

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN A PERIOD OF SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY.

¹**Anthonia Chika Ikwelle**

Department of Early Childhood Care and Education,
Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe

Ikwellchika290@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8614-8908>
+2348069576729

² ***Uchenna Emmanuel Orimba**

Aguata High School, Aguata.

ucheblack4real@gmail.com
+2348038928916

Abstract

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Education for sustainable development gives learners of all ages the knowledge, skills, values and agency to address interconnected global challenges including climate change, loss of biodiversity, unsustainable use of resources and inequality. The roles of Teacher Education in sustainable National Development cannot be underestimated. Despite this fact, Teacher Education has not been well strategized and focused for achievement of this sustainable development in Nigeria. This paper therefore focused on the importance of teacher education and how it can help to sustain the national development. It also x-rayed the teacher education in Nigeria with a view to producing quality teachers in Nigeria and in relation to the sustainable national development. It reviewed the relevance of teacher education and also highlighted on training and professional competencies of teachers. The concept of sustainable national development was also highlighted as related to teacher education. Types and objectives of Teacher Education were briefly discussed in relationship with teachers' roles in national development. No nation builds a strong and effective educational system without improvement on its teacher education programmes. This is because teachers remain the pillars through which education can transform and improve the development of any nation. The paper therefore, looked into teacher education and its objectives; the roles of education in national development and suggested ways to improve teacher education in order to achieve sustainable national development. Conclusions were made and recommendations drawn from the discussions.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Achievement, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Education for sustainable development gives learners of all ages the knowledge, skills, values and agency to address interconnected global challenges including climate change, loss of biodiversity, unsustainable use of resources and inequality. Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Mbakwem 2016). Sustainable development according to Manafa (2020) is a process of improving the range of opportunities that will enable individuals and communities to achieve their aspirations and full potential over a sustained period of time while maintaining the resilience of economic, social and environmental systems. Achieving sustainable development in school involves having quality education. For quality education to be effective, there must be internal quality assurance system established that will be reviewing and checking agreed institutional quality indicators and their associated outcomes. It is on this note that the school administrators should endeavour to have effective monitoring and supervision, motivation of teachers and regular conduct of training and retraining of teachers as strategies for achieving quality education. Teachers again need motivation to deliver quality education. No teacher can achieve quality education in an unconducive environment. To ensure quality assurance in schools for attainment of sustainable development goal, there must be provision of adequate school facilities and equipment.

This government is very much aware of the crucial role of teachers in the implementation of educational policies that are required to promote national development. Teacher education according (Okoro and

Jeremiah 2016), is the process of preparing those persons who are by nature of their functions designated as teachers. Teacher education is equally the training of persons who are directly responsible for the education of pupils or students (UNESCO 2002).

From the two definitions, it can be seen that teacher education is responsible for training and producing the requisite manpower needed in the educational system. The standard of education in a country is largely a function of quality of teachers in the educational system (Achimugu, 2020). Since no education can rise above the quality of its teachers, the National Policy on education emphasizes...That all the teachers in educational institutions, must be professionally trained (FRN, 2004). The policy outlines the following objectives of teacher's education.

1. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teacher for all levels of education systems.
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 and to enhance the commitment to national objectives.
4. To provide the teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in their country, but in the wider world, and
5. To enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession.

Form the above objectives, it can be seen that teacher education is a very important tool for individual, society and overall development of any nation. Surprisingly, despite the fact that National policy on Education has outlined this aims and objectives of teacher Education in Nigeria, the expectation of the labour market has not been met. There are not enough teachers to cope with the rapid school expansion in the nation, and some of the teachers available are not qualified to teach, as they have not received adequate training for the job they perform.

The Role of Education in National Development

It is important that we know how education helps in National development. It is equally important for us to know that the successful implementation of any educational policy depends on the employment of the right caliber of teachers to teach and impart the skills. Abdulsalam (2012) is of the opinion that, it is the teachers who translate our thoughts into action. This is why it is important for us to refocus teacher education towards the production of quality teachers who will help to meet the national development expectations.

There is a strong relationship between attributes of development and what education aims at achieving. Education helps in the development of any nation both economically, socially, politically, psychologically and morally.

Achimugu (2020), indicated that "people are the world's greatest assets, bringing out their creativity and their potentials means development as well." This emphasizes the importance of education in national development. The researchers discussed the role of education in national development under economic, social, political, cultural and technological developments.

Economic development

Economic development of a nation is dependent on the level of education of her citizens. Okebukola (1996) said that "Huge investment in human resource development, through education has made Japan the economic giant that it is today". Education trains able young men and women in fields of agriculture, commerce, industry, medicine, technology etc. These trained and skilled manpower service all the various sectors of the economy. Education imparts vocational skills, which help individuals to sustain themselves and the society. By this, people fit into the industry or work on their own when they leave schools. All these contribute to economic development and hence, sustainable national development.

Social Development

Social development cannot be attained without education. Existing practices and attitudes, which constitute obstacles to social development, can be eliminated through education. Furthermore, awareness through functional education will allow individuals in a society to be able to combat some social problems such as environmental pollution, cultism, population explosion, new kinds of diseases (e.g. AIDS), poverty, sex and drug abuses etc. Addressing all these social problems through education will contribute to national development.

Political Development

Politically, Education creates awareness in individual that promotes their participation as members of the society which in turn, will make them to appreciate the need to make personal or group sacrifices for the socio-economic and political development of a nation. They will no longer shy away from their voting rights and accepting to serve the nation in any capacity. Education trains elite groups which assume effective leadership role in the quest for socio- economic and political development.

Cultural Development

Cultural development too, cannot be achieved without education. Achievement in cultural development is through good education natured in discipline and high moral tone. Education provides access to new value system and cultural interaction that enhance discipline and moral upliftment. Education, as an agent of cultural change, plays an important role in eliminating existing practices and attitudes, which constitute obstacles to national development. Education provides individuals with the tools for renewing or even changing their cultural prejudices for better. These changes promote national development for happier and healthy living.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the society sustains itself through education and hence education is a bedrock and life-wire of any nation. At this juncture, it is vital to bring to our notice that, teachers are purveyors of this education and this paper is suggesting ways through which teacher education will be improved in order to produce quality teachers that will help in sustaining the national development and making education relevant to emergent national Issues.

Technological Development

Technological development cannot take place without education. In every aspect of our endeavours we see the role of scientific and technological development. For example, all gadgets (telecommunication system, radio set, Video sets, motor cars, aeroplane, air-conditioners, etc that make life worth living are derived from science and technology education. In fact, improvement in farming, nutrition, sanitation, transportation and communication system is derived from science and technological education. It is appropriate to conclude that education, especially science and technology education contribute to high level of national development.

Suggested Ways to Improve Teacher Education in Order to Enhance and Sustain National Development

Teacher education is indispensable in the task of national development and as such, it should be strengthened in order to produce quality teachers who will help to produce quality products (students) for the sustainability of our national development. It is against this background, that the researchers opt for the developmentalist model of Teacher preparation. So many educationists have advocated for this model because it emphasizes competency. That is to say, it is competent based. For example, Nwosu (2015) clearly explained this developmentalist model of teacher preparation. If adopted, quality teachers who will be capable of developing various skill and competencies necessary to promote national development will be produced. What is this developmentalism?

Nwosu (2012), described it as "an educational philosophy and political ideology to stimulate, energize and drive the national endeavour in education, indeed in every field of national endeavour". This developmentalism is so practical that, it will help to ginger individuals in all field of national endeavour.

Developmentalist Teacher Education Model

This approach to teacher education was evolved from the Nigerian "native" philosophy, Developmentalism (FRN, 1980, Nwosu, 2012). The tenets of the approach make it quite appropriate for incorporating skills and knowledge that will help to enhance and sustain national development. For instance, the fundamental aims of the Developmentalist Teacher Education models are to:-

1. produce teachers for all levels of the educational system who would be highly competent in their chosen areas of specialization and can effectively use their classroom function to promote the advancement of their discipline and profession, national development, international understanding, cooperation and advancement;
2. produce teachers remarkable for their moral integrity and such character that would enable them successively serve outside the classroom as community leaders, constructive change agents, social reformers or in short, agents of national development, progress in international communities and world at large.
3. produce teachers who see the teaching-learning process as a strategy for solving societal problems; promoting personal advancement of learners, poverty eradication, job creation, wealth creation,

cultural/political harmony and overall socio-economic development of the local and globalized state (Nwosu 2012).

From these aims, the developmentalist model puts strong emphasis on quality, and high admission standards in terms of content, knowledge, attitude and performance, as well as good personality traits. The developmentalist approach recommends psychological/aptitude tests as part of the admission process.

In terms of organization of what is to be taught, the model proposes a new, unique and analytical approach by which content (e.g. topics) is structurally analyzed initially into three components (knowledge, skills and values/attitudes) in the three domains of learning, and subsequently integrated through the normal curriculum development process as course outlines or schemes of work.

Aiming at production of development-oriented teachers (known for development-oriented teaching or instructional strategy), the model focuses on innovative teaching, performance skills in the various disciplines, or on competency-based teaching in schools.

Other features of Developmentalist Teacher Education model are:

The prominence given to demonstration teaching and observational teaching, clinical/experimental (micro) teaching, ability to use conventional and innovative teaching techniques effectively, the inquiry method, research based or research-guided teaching, and team teaching, with a high score set on functional competence. The model strongly advocates blending of conventional audio-visuals. Educational technology, the current computer Assisted Teaching and Learning (CATAL), with the ever advancing information Technology, into a new Technology of Education, or new Educational Technology (NET). The approach also sets a high premium on curriculum process and educational management, all finally capped with an internship programme.

From the foregoing, one notes that the approach fits into the current aspirations of the local and international communities since with it, "students meet their obligations by being worthy in character, attend lectures, do assignments and tests, avoid cheating during examination, and avoid membership of cults". So that; "at the end of the training programme, the student is truly worthy in learning and character" (Borisade, 2012).

As can be seen by all, the current Nigerian education is lacking in some of these quality as stipulated by this model. Therefore, the researchers advocate for the adoption of the developmentalist Teacher Education as this will help in producing teachers who will train students for the sustenance of national development. Viewed from this perspective, Developmentalist Teacher Education should be a very effective instrument for achieving relevant objectives of Nigerian's new educational reform and socio-economic paradigms of strategic National Education Plan (NEP), and National Economic Empowerment and Development strategy (NEEDS) (FME- SNEP, 2003; NPC-NEEDS,2004).

Conclusion

Teacher Education has the sole task of training the much-needed human resources for national development. The effectiveness and functionality of the human resources so trained in turn depends on sound and efficient teacher education programmes. To be able to play this vital role of sustaining national development, teacher education needs to be placed on sound footing. The political leadership should therefore invest on teacher institutions with the view to ensure that education functions as the instrument par excellence for national development.

There is need to improve quality in education so as to attain the sustainable development in schools. This could only be achieved through establishing some strategies by the school administrators. Supervision and monitoring strategies as well as teachers' motivation strategies are necessary strategies that will improve quality assurance and sustainable development in schools for effective and efficient delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made by the researchers:

1. Conditions of service for teachers should be improved and made competitive with those of other professions, in such a way that; scholars are attracted into the teaching profession.
- 2 The entire education programme should be competency-based not experienced- based.
- 3 Federal government, state government, local government and private sectors should join hands to ensure proper funding of teacher education institutions.
4. Motivational strategy like: Teachers' advancement programmes, providing good and adequate facilities and equipment among others should be encouraged by administrators. This will help in boosting their performance for better delivery and quality education.

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