

## **An Evaluation of Teachers' Service Delivery in Nigeria: Measures for Programme Accountability and Improvement**

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**Abstract:** The recruitment and retention of quality teachers is not only beneficial for social transformation but also for a sustainable economic growth of Nigeria. That explains why there is need for continuous evaluation of the performance of the teachers who themselves are products of teacher education programmes in the country. This paper is set out to evaluate teachers' service delivery in Lagos State and proffer strategies to make teachers' evaluation a regular exercise, for proficiency. A sample of 270 respondents made up of teachers and local education officers was employed. Questionnaires were sent to the respondents to seek their opinions on this issue. The data was analyzed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative method. Respondents are of the opinion that there are a lot of constraints with regards to teachers' service delivery in most of the schools in Lagos State. The authors suggest that effective evaluators need to be appointed for a regular check of teachers' activities in the schools.

**Key words:** Evaluation • Teachers' Service Delivery • Programme Improvement • Measures for Accountability • Teacher Education

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### **INTRODUCTION**

An evaluation of teachers' service delivery is invariably a product of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the programmes that produce such teachers. Programme evaluation is a subject that has received adequate attention in many other fields but little in the field of teacher education [1]. For a long time, practice in teacher education programme evaluation took a dimension that could not be characterized as a field of inquiry. This was owing to the fact that there was "very little analysis of part practice few position papers on method and only a handful of theoretical papers inquiring into the purpose and results of programme evaluation studies in teacher education" [2]. Most of the early attempts to describe programme evaluation in teacher education have been described as mere site-specific, idiosyncratic models designed for specific purposes at particular institution [2]. Alluding to [3], [4] characterizes and summarizes the available scholarship on programme evaluation in teacher education as restricted to describing efforts at individual institution to build an evaluation agenda". Yet it should be pointed out that purposes of teacher education programme evaluation have been essentially for four namely accountability, improvement, understanding and knowledge [5]. By accountability in this context is meant the degree to which an evaluation is conducted to next external accreditation standards. The NCATE stipulates a standard on programme evaluation and consequently, many states and regional accreditation associations in the USA require that a programme faculty routinely collect evaluation data for the purpose of decision making. Yet it is

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noteworthy that programme evaluations are not conducted solely for the purpose of accountability [6], a improvement of the programme under scarcity is another purpose [7]. According to [8], the improvement purpose can be accomplished through discrepancy evaluation in which “what is” is compared with “what should be”. Through this means, evaluation “helps teacher educators ask the best questions, collect and analyse the most relevant data and design more efficient and responsive programmes” [8]. There is yet another purpose for programme evaluation namely understanding. The importance of such an evaluation lies in the fact that the more clearly the stakeholders understand the experiences of preservice teachers, the more likely there will be commonalities in their perceptions which will invariably enable them make appropriate decisions about the continuation, modification, or termination of the programme [8]. Contribution to the knowledge about teacher education. [9] observes that there is a historic tendency for an evaluation to meet the need for accountability without adding to the body of knowledge on practice or measurement in teacher education. Given that the findings from an evaluation conducted in an institution may not apply to another and may not really enjoy external validity, there will be need for every system, setting or institution to collect similar data for analyses and interpretation, thereby contributing to the knowledge on the subject. There have been several evaluative efforts targeted at educational reform in the last three decades. The period has been one of intense pressure to change schools, colleges of education and teacher education during which many working within the educational domain have put forward ideas and created structures geared toward fostering substantive educational change. According to [10] among the prominent are the Holmes Group, founded in 1986 and reorganized as the Holmes partnership in 1995, which reported on teachers [11], schools [12] and schools of education [13]; the National Network for Educational Renewal [14] and the coalition of Essential schools [15], both based on a set of guiding principles; the National Commission on Teaching and America Future [16] which focused on issues of standards and quality assurance and the Association of Teacher Educators, Commission on Restructuring Teacher Education [17], which called for changes in the way teachers are educated. The common denominator in all the initiatives was the evaluation of programmes through an assessment of the degree of the effectiveness of their products, with a view to making for more productivity.

The implication of such efforts as enumerated above is that since the middle of 20th century, nations of the world are developing more consciousness of what goes into their educational processes. This is a result of the dynamic human society engendered by numerous needs of individuals. It is interesting to note that continents, countries and the world organizations like America, Britain, European Union, Japan, France, German, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United National Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the World Bank and a host of others are not left out of most of these educational reform initiatives [18]. The glossary of some of the policies involved in those initiatives, includes, for instance “the Nation at Risk Act” of the American Government. This emphasizes the need for the attainment of excellence in educational activities in America, at all levels no. The European Union, too, places emphasis on the realization of quality and functional education before 2010. This bears some semblance to the Korea Technical and Vocational Education, (T.V.E) policy of 1998. These are pointers to the need for special programmes laying emphasis on skill acquisition and technology-based economy [19]. Other organizations like UNESCO [20, 21, 22], UNICEF [23, 24] and World Bank have contributed immensely in developing educational policy reform initiatives in order to make the sector more efficient, relevant, transparent and responsive to the needs of the society. The “No Child Left Behind” Act, signed into law by President Bush in January 2002, requires states to have highly qualified teachers in every public school classroom by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. For the act to achieve the desired result, the American government through the Department of Education fashioned out a mandatory and regular teachers evaluation strategies. The tasks of teachers’ evaluation agency included among others a collection of comprehensive data on educational activities among the teachers in American schools with the aim of retaining competent teachers, capable of delivering quality teaching services and for proficiency, beginning from 2003-2004 school year. The instrument designed for teachers’ evaluation covers their mastery of the subject matter, their creativity and resourcefulness, their general attitude at work as well as their communication skills. These and many other evaluation models are put in place to checkmate the lapses of teachers in school [25]. However, the Nigerian Government, it should

be pointed out, is not unaware of the need for teacher education reforms. The call for Education for All by 2015 and Vision 2020 by the Federal Government are responses to this new world order. Yet it is obvious that the Nigerian Government seems not to have done enough to ensure effective and quality teaching service delivery compared with countries like America, Britain and others. For instance, Nigerian schools are in a deplorable condition and the government seems to be paying lip service to this situation. The National Teachers Registration Council (NTRC) has reregistered over 700,000 teachers who claimed to be professional teachers for practice [26]. Yet the poor performance of most of the students in Senior Secondary School Certificate, Joint Matriculation Examination and other examinations, shows that there is a problem in the school system. Teachers seem not to be doing enough to improve the social up-bringing of the youths. These groups of young people lack skill acquisition and have formed negative attitude to life and engage with anti-social behaviour (robbery, drug addiction, advanced fee fraud (etc). The Nigerian Government needs to borrow a leaf from the American Government on teachers' evaluation. With regard to the gains of this model of evaluation, [27] states that identifying, employing and retention of quality teachers through constant teacher evaluation is one of the key components of good results and ensures proficiency of the teachers in schools. He adds that a well designed teacher evaluation system improves practices and ensures quality teaching and professional growth. The need for teachers' proficiency in the teaching service delivery in Nigeria will undoubtedly aid the production of quality human capital that is capable of contributing to the social, political and economic development of the country and meet up with the world competitive economy. Contrary to this high expectation, the teachers in most schools in Nigeria seem to be inactive in their service delivery, especially with regards to mastery of skills, entrepreneurship and technological know-now.

In the Nigerian context, the National Teacher Education Policy [28], in its provision for monitoring and evaluation, emphasizes curricular relevance where it stipulates that the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and the National Universities Commission (NUC) shall develop and implement standardized instruments, with clear indicators for pass/fail, to be used to review the curriculum for cultural relevance, gender-sensitivity and health orientation including HIV and AIDS. Such instruments as will be used "will be available to the public and will be used by the NCCE/NUC and Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) in its accreditation and reaccreditations procedures in the colleges of education, National Teachers' Institute (NTI) and Universities respectively. This study is therefore in keeping with such evaluation requirements for teacher education programmes in Nigeria.

**Statement of Problem:** The high rate of mass failure of students in most of the National Examinations, lack of skill acquisition and the culmination of antisocial behaviours among young school leavers have become a serious problem to the society. These unpleasant experiences are being attributed to the poor teaching service delivery in the schools. Such a growing impression informs a compelling need to evaluate the teachers' service delivery with a view to determining their proficiency. The present study is a response to such a dire need.

**Research Questions:** The following research questions were developed to guide the study:

- What is the quality of educational activities that constitute the teachers' service delivery in Nigerian schools?
- What is the level of professional development of teachers in our schools?
- What factors militate against teachers' proficiency?
- What strategies can be adopted to ensure quality teachers service delivery in our schools?

**Hypotheses:** The following hypotheses were tested to backup the findings provided in this study:

- There is no significant relationship between quality of teacher education programmes and teaching service delivery.
- There is no significant relationship between teacher activities and teacher service delivery in schools.
- There is significant relationship between teachers' professional development and teachers' proficiency.
- There is no significant relationship between quality teacher service delivery and teachers' conditions of service.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The population for this study was all the teachers and local education officers in Lagos State. The sample consists of two hundred and seventy respondents (270) made of teachers in public schools and local educational officers. The number of teachers was 200 which represents 74.07% while the number of local educational officers was 70 which represents 25.93% of the total respondents. The questionnaire used was constructed by the researchers to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A covered Bio-Data while Section B sought to elicit specific statements relevant to the study. This section comprised 20 statements. The respondents were to indicate their opinions on the statements on three point self concept scale, thus; Agree (A) Undecided (U) Disagree (D). The questionnaire was subjected to scrutiny by some research experts from the University of Lagos for face and content validity. It was also pilot-tested to ensure internal consistency. A reliability of 0.90 was recorded. The instrument was deemed consistent and adequate to use in this study. Data was analyzed using simple percentage and chi-square statistics.

**RESULTS**

The results of the research questions and hypotheses are presented below:

Results from Table 1 show that the level of quality of teacher education is high with 83.30% of the respondents agreeing to this. Also, majority of the respondents (88.9) agreed that a greater proportion of teachers now possess the required qualification (NCE, B.A., B.Ed, M.Ed) to ensure quality service delivery. The chi-square statistic analysis above confirms that a significant relationship exists between educational programmes and teaching service delivery.

Results from Table 2 indicate that 76.30% of the respondents agreed that the educational activities teacher engage themselves in are essential though minimal, while 10.40% are undecided and 13.30% disagreed, making a total of 23.70% of the respondents. Also, 74.70% of the respondents agreed that most teachers have not been creative and resourceful enough in schools; while 13.3% was undecided and 12.60% disagreed, making a total of 25.60%. This corroborates the chi-square analysis above.

From Table 3, the result shows that the overwhelming majority i.e. 91.10% of the respondents agreed that teachers' pre-service and in-service preparation programmes are important, although they have not been adequate to guarantee quality service delivery in our schools. This result is buttressed by the chi-square statistical analysis which confirms that teachers' development enhances quality service.

Results from Table 4 shows that 77.88% of respondents agreed that lack of retention of teachers constitute a major threat to teachers' service delivery. Again, 70% of the respondents agreed the lack of motivation in terms of remuneration, poor classroom environment, lack of teaching aids, fund, infrastructure etc, constitutes great constraint to ensuring proficiency of teachers despite their academic qualifications. This confirms the chi-square analysis result stated above.

Table 1: Quality Of Teacher Education Programmes

| Question A: | U    |       | D   |       | Total |      |      |     |
|-------------|------|-------|-----|-------|-------|------|------|-----|
|             | N    | %     | N   | %     | N     | %    |      |     |
| 1           | 225  | 83.30 | 39  | 14.4  | 9     | 3.30 | 270  | 100 |
| 2           | 216  | 80.00 | 21  | 7.80  | 13    | 5.60 | 270  | 100 |
| 10          | 228  | 84.40 | 24  | 8.90  | 18    | 6.70 | 270  | 100 |
| 11          | 237  | 87.80 | 24  | 8.90  | 9     | 3.30 | 270  | 100 |
| 12          | 240  | 88.90 | 30  | 11.10 | 15    | 5.60 | 270  | 100 |
| Total       | 1146 |       | 138 |       | 64    |      | 1348 |     |

df = 8X<sup>2</sup>

cal = 13.1X<sup>2</sup>

tab = 2.73X<sup>2</sup>

cal = < X<sup>2</sup> tab

Ho: was rejected at P< 0.05

Table 2: Educational Activities engaged in by Teachers

| Question A: | U   |       | D   |       | Total |       |      |     |
|-------------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|------|-----|
|             | N   | %     | N   | %     | N     | %     |      |     |
| 13          | 203 | 75.20 | 30  | 11.10 | 37    | 13.70 | 270  | 100 |
| 14          | 201 | 74.40 | 35  | 13.30 | 34    | 12.60 | 270  | 100 |
| 15          | 202 | 74.80 | 35  | 13.30 | 33    | 12.20 | 270  | 100 |
| 16          | 206 | 76.30 | 28  | 10.40 | 36    | 13.30 | 270  | 100 |
| Total       | 812 |       | 128 |       | 140   |       | 1080 |     |

df = 6X<sup>2</sup>

cal = 1.64X<sup>2</sup>

tab = 104X<sup>2</sup>

cal = < X<sup>2</sup> tab

Ho: was rejected at P< 0.05

Table 3: Teachers' Professional Development

| Question A: | U    |       | D   |       | Total |       |      |     |
|-------------|------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|------|-----|
|             | N    | %     | N   | %     | N     | %     |      |     |
| 3           | 210  | 77.80 | 42  | 15.60 | 13    | 6.70  | 270  | 100 |
| 4           | 246  | 91.10 | 12  | 4.40  | 12    | 4.40  | 270  | 100 |
| 5           | 246  | 91.10 | 9   | 3.30  | 15    | 5.60  | 270  | 100 |
| 6           | 198  | 73.30 | 57  | 21.10 | 15    | 5.60  | 270  | 100 |
| 7           | 204  | 75.60 | 36  | 13.10 | 30    | 11.10 | 270  | 100 |
| Total       | 1104 |       | 156 |       | 90    |       | 1350 |     |

df = 8X<sup>2</sup>

cal = 2.73X<sup>2</sup>

tab = 74.4X<sup>2</sup>

cal = < X<sup>2</sup> tab

Ho: was rejected at P< 0.05

Table 4: Factors Affecting Teachers' Proficiency in Service Delivery

| Question A: | U   |       | D  |       | Total |       |     |     |
|-------------|-----|-------|----|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|
|             | N   | %     | N  | %     | N     | %     |     |     |
| 18          | 189 | 70.00 | 36 | 13.30 | 45    | 16.70 | 270 | 100 |
| 19          | 201 | 77.88 | 24 | 8.90  | 36    | 13.30 | 270 | 100 |
| 20          | 174 | 64.40 | 39 | 14.40 | 57    | 21.10 | 270 | 100 |
| Total       | 564 |       | 99 |       | 138   |       | 810 |     |

df = 4X<sup>2</sup>

cal = 0.71X<sup>2</sup>

tab = 11.9X<sup>2</sup>

cal = < X<sup>2</sup> tab

Ho: was rejected at P< 0.05

## DISCUSSION

The issue of quality service in teaching has been a recurring theme and this study lends credence to this assertion. The findings of this study reveal that teachers' proficiency can only be guaranteed through a constant review of our teacher education programme if quality service delivery would be achieved. [28] agrees with this view when she asserts that the conception of teacher quality transcends issues focusing on acquisition of knowledge, skill and attitude to accommodate

focus on teachers' accomplishments. The hypotheses tested by the study further buttressed the point that a strong relationship exists between teacher educational programmes, teachers' professional development, the educational activities teachers engage themselves in and the quality of teachers services delivery. However, this study identified some major constraints such as lack of retention of teachers, inadequate teaching facilities and aids and most importantly teachers' general condition of service. The role of teachers' in the schemes of quality service delivery was elaborated by [29, 30] when they point out that the teachers' role cannot be overemphasized as they can make or mar any educational programme regardless of the quality of its design. Ignoring this and other factors would leave a yawning gap between the goals of quality teachers' service delivery and the continued search for effective implementers of curricula in our schools.

## **CONCLUSION**

There has been a growing discomfort among scholars and researchers over issues arising from the recruitment and retention of quality teachers in Nigerian schools. Such a factor, it has been established, is not only beneficial to social transformation but also for a sustainable economic growth in the country. This paper has evaluated teachers' service delivery in the country and proffered strategies to make teachers' evaluation a regular exercise, for proficiency. The data analysis revealed that there was a need for a continuous evaluation teachers' service delivery with a view to improving the preparation programmes that produce them. The paper offers a number of recommendations which are listed in the following section.

### **Recommendations:**

- Government should ensure that teacher education programmes are constantly reviewed in the light of new challenges in teaching.
- Training and Retraining of teachers should be vigorously pursued to ensure quality service delivery.
- There should be a joint teacher evaluation strategy using both internal and external evaluators in order to determine teachers' mastery of subject matter, resourcefulness, creativity, communication skills and general attitude to work.

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