

Quality Assurance and Implementation of National Policy on Teacher Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study aimed at investigating quality assurance in the implementation of the National Policy on Teacher Education in the Akwa Ibom State College of Education. It focused attention on the internal measurement of the quality of the N. C. E. programme of the institution. Two null hypotheses were formulated bothering on quality assurance mechanisms in the institution. The study adopted ex post-factor design, population comprised lecturers and students of the college. A sample of 250 respondents was drawn from the population using the simple random sampling technique. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire tagged: "Quality Assurance in Teacher Production Questionnaire" (QATPQ), and tested at .05 alpha level using the t-test. The analysis revealed no significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents as to the adequacy of existing quality assurance mechanisms in the college except on the utilization of some mechanisms such as class attendant by lecturers, student's evaluation of lecturers, prompt attention to students' problems and examination rules and regulations. On the basis of the findings, it was concluded that teacher education in Akwa Ibom State has suffered from a number of problems which have adversely affected the quality of teachers produced. It was recommended among others that the college should improve upon its quality assurance mechanisms by providing the necessary educational facilities, motivating the lecturers adequately for effective teaching and putting in place adequate mechanism for proper monitoring of students' attitude towards learning and examinations.

Introduction

Teacher education is very paramount to national development since the quality of teachers determines the quality of human resources in all other sectors of the labour market. It is the pivot of all levels of education and the hub upon which a nation's economy is based. As rightly asserted by the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Based on this assertion the policy provides, among other things, that teacher education should produce highly

motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the Nigerian educational system; and provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing edu-social situations. The policy seeks to make the nation's educational system functional and relevant to the needs of learners and the society through quality assurance in teacher production.

Quality assurance in the implementation of the National Policy on Teacher Education should be the concern of all. The World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000 did not only emphasize the need to achieve education for all, but did also notice the need to improve the quality of teacher education as the basic for the achievement of the Education for All goals. The forum recommended the improvement of all aspects of the quality of teacher education to achieve recognised and measurable learning outcomes for all especially in literacy and essential life skills (*Dakar Framework for Action, Article 7, World Education Forum, 2000*).

Quality assurance in the implementation of the National Policy on Teacher Education remains a panacea for the successful implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme. Addressing the First International Conference on Teacher Education hosted by the Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, in July 2004, to brainstorm on how to tackle the numerous problems confronting the teaching profession, the University of Lagos Vice Chancellor, Professor Tolu Odugbemi, described the conference theme: "Innovation and best practices in teacher education" as relevant to the ongoing reforms in Nigeria and the Nigerian education sector in particular. Ajeyalemi, (2004) stated that government's interest in the future of innovations and teacher education can contribute to making education relevant and responsive to the needs of the society, stressing that Nigeria's present education programme cannot serve adequately the demands of the 21st century classroom. Ajeyalemi further posited that the teacher is the key factor in curriculum implementation and the main agent for translating society's educational intentions into realities. The teacher in school interprets the objectives and content in the curriculum plan and manages the learning situation. Teacher education must respond to and reflect changes that occur in education and society.

Afe (1995) described teacher education as "that component of any educational system charged with the education and training of teachers to acquire the competences and skills of teaching for the improvement in the quality of teachers for the school system". The training of teachers in Nigeria began with the introduction of formal education by the missionaries (Ohannado and Olabode, 1999). The desire to train teachers by the missionaries was geared towards helping the individuals fulfill their roles as catechists and teachers. Fafunwa (2004) reported that formal teacher education began in 1895 by the establishment of a training school in Abeokuta by the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.). Other missions later established their schools for the training of their own teachers. These teachers in training were taught theology and teaching methodology. The typical curriculum consisted of New Testament Catechism, Christian faith, School

Method and Management, Preaching, Theology, Hygiene, Geography, History, English, Geometry, Arithmetic, Local Language, Carpentry and Masonry (Fafunwa, 2004). At this time, the Government's interest in teacher education was very minimal. It only provided conditions of service for teachers and organized short evening classes and vacation courses as in-service training programmes for practicing teachers. When the interest of the Colonial Government arose, it was towards training teachers for the primary schools. This was owing to the amalgamation of Northern and Southern Departments of Education in 1929, and the bulk of beneficiaries at this stage were primary schools. Students that were trained were awarded the Teachers' Grade II certificate, which was the basic minimum qualification for teaching at that time.

As Nigeria began to warm up for independence, there arose the need to plan for education over the next twenty years and Ashby Commission was set up which was headed by Sir Eric Ashby in 1958 (Fafunwa, 2004). The recommendation of this commission led to the introduction of various teacher education programmes for teachers in the Secondary Schools. Advanced Teachers Colleges were established which today have become Colleges of Education under the Control and Supervision of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE).

Given the laudable objectives of teacher education as spelt out in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), it would be expected that only the intellectually promising and qualified persons should be trained as teachers. It would also be expected that the products from teacher education demonstrate academic competence as they carry out their teachings. Many NCE teachers who are teaching in the Secondary and even primary schools today are rarely competent. Obara (2001) opined that teaching is the most vital and strategic profession for national development. No doubt, the teacher is a crucial component of the education system, because the quality of education depends on the quality of teachers trained. Poorly trained teachers are most likely to produce poor engineers, poor medical doctors, poor lawyers, poor architects, poor nurses and poor teachers. A nation without quality teachers is doomed. According to Ngada (2003), the cumulative effect of incompetent teachers would be non-development rather than development and at times national retrogression instead of progress and advancement.

Indeed the importance of qualitative teachers and teacher education cannot be over emphasized. All arms of the development of a nation depend on the nature of its teachers. Madueke (1997) said that since national development has a direct link with education and the teacher translates educational policies, it requires that the education of the teacher be the priority of any country wishing to develop in all fields of human endeavour. The following areas of deficiencies have been identified in the implementation of the National Policy on Teacher Education in Akwa Ibom State:

Admission Policy

This is one of the most serious problems plaguing teacher education programmes in the nation. The few above-average-students found in teacher training institutions are

there because they had no admission somewhere else, not because they considered education as their first choice. With a collection of academically weak students, training is made quite difficult especially when one considers the fact that many of such students cannot communicate clearly in the official language of instruction.

Lack of Funds

This manifests itself in inadequate provision of facilities and equipment. Funding is a pre-requisite to all activities and to the success of teacher education in Nigeria. Ngada (2001) identified lack of facilities for micro-teaching, demonstration and peer teaching, lecture halls, classrooms, laboratories, hostels, staff quarters, generating plants, office equipment as being inadequate in most teacher producing institutions. This is more pronounced among students of Science, Technical and Business Education. This author further stated that it is common to have over 100 students using only 30 – 40 typewriters or 30 to 40 computers. A classroom capacity meant for not more than 50 students will be jammed with over 200 students. Science and technology today have produced new devices in teaching methodology. Modern technology teaches the use of computer through internet, video conferencing and teleconferencing and even the overhead projector in teaching. These devices are not employed to teach teacher trainees, because of lack of funds. How can these teachers cope with these devices on graduation? The funniest aspect of this predicament is the borrowing facilities during accreditation. This practice fools assessors. The borrowed materials are returned as the accreditation team turns it back and the institutions become once more empty.

Haphazard Conduct of Teaching Practice Exercise

Teaching practice is a cardinal and indispensable aspect in the preparation of teachers. Ololobou (2003) opined that it is through it that teacher trainees operationalise all the theoretical knowledge they have been exposed to in the lecture halls. Consequently, every student teacher is expected to spend at least twelve weeks on teaching practice before graduation. As important as this programme is, it is becoming increasingly difficult for training institutions to find places of practice for practicing students. This is owing to the population of trainees which cannot easily be absorbed by schools in the locality of their training institutions and the tendency for principals to pick only the number that can fill the vacancies in the school from among those sent to them while others are rejected. The practicing period is too short for students to be adequately prepared before being released into the school system. The coordination of this programme is another area of inadequacy. Lack of commitment on the part of supervisors calls for concern. Some students are supervised only once and some twice, while others are not supervised at all but are requested to see the lecturers in their offices with their lesson notes for scores. Hardly has there been a situation where a student is held behind because of poor performance in teaching practice.

Large Class Size and Heavy Workload

Practical experience and evidence abound that the heavy workload of the Nigerian teacher is detrimental to his health. The number of period a teacher has to teach on a daily basis and the large class size constitutes the heavy workload. Where a teacher has to face about five hundred students in a stuffy classroom, most of whom are standing, without public address system, is not encouraging at all. The National Policy on Education stipulates the range of 35 to 40 students per class. Apparently no meaningful teaching and learning can take place under this kind of atmosphere especially where the teacher - student ratio is outrageous.

Poor Evaluation Devices

Anikweze (1995) decrying the poor conduct of continuous assessment practices in teacher education in Nigeria observed that during the teacher training programme, teachers in training are only assessed on the cognitive domain, ignoring the psychomotor and affective domains. Consequently, the assessment of their students is often incomplete and below minimum standards. Thus the ineffectiveness in the handling of continuous assessment found among school teachers today.

The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) described education as an instrument *par excellence* in achieving national development. For any educational system to be qualitative enough to serve national development purposes, the quality of teacher education must be very high. Currently, instead of excellence in its output, there is poverty, unemployment, moral decadence and a collection of individuals who have no positive self-concepts, self-realization and self-actualization. These remain traceable to poor quality teacher education in the country. This paper, therefore, examines quality assurance indices in the implementation of the National Policy on Teacher Education in Akwa Ibom State College of Education.

Statement of the Problem

The future of any nation depends on the quality of its educational system, which in turn depends on the quality of teachers. The maxim that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers and that no nation can rise above the level of its teaching staff shows the role of the teacher and teacher education programmes in national development. With the Federal Government of Nigeria being so determined to provide education as a service to the nation and as a right for every citizen, and with the introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE), only well trained teachers can successfully translate the objectives of the Universal Basic Education programme to reality. According to Lassa (1996) "Education is the key to national development and only teachers hold the key and can turn it for national development". The teacher is therefore the pivot on which every national and educational development hangs. Supporting the above assertion, Ukeje (2000) stated that education is so powerful that "it can heal or kill; it can build up or tear apart; it can lift up or impoverish". Ukeje however

adduced that much depended on the type provided and particularly on the teacher who is the hub of the education process. It is therefore expected that only the intellectually promising and qualified persons are trained to engage in the teaching industry.

Teacher education programmes are structured to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge, attitude and skills for effective performance of their duties. Unfortunately, much lapses and inadequacies have plagued the process of teacher education in the nation so that the desired qualified teachers are not produced. This study therefore examines the existence and utilization of quality assurance mechanisms in the implementation of teacher education in Akwa Ibom State College of Education.

Purpose of the study

The study sought to investigate the:

1. Existing mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by Akwa Ibom College of Education.
2. Utilization of available quality assurance mechanisms in the Akwa Ibom College of Education.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the existing mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by the Akwa Ibom State College of Education?
2. How often do lecturers and students utilize the available mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom College of Education?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significant.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of lecturers and students on the adequacy of existing mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by the Akwa Ibom State College of Education.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean score of lecturers and students on the utilization of available mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by the Akwa Ibom State College of Education.

Research Methods

Population

The study population comprised 3076 students and teachers in Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Afaha Nsit. This consists of 2858 and 218 students and teachers respectively.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The study had a sample of 250 respondents: 200 students sampled across the different departments of the College and 50 lecturers sampled from all the departments. In both cases, the simple random sampling technique was used for the selection.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire tagged “Quality Assurance in Teacher Production Questionnaire” (QATPQ) was developed and used in the study. A trial test was conducted and analysed to determine the reliability level of the instrument, and that stood at 0.76 and 0.71 for lecturers and students respectively.

Decision Rule

For the research questions the arithmetic mean of the mechanisms are considered adequate if they are greater or equal to 2.5 but inadequate if less than 2.5. For hypotheses the calculated t values are significant if they are greater or equal to 1.96 but not significant if less than 1.96

Data Analysis

Arithmetic mean was used in answering the research questions while hypotheses were analysed using t-test.

Results of Findings

Research Question 1

What are the existing mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by the Akwa Ibom State College of Education?

Table 1: Arithmetic Mean of the level of adequacy of existing mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom College of Education

S/N	Mechanisms	Respondents	Arithmetic Mean	Expected Mean	Remarks
1.	Admission Policy	Lecturers	2.1	2.5	IA
		Students	2.0	2.5	IA
2.	Sufficient classroom	Lecturers	1.8	2.5	IA
		Students	1.9	2.5	IA
3.	Sufficient desks for students	Lecturers	2.0	2.5	IA
		Students	2.2	2.5	IA
4.	Instructional materials	Lecturers	2.6	2.5	A
		Students	2.3	2.5	IA
5.	Good library	Lecturers	3.1	2.5	A
		Students	3.5	2.5	A
6.	Good laboratories	Lecturers	3.3	2.5	A
		Students	3.3	2.5	A
7.	Sufficient lecturers	Lecturers	1.9	2.5	IA

		Students	1.8	2.5	IA
8.	Office accommodation for lecturers	Lectures	1.7	2.5	IA
9.	Proper conduct of examinations	Students	1.5	2.5	IA
10.	Discipline	Lecturers	1.4	2.5	IA
		Students	1.3	2.5	IA
11.	Class size	Lecturers	2.4	2.5	IA
		Students	2.1	2.5	IA
12.	Lecturers' motivation	Lecturers	2.3	2.5	IA
		Students	2.4	2.5	IA
13.	Hostel accommodation	Lecturers	1.2	2.5	IA
		Students	1.4	2.5	IA
14.	Electricity	Lecturers	1.8	2.5	IA
		Students	2.0	2.5	IA
15.	Potable water	Lecturers	1.3	2.5	IA
		Students	1.6	2.5	IA
16.	Teaching practice	Lecturers	1.6	2.5	IA
		Students	1.8	2.5	IA
		Lecturers	1.7	2.5	IA
		Students	1.9	2.5	IA

A = Adequate; IA = Inadequate

Table 1 presents the analysis of the arithmetic mean of the level of adequacy of existing mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom College of Education. From the table, many mechanisms were observed to be inadequate while very few were observed to be adequate being that mean score of those few mechanisms were higher than the expected mean (2.5). The adequate mechanisms were "good laboratories (3.3 as observed by lecturers and students); good library (3.1 and 3.5 as observed by lecturers and students respectively) and finally, instructional materials (2.6 as observed by lecturers). The result therefore shows that the existing mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom College of Education were not adequate.

Research Question 2

How do lecturers and students utilize the available mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by the Akwa Ibom State College of Education?

Table 2: Arithmetic Mean of the level of utilisation of the available mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom College of Education

S/n	Mechanisms	Respondents	Arithmetic Mean	Expected Mean	Remarks
1.	Instructional materials	Lecturers	2.6	2.5	E
		Students	2.4	2.5	IE
2.	Library	Lecturers	3.1	2.5	E
		Students	3.2	2.5	E
3.	Laboratories	Lecturers	2.9	2.5	E
		Students	3.2	2.5	E
4.	Class attendance by lecturers	Lectures	2.5	2.5	E
		Students	2.3	2.5	IE

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5.	Students' evaluation by lecturers	Lecturers	1.6	2.5	IE
6.	Prompt release of exams' results	Lecturers	1.1	2.5	IE
7.	Prompt attention to students' problems	Students	1.3	2.5	IE
8.	Exams' rules and regulations	Lecturers	1.6	2.5	IE
9.	Disciplinary measures	Students	1.8	2.5	IE
10	Adherence to admission policy	Lecturers	1.2	2.5	IE
		Students	1.4	2.5	IE

E = effective; IE = Ineffective

Table 2 presents the results of the arithmetic mean analysis of the level of utilization of the available mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom College of Education. From the table, many mechanisms were observed to be ineffectively utilized while very few were observed to be effectively utilized being that the mean scores of the effectively utilized mechanisms were higher than the expected mean (2.5). The effectively utilized mechanisms were Library (3.1 and 3.2 as observed by lecturer and students respectively); laboratories (2.9 and 3.2 as observed by lecturers and students); instructional materials (2.6 as observed by lecturers) and finally, class attendance by lecturers (2.5 as observed by lecturers). The results therefore mean that the available mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom College of Education were not effectively utilized by both the lecturers and students.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of lecturers and students on the adequacy of existing mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by the Akwa Ibom State College of Education.

Table 3: t-test results on Adequacy of existing mechanisms for quality assurance in Akwa Ibom State College of Education

S/n	Mechanisms	Respondents	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	Dec.
1.	Admission policy	Lecturers	2.1 ^x	.11	.91	NS
		students	2.0	.13		
2.	Sufficient classroom	Lecturers	1.8	.81	.86	NS
		students	1.9	.76		
3.	Sufficient desks for students	Lecturers	2.0	.56	.72	NS
		students	2.2	.64		
4.	Instructional materials	Lecturers	2.6	.67	.63	NS
		students	2.3	.81		
5.	Good library	Lecturers	3.1	.82	.99	NS
		students	3.5	.78		
6.	Good laboratories	Lecturers	3.3	.96	1.14	NS
		students	3.3	.94		

7.	Sufficient lecturers	Lecturers	1.9	.14	1.31	NS
8.	Office accommodation for lecturers	students	1.8	.13		
		Lecturers	1.7	.34	1.51	NS
9.	Proper conduct of examinations	students	1.5	.42		
		Lecturers	1.4	.42	.89	NS
10.	Discipline	students	1.3	.41		
		Lecturers	2.4	.39	1.22	NS
11.	Class size	students	2.1	.44		
		Lecturers	2.3	.57	1.51	NS
12.	Lecturers' motivation	students	2.4	.62		
		Lecturers	1.2	.28	1.89	NS
13.	Hostel accommodation	students	1.4	.37		
		Lecturers	1.8	.66	1.05	NS
14.	Electricity	students	2.0	.62		
		Lecturers	1.3	.51	1.37	NS
15.	Potable water	students	1.6	.55		
		Lecturers	1.6	.52	.48	NS
16.	Teaching practice	students	1.8	.59		
		Lecturers	1.7	.62	1.77	NS
		students	1.9	.73		

N = 250; df = 248; t - cri = 1.96

S = significant; NS = not significant

Table 3 revealed no significant difference in the mean scores of lecturers and students on the adequacy of existing mechanisms for quality assurance in the college. All the sixteen identified quality assurance indicators have each of their calculated t-values less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level and 248 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated t-values were less than the critical t-value the null hypothesis in respect of adequacy of existing quality assurance mechanisms was retained. The cumulative t also showed no significant difference in the mean perceptions of the lecturers and students.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean score of lecturers and students on the utilization of available mechanisms for quality assurance in teacher production by the Akwa Ibom State College of Education.

Table 4: t-test results on Utilization of available quality assurance mechanisms in Akwa Ibom State College of Education.

S/n	Mechanisms	Respondents	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	Dec.
1.	Instructional materials	Lecturers	2.6	.67	1.62	NS
		students	2.4	.66		
2.	Library	Lecturers	3.1	.82	1.45	NS
		students	3.2	.87		
3.	Laboratories	Lecturers	2.9	.96	1.56	NS
		students	3.2	.89		
4.	Class attendance by lecturers	Lecturers	2.5	.56	2.67	S

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		students	2.3	.58		
5.	Students' evaluation by lecturers	Lecturers	1.6	.62	2.89	S
		students	1.4	.59		
6.	Prompt release of exams' results	Lecturers	1.1	.34	1.03	NS
		students	1.3	.37		
7.	Prompt attention to students' problems	Lecturers	1.4	.29	2.99	S
		students	1.5	.31		
8.	Exams' rules and regulations	Lecturers	1.6	.77	3.01	S
		students	1.8	.74		
9.	Disciplinary measures	Lecturers	1.4	.66	1.11	NS
		students	1.8	.61		
10.	Adherence to admission policy	Lecturers	1.2	.11	1.28	NS
		students	1.4	.13		

N = 250; df = 248; t - cri = 1.96

S = significant; NS = not significant

Table 4 revealed no significant difference in the mean scores of lecturers and students on the utilization of existing mechanisms for quality assurance in the college. Six of the ten identified quality assurance indicators have each of their calculated t-values less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level and 248 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis in respect of utilization of existing quality assurance mechanisms was retained. However, there was a significant difference in the mean rating of lecturers and students on class attendance by lecturers, students' evaluation by lecturers, attention to students' problems and adherence to examinations' rules and regulations. These items had their t-cal above the t-value of 1.96 and therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected.

Discussion

The finding of this study revealed that most of the quality assurance mechanisms are not available in sufficient quantity and quality in the College for utilization by both the lecturers and students. Although these facilities are not totally absent, their quantity and quality cannot enhance qualitative production of NCE teachers by the college for successful implementation of the UBE programme.

Admission policy in the institution is not strictly adhered to, classrooms, desks and instructional materials are lacking; the library and laboratories are not equipped with necessary facilities, books and equipments; and office accommodation is in short supply. The institution suffers from large class size, poor electricity and water supply, and lack of hostel accommodation for students. Worse still, the lecturers are poorly motivated. All these impede the production of quality NCE teachers in the institution which in turn affects the successful implementation of the UBE programme. This finding is supported by Ngada (2001) who identified lecture halls, classrooms, laboratories, hostels, staff quarters, generating plants, office equipment as being inadequate in most teacher producing institutions in the country. The cumulative effect of these inadequacies is poor

quality production of teachers from these institutions. This can be blamed on lack of adequate quality assurance mechanism in the institution, poor utilization of the available ones, lack of commitment of lecturers to teaching, uncontrollable class size, and poor handling of examinations. As decried by Anikweze (1995), poor conduct of continuous assessments and examination malpractices in teacher education has been a bane in qualitative teacher production in the country. Education is so powerful that it can heal or kill, build up or tear apart, lift up or impoverish, much depended on the type provided and particularly on the teacher who is the hub of the education process (Ukeje, 2000).

Recommendations

1. Adequate funds should be made available to the institution for adequate facilities and equipment. This will also enable them carry out the necessary practicals so that the schools will no longer produce theoretical teachers who cannot apply their knowledge to any novel situation.
2. There is the need to review the mode of entry into the institution. The same requirements for entrance into other disciplines should be upheld in selecting entrants into teacher education programmes. Credits in Mathematics and English Language should be made compulsory. There should also be oral-interview to actually drop unqualified candidates.
3. The teaching practice exercise of all training programmes should be intensified, properly organized and supervised. A uniform period of one full year of the experience like all other professional disciplines could be introduced. A stipend should be paid to these teachers – trainees while in practice. There should be a legislation making it mandatory for schools to be made available at anytime for teaching practice and the staff made to be involved as co-operating teachers in the exercise.
4. There should be strategies to incorporate global dimensions in education from other countries. There is the need to put Nigerian Teacher Education on the path of competitiveness and strengthen it to participate favourably within the global system.

Conclusion

Teacher education in Akwa Ibom State has suffered from a number of problems which have adversely affected the quality of teachers produced. These include admission policy, insufficient classroom, insufficient desks for students, lack of instructional materials, poor library, poor laboratories, insufficient lecturers, poor office accommodation for lecturers, examination malpractice, indiscipline, class size, lecturers' motivation, hostel accommodation, electricity, potable water, and teaching practice. The challenges confronting teacher education in the State are daunting, but with adequate plan, purposeful implementation and belief in the Nigeria project, it is achievable. No doubt, the time for teacher reform is now.

Quality assurance in the implementation of the National Policy on Teacher Education is indispensable to national development. It is a known fact that teacher education is the corner stone for national development. The present overwhelming cry from employers, administrators, parents and general public concerning uncooked products of school system will cease if the inadequacies in the teacher education institutions are addressed. The paper therefore calls for adequate attention to be given to quality assurance in teacher production in the state through adequate funding, stepping up of the mode of entry into teacher education programme and minimum entry into the teaching profession, if the UBE programme is not to go the way of its sister programme – Universal Primary Education (UPE).

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