

Challenges of Administering Teacher Education Programme in Kenyan Universities

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Abstract

Proper management of logistical issues in Teacher education programme tends to promote the quality of preparation of school teachers. The main objective of the study was to investigate challenges of administering teacher education programme in Kenyan universities. The theoretical framework of the study was adopted as used by Koehler and Mishra's concept of technological pedagogical content knowledge. The study was conducted in public and private universities in Kenya. Purposive, random and stratified sampling techniques were used to select the subjects for the study. The sample size comprised of 59 lecturers and 635 fourth year students drawn from the selected universities. The research instruments included questionnaires and interview schedule. The study established that challenges in teacher education are real in nature and require urgent address. These challenges were broadly characterized as institutional-based (university) and extra institutional-based (outside the institution) in nature. These challenges results in preparation and production of poor quality of school teachers at university level in Kenya. It's therefore, recommended that the identified challenges require collaborative action and decision-making by relevant stake-holders in Teacher education programme and Kenyan universities offering Teacher preparation programme. In order to confront the noted challenges there is need to develop and use innovative practices in Teacher education.

Keywords: Teacher education, Innovative practice, Challenge

INTRODUCTION

There are some of impediments to the management of this programme in Kenya. The issues are technical, logistical and administrative in nature. Bosire (1995) out-lines these issues as philosophical, financial, infrastructural, administrative, educational and logistical in nature. According to her and UNESCO (1978), these issues obliterate the effectiveness and role of Teacher education programme in the development of Africa. The technical issues concern the policy design and formulation that should govern Teacher education programme and the preparation of school teachers in pedagogy and the expected innovations in this programme. This has been the weak link in administration of this programme in Kenyan universities for a long time.

From the colonial era in Africa there has been concern about policy structures related to the administration of Teacher education programme (Phelps-Stoke, 1925). The absence of these structures has not only affected the image of this programme of education but also the development and promotion of its quality in this continent. This has in turn adversely impacted on the level and quality of development in Africa. Besides, lack of clear policy frame-work governing Teacher education programme in most African countries has been the main road block to generation of innovations including technologization process in this continent.

In addition to development and administration of Teacher education-specific policy frame-work, there is the issue of technologizing Teacher education programme in Africa (Kafu, 2015). This programme has not adopted itself to and adapted the emerging educational technologies in education as suggested by Cook (1990). These technologies include the development and use of new models of instructional technologies and adoption of the new teaching machines/equipment like computer-related facilities which facilitate modern instruction (Kafu 1976, 2013). These are the technical requirements for teaching and training man-power for this century and beyond as advocated by Karanja, (1978).

Besides technical concerns, there are logistical issues affecting the preparation of prospective teachers in pedagogy in Kenyan Universities. Among these logistical issues in Teacher education programme include the development and availability of information technology and the management strategies of the programme. In this respect, Bond (2000) is of the opinion that this programme is currently mismanaged in Africa because of ignorance and failure to appreciate its nature and role in national development in modern Africa which results in production of incompetent school teachers in pedagogy that is the springboard for initiating and administering innovations in education and society. Hence, the present state of producing teachers who are less creative and innovative to initiate any tangible development in modern Africa and who do not have the ability to utilize the immediate environment in their instruction through improvisation as advocated for by Anastasiades et al (eds) (2011). This is the common feature in preparation of prospective teachers in pedagogy at university level worldwide.

In general, proper management of logistical issues in Teacher education programme tends to promote the quality of preparation of school teachers in pedagogy which is currently lacking in institutions of Higher learning in Kenya. There is increasing need to reverse this practice in Teacher preparation programme in East

Africa as it was done in Europe from which the Inter-University Council of East Africa picked the notion of introducing induction courses in pedagogy for lecturers at University (IUCEA, 2004). Recently, there have been calls to harmonize university academic programmes in East and Central African region so as to promote the quality of teaching and training of university graduates across this region (C.U.E. 2014).

Kelly (2012) points out to this existing negative attitude towards Teacher education programme when he says there are no services monitoring the process of preparing prospective teachers at university level. This explains why most university teachers have little time for pedagogical considerations in their instruction. They know well nobody at state and/or university level is concerned with the programme and/or will monitor them. It is in realization, of this fact that the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA, 2004) has taken up the challenge and now recommends the introduction of induction programmes on pedagogy for all university lecturers/ teachers in East and Central African region (IUCEA Annual Report, 2009) so as to strengthen the teaching and training of university students.

The modern society expects school teachers to be competent enough in utilizing the emerging educational technologies in instruction. In other words, a competent school teacher should be that individual who is a solution to the emerging technologies in modern education and society. The critical question at this juncture is, "is the present crop of school teachers well prepared for the challenges posed by developments in modern education and the society?" This raises the concern of the quality of school teachers being prepared and produced by institutions of Teacher preparation programmes across the curriculum in Kenya. That is, are these institutions adequately preparing prospective teachers in pedagogy to be able to competently engage learners in the requirements for modern instructional situations? There is evidence, especially among the graduate teachers, that many learners do not benefit much from the instructional engagements with their teachers (Kafu, 1976; Perkins, 1992). It is on the basis of this realization that the present study is conducted on the challenges facing preparation of prospective teachers in teacher education in Kenyan universities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the model of knowledge growth in Teaching as used by Koehler and Mishra (2005) built on Shulman's notion of Pedagogy and Content Knowledge (PCK) to articulate the concept of Technological Pedagogical Content knowledge (TPCK). Koehler and Mishra (2005) defined PTACK as the connections and interactions between these types of knowledge. This involves an understanding of the complexity of relationships among students, teachers, content, technologies and practices. According to Koehler and Mishra (2005), pedagogical issues face various challenges that need to be addressed.

This theory was relevant to the conducted study in that it deals with the issues related to preparation of prospective teachers in pedagogy which involves preparation of teachers in competencies of the presentation of new concepts which requires development of sensitivity to the dynamic and transactional relationship between all the three components by the TPCK framework. The adopted model in this study delineates components of the research and provides the framework based on available information from the previous studies.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed the descriptive survey research design consisting of fact gathering. Kothari (2004) and Ngechu (2003) explain that descriptive statistics include measures of central tendency which describe a sample or a group of individuals. Descriptive survey research designs were fit in this study because it describes records and analyzes situations in attempt to investigate preparation of teacher-trainees in pedagogy in Kenyan universities. The target population was lecturers teaching and preparing prospective school teachers in pedagogy in the selected universities and fourth year students pursuing degree programmes in education. The sample size comprised of 59 lecturers and 635 fourth year students drawn from the selected universities. Purposive, random and stratified sampling techniques were used to select the subjects for the study. The research instruments included questionnaires, interview schedule/guide observation checklist and document analysis.

RESULTS

The analysis of the collected data yielded the following results: 190 (58.82) male and 27 (8.65) female students and 16 (36.36) male and 3 (20) female lecturers cited inadequate duration for preparing prospective teachers as one of the noted challenge. 36 (11.15) male and 110 (35.26) female students and 6 (13.64) male and 3 (20) female lecturers cited poor/inappropriate facilities and resources as a deficiency in Teacher Preparation programme. But 24 (7.43) male and 66 (21.15) female students and 10 (22.73) male and 2 (13.33) female lecturers indicated inappropriate Teacher Education curriculum as a deficiency while 50 (15.48) male and 80 (25.64) female students and 9 (20.46) male and 4 (26.67) female lecturers cited under-staffing as a deficiency. 23 (7.12) male and 29 (9.3) female students and 3 (6.82) male and 3 (20) female lecturers felt that mismanagement of the Faculties/Schools of Education as academic and professional units as the main challenge.

Table 1: Categories of noted challenges in Teacher Preparation Programme

Noted Challenges	Students		Lecturers	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Inadequate duration	190 (58.82)	27 (8.65)	16 (36.36)	3 (20.0)
Poor/Inappropriate Facilities and Resources	36 (11.15)	110 (35.26)	6 (13.64)	3 (20.0)
Inappropriate Teacher education curriculum	24 (7.43)	66 (21.15)	10 (22.73)	2 (13.33)
Understaffing in the Faculties/Schools of Education	50 (15.48)	80 (25.64)	9 (20.46)	4 (26.67)
Mismanagement of Faculties/Schools of Education	23 (7.12)	29 (9.3)	3 (6.82)	3 (20.0)
Total	323 (27.26)	312 (26.33)	44 (3.71)	15 (1.27)

DISCUSSION

From this analysis it is clear that the most serious challenge is the inadequacy of the duration of preparing teachers (36.62), followed by understaffing factor (22.19), then poor/inappropriate facilities and resources (19.92) for preparing prospective teachers, inappropriate Teacher Education curriculum (14.09) and last but not least is the mismanagement of Faculties/School of Education (7.17) in Kenyan universities. These are challenges in Teacher preparation programme which the Kenyan universities must immediately address if they have to prepare and produce the right caliber/crop of school teachers to serve in Kenya and elsewhere in the world in this century and beyond (Kafu, 2013). Most of these cited weaknesses affecting the quality of Teacher education programme were noted by Karanja (1978) when addressing the state of education in Kenya. Karanja (1978) pointed-out that the quality of administering education was poor and had to be reviewed. These challenges in Teacher education programme are not unique to Kenya. Anastasiades et al (2011), Aubusson and Schuck (2013) and Ingersoll (2007) in their works on quality of Teacher education worldwide have cited these challenges.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Close scrutiny of the obtained results of this study demonstrates that the administration of Teacher education programme in Kenyan universities is facing numerous challenges/deficiencies caused by the practices conducted in this programme in these institutions. These challenges include inadequate investment in the programme by the state/government and institutions universities, the recruitment unqualified Teacher-educators and/or understaffing of the Faculties/Schools of Education in Kenyan universities to prepare school teachers, the use of inappropriate Teacher education curriculum for preparing prospective teachers for modern Kenya, the short duration (four years only) presently practiced in preparing school teachers and the poor quality of educational facilities and resources currently being used in teacher preparation programme in Kenyan universities.

The conclusions drawn from the above findings are that the established challenges are real in nature and require urgent address. Though surmountable, these challenges are varied in character and, therefore, require specific approaches in managing them. These challenges were broadly characterized as institutional-based (university) and extra institutional-based (out-side the institution) in nature. All these stated challenges combined have resulted in preparation and production of poor quality of school teachers at university level in Kenya. Teachers who cannot competently serve the needs of modern Kenya and, by extension promote the image of teaching profession in this country.

From the above presented findings and the corresponding conclusions, this study recommended that the identified challenges require collaborative action and decision-making by relevant stake-holders in Teacher education programme. Secondly, the study recommended that the Kenya government and the Kenyan universities offering Teacher preparation programme should totally commit themselves to promoting the quality of this programme for the benefit of Kenya. In order to confront the noted challenges there is need to develop and use innovative practices in Teacher education.

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