

Chapter 21

Current Economic and Political Dispensation and Teacher Education Programs in Niger Delta Region: Means of Enhancing Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter we highlighted the impact of the current economic and political dispensation in Nigeria and its impact on teacher education programs and the means of enhancing teacher education in the Niger Delta region. This paper is a conceptual and methodological breakthrough in Nigeria's academic landscape where qualitative and quantitative experiences highlight issues that are pertinent to teacher education program in the Niger Delta. The chapter proposed that the Niger Delta region's and the entire Nigeria's teacher education programs would be advanced if the component parts of the current economic and political disposition are resolved. This chapter contends that the Niger Delta region has the potential to address the challenges currently faced in the region such as social disruption (violence threat), poverty, hunger, disease, conflict, marginalization, and the achievement and improvement for effective teacher education programs. This chapter is of the immense judgment that successfully addressing the challenges currently faced in the Niger Delta region, teacher education programs will greatly improve qualitatively and quantitatively.

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INTRODUCTION

The current global disorder in economic and political dispensation has greatly impacted on teacher education programs and efforts are being made towards enhancing teacher education. Nigeria is not left out in this global disorder in economic and political disaster. The emerging paradigm for understanding global vulnerabilities in teacher education, the present economic and political dispensation challenges threatens the traditional notion of global stability. The argument is that the reference should be the individual rather than the state. However, economic and political disposition of a nation is necessary for national, regional and global stability.

Economic dispensation of a country is the manner in which economic resources are managed for development purposes. A country's political dispensation on the other hand is the system of governance that is in operation in a country at a particular period of time. Such dispensation could be democratic or autocratic (Saibu, Fakanbi, & Agboola, 2011). The place of any nation's economic and political issues is now widely used to describe the complex and interrelated threats associated with communal crises, genocide and the displacement of populations, hunger, poverty, disease, etc.

Modern economic and political dispensations encompass democracy, greater human rights, good governance, access to quality education and good health care and ensuring that citizens have opportunities and choices to fulfil their potentials. It further encompasses safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression, protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life—whether in homes, in jobs or in communities. In concrete terms, it is an integrated, sustainable, and comprehensive security from fear, conflict, ignorance, poverty, social and cultural deprivation, and hunger, resting upon positive and negative freedoms (UNDP, 1994; Ginkel & Newman, 2000). Every effort and

movement towards this direction is a step towards reducing poverty, achieving economic growth and preventing conflict in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 (UNESCO, 2005; Ololube, Egbezor & Kpolovie, 2008).

The general opinion by many (e.g., Saibu, Fakanbi, & Agboola, 2011) shows that democracy is generally supportive of positive macroeconomic performance. As a result, most economies in the world now practice democracy as opposed to other non democratic systems of government. Democracy is a desirable system of governance all over the world. However, the experiences of many countries, developed and developing alike have left many in doubt as to the relevance of democracy to positive economic and political performance (Saibu et al., 2011).

Education is a social value that teaches the understandings of democratic social control that creates individuals who do not short change others but works for the good of society as a whole. It helps to address the democratic principles based on access, full participation and equity (Ololube & Major, 2014). However, according to Msila (2007), education is seen as a weapon of transformation and a tool that could root the values enshrined in the constitution, democracy, social justice, non-racism, equality and reconciliation among the fundamental values. Furthermore, education helps define the life, values, political culture, and economic power of a nation. Knowledge, skills, norms, and values of responsible citizenship are inculcated through education. It is through education that the human capitals of any nation is harnessed and deployed for progress. Without education, we have no society, no democracy, and no future (Ozioko & Nwabueze, 2010). The aforementioned cannot be achieved with effective teacher education programs.

Teacher education programs have largely contributed to increase in developing knowledge, providing an enabling environment for innovation and in building human capital required for potential future knowledge economy. Nigeria as a nation

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