

Lecturers' Perception of Colleges of Education Related Problems in Nigeria: Implication for Teachers' Attitudinal Reorientation

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates lecturer's perception of some identified school related problems and their influence on the full realization of the aims and objectives of teacher education in Nigeria. One hundred lecturers from the six geo-political zones of Nigeria randomly selected from the seventy- seven federal and state Colleges of Education were involved in the study. Questionnaire demanding opinion of the lecturers was used as instrument. The Cronbach Alpha of coefficient used was calculated at 0.72. Frequency count and simple percentage were used to analyse data. A predetermined average of fifteen percent was established. The percentage above fifteen was considered positive and below fifteen as negative perception of the respondents on each of the problems. Findings revealed that the subjects identified inadequate infrastructures, lack of in- service training, overcrowded classroom, lack of professional and moral confidence, lack of developed interest in educational research and inadequate funding as the major problems facing teacher education in Nigeria. The study thus made some suggestions for the improvement of teacher education in a bid to actually actualize the aims and objectives of teacher education in Nigeria.

Keywords: Lecturers' perception, school related problems,

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education according to Afe (2003), is that 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 teachers for the school system. Fafunwa (1974) in Ademiluyi (2012) states that teacher education has been assigned the responsibility of training people who are professionally skilled in inculcating the right attitudes, values and

vocational skills at all levels of education. Likewise, Kolade-Oje (2008) in Adigun (2013) sees teacher education as the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period for the preparation of individuals who intend to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens. The aims of teacher education as stipulated in the National Policy on education (Federal Republic of Nigeria 2004) which are as follows:

1. To provide highly motivated, conscientious and efficient teachers for all levels of our education system.
2. To encourage further, the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.
3. To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large
4. To enhance their commitment to national objectives.
5. To provide teachers with the intellectual and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country, but the wider world.
6. To enhance teacher commitment to the teaching profession.

These aims can be adjudged plausible and robust but it must be mentioned however that there are certain shortcomings in the realization of these aims. Certain serious problems are militating against its full realization. Among these problems is the absence of in-training for the lecturers. The production of good teachers is through both the pre-service and in-service training. Those who decide to proceed directly from secondary school to any of the teacher training institutions leading to the award of the Nigerian Certificate in Education or the Bachelor's degree in Education were given pre-training, whereas, in-service training is given to teachers who are already in the education system to update their academic and professional competencies. Ogunu (1983) as cited in Momoh (1999) has identified four specific purposes of in-service training. They are:

- a) Continuing learning that is, a deliberate effort to translate the knowledge, understandings, and generalizations of the pre service programme into successful constantly improving professional practice.
- b) Remedial function i.e. filling the gaps inevitably left by the pre-service programme, however good it may be.
- c) Keeping pace with change that is helping the teacher trainers to keep abreast of new proposals and their educational implications. It is important for the trainers to learn of the new knowledge, ideas, and theory stemming from research and educational practice, and the proposals being made for changes in materials, methodology, and organization.

- d) Increased efficiency i.e. helping to increase the teacher trainers' efficiency in handling the day-to-day functioning of schools.

Momoh (1999) asserts that the in-service education programme is not only a tool to progress; it is also a symbol of faith in the improvability of the individual. He further identifies problems of in-service training as failure to relate in-service programme plans to genuine need of staff participations, failure to select appropriate activities for implementing programme plans and failure to implement in-service activities with sufficient staff and other resources to ensure effectiveness. Another problem identifies with teacher training in Nigeria is dying interest in educational research. Educational research, as defined by American Educational Research Association (2013) is a field of inquiry aimed at advancing knowledge of education and learning processes and development of the tools and methods necessary to support this endeavor.

Education researchers aim to describe, understand, and explain how learning takes place throughout the life cycle and how formal processes of education affect learning, attainment, and the capacity to lead productive lives. The College of Education is the producer of the much needed middle man power to service the nation's primary and junior schools. It has been observed that majority of their tutors are mainly first degree or master degree holders, as a result more emphasis are placed on teaching more than on research over the years, but now just like their counterparts in the Universities, there is need to publish papers or remain stagnant in the same position. It is a known fact that research develops and broadens the mind of the researcher, who in turn is obliged to impart his discovery or new knowledge to the pupils which is usually done through the lecture process. For a better future and advancement of science and technology, our educational system must be energized by new discoveries based on research. The major problem facing educational research in the Nigerian Colleges of Education is lack of funds and grants, lack of essential research laboratories; workshops that would permit and accommodate a well designed research work.

Another problem militating against the full realization of Nigeria Certificate Education objectives is the issue of large class. Overcrowded class is a common feature of most Nigerian Colleges of Education. The teaching especially in general studies and education courses becomes a tedious job and a mere formality, a matter of routine with little or no attention paid to the proficiency level attained by the learners. The sharp increases in number of schools enrolment of learners call for a corresponding recruitment of qualified lecturers, which further call for corresponding availability of classrooms, laboratories, instructional materials, textbooks, libraries, staff training and conferences, even learners-lecturers ratio will determine the level of quality

education associated with its growth (David, 1976). Most Lecturers lack both moral and professional confidence in their work. Most of them handled their lectures in a manner that can raise questions as to whether they are qualified. The activities exercised by a lecturer depend largely on his professional qualification. His moral confidence is his consciousness of what is right only, and they believe that what he is doing is right and improves his ability to do it, no matter what it will cost him. He exercises both his professional and moral confidence by studying the language policy and the objectives of teacher education and he works assiduously towards the realization of these objectives. The standard of teaching should be viewed both from measurable attribute of teaching such as knowledge and skills and also immeasurable ones such as ethical and the moral aspect of teaching. Moral and professional confidences empower the lecturer to do the right thing and ignore any inhibition to the success of their mandate as teacher trainers. They will thus work relentlessly to achieve the set goals. This study sought to identify the teacher's perception of the factors militating against the achievement of the objectives of teacher education in Nigeria. The following research questions were generated to guide the study

1. Could overcrowded classroom affect the teaching and learning process in Nigerian Colleges of Education?
2. Could lack of in-service training affect the efficiency of lecturers in Colleges of Education?
3. Could lack of educational research affect the efficiency of lecturers in Colleges of Education?
4. Could lack of professional and moral confidence affect the lecturers' efficiency in Colleges of Education?

Research Hypotheses

- H₀1: Overcrowded classroom can not affect the teaching and learning process in the Nigerian colleges of Education
- H₀2: Lack of in-service training could not affect the efficiency of lecturers in Colleges of Education
- H₀3: Lack of educational research could not affect the lecturers' efficiency in Colleges of Education.
- H₀4: Lack of professional and moral confidence could not affect the lecturer's efficiency in Colleges of Education.

METHOD

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The target population for the study was all the lecturers in all the Nigerian Colleges of

Education. The sample involved in the study consisted of one hundred (100) NCE lecturers selected from the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. Stratified sampling was used to select equal number of lecturers from the Nigerian Colleges of Education. The instrument used for the study was structured questionnaire, which was designed by the researcher based on earlier works of educators on the concept. It was an open ended questionnaire, which contained five sections. Section 'A' contained bio data of the teachers, which are age, sex, educational qualification and years of experience. Section 'B' contained ten items centered on the effects of lack of in-service training. Section 'C' contained items on lack of developed interest in educational research, section 'D' centered on lack of professional and moral confidence on the part of the lecturers. Section 'E' contained items on the effect of overcrowded classroom on the lecturer's efficiency. The questionnaire demands the expressions of opinion of respondents; hence, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated yielding an estimate of 0.72. The structured questionnaire was administered by the researcher to the participants of the study through posting; the posted questionnaire contained a researcher's self addressed envelope which was used to return the completed questionnaire. One hundred copies were returned out of one hundred and fifty copies; therefore one hundred copies were treated in the study.

Frequency counts and simple percentage were used to analyze the data collected for the study, while the sample responses were tallied. In section 'B' responses were grouped into six categories as stated above in this study; a predetermined average of fifteen percent was established. This means that the percentage above fifteen was considered positive (that is to say, they agreed that the problem do exists in their school) and percentage below fifteen was considered negative perception. (They disagreed that the problem do not exist in their own school).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The category with the largest number of responses was large/overcrowded classroom with 44%, followed by in-service training, 20%, lack of developed interest in educational research, 18%, and finally lack of professional and moral confidence, 18%. This results indicate that overcrowded classes syndrome exists in their respective colleges and is greatly affecting their level of efficiency. Also the Lecturers opined that lack of in-service training affects their level of efficiency. This is in support of Momoh (1999) assertion that in-service training is for increased efficiency i.e. helping to increase the teacher trainer's efficiency in handling the day-to- day functioning of schools and that it is not only a tool

for progress, but also a symbol of faith in the improvement of individual. From the results also, the lecturers rated educational research third high as it helps to keep abreast of the latest development in the teaching profession. Sampson (1999) in support of this explains that it develops and broadens the mind of the researcher, who in turn is obliged to impart his discovery or new knowledge to the pupils which is usually done through the lecture process. Professional and moral confidence is rated last but definitely very important. This involves the ability of the lecturer to use his professional training to do what is right at the right time and to do all within his power to ensure the realization of the objectives of the teacher education in Nigeria. It is a recognized fact worldwide that teacher, aside the students are the heart of the education process and the main determinant of the quality and effectiveness of its results. At any level of education, teacher factor cannot be relegated to the background. Thus, teacher training issue in Nigeria should be thoroughly considered by all the stakeholders.

Table 1: Teachers' perception on each problem

Categories	Number	Percentage
Large classes	44	44%
In-service training	20	20%
Educational research	18	18%
Professional and moral confidence	18	18%
Total	100	1 00%

Source: Field survey, 2013

CONCLUSION

In this study, the researcher was able to establish through the subject problem of overcrowded classrooms which in turn reduced the level of lecturers' productivity. This study also justified the need for in- service training for the Lecturers. Teacher education provides the foundation on which the superstructure of national development must be built. The stronger the foundation, the more magnificent would be the structure. To meet the challenges of the global era, teacher trainers should ensure that they go for viable in-service training. Similar to this, it was established through this study that for professional development and efficiency. Lecturers need to carry out rigorous research in their various fields and write quality educational papers from time to time. Finally, the study also justified the importance of lecturers developing both moral and professional confidence so as to be empowered against any inhibition to the successful discharge of their mandate as teacher trainers.

In order to equip the teacher trainers so as to give appropriate and required training to the teacher trainees, government should make enough funds available for the smooth running of the institutions. Lecturers should be encouraged to write and publish well researched papers by making funds available to them. More classrooms and laboratories should be built to reduce the problems of overcrowded classrooms. Lecturers are advised to go for further education and in-service training whenever the opportunity presents itself. Finally, the standard of education should be viewed both from measurable and immeasurable attributes of teaching such as ethical and the moral aspects of teaching.

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