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Abstract

The main thrust of this paper is to examine the enormous role of teacher education as it helps in production of competent and efficient teachers for the purpose of maintaining and sustaining development in Nigeria. This was done by conceptualizing teacher education, the goals of teacher education in Nigeria, the functions of teacher education and the place of teacher education in the National Policy on Education. It conceptualizes sustainable development as well as examined principles guiding that and the principles of sustainable development are also examined. The role of teacher education, vis-à-vis sustainable development in Nigeria has also been examined. Lastly, the paper proffered some recommendations such as: government at all levels should make concerted efforts in the provision of quality and productive teacher education system that may be capable of facing the challenges of the modern era.

Introduction

Teacher education is a central focal factor for national development because all the sectors in the society depend on human resources for efficient work and continuous development. Any person who is to be trained up to certain productive standard requires a mentor, an instructor, expert, tutor or a teacher. To produce persons capable of high quality skills, we need education. In fact, according to the demand of developmental challenges, we need to improve the quality of teacher education and develop educational standards that contain local and national issues. According to Kishan (2007), a very different kind of teacher has to be taught and should be prepared to shoulder new responsibilities extending far beyond the confines of the classroom. Teacher education should occupy a special position because of the value attached to teaching, teacher and teaching profession. In the view of Thornburg (2002), teachers hold the responsibilities of creating social cohesion, national integration and a learned society. They do not only impart knowledge but also create and generate new knowledge. The status of teachers has to be maintained to re-affirm the strength of any nation with regard to human development for national sustainable development. Development of a nation depends on the quality and efficiency of its education system and the teachers who man it. A sound and viable teacher education programme is essential for qualitative improvement of the general educational provision for the citizens of the nation. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004),

Since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers. Teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development. The minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the Nigeria Certificate in Education (P.39).

Conception of Teacher Education

The urge to provide good education for the citizens of Nigeria presently is growing faster. It is a universal urge to build a society based on good education. This has positively accelerated the search for quality in teacher education. According to FRN (2004), the development of the country rests on the teachers because they shape the youth in the classrooms. In order to have efficient and effective teachers

and productive teaching strategies from the teachers, they must have quality teacher education. Human beings are dynamic, they change with time. This therefore calls for effective training of teachers to be able to cope with the changes in society.

Teacher education is an essential factor that kindles the imagination of the teacher, to produce and accord a professional status to the teaching profession. A good and efficient teacher education programme promotes educational development and with this the education of millions of citizens can be achieved. According to Bellingham (2007), Teacher education is all formal and informal activities and experiences that help to equip and qualify a person to assume the responsibilities as a professionally trained teacher and to discharge his/her responsibilities most effectively.

The production of competent manpower for the various sectors of the economy in the society requires an efficient training of teachers. The teacher trains the youths by means of educating, directing and imparting knowledge to them. The nation's development depends on the output of its schools. Human resource development is expected to be the product of teachers in our educational institutions.

According to Walter (1941), in Aggarwal (2006), qualified teacher education means the total education experiences which contribute to the preparation of a person. It is equally a programme offered by educational institutions like universities for the purpose of preparing persons for teaching and other educational services and for improving the growth and development of the citizens.

In the view of Delor, et al (1996), teacher education is an integral component of the educational system. It is strongly connected with society and is conditioned by the needs, culture, aspirations and character of a nation. A nation is building its teacher education programmes under the realms of the constitutional goals and directive principles for growth and development. The socio-economic problems and the overwhelming growth of knowledge is the emerging expectations, challenges and changes operating in educational system. Teacher education is a laudable call for an appropriate response for a fruitful and futuristic education system, which provides the prospective within which teacher education programmes need to be viewed.

The fast and strong development of teacher education programmes will actually help in promoting competence in the general education programmes of the Nigerian youths. It will help the individual to independently work for the survival and development of the nation's economic and political systems.

Importance of Teacher Education

Teacher Education Programme for National Sustainable Development has the following importance:

- Building of accommodative attitude: - The programme helps in building a favourable attitude to trainees after the training exercise to carry out their responsibility as teachers. The trainees develop love and respect for the teaching profession.
- The attitude of research and development is created in the trainees, exposing them to experiments and to familiarization of other knowledge and worth of development.
- Development of methods and pedagogies in teaching. The future teachers learn the strategies of teaching and become familiar by gaining essential knowledge and methods required in teaching and learning.
- It provides teachers' trainees' confidence in themselves and in their profession. This helps the potential teacher to face the class and challenges associated with teaching.
- The teachers are trained to train students for good citizenry, political awareness, social and economic development for national sustainable development.

- Teacher training programmes are designed to maintain the standard and quality of education in the country.
- For the production of efficient, effective and credible personnels in other public sectors and organs of the society, the teacher education programs are necessary.
- The pedagogical training is geared towards the development of the multiple factors and aspects of human life. National sustainable development depends on the products from school; therefore, sustainable development may be practically possible when there are good teachers.

The Goals of Teacher Education in Nigeria

The fact that "NO" nation can develop and grow effectively in all the organs of the society more than the effectiveness and efficiency of its classrooms makes teacher education a centre factor to consider. This fact brings us to conclude that no education system can be better than its teachers. Therefore, both education and the general social system depend strongly on teacher who produces people with knowledge and skills for sustainable national development. However, the FRN (2004), states that the goals of teacher education in Nigeria are as follows:

- Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system.
- Encourage further, the 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.

However, teacher education is generally meant to equip the teachers with the professional skills so as to help in the pursuit of developing the younger generations in various aspects, such as; moral, spiritual consciousness and skill acquisition. Furthermore, it helps imparting knowledge for advancement and general socio-economic and political development of the nation, with a view to making the products fit into the broader challenges of developing the nation technologically and sustains the development therein.

Conception of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without disrupting the plans of the future or the plans and development that are presently remarkable and have standing qualities to promote the plans of the future.

In addition, sustainable development implies the consideration of good health, the protection of the social and physical environment and the provision of economic security. Sustainable development requires that, all programmes should be for the well being of the society, to have considerable plans, with positive effect in order to maintain and sustain balance in the pursuit of development and improve quality of life of the people in the society.

Principles of Sustainable Development

According to the United Nations Development Programme (1995) the principles of sustainable development are as follows:

- To develop national and international laws favouring the rules of compensation where damages are made.
- People have the right to live a healthy and productive life in peace and promote further development.

- A nation has the right to exploit resources, but without causing environmental damages or inflicting damages on other nation's environment.
- Development must not hinder the growth and development of other nations and the on-coming generations in the country.
- Environmental protection should constitute the integral part of the development plans and the eradication of poverty, subsequently equipping every citizen in the country.
- Sustainable development requires better scientific understanding of the nation's environment. The nation should share knowledge and innovative technology to achieve the goals of sustainability.
- Full participation of every citizen in the pursuit for education, politics, economy and environmental peace and security.
- The nations of the world. War is a destructive agent of social peace, security and sustainable development. Therefore, the nations of the world should consider education as the prime object of promoting the well being of humanity.

Teacher Education for Sustainable Development

The nations of the world fully recognized the importance attached to education and development. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the development of any nation largely depends on education, and to achieve sustainable development means to establish a good educational system that will be able to improve the lots of the nation, in terms of human and structural development. According to UNDP (1995), to produce good and effective citizens in the country, implies having good and effective education system. For education to be effective and efficient, the teachers have to be equipped adequately and professionally. With this, it shows that the education of the teacher plays a great role in the upliftment of the standard of the society and maintaining sustainable development. People today are holding and hoping on public awareness, education and training as essential tools for sustainable development. In addition, the UNDP (1995) maintain that education is a tool for achieving sustainable development and teacher education is the backbone for the implementation of educational plans and programmes.

Teacher education is having a broader goal and various responsibilities. The primary concern of a nation's education is to train teachers with a view to brain other people. This indicates that a good school product is a reflection of the teachers and the education system in general. Education is a tool for social mobility, sustainable development, cohesion, social integration and economic empowerment. The teachers help to preserve and transmit the values of the society to the younger generations, as well as prepare them to face the challenges of the competitive society of the modern world.

The FRN (2004) states that, the national goals of Nigeria, which have been endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education, are the building of:

- a free and democratic society;
- a just and egalitarian society;
- a united, strong and self reliant nation;
- a great and dynamic economy;
- a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens.

Teachers are responsible for further interpretation and implementation of the National goals of the education system in Nigeria. It is well known that education is an instrument for national development. To achieve the goals of development and sustainable development, the teacher education programme and the teachers have to be qualified, competent and efficient. This therefore means that:

- All nations depend on their school system to teach the philosophy of the nation to the youth.
- Teacher education remains the backbone of all the status of education in the country. This means that the quality of education of any nation is largely dependent on the quality of its teachers.
- The various nations of the world rely on education for social, economic productivity and political stability and development. These and many others can be attained through schooling for national sustainable development.

Recommendation

In view of the discussion in this paper, the following recommendations are put forward:

Government at all levels should make concerted efforts in the provision of quality and productive teacher education system that may be capable of facing the challenges of the modern era.

In order to raise the status of the teaching profession, there should be the provision of social security and facilities for the development of the profession and the well being of teachers at all levels of the education system.

To guarantee sustainable development, teacher education should be provided the proper attention in deserves.

Government should improve on the method of scientific approach and principles of sustainable national development.

National integration, social cohesion and citizenship consciousness should be made towards improving the standard of living of the people in society.

Development plans and investments should be geared toward acknowledging the future, by proper and adequate planning for sustainable development.

Conclusion

Development at any level requires the ability to maintain, sustain as well as improve on it. Teacher Education for Sustainable Development in Nigeria deals with the ability of the educational sector to be able to provide and maintain the provision of well trained manpower in the nation, which is capable of fitting into the various sectors of the society in terms of work. One of the basic channel of production, socialization, skill acquisition and general moral development of the individual is the school. The school therefore, is significant with regard to human development, which in turn has direct effect on the socio-economic and political development of the nation.

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