

Colleges of Education Graduates- A Panacea to Middle Level Manpower (Teachers) Supply in Schools in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the prominent place of colleges of education graduates in relation to teachers' supply in Nigerian schools. Five hundred respondents were involved in the study. Researcher's self-developed questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Percentages were used to analyze the data collected. The results of the study revealed that the colleges of education graduates were preferred to other teachers from other tertiary institutions due to their orientation in discipline and dedication to duty. The result further indicated that the job performance of colleges of education graduates were of outstanding quality considering their pedagogical skill(s). Recommendations made include: expansion of facilities in colleges of education by the government, extension of the internship of the colleges of education trainees from present one academic semester to two semesters and periodic overhauling of colleges of education curriculum

Key words: Middle-level teachers, teachers' supply, education curriculum

1. Introduction

Due to the continual relevance of teachers in human societies, the search for qualified, competent and committed teachers would remain abated. The search for effective and efficient teachers will remain age long global concern in education industry because teachers are pivots upon which the national aspirations and development rest upon. Olokede (2009) asserted that the indispensability of teachers to individual and national development in providing functional training is obvious.

From the inception of mission education in Nigeria, special reference has been attached to teacher education. Taiwo (1986) opined that the first attempt at teacher training in Nigeria was spear headed by the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) in 1953. Two teacher training institutions were founded; one for males and the other for females. The males' teacher training institution was transferred from Abeokuta in 1867 to Oyo, which was Saint Andrews Training College (now Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo). However, the female teacher training institution remained in Lagos.

Consequent upon the giant stride of the C.M.S., the Wesleyan Methodist opened its teacher training college/institution at Ibadan in 1930 and earlier before that time, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland established Hope Waddell in 1892.

Despite the missions' efforts, teachers were grossly inadequate to handle schools in Nigeria. Taiwo (1986) stressed this when he said that qualified teachers in primary and secondary schools were in short supply. He maintained that in 1951, the ratio of teachers to learners were 38,181 to 1,002,533 in primary schools and 1,392 to 24,225 in secondary schools. More astonishingly, the total number of teachers at the primary and secondary schools amounted to 39,573 only 11,032 possessed certificates and degrees.

In the drive to combat the inadequate supply of qualified teachers in schools, the voluntary agencies and the native authorities embarked on series of efforts. Later, there was emergence of Grade II teacher training colleges' establishment to upgrade the skills of the earlier grade III teachers' certificate holders.

Prior to Nigerian independence in 1960, the Regional governments have embarked on various efforts to give teacher education face value and propel it to an enviable status with the establishment of Advanced Teachers' Colleges later renamed Colleges of Education. Among these colleges were the Advanced Teachers' College Lagos (1962) Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo (1962) Advanced Teachers' College, Port Harcourt (1962) Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri (1963) Advanced Teachers' College Kano (1964) and the Advanced teachers' Colleges at Zaria and Sokoto.

The reason for the establishment of these Advanced teachers' colleges was to augment the numerical strength of qualified teachers in secondary schools. Adesina, Akinyemi and Ajayi (1983) observed that when the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) course was introduced in the early 1960s, the products were supposed to

teach in the lower forms of secondary schools. They stressed that at the inception of the NCE course, the major objective was to produce highly qualified non graduate teachers to teach the lower forms of secondary schools and Grade II teacher training colleges. They further stressed that the trainees were expected to spend the first two (2) years preparing for the A level and the third (3rd) year on pedagogical courses. However, the pattern was amended before the first courses started at the advanced teachers' training centers in Ibadan, Lagos and Zaria. Instead of preparing the students strictly for the 'A' level, emphasis was placed on taking the trainees up to A-level standard in their two teaching subjects during the three-year course.

The potency of NCE teachers in Nigeria would remain evergreen. Going by the memory lane, in the 1980s, some NCE teachers were appointed as Heads of departments, vice principals, school counselors and into other positions of responsibility in secondary schools.

Since education is dynamic in its policies and practices, it demands constant overhauling in order for it to help to accelerate economic, scientific, political and technological breakthrough for which it is globally known for. Presently in Nigeria with the benchmark drawn by the federal government that NCE should be the least teaching qualification, the federal ministry of education (2004: 39) postulated that; the minimum qualification for entry into teaching profession shall be the NCE.

The emerging trend in our educational development has necessitated the need for NCE programmes to be well structured and be more all embracing in order to get teachers trained in diverse areas of specializations such as technical and vocational courses, sciences, humanities (social sciences) languages, and rudiments of knowledge in ICT to meet the needs and survival of teachers' supply for junior secondary school (basic seven to nine educational programme) either its curriculum in academic or pre-vocation. Coupled with the above, teachers are specifically trained at colleges of education to handle the primary level of our education system (the lower basic (pre-primary up to primary six) . The trainees are referred to as the primary education studies trainees who have offered double major course in primary education studies.

The current situation in colleges of education programme is in line with the objectives/goals as specified by the federal republic of Nigeria (2009: 1)

- ❖ Producing teachers with high personnel and professional discipline and integrity;
- ❖ Teachers who are dedicated, with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes that would facilitate easy achievement of the national goals.

2.0 Statement of the problem

The continuous relevance of NCE graduates in the nation's capacity building and service delivery cannot be underestimated in education industry. The extent to which these middle-level teachers are contributing positively in solving the problems of shortage of teachers supply was the gap that this study filled.

2.1. Purpose of the study

The objective of this study was to determine the extent to which the NCE graduates were fulfilling in the discharge of their professional responsibilities/duties at both the lower basic and the senior secondary school levels.

2.2. Research questions

These two questions are meant to guide this study

1. Do the employers of teachers (officials of both the state ministry of education and local government education authority and proprietors of private schools) have preference in the recruitment of NCE graduates for teaching?
2. Are the perceptions of the private and public primary and secondary school heads the same on job performance of NCE graduate teachers?

3.0. Methodology

3.1.Design of the study

The study was a survey research. Survey according to Bandele (2004) is concerned with the study of a part of the population generally large, by selecting samples chosen from the population in order to discover the relative distribution and relationship between its variables. Survey research enables researchers select their sample from the population from all the segments to enable the representative opinion on the characteristics of the subjects.

3.2. Area and population of the study

The population for this study comprised of all primary and secondary school heads, officials in the state ministry of education, local government education authority and proprietors/proprietresses of private primary and secondary schools in Osun State.

Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study. In Osun State there are 3 senatorial districts (Osun Central, Osun East and Osun West) each of the senatorial districts has ten local government areas. Osun Central Senatorial district was selected. Out of the ten local government areas that made up Osun Central Senatorial district, random sampling techniques was used to select 4 local government areas (Osogbo, Odo-Otin, Olorunda and Ifelodun). The sample of this study were five hundred (500) subjects made up of 40 officials of ministry of education and local government education authority and 60 proprietors of private primary and secondary schools, 200 head teachers in both private and public primary schools and 200 head teachers of both private and public secondary schools.

3.3. Instrumentation

Questionnaire on Perceptions of State-Holders on Colleges of Education Graduates (QPSHCEG) was the main instrument used to collect data from the officials in the ministry of education and local government education authorities, proprietors/proprietresses of private primary and secondary schools, head teachers in private and public primary and secondary schools.

3.4. Validation and reliability of the instrument

The instrument was subjected to face validation by giving the initially drawn ten questionnaires to two experts in the field of measurement and evaluation for criticisms. Their comments and suggestions culminated the modified instrument used for the study. In order to ascertain the reliability of the instrument used, 150 stake-holders in primary and secondary schools outside the population used for the study were selected. The instrument was administered on them. After an interval of two weeks, it was re-administered on the same respondents. With the use of Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient, the results obtained from the two scores showed positive reliability of 0.75 and 0.77 respectively.

3.5. The Method of data collection: The researcher personally and as well used two research assistants to administer the questionnaire on the respondents

4.0. Data Analysis: The data collected were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (percentages)

4.1. Research question one: Do the employers of teachers have preference in the recruitment of NCE graduates for teaching?

The result in table 1 showed that 81% of the above stake holders prefer NCE graduates to others at time of recruitment. On item 2, 90% of heads of private and public primary schools took delight having NCE graduates to work under them. Also, 84.5% heads of private and public secondary schools cherished having NCE graduate to work under them.

Item 3 showed the opinions of stake-holders on government policy that NCE graduates should be retained at upper basic level of education. 98% of officials of ministry of education and local government education authority and proprietors of private schools supported the policy. Similarly, 93.5% of heads of private and public secondary schools supported the view that NCE graduates be retained at the upper basic level of education.

On item 4, 87% of officials of respondents i.e ministry of education and local government education authority and proprietors of private primary schools maintained that NCE graduates should be retained at the upper basic level qualification being the minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria. Also, 85% heads teachers of private and public primary schools agreed that NCE graduate should teach at upper basic level of education.

Item 5 revealed that 94% of officials of ministry of education and local government education authority and proprietors of private primary schools supported that NCE graduates who are trained in either Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) or Primary Education Studies (PES) should teach in primary school in order to enhance quality in service delivery. In the same vein, 97% of head teachers in both private and public primary schools also agreed with the proposition that NCE graduates who are either ECCE or PES should teach in primary schools.

4.2. Research question two: Are the perceptions of the private and public primary and secondary school heads the same on job performance of NCE graduate teachers?

In table II, item I, 94.5% of head teachers in private and public primary schools were of the view that NCE graduates were more professionally disciplined and committed to duty. Ditto, 84% of secondary school heads asserted that NCE graduates were more disciplined and have zealous for the callings as teachers.

Item II, 85% of heads of private and public secondary schools opined that NCE graduates possess and demonstrate better pedagogical skills in teaching and learning better than teachers at other setting. By the same taken 84.5% of heads of private and public secondary schools believed that NCE graduates could demonstrate better pedagogical skills than other sets of teachers.

5.0. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

Based on the findings above, it is obvious that NCE graduates are indispensable in ensuring effective teaching and learning at the basic and secondary levels of our education system. Therefore, all stake-holders should rally round to ensure the sustainability of this level of education and effective utilization of the crops of vibrant teachers turnout of the level (middle level manpower).

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings the following recommendations are made;

- ❖ Governments at federal and state levels should intensify efforts by expanding the facilities in the existing colleges of education to enable admission of more students and production of more middle level manpower (teachers) for schools in Nigeria. Again, government should recruit more personnel in areas of Nigerian languages, technical and vocational courses and other disciplines so as to make colleges of education fulfill its expected position in meeting the needs of the lower basic education and the senior secondary level of education
- ❖ The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) should ensure periodic accreditation of programmes of colleges of education in order to pave way for constant overhauling of colleges of education curriculum
- ❖ In order to attain more proficiency, there is need for the extension of the internship (teaching Practices) of the colleges of education trainees by extending the current practice of one academic semester to two academic semesters.
- ❖ Despite the fact that NCE should be the minimum entry qualification into teaching profession, the outstanding NCE graduates should be encouraged to teach at any level in secondary school

6.0. References

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Table I: Perception of stake-holder on recruitment of colleges of graduates

S/N	Items	Respondents	Yes	%	No	%	Total
1	You prefer NCE graduate to others when you embark on teachers' recruitment	Officials of ministry of education and local government education authority and proprietors of private schools	81	81	19	19	100
2	you take delight in having NCE graduates to work under you	Heads of private and public primary schools	180	90	20	10	200
		Heads of private and public secondary schools	109	81.5	31	15.5	200
3	You support the view that NCE graduates should teach at upper basic level of education	Officials of ministry of education and local education authority and proprietors of private schools	98	98	02	02	100
		Heads of private and public secondary schools	187	93.5	13	6.6	200
4	NCE graduates should only teach at lower level of basic education being the prescribed minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria	Officials of ministry of education and local education authority and proprietors of private schools	87	87	13	13	100
		Heads of private and public secondary schools	170	85	30	15	200
5	NCE graduates who are specialists in either early childhood care education or primary education studies should teach in primary schools to enhance quality in service delivery	Officials of ministry of education and local education authority and proprietors of private	94	94	06	06	100
		Heads of private and public secondary schools	194	97	06	03	200

Source: Research Data, January,2012

Table II: The views of primary and secondary school heads on job performance of NCE graduate teachers.

S/N	Items	Respondents	Yes	%	No	%	Total
1	NCE graduates are more professional disciplined and are committed to duty	Head teachers of private and public primary schools	189	94.5	11	5.5	200
		Head teachers in private and public secondary schools	180	90	20	10	200
2	NCE graduates possess and demonstrate better pedagogical skills in teaching and learning than other sets of teachers	Heads of private and public primary schools	170	85	30	15	200
		Heads of private and public secondary schools	169	84.5	31	16.5	200

Source: Research Data, January,2012

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