
The Teacher and History of Education in Nigeria: Matters Arising

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Abstract

Generally speaking history is not mere story telling. It is really an account of the events of the past which to a large extent have significant impact on the present as well as the planning of the future. There are different forms of history. These include political history, military history, economic history, social history, religious history and educational history among others. The field of history of education is almost as broad as the field of history itself. It concern itself with the study of how societies have transmitted culture from one generation to another. This also deals with how people's beliefs, ideas and faith have been taught. Their studies help teachers to interpret and generalize on educational experiences. This paper therefore, focused on the teacher and history of education in Nigeria; matter arising. The interdisciplinary approached is adopted, five objectives were raised to guide this paper. Findings in the end traced the evolution of the first university professorship in education, established at Edinburgh and St Andrews in the 1870s were the "theory history and practice of education along with psychology was among the first of the special disciplines which were applied to education as an academic study. Furthermore the task of history of education which is to trace in scientific manner the origin and evolution of public education, the study of history of education equips students and the teachers with the knowledge of the past with ups and downs to enable them solve problems. In the way forward as suggested more teachers should be encouraged to under-take undergraduate courses in educational history while status of teachers of history of education should be raised through government's recognition and remuneration just like their counterpart in the sciences.

Keywords: Teacher, History, Education, Curriculum, Cultural Heritage, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Education across the globe assures a procedure of transmitting the traditional values and practice leading to sustainable development. Education is viewed as being partnership with society. It undertakes principally the production of workforce and information for socio-economic advancement of the nation. Education can also be taken to mean the transmission of core values of people in a given society from one generation to another. These core values many include the culture and beliefs which the people deem necessary to be passed on to their young ones to enable them fit in properly in the society where they live. As observed by Ekpefa-Abudllahi (2011) the training and instruction of the young ones for the business of life is as ancient as the origin of man on earth and every society have developed various

means to carry out this function. The school system is often recognized as a cardinal instrument for imparting knowledge and skills. Teaching is a process with in-built intention of transmitting what is valuable. Hence there is a close link between education and teaching. According to Ololube (2005), teaching does not only involve activities of the teacher but includes those of the pupils. No study of the history of education in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular is complete without adequate knowledge of traditional of indigenous educational system prevalent in Africa before the arrival of Islam and Christianity (Fafunwa 1974). Furthermore Okafor (1971) in Wosu (2016, p. 145) observed that:

The navigational process of European into Nigeria accrued at different times by different explorers with diverse achievements. The British, France, Spanish and the Portuguese at various time made frantic attempt in the exploration and navigation of the width and length of today's Nigeria but the popular century when these exploration began was 15th century. The success of these discoveries led to many developments including the introduction of western education with traditional subjects such as history and history of education among others into Nigeria to which we now turn.

Today history as a body of knowledge encompasses not only the events of the past but also their consequences. Historians are no longer satisfied with the simple discovery of past, they aspire of course, not only to say what happened, but also to show why and how it happened (Osokoya, 2007). Furthermore, not many events of the past are of interest to the historians. Important historical facts with consequences are often preferred, hence W. H Walsh (1967) assert that the historian aims at a reconstruction of the past which is both intelligent and intelligible. History as commonly used has three levels of meaning, first, it is used to connote the entire human past as it actually happened. Secondly, it is used to connote man's attempt to describe and interpret that past and in the words of Professor Barrack Tough in Osokoya (2007) "the attempt to discover on the basis of fragmentary evidence the significant things about the past". Thirdly it is used to connote an academic discipline. Since history embraces the whole spectrum of human endeavour modern historian have attempt to classify the subject artificially into specific division for better understanding. Thus we have political history, military history, economic history, business history, social history, intellectual history, ethno-history and educational history. The field of history of education is almost as broad as the field of history itself. It concerns itself with the study of how societies have transmitted culture from one generation to another. It also deals with how people's beliefs, ideas and faith have been thought. Teacher education is therefore conceived as the basic and foundation of education at all levels, and history of education widens the scope and knowledge of the teacher and makes him more comfortable and competent in his class. The knowledge of educational development of the past enhances teaching and learning (Wosu, 2016).

Statement of the Problem

At a time when we have overcrowded school curriculum, traditional subjects such as history must inevitably justify their continued existence. In West African States, particularly Nigeria, candidate offering history at secondary school level have reduced considerably in recent times. The policy of the federal government to encourage science at the expense of arts subjects, particularly in the modern languages, as well as the physical and natural sciences have gained tremendous attention, there is need for adequate enlightenment of the philosophy for teaching of history so as to convince not only the adult skeptics, either inside or outside

academics but also give history teachers reason for their belief that history of education is a valuable component of the teachers. The study therefore examines the teacher and history of education in Nigeria, matter arising in order to expose the values and prospect of history of education to teachers in Nigeria. The purpose of this paper is to examine the teacher and history of education in Nigeria, matter arising, specifically the paper, therefore intended to highlight the following objectives:

- To examine the evolution of history of education;
- To examine the conceptualization of history of education;
- To examine the values of history of education to teachers;
- To examine the prospects and challenges for teachers in history of education in Nigeria;
- The way forward as suggested in the conclusion.

THE EVOLUTION OF HISTORY OF EDUCATION

It is generally agreed by historian that the western historical tradition can be traced to the fifth century BC in ancient Greece. History in the broad sense owes its origin to Herodotus (B.C.-C.425 B.C) and Thucydides (C.455 BC-C 400 B.C) both of whom wrote toward the end of the classical age in ancient Greece. The next historian was Polybius (C.198 B.C – 117B.C) who wrote when Greece was falling under the control of Rome (Orugbani, 2011). Modern history, that is, history as an academic discipline was born in nineteenth century Europe. Given the great revolutionary changes in nineteenth century Europe which led to the end of the ancient regime and in the process introduced novel political, economic, social and educational ideas; the belief in the unchanging character of human nature or in the immutable nature of social institution was no longer possible. As observed by Seaborne (1971), the first university professorship in education, established at Edinburgh and St. Andrews in the 1870s, were the “theory of History and practice of education along with psychology was among the first of the special disciplines which were applied to education as an academic study. This was at a time when the study of history generally was expanding in institutions of high education and when much of the effort of professional historians was directed towards elucidation of the political and constitutional aspect of the subject. Training colleges for intending teacher had been set up after about 1840, and, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the study of history of education spread into these colleges, where the emphasis, as in the universities of the time was placed on the development of institution and particularly on the part which the central government played in educational policy following the setting up of the Committee of Council on Education in 1839 and including of course, introduction of universal compulsory education following the Education Act of 1870. It was because of the need for a radical rethinking of such courses that, also in 1967 a history of education society was formed by lecturers in colleges and department of education. They organized conferences and issue bulletin, given publicity to more interesting new developments. The success of these led to development and introduction of history of education into Nigeria to which we now turn. In addition to these as observed by Fafunwa (1974) the Ashby commission issued its report in October 1960, basing its recommendation on three premises; its conception of Nigeria in 1960, Harbison’s estimate of Nigeria’s high-level manpower needs by 1970; and the commission’s estimate of the limited capacity in regard to Nigeria’s educational system. It then proceeded to make a number of recommendations on primary, secondary and sixth form education teacher training, technical education, commercial agriculture and veterinary education and, university education. It proposed that:

- The federal government should give support to the development of the new university of Nigeria, planned in 1955 and opened a few weeks before the publication of the Ashby Report in 1960;
- A university should be established in the north using the old sit of Nigerian college in Zaria as the base;
- A university should be established in Lagos with day and evening degree courses in business commerce and economics;
- University College Ibadan should move away from its conservative position, widen its curriculum and develop into a full university;
- All universities in Nigeria should be national in outlook;
- There should be wider diversity and greater flexibility in university education;
- Courses in engineering, medicine, law, commerce and agriculture should be offered;
- The new Nigerian university should be in dependent of one another and each should confer its own degrees;
- A National university commission NUC should be set up to have undisputed control over the affairs of the universities, particularly in term of finance, staff and courses; and
- All the universities should have B.A. (Education Degree).

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF HISTORY OF EDUCATION

History is commonly used to connote the entire human past as it did happened. It is an attempt at interpreting the past to be able to discover the significant things about the past. According to Wosu (2016), history, therefore, could be seen as the development of human societies in space and time for it to embrace thoughts and actions of the people in the past, present and future. History as an academic discipline refers to the record of important events which have taken place in the past. History is also a collection of a memory of man. According to Nwuzor and Ocho (1982) “history study generally implies a systematic piecing together and imaginative interpretation significant for continued human existence”. History is the memory of human group experience, if it is forgotten or ignored, we cease in that measure to be human, without history we have no knowledge of who we are or how we came to be like victims of collective amnesia grouping in the dark for our identity. It is the event recorded in history that generated all the emotions, the values, the ideals that make life meaningful, that have given men something to live for, struggle over, and die for. Historical events have created all the basic human grouping that attach to these (Damel 1973 in Ogbondah 2016). Any community that is serious about history is also always moving forward with their ways of doing things. History may include:

- Selection of events;
- Establishment of course-effect relationship;
- Choice of the fact out of many; and
- Use of event for problem-solving.

It is a truthful integrated account of the relationship between persons events, times and places (Osokoya, 1995). Furthermore Orubite (2002) opined that history is an imaginative creation, a personal possession which each one of us fashions out of his individual experience, adapts to his practical or emotional needs and adorns as well as may be to suit his aesthetic tastes. This means that history is a process that spans through the past, present and future. History

brings the past into the present and then projects into the future. Also, there is no history without an interest or purpose on the part of historians. Thus historian has utilitarian value. Etymologically, education derived its meaning from two Latin words 'educare and educere' respectively. The word 'educare is interpreted to mean; to train or to form or to mould. Education here seems to be sociologically biased. In other words, educare implies that the society trains, form or mould the individual to achieve the societal needs and aspirations. This perspective of the education has little to consider, on the natural potentialities of the individual child, while the word "educere" is interpreted to mean; to build, to lead or develop. This perspective of the concept is mostly favoured by the humanists, who insist that the function of education is to develop the natural potentialities in the child to enable him function in the society according to his abilities, interest and need. This perspective of the concept of education is child-centered, whereas the former is society-centered or subject matter-centered.

On the other hand, education in its broadest term is defined as the transmission of culture from one generation to another for the benefit, survival and continuity of any given society. Culture is referred to as the over-all ways of living, value systems and beliefs that are accepted at worthwhile by the greater majority of member of a given society as any point in time. Culture is dynamic, so is education which is not only the method of transmission, but also the content that is being transmitted. This is because culture at any point in time determines the education that is given. The general impression, which the non-initiate have is that education is synonymous with schooling. This is not true because we are talking about "culture transmission". Thus there are three types of education, formal, informal and non-formal. Formal education is properly designed, highly programmed and deliberate course of learning/teaching that take place in a formal school setting. While informal education is the opposite of formal education. It is the diffused, non-programmed non compartmentalized process of learning that take place in our homes at the market place farms, a ready example is indigenous education. On the other hand, non-formal education in some cases has all the attribute of formal education but take place outside the normal regular school system. Education is fundamental to human progress, enabling individuals and communities to acquire skills and knowledge, essential for improving their quality of life. Every country decides the purpose for which she wants to achieve through her education. Nigerian philosophy of education asserts among other things that education is instrument for national development where the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development and interaction of persons and ideas constitute aspects of education. It further notes that education foster the worth and development of the individual for each individual's sake and for the general development of the society (FRN, 2014).

So what is history of education? As a study in human science, historians have attempted to artificially classify the subject into diverse spheres of life; political history, social history, economic history, educational history or history of education among others. According to Tyack (1955), history of education has to do with origin and evolution of education in the past and to apply such practical valuable to the exhortation and inspiration of teachers and citizens in general. To Bailyn (1960), history of education in the broadest terms means the study of the entire process by which a culture transmits itself across the generations. Furthermore, Tyack (1955) observed that, this is advancement on the early 20th century accepted task of history of education which is to trace in scientific manner the origin and evolution of public education. Thus according to Tyack in Sheman and Kirschnner (1976), history of education sweeps beyond formally pedagogy to include family and church, library and going groups, and all the other varied means of shaping intellect and characters. As observed by Orubite (2002), essentially, history of education is the study of different aspects of education, their development and interaction with one another, and the other determining

factors in the society with a view to making the present better and anticipate a glorious future for our society.

Abiri (2005) asserts that history of education refers to the accounts, records or stories of all educational activities in the past, across the ages, and changes on development that have occurred in the process of educating or bringing up children both formal institutions of learning and otherwise all over the world. The main crux of educational history is to teach the knowledge of educational past which could be applied to improve the present educational system. While to Wosu (2016), history of education, as an academic discipline could be viewed as the application of historical method or skills in studying and improving the education process of the society. It tries to study the educational practices of the past noting their strength and weakness, so as to build a better system for present and future generation. It gives a starting point to educational process of a people and tries to defend some misconception and misinterpretation placed on the educational system by some foreign authors. This eventually would enable the teachers of history of education to interpret and generalized educational experiences in order to free themselves from routine. To Ogbondah (2016), History of education is the study of origin, development, growth influence, principles, practices and policies of education of any society. It also embraces types and level of educational institutions, the standard of teaching, the nature and scope of curriculum, funding, control of education, success and failure of any administrative policy and so on.

In a similar earlier work, Collingwood (1946) suggested four characteristics of history, these are:

- That it is scientific or begin by knowing and tells what it knows;
- That it is humanistic, or asks question about what was done by men of determinate times in the past;
- That it is rational, or base the answer which it gives on ground, namely appeal to evidence; and
- That it is self-revelatory, or exists in order to tell man what man is by what man did.

In the same vein, Blyth (1994) gave five elements of history. Firstly to him, history is about real people and real events interacting upon each other in the past. Secondly, history is concern with sequence, time and chronology. As third elements is the evidence, which enable us to know what actually happened in the past. A fourth element is the communication of the others to the past through talking, teaching and writing, whilst the fifth element is the way in which the past affects the present. The value or relevance of history of western education cannot be over-emphasized. In every wide range, history of western education is obviously seen to be the route through which young generation learn how the existence of what is education in western sense came into being. According to Ogbondah (2016), the history of western education discloses to the modern world those great pioneers associate with the development of educational principles, policies and philosophers. It erases ignorance about the people that deliberately worked hard to the growth of education and the types and the system practices from earliest time. Such people like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle among other were made known as well as their efforts and contributions via the teaching of history of western education.

THE VALUES OF HISTORY OF EDUCATION TO TEACHERS

By the second half of the 20th century history of education has started assuming the shape, which it exhibits today, and this now has implications for teacher preparation of what relevance, importance or usefulness is the discipline to teacher education? There is a common saying that one who does not know where he/she is presently, definitely will not know the direction of the future! Also the teacher is the last man of defence when it come to the implementation of any educational policy or programme (Orubite, 2002). Thus it is imperative that the teachers should know the evolutionary trend of education in all its ramifications so as to be able to perform all the functions required of a teacher in the overall educational enterprise furthermore according to Bariko (1983) in Garba (2014) one of the greater want of Nigeria today, in her present quest for development at both the public, private and education sector are for dedicated men who can turn our social, economic, science and technology and political institution around to operate solely for the good they can do, for the people they can serve for the peace and security they can promote and education and civilization they can advance.

Tyack (1955) on his comprehensive view observed that, in studying institutional tradition and alternative options, teachers should understand the social role and context of education conceived both as schooling and more broadly as cultural transmission, what task has the society assigned to various social agencies in different periods and why? How have educational innovators operated both within and without the educational system? How has the actual change matched the intent of the reformers? What have been the various models for the transaction of social and society? Who made educational decisions? On what grounds? What alternative decision might have been made and what might their consequences have been?

Indeed this is the task of history of education and it relevance to teacher preparation. However Wosu (2016) considered the following values of history of education to the teachers amongst others:

- By examining the actualities and the alternatives in education, one can become aware of the realistic choice in the present;
- Teaching-learning processes are made much easy when one is acquainted with the trends of educational development of his area or elsewhere;
- The knowledge of the problems of the past would assist teacher to solve easily the problems of the moment;
- It will help the teachers to know the various factors that influence educational development of any nation;
- The knowledge of the history of education gives teachers confidence in education, helps teachers to prepare adequately in the preservation and the transmission of culture from generation to generation;
- The study of history of education help us to appreciate the various aspects of our past-educational processes so as to link them to the present;
- It enable us to know what type of education we had and the purpose it served in the past; and
- It gives us the opportunity of knowing our past mistakes in education with the view to making necessary amends.

Furthermore, it creates ways through which ancient civilization and education could be compared and contrasted with the present one. This is so because it made us to know the kind of teachers, classroom, mode of teaching and schools in particular, which existed as of then and to relate them with now. It is through this process one could really tell if we are progressing or retrogressing in the sphere of education. Our educational policies and

Practices will be well understood in knowing how we bequeathed it from those we got it from. It will also be beneficial to know the past in order to plan a successful and effective future. The adoption of questioning and answering method of teaching propounded by Socrates was made possible with the knowledge of history of western education. It is noteworthy that no study of educational policy, practice and method is complete without knowing the earlier though practice and policies of education of the early founders. It is very important to get to the root of what we have inherited so as to enhance our own understanding and success in educational policies and planning. To add to the above mention Ogbondah (2016) outline the importance of history of education to the teacher such:

- To enable the teachers get background knowledge, understanding of relevant materials and putting those materials learnt in action. The understanding of the various trends that have led to educational development make teaching-learning easy and comfortable;
- Help to preserve the culture of the people by transmitting it to the learner;
- It enable the teacher and learners to know what obtained then before independent and what should be;
- It equips students and teachers with the knowledge of the past with ups and downs to enable them solve problems;
- It will throw some light on our present educational problems;
- It help the teacher to develop a positive image of himself and his country;
- It help the teachers to appreciate the formidable forces and factors that influence educational development in the country.

PROSPECT AND CHALLENGES OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

- One of the greatest challenges of our times seems to be centered around how we can train and retrain historians with very deep interest in the subject of history of education, professional teachers who will be able to keep history alive in schools: those who will sufficiently motivate our young generation and imbue them with a thirst for knowledge;
- History has to compete with modern day secondary school curriculum where prestige and phases has shifted from the humane studies to the science and technology. Until the subject is handed by professional and qualified teachers of the subject, students offering the subject will continue to diminish. It is only the competently trained history teacher who could demonstrate regularly to students and the consumers of the school products the benefits of studying history and history of education in the scientific age. This can only be accomplished through the quality of history and history of education at all the school levels. No doubt only the imaginative and interesting teacher could only be a catalyst to a young man's decision to study a traditional subject like history or history of education at this technological period of our time;
- In view of the values of history of education to the teacher and to our survival as earlier discussed above, perhaps all students irrespective of their areas of specialization should be exposed to history of education. Apart from students of humanities, student of science and technology have a great deal of use of history of education in the application, dissemination and implementation of their scientific and technological inventions and break through.

THE WAY FORWARD AS SUGGESTED IN THE CONCLUSION

It is important that every traditional subject in the entire educational levels curriculum including history or history of education should be able to justify its existence in this scientific and technological age. Partington (1980) advanced reasons why history should continue to remain relevant to teachers and in the school curriculum despite the negative argument of some experts. To him history of education plays the role of initiating children into specific heritage and the world picture, instill in children a given set of moral belief and help them to make better sense of the present world.

With reference to the objectives of teaching history of education in Nigeria, it allows students to understand the Nigerian heritage by exploring the society that is what it is, how it grows, the way it works and been what it has achieved. Fundamentally, the main purpose of education is to produce useful citizens. A person is said to be useful, if he can positively develop himself and contribute to the development of the society where he lives (Wosu, 2016). More committed competent history teachers therefore need to be trained and groomed for meeting the above challenges. Perhaps the secondary school history curriculum should be reviewed to cater for the needs of teaching of education and also restructured to meet the demands of our times and modern human existence.

Apart from the professional teaching qualification demanded of history teachers, the curriculum of history of education and also made it more relevant to the demands of the modern times. History of Education teaching at the university level should be broadened to include history teachers at the university levels who should therefore be updated with history of education through on-the-job training, workshops, seminars and attendance of international conferences. Short vacation courses on history of education courses should be organized for the already university trained and qualified teachers in our secondary schools. More teachers should also be encouraged to under-take undergraduate courses in educational history while status of teachers of history of education be raised through government's recognition and remuneration just like their counterpart in the sciences.

The competencies /demands of the history teacher are; knowing the subject (history), keeping historical interest alive, managing classroom effectively and assessing and evaluating students' progress (Osokoya, 2010).

Knowing the subject: An important job expectation of a history teacher is that he/she should knowledgeable in the subject much above the level of the students. Failure to knowledgeable in the subject, might lead to giving wrong information to students. Should this happens students might be temporarily or permanently maimed and this would definitely affect their academic performance in the subject.

Keeping historical interest alive. Perhaps another major quality expected of good teacher of the subject (history) is to keep the historical interest alive at all times. By this we mean that the history teacher should always strive for current books and journals in his/her field to keep him/her abreast of time. He/she should update his/her knowledge of history from time to time by interacting with his colleagues from other schools through attendance at conferences, seminars, lectures, workshops organized for history teachers at local and national levels as well as joining historical clubs or communities. Furthermore, he/she should strive to uplift himself/herself by seeking admission for higher degree at university level studying courses leading to the award of masters as well as Ph.D. in education of history.

Managing effective classroom: Managing effective classroom demands that teaching and learning resources should be used to promote student learning in history. This seems to be an obvious statement, but resources can be used as 'decoration' with no clear purpose in mind apart from some vague belief that they ought to be used. We should make the learning

environment as pleasant as possible through the use of displays, whilst the importance of colour should not be underestimated. The history teacher careful planning of daily activities and providing necessary teaching materials, when and where needed. He should also be able to provide for student individual differences especially in rates of assimilation and understanding of historical concepts. History teachers need to understand and develop different styles of management and organization putting into consideration the age and ability of students. Furthermore, the history teacher should understand that different strategies would be applied according to whether the teaching is aimed at the whole class, a group, or an individual. Although teachers need to be flexible and adaptable yet the ways in which they operate with one group may not be appropriate with another.

Assessing and evaluating students' progress: The history teacher should not only be knowledgeable in the art and science of monitoring students' progress, he/she should also be able to construct his/her own –self-made test in measuring the students' performance and dealing with such student that have some problems in the mastery of history concept. History teacher therefore need students' evaluation results to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and materials, and the selection of learning experiences, the diagnosis of learning difficulties and the guardians of learning in order to improve the instructional process.

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