC, NCCE, NBTE, NTI, TRCN, UBEC, State Ministries, and other organizations in the training, supervision, deployment, and management of pre-service teacher trainees, in-service trainees, and post-service trainees and trainers must be clearly defined.

### **Sustainable Development Goals and Teacher Education**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) reached their conclusion in 2015. The extent of their accomplishments will be debated in the future on their level of success. As a result, on September 25, 2015, the world's nations endorsed a text named "Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly. It was/is the post-2015/post-MDG sustainable development agenda, which has as its goals the eradication of poverty, the preservation of the environment, and universal prosperity. The paper included 17 goals and 169 targets, with 2030 set as the completion deadline. These 17 objectives are commonly known as "Sustainable Development Objectives" (SDGs). The 17 SDGs include no poverty, zero hunger; having a good quality of life; good education; gender equality; access to clean water and sanitation; cheap and clean energy; good work and economic development; infrastructure and industry innovation; lessened disparities; sustainable communities and cities consumption and production with responsibility, climate change, life on land, life below the water, peace, justice, and strong institutions and collaboration to achieve the goals.

SDG No. 4, which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for everyone, is the goal that is unique to the field or discipline of education. Included are the

following:

1. By 2030, guarantee that all girls and boys complete primary and secondary education that is free, egalitarian, and produces learning results that are pertinent and useful.
2. By 2030, guarantee that all girls and boys have access to high-quality pre-primary education that will prepare them for primary school.
3. By 2030, guarantee that all women and men have equal access to affordable, high-quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including higher education.
4. Significantly raise the proportion of young people and adults who, by 2030, possess the necessary technical and vocational skills for work, respectable employment, and entrepreneurship.
5. Achieve equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the disadvantaged, including individuals with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations, by 2030.
6. Ensure that all children and a sizable part of adults' men and women are literate and numerate by the year 2030.
7. By the year 2030, make sure that all students have the knowledge and abilities necessary to advance sustainable development, including, but not limited to, education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship, and an appreciation of cultural diversity and the role that culture plays in sustainable development.
8. By 2030, construct and modernize educational facilities that are gender, disability, and child-sensitive and offer all students a secure, non-violent, inclusive learning environment.
9. By 2030, significantly increase the number of scholarships offered to developing nations, especially the least developed nations, Small Island Developing States, and African nations, for enrollment in higher education, including technical, engineering, and scientific programs in developed and other developing nations, as well as vocational training in information and communications technology.
10. Significantly increase the number of certified teachers available by the year 2030, including through international collaboration for teacher education in developing nations, particularly in the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States (UNESCO, 2015).

This last one directly affects the training of teachers. The practice of teacher education and national policy should be consistent in order to prepare people for achieving this goal. The national education strategy in Nigeria demonstrates the conviction and faith in the contribution that education makes to promoting social and economic advancement. Additionally, the goals established for teacher education show a determination to guarantee outstanding teachers and teacher preparation through a vigorous push for policy reform in this area.

### **Challenges for the Achievement of SDGs**

There are still many obstacles to overcome, so it is clear that in order to achieve SDG No. 4, which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all, teacher education will require a stronger commitment to the effective implementation of national plans and policies, as well as a higher level of creativity and innovation in the preparation of teachers and in the classrooms. At all three levels of teacher preparation, recruitment, and retention, change in teacher education will therefore be essential. Teacher preparation institutes will need to review their programs' content and approach at this level, as well as develop better and more efficient programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006). She asserts that these programs should include three key components: coherence and integration among courses... intensively supervised clinical work interwoven with course work using pedagogies integrating theory and practice, and stronger and proactive partnerships with schools. To guarantee that the teacher gets the most out of all the courses, all of the courses in an education program should be viewed as parts of a whole and presented in a much more logical and connected way. Additionally, clinical practice should be carefully planned and carried out while utilizing connections and collaboration with schools to guarantee that theory and practice are closely related. The desire to shorten this component is sometimes strong because it is perceived as expensive, although institutions can constantly explore more school-based and cost effective models.

Additionally, we must consider the rising need for a fresh set of abilities among school dropouts, including

problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, innovation, and flexibility (Wagner, 2008). According to UNESCO (2014), in nearly a third of the world's countries, the challenge of training existing teachers is worse than that of recruiting and training new teachers. As a result, new skills necessitate new teaching methods, which need to be addressed for both pre-service and in-service teachers. Teachers must therefore possess these skills in order to help students learn them. In order to help teacher candidates gain these abilities while also training instructors to teach them to students, teacher preparation is necessary. Even though half of them have attended school for at least four years, 250 million youngsters are not gaining basic skills, according to UNESCO (2014:5). The children's exposure to poor teaching and learning practices is one of the causes of this failure. One approach of attempting to deal with this issue of low learning outcomes is to pay much greater attention to teacher preparation.

There are a variety of issues that affect teacher retention, such as poor working conditions, limited opportunities for professional advancement, and low salary. While teacher education schools may not have much control over the compensation and working conditions, they can aid increase retention by offering pertinent Continuing Professional Development (CPD). When technology, teaching methods, and school curricula change but teachers are unprepared to adapt, they may become frustrated. It is important to keep in mind that CPD must be carefully planned and carried out because it is an integral aspect of teacher recruitment and retention. Therefore, may we all (teacher educators, development partners, supporters, and governments) commit ourselves to working toward the provision of quality teacher education as we come together in this Seminar and as we position ourselves to aid our country in achieving the SDGs? Teachers may play a significant role in assisting countries in achieving the SDGs, but they must be prepared and given support in order to do so. The majority of governments have already incorporated the transformation of teacher education into their national plans and programs, and it is hoped that this will lead to more alignment between policy and practice. In the new six-year plan, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) will continue to support teacher education institutions in delivering efficient learning opportunities for sustainable development. COL is committed to tackling concerns related to teacher education. Having more pertinent, high-quality, pedagogically sound, and gender-responsive programs and learning materials is one of the main outcomes that COL will be working toward with partners in this plan (Joshua, 2016).

### **Teacher Education in Nigeria: Role of NCCE**

As the third leg of the excellence tripod for tertiary education supervision in Nigeria, the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) was formed by an Act in 1989. (the other two being NUG and NBTE). The establishment of Minimum Standards for all programs of teacher education and the accreditation of their credentials and other academic prizes are among its stated objectives. The Commission has relentlessly pursued quality assurance goals since its founding. The Commission is still committed to achieving its objectives of supplying our fast growing Basic Education sector with qualified instructors. In response to widespread criticism that current NCE programs are not producing enough people for Basic Education, the NCCE has updated the existing NCE Minimum Standards guidelines. New programs have been added to meet the current teacher needs at the Basic Education level. The new programs are now more focused on the expectations of Education for All (EFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The existing two-subject combination in the NCE program, which is suitable for preparation for the B.Sc. (Ed)/B.A. (Ed) degree programs; and the new two-subject combination in the NCE program, which is suitable for preparation for the B.Sc. (Ed)/B.A. The new Minimum Standards document is now focused on developing specialized instructors for: early childhood & care education or pre-primary education, junior secondary education, primary education, secondary school, adult education and informal learning, and special education in the classroom.

The new programs are therefore level-specific and appropriate for B.Ed degrees for individuals who wish to pursue higher education. Simply put, this implies that we are starting the process of preparing qualified instructors for each of the five aspects of fundamental education mentioned above. Along with the updated and extended Minimum Standards guidelines, an Implementation Framework to direct NCE-awarding institutions has been created in light of the fundamental changes in teacher education that these new programs reflect. The Framework establishes criteria for curricular implementation. It presents the historical context that influenced

the creation of the new teacher education programs and offers specific instructions on what administrators, teachers, and students should do when putting the curriculum into practice. This is thought to ensure that there is uniformity in practice throughout all the NCE-awarding institutions, along with other cutting-edge concepts that have been weaved into it.

For instance, the NCCE has engaged in a variety of initiatives over the past five years (such as conferences, workshops, critiquing sessions, etc.) to address the disparity between certified teacher qualifications and the caliber of their on-the-job performance. It has become evident that the observed mismatch between the current NCE program and the industry it serves has played a significant role in the issue. The goal of the NCE level teacher training program, which is the minimal teaching credential recognized in Nigeria, is to develop competent instructors for the Basic Education sub-sector, which includes the five previously mentioned components. In addition to those of the Senior Secondary Education, each of these parts or categories of education has a recognized national curriculum that is distinctive and substantial (which is equally content specific). Therefore, the NCCE must go above and beyond what it is currently doing in order to remain relevant to the sub-sector it is supposed to serve. Without ignoring the demands for higher education, it must equip instructors with the knowledge and abilities necessary to teach successfully at the various levels and sectors of the Basic Education program. The result of this thinking is the current Minimum Standards document. The commission was involved in a variety of related activities while discussions about the new Minimum Standards document's topic were taking place, including: a review of the teaching techniques, providing our teachers with a supportive, child- and learner-friendly environment, a review of the minimal requirements for teacher educators' professionalism and the Quality Assurance Toolkit, a new instrument that would address institutional evaluation as well as the requirements of educators in carrying out their duties, was created and disseminated.

The new Minimum Standards document has been expanded to address the needs identified in light of these developments. It has also updated the minimal contents using those found in the Basic Education Curriculum by taking advantage of the review activity. The document keeps the current two-subject combinations to enable for teacher candidates' preparation in senior secondary schools and as a requirement for admission to B.Sc. (Ed)/B.A. (Ed) programs. Therefore, NCCE is aware of and resolute in striving to fulfill her mandate in the teacher education sector of our educational system. She is also attentive to the difficulties and growing trends in our educational systems that are brought on by these trends globally.

### **Nigeria's Teacher Education Challenges**

The history of teacher education in Nigeria is complex and lengthy. Its current situation is marked by a few issues that call for immediate and ongoing care. Some of these difficulties include:

#### **Production versus Absorption of Teachers**

The rate at which teachers are produced by different training institutes and the rate at which they are incorporated into school systems differ. Without considering the demands of the society's teachers, training institutions accept students, educate them, and then release their graduates. The majority of the time, admission policies and practices are implemented in institutions to increase internal revenue (IGR) or to conform to the carrying capacities of the institutions as determined by the appropriate regulatory agencies, still without consideration for the teacher needs of the nearby and larger host or owner communities. The implementation of "part-time" and "sandwich" programs at our universities and colleges has significantly increased the number of instructors produced and placed on the job market. It follows naturally that there are more instructors generated than are required by the educational institutions, and this scenario has its own knock-on effects on the economy of the country. However, there are a few States in the country where there aren't enough instructors to staff the schools, so inexperienced and incompetent teachers are still employed there. In these states, the situation is different. However, this is a rare event. The prevalent condition in Nigerian society now is that there is an imbalance between the production and absorption of NCE and Graduate instructors. Ironically, schools in certain States are struggling to find the necessary quantity and caliber of teachers because the state governments have put a ban on hiring, while teacher graduates are out on the streets looking for work. For Nigerian teacher education, this presents a significant difficulty.

### **Constitutional and Policy Issues**

According to the Nigerian Constitution, only the Federal Government is authorized to enact laws or create policies pertaining to education. As a result, the State and Local Governments rely on and wait for the Federal Government to implement a new policy, amend an existing one, or discontinue an ineffective one. The Federal Government and/or her agencies set the standards and the curricula for use in the schools at all levels. However, the State Governments are free to build any type of school, and they have done so with great eagerness and generosity. As a result, it happens frequently that school owners and operators differ from those who create and provide school policies. The dedication to carrying out the policies and curriculum correctly is sometimes questioned. A problem could arise when local content is added to the nationally mandated curriculum to address the unique requirements of the communities surrounding the schools. In teacher education, a similar situation occurs. For instance, many colleges of education run by state governments and private businesses/individuals exhibit little interest in or dedication to providing the facilities that are required in their institutions or striving to have them accredited by the appropriate regulatory body. This scenario of competing and/or non-exclusive duties of the various levels of government in educational matters generally and in teacher education topics specifically raises a number of other issues.

### **Funding of Education**

The annual budgets of the various levels of government allocate very little money for the education sub-sector. Sometimes, the amount of money allocated to the education sub-sector by the federal government is as low as 11% of the total budget, and by state governments, it is 8.7% of the total budget, which is far less than the UNESCO recommendation of 26%. Due to a lack of funding, all the sub-components, sector's including teacher education, suffer from inadequate, insufficient, or outdated facilities and resources. As a result, a lot of institutions that provide teacher education are unable to reach their full potential because of a lack of funding from the owners of those institutions. The majority of state-owned educational institutions allocates no money for capital improvements and only relies on the Tertiary Education Fund (TetFund) for infrastructure improvements. In addition to insufficient budgetary allocations, another problem is the release of the budgeted funds. Many times, just a small portion of the budgeted funds are ultimately released, which worsens the sub-already sector's vulnerable situation. Another problem is how certain school administrators are managing the released monies. Another Nigeria-specific issue in this regard is the poor private sector involvement in funding education. The establishment of TetFund was a modest start in this direction, and it has effectively halted infrastructure deterioration in the majority of our public educational institutions.

### **Lack of Implementation of Existing Policies, Laws and Recommendations**

In Nigeria, at least, a lack of adequate laws and policies has not hurt teacher education. Contrarily, there are a lot of these laws, regulations, proposals, etc. that are waiting to be fully implemented. Both the well-articulated National Teacher Policy, which focuses on teacher education and the equally well-articulated National Policy on Education have not yet undergone full and thorough implementation. In a similar vein, other commissions and panels on education in general and teacher education in particular had previously worked and had produced a number of encouraging proposals. Many of these were abandoned or were never fully implemented because they were dead on arrival. Since we lack the will (political, financial, logistical, etc.) to implement the suggested therapies to improve the situations, even though as a nation we can readily describe our problems and potential remedies in Teacher Education (and in our sectors), we do so; that is a huge undertaking.

### **Low-quality Inputs/Entrants into Programs of Teacher Education**

The quality of applicants to our colleges of education and faculties of education in our universities is one of the biggest difficulties facing teacher education in modern Nigeria. Many people lost out on their first choices of programs, which were mostly outside of education. After realizing their scores in the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and/or School Screening Exercise were too low to get them into their first program of interest, some students switch to education. Most of the time, colleges and faculties must decrease their "cut-off points" in order to even screen candidates. As a result, the majority of candidates accepted to be trained as teachers at the conclusion of the admissions process are of low quality, unmotivated, confused, and transient. The "garbage in, trash out" adage applies because training institutions struggle to transform such high-caliber inputs into well-refined, high-quality, and competent products. The current conundrum in teacher education is poor treatment of the teaching profession.

The way teaching is viewed and perceived in Nigerian society is closely related to and most likely the root causes of low quality inputs/entrants into teacher education programs. It is one of the last careers that young people desire to pursue or that adults want their children or wards to pursue. They frequently view the working circumstances and welfare of teachers as appalling, frustrating, and unwelcoming. Teachers lose out in social and other groups where recognition is handed. Since they hardly ever turn up to be counted or taken seriously in society, teachers themselves don't seem to be helping the situation. Accordingly, how the government, people, and society as a whole treat or see teachers and the teaching profession typically tends to have a negative impact on the standard of the educational output as well as the perception and interest of young people in the field. This is possibly the biggest problem Nigerian teacher education is now facing.

### **Low Quality Trainers of Teachers**

Since professionals do not work in same or comparable circumstances, all types of personnel cannot be trained in the same manner. The "lecture approach" that characterizes instructional procedures at higher educational institutions should not be used in the training of teachers. Unfortunately, some of the trainers (lecturers) in our institutions are untrained in pedagogy, while others have outdated knowledge and abilities. When compared to the current and more effective method for achieving the best results, several of these trainers' instructional methodologies are mostly teacher-centered. Many of the system's trainers do not devote enough time to "continuous professional development" (CPD), which requires them to regularly update their knowledge, abilities, and dispositions in order to guarantee the systematic improvement of their delivery methods.

### **Disparity in Conditions of Service**

Differences in wages, requirements for promotions, opportunities for career advancement, and other benefits between colleges and universities serve as regular reminders that the grass is always greener in universities. Sometimes there are differences in the working environments in the two types of schools. The quality of their work is affected because some college workers spend their time and energy planning to leave their system and join a university system. A further indication of the federal government's priority order for its educational institutions is the formula it uses to distribute federal funds to various tertiary schools (which is 2: 1: 1 in favor of Universities, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education, respectively).

### **Multiple Monitors of Teacher Education Programmes**

In Nigeria, there are numerous government organizations that are either directly or indirectly charged with overseeing, monitoring, or regulating teacher preparation programs. While the direct responsibilities of NUC and NCCE in governing graduate and NCE teacher training in Universities and Colleges and other NCE-awarding institutions may be obvious, it is occasionally unclear what role NTI plays in training NCE teachers in the teaching-learning environments that have been typical of such trainings. Sometimes further description and clarification are needed for the function played by UBEC/SUBEC in overseeing teachers in the United States. In addition to the increased number of monitors, some agencies appear to be excessive, and some must deal with a lot of unpredictable or extraneous factors when carrying out their missions.

### **Infrastructure Deficit**

Some of the institutes that train teachers have inadequate facilities. Some training schools continue to have outdated infrastructures and insufficient training facilities (hardware, software and consumables). In many State-owned Institutions, numerous Federal Institutions, and the majority of Private Institutions, the situation is critical. The majority of tertiary institution owners in Nigeria have actually abdicated their duties in infrastructure development to TETFund, which is what is currently fashionable. Without TETFund, one wonders what the situation of our postsecondary educational institutions would have been.

### **Inability of Regulatory Agencies to execute their Mandates in Full**

Some of the government's regulatory agencies lack the funding required to fully perform their duties. For instance, due to a lack of funding, NCCE was unable to complete accreditation in up to ten Colleges for the entire year of 2015. NUC and NBTE might each have a unique tale to tell. Perhaps since their owners are unable to fulfill the requirements, the training institutes don't seem to worry as much about their accreditation status. The cumulative impacts of all of these have an impact on the caliber of educators who graduate from teacher training programs, and as a result, the caliber of instruction provided in our educational systems.

### **Suggested Reforms for Change in Nigeria's Teacher Education**

In Nigeria, teacher education has many challenges, some of which are listed below. Every issue demands an answer. Changes must be made as potential solutions to the problems identified in order to reconstruct teacher education and adapt it to the anticipated demands in Nigerian society. The modifications advocated include:

#### **Establishment of Teacher Education Fund**

Nigeria's teacher education is plagued by significant and pervasive issues. In fact, a number of the sub-players sectors have urged the government to declare a State of Emergency. To address the numerous challenges and issues in the sub-sector that are financial in nature, it is time to establish a separate/specific fund, similar to TETFund. In order to handle a problem or issue that affects the current and future generations of Nigerians, the society and the government would have worked together in this way.

### **Synergy between Teacher Production and Absorption**

Surveys of teacher shortages for each level of schools should be conducted on a state and national level, taking into account educational requirements, subject areas, etc. As a result, every State and Local Government will be aware of the precise quantity and diversity of teachers that they require at any given time. Then, COEs and university education faculties should admit and train candidates in accordance with the identified needs of the local community. Within the political system, free mobility of teacher education goods to locations with possibilities is desirable.

### **Full Scale Professionalization of Teaching in Nigeria**

Governments should make sure that teaching is fully practiced as a profession in Nigeria through the appropriate agencies. There should be some restrictions on who can teach. It should include, among other things, competitive and selective entry, well-defined and enforced training content and period, mandatory internship period, formal induction and licensing of new entrants following qualifying (minimum competency) examinations, participation in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programs being a requirement for renewal of license/certification, and appropriate sanctions, including possible license withdrawal. In the same sense, it should be legal to enable only teachers with appropriate credentials to instruct at all levels of school. Any employer who hires or retains any unqualified personnel as teacher(s) should be sanctioned or prosecuted. All unqualified personnel practicing as teachers in the school systems, who are appropriately labeled as "quacks" or "cheaters", should be systematically and gradually screened out of the school systems, from both public and private institutions. The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) needs to be able to handle the upcoming circumstances.

### **Making Teacher Education Programs Attractive to Teacher Trainees**

Given the situation that was previously described regarding the caliber of applicants who apply for admission into teacher education programs, it is imperative that the government make teacher education programs at all levels extremely attractive in order to attract qualified and motivated applicants to them. It's time to bring back the scholarships, grants, and other rewards that used to be a staple of teacher preparation programs. With this, qualified applicants with high UTME scores will be drawn to and chosen for teacher training.

### **Massive and Systematic Re-training of Present Teacher Trainers**

To fulfill the needs of today's trainees and learners, our teacher education training institutions' current staff is long overdue for a thorough rebranding. To keep up with child-centered and other modern or emerging teaching strategies that should be used in training teacher education personnel, managements of colleges of education, institutes and faculties of education, and similar bodies should be given the authority to organize refresher courses and workshops for their teaching staff. Every lecturer's professional development should include participation in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs. Unwilling and un-trainable lecturers should be fired from their positions.

### **Harmonization of Conditions of Service across Tertiary Educational Institutions**

All higher educational institutions should have equal and equivalent working circumstances in terms of pay, office and classroom amenities, career ladder steps and requirements, training opportunities, etc. These will eliminate or lessen perceived rivalry and societal/personal complexes among employees of different institutions. Additionally, there will be less movement or brain drain between universities. There will be a significant decrease in jealousy and envy among college and polytechnic staff members toward university faculty.

### **Enforcement of Established or Past Laws, Policies and Reforms**

The objectives of teacher education should be strongly pursued in Nigeria's National Policy of Education. The currently existing National Teacher Policy ought to be put into practice, strengthened, and updated as necessary. It is important to review and put into practice the recommendations made by previous national commissions, panels, and white papers. They shouldn't be left to collect dust in Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) while purported fresh reforms are sought.

### **Gathering all Teacher Education Programmes into One Regulatory Agency**

To ensure proper and comprehensive coordination and supervision, all Teacher Education programs offered in Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Universities, and other institutions should be regulated by a single agency. Additionally, it will improve the creation, execution, and evaluation of comprehensive policies. Here, it is strongly advised that the National Commission for Teacher Education (NCTE) be established. This will cause all parties involved in teacher education to become more focused and hold one agency responsible for all problems relating to teacher education across the nation.

### **Increased Budgetary Allocation to Education Subsector**

Any society's foundation is its education system. Anywhere in the world, it is at the center of national development. Governments at all levels must significantly increase their budgetary allocations to the Education sub-sector in order to meet UNESCO's recommendation of 26 percent of the total annual budget as the minimum if our education system is to play the expected role in Nigeria's national development and if it is to produce global citizens to compete successfully with their peers in the world. Finland, Japan, and other nations have already done this and are reaping the benefits in spades. To give more money to the COEs that are designated by government policy to train teachers for the Basic Education level, the Federal Government should review its sharing methodology for allocating cash to tertiary educational.

### **Autonomy to Mature Colleges of Education to Award Degrees of their own**

The ability to offer degrees on their own, without necessarily being affiliated with universities or altering their names to become universities should be given to mature colleges of education by legislation. Given that a significant portion of COEs currently manage degree programs of affiliated institutions with little assistance from the universities, this reform shouldn't be too challenging to implement. Similar to their counterparts at universities, COE employees should be able to advance to the highest academic rank of "Professor" by meeting the same requirements. Here, institutions like Teachers College, Columbia are cited as examples.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers are builders of nations. Every professional in almost every field of endeavor has been, is currently being, and will ever be taught by a teacher of some kind. Teachers are crucial to the development of a country. Education at the Basic education level, frequently followed by a period of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), also known as Nursery or pre-primary school education, serves as the basis for the development of most occupations. Functionality and teacher training for ECCE, Basic Education, and higher secondary school classes continue to be formidable obstacles for the entire nation of Nigeria. The delivery system at those fundamental levels of education is to blame for the lauded or allegedly declining state of education in the nation. Therefore, teacher education is a crucial component of education that no country can ignore, and Nigeria in particular. It develops the structural and foundational builders for all national and educational endeavors.

In Nigeria, teacher education has an illustrious and possibly infamous past. From pre-colonial to modern times, several attempts to produce trained teachers have been scripted, with related successes and failures or restrictions. The Nigerian Academy of Education brought together stakeholders in May 2016 to discuss the difficulties facing this crucial and strategic aspect of our country's development and to propose some reforms as a way forward. The journey of teacher education appears to be at a crossroads in contemporary Nigeria. The issues that Teacher Education in Nigeria faces are numerous, and the presenter has identified eleven major ones. He has also proposed roughly the same number of improvements to reposition Teacher Education for higher and more advantageous efficacy. These highlighted ones would be enhanced and possibly improved by our discussion of these. We have come to the conclusion that the current state of teacher education in Nigeria requires a national refocus, and all parties involved in the country's educational system must act quickly to rebrand teacher education to reflect the high goals and aspirations of our citizens.

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Corresponding Email: [nosakharry@gmail.com](mailto:nosakharry@gmail.com)