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REPOSITIONING TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA FOR TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY: SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS.

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined how to reposition Teacher Education in Nigeria for Teaching Effectiveness in the 21st Century. The place of the teacher in the overall teaching-learning process was discussed. The roles of Teacher Education Programme in the preparation of teachers were highlighted. The paper gave an exposition on the historical development of Teacher Education in Nigeria, identifying the underlined strengths and loop holes in the process over the period. The challenges of Teacher Education in Nigeria were hence highlighted. The paper then, puts its thrust on the characteristics of 21st century learning and presented a discourse on the Teacher Education Programme that will effectively meet the needs of the 21st century learning. Recommendations were made on how to ensure that teachers with high teaching effectiveness are turned out for the Nigerian 21st century classrooms. These include; government and private organizations should establish more effective teacher training institutions to ensure high teacher turnover as this will effect class size reduction needed for effectiveness in the 21st century learning, there should be provision and utilization of ICT facilities in teacher education institutions as through this, the teacher-trainees would acquire skills that will enable them to be informed and relevant in the 21st century. Also, teacher pedagogy should be robust to embrace several approaches such as collaborative, problem solving and project- based approaches among others which are relevant in 21st century learning. The paper however, employed document analysis.

Keywords: Repositioning, Teacher Education, Teaching Effectiveness, 21st Century Learning.

INTRODUCTION

The place of the teacher in the educational setting a nation will unequivocally remain pivotal regardless of the consistent educational reforms or curriculum changes. Countries may continue to embrace different educational systems with a view to finding a lasting solution to their educational challenges but the place of the teacher in the entire process remains central given that the teacher is one of the most important elements in any educational programme (NCTC, 1998). Nigeria for instance, from the inception of western education in the 1840s has witnessed series of changes in her educational system ranging from the 8-6-2-3, 6-5-2-3 to 6-3-3-4 systems of education and then the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in September, 1999. Despite these, her educational challenges are far from being over, implying that it is not only about a sound educational policy or educational system.

Suffice it to say that the quality of the teachers manning the educational process and, the process of their preparation are critical issues, given that teachers are mainly responsible for the implementation of the educational process at any stage (NCTE, 1998) and no education system can thrive above the quality of its teachers (FRN, 2004). Similarly, the American Commission on Teacher Education observed that, the quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of its citizens depends not exclusively, but in critical measure upon the quality of their education, which depends more than upon any single factor upon the quality of their teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2005). An arm of Nigerian Education System, saddled with the task of preparing teachers for the Nigerian Schools is the Teacher Education Programme offered in the Teachers Institutes, Colleges of Education and the Universities. The National

Council for Teachers Education defined teacher education as a programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher education. To Afe in Ejima (2012), teacher education refers to the policies and practices designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider society

The three stages in teacher education according to Olufunke and Ojeleye (2007) include:

1. Initial training/education which is the pre-service training.
2. Induction which has to do with the support the neophyte teacher gets from more experienced teachers and this could be referred to as mentorship.
3. Teachers development or continuing professional development which refers to in-service training.

The goals of teacher education in Nigeria are to:

1. Produce highly motivational, conscientious and efficient class room teachers for all levels of our educational system;
2. Encourage further, the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
3. Help teachers fit into social life of the community, 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;
5. Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession. (FGN, 2004; p. 24).

NB: Comments

1. Change all bulleting or alphabet numbering (to numbers)
To achieve the above goals, the Curriculum of Teacher Education in Nigeria has been structured to comprise:
- (1) **General Education** which sharpens the student teacher's worldview, equipping him with the requisite societal commonalities or knowledge needed to achieve competence. The general education component constitute the core content or university required courses (GST courses). GST courses are compulsory courses that must be taken and passed by all the students before graduation. These include Use of English and Communication Skills, Computer Studies, Science and Technology, Africa and the World among the others. These courses are spread through the 4- year's duration of study.

- (2) **Professional Education** which equips the student teacher with the knowledge of the learners and pedagogy. It comprises – philosophy, psychology and sociology of education, principles of education, history of education, educational administration, educational technology and teaching methodology. These form part of the compulsory requirements in teacher training to obtain a bachelor degree in education within four years.
- (3) **Specialized education** which includes studies related to the students intended field of teaching. This equips them with the good mastery of their teaching subjects. The pre-service teachers are expected to pass a specified number of units of their teaching subject before graduation.

HISTORY OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

The history of Teacher Education in Nigeria can be traced as far back as the emergence of Western Education in the country with the arrival of the Missionaries in the 1840s. Prominent among the missions were; Wesley Methodist, The Church Missionary Society (CMS), Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic. The various church missions established training institutions, devoted mainly to training elementary teachers which include;

1. The Training Institution, Abeokuta, 1959.
2. Hope – Waddel College Institute, Calabar, 1895
3. St. Andrew's College, Oyo, 1896
4. Baptist Training College, Ogbomosho, 1897
5. Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Teachers Training Centre, Ibadan, 1905

Given that the aim of education during the colonial era was the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills for evangelism and book-keeping, the then teacher education was structured to meet the need. The curriculum for instance comprised English, Arithmetic, Writing, Geography, Hygiene General Studies, Geometry, Agriculture, Nature study and Local Language (Fafunwa, 1974). The pupil-teacher system was utilized with its attendant deficiency of poorly conceived curriculum irrelevant to the educational needs of Nigerians. Hence, a shift from the missionary-based education in Nigeria came with the Phelps-Stokes Commission's report of 1925 and subsequent recommendations. Two types of teacher-training institutions that evolved were:

1. The Elementary Training College for lower primary school teachers of two years duration to award Grade III Teachers' Certificate.
2. The Higher Elementary Training College of two years duration to award Grade II Teachers

Certificate.

The report of Ashby Commission in 1960 brought a turn-around in teacher training in the country as the report hinged on the grave inadequate supply of trained teachers for the Nigerian Secondary Schools. The recommendations of the commission include:

1. The opening of more Universities.
2. The institution of a Bachelor Degree in Education
3. The training of more teachers for the Nigerian Secondary Schools.

Following this, there was rapid expansion of teacher training facilities in the country. The National Policy on Education (1977), stipulates that all categories of teachers in Nigerian Schools must be professionally trained. Education Institutions charged with such responsibilities include: Grade II Teachers Colleges, Advanced Teachers Colleges, Colleges of Education, Institute of Education and National Teachers Institutes (NTI) (Adeyinka, 1988).

The Ashby's report for the establishment of Grade I Teacher Training Colleges led to the emergence of Advanced Teacher Training Colleges in 1952 which later metamorphosed to Colleges of Education. They were NCE (Nigeria Certificate of Education) awarding institutions, producing well qualified non-graduate teachers to cater for the lower secondary classes. Nigerian Certificate in Education is the minimum requirement to become a teacher in Nigeria and there are 113 NCE awarding institutions in Nigeria presently (Isyaku, 2014). The institutions were first established in Lagos (1962); at Ibadan (1962); at Owerri (1963) which later became Alvan Ikoku College of Education in 1973; at Zaria (1962); at Kano (1964) and Abraka in 1968 (Amadi, 2011). The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) is charged with the responsibility of laying down minimum standards for all programmes of teacher education at the NCE level.

In line with Ashby Commission recommendations, more Universities emerged that provided teacher education programmes in the faculties of education and institutes of education. Many Universities ran programmes in B.A, B.Sc (Ed), M.Ed and up to Doctoral Degree level. Polytechnics also provide teacher education programmes in the area of Technical and Vocational Education. As at 2003, there were a total of 52 Universities in Nigeria with 31 having faculties and institutes of Education. However, the number of both Universities and Colleges of Education offering teacher education courses has steadily increased through the years

The Federal Government of Nigeria has

continually made attempts at consolidating and standardizing teacher education with a view to improving the quality of teachers (Ukeje and Asiku, 1982). To ensure professional status of teaching in Nigeria, the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1993 established the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) as an agency of the Federal Ministry of Education. The mandate of this body among others is to register and license qualified teachers to practise. The minimum bench mark qualification to be registered is pegged at NCE

STATUS OF TEACHERS IN PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL NIGERIA.

Indigenous education characterized pre-colonial Nigeria. Education at the time provided trainings in physical, character, intellectual, social and vocational developments. Almost every adult in Nigeria was a teacher and education took place everywhere and teachers were highly respected.

Colonial era in Nigeria brought formal education in place. Teachers exerted overwhelming influence on every facet of the society, the school, the church and the local communities, constituting the first set of educated elites in Nigeria. Teachers served as educators, disciplinarians and role models. Teaching then was very prestigious and the status of teachers was quite high. Ironically, as teachers raised other professionals in; law, medicine, accounting, engineering etc, there was greater clamour for these professions as they attracted higher financial rewards. Teaching gradually decreased in relevance while the influence/status of teachers accordingly decreased through the period.

CHALLENGES FACING TEACHER EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Some problems confronting teacher education in Nigeria include:

Inadequate Funding

Teacher education in Nigeria depends on funds from government to meet its financial obligations. When this is not forth-coming as it often would, the smooth running of the programme is compromised. Underfunding has for long been a major challenge of the education sector in Nigeria. For instance the budgetary allocations to the education sector for the years 2003, 2004 and 2006 were 7%, 12% and 11% respectively (FRN, 2006) and more recently, 8.7% in 2013 (Oseni, 2012) which invariably affects teacher education. Till date, the UNESCO recommendation of 26% budgetary allocation to the education sector is yet to be realized. Underpinned in the issue of inadequate funding is the issue of bad governance where there is lack of transparency and accountability resulting in misappropriation of funds allotted to education development. Under this

condition of financial inadequacy, it will not only be difficult to reposition our classrooms for the 21st century challenges in general but it would as well specifically impede effectively equipping the teacher training institutions to cope with the task ahead. When such institutions turn out poorly trained teachers, our schools would be staffed with incompetent teachers which invariably negatively affects the quality of instruction and the academic achievements of the learners. Increasing nature of poor academic performance of secondary school students especially in external examinations like West African Examination Council (WAEC) or Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) has been blamed on lack of funding from the government for quality infrastructure and also the fact that some secondary school teachers are not competent which may lead to poor academic performance of the students (Tope, 2012). The overall societal effect is poor educational development and low socio-economic growth of the nation.

Task of Coping with Global Changes In The Field

The integration of Information and Communication Technologies, ICT, in teaching – learning process at all levels of education system is currently an emerging global trend. The teacher education institutions everywhere including Nigeria are faced with the challenges of preparing a new generation of teachers for effective usage of these new learning tools in their teaching practices (UNESCO, 2002). The use of ICT in Nigeria especially in teacher educational institutions has been progressively slow due to economic disadvantages and government policies. There is hence the problem of slow access to basic ICT equipment, poor internet connectivity and lack of computers, and inadequacy in the use of audio-visual materials and equipment including films, slides, transparencies, projectors, programmed materials, information retrieval systems and instructional television (Ololube, 2006). These constitute serious barriers to effective teachers' preparation by these agencies. Furthermore, getting in-service teachers to imbibe these new technologies and methodologies of the advanced countries of the world is a big challenge to teacher education in the country.

Apart from integrating ICT into the educational curriculum; the 20th century educational curriculum does not encourage innovation and is of less relevance to the 21st century world of work. Given that the teaching-learning processes within the school system cannot be outside the existing curriculum, the net effect is that a teaching – learning process that does not support sporadic societal growth had been

sustained. There is then the need to practically overhaul educational curriculum at all levels of education.

Faulty Selection Process

Evidently, most of the problems encountered in the teacher education in Nigeria in process and output, stems from the selection process or entry point for the pre- service teachers. There is dearth of high calibre of students enrolling to train as teacher. As a result, a large chunk of the candidates are mainly rejects of other professions. Ibukun (2004) observed that it appears that the present system of education in Nigeria promotes the reservation of intellectually and financially deficient students for the teaching career. For instance, the cut-off point is raised for most professional courses such as medicine, engineering, architecture and accountancy which screen out low achieving students who finally find respite in the departments in education with lower cut-off marks. Furthermore, students who are not financially buoyant could as well find respite in sandwich programmes offered in the departments of education as part- time studies, as they can study while they work.

Indeed, a cursory evaluation of the admission requirements of the various institutions of higher learning reflects the values of the educational system. It shows that the best minds are admitted into the natural and physical science programmes while the next category are absorbed into the social, management or environmental sciences, the liberal arts and the humanities. These disciplines usually have high cut –off points tactically designed to capture high achievers. The third category, those on the lowest rung of the ladder in terms of intellectual attainment, are pushed to the faculties of education most often to mark time while awaiting a future opportunity of moving into a preferred course of study. Most of these students usually come through change of courses from other departments which they are unable to meet up with their high cut-off points. The quality of raw materials in teacher education programme is bound to affect the quality of the product or output irrespective of the calibre of teaching staff in the programme. However, in recent times, efforts are being made in the various faculties of education in schools to ensure that candidates with genuine interest in education to have chosen it as a first course of study are given preference in the admission process and that all admitted students possess the minimum entry requirements.

Poor Societal Perception of Teacher Education.

The public image of teachers in Nigeria is not a particularly good one. Teaching is not looked upon as a prestigious occupation; hence teacher education

does not enjoy so much patronage from the expected calibre of people. Such low social status accorded to teachers makes the profession unattractive to high academic achievers. The majority of teachers turn to teaching when every other option has failed them. Buttressing this view, a survey conducted by Ololube, (1991) in Ololube (2000) on career choice among secondary school students in Nigeria revealed how the society has carefully stigmatized members of the teaching profession resulting in majority of students contemplating professions like engineering, law, medicine, accounting, banking etc. The study found very few children who are interested in becoming teachers.

Inadequate Continuous Professional Development for School Personnel

There is no sufficient compulsion for in-service teachers to go for refresher courses in order to update their knowledge in their chosen fields. As a result of this, it is common to find some senior teachers not having upgraded their knowledge ten years after their initial qualification (Isyaku, 2014). Most schools lack internal mechanism for such upgrades. No field of learning is static as new findings daily emerge from research studies. Teachers who are not at breast with current developments in the areas of specialization and professional practice will not effectively deliver in the teaching learning process which explains why majority of our students are not achieving.

Learning in the 21st Century

The 21st century is marked by information explosion. In this era, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has so much domineering effects on humans than ever before. The 21st century presents humanity with the challenge of living in an increasing diverse, globalized and complex media-saturated society. The key players in the 21st century learning including the learners and teachers alongside their learning environment (the classroom) must rebrand to assume the 21st century features to truly make the required impact in the era. Today's students are referred to as "digital natives" who live in digitally focused world and need to see part of their life inside the class. Today's educators are hence digital immigrants' which is necessary if they must impact on the students who are digital learners. Specific 21st century skills according to Wagner (2008) include:

1. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving.
2. Collaboration across Network and leading by influence.
3. Agility and Adaptability
4. Initiative and Entrepreneurialism

5. Effective Oral and Written Communication
6. Accessing and Analyzing Information
7. Curiosity and Imagination

These skills are different from the 20th century skills given the emerging characteristics of the learner who happens to be at the centre of 21st century learning, and they are imperative. Teaching-learning in the 20th century was marked by teacher-centeredness, passive reception in learning, disciplinary focused, textbook dependent and limited appraisal among others. The 21st century learning recognises the change in the characteristics of the learner, the classroom and the teacher which form the basis of learning. The focus of 21st century learning is on producing students who are highly productive, effective communicators, inventive thinkers and masters of technology.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS

Knilt (2013) portrayed 21st century learners as Self-directed Lifelong Learners, Visionary Leaders, Collaborative Communicators, Flexible-critical Thinkers, Caring Global Citizens, Adept Literate Performers, Adept Information Managers and Healthy Humans. This crop of learners are considered "Digital Citizens" having been born in the computer age where these characteristics rule.

These traits were in fact absent in the learners of proceeding centuries who basically saw the teacher as the sole custodian of knowledge and could move only as far as the teacher could push them. Obviously, the 20th century learning style cannot satisfy the learning needs of this crop of learners, hence, the need to reposition the entire learning system starting with teacher education. The learning environment of the 21st century as well bears some striking features as subsequently captured.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 21ST CENTURY CLASSROOM

The 21st century classroom has peculiar characteristics. Teachers are facilitators of students learning and creators of productive classrooms environments for maximum skills development in the learners. The focus of a 21st century classroom is on students experiencing the environment they will enter as modern day's worker. The 21st century places a demand on an individual of a higher order thinking skills, effective communication skills and knowledge of technology which are expected to be imbibed in the course of the students educational training in a 21st century classroom. There is hence clamour for integrating ICT into teachers pedagogical practices in order to turnout products for the job market with 21st century work skills. This is the challenge of every educational institution.

Specifically, 21st century classroom has the following characteristics:

Student – centeredness: The 21st century classroom environments put students' interests first and are focused on each student's needs, abilities and learning styles. Teachers serve as facilitators and not lecturers.

Computing devices: These should be readily available being an essential 21st century learning tool, replacing, pen and paper. Ability to adequately operate a computer is a critical 21st century skill. Computing devices greatly assist in teaching and learning making the process more engaging and effective.

Active and adaptive learning: The students are actively engaged in learning through inquiry and collaboration..Using a variety of software, students can learn at their own pace in their preferred learning styles.

Inter disciplinary approach: Students work on interdisciplinary projects that utilize information and skills from a variety of subjects instead of studying each subject in isolation.

Learning to learn: The focus of students learning is on learning how to learn and no longer on rote memorization and recall.

Knowledge application: Students use the information they have learned to demonstrate their mastery of the content in the projects they execute.

Assessment/Evaluation: Teachers use a variety of performance based assessments to evaluate students' learning. Students' projects, presentations and other performance-based assessments are used to determine students' achievement. There is de-emphasis on assessments using tests which bother on memorization and recall.

Given this outlook of the 21st century classroom, it is obvious that the traditional practices of the teacher that dominated the 20th century classroom can no longer hold. There is hence a change in the role of the teacher and he is expected to embrace the skills that will enable him deliver on his new mandate of a facilitator and mediator of learning.

CHARACTERISTICS OF 21ST CENTURY TEACHER

A teacher that must deliver on the 21st century educational expectations will need to exhibit the following characteristics:

1. act as a classroom facilitator and allows each child to construct his or her own knowledge in the process.
2. establish a safe, supportive, and positive learning environment for all students, through adequate planning. Students know what is expected of them while the teacher knows how to effectively handle

- disruptions to maximize instructional time.
3. foster cooperation among students within the classroom.
4. encourage students' curiosity and intrinsic motivation to learn through providing experiences that develop their independent, critical and creative thinking and problem solving skills.
5. make students feel valued through encouraging their inputs in collaboration projects.
6. communicate effectively with students, parents, colleagues, and other stakeholders.
7. listen thoughtfully and responsively.
8. foster cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity in her students (Teacher as a Facilitator, 2007).

In all, in the 21st century,

1. Teachers no longer teach in isolation. They co-teach, team teach, and collaborate with other department members.
2. Teachers seek out professional developments that help them to improve both students' learning and their own performance.

According to Amadi (2014), the type of teacher that the new information age requires is one who is:

1. capable of using technological aids and information at his or her disposal for the benefit of his students;
2. able to promote and provoke critical thinking;
3. open to new ideas and willing to examine them critically and profitably;
4. flexible, open and sees himself and his students as a team in a common search for knowledge.

Taking cognisance of these changes, the 21st century education seems to be flexible, creative, challenging and complex. It addresses a rapidly changing world filled with fantastic new problems as well as exciting new possibilities. How ready are the various nations of the world including Nigeria to move with this new global education trend?.

TEACHER EDUCATION THAT WOULD OUTLIVE THE 21ST CENTURY

The 21st century and beyond would need a new crop of teachers as this emergence of the social webs and subsequent huge embrace of technology, particularly the mobile gadgetry in our classrooms has forced teaching to assume a paradigmatic shift in the era. Teacher education is accordingly expected to restructure to produce educators who can cope

with the challenge. Cochran-Smith (2003) asserted that the responsibility for preparing qualified and competent teachers continues to rest primarily with teacher education programmes at higher education institutions. Going by this, teacher education goals must keep pace with the realities of 21st century schooling, thus, the kind of learning that teachers require to undertake the complex job of the season must be provided by the process. The curricular of teacher education should take cognisance of ever changing needs of the society; the globalization scenario, the advancement and proliferation of technology and the way traditional classroom teaching is losing grounds for distance – virtual learning (Allen and Thomas, 2000).

With mindset of repositioning teacher education for the 21st century teaching challenges, the National Academy of Education Committee on Teacher Education (NAECTE) in the United States of America, adopted a framework that is organized, on three interesting areas of knowledge including:

1. Knowledge of learners and how they learn and develop within social contexts, including knowledge of language development.
2. Understanding of curriculum content and goals including the subject matter and skills to be taught in light of disciplinary demands, student needs and the social purposes of education, and
3. Understanding of and skills for teaching, including content pedagogical knowledge and knowledge for teaching diverse learners, and these are informed by the understanding of assessment and of how to construct and manage a productive classroom.

Darling-Hammond & Bransford (2005) conceptualized these in the model below:

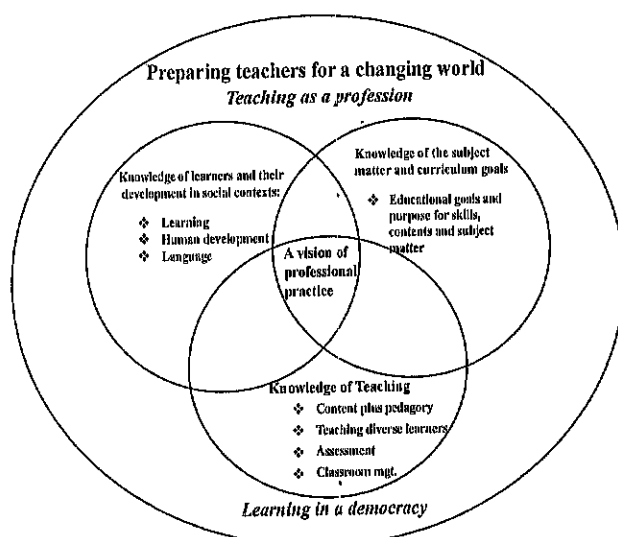


Figure 1: Adapted Framework for Understanding Teaching and Learning

With this, the curriculum of teacher education in the 21st century is capturing the changing role of the teachers from being information dispensers to the crucial role of mediating agents through which the information is transmitted. Training in technology is indeed pivotal in teacher education in the 21st century and should encompass telecommunications, satellite access, networking, the internet, video-conferencing and digital components as well as optical technology. (Darling-Hammond, 2005) These technologies will enable the teacher to feel comfortable and teach effectively and efficiently in a 21st century classroom.

The learners may have all the required 21st century characteristics in a 21st century compliant classroom but there is little that the teacher who lacks the 21st century skills can do to effect learning. This is a common challenge in most of the developing countries including Nigeria where a significant proportion of the present classroom teachers received their initial teacher education in the preceding century when such skills were not popular. Effective in-service training anchored on the relevant skills of the time appears to be the only answer. A lot of programmes are on ground for such upgrades for the willing and able teachers, for instance, in the Distance Learning Institutes (DLI) and Institutes of Continuing Education (ICE) in most Nigerian universities.

Sociological Implications

The teaching-learning process keeps the teacher in constant touch with the learners which extend to the larger societal networks. The teacher plays a pivotal role in shaping the lives of the children to embrace the socially acceptable pattern of conduct which is an important requirement for a stable society. Furthermore, the school is a powerful agent of social change and the teacher makes that happen, being a link between the learner and the society. Sociology of education among other functions equips the teacher with the societal norms and values needed to guide the students a right to avoid conflicts within and outside the school. Also, it keeps the teacher abreast with the socio-cultural environment to enable him or her teach within the societal culture content. Additionally, it keeps the teacher abreast with social changes, change in curriculum, enabling him or her to effect a change in teaching styles to suit the new development.

The 21st century society is becoming increasingly complex and the work place skills have changed greatly. It is imperative for teacher education institutions to embrace skills that will equip the teachers to turn out products with 21st century work skills to effect societal development

CONCLUSION

Teaching is central to education as has been expatiated in this paper. Throughout history, the nature of teaching has varied, depending on the prevalent type of education, be it non-formal, informal or formal. In all, the teaching strategies must be relevant to the educational realities of the time. Education in Nigeria particularly, has passed through several stages right from the period of dominant indigenous education, through the early years of emergent western education, to the present era of educating in the 21st century, and so has teacher education. The paper has vividly shown that the learner, the classroom and the teacher in the 21st century bear characteristics quite different from what obtained in the previous era and so is the work place. Thus, it is contingent upon the teachers to impart these 21st century work skills. The teacher education of the past cannot deliver on the 21st century educational mandate hence, the imperativeness of repositioning teacher education. Teacher education in Nigeria though, has not been static but has remained an evolving field, especially from the wake of the 21st century. Efforts are being made to enthrone the 21st century learning skills (characterised by integrating ICT in our educational curriculum among others) in our classrooms. In fact, a few of such 21st century classrooms grace the Nigerian educational landscape especially by some visionary educational key players in the private sector. More work is needed in this direction given that a whopping percentage of Nigerian children are in public education. Nevertheless, with the given recommendations duly and maximally implemented, Nigeria would have been placed on a pathway of educational excellence through effective teacher education programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schools of Education should design programmes that help prospective teachers to understand deeply a wide array of things about learning and be able to apply such in complex classrooms, serving increasingly diverse students.
2. Teaching should truly be professionalized in Nigeria to make the code of ethics binding on each member and ensure due regulation of entry into the profession. Only the professionally qualified should be admitted and issued with license
3. To make the products of teacher education more relevant to today's world of work, the curriculum of teacher education should be restructured to embrace the current global innovations of ICT. The acquisition of

skills on development and utilization of e-learning packages should be made mandatory in the process while the necessary ICT facilities should be provided. The curriculum should as well prepare the teachers adequately for self-employment through incorporation of some entrepreneurial skills development courses. This will enable the teachers escape the current global unemployment problem

4. There should be improvement in the academic and professional training of teachers through extending the current twelve weeks of teaching practice to give more room for practical work before certification.
5. Through adequate funding to schools, the infrastructural facilities in teacher educational institutions should be upgraded and made adequate too.
6. Rethinking teacher pedagogy is imperative given that more flexible methods like collaborative, problem-solving and project-based approaches will better meet the 21st century learning needs than the less innovative methods. More teacher education institutions should be established to increase teachers turnover as this will effect class size reduction needed for effectiveness in the 21st century learning.
7. Training and re-training of staff in the teacher educational institutions should be an ongoing process to make them continuously relevant in breeding the right crop of teachers.

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