

Chapter 50

Globalization and its Challenges for Teacher Education in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of globalization is defined variously, but in general, it is defined as the establishment of a global market for goods and capital, leading to what could be described as a multiplicity of linkages and interconnections between places, events, ideas, issues, and things, irrespective of whether they are directly related or not. Globalization on the other hand cannot be a reality in any nation if its educational system is not implicitly or explicitly geared towards achieving meaningful and desirable change for that society. However, since education and indeed the (educator) teacher constitute the most viable instruments by which an emerging nation can catch up with the developed countries, globalization will therefore be a mirage if teacher education is not geared towards producing teachers who are globalization friendly, teachers who are not allergic to globalization. In view of the above, this chapter examines the concept of globalization side by side with the current goals of teacher education in Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria recognizes the pivotal role of education as the fountain head of national development thus the National Policy on Education (NPE) (FRN 2004) provides that Nigeria's philosophy of education, is based on the belief among others that:

- Education is an instrument for national development.
- Education fosters the worth and development of the individual for the development of the society.
- There is the need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive united Nigeria, to this end, school programmes need to be relevant.

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The NPE further reiterates the importance of education to National development on page 8 that;

Education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because education is the most important instrument of change; any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by educational revolution.

Based on the statement above, there is the consciousness or belief in the tremendous import of education as the catalyst for national development in Nigeria.

Education is dispensed by teachers and thus, if education occupies a central role in national development, then teacher education is at the epicenter of national development. Again, the national policy on education does not lose sight of this. It provides that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers that is why all over the world much prominence is given to the teacher because of his peculiar role in national development. The quality of any education system according to Kalusi (2001) depends on the availability and competence of the teaching corps. The teacher factor in any educational programme is regarded as most crucial because what he knows can make a world of difference and what he does not know can be an irreparable loss to the development of the potentialities and abilities of society's younger generation.

One could see from the ongoing discussion that teachers are the hubs of any educational system. They are the determinants of quality. Therefore no matter how grandiose, innovative and imaginative the plans and programmes, the desired objectives may not be achieved without the right number of adequately educated and trained, dedicated and loyal, motivated and disciplined; committed and happy teachers serving at all levels of the educational system. However, the transition of the world from one of separate units into a globally integrated whole requires a new vision

of the teacher's role and pedagogical preparation. In other words, one conspicuous phenomenon of our times which has become a common target of pursuit by both "developed" and "developing" nations is globalization.

Globalization as a phenomenon cannot be a reality in any nation if its educational system is not implicitly or explicitly geared towards globalization. Invariably, globalization will always be a mirage if teacher education is not geared towards producing teachers who are globalization friendly, teachers who are not allergic to globalization. More so, the teachers serve as the think-tank of any nation and since education has been globalized, with no nation as an island of its own, the world has come together through technology whereby each nation is now interconnected with ease. Education, according to Amale (2003) is now international or intercultural. The teacher now stands as the midwife between the new era of globalization and the people. For the teacher to therefore deliver the expecting global baby in any given society, he must be adequately equipped to do so.

In view of the above, this paper shall examine the concept of globalization side by side with the current goals of teacher education in Nigeria. This is with the view to determine whether teacher education goals are consistent or otherwise with the phenomenon of globalization. The paper will also identify the constraints of globalization in the current teacher education programme in Nigeria and suggest possible way forward with some counselling implications.

PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is a trend that is engulfing the whole world. It has become the political, media and academic buzzword of the early 21st century. Writers, scholars and professionals are pointing to it as the panacea to many world problems.

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