

# ENHANCING QUALITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION THROUGH EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION

**Otomewo, Ayo Gladys (Ph.D)**

*Department of Primary Education Studies,  
College of Education, Mosogar*

## **Abstract**

*This paper examines the need to enhance quality in Teacher Education in Nigeria. This is necessary because of the changes in the globe. For our educational system to meet up with existing trends, there is need to examine the need to change our teacher education. Nations across the globe have made dramatic changes over the past decades especially with the emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Some countries are still behind this area in curriculum reform, pedagogy and training of teachers. Based on the above, there is need to enhance quality in Teacher education in order to meet with the demand of current global trend. This will also enable the Nigerian teacher compete favourably with others across the globe and also contribute meaningfully to national development. Concept of teacher education, concept of supervision, the importance of effective supervision, problems of teacher education, strategies of teacher education, quality in teacher education, the need for quality teacher education and strategies to enhance quality in teacher education were highlighted. Some recommendations were also made from the conclusion which include – all administrators of teacher education should be exposed to in-service training, the government should provide enough motivational strategies needed for effective supervision.*

**Keywords:** *Quality, teacher education and effective supervision.*

## **Introduction**

The National Policy on Education in Nigeria (FRN, 2013:13) states that, “education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of society”. This goal can be achieved by improving the quality of teachers through the Teacher Training College for those undergoing training and constant workshops and in-service training. Teachers play an important role in enhancing quality in educational system. Afe (1992) states that “It is an accepted truth that education is the most potent tool for change and social transformation. It is through teaching and learning that education is made possible. The fact remains that teaching and learning depend on teachers for there can be no meaningful socio-economic and political development in any society without teachers. It is on teachers’ number, quality and devotion that rest the effectiveness of all educational arrangement, development and growth. Even with the best of educational policies and designs and the expenditure of colossal sums of money on education, the ultimate realization of any set of aims for education depends on the teachers. They will ultimately be responsible for

translating policy into action and principles into practice in their interactions with their students. Therefore, the realization of the educational objectives depends on the quality and quantity of the available teaching manpower. This can also be influenced by the availability of adequate training and retraining programmes for those about to teach and those already teaching.

For teacher quality to rise above the educational system, a strong teacher education programme is required. Section 5B, number 92(a) of the National Policy on Education states that “In recognition of the pivotal role of quality teachers in the provision of quality education at all levels, teacher education shall continue to be emphasized in educational planning and development.” It further stated in number 92b that “the minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE).

For these goals to be achieved, there is need for effective supervision of Teacher Education. Without supervision of the Nigeria educational system by both inspectorate division of the Ministry of Education and heads of schools, teacher education will continue to lack quality. Any educational system that lacks quality cannot produce quality output (graduates) that will be productive towards national development because education is the live wire that promotes economic development.

### **Concept of Teacher Education**

Education is the bedrock and key to national development. It acts as an agent of change for an individual to have access to a happier and comfortable life. In line with this, Adelowo (2006) sees education as an enterprise which sets out to instill values, attitudes and skills in members of society. It is a process of personal development, a veritable means of developing human resources. Thus education refers to the way in which people learn skills, gain knowledge and understanding about the world and about themselves. It is a process by which an individual gains knowledge or insight as well as develops attitudes or skills.

The key actors in the educational industry are teachers. Without them the curriculum will not be delivered. Mkpa (2000) opined that the key factors in the various levels of education are the students, without whom, the institutions would not be established, the teachers without whom the curriculum will not be delivered and without the activities of the non-teaching staff, the system cannot function for the realization of quality objectives in education. Teachers are the central factor in the process of quality of education. Therefore, the teaching profession needs very highly educated and qualified manpower. Thus one of the purposes of teacher education is to train qualified and competent teachers to handle the affairs of the education system.

Okafor (1998) sees teacher- education as that form of education which is properly planned and systematically tailored and applied for the cultivation of those who teach or will teach particularly but not exclusively in primary and post primary levels of schooling. In its extended dimension it encompasses the preparation of administrators, supervisors and guidance counsellors. Nwana (2006) states that teacher education is that aspect of education, which produces teachers through professional training.

Thus the National Policy on Education recognized the importance of teacher education and states its objective as follows:-

The goals of Teacher Education shall be to:

- a). Produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the educational system;
- b). Further encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- c). help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
- d). provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations; and
- e). Enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession. (FRN,2013:56)

All teachers in educational institutions shall be professionally trained. Teacher education programmes shall be structured to equip teachers for the effective performance of their duties, Information Technology (IT) training shall be incorporated into all teacher-training programmes. Teacher education shall continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and in the curriculum. Teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in the profession.

### **Concept of Quality in Teacher Education**

Quality means different thing to different scholars. For example, Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Contemporary English-International Edition defines quality as: "A high degree of goodness or worth something that is special or distinguishes a person or thing".

Avalos (1991) considers the question of quality as somehow explainable in the context of relativism. She averred that:

What is meant by quality is of course an explainable question. As it concerns teacher training, judgments about quality are dependent on what are considered to be the appropriate outcomes of such training or more specifically, what kind of teacher the system is supposed to produce and how effective their predicted teaching performance will be.

Lyson (1996) further provided a technical exposition of the concept of quality and averred eight dimensions or indices of quality as submitted earlier by Gavin (1995). These include:

- Performance – Operating characteristics of a product or service.
- Reliability – the ability of a product to function as and when required.
- Serviceability – the reparability of an item, or restorability to use of an item or service after a problem has developed.
- Conformity – The degree to which delivered products meets pre-determined standards.
- Aesthetics – The extrinsic features, as it may be pleasing to the eyes.
- Secondary features – those that supplement the products primary function.
- Perceived quality – a personal evaluation by the user, for example with respect of brand or make.

When all these characteristics are combined, it is then, possible to make comparisons.

From the foregoing examination of the concept of quality, it is apparent that the issue of quality is relative, engaging, continuous and of global application. Quality teaching as it concerns this discourse would imply the following:-

- Conformity with goals or suitability for required educational purpose.
- Expertise
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Satisfaction of a specified need
- Excellence and value

### **Concept of Supervision**

Supervision, according to Igwe (2001), is the process of ensuring that the policies, principles, rules, regulations and methods prescribed for the purposes of implementing and achieving the objectives of education are carried out. It involves the use of expert knowledge and experience to oversee, evaluate and co-ordinate the process for improving teaching and learning activities in schools. Without effective supervision, these objectives of teacher education cannot be realized. Therefore, supervision is of utmost importance for the realization of quality in education. Ojogwu (2001) stated that supervision creates the awareness of sound educational philosophies in teachers. It makes them to be aware of educational policies and reforms and make them a part and parcel of the whole system so that the aim of education will be achieved because teachers are vehicles that will always deliver any educational reforms in schools.

The word “supervise” originated from the Latin word “supervidere” which means to watch and direct the performance of a person or a task or activity of the work. To supervise means to influence, stimulate, co-ordinate, direct and command others to perform a task for the maintenance of a standard.

Supervising, therefore, is the element of administrative process concerned with the effort of the administrator to guide the day-to-day operations of the organization by stimulating, directing and co-ordinating the workers and their efforts and cultivating good working personal relations so that all move collectively towards a more efficient performance of all the functions that lead to goal achievement. The term includes the sub-concepts of leadership and morale.

Leadership which consists of interpersonal influence involves the dynamic and interpersonal process of planning, organizing and controlling the needs of the members in a way that will lead to the achievement of task related group activities. Morale, on the other hand, refers to group satisfaction in the work situation as members see themselves as functioning social group with minimum alienation. A supervisor has to play a leadership role that stimulates and motivates the workers to a high task effort. At the same time, he carefully co-ordinates their individual efforts so that all lead to the achievement of the group goals.

Supervision is seen as the most reliable means of assessing the schools; bringing schools in tune with government policies, checking the quality of teachers; examination syllabuses, buildings and researchers. Supervision therefore, encourages rigid conformity

to approved standards. It may also be viewed as a duty generally aimed at ensuring proper functioning of the teacher, in order to increase their amount of work and improve the quality of output (students). Yet, other reasons for supervision are to-increase teachers' classroom management skills; and improve the effectiveness of teachers so that they can contribute maximally to the attainment of the schools goals. Supervising is, therefore, very crucial in any organization, be it educational, military, business, religious, political or family. Without it, even the best programme set out in a well laid out or structured establishment cannot be effectively executed.

### **The Importance of Effective Supervision of Teacher Education.**

1. Effective supervision will enable teachers to work effectively to avoid being punished. They will work hard and put in their best so as to justify their pay.
2. Effective supervision will help administrators to identify the quality of teachers in the schools.
3. Effective supervision will also help both the academic and non-academic staff to work together to achieve a common goal.
4. It improves standards in all aspects of the school system.
5. Supervision ensures uniform standard and quality control of instructional activities in schools.
6. Supervision encourages dissemination of information on innovation and progressive educational principles and practices in the school system through publications, workshops, meetings, seminars, conferences.
7. Supervision helps to obtain information on problems and difficulties of teachers and institutions and offer practical solutions to them.
8. Monitor and document the overall quality of education in school and practical and positive advice.

### **The Need for Quality Teacher Education in Nigeria**

Curriculum is the vehicle through which educational goals are attained. Many African and third world countries have reformed their education curriculum to reflect the needs of their society and meet global challenges. In the Federal Republic of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (2013), it is stated that teacher education shall continue to take cognizance of the changes in methodology and curriculum and teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in their profession. This policy statement reveals the need for regular reforms in teacher education curriculum to enable the teacher perform his functions effectively. According to Nwadiani (2013), "a potent tool for bringing about development is education through teacher education which must be consciously planned to meet the needs and aspirations of the people". He also noted that it is effective teacher education that will bring about sustainable development in all sectors of the economy in Nigeria and other developing countries. It is through quality teacher education that the quality of lives of the people can be improved. In the light of the above, Nigeria needs to prepare its work force in the education industry to enhance its global competitiveness through an enriched teacher education curriculum in ICT for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that is filled with new societal goals and

ideals. This could only be achieved through a revamped teacher education curriculum. This calls for the need for changes that will affect teacher education curriculum, teaching and learning methods assessment, monitoring of teachers and students, capacity building for teachers, funding and re-educating the available regular classroom teachers from time to time. This will keep them abreast with the new curricular offerings. The implicit learning theory underlying the curriculum and pedagogy of teacher education has been behaviourism. The emerging theory of constructivism has implications for teacher education practice because it would help in the preparation of the teachers for entering into the teaching profession as the new teacher requires an educational training programme that provides not only job skills but also higher order thinking, problem solving and collaborative work skills. This informs the reasons why this paper advocates for a revamped teacher education that is anchored on constructivist's philosophy which emphasizes creativity in teacher education. Revamping teacher education in Nigeria will:

- Prepare the new teacher better for the task of teaching.
- Assist the new teacher in learning modern methodology and help him replace the obsolete ones.
- Inject fresh blood of new technology into the veins of the teacher
- Help the new teacher face global challenges
- Help the new teacher compete with other teachers across the globe.
- Help the new teacher shift from behavioural theory to constructivist theory.

### **Problems of Teacher Education**

In spite of government's policies and efforts, the quality of teacher education is still bedeviled with lots of problems which deserve serious and urgent attention from government and other stakeholders for the management and supervision of schools to improve. Education is a consumption industry. Just like any other programmes in Nigeria, teacher education is faced with numerous problems. Recognizing the needs of teacher education in the country, it is of paramount importance that these problems be handled urgently.

#### *1. Poor Entry Requirements*

Entry requirements varied from institution to institution, especially with the requirements for pre-NCE programme. Some colleges admit students with 4 credits while some admit without credits at the O'level Certificate. Besides, at the degree level, most students enroll in the faculty of education only as a last resort. This poses problem to the teacher who is faced with the student without solid foundation in the secondary school.

#### *2. Inadequate Funds*

The federal and state governments have the obligation to finance education. But the funds provided are always inadequate. To achieve the goals and objectives of teacher

education, the government should do more on the area of funding especially in the payment of teachers salary and infrastructural development.

3. *Mobility of Teachers*

Most people take teaching profession as a second choice job. Teachers are ever ready to leave the profession when given better option. The main reason being poor conditions of service, therefore, there is need to improve on the conditions of service for teachers to reduce their mobility.

4. *Lack of Creativity in Student Teachers*

One of the objectives of teacher education is to train teachers that are creative, innovative, and have initiative and self-confidence. Most student teachers have no imagination and initiative and this makes them uncreative.

5. *Problem of Poor Preparation of Student Teachers*

Due to the short period of training, student teachers are not properly prepared for the teaching exercise. It takes just three (3) years to train Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) graduates.

### **Strategies for Enhancing Quality of Teacher Education in Nigeria**

To enhance quality teacher education, the training institutions must develop and maintain quality of education in accordance with the changing realities of time. This could be achieved through reform in the following areas:

- 1). Curriculum Reform
- 2). Change of methodology
- 3). The use of ICT in teaching
- 4). Availability of adequate training facilities
- 5). Effective supervision

*Curriculum Reform:* The curriculum of teacher education in Nigeria needs to be reformed to reflect the new learning shift from the traditional or inherited courses to embracing technology education. Teacher education institutions should shift focus to curriculum that acknowledges particular sets of talents that enable the trainee discover and develop his particular sets of potentials. Education is meant to prepare learners for effective life in society. Poor instructional methods hinder the actualization of this goal.

*Change in Methodology:* There is need to shift from the implicit learning theory underlying the curriculum and pedagogy of teacher education programme in Nigeria to the emerging theory of constructivism which will help in the preparation of would-be teachers in the task of teaching. The 21<sup>st</sup> century requires an education programme that provides not only teaching skills for teachers but a teacher training institution that is hinged on the critical pedagogy which is also hinged on constructivist philosophy.

*The Use of ICT:* For teacher education in Nigeria to be relevant in the information age, teacher education institutions need stay current in global trends to keep pace with the changes in their fields and with times. Usoro and Ogbuanya (2009) maintained that ICT is a catalyst for a paradigm shift to new training approaches across the globe. The Federal

Government's introduction of ICT education in the teacher education programme suggests that the teacher should be given an enabling environment that will enable him embrace ICT and e-learning. ICT tool has the ability to shift focus of classroom teacher-centred method to student-centred learning.

*Adequate Training Facilities:* Teacher education programme cannot be effectively implemented without training facilities to ensure that teacher education programmes operate in an environment that will make them compete favourably with other modern learning environments across the globe. The federal and state governments need to intensify efforts to supply and replace outdated facilities.

*Effective supervision:* There is need to supervise instructional materials, instructors/lecturers inclusive. It will enable all stakeholders to be up and doing in the realization of the goals of teacher education starting from the Federal Ministry of Education down to the classroom level.

## **Conclusion**

Education is the "bedrock" of any nation. Therefore there is need to enhance the quality of education in the society. To ensure quality in education, everybody concerned in the act of education should work hard and be under close supervision by the bodies responsible. Both internal and external supervision provisions are needed. The government should rise up to her statutory responsibilities while supervisors and supervisee should equally wake up from their slumber and carry out their assignments without fear or favour. It is believed that when all the people involved in the supervision, both internal and external, live up to their expectations by doing their jobs effectively, definitely quality will be assured in our teacher education.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made:

1. For quality in teacher education to be realized, all administrators of educational system should all be exposed to in-service training to get in tune with the system.
2. To boost the morale of the supervisors, government should provide enough motivational strategies needed for effective supervision.
3. Government should provide the sufficient materials to enable the supervisors carry out their jobs effectively.
4. All the people involved in teacher education should work with one mind to achieve a common goal of quality education. The supervisor should be seen by the supervisees as friends and co-operate with them for a better result.

5. The government should provide enough personnel to carry out the supervisory roles for effective result.
6. The teachers should also be supervised concerning the quality of books. This will help to maintain quality.

## References

- Avalos, B. (1991). *Quality in basic education approaches to teacher education, initial teacher training*. London. Malborough House Commonwealth Secretariat p.23.
- Adelowo, T.O. (2006): Education and human development of the special need: A global view in T.C. Abani (ed): *Teaching pupils with special education needs in the regular UBE classroom*. Ibadan: Celuben Printers 1 – 36.
- Afe J. O. (1992). Trends in teacher education: The case of colleges of education in Nigeria. In Osiegie Oriafio and Uche Gbenedion (Eds.) *towards education in Nigeria for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (45 – 52).
- Akpotu N.E. & Nwaham C.O. (2008): *Introduction to the teaching profession in Nigeria*. Agbor: Royal Pace Publications.
- Egbo A. C. (2007). Effective supervision for quality education in the university. *Access, equity and quality in higher education. NAEP* (291 – 297).
- Eimuhi J.O. & Otomewo G. A. (2007): Developing Teaching Manpower in the New Millennium through the distance learning system of the National Teachers' Institute in Nigeria. *Access, equity and quality in higher education. NAEP* (189 – 199).
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013): *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Education. Pg 56
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013): *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: Federal Ministry of Education. Pg 13
- Idialu, P. E. (2010). *Principles of methods of teaching: teaching the teachers*. Agbor. End time publishers  
1(1) 226 – 236.
- Igwe, S. O. (2001). Supervision, evaluation and quality control in educational management in Nigeria Nwagwu, Ehiamentor, Ogonu and Nwadiani Benin-Ambik press.
- Lyson, T. (1996). Costing 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Alpine place, London: letters educational press. 153-157.
- Mkpa J. K. (2000). Education for effective living. *Quarterly journal of education*, 4(35),69
- Ntui V. & Igwe N.C (2013): Quality teaching in higher education as a catalyst for leadership and socio-economic transformation in Nigeria. *Niger Delta Journal of Education (NIDJOE)*. A publication of COEASU SOUTH-SOUTH  
1(1)226-236
- Nwadiani, Mon. (2013): *“Teacher education as a tool for national development: The journey so far”*. A lead paper presented at the annual national conference organized by the School of Education College of Education, Agbor. 15 – 18 October, 2013.
- Nwana S. E. (2006). The importance of teacher education in national development. In Maduewusi and Eya (eds). *Perceptive in teacher education*. Onitsha: West and Solomon publishers.

- Ojogwu, C. M. (2001). *Supervision as an instrument for maintaining standard and quality control in schools in current issues in educational management in Nigeria*. Being a lead paper presented at the first annual national conference organized by the association for encouraging qualitative education in Nigeria at Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT).
- Okafor, F. C. (1988). *Nigeria teacher education: A search for new direction*. Enugu: Fourth dimension
- Osagiede M. A. Revamping the teacher education curriculum in Nigeria with new technological packages for national transformation. *African Journal of Studies in Education* 9 (2) 270 – 281.
- Usoro, A. D. & Ogbuanya, T. C. (2009) “Improving technical and vocational education institution with information and communication technology (ICT) Ata Technical College in Akwa Ibom State. *International Journal of research in education, Pan African series*, 2(3) 65-74