Navigating Teacher Education towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

Teacher education is an essential part of a sound Educational System and stability in a country. Navigating Teacher Education can be a complex and challenging educational concept, however with the right resources and partnership it can be transformed into a successful educational endeavour. The aim of this paper was to explore navigating Teacher Education towards improving Basic Education in Nigeria. First, the need for improving Teacher Education was highlighted. Second, the role and impact of improving trainee teachers' attitude, student exchange programme, research funding, scholarship, massive recruitment of graduate teachers and the implementation of the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014) as they relate to Universal Basic Education in Nigeria were discussed. Third, the role of policymakers and stakeholders in ensuring that trainee teachers have knowledge and skills to improve basic education was also noted and discussed. Finally, actionable measures that can be taken to improve Nigeria's Basic Educational Standards through the navigation of Teacher Education were also discussed and it concluded that prospective teachers, especially for the young children in basic schools should be adequately trained to provide them with the intellectual and professional background needed for their assignment.

Keywords: Basic, Education, Teacher, Attitude.

Introduction

Teacher Education is an educational programme for trainee teachers with the goal of equipping them with an understanding of the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children at a given place. Navigating Teacher Education is a programme championed by academics and education experts in teacher training to bring innovation to Teacher Education with regards to disciplines in Basic Education for a better understanding of the needs of the young ones, especially in the 21st century (National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC; Kosnic & Beck, 2011). Teacher Education has to do with developing the inherent skills of teachers necessary to build positive, nurturing relationships with children and families. It involves offering a variety of resources to help pre-service teachers gain a deeper understanding of the needs of young children. By navigating Teacher Education, trainee teachers are expected to gain access to materials that provide an in-depth look at how best to meet the needs of young children in various settings, while also exploring strategies and approaches that can be used to support children's learning in an inclusive Educational System.

Additionally, navigating Teacher Education advocates for both formal and informal mentorships and opportunities for pre-service teachers to connect with experienced educators who can provide guidance and support (Aydarova & Berliner, 2018). It involves improving trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching practice through the establishment of micro-teaching laboratory (addressing trainee teachers' nervousness, addressing pre-service teachers' challenges with the appropriate utilization of instructional materials and up skilling pre-service teachers on the improvisation of instructional materials) as well as improving pre-service teachers' attitude towards teaching practice through intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Others found across literatures include promoting student exchange programme in colleges of education (Leutwyler & Meierhans, 2016; Walters, et al, 2009), scholarship opportunities for pre-service teachers (Grant-Smith, et al, 2018), massive development of Basic school infrastructures and massive recruitment of teachers by the different levels of state authorities in collaboration with the private sector (Egberibin, 2016). It also focuses on the importance of providing an environment that is responsive to a child's individual needs (Musanti & Pence, 2010), while promoting respect for children's backgrounds and cultures.

Premised on the foregoing, there is a dimension of improving Basic Education in navigating Teacher Education. As enshrined in the National Policy on Education (NPE) FRN (2014), Basic Education is designed to cater for the academic and cultural needs of young children between the ages of 6 and 12. As a matter of fact, the NPE placed emphasis on having young children being culturally schooled in tandem with the national goal and objectives which is central to uplifting the African culture and tradition. Thus, navigating Teacher Education in relation to geographical delimitation involves helping trainee teachers acquire home-grown skills to teach in a way that is culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of students. This can be done through the use of culturally relevant literature, interactive activities, and other teaching approaches that take into account students' cultural backgrounds during Teacher Education. Again, navigating teacher education demands that pre-service teachers are provided with training on how to create a safe learning environment for all learners, regardless of their cultural backgrounds and the actions or inactions of government (Australian Government, 2019).

Basic Education

Basic education has many definitions, but generally speaking it refers to the basic skills, concepts, and values needed by individuals to function adequately in society. These skills may include: mathematics, writing, reading, and science, among others. According to the National Policy on Education, FRN (2014), Basic Education is the education given to children aged 0 – 15 years. It encompasses the Early Child Care Development Education (ECCDE) which is segmented into ages 0 – 4, situated in Daycare or Crèches, fully the operation of private sector; while ages 5 – 6 belong to the pre-primary and are within the formal school system. The next is Primary Education which is given to children aged 6 – 12 years; the third segment of Basic Education is the Junior Secondary Education. It is the first 3 years of education a child receives after primary education. It is given to children aged 12 – 15 years.

In order to reach the world educational benchmark, Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme was launched in 1999 under the democratic president Olusegun Obasanjo (Okorosaye-Orubite cited in Elems-Ikwegbu, 2023). In line with the foregoing, Kennedy cited in Elems-Ikwegbu (2023) corroborated that UBE emerged during the Jomtien World Conference of Education for All (EFA) held in Thailand 1990 with a view to cater for learners worldwide. The UBE was designed to be an innovation on the 6-3-3-4 System. The first 10 years uninterrupted schooling is slated for 1 year pre-primary, 6 years primary and 3 years junior secondary school. It is expected to be comprehensive, free and compulsory for every Nigerian child and to provide unhindered access to children within the ages of 5-15 years. According to Elems-Ikwegbu (2023) the relevance of Basic Education to educational development is immense. It is the first level of education that children receive and it forms the foundation for their future educational attainment. Similarly, Dufitumukiza, et al (2020) noted that a strong Basic Education System is essential for ensuring that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential in the sense that Basic education is critical for psychosocial development of young children.

Education

Whenever the term 'Education' is mentioned, what comes to the mind is the acquisition of formal training at a given place over a specific period of time. However, the term 'Education' is universal and has become one of the most celebrated concepts in human history. According to Achuonye (2013), education is the transfer of worthwhile knowledge, behavior, values and culture from one generation to another for safeguarding the nation and its future. Okeke (2016) defined education from the functionalist view which is preparation of individuals for adequate functioning and survival in the society through specialized training given in an organized manner. Education is an essential part of any society, shaping the values and character of its people. It is also a powerful tool for social and economic development, enabling societies to build knowledge, expertise, and skills. Education can take many forms, ranging from informal learning such as everyday interactions, to formal education through schools and universities, to vocational training and apprenticeships. The history of Western education in Nigeria can be traced back to the 1842 when the Wesleyan Methodist arrived Badagry to evangelize and consequently the first school named 'Nursery of the Infant Church' was opened in 1843 under the auspices of Rev Thomas Birch Freeman with the assistance of Mr and Mrs Williams De Craft. Subsequently, other Missionaries arrived in their numbers and opening of schools became a necessity for evangelism (Abdulrahman cited in Elems-Ikwegbu, 2023). Education is a vital component of any society, helping to form the knowledge base and values of individuals and entire countries (Lightfoot, 2014). Education is one of the most important factors in the development of any modern society. A lot of emphasis has been placed on the importance of education since the beginning of time. Many leading countries in the world such as: the United States of America, Singapore, Chile, Canada. Israel, Finland and so on are where they are today because they saw education as the most powerful tool for economic growth (Elems-Ikwegbu, 2022). A balanced concept of education often considers its current societal value or national interest, the key players in education sector, the teachers, instructional materials, learning

environment and so on to achieve a desirable outcome capable of ushering the nation to global platform.

Teacher

The term 'teacher' has existed for centuries, but its meaning and application have changed over time. From ancient philosophers to modern-day educators, the role of a teacher has continually evolved in accordance with human and societal development. The word 'teacher' is derived from the Latin word 'docere', which means 'to show' or 'to lead' (Parihar, 2018). In ancient times, teachers were seen as mentors and guides who imparted their wisdom and knowledge to those who were eager to learn. Examples were; Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle who were among the first teachers known for their various teaching methods, such as the ability to teach and ask questions, engage in dialogues and deliver lectures respectively. (Guthrie & Warren, 2013).

The term 'teacher' applies in different context in today's world. Generally speaking, a teacher is someone who provides instruction and guidance to students at all levels. In other words, a teacher is described as the knowledgeable and intelligent one due to the level of information, skills and values he imparts on students (Osaat, et al 2022). Ofoego and Ebebe cited in Osaat et al (2022) were of the view that teachers are professionals who have a beneficial influence on students and that the influence of a teacher on a student and the society is determined by their degree of knowledge. Within the context of the term "teacher" common terms which are used include classroom teachers, online teachers, virtual teachers, lecturers, professors and facilitators. Classroom teachers are the most traditional type of teachers. They are the ones who are typically found in a physical classroom setting, and they often have a long-term relationship with their students. They are responsible for providing instruction and guidance to their students, and they may also be involved in other tasks such as evaluating student performance and receiving feedback (Klette, 2023).

Teacher Education

The importance of Teacher Education in improving civilization cannot be overstated. The educational level of the citizens determines the developmental status of the society. According to Onwughalu (2017), education is the key that drives a progressive and socially robust society. Teacher Education equips instructors with the skills, information and competences they needed to successfully conduct lessons and achieve desired results in every circumstance. In a similar spirit, the Federal Government of Nigeria, FRN (2014) saw Teacher Education as professional training structured to equip teachers for effective performance of their tasks. In the same vein, Ekpeta-Abdullahi (2018) defined Teacher Education as the training and preparation of teachers to acquire the relevant skills and competencies for educational development. Also, Usman (2020) defined Teacher Education as a programme which develops the prospective teacher's proficiency and competence to enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges there in.

Teacher Education is geared towards producing valuable and resourceful teachers that will guarantee effective service delivery to the society. Adewuyi and Ogunwuyi cited in Usman (2020) opined that Teacher Education is the provision of professional education and specialized training within a specified period for the preparation of individuals who intends to develop and nurture the young ones into responsible and productive citizens. It also equips individuals who intend to go into teaching profession with the knowledge and skills required for effective performance in and outside the classroom (Eduwen et al, 2016). The relevance of teacher education to educational development in a nation is significant; teacher training is an essential part of a sound educational system and stability in a country. The quality of teachers has a direct impact on the quality of education and, ultimately, on the development of a nation. Properly schooled teachers are essential for providing quality education and for ensuring that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential. To Adegoke and Oni (2015), an effective teacher education helps to ensure adequate preparation of trainee teachers to meet the challenges of teaching in today's classrooms. It provides them with the knowledge, skills, abilities and aptitudes they need to effectively instruct and support their students. It further provides pre-service teachers with the soft skills needed to effectively manage emotions and vices among students while at the same time providing quality service delivery (Umeghalu & Obi, 2020; Umeghalu and Oluwuo, 2022). In this way, teacher education becomes the platform for future generations to build upon their knowledge and expertise in order to contribute to their nation's progress and development.

Navigating Teacher Education towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria

Education is the platform upon which people stand to be free from chains of ignorance through the transmission of relevant information, skills and values. The teacher is the transmitter; hence, the need to be properly and appropriately trained in the necessary abilities (Osaat, et al 2022). Imogie cited in Okeke, et al (n.d) acknowledged that the quality of education prospective teachers receive has significant relationship with the developmental level of the nation they are to serve. Imogie in Okeke et al continued by saying that the nation hits its doom when Educational/Teacher Training Institutes produce uninspired, lazy, unmotivated, uncommitted, immoral and anti-social teachers to transmit such knowledge to the young generation.

Universal Basic Education (UBE) is the most recent education programme, which entails 10 years of uninterrupted schooling of the young ones. Among other objectives as provided by the Federal Government of Nigeria, FRN (2014) is to ensure the acquisition of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, communicative and life skills as well as the ethical, moral security and civic values needed to lay a solid foundation for lifelong learning. Thus, the curriculum at the primary and junior secondary levels when put together among others emphasized on providing the child the opportunities to develop life manipulative skills and basic knowledge for effective functioning in the society within the child's capability and educational advancement of the child.

The foregoing cannot be achieved without proper training of the trainer; the trainer must be adequately trained to meet up the objectives of Basic Education. After all, FRN (2014) stated

among other goals that Teacher Education shall encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers and also provide them with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment to enable them adapt to changes. This implies frequent exposure to innovations; it is said that 'A well trained teacher falls in love with the problem not the solution'. To navigate Teacher Education towards improving Basic Education in Nigeria, the following must be considered:

1. Improving trainee teachers' attitude
2. Establishing student exchange programme
3. Research funding
4. Scholarship
5. Massive development of basic school infrastructures
6. Massive recruitment of graduate teachers

The role of Improving Trainee Teachers' Attitude in Navigating Teacher Education towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria

One way to improve trainee teachers' attitudes is to provide them with opportunities to engage in reflection and self-evaluation (Kohl & Hopkins, 2022; Yunus, et al, 2010). This can be done through regular feedback sessions, both formal and informal. Additionally, offering positive reinforcement and showing appreciation for good work can help motivate trainee teachers to maintain a positive attitude. Other vital dimensions are:

a. Improving pre-service teachers' attitude towards teaching practice through the establishment of micro-teaching laboratory (trainee teachers' nervousness, challenges with the appropriate utilization of instructional materials and improvisation of instructional materials)
b. Improving pre-service teachers' attitude towards teaching practice through intrinsic motivation.
c. Improving pre-service teachers' attitude towards teaching practice through extrinsic motivation.

The Role of Micro-Teaching Laboratory in Improving Trainee Teachers' Attitude

Micro-teaching laboratories are an effective tool for improving the attitude of trainee teachers. Micro-teaching laboratories typically include a classroom setting, with desks and chairs for the trainee teachers and a podium or other teaching devices for the instructor. Common activities in micro-teaching laboratories include teaching simulations, video demonstrations, role playing, feedback and evaluation sessions, and lesson planning (Paggara, et al, 2020; Shi, 2020). These activities all aim to help the trainee teachers improve their teaching skills and gain confidence in their abilities (Elias, 2018). Micro-teaching laboratories provide a safe environment for teachers to practice their teaching skills and receive feedback from experienced teachers. This feedback can be used to identify areas for improvement and help trainee teachers gain confidence in their teaching abilities (Paggara, et al., 2020; Elias, 2018). Ultimately, it can help to improve trainee teachers' attitudes by giving them the opportunity to practice their skills and receive positive

reinforcement from successful experiences. While there may be criticisms of establishing micro-teaching laboratories in terms of cost and effectiveness, different scholars have highlighted five unique differences between micro-teaching laboratories and regular classrooms in teacher training institutes. They are as follows:

1.   In a micro-teaching laboratory, the trainee teachers receive direct feedback from an experienced teacher; in a regular classroom, there is often no direct feedback as noted by Elias (2018).

2.   In a micro-teaching laboratory, the focus is on specific teaching techniques; in a regular classroom, the focus is more general as observed by Pham (2022) and Paggara et al (2020).

3.   In a micro-teaching laboratory, there is more time for practice and feedback; in a regular classroom, there is usually less time for practice and feedback as remarked by Otsupius, (2014).

4.   In a micro-teaching laboratory, the instructor can give specific direction and guidance; in a regular classroom, the instructor may not be able to do this as easily as acknowledged by Pham, (2022).

5.   In a micro-teaching laboratory, the environment is more relaxed and supportive; in a regular classroom, it may be more formal and rigid as reported by Elias (2018).

Furthermore, Pham (2022) agreed with Elias (2018) that micro-teaching laboratories can help trainee teachers to address the challenges of utilizing instructional materials by providing a safe environment for them to practice and receive feedback on their techniques. Through this process, trainee teachers can learn the best ways to use different instructional materials and become more confident in their ability to use them effectively. Additionally, experienced teachers in the laboratory can provide tips and advice on how to effectively utilize instructional materials and suggest modifications or adaptations that may be needed. On modifications or adaptations that may be needed in the use of instructional materials through trainee teachers activities in micro-teaching laboratories, Reddy (2019) and Remesh (2013) observed that experienced teachers in the micro-teaching laboratories can provide tips on how to effectively modify and adapt to existing instructional materials as well as suggest creative ways to create new materials. Additionally, through practice, trainee teachers can become more confident in their ability to improvise and utilize instructional materials in a way that is effective for their students

The Role of Intrinsic Motivation in Improving Trainee Teachers' Attitude

Intrinsic motivation is the motivation to do something because it is personally satisfying or meaningful rather than because of external rewards. Intrinsic motivation can play an important role in improving trainee teachers' attitude by providing them with a sense of purpose and direction. When trainee teachers have a clear goal and personal connection to what they are

doing, they are more likely to be motivated to succeed and stay positive, which can lead to improvements in their attitude (Calderón, et al, 2020). Additionally, intrinsic motivation can help to keep trainee teachers focused and engaged, which can further help to improve their attitude. This goes in line with Ee and Chang (2010) who submitted that characteristics of intrinsic motivation for trainee teachers include: a sense of purpose, a desire to learn and grow, and a feeling of accomplishment. Similarly, Avsec and Ferk (2022) observed that intrinsic motivation, which refers to individuals' desire to engage in a task for its own sake, has several benefits for trainee teachers. The scholars agreed that first; it can lead to greater enjoyment of the task, which can lead to improved performance. Second, intrinsic motivation is associated with greater persistence on challenging tasks and improved problem-solving strategies. Third, intrinsic motivation is associated with more flexible, sophisticated thinking and greater creativity. Fourth, intrinsic motivation is associated with greater social skills and more positive social interactions. Fifth, intrinsic motivation is associated with more positive attitudes towards learning and school and improved academic performance. Going on, Tee Ng (2012) submitted that those responsible for providing intrinsic motivation to trainee teachers include mentors, instructors, and other experienced teachers. Mentors and instructors can provide guidance and support while experienced teachers can help to create an environment that is conducive to learning. Additionally, trainee teachers themselves can be responsible for their own intrinsic motivation by setting personal goals, taking initiative in their learning, and seeking out resources that will help them achieve those goals (Avsec & Ferk, 2022). Similarly, Ahmed, et al (2021) concurred that concerned authorities equally have a role to play in providing intrinsic motivation for trainee teachers. That role is to create an environment that encourages learning and growth. This includes providing resources and support, setting expectations and standards, and recognizing achievements. Additionally, concerned authorities can provide opportunities for trainee teachers to develop their skills and gain recognition through awards or other forms of recognition. By creating an environment that is conducive to learning and growth, school authorities can help to motivate trainee teachers to stay focused on their career goals and strive to be at their best (Kim & Cho, 2014).

The Role of Extrinsic Motivation in Improving Trainee Teachers' Attitude

Extrinsic motivation is a unique dimension of improving trainee teachers' attitudes and engagement. By providing rewards or incentives for desired behavior, extrinsic motivation can encourage trainee teachers to put forth greater effort and persist in the face of challenges. Additionally, extrinsic motivation can increase trainee teachers' task enjoyment and satisfaction, leading to improved performance (Kim & Cho, 2014). Extrinsic motivation for trainee teachers can therefore be defined as a set of external and tangible rewards (e.g., grades, money, awards, prizes) that lead to improved task performance (Tekin, 2016). This is akin to Sisman and Kucuk (2019) that using extrinsic motivation to positively influence the attitudes and engagement of trainee teachers can be an effective strategy for improving the learning experience. By offering rewards, such as recognition or tangible items, for completing tasks or reaching milestones, educators can help encourage trainee teachers to stay focused and engaged in their studies. This

motivational technique also helps create a sense of accomplishment and pride among trainee teachers as they progress through their training programme. Extrinsic motivation can also be achieved by encouraging social interaction. This is supported by Mansfield and Volet (2014) who noted that one-way educators can encourage social interaction is by hosting virtual study groups or forums. This gives trainee teachers an opportunity to interact with their peers, ask questions, and share resources. Another way to encourage social interaction is by using social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. These platforms can be used to create groups or pages where educators can post updates, share resources, and engage in discussion (Saini & Abraham, 2019). Additionally, utilizing extrinsic motivation in the classroom can help foster a sense of collaboration and camaraderie among trainee teachers and help foster a positive learning environment that encourages dialogue and meaningful exchange of ideas to improve their attitude towards life-long learning and practice (Saini & Abraham, 2019; Mansfield & Volet, 2014).

The Role of Student Exchange Programme in Navigating Teacher Education towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria

A student exchange programme is a type of educational opportunity that allows students to experience life in a foreign country for an extended period (Walters, Garii & Walters., 2009). The main objectives of such programmes are to provide participants with the chance to experience another culture and language, develop their intercultural understanding and communication skills, gain global perspectives on education, and help them become more aware of the wider world. Through student exchange programmes, pre-service teachers can have the chance to learn from each other's cultural backgrounds and ideas while also gaining a better understanding of how different Educational Systems work (Leutwyler & Meierhans, 2016). This can ultimately lead to improved Basic Education in Nigeria. To ensure that this happens, student exchange programmes need to be effectively carried out by establishing strong partnerships with foreign universities or schools, providing guidance and support to participants throughout their stay abroad, and monitoring their progress while they are away. Additionally, it is important that trainee teachers are given the opportunity to reflect on their experiences upon returning home in order to ensure that what they have gained through the programme can be used to benefit Nigerian Basic schools. According to Holguín (2013), student exchange programmes have the potential to be a powerful tool in reforming teacher education and improving Basic Education in Nigeria. By exposing both teachers and students to different teaching methods, Educational Systems and cultural perspectives, these programmes can facilitate the exchange of ideas and practices that can lead to improved teaching standards and more effective learning outcomes. Furthermore, they allow for the sharing of resources between schools and universities, which can lead to greater access to learning opportunities. Additionally, student exchanges can provide an opportunity for pre-service teachers to develop their understanding of diverse cultures and gain a better appreciation of how culture influences educational outcomes ((Kim & Cooc, 2022). By increasing cultural exchange between Nigerian schools, universities and other countries, pre-service teacher (student) exchange programmes can help create a more unified educational environment in Nigeria which is better equipped to meet the needs of her pluralistic society.

The Role of Research Funding in Navigating Teacher Education towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria

Research funding in colleges of education is an important tool for improving Basic Education in Nigeria, and it can be used to help navigate teacher education towards achieving that goal. The objectives of research funding are designed to facilitate the growth and advancement of teacher education, as well as to promote and support research that can lead to improved educational outcomes. Research funding can be used to support research projects and initiatives related to teacher education, such as curriculum development, classroom instruction strategies, professional development, and educational technology (Dynarski, 2022). Additionally, research funding can be used to provide access to resources such as textbooks, student materials, technology equipment, and instructors for courses in teacher education. It is important for research funding to be effectively practiced in order to ensure that the objectives are being met and that the resources are being properly utilized. This means not only having access to the right funds but also creating a plan for how these funds will be allocated so that they are used in the most effective way possible (Dynarski, 2022). This goes in line with Livingston (2012) that research funding in teacher education is the allocation of financial resources to support research that focuses on improving the quality and effectiveness of teacher education. Research in this area can range from studies that look at existing teaching practices and curricula, to those that investigate the impact of new technologies or approaches, as well as those that explore how best to train teachers to meet the needs of their students. The impact and effectiveness of research funding in teacher education is especially important for countries like Nigeria, where basic education continues to be underfunded and inadequate (Ogunyinka, et al, 2015). By providing resources for rigorous research, it is possible to identify areas where reforms and improvements can be made in order to ensure better outcomes for students. Through such research, trainee teachers can gain the skills and knowledge needed to effectively deliver instruction in a way that meets the needs of their students. Additionally, research into teacher training can also help inform policy makers about what types of investments are necessary for improving basic education in Nigeria.

The Role of Scholarship in Navigating Teacher Education towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria

Scholarships for trainee teachers are financial awards given to those currently enrolled in a Teacher Education Programme. These grants provide much needed financial support to students, allowing them to focus on their studies and training without the burden of paying tuition or other expenses. With the help of these scholarships, trainee teachers are able to access better educational opportunities, which can help them gain the skills and knowledge needed to improve basic education in Nigeria. According to Egede and Asabor (2019) the role of scholarships in navigating Teacher Education towards improving Basic Education in Nigeria is critical. Humphreys, et al (2020) acknowledged that by providing financial aid for those studying to become teachers, scholarships can help ensure that qualified professionals have the resources they need to pursue their studies and become effective educators. Scholarships can also play a role in increasing access to quality teaching and learning materials, as well as expanding access to programmes that support the professional development of teachers. Ultimately, scholarship

programmes for trainee teachers can be an effective tool for promoting higher quality basic education in Nigeria.

The foregoing was expected by Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria (EDOREN) but found an entirely different situation in one of the very few scholarship programmes instituted by foreign bodies in partnership with the Nigerian government for trainee teachers in colleges of education (EDOREN, 2014). EDOREN remarked that funds for the scholarship programme were initially committed by the local governments, state bodies and the foreign bodies. At some point, the Nigerian government began to renege on their part while the foreign bodies remain steadfast. Consequently, the flow of funds to both trainees and Colleges of Education was either slow or blocked, and some funds remain unpaid. The poor funding flows for the colleges mostly affected those funded by the government, while awardees funded by the foreign bodies were more often paid on time. According to EDOREN, a wide range of the trainee teachers reported that the stipend and other benefits were not adequate to support awardees' studies and daily needs. Thus, in navigating teacher education towards improving basic education, this phenomenon is expected to be addressed.

The Role of Massive Recruitment of Graduate Teachers in Navigating Teacher Education towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria
Massive recruitment of graduate teachers is a concept that refers to the implementation of large-scale hiring initiatives in the field of education. This type of employment strategy is often necessary when a country faces an acute shortage of qualified instructors in its school system; this is particularly true for Nigeria, where there has been a chronic lack of qualified and specialized teachers for decades (Lawan, et al, 2020). The massive recruitment of graduate teachers can help to improve basic education, as it increases the number of professionals available to provide instruction and implement the crucial drive for the implementation of the NPE (FRN, 2014) Policy on Universal Basic Education.

Furthermore, such large-scale hiring initiatives can also assist teacher education by making it easier for educators to obtain specialized training and certifications required to obtain better teaching positions. More so, massive recruitment of graduate teachers can also help to ensure that all students have access to quality instruction regardless of their socio-economic background or geographic location. It is more alarming that there are thousands of well-trained graduate teachers who are specialized in sciences roaming the street in search of private teaching jobs that are already over-subscribed with poor condition of service while state-owned basic schools are in acute shortage of science teachers (Olatunde-Aiyedun & Ogunode, 2021). The ripple effect is that most of these vibrant minds will either switch to other occupations or jostle for international job openings for Nigerian teachers as recently announced by the countries of Liberia and the United Kingdom. This will further affect the interest of future teachers and the viability of basic education in Nigeria. Thus, massive recruitment of graduate teachers is an essential strategy at this time for ensuring that Nigeria's basic education system reaches its full potential and provides equal access to educational resources across the 774 local government areas of the country.

Actionable Steps for Policymakers and Stakeholders in Navigating Teacher Education Towards Improving Basic Education in Nigeria

In order to improve Basic Education in Nigeria, policymakers and stakeholders must take actionable steps in navigating Teacher Education. These steps should be multi-faceted and involve creating an environment that promotes teacher learning and professional growth (Macias, 2017). This could include providing access to quality resources such as educational materials, technology, well-trained mentors, and professional development opportunities like specialized workshops, seminars, and conferences. Furthermore, it is important to encourage collaboration among teachers to allow for the sharing of best practices (Zeinabadi, 2023). In addition, it is essential to create a system of accountability in which teachers are held accountable for student learning outcomes (Bolyard, 2015). This could be done through the implementation of teacher evaluations and professional development plans. Finally, Okebukola cited in Usman (2020) asserted that the importance of a teacher cannot be overemphasized, he lamented thus; 'the world without teachers is a world without hope, the world without teachers is a world without progress and the world without teachers is a world that is doomed'.

Conclusion

The quality of a teacher is important to the success of an Education System. Navigating Teacher Education can be a complex and challenging process, teachers are the most refined workforce that determines the quality of the citizenry. This implies that no Education System can rise above the level of the teachers. Even though Nigerian Education System is bedeviled by many critical factors which threaten to cripple Teacher Education, it is hoped that the aforementioned steps would be effectively implemented to achieve a desirable result. Also, with the right resources and partnership Teacher Education can be transformed into a successful educational endeavour. By focusing on contemporary resources, providing scholarships for pre-service or trainee teachers, and funding research as mentioned in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014), policymakers and stakeholders can help ensure that teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively educate children in Basic schools while at the same time improving Basic Education nationwide.

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