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## EDITORIAL DESK

The Journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy stands as a beacon of scholarly excellence, drawing upon a diverse spectrum of researchers hailing from the expansive West African region and beyond. This volume showcases 14 meticulously researched articles curated from contributors in Nigeria and the United States of America. The genesis of these scholarly endives can be traced back to the auspicious conference convened at the Lagos State University Makanjuola Lecture Hall, held in December, 2023.

These articles, characterized by their depth and precision, underwent rigorous scrutiny during the conference, with over 90 participants actively engaging in critique. Subsequent to this extensive quality assurance regimen and plagiarism checks, only 14 articles successfully met the standards set forth by the esteemed guild of the editorial team, in strict adherence to international best practices.

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Editors announces the second edition of the publication schedule of the journal. Our heartfelt congratulations extend to the authors whose papers demonstrated exceptional merit and successfully navigated the rigorous selection criteria. To future researchers, we extend our encouragement to strive for greater heights in their scholarly pursuits.

The Board of Editors appreciates the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Ibiyemi Ibilola Olatunji Bello, mni NPOM for providing the enabling environment for the conference and her directives to the editorial team for strong quality assurance measures. We believe in your leadership and concerted efforts at ensuring high standards for the journal publication.

Prof. M. O. B. Mohammed, FNAEAP  
Editor in Chief

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## MANAGING TEACHING PROFESSION FOR BRIGHTER REWARDING FUTURE: PANACEA FOR CONTEMPORARY SLAVERY MOVEMENT OF NIGERIAN PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS IN DIASPORA

Taofeek Olawale SHITTU PhD<sup>1</sup> PROF. Bolanle Adeyemi OLA<sup>2</sup> & Zacceaus Adeniyi SASA<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Nigeria.

[taofeek.shittu@lasu.edu.ng](mailto:taofeek.shittu@lasu.edu.ng); [bolanleola@gmail.com](mailto:bolanleola@gmail.com); [sasaadeniyi1970@gmail.com](mailto:sasaadeniyi1970@gmail.com)

+2348026297217; +2347033429007; +2348023786799

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1975-1280>

### Abstract

*This study explored the potential of the teaching profession to provide a bright and rewarding future for Nigerian professional teachers in diaspora. This qualitative study investigated the challenges faced by Nigerian professional teachers who migrated abroad in geometric progression and explored the potential of the teaching profession to search for greener pastures. The study focused on the Nigerian educational system and examined the obstacles experienced by education graduates, professional teachers, and academic staff of tertiary institutions who have chosen to leave their secured government jobs in search of better opportunities overseas. The key challenges identified include poor conditions of service and remuneration package, inadequate educational resources, and limited access to professional development opportunities for academic excellence. Furthermore, the study delved into the experiences of Nigerian education graduates and professional teachers in diaspora who face racial discrimination, and educational exploitation akin to modern-day slavery. It highlighted the urgent need for government intervention to address this contemporary issue through increased funding for education sector. By doing so, it is posited that the government can act as a panacea to the modern slavery movement that Nigerian education graduates and professional teachers are facing in diaspora. Additionally, the research underscores the absence of a suitable career path for professional teachers and academic staff in higher institutions as a contributing factor to their migration. This, in turn, adversely affected the quality of teaching and learning in Nigeria educational system. To mitigate the exodus of quality teaching staff, the study emphasised the importance of providing a brighter and more rewarding future for professional teachers. In conclusion, the study asserted that the establishment of a well-defined career path is crucial for Nigerian Professional teachers to counteract the current migration to diaspora countries. By taking these steps, the Nigerian government can alleviate the current suffering and enhance the welfare of teachers, thereby reducing the loss of professional teachers to diaspora countries. The study recommended among others that research could provide valuable insights into the situation and assist policymakers in addressing the current plight of Nigerian professional teachers in diaspora.*

**Keywords:** Contemporary, Diaspora, Management, Profession, Slavery and Teaching

### Introduction

Around the world, both the developing and the developed nations demand respect for teachers. Although teaching is an important societal role in Nigeria, people are not as likely to pursue it as they could be due to its low status and the nature of the profession. Instead, people must develop their professionalism by gaining a solid foundation in academic knowledge and skill development. This is because teaching is a noble job that deals with intellectual issues and necessitates service skills in order to be relevant in the modern classroom. The essence of education is universal, exhibiting some traits that transcend cultural boundaries. The specific

application of information, skills, and attributes with the goal of providing unique services to meet society's and each individual's educational needs is teaching. The only professional group that perhaps has a bigger influence on the lives of Nigerian youth is the teaching profession. Moreover, the destiny of the nation is impacted by any influence on the youth.

Coincidentally, there is a progressive retreat in Nigeria's educational system. Following Nigeria's independence, the British left behind a sound system, but it has since been destroyed by corrupt officials, tribalism, ethnic discrimination, and inadequate management of the educational system. Prospective teacher in-training used to receive sufficient support. They received scholarships that covered their living expenses, books, and tuition. When their training was up, they had a job guarantee. All of these were intended to inspire and encourage aspiring teacher candidates to pursue the desirable career. These days, it appears to be the opposite (Ejikeme, 2014). It's depressing to be a teacher in Nigeria these days. The teaching profession has been under threat for more than 20 years due to the irregular migration of some highly qualified academic staff members, graduate students, and professional instructors who moved overseas in a geometric progression, exploring the possibility of using the teaching profession as a means of pursuing better opportunities. The frequently expressed aspirational purpose of improving the teaching profession to the stature of other renowned vocations like those of doctors, engineers, lawyers, and accountants is made particularly challenging by the industry's size, history, and character. Most educator training programs and schools are unable to admit and hire as many individuals as they would like due to the high demand for teachers. Professional brain drain is the result of this unpleasant circumstance.

The phrase "brain-drain" refers to the widespread migration of professionals from developing to developed countries in search of better job prospects and working circumstances. The increasing number of academic staff members professors and other professionals leaving Nigeria in search of better prospects elsewhere is having an impact on the administration of the country's teacher education programs. It would be incorrect, nevertheless, to believe that the teaching profession in Nigeria has maintained a steady place in the labour market. A number of reasons, including shifting political narratives, expanding labour movements, macroeconomic events, and ongoing reform initiatives, have contributed to the dynamic changes that have occurred throughout time in the teaching profession (Kraft and Melissa, 2022). This means that in order for the teaching profession to adapt to the constantly changing demands of its environment, it must be controlled as appropriate for quality assurance.

### **Managing the Teaching Profession in Nigeria**

Teaching is a profession in the widest sense of the word because teachers uphold their own moral standards and consider themselves to be servants of the community. The noble profession of teaching is to find, pick, and develop teachers to help achieve educational objectives. The teaching profession is generic to all other occupations. Teachers are the source of learning, and teaching comes from that. While professionalism appears to be the tactics and language people in their line of work use to try and enhance their status, pay, and working conditions, professionalism in teaching refers to the techniques, knowledge, and skills teachers employ in the classroom. According to Kunuba (2017), teaching is the structured labor that adults conduct in the educational system with the intentional goal of helping the students under their supervision gain knowledge, skills, habits, and values in an environment of respect, freedom, and trust. In developed countries, the quality of the teaching profession is closely related to success in all spheres of society. The teaching profession is defined by a specific body of knowledge, extensive training, the creation of in-service growth, social service, autonomy, and a code of ethics. Members of the Nigeria Union of Teachers are required to follow rules and a code of conduct when engaging with pupils and one another. Government-created education decrees,

sometimes with assistance from the teachers' union, are the main source of authority for teachers. The teaching profession has, however, become less prominent in Nigeria due to a number of concerning factors, including mismanagement of the industry, a high professional unemployment rate, retrogression, corruption, indoctrination, low technological advancement, economic inefficiency, criminality and diffidence, cultism, mediocrity, and unrest among labourers and students. Mogboh (2017) asserts that education is the starting point for a long chain of occupations that includes science, medicine, law, engineering, and even religion. It is commonly acknowledged that teaching entails instructing, imparting knowledge, and assisting students in learning appropriately. The instructor holds the key to unlocking the door to modernity. Most individuals believe that you can study everything you want from society in schools. This is because school function as society's factory and reflection at the same time. But teacher education needs to point these activities in the proper path. According to Jimba and Ogundele (2014), teacher education is given the responsibility of producing:

1. Highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system;
2. Encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
3. Help teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals;
4. Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations;
5. Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

Furthermore, the government, acting through its agencies, the Teachers' Service Commission, School Boards, and the Local Education Authority, still has significant power over the hiring and firing of teachers. While the government has significant control over personnel and curriculum management, members of the profession are primarily responsible for the implementation of the syllabus, or the "core" matter of education. The curriculum is set at the local level, but it adheres to the national policy as defined by advisors and inspectors. This allows the curriculum to portray the overall curricular trend within a given educational level. Content decisions, or scheme of work decisions, are mostly made by individual school authorities who continue to adhere to the overall policy trend. Textbooks are often decided upon through consultation, and as long as the material is in line with the curriculum, each school is free to use its own supplementary textbooks. With the exception of course accreditation and grants/finance for campus management, universities are entirely autonomous. In Nigeria, financing education is a significant problem in comparison to other economic sectors.

### **Challenges of Teaching Profession in Nigeria**

The globalization of education has given rise to problems that need to be objectively interpreted, analyzed, and solved within the parameters of generally acknowledged standards, values, and procedures for bringing up Nigeria's future generations. Teacher education is one useful strategy to support social stability. The teacher's internal dilemma has been understood by society. This is because the pride in intellectual prowess and goal accomplishment has been replaced by party politics and financial power. Unfortunately, the Nigerian government's reluctance to solve important issues pertaining to the teaching profession has resulted in the modern-day smuggling of qualified education graduates and professional teachers abroad. The Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) lacks autonomy, the government is unable to register the NUT as a professional organization, there is a large number of unqualified staff, a porous entry qualification, a lack of standards, and teachers are not involved in making decisions. These are just a few of the challenges that professional teachers in Nigeria face. Other issues include low wages, poor motivation, and poor welfare. Negative reinforcement in the community and lack of professional

teachers, inadequate funding for the teaching profession; a subpar work environment (i.e., inadequate facilities and infrastructure); the government's incapacity to register NUT as a professional organization; a large number of unqualified employees; a weak entrance requirement; a lack of standards; the exclusion of teachers from decision-making processes; and state control over staff personnel services for teachers. These various issues, which have mainly gone unresolved within the framework of established policies and action plans, may be the reason behind the current flight of professional Nigerian teachers abroad.

### **Rationale for Contemporary Movement of Nigerian Professional Teachers to Overseas**

Today, Nigeria is seeing a geometric growth in the number of professional teachers leaving the country to work abroad. This campaign against modern slavery has been sparked by a number of issues, including potential social, political, and economic ones. Many professional academic staff members, including professors, are searching for opportunities to relocate abroad in order to pursue personal ambitions, foster global awareness, and meet specific academic objectives. Professional teachers and academic staff have received much too little attention, which has had a detrimental effect on brain drain and subpar instruction. The term "brain-drain" describes the large-scale exodus of experts seeking better employment opportunities with better working conditions from poor to wealthy nations. The management of the teacher education program in Nigeria is being impacted by the large number of academic staff members, professors and other professionals leaving Nigeria's higher education institutions in search of better opportunities abroad.

Many factors contribute to the brain-drain problem in Nigeria's higher education institutions, including unpredictable academic calendars, insecure jobs, poor administration, low motivation, strike activity, and institutional corruption. There are currently less and fewer experienced academics and professional instructors in the country's teacher education schools as a result of brain-drain. Many academic staff members are leaving due to poor working conditions, low salary, and unappealing incentive packages. Due to limited funding for education, obsolete infrastructure, insecurity, and perks, many teachers are leaving their jobs. According to Okoli, Ogbondah and Ewor (2016), Nigerian public universities are faced with rapid faculty exodus or brain drain. Some faculty members abandoned universities for other sectors of the economy where professionals and scientists receive higher salaries and greater social recognition. The caliber of graduates that our universities generate is a direct outcome of the faculty migration. Due to a lack of qualified professors and teachers to advise and guide them, students in Nigeria's teacher education programs are suffering greatly from the brain-drain issue. When it comes to professional teachers' unemployment, deteriorating infrastructure, and the politicization of the hiring process for new teachers, the government has not demonstrated adequate commitment at any level to address their welfare.

However, because of their large numbers, teachers often receive compensation that is not commensurate with the amount of work they do in comparison to other professions. This is because government funding for education is already overburdened relative to other areas of national service and development. Recurrent education spending in Nigeria for the current fiscal year (2023) amounted to N606 billion, or roughly 7.04% of the federal government's budget. Studies and headlines about professional teacher burnout and plan to resign create a bleak picture, but it is difficult to make sense of these tales and cross-sectional numbers in Nigeria. The academic, socioemotional, and life outcomes of learners are significantly influenced by their teachers (Chetty, Friedman and Rockoff, 2014; Jackson, 2018; Kraft, 2019). The nation's democratic values, social cohesiveness, and economic competitiveness are all shaped by teachers working together. However, teachers have long battled to achieve and preserve the status of a respectable profession, despite the important role they play in our society.

Furthermore, because of the dramatic shifts in the standing of the teaching profession over the past 10 years including a decline in their pay package, enthusiasm, curiosity, readiness, and contentment professional teachers in Nigeria have encountered several challenges. However, teachers would much rather go abroad in search of greener pastures. Working overseas helps educators advance their pedagogical knowledge, foreign language competency, information acquisition and utilization skills, decision-making aptitude, communication abilities, and adaptability to a variety of contexts (Serbes, 2017). It has been noted that professional teachers can progress in their professions by gaining overseas experience. Professional instructors come across cutting-edge lesson plans, curriculum, teaching strategies, and educational resources when working abroad. Since educators apply their experiences and newly acquired information in the classroom, working overseas has been viewed as a chance for professional growth (Altun, 2015). However, because the sector is not given enough attention, Nigeria's existing educational landscape lacks the strategic plan and policies that would enable professional teachers to work successfully and efficiently. According to Ejikeme (2014), a cursory observation of lecturers' activities reveals quite a lot of tasks which include but not limited to:

1. Using the internet and libraries to obtain current material on the specific teaching subject.
2. Carrying out studies to enhance practice.
3. Writing books and journal articles for publication in order to gain exposure and a large readership.
4. Delivering the approved courses
5. Conducting continuous assessment, marking and recording
6. Setting examinations for those courses
7. entering the results into the university's main data board for exams.
8. Attending seminars, conferences and workshops, most of the time from their personal pockets.
9. Acting as cohort advisers and parents, and supervising students' projects and theses.

### **Implications**

One recent development that plagued Nigerian education was the emergence of modern-day slavery. Due to Nigeria's current economic, sociopolitical, and technical circumstances, professional teachers and other seasoned academic staff members are free to migrate abroad in search of more promising and fulfilling futures. The modern movement caused a brain drain, and as a result, Nigeria's educational system is becoming less and less effective because of low budget, deteriorating facilities, and inadequate support for competent teachers. This viewpoint is supported by Ogundele and Olaniyi (2012), who also recommended the use of a structural strategy to raise the caliber of education provided by Nigerian teachers. It should be noted that certain professional professors and academic personnel from Nigeria who relocated abroad occasionally took up other menial employment. Some Nigerian professional instructors have been seen working as unprofessional cab drivers, waiters, street sweepers, and healthcare providers on foreign streets. Thus, the study concentrated on the local and worldwide ramifications and repercussions of professional teachers' enslavement. Specifically, putting into practice multifaceted initiatives like better compensation packages, better career chances, and easier access to professional development opportunities for teachers in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The teaching profession is an honorable profession. Teachers in Nigeria are government-employed professionals in the public service, just like doctors, engineers, lawyers, and accountants. However, unlike these professionals, teachers in Nigeria do not receive the same respect and treatment, especially at lower levels. Teachers were considered professionals who treated patients without providing appropriate compensation or benefits. Professional teachers

with qualifications are currently leaving Nigeria for other nations where their status and value are recognized due to the unfavorable conditions. Nonetheless, cross-cultural disparities in teaching and learning in the diaspora, poverty, and recruiter exploitation plagued Nigerian professional teachers as well.

### Recommendations

The study recommended the following:

1. Policy makers should offer important insights into the current circumstances and help alleviate the issue of Nigerian professional teachers who are in diaspora.
2. Government should enact legislation pertaining to multifaceted measures that would give Nigerian teachers and academic staff at postsecondary institutions better compensation packages, more opportunity for career advancement, and easier access to professional development opportunities.
3. Based on research and data, policymakers should manage the problems of contemporary slavery and create contextually appropriate remedies. They should also keep an eye on patterns and trends that are evident in various geographic and sectoral contexts.
4. Research, information, and proof that are accessible to combat the modern movement of professional teachers in Nigeria should be funded by the government.
5. To address the issue of professional teachers leaving Nigeria in search of better opportunities abroad, the authority of teaching professional bodies should host seminars, conferences, and symposiums.

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