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Abstract

The paper focuses \textit{integration of networkin...}, among faculties of education in West Africa through \textit{Internationalisation} of teacher education in context \textit{(global trend explained and rationale for such w... given. The overall goal of internationalisation of teacher education to produce teachers with global perspective needed to meet the challenges of education in the era of globalisation was discussed. The curricular and teaching den... for the aegis of Collaboration of Education Faculties in West Africa (CEFIVA), mere highlighted for act...}

Introduction

The world has become a global village due to the advent and inter-connectivity of Information Communication Technology (ICT). Almost all human activities are knowledge-based and the developments in ICT facilitate the sharing of knowledge and skills among different human communities or nations for their individual and collective developments and the associated educational, scientific and technological, political or socio-economic advantages. Thus, every nation is tilting towards globalisation and embracing international relationship in all spheres of development. In general sense, globalisation means bringing into closer contact between different nations of the world with increasing possibilities of personal exchange, mutual understanding and friendship between world “citizens” and
creating of global civilisation (kisher, 2008). Globalisation leads to internationalisation. Internationalisation is a response to the opportunities and challenges of globalisation (Abdallah, 2007). Internationalisation of education can be interpreted in this context as one of the ways the education system is responding to globalisation. Globalisation and internationalisation of education remove the mental block separating nations, pave ways for broadening of minds, allow for integration of diverse cultures and promote inter-relationships and collaborations among nations towards achieving the goals of global development. Internationalisation of education, universities play critical roles to enhance the flow and sharing of knowledge across and among nations. Knowledge has, therefore, become a global commodity and universities remain the centre of knowledge production and dissemination. Sharing of knowledge for advancement of human societies can best be facilitated if universities collaborate at both regional and global levels. In this context, internationalisation of education involves a broad range of elements: curriculum, teaching and learning, research, institutional agreements, student/faculty mobility, development, cooperation etc. (Abdallah, 2007). Therefore, education in the context of internationalisation and globalisation has become transnational activity like economic activity aimed at bringing nations and institutions together. In this circumstance, nations and institutions have begun to refocus their education systems and programmes to embrace international system (Reddy, 2008). This demands for new educational goals and standards that bear relevance to global and international issues and perspectives. Today, nations are being compelled to respond to the challenges of globalisation and to refocus their educational system to face the challenges. Teacher education remains the pivot for attainment of the objectives of any educational system and educational reforms. Production of teachers for a new world order and for emerging international educational reforms becomes important. This calls for internationalisation of teacher education to meet the envisaged future challenges due to the impact of globalisation. This paper focuses on regional collaboration in teacher education amongst West Africa University Faculties of Education.

Rationale for Internationalisation of Teacher Education

Internationalisation of education is based on the rationale of globalisation which is to enhance global productivity and development. In education, internationalisation is aimed to produce individuals with international perspective who can be productive members of the global society. Education has become a transnational activity and a fluid endeavour across borders. An educational system that aspires to be a world class and wishes to attain international standards must tailor its educational programmes to producing world class graduates that can
face the emerging challenges of the new world order. The traditional teacher education programmes as they are being offered presently seem inadequate to equip today's graduate teachers with the competencies that will bring out in them their potentiality to cope with the challenges of globalisation and internationalisation.

Internationalisation of teacher education opens opportunities for collaboration amongst universities in many ways that will lead to mutual benefit and improvement on quality and standard and the general provision of education. Collaboration amongst universities will help bring the intellectual and material resources of the universities together to improve the quality of education globally. Considering the similarities in the circumstances of West Africa educational systems, their antecedents, the prevailing socio-economic and cultural circumstances and the state of the educational developments, collaboration amongst the universities in West Africa will bring positive effect on the quality of education in general and teacher education in particular. Globalisation has placed its demands for teachers with international or global perspectives in the areas of knowledge, skills and values. Such teachers are increasingly being demanded worldwide (Latchanna & Babu, 2008). Sound teacher education programmes that meet international demands and standards, therefore, become necessary.

The Goal and objectives of internationalisation of Teacher Education

Education is generally goal-oriented. Traditionally, educational goals are focused on individual and societal development. Pertaining to individual, the goal is to liberate the individual from ignorance and imperfections by equipping the individual with appropriate knowledge, skills, values and attributes that will enable the individual to fit into the society and also contribute to the betterment of the society. The societal development is predicated on the quality of the individual which the educational system produces. In international context, the goal is to develop global competencies and values that the individual needs to participate and live in global environment that is presently technology-driven and competitive. The basic objective of education in the context of globalisation and internationalisation is for the educational system to prepare students with survival skills and competencies to compete in the world market and as a productive member of the global society.

The specific objectives of internationalisation of teacher education coupled with those traditional objectives of teacher education should include producing:

- teachers with global perspectives in terms of knowledge, skills and values;
- teachers with competencies that will make them employable in the global market;
teachers who are capable of adopting their training to the socio-economic and cultural diversities of students at international spheres;

• teachers who can easily adapt to the global environments; and

• teachers who can imbibe humanistic values to live as global citizens.

Curricula and Teaching Demands for Internationalization of Teacher Education

A sound programme of professional education is essential for preparation of quality teachers for qualitative education. The present teacher education programme may not be adequate to meet the demand of globalisation and thus, the need to review the standard of teacher education to accommodate international demands and perspectives. In international context, teachers will need a broad knowledge, skills and competencies and effective characteristics to function both at national and international level.

Internationalisation of teacher education demands new global practices, new curricular provision, effective teaching strategies and also calls for functionalistic education. Davi & Jyothi (2008) suggest that excellent teachers preparation programme should be built on the following four pillars: learning to know; learning to do; learning to live together; and learning to be. These they conceived should be built on framework of reference in the following areas:

• Global and the local;

• Universal and individual;

• Tradition and modernity;

• Long term and short term;

• Competition and equality of opportunity; and

• Knowledge explosion and capacity to assimilate.

It is envisaged that teacher education built on these framework will guarantee the production of teachers that can function not only locally but also internationally and not only the teachers for today but also for the future educational demands. For global practices, Kumar & Saroja (2008) outline that teacher education should prepare trainees to acquire the following competencies: communication, leadership, management of change, self managed learning, teamwork, critical thinking; analytical and conceptual thinking, ethic and social responsibilities, management of interpersonal diversity, acquisition of technical knowledge and their application, handling of JCT and the use of JCT for accessing and processing learning. In the same context, Prasad (2008) prescribes that the teacher education programme curriculum in addition to the inclusion of knowledge and skills of teaching
methodologies, knowledge of educational psychology, educational technology, philosophy and history of education, school management practices, etc, in content of internationalisation, teacher education should be laden with inputs on human right education, peace education, developmental academics and all-encompassing value education. He suggested further the study of optional subjects e.g. the study of one foreign language and cultural studies.

It should be emphasised that international prospective teachers must be equipped with inquiry mind, long-life learning, sound subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills and the capacity to apply knowledge and competencies to solve contemporary problems and also develop ethical and social skills that are globally acceptable.

In order to achieve all the above, the curriculum of teacher education should be broad-based, more practical oriented than hitherto and should also be competency and technology-based. Thus, web-based learning and use of different ICT devices should be integrated in the contents and instructional strategies ill the implementation of the teacher education curriculum for the new international dispensation. Every pre-service teacher in context of present trend must acquire competence in the use of ICT in teaching and learning and be capable of integrating the use of ICT in classroom teaching-learning process.

Sumalatha & Ramakrishnai (2008) suggest that teacher education programme for development of ICT expertise of pre-service teachers can be achieved by allowing the following:

- All written assignment made appropriately desktop published;
- Use of web-based references encouraged;
- Seminars or presentations by students involve the use of multimedia;
- Students encouraged to submit some or all of their assignments as E-mail attachments; and
- Students made to report their field experiences and project works in a CD form

Achieving the above requires that teacher preparation should take place in institutions that are well equipped with ICT facilities and qualified ICT educators.

**Strategies for Attainment of Internationalisation of Teacher Education**

Prasad (2008) identified the following strategies for attainment of internationalisation of education: Two-tier system and Single-tier system. In adopting the Two-tier system, a particular university can have its own existing educational programme on the traditional line and along it runs or offers educational
programmes as part of international network designed for attainment of global perspectives. Yet, national ideals for education are retained.
The Single-tier system is an integrated approach or pattern that allows for uniform international education programme in which the curriculum contents and process are blended in context of international evolved education norms objectives and global standards. This calls for in-depth collaboration in the entire educational process, planning and curricular development.

The Role of CEFWA in Internationalisation of Teacher Education

CEFWA should follow the global trend by evolving mechanisms that will allow for greater international collaboration in teacher education among member universities. Such collaboration can be based on the following:

i. Carry out researches in international studies in teacher education that focus on all aspects of teacher education including comparative studies;

ii. Create mechanism that allow pre-service students as well as educators in one faculty seeking to learn from colleagues in similar faculties sharing same perspectives of preparing students for the global community;

iii. Create web-based information technology as a tool for international exchange programmes, partnership and for teaching and learning experiences;

iv. Come up with educational linkage and student exchange programmes for specified course(s) to be taken by students as graduation requirement. Exchange programme on practice teaching can be part of such exchange programmes; and

v. Evolve funding arrangements and seek national and international financial supports, scholarship, grants from funding agencies, foundations, NGOs and Government for development of teacher education.

Conclusion

This paper conceptualised internationalisation of teacher education in the West Africa sub-region through collaboration amongst West Africa universities faculties of education. Faculties of education must collaborate and evolve mechanisms to reform their teacher education programmes in areas of curriculum development, teaching and learning, research, etc that will lead to improving the quality of teacher education in general and making teacher education responsive to meeting the global challenges due to globalisation. There are expected actions to be taken by CEFWA. CEFWA is, therefore, challenged to bring about internationalisation of teacher education in the sub-region.
References


