

## **Teachers' Recruitment Procedure in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Nigeria is equally befallen with numerous challenges in its public-school teacher recruitment drive that negatively infiltrate its education system. This paper discusses the challenges experienced in recruiting teachers in public schools in Nigeria. Some forms of obstacles presented are characterized by bureaucratic bottlenecks, flaws in transparency, lack of adequate funding, and nepotism among others. This paper attempts to explore the chances to improve the method of recruiting teachers through policy reforms, increased financing and merit-based choosing criteria. The challenges include bureaucratic bottlenecks, impunity, lack of transparency, inadequate funding, and nepotism. The reform process would promote responsiveness to policy in recruitment through the possibility of further funding and the use of merit selection, and there would be far-reaching change in the process of online recruitment. If these problems are solved, and opportunities gradually positioned in their rightful places, the teacher recruitment process in Nigeria will be better and as such, the quality of education in this country will progress. Based on this, it is advised that any obstacles in the current selection process be routinely reviewed and fixed.*

**Keywords:** *Teachers' Recruitment, Recruitment Procedure, Education System*



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## **INTRODUCTION**

A teacher's responsibilities in the twenty-first century extend beyond the classroom; they also include navigating a variety of technical obstacles that arise in and out of the classroom. As a result, instructors need to possess a variety of skills to succeed in the teaching profession. In light of the current cultural shift, a teacher needs to be knowledgeable about gender education, technology education, distance learning, peace education, and lesson planning (Karacaoglu, 2008). In light of the current technological transformation, it is crucial to examine the teacher selection process through a methodical policy. When employing new teachers, educational organizations make a lot of decisions. Obtaining relevant data regarding improved human performance and skills for high-quality instruction is the main goal. As a result, the selection process looks for the greatest personnel while taking the companies' physical and financial resources into consideration (Wilk & Capelli, 2003).

The supply and demand of teachers for public schools are out of balance. Due to population growth and attrition, this disequilibrium continues and gets worse every day. Given the economic consequences, it also leads to bad teaching and inappropriate selection. With the assistance of school administration, long-term planning is required to fill such teaching jobs (Hsieh et al., 2012). According to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019), even if teacher attrition is a significant problem for the adequate supply of teachers in schools, teacher training is still crucial. The majority of financial resources are used for hiring and mentoring because there is a lack of training for teachers. Therefore, to make hiring more profitable and less cost-effective for the educational sector, a review of the hiring method is required. According to Symeonidis (2015), there is a significant global shortage of primary school teachers,

with 114 nations needing to enroll approximately 1.7 million additional teachers. As a result, public school quality is declining and the student-teacher and student-class ratios are rising. In many parts of the world, the concepts of migration, relocation, and cultural change have improved the demands on teachers. Conversely, trade and technology have also altered the nature of school culture. Consequently, an average teacher would never succeed in such a setting. The need for more competent instructors has been highlighted by cross-cultural needs; therefore, selecting such teachers necessitates careful consideration and a system-wide perspective.

While hiring new teachers is a significant source of revenue for the state, the quality of education is in jeopardy in public sector schools due to the inadequate supply of teachers. The labor market's competition has reduced these public schools' contribution to the labor market (Green et al., 2008). Ensuring effective teaching and learning requires careful attention to these variables, which fall within the purview of the Ministry of Education and Human Capital Development, which oversees state educational management. As stated in the National Policy on Education cited by Imam (2012), any educational system's ability to succeed depends on careful planning, effective management, and sufficient funding. Organization and structure, proprietorship and control, inspection and supervision are all aspects of administration. Only the work of its personnel will allow the Kwara State Teaching Service Commission as an entity to fulfill its obligations. The ministry's personnel must carry out their responsibilities by their job descriptions to pursue attaining the organization's goals. Therefore, it is expected that each organizational member will complete their assigned task, which will eventually result

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in the accomplishment of the organization's objectives. Therefore, managing the human resource (employee) in the system for optimal performance is one of the keys to a successful and productive organization.

According to Oladipo (2021), the current system of hiring secondary school teachers is insufficient to accommodate the growing number of students and is not systematic. There is no longer a need to develop recruitment strategies for secondary schools systematically. Efforts should be coordinated rather than haphazard. Considering recruitment efforts that encourage capable secondary school dropouts to enter the field, positively portray the profession by using outstanding teachers as role models for leadership and best practices. According to Aina and Olanipekun (2015), there is a significant disparity between the nation's resources for managing education and the rate at which the student population is growing. In a time of economic crisis in Nigeria and around the world, education has gotten more and more expensive. This means that to keep up with the rate of student population growth, the educational system needs to hire more secondary school instructors.

More trained secondary school instructors are apparently in high demand in many schools as a result of the deterioration of Nigeria's secondary education system (Aluede et al., 2020; Odukoya et al., 2018; Mubashiru et al., 2016), possibly driven by the free education policy and the ensuing sharp rise in student enrollment. Even though the Kwara state government has implemented several initiatives to increase the number of subject-specific teachers hired by schools, it appears that the available teachers have not been distributed fairly throughout subject areas. There appears to be a discrepancy between the supply and demand for certified instructors in the State's secondary schools. More qualified instructors are in demand as a result of additional courses being added to many school curricula and the

implementation of continuous assessment as a tool for assessing student performance. The need for qualified secondary school teachers was present in both the sciences and non-sciences, but it seems that science courses had a greater demand than non-science topics.

The Ministry of Education's duties for the efficient administration of education in the state were outlined in the National Policy on Education. To prepare and hire secondary school teachers to carry out their teaching duties effectively and efficiently, the Kwara State Teaching Service Commission must properly carry out its tasks. Teaching and learning are the main ways that secondary school teachers educate their pupils knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The majority of the time, instructors' subpar work habits and execution are to blame for students' subpar achievement. It should be mentioned, too, that teachers can only function well if they are properly prepared. The low performance of the Kwara State Teaching Service Commission may have something to do with the underperformance of secondary school teachers. This is because it influences how instruction and learning are carried out in the state's educational establishments.

#### Concept of Teachers' Recruitment Procedure

The recruitment of teachers for secondary schools is a component of the teacher labor market. The quantity of teaching jobs available at a specific level of total compensation represents the demand for instructors, while the quantity of qualified people willing to teach at a specific level of total compensation represents the supply of teachers. All forms of compensation, including bonuses, other financial benefits, and projected future earnings, are included in the term total compensation. Other forms of rewards that come from teaching and fall under the categories of working conditions or personal satisfaction might also be included. The number of instructors that a

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school is willing to employ and the number of qualified teachers who are willing to teach will depend on the current or negotiated levels of salary, benefits, and working conditions in that particular school. These supply and demand laws and the variables that affect them offer a rational framework for the study, comprehension, and assessment of retention and recruitment policies (Brannon, 2010).

According to Olaifa et al. (2023), the fundamental ideas guiding the supply of teachers in secondary schools are as follows: people will choose to become teachers if they believe that teaching is the most fulfilling career path out of all of their options. When we discuss attractiveness, we mean desirable in the context of total compensation and ease of access (salary, benefits, working conditions, and personal satisfaction). In an economy where demand outpaces supply, teacher shortages happen. This may arise from lower supply, higher demand or both happening at the same time. If supply exceeds demand, teacher surpluses arise. Policies are usually changed in response to the degree to which there is an unmet or oversupplied demand for instructors. A broader labor market that encompasses the markets for all other jobs needing roughly equivalent levels of education or ability is nested within and constantly influences the labor market for teachers. When hiring secondary school teachers, supply and demand analysis may be used to determine what influences a person's decision to become a teacher. An individual who chooses teaching over other viable careers will forfeit the chance to benefit from the higher overall salary of those other careers. These missed opportunities are referred to as the opportunity costs of educating. People will be less inclined to choose to educate if doing so has significant opportunity costs (Moir et al., 2009).

Increasing the rewards of teaching in comparison to other competitive jobs that appeal to the target demographic is the aim

of policymakers in their efforts to attract teachers to secondary schools. Studies on recruitment could look at things like early recruitment tactics, entry-level teacher compensation, changes in policies related to credentialing and alternative certification requirements, ease of entry, monetary compensation, working conditions, and personal satisfaction elements of the allure of teaching that can be influenced by policy levers. Conversely, factors related to teacher attrition may be seen in the retention of teachers. Both voluntary and involuntary attrition are possible, but given the high tenure rates and the ubiquity of unionized grievance procedures about termination, the majority of attrition from the teaching profession is voluntary. This concept of opportunity costs applies once again to voluntary attrition. People who feel that their opportunity costs are greater than the benefits of teaching are more inclined to quit the field. Teachers may be motivated by comparable opportunity costs to transfer from one school or district to another, resulting in attrition that is specific to a particular school or district.

#### Teachers' Educational Qualifications

A fully credentialed teacher with the equivalent of a major in the subject matter they are teaching is considered well-qualified (Ingersoll, 2020). Teachers' educational backgrounds are a key determinant of their expertise and knowledge in the classroom, which helps them do their jobs more successfully and efficiently. It is not very useful for assessing how prepared instructors are for the subjects they must teach in schools. To ultimately achieve the objectives of the educational system, a more thorough comparison of the information and abilities acquired in their training courses with the real material and skills needed to teach the high school curriculum must be made. According to Etebu and Amatari (2020), there are two methods to become a teacher: traditional and alternative paths of education. Conventional certification is

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awarded upon completion of an education undergraduate or graduate program. Alternative certification paths include pedagogy and topic area coursework without an education degree.

Danielson and McGreal (2000) suggested that alternatives to formal qualifications for enhancing teaching should include short-term activities like seminars, peer assessments, and mentorship. If they are unable to obtain employment immediately, first-degree content teachers are more likely to enter the teaching profession. Despite frequently receiving considerably lesser pay than a fully trained teacher, they opt not to enroll in the one-year postgraduate professional training program, depriving themselves of a fundamental teaching basis. According to Huang and Moon (2009), between 40 and 60 percent of the variation in the mean academic performance of students following an evaluation can be attributed to the educational background of teachers. Sanda (2013) concluded that there was a strong link between the educational background of teachers and their performance on the job. The good performance was ascribed, among other things, to the outstanding instructions provided by qualified teachers. Teacher performance and supervisor ratings are greater for teachers with regularly stated certification than for those who do not fulfill the criteria (Vandevoort et al., 2004). However, this conclusion was based on data that had essentially no statistical controls applied. Little of the prior research included controls on student "inputs" that would reassure the skeptical reader about the findings, despite the abundance of studies on the advantages of teacher certification for student learning.

According to Laczko-Kerr (2002), a teacher's certification level has a significant impact on the academic performance of their students in schools. The school where they were employed, the grade level they taught, their certification status, the date and university of their highest degree, their

age, and the length of time they had taught will all positively affect the way teachers perform on the job and help students perform better academically. It has been demonstrated that teacher education reform has made desirable aims of teacher educational qualities that are seen to be associated with student learning in many different countries. According to some of these reforms, teacher education should be made more professional by being extended, upgraded to graduate degrees, and governed by standards-aligned systems for promotion, certification, and licensure (Firestone et al., 2004).

This research aims to address the gap in research on the challenges and prospects of teacher recruitment in Nigeria. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of teacher recruitment in Nigeria, identify obstacles and constraints that hinder the process, and propose potential improvement solutions. The research identifies specific challenges that hinder the recruitment process, such as bureaucratic hurdles, lack of transparency, and nepotism, and provides a nuanced understanding of the obstacles that need to be addressed. By exploring the prospects for improvement, such as implementing merit-based recruitment procedures, enhancing transparency and accountability, and investing in professional development and training for teachers, the research will offer actionable recommendations for enhancing the recruitment process. The findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge on education in Nigeria and provide valuable insights for policymakers, education authorities, and other stakeholders involved in the recruitment and management of teachers. Overall, this research will serve as a foundation for further studies and initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of education through effective recruitment and management of teachers.

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## **METHOD**

The research methodology for studying teachers' recruitment in Nigeria is comprehensive and systematic. It involves a literature review, qualitative interviews, and case studies. The literature review provides a foundation for understanding the historical context, challenges, and potential prospects of teachers' recruitment in Nigeria. Qualitative interviews will provide valuable insights into the intricacies of the recruitment process, involving government officials, administrators, school principals, and teachers. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather diverse perspectives on the challenges faced during recruitment and potential opportunities for improvement. Case studies provided in-depth insights into localized challenges and prospects, examining real-life examples of recruitment procedures. This comprehensive research methodology enabled a holistic exploration of the challenges and prospects, with the findings and recommendations potentially informing policy decisions and contributing to the improvement of the teachers' recruitment process in Nigeria. The findings and recommendations resulting from this research have the potential to inform policy decisions and contribute to the overall improvement of the teachers' recruitment process in Nigeria.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Challenges Facing Teachers' Recruitment**

Absence of human resource planning: Hiring occurs in two stages, selection, and recruitment, which happen sequentially. According to Verhulst and DeCenzo (2021), predicting a human resource plan for recruitment includes locating or luring various candidates to occupy open jobs with companies. Wilk and Capelli (2003) assert that choices made about hiring are crucial and outcome-focused for both people and society. The primary objective of the selection process is to gather crucial data about candidates, enabling the most qualified ones to be singled out for

employment offers.

Changes in the physical surroundings: Their selection processes remain deficient from the beginning to the end, despite the growing demand for qualified teachers. The physical landscape of educational institutions and societal norms have changed, necessitating the need for an efficient and knowledgeable hiring panel to find new teachers. Fair selection has been impacted by shifts in the political environment, cultural demands, policy-making process, and accountability framework. Feudalism, tribalism, and cultural prejudices, on the other hand, are significant obstacles to transparent teacher selection (Chohan & Qadir, 2013).

Insufficient qualifications and self-interests of teachers: Okeke and Iwara (2020) noted that deficiencies in professional training, issues with teacher certification accreditation, and insufficient qualifications at the time of entry are some of the major issues identified in the fair selection of teachers. Other issues with fair selection include political and regional pressure to influence the selection process. In a similar vein, excessive self-interest in the teaching profession is concerning for achieving the objective of high-quality education.

Political pressure and cultural issues: Regarding the student-teacher ratio, the quality of instruction is likewise declining. According to Zakar et al. (2020), one of the factors that is rising as a result of the sharp increase in school enrollment is the student-teacher and student-class ratio. Less professional training, political influence, and ineffective instructional coordination all of which are lower quality are the root causes of these issues. According to Hameed and Waheed (2011), the lack of female instructors is also a significant signal of the numerous gender inequalities that still exist, particularly in less developed nations. To ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to enter the teaching profession, gender discrimination as well as

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differences in class and race may need to be addressed. Less developed nations' teaching quality has declined due to political influence. Teachers are becoming more and more involved in personal and political problems instead of educating students since this practice of building a political vote bank is quickly spreading instead of focusing on educational progress (Punab & Jamil, 2009).

Absence of a selection mechanism and policy: According to Ahmed and Din (2017), there are issues with the system and appropriate approach for selecting teachers in various parts of the world. In the same way, there is no authority for the correct application and accreditation of such a system or approach if it continues. The majority of issues with the selection process for teachers are related to selection management. Poor policy, inappropriate executive procedures, and their application lead to these kinds of issues. These difficulties also include a lack of openness in the testing, documentation, and check-and-balance processes; inadequate coding; secrecy; improper test administration; challenges with the accreditation of teachers' certifications; favoritism; and personal interests. Consequently, these public schools are staffed by subpar teachers, which impedes the advancement of the country (Nkhata, 2023).

#### Prospects for Overcoming Challenges in Teachers' Recruitment in Nigeria

Realistic challenges present themselves in the recruitment of teachers in Nigeria, but viable prospects can still be made on the whole general recruitment procedure with merit as opposed to political pressure, reformed transparent selection processes, and meaningful policy efforts. That would mean that Nigeria can work at a better and more effective system of recruitment of teachers based on merit.

1. Investments in the development of solid human resource planning frameworks specifically tailored to the Nigerian education sector to enhance the efficiency

and effectiveness of recruitment of teachers. This will include the conduct of regular need assessments in cooperation with the associated educational institutions in aligning curriculum to meet the demands of the industry and also streamlining processing through continuous use of technology.

2. In this regard, incentives or professional development efforts by way of consistent treatment to those willing and striving to improve the infrastructure of deprived regions may instill or encourage a change of heart in the educators regarding accepting posting in such areas. The digital technology and infrastructure available for remote teaching and flexible work arrangements would further decrease the differential in urban-rural teacher deployment.

3. For a teaching job, the prescriptions and policies should therefore) some definitive qualifications indicating the skills and competencies of teachers, and towards this dedicated and continuous professional development through training and other mechanisms of appraisal to establish the competencies of the candidates. For instance, Nigeria may be able to attract highly qualified and dedicated individuals who work with the zeal of ensuring quality education for all in the country through the institutionalization of merit-based recruitment policies and inculcating in citizens a sense of belonging and dedication in the teaching profession.

4. This will only be achieved if the recruitment process is very clear and departs on merited grounds. Strict guidelines will be followed with qualifications and teaching competency preferred rather than politically leaning to the right party. Secondly, raising awareness and sensitization of the stakeholders on the role of meritocracy recruitment of teachers can be very important in changing cultural attitudes to be objective attitudes in teacher recruitment.

5. Another problem exists in the overall

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selection system that could not bring out a clear framework with well-defined criteria to ascertain and identify the right person. This would mean including some of the above tools for selection like the standardized tests and the interviews and the assessments would mean that all the candidates would be put under some form of unbiased screening of the skills and competencies. In Addition, the creation of a broad policy framework that would govern all activities from the advertisement time related to the recruitment and the selection would go some distance in at least ensuring that there is transparency and there is accountability in those operations.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Teachers' Recruitment Procedure in Nigeria is faced with a couple of challenges that seem to impede the effective recruitment and placement of well-trained teachers. Various critical problems such as nepotism and favoritism, corruption, poor infrastructure, and lack of transparency characterize the recruitment process that tends to recruit even less qualified teachers and place them in schools. However, if stringent measures are implemented to curb corruption, transparency in selection, better recruitment in the areas of individuals deployed, and investment in training and development programs for teachers, then indeed most of the challenges that are currently faced can be addressed. By addressing them and looking at opportunities that could be availed in the form of improvements, Nigeria shall be capable of attracting, selecting, and recruiting qualified teachers.

### **Suggestions**

The following recommendations are made:

1. Consultation with specialists in the field of education, a written quality policy and procedure for the recruitment and selection of teachers may be created.
2. For selection, a distinct human resources (HR) department with a transparent code of conduct and oversight

may be formed.

3. Tests of professional expertise, subject matter expertise, and personality may be administered using processes for scoring, validity, and reliability.
4. All forms of bias and discrimination must be prevented in all processes by updating the documentation, recording, and preservation systems.

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