


Teacher education, innovation, and knowledge transfer for sustainable development in Anambra state: the role of English language

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ARTICLE INFO	Abstract
<p>Keywords: <i>Teacher education, Innovation, Knowledge transfer, Sustainable development.</i></p> <p>©2025 Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International</p> 	<p><i>This study surveyed the development of Teacher Education from the missionary period through the colonial era to the present day emergence of colleges of education and Faculties of education in universities in Nigeria. The theory of teacher innovation served as the theoretical framework for the study. A sample population of two colleges of education in Anambra State was used for the study. The researcher visited the institutions and conducted oral interviews and discussions with some lecturers. The course contents of some departments were also examined including the pay packets of some lecturers. The importance of English as a vehicle for the transmission of knowledge for all the courses in teacher education was also emphasized. The research suggested that the government, the society, the parents and voluntary organizations should put their hands on deck to provide all that is needed for teacher education in Nigeria as no country can grow above the educational standard of its citizens. It was discovered that the lecturers' pay packets which should serve as motivation was not encouraging, the course contents did not contain enough information which should produce qualitative teachers with the needed skills for them to be self-employed on graduation. It was recommended amongst others that the curriculum of teacher education should be completely overhauled to introduce more meaningful innovations to help harness the innate talents which will give room for sustainable development in a developing country like Nigeria.</i></p>

Introduction

Teacher education is an indispensable tool for effective development of any country. It cannot be an overstatement to say that no country can have any meaningful and sustainable development without providing qualitative and sound education for her citizens. For one to evaluate the level of development of any country, he must first of all evaluate the quality and quantity of teachers. There is no gain saying that teachers go a long way to determine the fate of any country. The role, functions and effects of teachers are often noticed in all aspects of the activities of a country, for instance, in their economy, political, social and in fact all aspects of their existence. Adetugbo, A.A (2020 P.75)

It is necessary to note that the knowledge a learner acquires in the school is transferred to all other aspects of the lives of the society, especially when such a learner enters into the labour market as a finished product from school. The competence which the person portrays in his workplace goes a long way to say much about the school, as the learner acts as an ambassador for the school *Afolayan et al (2020 P.70)*

It is necessary to note that the English language plays a very vital role as the channel of communication between the teacher and the learner. It is the official language of teaching and learning in all schools in Nigeria as has been enshrined in the national policy on education. This is as a result of the fact that Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country.

Recent linguistic researchers reveal that there are over four hundred different linguistic communities in Nigeria with Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba as the three major languages. The divergent nature of Nigeria, with ethnic rivalries and hatred have made it difficult for her work to have a national language which can serve as the language of instruction and communication in all schools in Nigeria, hence the official language for teaching and learning . Again, Nigeria was colonized by Britain whose native language is English. During the colonial period, the White man made English compulsory in schools and raised its status to an enviable position that he who could speak it well was regarded as being very intelligent. In fact, English became a status symbol and a yardstick for social stratification *Audley, I.R (2018, P.80)*

This paper will survey the development of teacher education in Nigeria, some innovations already introduced during the process of development and knowledge transfer of education to humanity's existence. It will also survey the role of the English language in teacher education, some problems facing English as a language for the acquisition of teacher education and how to solve some of those problems.

Development of teacher education in nigeria

Commissions report 1925, memorandum 1926 ordinance and eventually the new national policy on education came to be the latest policy on Nigeria education in general and teacher education in particular.

The Missionary Period:

The Portuguese sailors were the first Europeans that came to West Africa, Nigeria inclusive. They came principally for commercial purposes on slaves. The business of slavery and slave trade lasted for more than five hundred years. They did not make a good impact on education until the missionaries came with the arrival of Rev. Treeman and Mr. & Mrs. De graft of the Methodist Mission. There was also the coming of the Church Missionary Society who produced catechists, interpreters and teachers who were not quite professionally trained.

The church missionary society established teachers institute in 1853 at Abeokuta. The training institute was moved to Lagos in 1896, and later moved to Oyo and named St. Andrews College, Oyo in 1833. The Baptist Mission established a seminary in Ogbomoso which was changed to Baptist Training College in 1897. The Methodist mission also established a training college in Lagos.

In 1896 the Catholic Church established St. Gregory College. In 1905 Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society opened a training institute for training of teachers and catechists. This was later changed to Wesleyan College Ibadan.

Fafunwa (1974 P.70) recorded that as the training institute was being built, some people were being trained as teachers, catechists and interpreters in the homes of these missionaries in an informal setting. The training of teachers at this period concentrated on only training of primary school teachers because there were no secondary schools at that time.

Fafunwa (1974 P. 74) recorded that there was no uniformity among the training schools established by the different missionaries as regards to salary of teachers, uniform scheme of work or other aspects of the school management.

Role of Colonial Government

At the initial period, the colonial government did not have any well-defined education policy for its colonies. She only tried in some little measures to help the missionaries. The content of the curriculum then were comparative religion, elementary geography, English, History, domestic science and practical agriculture.

Government participation began with the establishment of an education ordinance in 1887 which included the Governor, members of legislature, inspector of schools and others appointed by the Governor. The ordinance specified conditions for giving grants to schools.

In 1899, a protectorate for northern and southern Nigeria was created and in 1903 an education department was created for northern and southern schools. In 1906 the protectorate of southern Nigeria was merged with the colony and protectorate of Lagos to become protectorate and colony of southern Nigeria.

Teacher education in Nigeria has been undergoing changes right from the missionary activities through the colonial era to the post independence era and modern period. The situation has not been static, rather there had been various enactment of ordinances like 1882 and 1887 education ordinances. There were other memoranda and reports like Phelps-stokes commission's report, Elliot's Commission's report, 1925 memorandum/ 1926 ordinance, and the new national policy on education came to be the latest policy on Nigeria education generally and teacher education in particular.

With the passage of time, the number of colonial government schools increased and African teachers alone were not enough to take care of the schools. Some Indian teachers were employed by 1912, there were up to fifty-nine (59) government primary schools and ninety-one mission schools assisted by the government according to *Fafunwa (1972 P.75)*.

The government primary school teachers' houses were maintained while grants were made available to augment teachers' salaries. In 1923, the Phelps-Stokes Commission submitted its report and the colonial administration appointed an advisory committee on native education to advise the secretary of states for the colonies on matters of native education. In 1925, the committees produced a memorandum on education policy in British tropical Africa and this contained the principles of teacher education in Nigeria. Section seven of it states that there should be an adequate number of qualified and trained teachers in schools, while sections twelve and thirteen maintained the importance of training women teachers and training of university rank teachers. In 1926, an ordinance was published which stated that there should be a register for trained teachers and only people whose names were in the register should be allowed to teach. This was the starting point of the union of teachers known as Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) in 1930.

The Ashby report of 1960 proposed a plan for higher education institution programmes in teacher education. This report suggested the production of seven hundred graduate teachers every year from 1960 to 1970. A conference was organized in 1961 by the University of Nigeria which was attended by Nigeria school principals, professors and education officers. This conference recommended a three years B.A and B.sc (education) degrees in universities. In 1962, five advanced teacher training colleges were established by both federal and regional governments aimed at producing qualified non-graduate teachers to teach the lower forms of secondary schools. In 1960, there was an important project on teacher education in Nigeria which was financed by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and called Afro-Anglo-American teacher education.

Sustainable Development

This concept has been widely used since 1980. But it has gained more popularity as it has now been used as a way of responding to global environmental concerns and other issues such as biophysical matters, non violent, inclusive and effective learning environment for all. *Osuji (2019 P.65)* explains sustainable development as 'an approach that combines the development needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability of the future while also maintaining ecological integrity'. This implies a development process that is equitable and sensitive to ecological and environmental issues.

English as the Language of Instruction in Teacher Education in Nigeria

Teacher education which started during the missionary era had English as the language of teaching and learning. This continued until it became enshrined in the National Policy on Education. During the colonial and missionary era, English gained fame and popularity that he who was able to speak it well was regarded as brilliant. Commenting on the position of English in Nigeria, *Eyisi, J (2019 P.64)* opines that English became a status symbol and was used as a yardstick to measure intelligence. It was also used to place people on the social ladder.

Despite the fact that English was made the language of communication in 1882 and the official language of instruction in 1887, it is still facing a lot of problems. Some of these problems include lack of qualified English teachers, lack of instructional materials, lack of impressive motivation of teachers and mother tongue interference. Both the government, the parents, voluntary organizations etc. should put all hands on deck to solve the problems that are facing English as a second language in Nigeria.

It is worthy to note that every teacher worth his salt should know how to speak English very well and have a strong command of it. This is because without it, such a teacher will find it difficult to have effective delivery of his or her lesson, no matter what subject it is. In teaching and learning, communicability and comprehensibility should be worth any price. It is strongly suggested that every teacher should have done English as a general course and have a good command of it. If this is so, such a teacher will not find it difficult to have a communicative competence in English which will go a long way to make the delivery of his lesson easier and more interesting.

Statement of problems:

There are certain problems facing teacher education in Nigeria which prompted this study. Some of these problems include:

-Lack of qualified teachers in schools: Some individuals who find themselves in the teaching profession do not have the passion or interest since teaching is a vocation. They do not possess the necessary qualifications for their respective roles. Therefore, they are often inexperienced and poorly informed for such positions. Consequently, they find it difficult to put in their best while teaching. They lack the necessary teaching skills, knowledge, commitment and interest in teaching.

-There is the serious problem of the inability of the government in Nigeria to provide adequate motivation for teachers. As a result, there are not enough teaching materials, enough classrooms and motivations for teachers and students alike. One can recall that in 2022, academic staff of universities in Nigeria embarked on more than eight months of strikes and lock out.

-Nigeria has the problem of non-functional curriculum for teacher education: This does not give room for producing functional, qualitative, innovative and creative teachers. Commenting on this problem of theoretical curriculum, *Akintola, T.M (2019 P.76)* states that the federal government should have a complete overhaul of the curriculum to produce teachers who can help in training learners who are self-employed on graduation.

Purpose of the Study:

This study is aimed at having a critical survey of teacher education in Nigeria. The survey concentrates on the development of teacher education as well as the problems and prospects involved. Efforts will be made to proffer solutions to the problems, and introduce innovation towards training functional and skillful learners to be self-reliant and self-employed upon graduation. The main purpose of the study is to produce a research which should serve as a guide to educational planners and educators towards producing qualitative and skill oriented learners in the country.

Significance of the Study:

The study is important because it will help the government who are the education policy makers to create adequate policies and introduce innovation into teacher education for the attainment of sustainable development. It will also help the lecturers who are the educational policy implementers to improve on and production of qualitative and skill oriented learners.

Area of Study:

The study concentrated on Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe and Federal College of Educational Technical Umunze, both in Anambra State.

Method of Research:

Field investigation, observation, questioning, oral interview, collection and analysis of data were used for the study.

Sampling Technique:

Simple random sampling was used for the study. The researcher visited the two teacher training institutions in Anambra State and through random sampling, interrogated some in English department in researcher also observed some of the instructional materials used in the institutions. The course contents of some departments were also critically examined.

Population of the Study:

A sample population of fifty lecturers and fifty students were interviewed both at Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe and Federal College of Education Technical, Umunze.

Research Questions:

The following research questions guided the study:

- (1.) To what exact does students do well in the courses in your department?
- (2.) How often do your lecturers attend lectures
- (3.) What is the salary for the least lecturers and the highest lecturer in the department?

Review of literature

The literature for this study was reviewed under three sub-heading namely:

- (1) Conceptual framework
- (2) Theoretical framework
- (3) Empirical studies

Conceptual Framework

The following concepts were reviewed; Teacher education, innovation, knowledge transfer, sustainable development.

Teacher education is an integral part of general educational system in Nigeria today. The level of education has been undergoing changes and development right from the missionary era, to post independence and to the present time. The development has been continuous even till the enactment of early ordinances like 1882 and 1887 education ordinances.

It is worthy to note that teacher education which started around the 18th century with the missionaries and colonial masters has now come to the establishment of colleges of education and faculties of education in universities. During the missionary era, the curriculum for teacher education was very narrow. *Eze, (2019 P-76)* opined that the scheme of work at that time took care of only three 'Rs', namely reading, writing and Arithmetic. *Okoye R. (2021 P60)* noted that during the missionary period, teaching and teachers were regarded as very important concepts in the society. During that

time, no profession was regarded with respect and dignity like the teaching profession. They further explained that the English language which was the channel for teaching and learning was also regarded with respect. He who could speak the English language very well was regarded with dignity. *Baldeh (1990 P76)* remarked that while the prestigious English language grew in popularity, the vernacular waned. According to her, any pupil who was caught speaking the vernacular in schools was punished severely while those who spoke the English language were rewarded with appointments and promotions as teachers, interpreters, messengers and clerks.

Theoretical framework

The theory that serves as a framework for this study is the theory of innovative education. Innovative education is a process of education and innovative training which contributes to the development of creative abilities, self learning and improvement. This is to ensure that man's innate tendencies are developed. It is a multi- component social activity. Fresso, (2011 P62) states that innovation in professional education is the integral content of technical and technological, pedagogical, socio-economic innovation. Innovation in education is a multi-component social activity that includes the process of developing progressive innovations in the method of education. It also includes transforming the technology that implements them as well as introducing them into methodology and practical pedagogy so as to have a progressive effect. Khutorskoy, AN (2020 P.70) opines the three components of the innovation process. This gave room to the development and application Innovation. The aim of innovative education is to the advance of human development as a very important part of social activity.

Empirical Studies

Some scholars have made certain postulations concerning how to improve teacher education in Nigeria for sustainable development. There -is no gain-saying the fact that teacher education is a very vital aspect of the education of any country. Teachers play a very indispensable role in determining the fate of the youths of any country. Okeke, FN (2021 P69) maintains that without a strong educational policy, any country will find it difficult to survive, especially at this age of science and technology. He goes on to lament that Nigeria's educational system and policy are not something to write home about. Consequently, this has affected all the aspects of the lives of her citizens. According to him, Nigeria's educational system produces only people with emphasis on paper qualification. The products of the Nigerian educational system roam about the street, jobless, because emphasis was only on the theoretical aspects of their courses. Oyekan, 2020 P 76) notes that teacher education should produce qualified professionals in teaching who can adjust to the challenging needs of the society by training out professionals different aspects of their lives.

The goals of teacher education as stipulated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) as contained in the *National Policy on Education* are to produce highly motivated conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system, encourage and further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers, help teachers to fit into the social life of the community at large and enhance their commitment to national goals. Commenting on the state of teacher education in Nigeria, *Emelife PJ (2021P 70)* records that teacher education is faced with a myriad of problems which have hampered the achievement of its goals as contained in the National Policy on Education. He further observes that some of the problems that are facing teacher education in Nigeria include: Lack of enough funds to provide all that is needed for the achievement of qualitative education, lack of effective scheme of work that will help in training out functional teachers, lack of motivation of teachers by the government.

Method Of Research:

The study concentrated on Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe and Federal College of Educational Technical Umunze, both in Anambra State.

Field investigation, observation, questioning, oral interview, collection and analysis of data were used for the study.

Simple random sampling was used for the study. The researcher visited the two teacher training institutions in Anambra State and through random sampling, interrogated some lecturers and students in the institutions. The researcher also observed some of the instructional materials used in teaching in the institutions. The course contents of some departments were also critically examined.

A sample population of 50 lecturers and fifty students were interviewed both at Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe and Federal College of Education Technical, Umunze.

Summary Of Findings

The researcher after discussion with the sample population discovered the followings:

- (1.) Some departments did not have enough lecturers
- (2.) The courses embarked on each semester do not have detailed and functional course contents that can develop the innate talents and skills in the learners which can help them to be self-employed after graduation.
- (3.) The salary scales of the lecturers were not impressive. Consequently, some of them lack the necessary job satisfaction needed to stimulate interest, hardwork and commitment.

Conclusion

Teacher education is a very indispensable aspect of the levels of education of any country. It came to Nigeria in the 18th century through the missionaries and the colonial masters. The missionaries built churches and needed teachers who would help them to propagate the gospel. They started training out people in their homes as teachers, interpreters and clerks. *Beni, FG (2021 P 77)* maintains that teaching is considered as one of the most strategic professions for the attainment of sustainable development goals. There is no gain-saying that education is a major factor for sustainable development and the teacher is considered to be at the centre of this issue. A teacher is the channel through which knowledge, skills, values and attitudes pass to the learner. Qualitative teachers produce qualitative students who in turn become the products of excellent professionals in their various endeavors.

It is lamentable that there are a lot of challenges that are facing the education industry in Nigeria. Some of these problems include inefficiency of qualified teachers, insufficient instructional materials, and classrooms and inadequate incentives and motivation of teachers. It is also worthy of note that enough innovations have not been introduced into teacher education. The importance of innovations which can produce qualitative and practical oriented teachers cannot be overemphasized. In this era of science and technology, it is necessary to restructure the curriculum of teacher education and train out teachers who will in turn train out students who will be practically oriented and self-employed upon graduation. Emphasis should also be placed on skill acquisition and entrepreneurial education. This will go a long way to help students to be gainfully employed after graduation and reduce graduate unemployment. *Agbionu CN (2021 P.46)* states that entrepreneurial education should be an indispensable part of education in Nigeria. She therefore advises that it should be given its pride of place in schools.

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