

Shortage of Professional Teachers in Nigerian Educational Institutions and the way Forward

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ABSTRACT: The role of the teachers in the implementation of school curriculum cannot be underestimated. As important as the roles of the teachers to the development of education, it is unfortunate that these teachers are in shortage in most of the Nigerian educational institutions. This paper examines the factors responsible for the shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. Inadequate funding, limited teacher education institutions, corruption, lack of manpower planning, brain-drain and poor motivation were identified as the factors responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. To address these challenges; the presenters recommended the following; increment in the funding of teacher education institutions, establishment of more of teacher education institutions, fight all forms of corruption in the higher institutions, develop strategic manpower planning for educational institutions, provide conducive working environment and increase the salaries of teachers in all educational institutions.

KEYWORDS: Educational institutions, Shortage, Professional. Teachers

1. Introduction

The Nigerian educational system is facing many challenges. One of these challenges is shortage of professional teachers. The Nigerian educational comprised the basic education, senior secondary school education and the tertiary education. The National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004) provides a guide at attempting to fulfill the nation's objectives. This nation has five major

objectives as stated in the Second National Development plan namely; a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; united strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land of bright and full of opportunities for all citizens. From these broad policy objective were derived the National Policy on Education which spelt out the philosophy of Nigerian Education. The realization of the above goals and objectives hinges on the availability of qualified professional teachers.

In order to ensure production of adequate professional teachers in Nigeria, the Nigerian government declared in the National Policy on Education (NPE 2013) in section 72 stipulates that, all teachers in the Nigerian educational system should be professionally trained to produce teachers that are highly motivated, diligent and competent with intellectual and professional background for all levels of our educational system that enhances the spirit of enquiry and creativity. The objectives of teacher education are very laudable but it is faced with catastrophic challenges in its implementation and as such may not be tenable due to the type of apathy shown by various stakeholders at all levels. National Policy on Education (2013) also specified the steps to be adopted in the implementation of teacher education objectives but events seem to prove otherwise. The document asserts that all teachers in educational institutions such as Colleges of Education, Faculty of Education, Institute of Education, National Teachers Institute, and Schools of Education in Polytechnics, National Institute for Nigerian Language (NINLAN) and National Mathematical Centre should be structured to equip teachers for the effective and efficient performance of their duties, effectively and efficiently resulting to higher productivity in instructional delivery but it is indeed still a dream to be actualized in the Nigeria history and policy implementation of teacher education.

Recent studies showed that the Nigerian educational system is faced with the problem of acute shortage of professional teachers at all levels (Ogunode, 2020; Ige 2013; NEEDS, 2014). The problem of shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian education educational system is caused by many factors. This presentation discusses the factors responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions and the ways forward.

2. Concept of Professional Teachers

A professional teacher or a qualified teacher is one that has the competences in terms of the requisite knowledge, skills, values and conduct established for teachers at the national and international levels. It does not mean any one who is able to read or write, or able to stand in front of the classroom with a piece of chalk facing the writing board and a group of students. To be a teacher is to be a professional and the tenets of professionalism require that, among others,

the individual has undergone the relevant professional education and has proven expertise in theory and practice as defined by the national and international teaching standards. This is the kind of qualified teacher implied by the theme of the World Teachers' Day (Nwokeocha, 2018). Noun (2012) a teacher is described as the professional, who imparts knowledge, learning experiences at his disposal to stimulate, guide, direct and facilitate learners to acquire adequate mastery of the skills being imparted. Akindutire, & Ekundayo, (2012) cited Ajayi, (2004) who defined a teacher as someone who causes learning to take place; someone who imparts knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to a group of learners. From the definitions, it is clear that a teacher is one who helps the learners often in a school, as well as in a family, religious and community setting. Learning cannot take place without the teacher, even though he is not physically present; he is indirectly represented by the medium through which learning takes places (Akindutire, & Ekundayo, 2012).

Who can be a Teacher?

According to the provisions of Teachers' Registration Council Act (2004), teachers are categorized into four main classes namely:

A – Class: Holders of Ph.D. in Education or Ph.D. in other field plus Education (i.e. PGDE)

B – Class: Holders of Masters Degree in Education or Masters degree in other field plus Education (i.e. PGDE)

C – Class: Holders of Bachelors degree in Education or Bachelors degree in other field plus Education (i.e. Akindutire and Ekundayo 431 PGDE).

D – Class: Holders of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) or equivalent (Isaac &Haastrup 2012). The provision of the TRC Act emphasized that, 'holders of the TC II and equivalent shall be given provisional registration which shall terminate at the end of 2006.'

This suggests that the minimum NCE requirement as the baseline for teaching in Nigeria had started since 2006 (Akindutire, & Ekundayo, 2012).

The teacher is an important figure in the realization of the objective of educational institution. The teacher is responsible for the training and production of manpower for the social, economic and technological advancement. Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory, & Abubakar (2020) also observed that teachers are fundamental to effective delivering of teaching programme in the educational institutions. The teachers' place in the educational institutions cannot be replaced. Teachers are the implementer of the curricular. The teacher plans the lesson, organizes the instructional resources and delivers the lesson. The teachers ensure the students learn the right knowledge and skills through the process of teaching and learning. Atiga & Ogunode (2021) opined that teachers are the implementers of school curriculum. Their functions include to teach, prepare lesson note and lesson plan, to evaluate the students, sets exam questions and marks answer sheet. Their functions also include providing leadership in classes, perform academic services, relate with parents on feedback on students' progress and sometime carry students for excursion with school permission. The teachers are very important factors in the management of educational institutions especially the secondary schools. The teachers' roles cannot be replaced in delivering of teaching programme.

2.1 Current Trend of Shortage of Professional Teachers

The current situation of Nigerian educational sector can be described as facing acute shortage of professional teachers. At the early child education, Amadi, 2013; Okewole, Iluezi- Ogbedu, & Osinowo, 2013; Osho, Aliyu, Okolie, & Onifade; 2014) submitted that inadequate professional teachers is a very big problem facing the management of early child education in Nigeria. At the primary school education, Ogunode (2020a) observed that shortage of professional teachers is hindering effective administration of primary school in Nigeria. Independent Newspapers (2019) submitted that there was a deficit of 135,319 teachers at the Early Childhood Care Development Education, 139,772 deficit in primary schools, and 2,446 shortage in Junior Secondary School across the nation. Several challenges have been identified as clogs in the realization of good access, equity and quality of education in Nigeria. At the secondary school Atiga & Ogunode (2021); Ogunode (2021), Ige (2016) observed that inadequate professional teachers is another major problem preventing effective management of public secondary school in Nigeria. Managers of public secondary schools need a lot of professional teachers to be able to manage the secondary school well. It is unfortunate that as important as the teachers to achievement of the objective of secondary school management that many public secondary schools do not have adequate professional teachers. The scarcity of professional teachers is more pronounced in the sciences programme (Aiyedu & Ogunode 2021). (Ogunode2021) observed that shortage of professional teachers is a very big problem facing the administration of public secondary schools in Nigeria. At the tertiary institutions, Ogunode & Abubakar (2020a) submitted that the problem of inadequate lecturers is a serious problem facing all the higher institutions in Nigeria. Many higher institutions do not have adequate lecturers to deploy for teaching in the various

institutions. The shortage of lecturer is responsible for the poor quality of teaching and learning in most Nigerian higher institutions; this is further supported by Ogunode (2021) that inadequate professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions has been the major problem of Nigerian institutions.

3. Causes of Shortage of Professional Teachers in Nigerian Educational Institutions

The following factors will be used as the causes of teacher' shortage in the Nigerian educational institutions. Inadequate funding, limited teacher education institutions, corruption, lack of manpower planning, brain-drain and poor motivation.

3.1 Inadequate Funding

Inadequate funding of education is major causes of inadequate professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. The funding of education in Nigeria poor and below the UNESCO 26% recommendation for developing countries like Nigeria. Ogunode & Adamu (2020) observed that inadequate funding of public higher institutions in Nigeria is responsible for the shortage of academic staff. The public higher institutions in Nigeria are underfunded. The inability of the government to implement the recommendation of the UNESCO 26% annual budget allocation for education for the developing countries like Nigeria is affecting the development of higher education. Due to inadequate funds in the system, the school administrators cannot employ adequate academic staff require to implement the teaching programme as expected. Ogunode (2020) submitted that problem of inadequate teachers in public universities is caused by underfunding of the universities, corruptions, brain-drain, poor motivation, unconducive working environment and lack of manpower planning. The implication of shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public universities include high student –teacher ratio, poor learning, poor delivery of teaching, low productivities and poor quality of education.

3.2 Limited Teacher Education Institutions

Limited teachers' education institutions in Nigeria is another factor responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the various educational institutions. The total number of higher institutions that specializes in teachers' production for the country is few and not produce the needed manpower requirement for the entire educational institutions. Ogunode (2020) observed that inadequate teachers in institutions is another factor contributing to the shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. The total numbers of teacher institutions in the country is not enough to produce the numbers of teachers needed in all the forms of Nigerian educational institutions. The number of Colleges of education, institute of education and faculty of education in the country do not have the capacity to production the professionals teachers require to produce professional teachers for all the educational institutions in the country. Atiga, & Ogunode, (2021) cited Junaid (2013) who disclosed that 9.1 million teachers are needed between 2008 & 2015 to achieve Education For All (EFA), teacher requirement projections between 2005 and the same Y2015 is far below this future need. A total of 7.2 million new teachers are also expected to replace teachers leaving their post either on retirement or outright leaving for greener pasture. Research has it that educational institutions in Nigeria are not adequate for the huge population of Nigerian youth seeking for admission every year.

3.3 Corruption

Corruption is another big reason for the shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. The funds budgeted and released for employment of teachers are looted or diverted by some administrators in the educational institutions. The school administrators institutionalized what is called ghost workers in their various schools and are collecting their salaries instead of employing the teachers in the schools. Ghost worker corruption is one of the most common form of corruption in the educational institutions in Nigeria. The Governor of Imo states Hope Uzodimm observed that the state has uncovered over 100 ghost workers, including more than 60 “dead or non-existent persons” in its schools. It is a sad revelation that over sixty (60) persons on the payroll of the board were found to be dead and non-existent, while another forty (40) persons who are no longer in the service of the State are still on the payroll of the State Government. In Kwara State, the state Government has suspended a permanent secretary and four other senior officials over their alleged involvement in the recruitment of ‘fake’ teachers and suspicious deductions of workers' salary at the state Universal Basic Education Board (SUBE). The minister of finance and budget in Nigeria revealed that over 70,000 ghost workers that have been identified through the approved the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) (Naiarenews 2020). Transparency International says 66 per cent of the money Nigerian governments allocate to education is stolen by corrupt officials. In 2018, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project claimed that there were allegations of corruption in several federal universities relating to the unfair allocation of grades; contract inflation; truncation of staff's salary on the payroll; employment of unqualified staff; certificate scandal; examination malpractice; sexual harassment; and issuance of results for expelled students to graduate (Punch,2020). According to the report, corruption is commonplace in education systems across the Economic

Community of West African States (ECOWAS). “This affects education access, quality, inclusion and learning outcomes with devastating consequences, not only for national economic growth but also for the life chances of children, their families and communities,” the report said. The report highlighted “Resource misallocation, corrupt procurement, exchange of sex for grades, examination malpractices, fake qualifications, teacher absenteeism, and corrupt recruitment practices” as the various corruption risks and challenges facing education systems in all the countries (Premiuntimes2019). The report *Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All* indicates that Nigeria is among the 37 countries that are losing money spent on education, because children are not learning. UNESCO disclosed that the menace is already costing governments USD 129 billion a year. It stressed further that despite the money being spent, rejuvenation of primary education is not in the near future because of poor-quality education that fails to ensure that children learn (NEEDS,2014).Corruption within the educational institutions is a key factor responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. Ogunode & Adamu (2020) submitted that corruption is another factor responsible for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. The forms of corruption practices that responsible for shortage of academic staff in the higher institutions include; funds diversion, ghost workers and recruitment fraud. Funds released for the employment of academic staff are been looted by some administrators and principals officers of the institutions. Some school administrators are using fake names to collect salaries for people that are supposed to be employed in the system. The politician hacked recruitment process in the various higher institutions by sending their less qualified candidate for employment in the system. The high level of corruption in the administration of higher institutions in Nigeria also contributing to the shortage of academic staff in the various institutions of education.

3.4 Lack of Manpower Planning

Another factor responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions is lack of manpower planning for teacher education in Nigeria. There is poor manpower planning on teacher development in Nigeria and this is causing shortage of professional teachers in the country educational sector. Ogunode & Adamu (2020) observed that lack of sound strategic manpower planning for the production of manpower for the nation’ higher institutions is another reasons for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian higher institutions. The Nigerian government through the various commissions established to oversee the administration of higher institutions in the country have not designed an implementable road map for the production of adequate manpower for the higher institutions in the country. The inability of these agencies to draw the strategic plans of ensuring the production of the right manpower for the higher institutions is responsible for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Ogunode, Gregory, & Abubakar, (2020) submitted that the lack of manpower planning is responsible for the teacher gap in the Nigerian educational institutions across the country. The problem of inadequate manpower in the Nigerian educational sector is a result of lack of effective manpower planning. The inadequate infrastructural facilities in the primary, secondary and higher education in Nigeria is due to lack of comprehensive infrastructural facilities planning, while the problem of inadequate funding can also be traced to the lack of financial educational planning for the entire educational sector. Anyadike (2013) cited Goetz, (1989) who submitted that inadequacy of Human Resources Planning has been cited as the reason why most public organization today are facing a chaotic situations as they did not at onset plan their workforce, neither did have any systematic human resource (HR) management programme that put the organizations goals first and the decay in the public organizations is evident as the level of frustration is equally high; and the “marketplace” trend of organization is becoming a reality. The cause of this unfortunate development is primarily a lack of human resource planning. Ogunode (2020) discovered that inadequate data/information, shortage of professional planners in manpower planning, inadequate working materials, poor capacity development of educational planners, political instability, lack of political and inadequate planning funds are the challenges facing the planning of manpower in the educational sector in F.C.T, Abuja.

3.5 Brain-Drain

Brain drain refers to massive movement of professional (academician) from developing countries to developed countries for a better employment opportunities and security. Brain-drain is manifesting in all the Nigerian educational institutions. At the basic education, Akindutire, & Ekundayo, (2012) and Durosaro, (2006) observed that there is the problem of attrition in the teaching force and dwindling enrolment of teachers. The teachers’ conditions of service are not enticing enough to attract and retain the best of brains in the profession. Akindutire, & Ekundayo, (2012) and Ajayi & Shofoyeke (2003) claimed that the continued uncomplimentary public perceived image of teachers may not likely attract the right calibre of people to be retained in the teaching profession. Today, there are holders of professional qualifications in Education serving in the banks, customs departments, hotels, immigration, airways and so on. Akindutire, & Ekundayo, (2012) and Durosaro (2006), submitted low status accorded to teachers in the country, does not make students enroll and be trained as teachers. The few who enroll do so because they have no choice. Akindutire, & Ekundayo, (2012) and Ibukun (2004) observed that many brilliant individuals are not willing to take up teaching as a

profession. According to the author, this should not have been so if teaching is upgraded to a position of respect in the Nigerian society. It appears that the present system of education in Nigeria promotes the reservation of intellectually and financially deficient students for the teaching career. How then can third class brains be expected to effectively teach first class brains? Ogunode & Adamu (2020) observed that Brain-drain problem is another major factor responsible for the challenge of inadequate academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Hundreds of academicians are leaving the Nigerian public higher institutions especially the universities leaving to the institutions starve of lecturers. The mass movement of lecturers to other sector of the economic like the banking sector and oil sector is responsible for the shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Ogunode & Abubakar, (2020); Ogunode, & Abubakar, (2020) observed that higher education in Nigeria are facing the problem of brain-drain.

3.6 Poor Motivation

Poor motivation of teachers is another factor responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. Nigerian teachers are poorly motivated and this is causing many professional teachers to leave the sector. Motivation according to Moshinkie (2001) is the attention and effort required to complete a learning task and the application of new materials to the work site. Success or failure in education can be attributed to motivation, this is because a teacher may be motivated to increase or decrease the vigour of his activities (Ezenwa, 2006). Mmadike (2006) found excess workload; low morale; inadequate remuneration; unattractive prospects for promotion and inadequate working conditions as sources of job dissatisfaction among university teachers in Nigeria. Ogunode & Adamu (2020) submitted that poor motivation is another fundamental reason for shortage of academic staff in the Nigerian public higher institutions. Academic staff working in the Nigerian higher institutions are poorly motivated. Their salaries are not good like other professionals, their working condition and welfare packages is poor and their salaries are not paid until. Many qualified trained teachers will not want to work in the educational institutions in Nigeria because of the level of motivation they are getting from the government. Stakeholders attributed skill and personnel shortage to a number of factors, among which are poor salaries and low social prestige accorded teachers especially at the basic level of the education sector. Respondents expressed the view that teaching is generally viewed as the last resort of jobseekers because of the harsh economic realities and poor prestige accorded teachers in the society. Most newly recruited teachers would not mind leaving the profession if and when more attractive jobs become available in the public and private sectors (NEEDS,2014).

4. Way Forward

To address these challenges, the presenters recommended the following; increment in the funding of teacher education institutions, establishment of more of teacher education institutions, fight all forms of corruption in the higher institutions, develop strategic manpower planning for educational institutions, provide conducive working environment and increase the salaries of teachers in all educational institutions.

a. Adequate funding of Teacher Education Institutions

The government should increase the funding of all public teacher education institutions in the country. This will help to improve the quality in the system.

b. Establishment of More of Teacher Education Institutions

The government need to establish more teacher education institutions across the country to aid the production of more professional teachers in the country.

c. Fight all forms of Corruption

The government should fight all forms of corruption in the teacher education especially the ghost work problems. Recruitment in the educational institutions should be done objectively and void of political influences.

d. Develop Strategic Manpower Planning

The government should develop a strategic manpower blue print to give direction for the teacher manpower planning and implementation in the country. This will help to reduce the problem of shortage of professional teachers in the country.

e. Provision of Conducive Working Environment

The government should provide conducive working environment for all the staff in the teacher education institutions. This will help to reduce the brain-drain problems.

f. Increment in the Salaries of Teachers

The government should increase the salaries of teachers in the country. This will help to retain the best brain in the educational institutions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of the professional teachers in the implementation of school curriculum cannot be underestimated. This paper discussed the factors responsible for the shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. Inadequate funding, limited teacher education institutions, corruption, lack of manpower planning, brain-drain and poor motivation were identified as the factors responsible for shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. To address these challenges; the paper made the following recommendation; increment in the funding of teacher education institutions, establishment of more of teacher education institutions, fight all forms of corruption in the higher institutions, develop strategic manpower planning for educational institutions, provide conducive working environment and increase the salaries of teachers in all educational institutions.

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