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STRUCTURAL APPROACH FOR IMPROVING TEACHERS' EDUCATION STANDARD IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

In recent time, Nigeria had witnessed unprecedented upsurge demand for education; the demand led to high students' population explosion at different levels of Nigeria educational system. Nigeria, therefore being the giant of Africa needs quality and standard education that will make the country ranked high among the development nations of the world. For this reason there is the need to restructure and reorganize teachers' educational programme in order to cater for societal demands for education. This paper however examined the structural approach towards enhanced standard teachers' education programme. It focused on the past and present structure of teachers' education programme, the strength and weaknesses. The paper also makes structural approach recommendations to enable Nigeria to be in the world class standard in teachers' education programme and to achieve Nigerian educational goals. Implementation strategies was also suggested towards enhancing quality assurance and standard in Nigerian teachers' education programme. It was finally concluded that effective structural approach should be accorded for Nigerian teachers' education, in the interest of enhancing quality in teachers education programme in Nigeria.



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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria in the 70's marked the beginning of unprecedented upsurge demand for education, with the introduction of the compulsory free universal primary education for the school aged children. The universal primary education (UPE) then faced a lot of problems, Prominent among the problems are inadequate school facilities, lack of qualified teachers, students' population explosion, inadequate training and retraining of teachers to cater for the pupils population in the schools. In order to solve the problems, the Federal Republic of Nigeria established various teachers' educational institutions such as, pivotal teachers' colleges, institute of Education, Advanced Teacher, Colleges and National Teachers' Institute (NTI). The established institutions were charged with the responsibilities for producing Grade Two, Grade III, TISSEP and Grade 1 teachers. The teachers produced then were used to provide immediate solution for the teachers demand and supply. Yet teachers produced then were not properly trained, they are half-baked teachers who could not drive the wheel of Nigerian educational goals to a desirable destination.

In recent time therefore, the societal demand for education manifested itself in the number of students that enrolled at the different levels of Nigerian Educational Institution. High Population Explosion in Nigerian Educational Institutions had become the concern of well meaningful Nigerians who have good will to education. Also three tiers of government demand for quality education for the erring students' population in the schools.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) accepted education as the instrument that could bring about national development. The federal Government however becomes interested in teachers' education to meet the challenge of the earring student population. However it was observed that there is no quality education that can rise above the level of its teachers. High priority however given to the teachers education in Nigeria. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), spelt out the goals of teachers' education as follow:

- Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of educational system.
- Encourage further spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.
- Help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to National goals.
- Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations.
- Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession (p.33).

Ojedele (2000) observed that no standard education could be provided with out quality teachers. Ojedele however noted that mass illiteracy is the bane of national productivity. The author opined that any country that failed to give her citizen quality education, such country may not be ranked high among the development nations of the world.

Ogundele (2004) also observed that 1990's was characterized by different form of crises and interests in Nigeria educational institutions. The crises include student unrest, teachers strike, examination malpractices, cultism, hooliganism, hungry, smoking, stealing and all forms of social crimes, all these disciplinary behaviors are attributed to the types and qualities of teachers' education coupled with faulty education system provided. Also, in recent time the social crimes such as kidnapping, bombing, examination malpractices, unemployment and killings that is currently disturbing the security and peace of the nation is attributed to the faulty nature of educational system provided.

In a bid to eradicate all forms of disciplinary behaviors in the schools system, Saraki (2000) however called for national educational reforms in Nigeria educational institutions. The types of educational reformed introduced by Saraki are, examination ethic reform, transferring or retiring indiscipline teachers, establishing educational corps to arrest the indiscipline students, adequate training and human capital development for teachers.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2007) also established teachers' registration council of Nigeria, introduction of compulsory Postgraduate and Advanced Diploma in Education (PGDE) for the teachers who are not educational biased. Despite all efforts put in place by the Federal and State Government to develop and produce quality teachers in Nigeria, in order to improve the lot of teachers. Also the Federal Government of Nigeria through the World Bank Assisted Programmes on Melieum Development Goals (MDGS) organized capacity building programmes for the teachers that are in the active service, (National Teachers Institute was charged with such responsibility). The purpose is geared towards producing highly dedicated and quality teachers for quality education.

These efforts of the three tiers of government prompted the writer to investigate the structural approach that could be adopted towards enhancing effective teacher education programme in Nigeria.

Approaches to standard teachers education programme in Nigeria

In a bid to provide highly qualified teachers to teach in Nigeria schools.

Minimum qualifications for teachers: Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) stated that the minimum qualification for the teachers in the teaching profession should be Nigeria certificate in Education (NCE). All teachers should be profession the federal Government of Nigeria also approved the fact that any person that want to enter into classroom right from crèche to university should have educational qualification. It was however mandated that all graduates and higher diplomas who are not educationally biased should be trained to have post Graduate diplomas in Education (PGDE). Registration of all the qualified teachers. That all qualified teacher should be registered under the Teachers registration council of Nigeria (TRCN), Establishment Professional Teacher Institution in an attempt to produce standard teachers for Nigerian education system, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) also approved the establishment of education institutions to be charged with the responsibilities of training the professional teachers, for the minimum standard required to be met. Such institutions are colleges or Education, National Teachers' institute, school of Education in the polytechnics, National institute of Nigerian Languages, and National Mathematical Centre.

Exposure to change and innovation in effects put in place towards improvement of teacher educational programmer in the teachers' education Nigeria are exposure to innovation and change in the teaching profession, in- service training programme, promotion opportunities towards professional growth setting up teachers' registration council to control and regulate teaching profession, an appointment of academically and professionally qualified teachers.

All the federal Government of Nigeria efforts towards the provision of qualified teachers for quality education in the country are laudable ones and highly commendable. Yet there are many teachers today that could not defend their certificate Adedoyin (2006) observed that out of ten 10,000, NCE teachers that applied for teaching job in Kwara state in 2006 only 60 applicant could defend their certificates Lawal (2002) also ordered for the closed down of many schools purposely because their teacher could not defend their certificates. Also many teachers were sacked from the teaching profession purposely because they could not defend their certificates. Despite all efforts put in place towards improving the qualities and standard of teachers' education programmers in Nigeria, many teachers are still found wanting as far as standard is concerned. What are the next approaches for improving the standard of teachers in Nigeria? The paper however investigated the structural approach that can be put in place toward improving teachers' education standard in Nigeria.

Problems encountered by the Teachers education programmes in Nigeria.

Many authors identified many problems encountered in a bid to improve standard teachers education programmes in Nigeria. Owan, Enoh, Becky and onwuka (1992) identified problems such financial problem, lack of qualified teachers, students towards teachers education, inadequate buildings, instructional material, library laboratory e.t.c inadequate supervisor and disparity between projected and actually enrolment.

Oyesola (1998) also noted those problems that affect Nigeria teacher education programmes as poor structural approach accorded teachers education programme, cancellation of teachers colleges. De-boarding system in education, relegation and disregard for teaching profession, poor teachers morale and job satisfaction, irrelevant curriculum development and teaching profession is taken as a serious, find themselves in the profession just because there in no other way. Teachers are not adaptable to change and innovation in the teaching profession. They have negative attitude toward change and innovation on teachers' education. Improper structural approaches that enable individuals and unqualified people to ordinarily jumped to the profession without adequate training. When they get to the profession they start to perform blunders and make jest of the profession. This paper focused on the need to restructure and re-organize teachers' educational programme in Nigeria so that effective standard and quality education could be enhanced in Nigerian schools.

Ogundele (2008) observed that Nigeria post independent was characterized by many crises in educational system. The crises was attributed to low standard of educational system provided. Also the structure approach accorded teachers' education was not tailored to the students' needs and aspirations. Immediately after the independence the structure of schooling are 7-5- 4 i. e seven years in primary schools 5-years in secondary school and 4 years university. Any candidate that failed school certificate would be advised to go to pivotal grade two teachers colleges to spend two years. Those with fair result will be asked to go university through higher school certificate (H.S.C) to spend their sixth years of secondary schools.

In 1 970s, the structure was changed to 6-5-4 that years of primary education, 5 years of secondary education and 4 years of university education. There was teachers colleges, higher secondary colleges for those student without good result.

The weakness of these types of structure is that it is culturally biased, non-technologically oriented, it also devoid adequate specialization it basically prepared individuals for white collar jobs, and the type of the structure provided are mainly allowed individuals to jump to a specialization it brings low perfections in the areas of specialization jumped into. It however resulted to high rate of examination malpractice in Nigerian educational system.

Curriculum conference of 1969 changed the structure of schooling to 6-3-3- 4 educational system (i.e 6 years in primary schools, 3 years of junior secondary schools and 3 years of senior secondary school and 4 years for university education). Nigeria is current implementing 9 -3 -4 educational system. This structure free and company 9 years in universal basic Education 3 years of secondary education and 4 years of university education. It means that during this period every child would be exposed to rudimentary basic education.

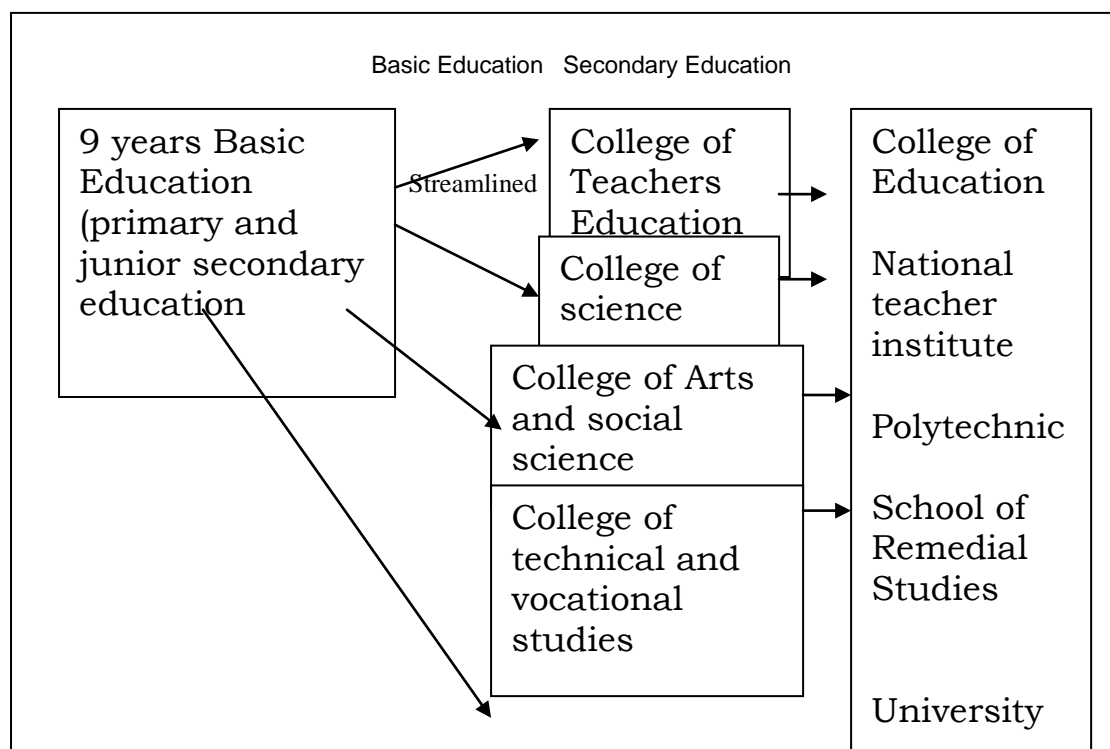
Owan Enoch & Bamanga (1992) also observed the following weakness in the structure of schooling namely inadequate counseling towards the choice of subjects, poor implementation of the policy programme, poor teachers' morale, inadequate educational facilities, poor supervision and politicization of the educational implementation of the laudable plans. It was formerly 6 years in primary schools and 5 years in secondary schools and 4 years in university, later changed to 6 years primary school, 3 years in junior secondary 3 years in senior secondary schools and 4 years in university.

Presently it is 9 years of universal basic education, 3 years in senior secondary schools and 4 years at university implementation of these programmes. There is therefore necessary to create awareness to re-structure Nigeria educational system towards enhancing standard education programmes in Nigeria.

The 9 years universal basic education in Nigeria recently introduced is a welcome phenomenon. The first six years covered pre-basic and basic education. The last three years is characterized by a comprehensive programmes which covered, commercial technical and general education and it was planned that during the period the students attitudes are carefully assessed for the three years of secondary education, the student are streamlined into their respective commercial, technical, science and general education. This aspect of the scheme posed some problems to the planning capability of teachers' education. At this particular level, teachers' educations are totally neglected.

The problematic irony of this level is that immediately after completing of senior secondary education and if the result is not good enough to be admitted to university education. These candidates will now use the result to try colleges of education or faculty of education or this graduate after completing their course in their non-educational courses and no employment the next is to take teaching profession as their last hope and their stepping stone.

This situation is not good enough in providing effective teachers education programmes in Nigeria. This problem however called for making a refocus on the structuring teachers education programmes in Nigeria using systematic approach. Since federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) accepted education as the only instrument for national transformation and socio economic development. There is the need to restructure Nigeria teachers' education programme, if effective educational goals achievement are to be achieved. The federal Government of Nigeria should reverse back to the universal basic education. 6-years of primary education, separate schools should be designated for different educational programme. For instance some schools for science education separate one for arts, for commercial, for Technical Education and Teachers' Education. College of science commercial and arts should be-directly controlled by west Africa Education council and college of Technical Education should be direct controlled for National Technical and Business Examination board and college of Teachers Education should be directly controlled by National Teachers' institute. If this structure approach is adopted standard education will be achieved in Nigeria teacher education it is therefore surface to say that, any body that want to be teacher, will start right from teachers education school i.e. after the grade 11 he or she will proceed to NCE to BA.Ed and BSC.Ed to MSc (Ed) or to PhD. This idea could therefore be conceptualized by using structure approach model.



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CONCLUSION

This paper examined the structural approach that could be adopted in order to provide standard teachers education. It revealed that there in the order to revisit 6-3-3-4 system of education in another dimension. The structural approach suggested is that, not every school should run both junior and secondary school education. There should be some schools to be designated purely for junior secondary Education (3 years) while some schools to run pure senior secondary Education. Among those schools to run senior secondary education some should be designed to run mainly science, teachers' education and technical and vocational education.

Recommendations

In a bid to produce highly motivated teachers for teachers for Nigerian educational system the following recommendations should be adopted.

Minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession should still be Nigeria certificate in education (NCE).

There is need to established more universities in Nigeria that will accommodate more students population for admission.

Nigeria should borrow a leave from soviet union where by any teacher with higher qualification can serve at any level of educational system without any discrimination in their status for instance a master in education can decide to teach in secondary education such a teacher will treated in the same manner with there counter part that decide to teach in tertiary in situations.

There is the need to establish institute of Teacher Education to be properly equipped for the training of teachers for Nigerian educational system.

The teaching practice exercise should be well coordinated and every teacher in training should be allowed to spend at least one year of their programme on the field, for this will acquaint them with the necessary development and innovations in the teaching profession.

Also teacher morale should be adequately enhanced by way of good salaries and allowances for teachers morale and aid their commitment to teaching profession.

Finally centre for technical and Teaching Education should be establish train graduate teachers on enterpreneural skills acquisition so as to eradicate problems of unemployment in Nigeria teachers education programme.

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