



Teacher Education Programme and Sustainable Development Goals among In-Service Teachers in Abu Affiliated Institution in Zaria

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Abstract

This paper was centered on teacher education programme and sustainable development goals (SDGs) among in-service teachers in ABU affiliated institution in Zaria. Two important key words - teacher education programme and sustainable development goals (SDGs) were the focus of this write-up. This write-up stems from the fact that education is the most potent instrument that can be used in developing human capacity for national development and since the teachers are the pivot of the educational system, the paper was set out to examine to what extent teacher education programme in FCE, Zaria can produce teachers that can help the Country to achieve the sustainable development goals. The study was guided by four research questions and paved way for the use of questionnaire in data collection. An estimated population of over one thousand, six hundred (1,600) students were admitted during the 2014/2015 academic session. From this figures, selected sample size of two hundred and twenty - five (225) in-service teachers who had enrolled for B.Ed programme under the ABU, Zaria affiliates were used in this study. Survey research design was equally adopted in this study and purposive sampling technique used in the selection of respondents. The findings of this study showed that teacher education programme was responsible for quality education in the Country. At the same time, teacher education programme has failed to help improve gender equity as contained in the sustainable development goal. The study recommends that if teacher education is properly repositioned, quality education in the Country can be guaranteed.

Keyword: Teachers, Education, Teacher Education, Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction



According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), no nation can achieve economic, social and technological development and self - sufficiency without a good system of education to sustain its achievement. The training and production of manpower required for the attainment of not only national objectives but sustainable development goals (SDGs) of the United Nations should be framed on the quality and quantity of teachers. One is not therefore surprised why Fafunwa (1974) cited by Jekayinfa (2000) believed the dependency on manpower training and development is tied to the teachers. Education should not, however, be confused with teaching which is only one aspect of the educational process. To teach is to instruct, to impart knowledge and to guide pupils or students to learn properly. Therefore, the teacher must have useful knowledge, professional skills and a thorough knowledge of the psychology of the child. This is more important in the 21st century as nations of the world key into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations focused at realizing the universal goals that meet the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing the world at the moment. The SDGs replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which started as a global effort in 2000 to tackle the indignity of poverty across the continents, where member nations became a signatory to. SDGs came into existence in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2012 at the United Nations Conference on sustainable development aimed at achieving 17 Goals. This was built on the successes recorded by the former Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and as well, expanded to include new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice among others. The central focus of this paper therefore deals with SD goals no. 3, 4 and 5 respectively. These specific goals are outlined below as:

1. To promote the wellbeing and capabilities of all citizens;
2. Targeted at promoting quality education and gender equality and;
3. Enabling all citizens to reach their potential, irrespective of class, gender, ethnic origin, religion, or race. This paper examined the conceptual framework as teacher education, sustainable development goals (SDGs), origin of SDG, importance of teacher education, academic qualification and requirement for teacher education in Nigeria, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, null hypotheses, methodology and findings respectively.

Conceptual Framework

According to Adewuyi & Ogunwuyi (2002), teacher education is the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period for the preparation of individuals who intends to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens. It is informed by the fact that teaching is an all-purpose profession which stimulates the development of mental, physical and emotional powers of students. The heartbeat of manpower development and training for prudent use and sustenance of resources in nation building is teacher education. Teacher education, being inextricably linked with general education and social goals, is constantly caught up in the series of dilemmas derivable from educational expansion, political, technological development and social change. The prevailing crisis in Nigerian education and its society as typified by unemployment, poverty, corruption, crime, indiscipline and underutilization of capacities in all facets of human life and national development, could be ascribed to the neglect of teacher education and pitiable plight of the teachers.



A coherent teacher education programme should systematically embrace integrated curriculum innovations which reflect the social, economic and political environment of a modern society to immediately solve societal problems (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 especially with the smooth implementation of the SDGs. It is clear from the foregoing that the role of the teacher in the implementation of sustainable development cannot be quantified, especially in training personnel in various areas of the workforce.

As a matter of fact, the quality of education can be determined from the quality of teacher education programme as it is the product of this system (teachers) that interpret and implement policies. It is based on these obvious facts that the philosophy of teacher education in Nigeria is anchored on five value objectives. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) outlined the objectives of teacher education as follows:

1. Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system;
2. Encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
3. Help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
4. Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations and;
5. Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession. The under listed points are the importance of teacher education to a nation as Nigeria.

1. It provides teachers' trainee confidence in themselves and their profession. This help the potential teacher face the class and address any challenges associated with teaching.
2. Teachers are trained to further train their students for good citizenry, political awareness, social and economic development.
3. Development of methods and pedagogies in teaching. The future teachers learn the strategies of teaching and become familiar by gaining the essential knowledge and methods required in teaching and learning.
4. The attitude of research and development is created in the trainees, exposing them to experiment and to familiarization of other knowledge and work of development.
5. Building of accommodative attitudes: The programme helps in building a favourable attitude to trainees after the training exercise to carry out their responsibilities as teachers. The trainees develop love and respect for teaching profession (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. These 17 Goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. The goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another. The SDGs are an inclusive agenda. They tackle the root causes of poverty and unite us together to make a positive change for both people and planet. It further provides us with a common plan and agenda to tackle some of the pressing challenges facing our world today such as poverty, climate change and conflict.

The goals cover global challenges that are crucial for the survival of humanity. They set environmental limits and set critical thresholds for the use of natural resources. The goals recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic development. They address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection and job opportunities while tackling climate change and environmental protection. The SDGs address key systemic barriers to sustainable development such as inequality, unsustainable consumption patterns, weak institutional capacity and environmental degradation (UNDESA, 2016).

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were born at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012. SDGs replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which started as a global effort in 2000 to tackle the indignity of poverty. The MDGs established measurable, universally-agreed objectives for tackling extreme poverty and hunger, preventing deadly diseases, and expanding primary education to all children, among other development priorities. The objective of SDGs was to produce a set of universal goals that meet the urgent environmental, political and economic challenges facing the world.

For 15 years, the MDGs drove progress in several important areas such as: reducing income poverty, providing much needed access to water and sanitation, driving down child mortality and drastically improving maternal health. MDGs kick-started a global movement for free primary education, inspiring countries of the world to invest in their future generations (young learners) (Tahir, 2006). Most significantly, the MDGs made huge strides in combating HIV/AIDS and other treatable diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis.

Other Key MDG achievements included:

- More than 1 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty (since 1990)
- Child mortality dropped by more than half (since 1990)
- The number of out of school children has dropped by more than half (since 1990)
- HIV/AIDS infections fell by almost 40 percent (since 2000)

The legacy and achievements of the MDGs provided one with valuable lessons and experience to begin work on the new goals (SDGs) (Ajiye, 2014). The SDGs are also an



urgent call to shift the world onto a more sustainable path. All 17 Goals set to be achieved in SDGs are interconnect, meaning success in one affects success in others. Dealing with the threat of climate change impacts how we manage our fragile natural resources, achieving gender equality or better health helps eradicate poverty, and fostering peace and inclusive societies will reduce inequalities and help economies prosper. It is so unique in that they cover issues that affect us all as a nation.

The requirements for admission into the various teacher-training programmes in the Country differ, so also is the academic qualification awarded. For admission into colleges of education, prospective candidates must have at least three credits in the Senior School Certificate - including the subjects they want to study - and two other passes. At the university level, the entry requirement is five 'O' level credits, which must include the chosen major teaching subject. In addition to this, prospective candidates are required to sit for an entrance examination known as the Unified Matriculation Examinations (UTME). The two avenues as earlier on discussed are regarded as pre-service teacher training. It prepares the perspective teachers to participate effectively in the educational system and usually involves exposure to varied concepts of teaching and learning and contents of different subject areas depending on the area of their proposed specialization (NCCE, 2012). The 3-year NCE programme obtained from either College of Education or National Teachers' Institute (NTI) covers:

- General studies (Use of English, Introduction to Computer, Entrepreneurship Education, Citizenship Education, Family Life Education and so on) earn 14 credits.
- General Education (philosophy, sociology, psychology, theory and history of education, comparative education, school administration, classroom management, subject pedagogy, etc.) garnered 36 credits.
- Subject specialization attracts 70 credits.
- Teaching Practice and other co-curricular activities (6 credits/units.). Usually the teaching practice is organized for students in the whole of first semester NCE III. This implies that teacher-trainees would have been exposed to two or three years of instruction in pedagogy as well as the content of their specialist areas. During the teaching practice, students are expected to imbibe the culture of the schools where they are posted: they are required to be in attendance everyday in their assigned schools during the term. They are also expected to substitute for the regular teacher during the period, often after due orientation and supervision of the regular teachers. The principals, vice principals and regular teachers play significant roles in support of teaching practice while faculty members undertake the supervision and assessment of trainees (student-teachers). The school involvement is limited because they do not grade but only ensure conformity with the scheme of work. Students are also expected to prepare lesson plans for every lesson for which they are responsible, based on the format given earlier during their orientation. The lesson plans are made available to the TP supervisor during supervision and expected to be adequately observed, supervised, commented on, critique, commended and sometimes condemn the student's efforts. It is expected that after teaching practice exposure, trainees are able to acquire practical knowledge needed to jump-start them into the teaching profession.



- Research project (4 credits). At graduation, a teacher must have been exposed to 130 credits of intensive training (NCCE, 2012). At the end of their trainings, trainees are awarded degrees according to the institution attended as well as their overall academic performance which qualified them to teach at the level of education trained for. In addition, and very recently, they are also required to register with the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) which is a body responsible for the licensing of teachers. At the fulfilment of these requirements, they are considered professional teachers. Other types of teacher education programmes include M.Ed and Ph.D which can be run through pre-service training or in-service training depending on the circumstance or needs.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the seemingly importance of teacher education to national development in a Country like Nigeria, the implementation of any such government policy as the sustainable development cannot succeed without the teachers. Unfortunately, the caliber of teachers been turned out from the nations' educational system are ill-equipped and incompetent towards providing quality education desire (Omoniwa, 2009). Some of the problems which have bedeviled teacher education just like in Federal College of education, Zaria till date included inadequate funding, issue of attrition, lack of commitment and professional ethics and poor perception of the society towards her teachers.

Objectives of the Study

The study is guided by the following objectives. These include:

1. Determine the extent to which teacher education programme influenced quality education among in-service teachers enrolled in FCE, Zaria affiliated programme (ABU).
2. Assess the extent to which teacher education programme influenced gender equality among in-service teachers that were enrolled in FCE, Zaria affiliated programme (ABU).
3. Evaluate the extent to which teacher education programme influenced the capabilities of in-service teachers in FCE, Zaria affiliated programme (ABU).

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses which had been formulated for this study were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant influence between teacher education programme of FCE, Zaria affiliate and quality education offered the in-service teachers.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence between teacher education programme of FCE, Zaria affiliate and gender equality among in-service teachers.

H₀₃: There is no significant influence between teacher education programme of ABU, Zaria affiliate and capabilities of in-service teachers.

Methodology



The study was a survey research design focusing on teacher education programme and sustainable development goals (SDGs) among in-service teachers in ABU affiliated institution in Zaria. Students from Federal College of Education, Zaria pursuing various degree programmes in affiliation to ABU, Zaria were selected for this study. An estimated population of one thousand six hundred (1,600) students admitted during the 2014/2015 academic session from the different B.Ed programmes was considered in this study. Out of this figure, a sample size of two hundred and twenty - five (225) in-service teachers was randomly selected for this study. This, the researcher believed was more than ten (10%) percent of the estimated population and therefore, the need to use it as suggested by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006). The researchers were in full support that samples should be as large as possible; in general, the larger the sample, the more representative it is likely to be, and the more generalizable the results of the study are likely to be. These teachers were sampled from about eleven (11) B.Ed affiliated programme run by FCE, Zaria. And they were selected from 300 level classes cut across different background, religion, tribe, occupation and socio-economic statuses for fair representation away from been bias. Based on this, purposive sampling technique was adopted to sample all the respondents. A structured questionnaire was developed for this study, with 225 copies of questionnaire been distributed to the respondents (student-teachers). The data were analyzed using independent t-test statistics considered as the most suitable statistical analysis for this type of study.

Data Analysis and Discussions

Table 1: There is no significant influence between teacher education programme of FCE, Zaria affiliate and quality education offered the in-service teachers.

Variables	Gender	N	MEAN	SD	Std. Er	Df	T-Cal	T-Crit	P (sig)
Qual. Educ	Male	200	18.0000	6.0151	0.0067	198	1.99	1.96	0.000
	Female		18.2000	6.0451	0.0060				

P calculated < 0.05 t calculated > 1.96 at df 198

The above result revealed that the two variables were significantly of influence to one another. This was indicated with an observed t-calculated of 1.99 obtained at 198 degree of freedom. The observed significant level was 0.000 ($P < 0.05$). With these observations, there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis. In essence, there is significant influence between teacher education programmes and quality of education.

Table 2: There is no significant influence between teacher education programme of FCE, Zaria affiliate and gender equality among in-service teachers.



Variables	Gender	N	MEAN	SD	Std. Er	df	T-Cal	T-Crit	P (sig)
Gender Equality	Male	200	18.2000	6.0451	0.0063	198	1.98	1.96	0.000
	Female		16.8000	6.3373	0.0057				

P calculated < 0.05 t calculated > 1.96 at df 198

Table 2 above showed that an observed t-calculated value of 1.98 was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. The mean value and standard deviation for male respondents were 18.2000 and 6.0451 respectively. However, the mean value and standard deviation for female respondents were 16.8000 and 6.3373. This therefore suggests that significant influence exists in teacher education programme on the basis of gender equality.

Table 3: There is no significant influence between teacher education programme of ABU, Zaria affiliate and capabilities of in-service teachers.

Variables	Gender	N	MEAN	SD	Std. Er	df	T-Cal	T-Crit	P (sig)
Capabilities	Male	200	18.0000	6.0151	0.0067	198	1.97	1.96	0.000
	Female		18.8000	6.0451	0.0060				

P calculated < 0.05 t calculated > 1.96 at df 198

Information from table 3 above showed t-calculated value of 1.97 was obtained at 198 degree of freedom. The observed significant level was 0.000 ($P < 0.05$). The mean value and standard deviation for capabilities of male respondents was 18.0000 and 6.0151 respectively. Also, the mean value and standard deviation for female respondents were 18.8000 and 6.0451. With these observations, there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

Discussion of Findings

In table 1, t-test statistics was used to test significant influence between teacher education programme of FCE, Zaria affiliate and quality education offered the in-service teachers. The hypothesis was subsequently rejected. This showed that teacher education programme significantly influenced the quality of education offered the in-service teacher in the study area. The EFA GMR 2013/14 (UNESCO 2013) emphasizes the importance of teacher professional development in contexts where teaching methods are being updated to move away from traditional approaches to more participatory, critical methods: ‘Without training, teachers can find the shift to learner-centred pedagogy demanding, particularly in schools with few resources’.

Table 2 examined significant influence between teacher education programme of FCE, Zaria affiliate and gender equality among in-service teachers. In testing this hypothesis, t-test statistical procedure was employed. And the result showed that significant influence between the twin variables exist suggesting the null-hypothesis was out rightly rejected.



In the table 3 above which tested significant influence between teacher education programme of ABU, Zaria affiliate and capabilities of in-service teachers. The opinion of respondents brought about the rejection of this hypothesis. In essence, quality of teacher education programme determines the capability of in-service teachers after returning back to their places of primary assignment.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study which is equated to the problem which has risen are as follows:

1. It was revealed that teacher education programme is significantly influence to the quality of education but poor implementation of its guidelines (either by NCCE or NUC) has brought about dismal performance by the nation's educational system.
2. Teacher education programmes have a significant influence with the capabilities of all citizens. In other words, the problems associated with the implementation of teacher education programme if not adequately addressed may limit the capabilities of the teachers themselves and their learners.
3. The study identified that significant influence exists between quality in teacher education programme and capabilities of all citizens. The implication of this, is that gap exist between policy formulation and implementation hence, the inability to achieve the sustainable development goals through teacher education programme.

Conclusion

The study reveals that teacher education programme if fully implemented the way and manner it should be, realizing the goals of sustainable development of the United Nations is realistic. However, the problems identified in this study should be adequately tackled with all sense of humour.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been put forward in this study

1. Efforts should be made to religiously implement the guidelines stipulated in teacher education programmes in the Country. This should be done by all the stakeholders involved in its implementation.
2. Beyond what is provided in the teacher education programmes, all hands should be on deck to ensure that prospective teachers are offered admission on merits and thoroughly refined to be able to assist in achieving the identified goals of sustainable development.
3. Teacher training colleges should work to achieve international best practices in their domain irrespective of their locality, affiliations or what they may tame them to be. It is advised that post qualification survey should be carried out from-to-time in collaboration with employers of labour to assess how their training have helped them improve on their jobs.

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