

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING TEACHER EDUCATION IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The paper investigated strategies that will promote education and teacher education in Anambra State. Three research questions were answered and two null hypotheses tested. The population was 350 respondents made up of 230 teachers and 120 principals drawn from secondary schools in Anambra State. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Data were analyzed with mean and t-test at .05 alpha level. Major findings of the study were problems facing education and teacher education in Anambra State and they included lack of teachers, poor infrastructure, low morale and productivity, high attrition rate, inadequate supervision, and lack of teaching aids. Strategies that can promote education and teacher education include better welfare packages for teachers, effective supervision of teachers, provision of better infrastructure, re-training of teachers, recruitments of more teachers, professionalization of teaching and removal of incompetent teachers from the system. It was recommended among other strategies, that government should recruit more teachers, provide better infrastructures, better methods of fighting examination malpractice and cultism should be devised in addition to nurturing a better school-community relationship.

Key Words: Strategies, Promoting, Teacher, Education.

Introduction

Education is a catalyst to national development. Briggs in Afoka (2010) stated that education is a long-term investment by the state to make itself a better place in which to live and a better place in which to make a living. To further buttress the importance of education, Watson (2011) itemized the dividend of modern education to include economic reforms, moral revival, cultural awareness, national integration, democratic government, rural regeneration and manpower development. Part of education is teacher's education which is aimed at raising the profile of teachers as regard their competence and overall effectiveness. What is then teacher education?

There is no universal definition of teacher education. Some of the most relevant definitions will be highlighted here. Afe (1993) observed that teacher education is the component of any educational system charged with the education and training of teachers to acquire the competencies and skills of teaching for the improvement in the quality of teacher for the school system. Another definition sees it simply as education designed for a would-be teacher or the type of education a would-be teacher has to acquire (Samuel, 1996).

Expatriating on the above definition, Ibrahim (2000) asserted that teacher education is a process whereby prospective teacher, pre-service teacher or intending teacher or

aspiring teacher is provided the opportunity to develop cognitive perspectives, affective dispositions and psychomotor competencies which will endow him or her with the qualities, capacities, capabilities for teaching. Other equally useful definitions of teacher education were provided by Denga (2001) and Adoga (2004). According to Denga (2001), teachers' education is the process of preparing or developing individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills that will enable them to effectively direct learning situations. Adoga (2004) stated that teachers' education is a process of instilling professional competence relevant to the national development in our would-be teachers for our economic growth and nation-building. Summarizing these definitions, Maduewesi and Eya (2006) came out with these three perspectives.

- a) Teacher education involves giving professional training to teachers by imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes and values desirable in the teaching profession.
- b) The knowledge so acquired will enable teachers to transmit culture from generation to generation as well as shaping the destinies of both individuals and the society at large.
- c) Teacher education is highly indispensable for a nation that wants rapid development and progress.

In view of the importance of teachers' education, the National Policy on Education (2013) highlighted the aims as follows:

- i. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education.
- ii. To encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.
- iii. To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives.
- iv. To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation notably in the life of their country, but in the wider world.
- v. To enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

Apart from these aims stipulated in the National Policy on Education (2013), other relevant objectives of teacher education were enumerated as follows:

- a) The production of academically and professionally sound and highly motivated, conscientious and dynamic breed of teachers.
- b) Cultivation of social life, adequate adaptability and positive national awareness in prospective teachers to the changing educational conditions.
- c) The production of knowledgeable, competent and effective teachers capable of inspiring children to learn.
- d) Facilitation of the education of children in Nigeria, education edicts, history and cultural life towards the generation of sense of oneness and patriotism.
- e) Improving the quality of progressive thinking in teacher (Ahilomes, 1992).

There is no gain saying the fact that teacher education is required for the development of Nigeria. This may have prompted Ukeje (1986) to further highlight the aims of teacher education to include:

- a) Inspiring the youths to develop national consciousness and sense of national unity.
- b) Inculcate in the youths the right type of values and attitudes for their individual progress and for the survival of the nation.
- c) Lead the youths to the development of their mind to the proper understanding of the world around them.

Despite the relevance of teacher education in Nigeria, there is still need to improve the way the programme is being managed by education planners. To achieve this objective, certain strategies must be employed to enhance its status and overall relevance to national development.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers' education is very important in the development of educational system of the country. Unfortunately, teachers' education does not command the prestige it deserves. It is viewed with disdain. Education at the best of times is seen as inferior to most other courses. Teachers' education is seen as a course for losers or unambitious people. Men have deserted the teaching profession, student with the lowest JAMB scores are admitted to study teachers' education and other education courses. Standard of education continues to go down due to many reasons, students need two or three to obtain five credits necessary for University admission. This situation has given stakeholders in education some anxious moments. Teachers are the hub on which the wheels of education revolve. National Policy on Education (2004) stated that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. In the midst of this development, many questions are begging for answers. Why is teachers' education not given its due consideration? What are the implications for neglecting teachers' education? To what extent could certain strategies help to make teachers' education retain its place of pride in Nigeria's educational system? How can teachers' education contribute to educational development in Nigeria? The focus of this study is to investigate strategies that will promote education and teachers' education in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigated strategies that would promote education and teachers' education in Anambra State. Specifically, it sought to determine the:

- 1 Problems facing education and teachers' education in Anambra State.
- 2 Impact of teachers' education on educational development
- 3 Strategies that can promote teachers' education in Anambra State.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant because it determined the problems facing education and teachers' education. Facts highlighted in the study will be of assistance to educational planners and policy makers. The study highlighted the impact of teachers' education on educational development. Information obtained in this study will be of immense benefit to teachers, principals and students alike. The study will further expose the strategies that can promote teacher education. Facts revealed in this study will be relevant to education planners and government who will be appraised of how teachers' education will be made to realize its full benefits and subsequently contribute to educational development. On the whole, the findings of this study will be beneficial to education planners, policymakers and other stakeholders in formulating better educational policies.

Research Questions

1. What are the problems facing teachers' education in Nigeria?
2. What are the impacts of teachers' education on educational development?
3. What are the strategies that can promote teachers' education?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between mean ratings of principals and teachers on the strategies that can help to best promote teachers' education.

Scope of the Study

The study was delimited to discussing the strategies that will promote education and teachers' education in Anambra State. It covered the problems facing teachers' education, impact of teachers' education on educational development and strategies that can promote teachers' education.

Methodology

Survey design was used for the research. It was designed to determine strategies that could promote education and teacher education in Anambra State. Essentially, survey research examines peoples' opinions, motivations, interests and perceptions through the use of questionnaire or interview. To this effect, such survey design was deemed most suitable for this research.

Area of the Study

The area of the study is Anambra State of Nigeria.

Population of the Study

The population of the study is made up of 350 respondents.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study made use of 350 respondents (230 teachers and 120 principals). The stratified sampling method was used to draw the sample of the study. This technique was adopted to ensure that teachers and principals from the six education zones were

well-represented. This method was also used to cover parameters like respondents' local government area, zone, sex, experience and academic qualifications. The justification for the use of this technique was consistent with Berg and Gall's (2004) view that stratified sampling is important to ensure that certain sub groups in the population are represented in the sample. At the end, 350 respondents were selected for the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

Structured questionnaire designed by the researchers and validated by experts was used for data collection. The questionnaire strategies that promote Education and Teacher Education consisted of 24 items. It was validated by three experts in Educational Management and one from Measurement and Evaluation of Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Anambra State. The response format used were according to their values on the following; very important =4, important=3, unimportant=2 and very unimportant =1. Cronbach alpha formula was used to analyze the data collected for reliability, from a pilot testing of 20 respondents in Enugu State. The reliability coefficient yielded 0.19.

Method of Data Collection

Hundred percent of the 350 copies of the questionnaire administered to the respondents through on the spot administration were properly completed and retrieved with the help of research assistants.

Method of Data Analysis

The research questions were answered using the mean and standard deviation. The null hypothesis was tested using t-test statistic. Item that attracted mean ratings of 2.00 and above on the four-point scale were regarded as "important" but items that attracted less than 2.00 were deemed as "unimportant". The t-test hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The null-hypothesis was not rejected if the calculated t-value is less than the table value, and was rejected if the calculated t-value is equal or greater than the table value.

Result of the Data Analysis

Table 1. Mean responses of the Respondentson the Problem facing teacher education.

S/N	Item Description	X	SD	Remarks
1	Poor quality of the entrants into teaching	2.92	0.8	Important
2	Lack of uniform minimum qualification	3.83	0.37	very important
3	Brain- drain	3.75	1.17	Important
4	Lack of a unifying professional	3.75	0.44	very important
5	Inadequate infrastructure and materials	3.5	0.50	very important
6	Insensitivity of government	3.75	0.44	very important
7	Non-enforcement of the code of ethics	3.42	0.76	important
8	Low public image.	3.58	0.64	very important
Total grand X		28.50	5.19	

The result of the data in table 1. showed that the respondents consensus that items listed on it are problems facing teachers' education in Anambra State

Table 2: Mean responses of the respondents on impact of teachers education in educational development

S/N	Items Description	X	SD	Remarks
9	Education planning and policy-making,	2.75	0.83	important
10	Implementation of educational curriculum	3.92	0.28	very important
11	Production of needed manpower	3.5	0.65	very important
12	Research and evaluation of objectives	3.92	0.28	very important
13	Formation of Educational Bodies and Association	3.08	0.64	important
14	Formation of Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs).	2.75	0.83	Important
15	Establishment of Educational Resource Centres	3.25	0.60	Important
16	Local production and improvisation of learning materials	3.5	0.65	very important
	Total, grand X	26.67	4.76	

To a high extent, information documented on Table 2 depicted homogeneity among the respondents on the impact of teachers' education on educational development. The respondents strongly upheld that these factors represent the impact of teachers' education on educational development in Anambra State especially with a grand mean total of .3.3.

Table 3 Mean responses of the respondents on strategies that can promote teachers' education

S/N	Items: Description	X	SD	Remarks
17	Intensive recruitment and training of teachers	3.92	0.28	very important
18	Professional development of teachers	3.5	0.65	very important
19	Provision of adequate facilities	3.75	0.44	very important
20	Better remuneration of teachers	3.92	0.28	very important
21	Adequate use of information and Communication Technology (I.C.T)	3.5	0.65	very important
22	Improvement of teacher student ratio	3.42	0.64	important
23	Prevalence of regular in-service training	3.08	0.87	important
24	Upgrading of teachers public image	3.92	0.28	important
	Total grand X	39.01	4.09	

The result tabulated on Table 3 revealed the respondents consensus that items listed here are strategies which can promote teachers' education in Anambra State especially with a grand mean of 3.6.

Table 4 Shows t-test Summary examining the difference.

Groups of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Mean X	Standard Deviation(SD)	Degree of Freedom	Level of Significance	t- calculated	t- Critical
Teachers	230	3.5	0.65	94	1.05	1.88	1.96
Principals	120	3.16	0.95				

Table 4 above has indicated that there is no significant difference between teachers and principals responses on strategies that can help to best promote teacher education as a means of enhancing educational development.

Findings

The following findings were made:

1. The impact of teachers' education to educational development were identified. These included educational planning and policy production of needed manpower, formation of educational bodies and associations, implementation of educational curriculum among others.
2. Poor quality of entrants into teaching, brain drain, low public image, government insensitivity among others, were identified as problems facing teachers' education.
3. All strategies towards promoting teachers' education were highly rated. They included professional development of teachers, provision of adequate facilities, better remuneration, improvement of teacher-student ratio among others.
4. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of the respondents' responses on the strategies that best promote teachers' education was not rejected.

Discussion

The study revealed that there are problems facing teachers' education in Nigeria which in effect affect educational development in Nigeria.

The findings were consistent with Ezeani (2006) who opined that inconsistent entry requirement, high attrition rate, inadequate infrastructures and materials, government insensitivity, low public image, lack of a unifying professional bodies brain drain and non-enforcement of the code of ethics. These factors significantly affect teacher education and by implication educational development in Nigeria. Ezeani (2006) concluded that except these problems are solved, teachers' education programme will not have any future in Nigeria and will definitely fail to serve the purpose of its establishment of educational resources centres, local production of non-government organizations according to (Nwana, 2006).

These are crucial to educational development at all levels in Nigeria. Supporting the above assertion, Adoga (2004) stated that teachers' education is a process of instilling professional competence relevant to the national development in our would-be teachers for our economic growth and nation-building. The results further highlighted strategies that can help to promote teachers' education with the findings being consistent with Ofojebe (2006) view that intensive recruitment and training of teacher professional development of teachers, provision of adequate facilities, better remuneration of teachers, adequate use of Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T), improvement of teacher-student ratio, prevalence of regular in-service training and upgrading of teachers' public image. These strategies, if effectively implemented, will ensure that teachers' education justifies its place in the curriculum. Continuing, Ofojebe (2006) argued that improvement in the quality of teachers through the I.C.T

is of great advantage to the nation since they will eventually turn out to be the nation's well-equipped manpower.

The findings revealed the implication of strategies for improving teacher education as a means of enhancing educational development. Strategies highlighted were acceptable to both teachers and principals. The findings tally with Ofojebe (2006) view that teacher education should be given priority more than ever before by the government because teacher education is the pivot around which the entire education revolves. Ignoring this wise counsel will be most unwise as far as teacher education is concerned.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions were made. There are many problems facing teacher education in Nigeria such as low esteem, lack of infrastructures due to poor funding and lack of employment opportunities. There is need for more incentives to be given to teachers in form of better salaries, prompt promotions, in-service training with pay among others. It is therefore, concluded that the employment of these strategies will facilitate the realization of goals of teacher education on one hand and education in general on the other hand.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the conclusion drawn from the study.

1. Funding for teacher education should be reviewed upward.
2. Efforts must be made to improve the public image of teachers through sensitization programmes.
3. Teachers welfare package should be improved.
4. Infrastructures and facilities that enhance teaching and learning of teacher education should be expanded in quantity and quality.
5. Effort should be made to minimize the rate of attrition in teaching profession.

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