ENHANCING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT IN NIGERIA THROUGH TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE OF TRCN

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ABSTRACT: The quality of teachers is an important factor in the achievement of educational goals, and this is why Wokocha (2013) asserts that the quality of the teacher could be determined through intellectual competence, mastery of content, teaching experience, skills and dissemination of knowledge. Thus, one of the best ways to raise the quality of teachers is by building their capacity through Mandatory Continuous Professional Development Programmes, (MCPD). Social engagement through teacher education and training has been one of the areas of emphasis of the Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). This paper uses secondary data analysis to discuss the activities of Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria. It examines how social dynamism and globalization demand emerging skills from education and educators. It argues that the new reality requires the need to incorporate new skills into teaching including social issues to encourage deeper connection to social engagement issues. It concludes that teacher education and training is one of the effective ways of ensuring social engagements. Using the experience of the TRCN, the paper shares some strategies and skills that can be employed to inculcate social engagement in teacher training and education.

Education is a gateway to instituting and disseminating change; social engagement is one such change that can help snowball for advancement in the education of teachers as well as to help re-evaluate their approach to teaching and learning. The teachers view on teaching and learning really needs to be updated often especially that majority of them quite often become too attached to given methods and as such, become oblivious of other possibilities they could explore to assist learners connect to knowledge (Avoseh, 2006-2007). This is imperative as it is a known phenomenon that teaching and learning most often takes a one-way approach where the teacher is the one basically doing all the talking while the students just sit back and listen with little or no feedback/interaction as was succinctly affirmed by Hurst, Wallace & Nixon (2013, p. 376) thus, "the model of discourse in most classrooms is a one-way communication from the teacher to the students." One-way interaction is obviously against the philosophy of Dewey (1963) who posits that learning is primarily a social activity. To take the burden of teaching and learning off the shoulder of the teachers as Vacca & Vacca (2002) put it, everyone needs to be given a participatory opportunity to dialogue for real interaction, to ensure everyone is given the chance to be heard, after, Avoseh (2006-2007) says that dialogue is fundamental in any adult education methodology. Routman (2005, p. 207) affirms that "students learn more when they are able to talk to one another and be actively involved." The teacher's role in fostering social engagement cannot be under-estimated and this is why it is very important for the social engagement tenets to be fully incorporated into

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teachers' professional development programs. In short, social interaction is vital to the learning process because, a mired teacher education leads to serious disruptions in the society hence, the need for continued upgrading in teaching and learning methods, approaches and exposures since the teacher plays a critical role in instituting social engagement rules as they are the custodian of knowledge. As a matter of interest, culturally inclusive pedagogy, transformative education help instructors who facilitate learning in primary, secondary and undergraduate classrooms to transform their practice (Django & Alim, 2017; Hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2006).

Social engagement is a critical consideration for education, and this is why Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin (1995) uphold that teacher education is one sure way of incorporating social interaction/engagement issues into teaching and learning process. According to them, when social interaction becomes part of the classroom dynamics, classrooms become active places; teachers need to experience this for themselves, so they know how to create this type of learning environment in their own classrooms). Social engagement can be denoted to mean an interaction, engagement or enlightening discussion amongst learners, thus Vacca et al. (2011) theorized that, socially interactive learners are engaged learners (Vacca et al., 2011). Social engagement is described as an interaction often theorized within a framework of social justice, (Carpenter, 2019). It is a concept that has to do with the interactions between students and their peers as well as interactions between students and staff and this this nature of interaction is instrumental to students' success. Social engagement helps in inculcating some of the well desired change as it utilizes the approach of interaction and involvement. The sense of inclusion which social engagement entails in the long run births stellar performances and better outputs in education as upheld by Hurst, Wallace & Nixon (2013) who summed that social interaction improves students learning by enhancing their knowledge of literacy and teaching and their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. That culture of exclusion does not allow key stakeholders, that is the teachers to be involved in key decision-making process and this makes them to take the back seat in teaching and learning and as a matter of fact, education in entirety and this in itself abhors ownership and pervert's excellence, (Hammond, 2000). In the real sense, teachers can no longer be positioned in the rear in issues that concern them and then be eventually expected to implement such a change they were not part-of, (Broemmel, 2006; Ingersoll, 2003; Kirk & Macdonald, 2001; Markow & Pieters, 2010).

Education is one sure means of inculcating desired change in any upwardly mobile society and the case for social engagement is not an exception. The burden and expectation on education is huge as it is expected to help liberate the mind and empower it with the ability of critical thinking which in the long run allows for empowerment. Teacher education programs should have the goal of presenting curriculum in such a way to teach the necessity of social interaction. Pre-service and in-service programs need to model how social interaction encourages collective problem solving and knowledge sharing (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). For Bromley (2008, p. 111), active engagement helps create "a positive classroom environment and establish a community of learners who support each other." This process is very vital because of the demands of globalization and social dynamism, which is in tandem with the goal of education in Nigeria as stated by the national policy on education; thus, provide teachers with the

intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations (Federal Government of Nigeria (NPE) (2013). The world is confronted with unprecedented challenges and changes ranging from social, economic and environmental, all driven by hastening globalization and the dynamism in technological developments thus providing a myriad of new opportunities for human advancement (OECD, 2108). Education cannot be left out, hence the need to be prepared and ready to cope with the uncertain and ever-changing future. The future is uncertain, and we cannot predict it; but we need to be open and ready for it. The children entering education in 2018 will be young adults in 2030 and as such, they need the right knowledge, skills, capabilities, exposures and development to be able to function adequately in the global space. Therefore, education needs to devise the means to incorporate contemporary values such as the social engagement which gives a room for the engagement of all to ensure broad access and opportunity to all especially in expressive education. The goal of teacher education encourages dynamism and that is why it stated, thus, shall continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and in the curriculum. Teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in the profession.

Education is a major concern for all societies. As the foundation and essential driving force of economic, social, and human development, education is at the heart of the change that is dramatically affecting our world in the areas of science, technology, economics, and culture. It is the reason behind social change and scientific progress, and in its turn, it is subjected to the results of progress that it itself has engendered, both with regard to content as well as methods and established aims (Gupta, 2017). The role of education in the face of globalization and dynamism is to prepare the present children for the oncoming future; for jobs that have not yet been created, for technologies that have not yet been invented, to solve problems that have not yet been anticipated, (OECD, 2018). Education is one of the means by which learners can be equipped with the requisite skills and competencies to face the daunting future as well as contribute meaningfully to it especially with the changed gold-post due to the unprecedented Coronavirus pandemic. "The entire world has been thrown into confusion with the scourge of the novel Corona virus also known as COVID-19. This virus that began in Wuhan China in November 2019 can now be said to have registered its presence in almost every country of the continent and its really dealing its blow as demonstrated in the exponential reported cases and deaths recorded across the globe. Because of this raging pandemic, every aspect of the human life has been affected" (Alimigbe, 2020). To engineer this change, the teacher will have a significant role to play in encouraging positive peer relationships and creating such identity and belonging to help nurture in a number of ways as help creating space within the academic milieu where students spend time together, staff organize social activities and peer mentoring and coaching, (Jones & Thomas, 2012).

As already identified, the teacher plays a very key role in fostering social engagement tenets and being open to ideas they say, is the way forward. The Nigerian education system is rife with situations where the teacher is seen as "alpha and omega" in the teaching and learning process. Most often, teaching and learning is usually a one-way approach, where the teacher stands as the reservoir and this is obviously against the philosophy of Dewey (1963) who believes that learning is primarily a social activity. A

great role therefore for the TRCN is to emphasis social engagement in their MCPD programs by fully incorporating it to ensure they reflect in the teachers teaching and learning. This is imperative especially since studies have found out that when students air their views, when they are given opportunity to contribute to what they learn, more understanding occurs, and more learning takes place. Nigeria, a creation of European imperialism with population of over 200 million, spanning over an expanse of land about 351,649 sq mi (910,771 sq km), has over 250 ethnic groups and widely varied culture and three regionally dominant ethnic groups: the Hausa in the North, the Yoruba in the west and the Igbo in the East (Infoplease, 2017). Fafunwa (1981) accounted that formal education can be traced to 1842 when the first primary school was established in Badagry, Nigeria, and then later spread to other parts of Nigeria such as Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ogbomoso, Oyo, Calabar and a host of other towns, particularly in the then Southern protectorate of Nigeria. It was the efforts of churches like Church Missionary Society (CMS), Roman Catholic Mission, and Wesleyan Missionary Society, that made the spread of Western education in Nigeria a reality, and since then the country's educational history has evolved to what it is in the present-day Nigeria. Nigeria has 36 states and the Federal capital Territory Abuja. The country is divided into (6) geo-political zones for political and administration purposes, South-South (6 states), South-East (5 states), South- West (6 states), North- Central (5 states), North-West (7 states) and North-East (6 states).

The Challenges of Education Post COVID-19

Prior to COVID-19, the phenomenon of globalization had always posed challenges to education because of what most authors have agreed is its intricate connection to the maximization of profit. Profit takes priority in a market economy which is the framework of globalization. Merriam (2010) noted that the market economy frame of globalization makes it more beneficial to countries that fall within the developed bracket. Conversely, it slants against countries that are outside the economically developed circle. Jarvis (2008) put the downside of globalization more poignantly asserting that "even in the first world, the poor continue to be excluded and get poorer" (cited in Merriam 2010, p. 402). Merriam further concurred with Jarvis's submission by emphasizing the extent to which marginalized groups have been overrun by uneven economic development that has causal link to globalization. In most communities of the developing world, social services – especially education – often suffer most the pangs of uneven economic development. What is true of any developing world is especially true in Nigeria where education – and teachers – have remained of second order importance.

The challenges of globalization prior to COVID-19 were borderless in their reach of vulnerable populations across the globe. COVID-19 certainly increases the downside of globalization and have further made "difficult-to-reach and underserved populations face further obstacles" to education (Boeren, Roumel, & Roessger 2020, p. 201). Researchers and authors are agreed that COVID-19 will widen the global inequity gap and that development education will suffer (McCann & Matenga, 2020 & McCloskey, 2020).

Beyond individuals, some countries and continents belong to the club of "underserved" in the comity of nations. McCann & Matenga (2020) were blunter in asserting that "the

impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Global South will be formidable and will take decades to recover from" (p. 161). This is truer of Africa and Nigeria.

An expert on the African Union (AU) affirmed that one major post COVID-19 challenge is its propensity to increase 'cap-in-hand' diplomacy. There is now a risk that the COVID-19 crisis may make African countries more dependent on foreign assistance… and that "These effects in the health and economic sectors will expose and compound pre-existing social, political, and environmental vulnerabilities" (Cedric de Coning, 2020).

What is true of the global south is true of Africa. And what is true of Africa is especially true of Nigeria and more so of education in Nigeria. At the onset of the COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020, all federal educational institutions were closed. Seven months after, all federal universities and related institutions responsible for teacher education have remained closed with no viable option of online instruction. The downside of the closure with no alternate delivery options have left millions of students, teachers, teacher educators, and teachers-in-training vulnerable to all forms of social ills. Most private institutions across the country were forced to close or downsize their operations. Most young people have either become victims of crime or accomplices in crime. A recent week-long national protest against police brutality in Nigeria and the resultant violence – including loss of lives and property- are indicators of the challenges that await education post COVID-19.

Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), according to the TRCN Act CAP T.3 (of 2004, section 1), was established by ACT 31 of 1993 now CAP T.3 of 2004 in fulfilment of the quest for the professionalization of the teaching profession. Nigerian Teachers had over the years clamoured for the establishment of a regulatory agency of their own as obtains for all professional groups to regulate the practice of the profession. They noted that the absence of such an agency was responsible for the low esteem of the profession, promoted the notion of teaching as an all-comers job; responsible for the deterioration of the material condition of teachers and its negative impact on the quality of education in the country.

Events preceding the establishment of TRCN included an unprecedented national strike by the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) in 1992 calling for the establishment of the council, and a series of other agitations and interactive action by stakeholders to fully sensitize the nation on the need for such agency and the advantages that it portends.

The enactment of the TRCN ACT in 1993 did not however, materialize in its immediate take off. This had to wait for another six years before the Registrar/Chief Executive of the Council was appointed in April 1999. Even at that, the Council effectively commenced operation in June 2000. Thus, the phenomenal expansion of the education system in the country gave rise to a plethora of problems among which is the poor teacher quality and inadequate number of teachers who are also poorly remunerated and motivated hence the establishment of TRCN to control and regulate the teaching profession in all aspects and ramifications in Nigeria, (National Policy on Education)

This Act empowers the Council to among other responsibilities to;

- *Determine who are teachers in Nigeria,*
- *Determine what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered as teachers under this Act and raising those standards from time to time as circumstances may permit,*
- *Secure in accordance with the provisions of this Act the establishment and maintenance of a register of teachers and the publication from time to time of the lists of those persons,*
- *Regulate and control the teaching profession in all its aspects and ramifications,*
- *Classify from time-to-time members of the teaching profession according to their levels of training and qualification,*
- *Perform through the Council established under the Act the functions conferred on it by the Act.*

In fulfilment of these mandates, the Council's vision was aimed at regulating teacher education, training and practice at all levels and sectors of the Nigerian education system in order to match teacher quality, discipline, professionalism, reward and dignity with international standards. The Council thus promotes professionalism in the teaching profession through accreditation, monitoring and supervision of teacher education programs at all levels of the nation's education system. The Act further empowers TRCN to mount, monitor and supervise Mandatory Continuing Professional Development Programs and at the same time, maintain discipline among teachers at all levels of the education system in the country. Basically, the TRCN's activities have been geared towards achieving her mandates hence informing all the programs being executed to meet the yearning and improving the aspirations of the teachers, teachers' professionalism and the teaching profession in general for effective service delivery. TRCN has and continues to execute programs and activities in the areas of Professionalism, Quality Assurance, collaboration with donor agencies, access to teacher education and professionalism, professional conduct and enforcement and professional publications. Some of these activities include but not limited to:

1. Conduct of Professional Qualifying Examinations (PQE), Professional Qualifying Examination Integrated (PQEi) for final year students in education accredited institutions; and Professional Qualifying Examination for teachers in the diaspora (PQEd): this helps to ensure that the teachers not only possess certificates but continually update their knowledge through the administering, assessing and grading of prospective teachers before they are registered and licensed to be admitted into the teaching profession in the country. The examination ensures that only well-educated and qualified teachers are certified to teach in Nigerian schools.
2. Registration of teachers for certification: this is done in line with the Council's mandate of securing, establishing, and maintaining a register of teachers in the country. the Council has been able to register well over a million teachers who have successfully sat for and excelled in the professional qualifying examination.

Certification is the only thing that confers professional status as well as compels registered teachers to conform to the tenets of the profession.

3. Licensing of registered teachers: a distinguishing mark of a genuine professional is the possession of a valid practicing license at any point in time. The license is issued only to certified teachers who have passed the professional examination, and this is renewable after every (3) years based on evidence of successful attending of upgrade of knowledge by the teachers through the attendance of conferences and Mandatory Continuous Professional Development of which the Council keeps records and as well allocate points.

4. Mandatory Continuous Professional Development for teachers (MCPD): this refers to a set of developmental goals, capacity building and strategies and service delivery for ongoing, ceaseless improvement in the pedagogical and professional capacities of teachers. Mostly the council's MCPD programs entails annual general meetings, annual conference of registered teachers, workshops, seminars and relevant trainings approved by the Council. To this end, the Council developed as well as distributed MCPD manual to critical stakeholders and MCPD providers to guide their conduct and upgrading of teachers which is relevant for their license renewals after (3) years.

Other activities of the Council are: Professional standards for Nigerian teachers (stipulated standards for teacher/leaders in education system at all levels in the country); development of Continuous Professional Development Assessment Framework (CPDAF); harmonized national Benchmark for post graduate diploma in education (PGDE); Teachers Investigative Panel (TIP) and Teachers Tribunal (TT); Guidelines on accreditation and monitoring of teacher's education programs to monitor Professional Diploma in Education (PDE) and Post-Doctoral Diploma in Education (PDDE); Teachers code of conduct (to investigate, sanction and punish offenders); publication of *Nigerian Journal for Professional Teachers* (NJPT); Teachers Code of Conduct, professional diary, publication of Statistical Digest of Teachers in Nigeria; development of Career Path Policy for Teaching profession in Nigeria; issuance of Letters of Professional Standing to teachers willing to teach outside the shores of the country; Induction of students at point of graduation, World Bank collaboration on strengthening of mathematics & science education (SMASE) in Nigeria,

Teacher Training and Social Engagement

The teacher has an unquantifiable contribution to national development and that is why their training should often embrace dynamism and globalization to ensure equipping it with current trends for an upward development not only in education but national development in general. The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, in this regard, ensures quality of teacher education through the accreditation, monitoring and supervision of all courses and programs of teacher education institutions in Nigeria. They include the faculties and institutes of education in Nigerian Universities, colleges of Education, etc. To this effect, Abram (2012) asserts that social engagement is a strong factor in the elimination of problems associated to student retention which has plagued higher education for many years. Based on Abram's opinion, series of research have alluded to the fact that social engagement is instrumental to help in the improvement of the many students'

retention problems, since social engagement can determine to a large extent whether students will remain in school to complete their studies. In recognition of the place of the teacher and teacher education in political, economic and social development, the Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE) in her catch phrase, "no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers hence teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development" (Federal Government of Nigeria (NPE), 2013), exalted teacher education to her due place. Teacher education connotes a series of processes leading to the development of persons with requisite knowledge, skills and values to offer service as professional teachers, (Okebukola, 2001; 2007; 2015). To ensure that the teacher continues learning all through their professional and service years, this initial training to equip them with professional recognition does not stop hence the need for mandatory continuous professional development (MCPD). Thus, the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria is saddled with that responsibility of coordinating, administering and regulating teacher education and of course, MCPD. These interventions are all done in accordance with the goal of teacher education in the country amongst which are; help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals; provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to changing situations; enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession, Federal Government of Nigeria (NPE) (2013). These goals for teacher education resonate perfectly for social engagement since it connotes helping the teachers fit into the social life and this cannot be achieved if the teachers are not engaged, allowed to air their views or better still, allowed to be heard.

Teacher training is the opportunity for introduction of values, skills and knowledge that can be useful in the upgrading of the teacher's knowledge. it is the avenues the teachers have to have their say and make input to matters that concerns them. Many Nigerian teachers fail to incorporate social engagement rules into their teaching since on account of their own weak exposure to this during their own training.

Obviously, there is a connection between education and social engagement and Converse (1972) succinctly encapsulates this link thus:

> Whether one is dealing with cognitive matters such as level of factual information about politics or conceptual sophistication in its assessment; or such motivational matters as degree of attention paid to politics and emotional involvement in political affairs; or questions of actual behavior, such as engagement in any of a variety of political activities from party work to vote turnout itself: education is everywhere the universal solvent, and the relationship is always in the same direction. The higher the education, the greater the 'good' values of the variable. The educated citizen is attentive, knowledgeable, and participatory and the uneducated citizen is not. (p. 324)

The focus in the above quote points to the fact that "education is the universal solvent." Similarly, Almond and Verba (1963/1989, pp. 315-316) demonstrate the connectedness between education and social engagement as "…the uneducated man or the man with the limited education is a different political actor from the man who has achieved a higher

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level of education." The relationship of education to social engagement is something reflected in all spheres as also noted by Marsh and Kaase (1979, p. 186) who noted the striking empirical regularity linking education and engagement thus:

> Education is one of the most important predictors – usually, in fact, the most important predictor – of many forms of social participation – from voting to associational membership, to chairing a local committee to hosting a dinner party to giving blood. The same basic pattern applies to both men and women and to all races and generations. Education, in short, is an extremely powerful predictor of civic engagement.

In all of these, the link between education and social engagement cannot be underemphasized because people attend school and their level of engagement is positively boosted and this is why Campbell (2006, p. 28) posits that; "one school of thought holds that, for at least some types of engagement, the content of education does not matter at all that education only serves to enhance an individual's socioeconomic status, which in turn increases engagement." Campbell in his analysis of the link between education and engagement explains that as much is yet to be learned of the connectedness between education and engagement:

> the preponderance of the existing evidence recommends moving forward with more analysis, including the development of indicators pertaining to the links between education and engagement. Such indicators might include individual-level measures of young people's civic and social engagement and extra-curricular involvement, as well as aggregated measures of the "ethos" or culture within a school. School ethos can incorporate the openness of the classroom climate, the degree to which students' opinions are respected by teachers and administrators, and the overall sense of community within the school.

The Case of TRCN

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria in keeping to her mandates have been executing as well as regulating the conduct of the Mandatory Continuous Professional Development programs in the country in a bid to constantly update the repository of the Nigerian teachers. Every profession can lead ideas within its field of expertise through continuous exploration of ideas and knowledge, hence a core role for TRCN.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) refers to a set of developmental goals, capacity building and strategies and service delivery for on-going, ceaseless improvement in the pedagogical and professional capacities of teachers. Generally, TRCN's CPD programs cover annual general meetings, annual conference of registered teachers, workshops and seminars as well as other training programs approved by TRCN from time to time. It also includes training and education programs organized within and outside the education sector which is relevant to the teaching profession in meeting the CPD standards. To this end, TRCN has developed and equally distributed MCPD manual to critical stakeholders and MCPD providers like the National Teachers Institute (NTI), Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs), Non- Governmental Organizations, etc.

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (2015) enumerated the objectives of the MCPD thus;

- Helps to ensure teachers keep abreast of developments in theory and practice of the profession as well as provides a forum for cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences.
- Offers intellectual, social and emotional engagement with ideas, materials, and colleagues to be intellectually engaged in their discipline and work regularly with others in their field.
- The MCPD is a sure way to maintain competence and relevance of the education/teachers in economic, technological, political and social environment through keeping of teachers abreast with the latest innovations in the teaching profession and beyond which are all geared towards maintaining professional excellence at all times. This is an ongoing process of change in order to assist teachers adopt, contribute and participate actively in the implementation of challenges ahead and also to enhance the teacher's commitment to the teaching profession in general.
- MCPD serves as an on-going process of change in other to assist teachers adapt, contribute and participate actively in the implementation of challenges ahead.

TRCN is committed to professional development of teachers in that she collaborates with myriad of stakeholders in education to attract free training programs for teachers. So, the Council, in this regard, has organized joint capacity building workshops and seminars for teachers with the World Bank, UNESCO, and other international and National agencies. Similarly, every year, TRCN tours the entire country with experts from various fields training teachers in critical areas needing urgent improvement. The Council in cognizant of the fact that she is saddled with the responsibilities of determining the standards that must be attained by Professional teachers in the country and equally raising those standards from time to time, carries out series of professional developments activities to keep the teachers abreast of innovations in the teaching profession as well as help to enhance their skills for social engagement. Discussed below therefore are some of the activities that TRCN has executed in the recent past.

Capacity building training on Digital Literacy for Nigerian teachers at the basic and post basic levels

Because of education dynamism and the transformations that information technology is evolving, TRCN continually sees the need to expose the Nigerian teachers to new developments in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) innovations. TRCN embarks on digital literacy training programme for teachers to keep them abreast of national/global trends in innovations in ICT to enable them to bring the knowledge to bear in their teaching and learning processes. The training, which is usually organized concurrently in all the (6) geo-political areas, attracts (though a quite minimal number of teachers) 20 teachers from each of the 36 states of the Federation including the Federal capital territory who are later expected to cascade the knowledge received down to their fellow teachers.

Pedagogical Training for Mathematics and English Teachers

This program is an improvement workshop for teachers of mathematics and English language in Nigerian junior and senior secondary schools. In the Nigerian educational system, Mathematics and English language are two critical subjects that students must pass if they are to advance in the world of academics or even in the vocations and as such, teachers knowledge needs to be constantly updated in this regard, to ensure the students get the best in terms of innovations as well as improve their professional development. The workshop basically is to enhance the pedagogical skills of teachers of Mathematics and English Language at the junior and senior secondary schools through addressing issues relating to poor teaching methods and skills, poor teacher preparation in these subject areas, among other factors. The improvement workshop features international and local experts versed in the best practices of the subject areas who share experiences with the teachers about key variables for academic performances in other countries and the lesson for Nigerian and also, opportunity to disseminate basic findings and techniques for teaching of both subjects. Thus, during this workshop sessions, experts in the fields lead the teachers through.

Continuous Professional Development Workshop for Registered Teachers on the Professional Standards for Teaching Profession in Nigeria (PSTPN)

The Council haven recently embarked on a review of one of her critical documents, which encapsulates all that every teacher is expected to know and exhibit in the practice of the profession in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, to depict emerging issues in education and some gaps observed in the former edition, (Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, 2019). The document defines what a professional teacher must know and put into practice as well as the core values, ideals and conducts that professionals must exhibit. The review is done to include four domains of professional standards for teaching and teachers thus: professional knowledge, professional practice, professional conduct and membership obligations. Also included are the professional standards for school leadership which includes (7) areas thus: Developing self and subordinates; leading professional knowledge service and conduct; managing resources in the school; generating resources internally and ensuring accountability; promoting school improvement, innovation and change; supporting learners' enrolment and participation; and engaging and working with the community. The review became imperative as a result of emerging issues and activities in the education sector and the need to standardize professional practice to meet international specification. In order to provide an inclusive framework, the Council invited stakeholders from Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT), Deans of Faculties of Education, Provost of Colleges of Education and Rectors of Polytechnics, National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS), School Based Management Committees (SBMCS), classroom teachers and Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs). After the Council Haven did the review, the need then arose to disseminate the content of the PSTPN to the teachers to ensure they were conversant with the contents and able to apply them to their teaching. To this effect, a two -day training was organized for basic and senior secondary school teacher on the contents and application of the Professional Standards for

their effective service delivery by TRCN. The training which was intended to train the teachers on the nitty-gritty of the document, was an interactive session where the teachers and their trainers deliberated on a series of issues or subject areas arising from the document, and everyone was equally given an opportunity to offer input on the direction of events for the new documents all in the bid of encouraging social engagement.

In all of the above TRCN programs, there are various strategies and skills that the Council utilizes to engender social engagement to help teachers in use for their teaching and learning process for values and principles and some of these are discussed below:

- **Free communication flow by involving everyone in the discussion** – TRCN in cognizant that effective communication is key and also that the teachers are valued and reliable voices in the execution of education objectives, school improvement and education outcomes. They are also res[ponsible for impacting teaching and learning, which allows for free communication flow in their Continuous Professional Development programs. To achieve this, all teachers are given level playing ground where they are made to know that their being selected to attend the program is not an accident and that their contributions are highly valued and respected and, as such, are welcomed to contribute to the discussions.
- **Encourage collaboration amongst teachers through group activities**- TRCN knows the teaching profession consists of a body of an intellectual community and as such uses her professional development programs to bring teachers together where they can freely discuss and share ideas on common subject matter which can help in progressing and sustaining the profession as it were. TRCN therefore prioritizes this community engagement by encouraging collaboration amongst the teacher through sharing them into groups to engender discussions. Through this community engagement and by TRCN making it a priority, teachers feel involved in their communities and build relationships by directly working with fellow teachers on education initiatives and progress and then also seeing themselves as part of the core group helping to set targets as key stakeholders. This kind of opportunities allows everyone to participate and see themselves as major players in initiating change in a system they are part of and this knowledge they can transfer and incorporate into their teaching.
- **Allowing for professional culture** - Professional cultures, they say, aid educators in committing to their growth and development, while a focus on collaboration promotes shared ideas and information, leading to a stronger in-school community of more effective and engaged teachers. TRCN being a Professional Regulator, ensures that her Professional development activities bring the teachers together in such a way that they can share professionally through social engagement. Through this way, teachers learn and share information on topical educational issues, ideas as well as interactive dialoguing and deliberations, which further develops their teaching and learning. TRCN MCPDs are usually avenue for learning where teachers come together to learn about and implement new initiatives through social engagements.

Conclusion

The paper has given a cursory look at enhancing social engagement in Nigeria through teachers' professional development using secondary data from the Teachers

Registration Council of Nigeria, a body tasked with regulating teaching in Nigeria. The paper looked at the imperative of social engagement, the role of education, the demands of globalization/social dynamism and especially post COVID-19, and the role of teachers in fostering social engagement especially given the peculiarities of Nigeria. The paper equally addressed the challenge of education post COVID-19, looking at the impact of globalization generally, especially on education and of teacher education. Similarly, the history, mandates, functions and activities of TRCN were x-rayed as well as showing the interconnectedness of teacher training and social engagement. Lastly, the paper used secondary data from the Teachers Registration council of Nigeria to connect the impact professional development has had in enhancing teachers' skills for social engagement as well as passing those skills on to reflect in their classes to students. The paper examined some documents and studies in adult education, sustainable development of cities and communities, and innovative technology. The paper highlighted that continuous development programs for teachers have the capacity of disseminating social engagement rules to teachers that they could use to impact their teachings, thus, there is, therefore, the need for TRCN to promote social engagement in their MCPD's for teachers by introducing social engagements tenets into her curriculum for sustainability of teacher education and of course, better outputs in teaching and learning.

Recommendation

The TRCN Mandatory Professional developments programs have proven to be real time opportunities for teachers to meet, relate and interact with their colleagues in such a way that makes them feel being carried along in issues concerning them. By this way, it makes them own outcomes of programs since they ascribe ownership. Although research has not been carried out to determine the effects the social engagement has on their teaching and learning, it is based on assumption that it has positive impact. Thus, studies could be carried out in this regard to relate relationship and possibly see how processes could be improved upon for the sustainability of the teachers as well as the teaching profession in general. Had a difficult time with this paragraph.

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