



Chapter Six - Major Problems of Colleges of Education in Nigeria and Possible Solutions

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Submitted: 5. February 2024
Published: 1. July 2024
Volume: 11
Issue: 3
Affiliation: Department of History, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria
Languages: English
Keywords: Colleges of Education, Teacher Education, Nigeria, Challenges, Funding, Infrastructure
Categories: News and Views, Humanities, Social Sciences and Law
DOI: 10.17160/josha.11.3.972

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Chapter Six

Major Problems of Colleges of Education in Nigeria and Possible Solutions

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Abstract

Chapter Six is full of numerous challenges that hinder the effectiveness of producing quality teachers in the colleges of education in Nigeria. The major challenges identified by Al-amin include inadequate funding, lack of qualified personnel, outdated curriculum, poor infrastructure, and inadequate facilities. He opined that these challenges have significant implications for the quality of teacher education in Nigeria and the nation's educational system as a whole.



Introduction

Education is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that enable individuals to develop and achieve their full potential. It involves the transmission of knowledge and the development of cognitive, social, and emotional abilities through various forms of teaching and learning. In its broad terms, education is any process by which an individual gains knowledge or insight, or develops attitudes or skills.¹ Education can take place in a variety of settings, such as schools, universities, vocational training centres, and informal learning environments. It encompasses a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, science, literature, social sciences, languages, and the arts. Education also plays an important role in shaping individuals' values and beliefs, as well as in promoting social and cultural development. Overall, education is a lifelong process that helps individuals acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in their personal and professional lives and to contribute positively to society. In its effort to provide qualitative education in the country, the Federal and State Governments in Nigeria established colleges of education. Colleges of education in Nigeria are institutions established to train and produce qualified teachers for primary and secondary schools. These institutions have played a vital role in the development of the Nigerian educational system by producing quality teachers who have contributed to the prosperity, growth and development of the nation.² However, despite their importance, colleges of education in Nigeria are faced with various challenges that hinder their effectiveness in producing quality teachers. This paper aims to examine the challenges facing colleges of education in Nigeria and their implications for teacher education in the country.

A Brief History of Colleges of Education in Nigeria

The history of colleges of education in Nigeria dates back to the colonial era when the first set of teacher training institutions were established to train Nigerian teachers for primary schools. According to Taiwo, the Church Missionary Society

¹ Encyclopedia Americana, Vol.9:642. There is no universally acceptable definition of the concept “education” though the researcher is not oblivious of the different definitions by different eminent educationists such as J.S. Farrent, Alban Winter etc. In Arabic, the word *tarbiyah* refers to education, but encompasses more than just sitting in a classroom and learning from books. The meaning of education in the Islamic context includes every aspect of absorbing information, including learning by doing and also by observing others. Ibn Manzur a 14 th century lexicographer, offers several terms as synonymous for *tarbiyah*, including increase, formation, nourishment, care, guarding, and grow/let grow. Roald explains that *tarbiyah* in the Islamist sense “relates to a lifelong process.” This corresponds to Illich and other postmodernists’ theories about “de-schooling,” or acknowledging that education takes place all the time, and not just in the classroom. This insight is evident in the Arabic words *tarbiyah*, *ta’lim*, and *ta’dib*, all of which refer to different aspect of the process of education.

² Kyari 20214, 3.



(CMS) established the first Teacher Training Institution in Abekuta, Western Nigeria, in 1859. The Baptist Mission also founded the Baptist Training College Ogbomoso in 1897, with the Wesleyan Mission establishing the Wesley College of Ibadan in 1918.³ Eastern Nigeria is a nation in which education is not a priority to the government of Nigeria, the Hope Waddel Institute was founded in Calabar in 1892⁴ These institutions were known as Teacher Training Colleges and they were established by the British colonial administration in Nigeria in the early 1900s. Nigeria, as a nation, came into being only in 1914 when the amalgamation of Northern and Southern protectorates was made by Lord Lugard. In 1931, the Nigerian government established the first Teachers' Training College in Nigeria, known as the Wesley College of Education in Elekuro, Ibadan. The college was established to provide training for teachers who would teach in primary schools in Nigeria. The College of Education in Nigeria was a brainchild of the Ashby Commission report of 1960 that trained Teacher Grade One College. In 1962, the Nigerian government established the first Advanced Teachers' College in Nigeria, the Advanced Teachers' College, Zaria. The college was established to provide post-secondary education for teachers who wanted to improve their teaching skills and qualifications.

In 1986, the Nigerian government established the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) to oversee the activities of all the colleges of education in Nigeria and ensure strict enforcement of the carrying capacity of appropriate academic programs.⁵ The NCCE is responsible for ensuring that the colleges of education in Nigeria provide quality teacher education programs that meet the needs of the country. Currently, there are seventy-two (72) colleges of education in Nigeria, thirty-four (34) of them are state colleges of education two (2) are private colleges of education and the remaining ones are owned by the Federal Government.⁶ These colleges offer certificate, diploma, and degree programs in education and related fields. Many of the colleges have since been upgraded to degree-awarding institutions, and they have contributed significantly to the development of the education sector in Nigeria. Despite their crucial role in shaping the quality of education in the country, colleges of education face several challenges that impede their effectiveness. This paper will provide an overview of the problems faced by colleges of education in Nigeria and possible solutions.

³ Yusuf 2014, 107.

⁴ Yusuf 2014, 107.

⁵ Kyari 20214, 2.

⁶ Kyari 2014, 2.



The Problems of Colleges of Education in Nigeria

Nigeria is a nation in which education is not a priority to the government. Therefore, there are several challenges facing colleges of education in Nigeria, some of which include:

Inadequate funding: Funding is a critical issue as only adequate provision of both infrastructural, material and human resources are necessary for the effective operation of education. Colleges of education in Nigeria are owned and funded by the Federal and State governments as well as private individuals. Low level of funding is one of the challenges affecting colleges of education in Nigeria. Over the years government subventions to colleges have never been adequate but at the same time, governments maintain the policy that colleges should not charge fees deemed adequate to complement the financial effort of the government. In Nigeria, the allocation to education as a share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is quite minimal. To date, government funding of vocational and technical education programmes has not been impressive.⁷ In fact, at present, there appears to be no serious effort at funding the colleges. According to Nwagwu poor funding leads to non-existent, dilapidated or grossly inadequate infrastructure, facilities and equipment. Instructional and living conditions in many of these colleges' offices, hostels, libraries and laboratories have deteriorated. The underfunding of Colleges of education in Nigeria seriously affects the quality of education. Insufficient funding also affects the ability of the colleges to recruit and retain qualified lecturers and support staff.

Poor infrastructure: Most colleges of education in Nigeria lack adequate facilities such as libraries, laboratories, workshops, usable equipment and classrooms. This limits the ability of students to access the resources they need for learning and research. However, it is surprising that where these facilities are grossly inadequate as most of the laboratories only have the items or equipment that were provided when the departments were established. It depends on engineering workshops and lecturers to teach technical education concepts in this 21st century.

The facilities and other resources of today are inadequate quantitatively and qualitatively and besides they are obsolete. Oryem indicated that only 40% of institutions of higher education in Nigeria have laboratory or workshop space for technical education programmes. Of the others, 60% do not have laboratory or

⁷ Adamu and Harram 2014, 38.



workshop space and this reflects the low quality of technology programmes in higher institutions.⁸ The inadequacy of teaching and learning laboratory/workshop facilities have contributed to the diminution of the quality education in colleges of education in Nigeria.

Poor and outdated curriculum: The curriculum is the prescribed activities for each class in the colleges of education in Nigeria. There is the national curriculum produced by the National Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) which is an agency of the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and from the curriculum, the syllabus is produced.⁹ The curriculum in most colleges of education is outdated and does not reflect current trends in education. This means that graduates are often ill-equipped to deal with the challenges of modern-day teaching. The problems associated with the current curricula are

- i. They are based on a foreign model which has evolved under ideal conditions (staff, equipment, infrastructure, training opportunities etc.) that are not easily duplicated in developing countries.
- ii. There is a basic lack of textbooks in this area and most of the available textbooks are often illustrated with examples from outside the local environment and which are irrelevant to the particular country.
- iii. There is usually a shortage of highly competent indigenous teaching and support staff with sufficiently wide practical experience in technology.
- iv. The curricula are adjudged to be too academic and overloaded with intellectual content in pure science and mathematics at the expense of basic engineering and technology.
- v. Inadequate provision for humanities, social sciences, business management concepts and entrepreneurial skills development because of the inadequate preparation of the students for the industry some employers retrain the graduates to make them productive in their organizations.
- vi. The teaching approach follows the conventional method of transferring knowledge through the lecturer reading out to students who would then

⁸ Oryem in Adamu and Harram 2014, 38.

⁹ Aigbe 2001, 20.



take down notes. The educational system continues to place considerable value on these methods of teaching.

Shortage and poorly qualified manpower: There is a lack of qualified lecturers who are responsible for the provision of knowledge and skills. Qualified manpower plays an important role in providing quality knowledge and teaching correct skills. The correct knowledge and skills acquired early in life have beneficial effects later. The few available lecturers in the colleges of education who are responsible for teaching and administration are working under very difficult conditions. As a result of this, many colleges of education in Nigeria suffer from low academic standards, which can lead to a lack of confidence in the qualifications of graduates.

Inadequate supervision and mentoring: Many student teachers in colleges of education lack adequate supervision and mentoring, which can affect their ability to develop the necessary skills for teaching.

Poor student welfare: Many colleges of education do not provide adequate accommodation or welfare services for students. This can affect their well-being and their ability to focus on their studies.

Inadequate research and innovation: Many colleges of education do not prioritize research and innovation, which can limit the ability of lecturers and students to contribute to the development of new knowledge and practices in education.

Overall, addressing these challenges is crucial to improving the quality of education in Nigeria and ensuring that graduates from colleges of education are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary for effective teaching.

The Solutions to the Problems of Colleges of Education in Nigeria

There are several challenges facing colleges of education in Nigeria, but here are some solutions that could be implemented to address these problems:

Funding: One of the major challenges facing colleges of education in Nigeria is inadequate funding. To address this, the government should increase the budgetary allocation to the education sector, specifically to colleges of education. Therefore, governments at all levels must be pressured to devote the recommended 26% of their budgetary allocation to education. Additionally, private organizations and philanthropists should be encouraged to donate to colleges of education.



Infrastructure: Colleges of education in Nigeria lack adequate infrastructure, including classrooms, hostels, and laboratories. To address this, the government should invest in the construction of new facilities and the renovation of existing ones. Private organizations can also be encouraged to contribute to the provision of infrastructure. Adequate infrastructure services that would support the full mobilization of the economic sector.

Quality of Teaching: The quality of teaching in some colleges of education is poor, which affects the quality of graduates produced. To address this, the government should provide training and development opportunities for teachers in these institutions. Additionally, a merit-based recruitment process should be implemented to ensure that only qualified and competent teachers are employed.

Curriculum: The curriculum of colleges of education should be reviewed and updated to ensure that it is relevant to current needs and trends. This should include the integration of technology in teaching and learning.

Accreditation: Colleges of education should be regularly assessed and accredited to ensure that they meet the required standards. The government should establish a regulatory body to oversee the accreditation process and enforce compliance with standards.

Collaboration: Colleges of education should collaborate with other institutions, both within Nigeria and internationally, to share best practices and promote the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

By implementing these solutions, colleges of education in Nigeria can improve the quality of education they provide and produce graduates who are better equipped to contribute to the development of the country.

Conclusion

This study looks at the challenges facing colleges of education in Nigeria and their possible solutions. We have seen that issues of inadequate funding, lack of qualified personnel, outdated curriculum, poor infrastructure, and inadequate facilities are some of the major challenges facing these institutions. This study concludes that the challenges facing colleges of education in Nigeria are significant and urgent intervention is needed to address them. The Nigerian government needs to increase funding to these institutions, recruit and train more qualified personnel, update the curriculum to meet current demands, improve infrastructure, and provide adequate



facilities. These interventions will improve the quality of teacher education in Nigeria and enhance the nation's educational system's effectiveness.



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