

Assessment and Improvement on Teacher Education Curriculum for Socio-Economic Reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria.

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Abstract

The study discussed the assessment and improvement on Teacher Education Curriculum (TEC) for Socio - Economic Reconstruction (SER) in the 21st century Nigeria. A Descriptive Survey Research Design (DSRD) was adopted by the researcher because it has the advantage of wide coverage as a great deal of information can be obtained from a large population. The population for the study comprised all professional teacher trainers in Adeyemi Federal University of Education (AFUED) Ondo, Ondo State. Random Sampling Technique (RST) was used to select one hundred (100) professional teacher trainers from AFUED, Ondo. Three (3) Research Questions (RQs) were raised on the study. The self-developed Questionnaire (SDQ) was employed to elicit information from the respondents. Validity and reliability of the instrument were assured. Data collected was analyzed using frequency count, simple percentage and mean. It was found from the study that the theoretical nature of TEC and the inflexibility of the curriculum to accommodate innovations and alternative pathways to socio-economic reconstruction are major factors against socio-economic improvement in the 21st century Nigeria. It was concluded among other factors that the government and the curriculum experts should make TEC more flexible with a comprehensive curriculum design (CCD) that could accommodate innovations for adequate improvement and successful reconstruction of socio-economic status through teacher education in the 21st century Nigeria. It was recommended that policies that allow teacher training in demanding intellectual vocational activities, enabling environment for continuing training, financing and articulating teacher education programmes should be introduced, if there should be a rewardable socio- economic reconstruction through teacher education programmes in the 21st century Nigeria.

Keywords: Teacher Education Curriculum, Assessment of Teacher Education Curriculum, Socio- Economic Reconstruction, The 21st century Nigeria.

Introduction

A well organised education should ensure individual socio-economic development that has the capacity of unlocking all kinds of suffering as well as equipping individuals from various backgrounds with a brighter future. Education has been viewed as a process by which knowledge, attitudes, beliefs etc of a society's are transmitted from one generation to another through a well-defined method, to produce members that will imbibe society's religion, culture and social life (Oladosu, 2010). Education encompasses all processes of human learning which should enable the recipient to acquire, develop and cultivate new capacity to solve their different socio-economic challenges and the difficulties that are common to the society in which they found themselves (Jekayinfa & Kolawole, 2010)

Nyege & Hassan (2019) declared that education is generally regarded as a means to better life and the upliftment of the society's socio-economic growth and development at large. Hence, education is seen as a potent instrument for socio-economic and political reconstruction of the nation's economy. As such, education that is

systematically planned, adequately structured, effectively organized and skillfully empowered with adequate infrastructural facilities and motivational incentives that would enhance teacher's productivity will become an instrument par excellence for socio-economic development in the 21st century Nigeria (Adebile, 2020). The thrust of this paper is to assess the state of teacher education curriculum practices whether it serves as an instrument for improving socio-economic status of individuals and the nation at large.

Teacher education is an institution designed and organised for professional training of individuals who desired to engage in the commitment to the art and science of teaching. Adebile, (2017) opined that teacher education is the professional education of teachers towards attainment of brilliant attitudes, productive skills and adequate knowledge that could make them efficient and effective in their practices with the intent of satisfying the needs of the society at any point in time. Hence, the systems, policies and skills in the curriculum design of teacher education should bear the aim of performing the tasks of socio-economic development while under the rudiments of the training of teachers. Education and curriculum that does not involve vocational and practical procedures designed against the theoretical manipulations of the content of what is to be learnt in the formal classroom situation is far behind any successful socio-economic reconstruction at any level in any society.

On the assessment of the teacher education curriculum for improvement; Bakky, (2017); Adebile, (2007); Adebile, (2009) in their different studies; found that priorities are given to theoretical activities with low vocational and practical knowledge and practices. Also, that the teacher education curriculum is devoid of regular evaluation which would have created alternative pathways for innovations. Okolo (2016) reported that teachers are the pivot of positive factors determining the quality of education and its contributions to national development in the areas of social, political and economic growth and when teachers are not given sufficient motivational incentives for curriculum implementation at any levels of reconstruction agenda, such programmes may not be successful. It is important to note that teacher education is evolving and dynamic and it is imperative for the government at all levels to ensure adequate preparation of competent teachers to face these challenges in a fast changing economy in the 21st century Nigeria. In essence, the reports of curriculum implementation of teachers education curriculum is not favourable enough to satisfy the essential needs for socio-economic improvement, hence, the need for assessment and improvement on the outcomes of teacher education curriculum reports and practices.

Studies on curriculum implementation of teacher education ascertained that most part of the content is becoming outdated and there is no consistent link with the needs of this present technological age. It was equally observed that TEC was given to courses and knowledge with same streamlined instructional methodology and that there were considerable inconsistencies in teacher education programmes with regard to aims, objectives, teaching-learning materials and assessment of learning outcomes (Okolo, 2016; Bakky, 2017; Jane, 2017; Kazeem, 2015). As such, assessment, re-orientation and reconstruction are germane on teacher education curriculum practices.

It was on the basis of this educational research gap that this paper examined the current state of teacher education curriculum, its assessment for flexibility and consequently improvement on the curriculum for successful reconstruction of socio-economic status of individuals in the 21st century Nigeria, through teacher education programmes.

Statement of the Problem

Trend analysis on socio-economic change in Nigeria has advanced a globalized and diverse complicated environment of seemingly suffering and poverty. This has impacted a global educational needs and challenges with great pressures on educators and responsible stakeholders in education. Observation revealed that curriculum content, flexibility and innovations in teacher education is not adequate for training of teachers and certification is being too theoretical in nature. Equally, policies that ensure effective socio-economic development after graduation are not given priorities in curriculum practices. This informs a need for assessment for improvement on TEC for effective and successful socio-economic reconstruction through teacher education programmes in the 21st century Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to;

- examine the current level of TEC in Nigeria toward socio-economic reconstruction.
- determine the level of flexibility of the curriculum for content accommodation of innovative ideas towards socio-economic reconstruction.

- investigate the level of socio-economic improvement through teacher education curriculum practices and programmes in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the current state of teacher education curriculum practices in Nigeria?
2. What is the level of socio-economic improvement through teacher education programmes in the 21st century Nigeria?
3. Is there flexibility in the teacher education curriculum for socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

The study is quite essential because the findings would encourage the students in training to get focused on the possibilities of being productive beyond the four-walls of the classroom after graduation. It will stimulate and motivate professional teacher trainers to explore teaching-learning skills that would imbibe more vocational and practical activities on the prospective teachers for socio-economic improvement in this growing trend of unemployment in Nigeria. To the government and responsible stakeholders in education, findings of this study would expose the several hidden contents that will attract, develop and improve socio-economic status of teachers and individual in the 21st century Nigeria.

Methodology

The study assessed the curriculum of teacher education for improvement and socio-economic construction of the 21st century Nigeria using Adeyemi Federal University of Education (AFUED) professional teacher trainers in Ondo, Ondo State. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised all professional teacher trainers in AFUED. Random sampling procedure was used to select one hundred (100) professional teacher trainers from the five (5) existing schools in the institution. Assessment and Improvement on Teacher Education Curriculum (AITEC) questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The AITEC was made up of fifteen (15) structured items with a four point likert scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree as responses sets meant to elicit opinion against the research questions. The instrument was arranged in two (2) sections. Section A was on personal bio data of the respondents, section B was on the state, flexibility and the level of TEC practices in teacher education programmes. The researchers ensured logical validity and reliability of the instrument used. Mean, frequency count and simple percentage were used to analyze the data collected.

Results

Table 1: Respondents' Views on Current State of Teacher Education Curriculum Practices.
N = 100, $\bar{X} = 2.50$

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
1.	Teacher education curriculum practices is below expectation.	36 (168)	42 (108)	14 (28)	8 (8)	2.66	Agreed
2.	Government financial support towards teacher education curriculum implementation is sufficient.	28 (112)	40 (120)	20 (40)	12 (12)	2.84	Agreed
3.	There is a wide range between curriculum theoretical practices and practical activities.	34 (136)	40 (120)	16 (32)	10 (10)	2.98	Agreed
4.	Teacher education curriculum is satisfying all needs of the users.	10 (40)	20 (60)	50 (50)	20 (20)	1.70	Agreed
5.	Government is supplying all the necessary resources for curriculum implementation.	30 (120)	30 (90)	20 (40)	20 (20)	2.70	Agreed
Mean Cluster (\bar{X})						3.21	

Table 1 revealed that respondents agreed that teacher education practices was below expectation

$\bar{X} = 2.66$ and government financial support towards teacher education curriculum implementation was insufficient $X = 2.84$. The result also showed that there was a wide range between curriculum theoretical practices and practical activities $X = 2.98$. The result further revealed that government have not supplied enough necessary resources for curriculum implementation process $X = 2.70$. However, the result showed that teacher education curriculum have not been adequately satisfying all the needs of the users. A cursory look at the table indicated that the current state of teacher education curriculum practices is not adequate enough $X = 3.21$ that is, the above 2.50 which serves as bench mark for acceptance is relevant.

Table 2: Respondents' Views on Level of Socio-economic Improvement through Teacher Education Programmes in Nigeria.
N = 100, $\bar{X} = 2.50$

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
6.	Teacher education programme is in total support of the socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria.	30 (120)	34 (102)	16 (32)	20 (20)	2.74	Agreed
7.	The present state of teacher education curriculum has no significant support for socio-economic reconstruction.	29 (116)	36 (108)	16 (32)	19 (19)	2.75	Agreed
8.	Teacher education curriculum is not designed to support socio-economic reconstruction.	31 (124)	32 (96)	20 (40)	17 (17)	2.77	Agreed
9.	No motivational incentives for in-service teachers to boost their socio-economic status.	40 (40)	40 (120)	5 (10)	10 (10)	3.00	Agreed
10.	Teacher education programme has failed to develop empowered productive socio-economic teachers.	30 (120)	30 (90)	20 (40)	20 (20)	2.75	Agreed
Mean Cluster (\bar{X})						2.80	

Table 2 depicted that respondents agreed that teacher education programme was not in total support of socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st $X = 2.74$. Also the result showed that respondents opined that the present state of teacher education curriculum has no significant support for socio-economic reconstruction $X = 2.75$. The result further showed that teacher education curriculum is not designed to support socio-economic reconstruction $X = 2.77$. The finding further revealed that there was no motivational incentives for in-service teachers to boost their socio-economic status $X = 3.00$. Also, the finding revealed teacher education failed to develop empowered productive socio-economic individuals / teachers. 3.00 and low practical knowledge and practices in curriculum implementation has a defeating effect in improving socio-economic status of teachers. A cursory look at the table with cluster mean 2.80 that is greater than the required mean value $X = 2.50$ indicated that there was no little or low level of socio-economic improvement through teacher education in the 21st century Nigeria.

Table 3: Respondents' Views on Flexibility in Teacher Education for Socio-economic Reconstruction in Nigeria.
N = 100, $\bar{X} = 2.50$

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	Decision
11.	Low practical knowledge and practices in curriculum implementation has a defeating effect on improving socio-economic status of teachers.	10 (40)	20 (60)	60 (120)	10 (10)	2.30	Disagreed
12.	There is total flexibility in teacher education curriculum for socio-economic reconstruction.	10 (40)	20 (60)	16 (120)	19 (10)	2.30	Disagreed

13.	There are opportunities for vocational training that translate to socio-economic reconstruction in the 21 st century Nigeria.	5 (20)	10 (30)	70 (140)	15 (15)	2.05	Disagreed
14.	Teacher education curriculum is not flexible enough to accommodate new innovations for socio-economic reconstruction.	30 (120)	34 (102)	16 (32)	20 (20)	2.74	Agreed
10.	Training and certification is based on the different skills of teaching and learning alone.	31 (124)	32 (96)	20 (40)	17 (17)	2.77	Agreed
Mean Cluster (\bar{X})						2.40	

Table 3 indicated that there is a relatively low practical knowledge and practices in curriculum implementation of teacher education $X = 2.30$. Further still, education curriculum for socio-economic reconstruction is not total $X = 2.30$. Also the result by the respondents indicated that there are limited opportunities in teacher education curriculum for vocational training $X = 2.05$. Also, respondents agreed that teacher education curriculum is not flexible enough to accommodate new innovations to socio-economic reconstruction $X = 2.74$. The respondents equally agreed that training and certification is based on the different skills of teaching and learning alone $X = 2.77$. With bench mark $X = 2.50$, it could be inferred that teacher education curriculum practices for socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria is not flexible enough to accommodate new ideas and innovations.

Discussion of Findings

Findings based on Research Question I showed that the current state of teacher education curriculum practices is not adequate enough for socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria. This is in line with the findings of Nkoro & Origima (2014) on curriculum implementation and practices. According to the scholars, curriculum implementation and practices is insufficient to satisfy the needs of the user and the society at large. Also, Ugadu, (2017) submitted that teacher education curriculum should be reformed to avoid all the controversial issues on curriculum innovations and development in order to enjoy consistent rewardable results through curriculum practices in teacher education programmes.

Findings based on Research Question II indicated that there was a very low level of socio-economic improvement through teacher education programmes and curriculum practices in the 21st century Nigeria. The findings of Maduewesi, (2010) corroborates this result on issues and challenges in Nigerian education in the 21st century, he opined that the increasing trend in socio-economic challenges has drastically affected almost every aspect of educational development in Nigeria. As such, Ekpiken and Ukpabio, (2014) advocated for repositioning of teacher education in Nigeria for adequate and effective sustainable development.

Findings based on Research Question III revealed that there is no sufficient flexibility in teacher education curriculum practices to accommodate new innovations for socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria. Eneasator and Eneasator (2011) observed this in their study on Quality Teacher Education Programmes in Nigeria. It was reported that consistent failure on curriculum practices is always at the stage of implementation, which is applicable to why innovations are always almost impossible in curriculum practices in Nigeria. Aguokogbo (2010) developed a write-up on curriculum development and implementation for Africa. His submission could be referred to as embracing a good curriculum development without adequate resources for implementation, which consequently devalued the levels of education and socio-economic sustainable development in the 21st century Nigeria.

Conclusion

Considering the findings of this study, assessment of teacher education curriculum for socio-education reconstruction needs a lot of modifications and innovations for adequate improvement. Modifications for innovative ideas to become flexible in order to accommodate changes for solving the issues on socio-economic development and growth. Presently, we experience a kind of disturbing state on socio-economic development in Nigeria; which our curriculum practices supposed to address adequately. Our theoretical form of teacher education curriculum practices which does not actively engage prospective and in-service teachers after graduation, and consequently does not contribute to socio-economic growth and improvement; should be a great concern to all concerned responsible stakeholders in curriculum design and education at large.

Recommendations

From the findings, the following recommendations are proffered;

- That there should be consistent curriculum evaluation and innovation in teacher education curriculum in order to achieve alternative pathways for socio-economic reconstruction through teacher education programmes in the 21st century Nigeria.
- Curriculum planners should emphasize more on the flexibility and feasibility in the curriculum practices to creative innovative ideas for the fulfillment of global educational need of the 21st century Nigeria.
- The government should organise functional re-training programmes for teachers on teacher education curriculum practices with vocational and practical resources which will boost teachers' productivity for socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria.
- Relevant and adequate human and material resources should be made available for teacher education curriculum practices to achieve rewardable outcomes of curriculum practices.
- Prospective teachers, through curriculum practices should acquire relevant vocational skills during their training years for the socio-economic reconstruction in the 21st century Nigeria.
- Hope is not lost on socio-economic reconstruction through teacher education curriculum practices, if education and curriculum should be placed in the rightful positions of creating and ensuring enabling environment for socio-economic growth and development in the 21st century Nigeria.

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