

GLOBALISATION OF TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Teacher education in the 21st century must be equipped to face the issues of globalization and its effects on the learners they may encounter after or during their training process. The world is gradually becoming a global village and for teachers to have the right tools to operate effectively and efficiently in the nearest future, teachers need to be more knowledgeable on the availability of new technologies and methods of their applicability in the advanced nations of the world. This is in consonance with the fourth goal of the teacher education as enshrined in the national policy on education. It states that teachers will be provided with intellectual and provisional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situation, not only in the life of their country, but in the wider world. The National Policy on Education asserted that, no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Hence, there is the growing need in this globalization era, to always evaluate the curriculum and objectives of the nation's teacher education program with a view to ensure adequate supply of quality manpower(teachers), made readily available to the various levels of the educational system in the country. This paper seeks to justify the need for the globalization of the teacher education curriculum in Nigeria.*

Key Words: *Teacher Education, Globalization, Curriculum, Global Perspective.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

The concept of globalization in teacher education would require the empowerment of teachers in their acquisition of knowledge and skills that will cut across national boundaries, cultural, ethnic, religious, gender and racial affiliations. The responsibility of building a well-balanced individual for all aspects of life is shouldered by the teacher. The responsibility and competence of teachers is undergoing enormous changes all over the world due to the changing times as well as the changing needs of the society and globalization. This change therefore calls for a global review and inclusion in the teacher education curriculum, to prepare teachers for the world that lies outside the classroom. There is a growing need to recognize cultural diversity and ethnic affiliations among learners. Teachers need to be prepared for these needs in learners and create equity in the classroom and seek ways to promote citizenship in a diverse, democratic society. Pai and Adler (1997) noted that advocates for pluralism believe that multicultural education is appropriate for a democratic society because: "participatory democracy is fundamentally pluralistic . . . it entails the acceptance of the intrinsic worth of all human beings and their unique individuality" (p. 104). With the global trend of acceptance and equity in education, there is a growing need to provide an environment in teacher education that values diversity, learners educational and vocational choices should not be limited by any form of prejudice, discrimination or stereotyping. A noble profession like teaching should have the vast majority of its teachers knowledgeable in all aspects of human behaviors and factors responsible for such behaviors. Beliefs, traditions, culture, religion, language, ethnic and racial affiliations are parts that makes up the whole of our students populations. Teachers should be equipped and prepared for various learners they may encounter in and outside their classroom. No nation develops beyond the quality of its education system, which is highly dependent on the quality of its teachers. Teachers should be given the most appropriate tools during and after their training, including content knowledge and skills as well as teaching methodology to be able to do their work professionally. The information age places an important responsibility of connecting students with a constantly changing world, new information for and technological developments (Merryfield, 1997). Hanvey (2004) argued that education for a global perspective enhances the individual's ability to understand his or her condition in the community and the world, and improves the ability to make effective judgments.

2. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS:

2.1 GLOBALIZATION

Globalization in education implies that the curriculum should reflect all acceptable global standard of education. All aspects of learning contents, skills and general practice in education should be applicable, acceptable and knowledge should be transferable in education. Globalization in relation to education should be able to address

the need for learners to be able to think critically and also possess ability to be continuous learners. Globalization of education is the continuous upgrade of education to reflect the collective needs of the global community. Today, more than ever, schools, colleges and universities have only two possible options to take, to ensure greater survival and stability, that is, “to change or to resist change (Johnstone, 2000). Globalization in teacher education is necessary to equip the teachers to adapt to the changes that occur in the global community and also accept such changes as a necessity for growth and development.

2.2 TEACHER EDUCATION

The concept of teacher education can be rightly described as the form of education which is properly planned and systematically tailored and applied, for the cultivations of those who teach or will teach particular subject but not exclusively in primary and post primary levels of schooling (UNESCO, 2005). It can also be seen as an education that is focused on developing knowledge, attitude and skills necessary for preparing personnel for entry into the teaching profession. Ipaye, (1996) referred to teacher education as the process by which prospective teachers are provided the opportunity to develop cognitive perspective, affection disposition and psychomotor competences that will imbue them with confidence and capacity to teacher and carry out other teaching related activities effectively and efficiently.

2.3 CURRICULUM

Braslavsky (2003), states that curriculum is an agreement among communities, educational professionals, and the State on what learners should take on during specific periods of their lives. It is the total learning content and experience provided by an institution of learning. It includes the content of courses, the methods and strategies employed for teaching and learning, and all other aspects that relates to the institutions outline. A curriculum is the sum total of all the activities that takes place in the school, whether in the classroom or outside the classroom. In this study the focus of the curriculum is on its contents in teacher education institutions.

2.4 GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Global perspectives are learning, which helps an individual understand his/her own condition by understanding cultural and political universals, and differences in the world. Teaching with a global perspective seeks to help students understand that decisions they make affect others, and the decisions of others affect us (Hanvey, 1976; Case, 1993).

Global perspective also means sharing and cooperation with others allowing them to use whatever resources are available to attain individual as well as common goals. Further, empathy towards others, i.e. understanding and sharing feelings, communication ability in order to express and exchange thoughts, feelings and information and resolving conflicts by finding satisfactory ways of dealing with disagreement or argument between people, groups, societies or nations.

3. NATURE OF TEACHER EDUCATION:

- Teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components are complimentary to each other. According to the International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher education (1987), Teacher education can be considered in three phases: Pre-service, Induction and In-service. The three phases are considered as parts of a continuous process.
- Teacher education is based on the theory that Teachers are made, not born in contrary to the assumption, Teachers are born, not made. Since teaching is considered an art and a science, the teacher has to acquire not only knowledge, but also skills.
- Teacher education is broad and comprehensive. Besides pre service and in-service programmes for teachers, it is meant to be involved in various community programmes and extension activities, viz adult education and non-formal education programmes, literacy and development activities of the society.
- It is ever-evolving and dynamic. In order to prepare teachers who are competent to face the challenges of the dynamic society, Teacher education has to keep abreast of recent developments and trends.
- The crux of the entire process of teacher education lies in its curriculum, design, structure, organization and transaction modes, as well as the extent of its appropriateness.
- As in other professional education programmes the teacher education curriculum has a knowledge base which is sensitive to the needs of field applications and comprises meaningful, conceptual blending of theoretical understanding available in several cognate disciplines. However the knowledge base in teacher education does not comprise only an admixture of concepts and principles from other disciplines, but a distinct gestalt ‘emerging from the conceptual blending’, making it sufficiently specified.
- Teacher education has become differentiated into stage-specific programmes. This suggests that the knowledge base is adequately specialized and diversified across stages, which should be utilized for

developing effective processes of preparing entrant teachers for the functions which a teacher is expected to perform at each stage.

- It is a system that involves an interdependence of its inputs, processes and outputs.

5. OVERVIEW OF THE TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN NIGERIA:

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is playing a prominent role amongst government agencies committed to reforms, by focusing on the review of the curriculum in education in order to make it relevant to the basic education school system. The goals of teacher education in Nigeria as articulated by the Federal Government of Nigeria in its national policy on education (FGN, 2004) as follows:

- To 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
- To help the teacher to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals.
- Provide teachers with intellectual and provisional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situation, not only in the life of their country, but in the wider world.
- Enhance teacher's commitment to the teaching profession.

The teacher education policy is given a significant boost by the establishment of National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) which is saddled with the responsibility of supervision, quality assurance, regulations and monitoring of the colleges.

Training of teachers takes place in specialized training schools, where focus is on teacher training programme alone, and faculty of education in Nigerian universities. The modes of training are in four major components and are highlighted below:

- A general broad education programme to bring out depth in the intellectual knowledge of teachers. This aspect constitutes a core aspect of teacher education programme designed for all trainees. Some of the courses include basic knowledge of humanities, citizenship education, use of English, language and communication, computer appreciation, general mathematics, etc.
- The second component is the subject area specialization. In many training centers and universities, a trainer is expected to specialize in maximum of two subjects" combination.
- The third component focuses on professional courses designed to ensure trainers are grounded in science of teaching and learning. They include courses on philosophy of education, educational psychology, sociology of education, curriculum and instruction, guidance and counseling, educational administration, etc.
- The last component is practical intercom designed in two modes. The first mode is micro teaching. Micro teaching is experimental in nature aimed at inculcating required confidence in a classroom setting. The duration of teachings and number of students per class is scaled down to a considerable size a non-experienced teacher can easily manage. The actual teaching practice may take duration of two semesters. Student-teachers are posted to schools to teach under the supervision of experienced teachers in the schools of their posting, and their college or university lecturers. The teacher education policy is given a significant boost by the establishment of National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) which is saddled with the responsibility of supervision, quality assurance, regulations and monitoring of the colleges.

6. ROLE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA:

The teacher is a very important instrument for the effective implementation of the educational goals and objectives of any nation. It is the teacher who interprets and implements the nation's curriculum which is designed to achieve the educational goals (Omojunwa, 2007). The obvious implication of this fact is that the qualities of a nation's education can only be as high as the quality of its teachers (Obiefuna, 2002).

Teacher education can be seen as the conscious effort and consistent training of teachers towards attaining the right attitudes, values, norms, operational skills and adequate knowledge necessary to make positive contributions to the development of their learners. Teacher education is a continuous process necessary to make them well equipped, efficient and effective in their work. This training includes education done before commencement of the teaching service (pre-service) or during service (in-service or on-the-job). The role of the teacher in every society varies, however the basic role of transmitting and, preserving the cultural heritage of the society, enhancing quality manpower development and developing young learners ready to provide service to humanity and to achieve the set national objectives, remains the same.

According to Oyekan, (2006), the purpose of teacher education is to produce well-qualified professional teachers that can adjust to the changing needs of the students and developmental prospects of the modern society. Education is an inevitable tool for sustainable development and a vehicle for advancing the frontier of knowledge

(Abdul-Kareem, 2001). Ukeje, (1996), supported this fact when he stated that education unlocks the door to modernization, and added that it is the teachers who hold the key to that door. (Afe, 1992), states that the realization of the educational objectives depends on the quality and quantity of the available teaching manpower. In this regard, teacher education can be considered as the bedrock for national development as well as the tool for character development and sustainable future for any nation.

Teachers need to radically adapt to the new skills, techniques, methods and demands and secondly a change in the mind set to take up new responsibilities. Teachers have the opportunity to leave an indelible impression on their students' lives. School experiences mold, shape, and, can influence how children view themselves inside and outside of school. These school memories have the potential to last a lifetime in students' minds and can play a consequential role with present and future decisions. It does not take long for students to realize that teachers make the difference between a long and boring school year and an exciting and challenging year.

7. NEED FOR GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IN TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM:

Globalization is an impetus for change, not only in educational policies, but also in the role and expectations of the classroom teacher. Globalization of teacher education curriculum will have a tremendous impact on general classroom teachers as they are increasingly faced with the challenge of meeting a wide range of student needs. The demand for classroom teachers are increasingly required to understand a multitude of exceptionalities, manage a diverse classroom, implement differentiated instructional strategies, and make appropriate accommodations for individual needs. Therefore, preparing teachers to face this diversity is becoming critical. There is an urgent need to equip teachers to work in diverse settings with different groups in the classroom, regardless of race, ethnic or religious affiliations.

Porter and Vidovich (2002) consider that globalization is about the connection of cultures and the integration of economies that involve international networks. According to Carnoy and Rhoten (2002) the main resources for globalization are increasing knowledge and information. The implication of this is that, those who prepare and train the present day teacher must have vast knowledge on available technology resources for teaching and learning, acquire necessary skills for utilization of technologies for instruction and be conversant with latest acceptable teaching and learning methods that are technology compliant.

Developing Perspectives for equitable and sustainable development through teacher education, In order to develop future citizens who promote equitable and sustainable development for all sections of society and respect for all, it is necessary that they be educated through perspectives of gender equity, perspectives that develop values for peace, respect the rights of all, and that respect and value work. In the present ecological crisis promoted by extremely commercialized and competitive lifestyles, children need to be educated to change their consumption patterns and the way they look at natural resources.

There is also an increasing violence and polarization both within children and between them that is being caused by increasing stress in society. Education has a crucial role to play in promoting values of peace based on equal respect of self and others. Teacher education curriculum could be used to fortify trainees on the attitudes and beliefs towards diversity in the classrooms because according to Banks (2009), in virtually every school, one is likely to find students of different ethnic groups and from a variety of racial composition. This variety is increasing every day.

There is need for the 21st century teacher to adapt to the changing needs of learners and seek ways to adapt and understand their learners and also nurture their talents. Due to technological explosions that cut across the globe, teachers would need the knowledge and skills to construct and manage their teaching and learning activities, communicate well, and use technology more efficiently.

The globalization of teacher education curriculum seeks an approach to education which seeks to enable pre service and in service teachers to participate in shaping a better shared future for the world through understanding the unity, diversity and interdependence of human association. Helping them to develop a sense of appreciation of cultural, racial, religious and ethnic diversity, which is necessary in promoting global peace and social justice for all.

According to Tye (1999), few teacher education programs worldwide promote global education. In a pluralistic world like what we have today in Nigeria, teacher trainees need to develop a global perspective. They need to be able to relate with people from different racial and ethnic background, cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, and aspirations. Musil, (2006) opined that a gap still exists between the rhetoric and the reality of preparing students for a global society. Bok (2006) opined that our students today receive "very little preparation either as citizens or as professionals for the international challenges that are likely to confront them" (p. 233). This therefore calls for the globalization of the teacher education curriculum to prepare learners for a more global perspective.

8. MODELS FOR GLOBALISING TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN NIGERIA:

The Partnerships for 21st Century Skills (2009), outlined the following model the 21st century curriculum should cover;

- Life and career skills, focusing on the ability to navigate complex life and work environments. These include skills such as flexibility and adaptability to change, possessing initiative and self-direction, managing time and goals, being able to work independently and yet still work effectively with others, respecting individual and cultural differences, demonstrating good leadership and being responsible to others.
- Learning and innovation skills with a focus on creativity, critical thinking, innovative thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration; information, media and technology skills,
- Integration of 21st century themes within the academic content of core subjects. Such themes include global awareness; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; and civic, health and environmental literacy.
- Information and media technology skills with a focus on accessing information efficiently and effectively, evaluating it critically and competently, and using the information accessed accurately and creatively to solve problems. It also involves understanding how and why media messages are constructed, creating one's own media products; and using technology as a tool for research, organization, evaluation and communication, and finally, managing, integrating, evaluating and creating information to successfully function in a knowledge economy (P21 Framework Definitions, 2009, p. 4-9).

9. CONCLUSION:

The review of various literatures in this opinion paper clearly shows the need for the globalization of the teacher education curriculum in Nigeria. The role of the teacher in this age of globalization is becoming more complicated. The education of teachers is becoming more specific and specialized and yet demanding in the new world order on account of the explosion of knowledge. This calls for increased professionalism among the teaching community. In view of globalization, the objectives of teacher education in many countries have to reflect national and international needs. Globalization of teacher education curriculum should include subjects such as global education, human rights education, environmental education, gender education, and multicultural education. Infusing this level of education in the teacher education curriculum on diverse subjects to prospective teachers will contribute to form a more united and tolerant world. Prospective teachers need to acquire skills that can be applied to special processes like critical thinking, decision making, value judgment, negotiation skills and conflict management.

The globalization of the teacher education curriculum is also necessary to provide prospective teachers with knowledge and experiences with various forms of diversity, including cultural diversity, religious, racial and ethnic diversity.

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