

## BUILDING CAPACITY: THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER PRODUCTION AND TRAINING IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS

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### Abstract

*In the quest to improve educational outcomes in Nigeria, the production and training of qualified teachers stand as pivotal elements. As the backbone of any educational system, teachers directly influence the quality of learning, student engagement, and overall academic success. Teacher production and training play a vital role in improving education quality in Nigerian schools. Nigeria faces challenges like a shortage of qualified teachers, uneven distribution, and inadequate training. These issues affect students' learning and overall educational outcomes. Increasing the number of well-trained teachers ensures every child gets access to good education. Proper training equips teachers with modern teaching methods, subject knowledge, and classroom management skills. This leads to better student engagement and success. Investing in teacher education also supports professional growth and motivation. Ultimately, strengthening teacher production and training is crucial for Nigeria's educational development and future progress.*

**Keywords:** Building capacity, Teacher production, Training,

### Introduction

A key role in both our individual and societal growth is education. The process of teaching someone new information, attitudes, and abilities so they may benefit both themselves and the wider community in which they live is known as education. It also involves providing a proper environment and assisting them in developing their physical, mental, moral, spiritual, and emotional well-being. However, it is important to distinguish between education and teaching, as the latter is only one facet of the former. The purpose of instruction is to direct students

towards correct learning, to convey knowledge, and to instruct. As a result, the instructor has to possess practical knowledge, professional abilities, and a deep understanding of children's psychology. The preparation of teachers is not the sum total of teacher education; in our curriculum, "training" and "educating" are not identical. The intricate and comprehensive process of training or preparing individuals whose vocation is teaching to fulfil their tasks as teachers and contribute to the development of their country is known as teacher education. While training may just impart fundamental performance abilities like running, swimming, writing, reading, and so on, education includes both mental and physical qualities in addition to values. According to Peretomode (1992) in Ekpiken and Edet (2014), a teacher is a person who is hired and recognised to assist students in achieving certain learning objectives in a classroom setting. It is the responsibility of the teacher to put the curriculum into practice in order to accomplish national development goals and educational objectives.

Based on the numerous policies that have been implemented, the Nigerian government is fully aware of the critical part that teachers provide in delivering educational initiatives that are required to enhance the nation's growth. For instance, the National Policy on Education (2004) makes it abundantly evident that the development of highly motivated, industrious, and efficient classroom teachers is the aim of teacher education and that the quality of teachers at any given institution cannot be surpassed. The Nigerian educational system has seen a lot in terms of programmes, policy creation, and recommendations from numerous task forces, commissions, boards, seminars, courses, symposia, and meetings on how to most effectively develop enthusiastic teachers so as to allow these individuals to educate and raise good and competent children. Regretfully, there is a gap in the practical implementation of these concepts and guidelines, which results in the development of very unsatisfied and uninspired instructors. Notwithstanding these circumstances, the importance of Nigerian educators in the development of the nation cannot be overstated, as they are widely seen as indispensable to the survival of any nation. Teachers are essential to the educational system and serve as centres for national progress. Because of this, the Nigerian government is convinced that the quality of teacher preparation should constantly be improved upon (reformed) in order to produce positive results for the institution of education by means of the expert setup of people for the responsibilities in educating and nation-building (Ikediwu, 2005).

Majasan (1995) in Ekpiken and Edet (2014) asserts that educational institutions and instructors support the development of a range of skills and competences that assist prepare people for a variety of roles in society. As a result, the teacher serves as a catalyst for advancement in science, economics, society, politics, and culture. the provision of labourers to the several industries within the country's economy, including physicians, engineers, accountants, scientists, and educators. For this reason, the various institutions and professions are considered to have originated from teacher education and teachers themselves. The workforce generated by the educational system supports every aspect of the country's growth, including the creation of more nutrient-dense food, an enhanced transportation network, cutting-edge medical care, and an extensive network of communication systems that enhance quality of life. In this sense, the educational system makes a significant contribution to the growth of the country. Teacher

education reform must generate highly motivated and effective classroom teachers who can integrate into the social fabric of every community and strengthen their commitment to the aims of national development if it is to preserve our educational system (Achimugu, 2000).

In Nigeria, the education system remains the most essential tool in engineering the future of this country. Central to this system are the teachers who impart knowledge, skills, and values to the next generation. Therefore, the production and training of teachers hold significant importance in ensuring a high-quality education for all Nigerian students. Teachers, as micro-level professionals, are a pivotal component in most educational institutions, as almost all education stakeholders agree. Additionally, everyone agrees that their work has a direct bearing on the system's and students' educational results.

It is important therefore, that the level of excellence in education in any country is directly connected to the capacity and competence of its teachers. In Nigeria, the need for effective teacher production and training has become increasingly evident in the quest for educational reform and improvement.

Nigeria faces significant challenges in its education sector, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching. The shortage of qualified teachers, uneven distribution of skilled educators between urban and rural areas, and the lack of continuous professional development opportunities have all contributed to a decline in education standard across Nigeria. Furthermore, the unstopped evolution of technology and teaching methodologies necessitates a continuous process of upskilling and reskilling for educators to remain effective in the classroom.

### **Shortage of Teachers: The Unresolved Issue**

For a variety of reasons, educators play a vital role in each community. Dasko (2002) defined a teacher as someone who shares information with others, provides care when necessary, and has the qualities of compassion, patience, and love. This is supported by Adewuyi and Ogunwuyi (2002), who offer a variety of lenses through which educators could be viewed as it relates to building the country. According to them, teachers can be seen as educators, tradition transmitters, technologists, moral educators, educators of life skills and values, locus-patentis, advisers, legislators and those tasked with putting policies into action, religious leaders, and strict disciplinarians. However, the lack of teachers is a global issue that is not exclusive to the educational system in Nigeria. According to the UNESCO Report of 1997, there were only 40 million teachers in the globe in 1980, out of an overall population of 5.5 billion. This means that there was one teacher for every 112 people. In Africa in 1965, there were approximately 100 high school instructors for every 150,000 students. The problem may be defined as the lack of experienced and competent instructors in the state's public schools, or it can be seen as the lack of eager and dedicated teachers.

Teacher shortages have been a persistent issue in the field of education, impacting the quality of instruction and the overall learning experience of students. In a study conducted by Fadipe

in 2000, four main categories of teacher shortages were identified, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of this challenge.

**1. Subject-Specific Shortages:** One of the primary categories of teacher shortages is the lack of educators in specific subject areas. This shortage often affects subjects such as mathematics, science, and special education. The demand for qualified teachers in these specialized fields frequently outstrips the available supply, leading to classrooms being staffed by instructors without the requisite expertise. As a result, students may not receive the high-quality instruction necessary to excel in these subjects, ultimately impacting their academic achievement and future opportunities.

**2. Geographic Shortages:** Geographic disparities in teacher distribution contribute significantly to the overall shortage of educators. Rural and remote areas often struggle to attract and retain qualified teachers, leading to understaffed schools and limited access to diverse educational opportunities. Conversely, urban areas may also experience shortages, particularly in high-need districts with challenging working conditions. The unequal distribution of teachers across different regions exacerbates educational inequities and hinders efforts to provide all students with access to quality education.

**3. Demographic Mismatch:** The demographic makeup of the teaching workforce often fails to align with the diversity of the student population. As student bodies become increasingly diverse, the lack of representation and inclusivity among teachers can impede the development of positive role models and culturally responsive pedagogical approaches. Addressing this demographic mismatch is crucial for fostering an inclusive learning environment and promoting a sense of belonging among students from various backgrounds.

**4. High-Need Schools and Specialized Programmes:** Certain schools, particularly those serving high-need populations or offering specialised programmes, encounter acute challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. These institutions often face complex issues related to student behavior, academic support, and community engagement, requiring educators with specific skills and expertise. However, the demanding nature of these roles, coupled with limited resources and support, can deter potential teachers from pursuing careers in these settings, perpetuating the cycle of shortages and educational disparities.

The four categories of teacher shortages identified encompass a range of interconnected factors that contribute to the pervasive challenges in staffing our schools with qualified, dedicated educators. Addressing these shortages demands a comprehensive approach that encompasses targeted recruitment efforts, support for professional development, and the creation of conducive working environments. By acknowledging the nuanced nature of teacher shortages and implementing strategic interventions, one can strive towards a more equitable and enriching educational landscape for all students.

## Shortage of Teacher: A Brief Review

Africa has a teacher shortage and has undergone distinct reviews. Showing the depth of the scarcity of teachers' difficulties. The lack of teachers in African nations has an impact on how the local curriculum is implemented. An additional UNESCO institution for statistics studies in order to meet the goal of universal primary education by 2015 and to replace current teachers, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2006) reported that a shortage of teachers is occurring in South and West Africa. The goal of Education for All (EFA) can undoubtedly never be accomplished without significant funding for educators. The suggestion attributed to the high number of untrained instructors in schools and the challenge of recruiting new teachers is sporadic training retention and professional development (Keuren, et al., 2014).

In a 2002 study, UNESCO found that one-third of secondary school teachers in 11 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa lacked formal training. Lewn (2002) has also demonstrated the lack of qualified instructors needed to accomplish the education for all goal. The majority of sub-Saharan African nations seem to be affected by two variables in particular when it comes to the teaching profession. First, the pay gap between this occupation and others that are equivalent has been extensively documented.

In 2012, there were over 29 million teachers working in primary education systems worldwide, with 82% of them being employed in developing nations. "Between 1999 and 2012, the number of primary teachers rose by 17%, or over 4 million instructors. The Arab States and sub-Saharan Africa had the biggest increases. Over the same time span, the number of secondary school teachers climbed from 24 to 32 million, which is twice as many as the number of elementary education instructors" (Keuren, et al., 2014; pg 14).

Of the 97 nations for which data was available in 2012, only five had ratios more than 30:1 at the upper secondary level. These five countries were Bangladesh, the Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Nigeria, and Yemen. In most nations, the upper secondary student-teacher ratios either fell or remained unchanged. Only 13% of sub-Saharan African nations have data available, despite the fact that these nations experience the worst teacher shortages at the higher education levels (Dolton, 2013).

The amount of children not attending school, enrollment patterns, demographics, and present teacher shortages all influence the demand for teacher recruitment in the future. A 2014 analysis by the UIS indicates that by 2030, 27.3 million primary school teachers will need to be hired (UIS, 2014). 23.9 million more teachers are needed between 2012 and 2030 to take the roles of those teachers who had changed their career, retired or those who departed the teaching profession because of death or diseases. The shortage is covered by the remaining 3.4 million, which also handle enrollment growth and ensure that there are no more than 40 children for every teacher. Therefore, in order to provide universal primary education by 2030, an extra 190,000 teachers must be hired year to ensure an adequate supply of instructors (similar forecasts are presently not attainable for secondary school).

More elementary school teachers are needed in certain areas and nations than in others. Sub-Saharan Africa is the largest obstacle by far, since it is responsible for 67% of the extra primary school teachers required between 2012 and 2030. Approximately 15% of the extra instructors needed are found in the Arab States. According to a country-by-country analysis of teacher requirements, Nigeria continues to face the greatest problem, requiring about 400,000 more primary school teachers between 2012 and 2030—12% of all teachers worldwide. Seven of the developing nations in sub-Saharan Africa are those that need the greatest number of extra elementary teachers (UIS, 2014). By 2030, will nations be able to hire enough teachers? It is improbable, especially for the individuals with the largest disparities. According to a UIS analysis based on population predictions and patterns in teacher recruitment over the last ten years, 28 nations, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, won't be able to fill the void until around 2030 if current trends continue (UIS, 2014).

There is a worrisome and unprecedented shortage of trained instructors in public elementary and secondary schools throughout the nation. On its website, the Universal Basic Education Commission said that there were 1.68 million instructors, 171,027 schools, and 47 million pupils in Nigeria. There were 354,651 instructors for 7.2 million students in pre-primary schools, 915,593 teachers for 32 million pupils in primary schools, and 416,291 teachers for eight million students in junior secondary schools, according to the 2022 National Personnel Audit breakdown. By 2023, there will be 2.3 million registered teachers in the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria database (Guardian Newspaper, 2014).

To strengthen the teaching as a profession as well as elementary and post primary school level of education systems in their states, policymakers at all levels must place a high priority on hiring, preparing, inspiring, and rewarding teachers. The Child Rights Act should be strictly enforced and properly domesticated.

Research indicates that inadequate compensation, poor working conditions, and high learners and educators ratios—which place excessive strain on teaching and induce stress for teachers—are the root causes of the severe teacher shortages. The absence of infrastructure and instructional tools to make their jobs easier is another contributing factor. In addition to job instability, political irresponsibility, and corruption cause a teacher shortage in the states.

“According to UNICEF statistics from June 2022, Nigeria has the highest out-of-school rate in the world, with over 18 million pupils, including 10 million females, and 3.3 million dropping out before JSS 1. Twenty million children in Nigeria were not attending school, according to UNESCO previously. The North-East, North-West, and South-East zones' out-of-school rates are similarly threatened by insecurity” (Punch Newspaper, 2023 pg 22).

### **Capacity Building**

In the debate around global education reform, the term "capacity building" has gained popularity in both established and developing nations. Nevertheless, it constitutes an often misinterpreted social concept while being widely used. To put it conceptually clearly, capacity development is about investing in and allocating physical, intellectual, and human resources—



especially when other intervening factors have failed in a particular institutional or social environment. Why is capacity development important for states along with other policy makers to consider? According to (Delaney, 2002) the advantages of capacity building are significant, “in the short term, [they accrue] to the specific individuals and institutions that are their recipients, but the ultimate beneficiaries are future members of society, whose interests cannot be clearly determined in the present”. The demands of the person as well as those of the pertinent institutions for growth and development must be met for capacity building to be successful. Developing teacher capacity is ultimately about fostering excellence, progress, and development within the educational system.

### **Rationale for Advocating Teacher Capacity Building**

Even casual observers with a superficial interest in education are aware of the issues facing Nigeria's teaching profession at this point. There is now a widespread belief that a significant portion of Nigerian teachers lack the necessary skills to provide high-quality instruction for a variety of interrelated reasons, the most important of which are poor morale, infrastructure constraints, and policy, structural, and curricular concerns. It is well acknowledged that the benefits of Nigerian education have diminished (Udoikah & Omeje, 2017). The staggeringly high rate of scholastic failure in the nation is a glaring reminder that the system has serious issues. This indicates that Nigerian children are not getting the sort of education necessary to succeed in the competitive world of the twenty-first century, which requires creativity, invention, abilities to think critically, skills that are envisionabe, adaptable and transferable and adaptable. A brief glance at the results of various worldwide standardized achievement exams reveals a concerning trend: Nigerian pupils are conspicuously missing from these assessments, with very few exceptions. Nigerian students should not be excused from participating in international assessments like PIRLS (Progress in Reading Literacy Study) and TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) because of their place in Africa. The result of education, according to a number of economists and educational specialists, is a lasting capital asset, and having one improves one's standard of living generally in most cultures. In fact, it is reasonable to say that in the 21st century, a civilization cannot exist without a strong educational foundation. Teachers' performance, which in turn relies on their capacity development, is critical to raising student accomplishment. It is important to emphasize that the quality of education, as measured by the amount of instruction, the infrastructure, and the curriculum, has a major impact on economic development (Todaro & Smith, 2015). The importance of teacher quality and teacher education is being emphasized once again in many industrialized countries. Since teachers continue to be the cornerstones of the educational system, no country can really establish a robust and successful educational system without regularly evaluating and then improving its teacher preparation programmes (Niyozov, 2008). Macro-level policies may be announced by the government, but they are only words and concepts on paper unless they are understood and implemented by learners at the micro level (Egbo, 2009). In essence, neglecting the professional demands of educators is detrimental to the advancement of Nigeria's educational system. Developed nations allocate substantial resources towards capacity development, seeing it as a vital component of creating the finest

system possible. For example, despite the fact that education in Canada is a provincial responsibility, the several province governments work together to assist educators in their job, even going so far as to pass laws and rules requiring teachers to engage in ongoing professional development. Since teacher professional development is so crucial, most provinces have professional development days scheduled into school calendars throughout the academic year.

It is important to emphasize once again how much has been spoken on sustainable development. However, without the presence of certified educators in the classroom, none of the programmes will be effective. For instance, one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is achieving universal primary education, and this deals directly with education; yet, the achievement of the other SDGs depends both expressly and implicitly on strong educational institutions and efficient teaching and learning.

Reasonable student-teacher ratios and a sufficient pool of instructors are insufficient to enhance the delivery of high-quality education. Ensuring that educators have enough training, motivation, and support is equally crucial. While regional and national disparities are evident, distinct novice or on-the-job teacher education frameworks sometimes make cross-country comparisons difficult (Altinok, 2013).

### **Challenges Facing Teacher Education in Nigeria**

The issues confronting Socratic vocation in Nigeria remain severe despite the numerous proposals and changes aimed at repositioning the field for optimum performance. Some of these developed as a result of the shifting political and socioeconomic landscape of the era, while others resulted from the government's neglect of the education sector, particularly when it comes to keeping up with new realities like meeting Nigeria's expanding population's needs and demands for education with an equal supply of facilities and services. The following are some of the issues that are especially looked at:

**Inadequate Execution of Policy:** Inadequate policy execution poses a difficulty to the provision of high-quality teacher education. The appallingly low performance of Nigerian higher education institutions' teacher graduates may be attributed to poor quality delivery. (Anyakoha, 1994) maintained that while the authors of our policies are intelligent, visionary, and fervently committed to the future of what they write, the difficulty arises in the implementers' attempts to put theory into reality. However, a number of reasons might be mentioned as impediments to the efficient execution of educational policy, which would lead to subpar delivery. Examples include inadequate funding of education by the government and the careless use of money by agencies in the implementation processes. When money intended to provide qualitative education is embezzled or misused, the education that students get is rendered useless.

**Bad Working Conditions and Brain Drain Syndrome:** According to Osokoya (2012), there are insufficient incentives for Nigerian educators to attract and retain the best students in their institutions. Those who stay in the field continue to have comparatively low social status and related psychological issues as a consequence of the declining appeal of teaching and,



therefore, the declining enrollment in teacher education programmes. As a result, some instructors leave the remaining pool in pursuit of better prospects in other economic sectors with greater service rewards or even relocate abroad to nations with much better working circumstances for teachers. This condition may be largely attributed to a number of factors, including insufficient social acknowledgment, a poorly prepared educational system in increasingly harsh work situations, and delays in or outright denials of teacher wages. The country's dependence on inexperienced and often untrained instructors and lecturers across a wide range of educational areas and institutions surely affects the calibre of student work and recent graduates who are finally employed to satisfy the nation's educational manpower demands. The economy is also impacted by this. Regardless of the negative effects the trend has on the economy, this vicious cycle contributes to the declining quality of education in secondary and elementary schools, colleges, and institutions of learning (Osokoya, 2012).

**Concerns about Internal Efficiency and Quality Assurance:** In order to ensure internal efficiency and quality control in the teaching profession, prospective teachers must possess both intellectual and emotional skills. There is a growing trend in Nigerian postsecondary education that candidates applying to teach are either unqualified to teach in popular professional courses like architecture, engineering, law, medicine, or science, or they have been rejected from their preferred fields of study. Admissions and placement procedures in education programmes are not as stringent as they are in other previously mentioned programmes, which is shown by the typical dearth of candidates to programmes that would train them as instructors in universities and colleges. The worldwide criteria for teacher selection are mostly challenged by this. For instance, the International Labor Organization (ILO) suggests that moral, intellectual, and physical attributes be taken into consideration when choosing instructors. Furthermore, before being allowed for training, candidates in more developed nations such as the UK are required to meet a number of personal and intellectual requirements (Lassa, 1998). Conversely, students are admitted to Nigerian universities, polytechnics, and colleges primarily on the basis of their completion of the minimum academic requirements; other internationally recognized requirements, like mental health, physical well-being or qualities, moral uprightness, and communication proficiency, are rarely taken into account. A major obstacle to the nation's teacher education system is the poor quality of teachers generated by NTI's in-service training, in addition to the aforementioned issues. According to several academics from Nigeria, the majority of instructors who were promoted to instructors Grade II by the NTI were very inadequate in both their academic subject knowledge and their teaching methods (Obanya, 2008). The NTI's continuous Pivotal Teacher Training Programme (PTTP), which is now being implemented, presents perhaps the most onerous task. The federal government's intense PTTP programme is meant to prepare instructors to carry out the UBE programme. When UBE was first established in 1999, there was a severe scarcity of trained instructors. In order to fill the voids in the system, it was evident that cost-effective alternatives were sought for (FGN, 2003). The PTTP's teaching methodology combines in-person instruction on weekends and holidays with self-instructional course materials and classroom teaching experience. The programme is designed as a 15-month

programme that includes a 12-week school experience and an internship lasting three months in a primary school. Upon completion of the programme, candidates are certified and considered qualified to teach. However, the programme's detractors have criticized its low academic standing, its output, and—more importantly—the programme's lax admissions rules (Enukora et al., 2003; Okoya, 2012). The problem in the education sector is made worse by the magnitude of these standards assurance difficulties being concurrently applied to the internal effectiveness of Nigeria's education system.

**Lack of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Knowledge and Use:** The lack of understanding and use of ICT in a society that is becoming more interconnected is a significant obstacle to Nigerian teacher education. To ensure that the system as well as its products remain relevant in the twenty-first century, all instructors must be proficient in computer technology and internet use. In Nigeria, many schools continue to use the old educational system with little to no ICT adaption. Since the world is increasingly becoming a global village, school teachers not only need to be trained and retrained in ICTs, but facilities must also be provided by the government to allow teachers and their students to access these continuously. They will be able to benefit from the wealth of data and encourage networking within professional networks as a result. For our future educators to work effectively and efficiently, they need to be deeply rooted in the newest techniques and technologies (Osokoya, 2012).

**Teaching's Lack of Professionalization:** A large number of Nigerian educators have fallen short of the minimal international requirement. This is due to the fact that a sizable proportion of inexperienced and under qualified employees are still kept in the system, creating an environment in which a career in teaching has not yet reached professional status. While the majority of lecturers in higher education have not yet had any formal training in teaching, many untrained professors are nonetheless employed by several State Teaching Service Boards. Teaching will remain available to everybody until the government mandates this training and actively pursues the programme; this might further undermine the professionalism of those who teach (Osokoya, 2012). Given that education is still a crucial element in creating a rich and healthy society, this undoubtedly has further, broader sociopolitical and economic ramifications.

## Conclusion

It is widely acknowledged that the core of every educational system is its instructors. Therefore, if the nation hopes to progress educationally, much attention must be paid to their development and production. The development as well as instruction of teachers is a critical component of capacity building in Nigerian schools. To ensure that pupils obtain a high quality education and that the learning atmosphere is conducive, quality instructors are crucial. Since Nigeria's independence, the government has rapidly expanded and diversified its teacher training facilities and programmes, strengthening the innovative efforts of the missions to teacher production in the country. However, there are challenges such as inadequate teacher training institutions, insufficient funding, and the need for continuous professional development. To

address these issues, it is important to invest in improving teacher production and training, increasing funding for education, and promoting ongoing professional development to enhance the capacity of teachers in Nigerian schools. Unless these issues are concomitantly tackled, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the nation will remain rhetoric.

### Recommendations

In order to ensure that all learners get an equal distribution of teachers who are competent, motivated, and well-supported, the governments should consider implementing the following recommendations:

1. Strategies and policies should be put in place to ensure that teaching attracts most skilled individuals from different backgrounds who are prepared to make a living in distant locations and educate disadvantaged students.
2. Qualified educators should be incentivized to take jobs in places in which they are most needed by offering suitable working circumstances and a range of incentives, including decent housing and additional allowances or bonuses. The greatest strategies to keep outstanding teachers in the classroom and to support and sustain their dedication to teaching are to provide them a lucrative career path, better working conditions, and better remuneration.
3. Adequate training that strikes an appropriate equilibrium between theory and practice should be provided to all educators. Educators should also be equipped to provide instruction in a tongue that young students can comprehend, assist students with a variety of educational requirements and backgrounds, and teach reading to young students.
5. To adjust to new learning problems and new abilities, all instructors must engage in ongoing professional development.

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