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PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER PREPARATION IN A PERIOD OF SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Philosophy of education plays a critical role in teacher preparation. Would-be teachers are meant to develop critical thinking which is essential for teaching profession. Teacher preparation is the hallmark of education since no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Hence, production of quality teachers must continue in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. This study examined teacher preparation in the light of philosophy of education in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State – Nigeria. Three research questions were formulated to guide the researchers in conducting the study. The population for this study consisted of all the lecturers in the four government-owned teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State. The sample size of this study was 350 lecturers (230 female and 120 male) of the four government-owned teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State. Data were collected with researchers-developed questionnaire titled "Teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty (TPPSPEU). Mean ratings were used to answer the research questions. A t-test hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study found out that teacher preparation must continue in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty since it is the source of our country's manpower production. Based on the findings, it is recommended among other things that the federal and state government should increase the money used in funding teacher preparation institutions to ensure continual production of quality would-be teachers in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Nigeria.

Keywords: Philosophy of Education; Teacher Preparation; Socio-Political; Economic Uncertainty

Introduction

Education is the key to national development. Ezeaku and Ohamobi (2018) stated that education is a long-term investment by a nation to make itself a better place in which to live and a better

place in which to make a living. To further buttress the importance of education, Watson (2011) itemized the dividend of modern education to include economic reforms, moral revival, cultural awareness, national integration, democratic government, rural regeneration and manpower development. An aspect of education is teacher education which aims at preparing would-be teachers to acquire necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to effectively direct learning situations.

Different educational thinkers define teacher education differently. Osuji (2009) defined teacher education as professional education of teachers towards attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable so as to make them efficient and effective in their work in accordance with the need of a society at any point. It is then the component of any educational system charged with the education and training of would-be teachers to acquire competencies and skills of teaching in a school system. According to Ezeaku and Ohamobi (2018) teacher education is a process whereby prospective teacher, pre-service teacher or intending teacher or aspiring teacher is provided the opportunity to develop cognitive perspectives, affective dispositions and psychomotor competencies which will endow him or her with the qualities, capacities, capabilities for teaching. It involves giving professional training to teachers by imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes and values desirable in the teaching profession. Ogbuagu (2021) asserted that teacher education is a pre-planned articulated set of events and activities that are intended to help a would-be teacher to acquire appropriate competencies needed to be able to enter the teaching profession and to become resourceful, effective, efficient and a competent teacher. Teacher education is further viewed as the arrangement which helps in updating the teachers' knowledge in their job of teaching and learning. Hence, it is fundamental source of manpower development.

Objectives of Teacher Education

Teacher education has been part of the National Policy on Education since 1981. Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) emphasized the goals of teacher education as follows:

a. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system.
b. To encourage further the spirit of inquiry and creativity in teachers.
c. To help teachers to fit into social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to the national objectives.
d. To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country, but in the wider world.
e. To enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

The importance of teacher education lies on the fact that the prepared teacher shows mastery of subject-matter, skills, methods, creative ingenuity, abilities and competencies. With the professional commitment, the teacher remains the producer of all other professionals such as Lawyers, Medical Doctors, Pharmacists, Engineers and Architects among others. Undoubtedly, a teacher is the greatest among potential asset and a significant factor in national development (Ogbuagu, 2021).

Teacher Preparation

Any nation that encourages its citizens to be creative and innovative must be conscious of the quality and quantity of teachers in the system. Maduewesi (2005) stated that the issue of teacher preparation is perhaps the upper most concern of educational planners and administrators. Teachers are the pivot of any educational system hence the National Policy on Education (2013) stated that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. The writers define teacher preparation as the process of attaining professionalism through acquisition of necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for competencies and effective performance in the Job. Teacher preparation in Nigeria has metamorphosed tremendously. Currently, categories of teachers practicing include B.ED, and NCE. Nigeria certificate of Education (NCE) is the minimum teaching qualification in Nigeria.

The National Policy on Education (2013) charged the following bodies with the responsibility of teacher preparation at various levels – Colleges of Education, Faculties of Education, Institutes of Education, National Teachers' institute and Schools of Education in polytechnics. The Federal Government charged the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria with the responsibility of registration of professional teachers.

The Problems of Teacher Preparation in a Period of Socio-Political and Economic Uncertainty

The following problems face teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty:

i. **Inadequate Qualified Academic Staff:** Some teacher preparation institutions lack adequate qualified academic staff. Qualified academic staff are needed in teacher preparation institutions for would-be teachers. Future teachers need to be well-equipped with 21st century technological skills and knowledge before they get into the classroom. This is more important in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. It is therefore pertinent that would-be teachers are adequately up-skilled technologically to deliver the kind of education that future demand (Ogbuagu, 2021).

ii. **Problem of Funding:** The formal education system is funded from three major sources: government, parents and the community, with the bulk of the fund coming from government allocation. Government allocation to education has been steadily decreasing (Ofojebe, 2006). The implication is that burden of funding teacher preparation now weighs more heavily on parents and community. This government's attitude to the burden of funding teacher preparation is a great threat in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. Hence, it can adversely affect the quality of teachers produced which constitutes the labour force of the nation.

iii. **Inadequate Facilities:** The provision of adequate physical facilities such as conducive lecture halls, laboratories, machine tools and other relevant equipment for teacher preparation institutions are a matter of necessity. The deplorable condition of the lecture halls and laboratories in most of the teacher preparation institutions is certainly an impediment to production of quality would-be teachers. It is also one of the greatest challenge in the production of qualified and professionally trained teachers needed by our nation. Government ought to provide adequate facilities in a period of socio-political and economic

uncertainty (Ogbuagu 2021). It is based on this background that the current study sought to examine teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in the light of philosophy of education in Anambra State Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Philosophy of Education sets standards for manpower development in every country. Teachers' education is concerned with manpower development through preparation of future teachers. Sadly, in Nigeria, enabling environment is not guaranteed for this teacher preparation. There is socio-political and economic uncertainty with the economy which unsettles the mind of the teacher and affect his/her preparation. In the words of Ogbuagu (2016) a modern teacher must have thorough knowledge of his or her chosen subject matter if he or she is to command the respect of his or her learners or students. Teacher preparation aims at promoting effective teaching. Teacher preparation institutions are responsible for proper education and training of teachers for effective classroom delivery.

Sometimes, students protest against ineffective teaching shown by their respective classroom teachers. When this happen, the term teacher preparation is dragged to the mud. One wonders if some teachers are really professionally trained for a meaningful classroom interaction with their students. Despite socio-political and economic uncertainty, the core responsibility of teacher preparation institutions remains to train professional teachers who are ethical knowledgeable and skillful for effective classroom delivery. Hence, the examination of teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in the light of philosophy of education in Anambra State is the problem of the study.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in the light of philosophy of Education, in Anambra State – Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine;

1. The problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.
2. The impact of teacher preparation on educational development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.
3. The strategies that can promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What are the problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State?
2. What are the impact of teacher preparation on educational development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State?
3. What are the strategies that can promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State?

Research Method

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study was carried out in all government-owned teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State. There were four government-owned teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State as at

September 2023. They comprised faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Faculty of Education Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbariam, Federal College of Education (T) Umunze and Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe.

The population for this study consisted of all the lecturers in the four government-owned teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State. The sample size of this study was 230 female lecturers and 120 male lecturers of the four government-owned teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State. The stratified sampling method was used to draw the sample size of the study. This technique was adopted to ensure that female and male lecturers from the four-government-owned teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State were well-represented in sex, experience and academic qualification.

Data were collected with researchers-developed questionnaire titled 'Teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty (TPPSPEY). The questionnaire consisted of two parts: part one was the introductory part and contained statements that sought information on the respondents' status. Part two comprised 15 items that were organized under 3 sections namely the problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty, the impact of teacher preparation on educational development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty and the strategies that can promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. The respondents were requested to indicate their opinions on a four-point rating scale of strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and strongly Disagree (1). Two experts in the department of Educational Foundations, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka validated the instrument. For reliability, split-half test was used. Pearson Product moment Correlation Coefficient of 0.90, 092, 094 were obtained for the reliability of the three sections of the instrument for data analysis. The three research questions were answered using mean ratings. Based on the 4-point rating scale, the decision rule that any mean score from 2.50 and above was taken as agreed while any mean score below 2.50 was taken as disagreed.

Presentation of Results

Research Question one: What are the problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean Rating of Respondents on the problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.

N = 350: 230 Female Lecturers and 120 Male lecturers of teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	X-mean	Decision
1	Problem of inadequate funding of teacher preparation institutions by the government	4.00	Strongly Agree
2	Problem of poor quality of the entrants in teacher preparation institutions.	3.94	Strongly Agree
3	Lack of uniform minimum qualification for teacher preparation institutions	3.30	Agree
4	Lack of a unifying professionalism for teachers.	3.20	Agree
5	Problem of low public image for teaching profession.	3.80	Strongly Agree

Results in Table 1 showed that all the items have mean ratings above the cut-off point of 2.50. The table also showed that the respondents strongly agreed with the

statements in items 1, 2 and 5 while they agreed with the statements in items 3 and 4. Hence, they agreed that statements in items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are the problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.

Research Question Two: What are the impacts of teacher preparation on educational development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean Rating of Respondents on the impact of teacher preparation on educational development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.
N = 350: 230 female lecturers and 120 male lecturers of teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	X-mean	Decision
6	Teacher preparation institutions are responsible for production of needed manpower in education.	4.00	Strongly Agree
7	They handle education planning and policy-making.	3.30	Agree
8	They implement educational curriculum for the achievement of set objectives.	3.20	Agree
9	They embark on research and evaluation of objectives for educational development	3.88	Strongly Agree
10	Teacher preparation institutions engage in local production and improvisation of learning materials for educational development	3.90	Strongly Agree

Results in table 2 revealed that respondents' responses of the statements in items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 scored above 2.50 of the mean rating. The respondents strongly agreed with the statements of items 6, 9 and 10. The respondents agreed with the statements of items 7 and 8. Hence, all the respondents responded positively in identifying the impact of teacher preparation on educational development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.

Research Question Three: What are the strategies that can promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State?

Table 3: Mean Rating of Respondents on the strategies that can promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.
N = 350: 230 female lecturers and 120 male lecturers of teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	X-mean	Decisions
11	Intensive training of would-be teachers	4.00	Strongly Agree
12	Provision of adequate facilities in teacher preparation institutions	3.96	Strongly Agree
13	Adequate use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teacher preparation institutions	3.88	Strongly Agree
14	Upgrading of teachers public image through better remunerations.	3.30	Agree
15	Professional development of teachers	3.20	Agree

In the results as shown in table 3, all the items have mean rating above 2.50 indicating that strategies stated in the items can promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between mean ratings of female and male lecturers on the strategies that can best promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.

Table 4 – Summary of the difference

Sex of the Respondents	Number of Respondents	X - Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Degree of Freedom	Level of Significance	t -Calculated	t - Critical
Female	230	3.50	0.65	94	1.05	1.88	1.96
Male	120	3.16	0.95				

Table 4 above revealed that there is no significant difference between female and male lecturer responses on strategies that can best promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State.

Discussion

According to the responses of research question one, 350 lecturers in teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State agreed on the problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State as inadequate funding of teacher preparation institutions by the government, poor quality of the entrants in teacher preparation institutions, Lack of uniform minimum qualification for teacher preparation institutions, Lack of unifying professionalism for teachers and low public image for teaching profession. This finding agreed with Ezeani (2006) study which discovered that inconsistent entry requirement, inadequate infrastructures, government insensitivity and lack of unifying professional bodies are factors adversely affecting teacher preparation. In support of the above finding, Nwana (2006) concluded that unless these problems are solved, teacher preparation programme will not have any future in Nigeria and will definitely fail to serve the purpose of manpower development in Education.

In research question two, 350 lecturers in teacher preparation institutions in Anambra State agreed on the impact of teacher preparation on educational development in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State as production of needed manpower in Education, handling of education planning and policy-making, implementation of educational curriculum for the achievement of set objectives, research and evaluation of objectives for educational development, local production and improvisation of learning materials for educational development. This finding agreed with Ezeaku and Ohamobi (2018) study which discovered that teacher preparation is involved in educational development through research, educational planning and implementation of educational curriculum towards achieving objectives. In support of the above discovery, Ogbuagu (2021) concluded that the impacts of teacher preparation on educational development are quite overwhelming and great. Thus, effective teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty is needed not only in Anambra State but in Nigeria at large for educational development.

Result findings from research question three revealed that 350 lecturers in teacher preparation institutions in Anambra state agreed on the strategies that can promote teacher preparation in a period of

socio-political and economic uncertainty in Anambra State as intensive training for would-be teachers, provision of adequate facilities, adequate use of information and communication technology, upgrading of teachers public image through better remunerations and professional development of teachers. This finding was consistent with the study of Ofojebe (2006) that discovered intensive training of future teachers, professional development of teachers, provision of adequate facilities, adequate use of information and communication technology (ICT) and upgrading of teachers' public image as the strategies that can promote teacher preparation. Furthermore, Ofojebe (2006) argued that improvement on the quality of teachers through teacher preparation institutions is of great advantage to the nation since they are the nation's source of manpower. Thus, effective teacher preparation must be maintained in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty not only in Anambra State but in Nigeria at large.

Conclusion

The findings of the study call for serious actions from the Federal Ministry of Education, State Ministry of Education and stakeholders in education industry. Problems facing teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty as identified in this study is certain and obvious. The above-mentioned strategies should be adopted to promote teacher preparation in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty. Failure to adopt those strategies can affect negatively our educational growth and development. This is because teacher preparation institutions are primarily responsible for producing future teachers. Thus, no nation can rise above the quality of its teachers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

a. Federal and State Governments should increase the money used in funding teacher preparation institutions to ensure continual production of quality would-be teachers in a period of socio-political and economic uncertainty in Nigeria.
b. Efforts must be made to upgrade the public image of teachers through better remunerations
c. Teachers' welfare package should be improved to motivate them for better results.

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