

**AFRICAN SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL  
FACULTY OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION  
IMO STATE UNIVERSITY  
NIGERIA**

**VOL. 9 NO. 3 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**PERCEPTION OF TEACHER EDUCATION TOWARDS MEETING THE LEARNING NEEDS OF  
THE ADULT IN RIVERS STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The aim of this paper is to examine the perception of teacher education towards meeting the learning needs of the adult. Four research questions guided the study. The population of the study consisted of eighty persons. A sample size of 55 persons was selected through multi-purpose sampling technique. A questionnaire titled "Perception of Teacher Education Questionnaire (PTEQ)" was used to collect data for the study. Data was analyzed using simple percentages and mean statistic. Findings showed that quality manpower for teacher education was inadequate. The findings revealed that the curriculum for teacher education and funding were inadequate. The findings showed that the strategies adopted in teacher education toward meeting the learning needs of the adult were adequate. Conclusively, the study showed that teacher education is a necessary pre-requisite for meeting the learning needs of the adult but lacks the needed resources for effective teaching and learning. The study recommended recruitment of qualified manpower and review of the curriculum to broadening the knowledge, skills and competences of the trainees.*

*Keywords: Education, Teacher Education and Adult.*

**Introduction**

The poverty of human resources endowment constitutes the most important problem the nation face, which hinders positive change and development in the society (Obasanjor 2000). However, the quality of adult education and training in this situation are communicated through the media development and the imperativeness of their quality as a consequence of maintaining educational standard in sub-Saharan African countries has prompted national leaders and scholars to critically examine the problem confronting teacher education in particular and the educational system at larger (Ochu, 2008). Also driving this search is the burden and worry associated with the president declining quality of education systems, which largely undermines the socio-economic transformation of the country particularly rural areas. This requires meeting the learning needs of the adult, particularly those residing in rural areas.

Going by the federal government of Nigeria Decree No.16 of 1985 (Umar, 2006), teacher education refers to the professional training given to teachers entering or already in the teaching profession either as part of secondary education or higher education. More precisely

stated, teacher education is any deliberate and conscious effort aimed at providing training and training opportunities for those who are to carry the responsibility for driving education towards attainment of set objectives (Umar, 2006).

The aims of teacher education according to the national policy on education (2004) are;

- a. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teacher for all levels of our education system;
- b. To encourage further, the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teaching;
- c. To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives;
- d. To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of country but in the wider world;
- e. To enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

These aims reflect in teacher education of adult educators when the teachers are exposed to adult education level. Perception has been defined as an expression of ways individuals or groups notice things particularly with the senses. It is concerned with the senses. It is concerned with the ability to comprehend the true nature of something in existence in a given environment. It encapsulates and ventilates an idea, a belief or an image, a person or group possess as a result of how they see or understand situation in the society.

According to Banett (1999) in Umar (2009), the fundamental problems of education are: the perception of the quality of input, content, processes and environmental variables of the teaching and learning processes. Improving the quality of teacher education in the field of adult/community education involves the perception of trainees in adult education, training institutions and departments with respect to the polity of input, content, processes and environmental variables of the teaching and learning processes.

According to Carlson (2003), there are four aspects of competence needed by every adult educator for effective work with adult learners. This includes pedagogical and didactic competence, communication skills, reflective competence and study competence. Pedagogical and didactic competence focuses on building skill in in rating irrationalizing and explaining communication skills places emphasis on the skills needed to guide adults through the learning process. Reflective competence focus on development ability to reflect on learning the last category of teacher competence which is study competence requiring developing study skills to enable them continue studying after graduation.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Nigeria in general and Rivers State in particular, there are increasing opportunities for teacher education, for those entering and those already in the profession. However, evaluation studies to monitor progress so as to ensure improvement in the teaching and learning process have focused mainly on urban residents as a result of which data does not exist on the perception of rural adult populace.

### Research Question

1. To what extent is the manpower needs for teacher education adequate towards meeting the learning needs of the adult?
2. To what extent is the teacher education curriculum content adequate towards meeting the learning needs of the adult?
3. To what extent are the instructional strategies adopted for teacher education adequate towards meeting the learning needs of the adult?
4. To what extent is funding of teacher education adequate towards meeting the learning needs of the adult?

### Methodology

The study population consisted of eight person (degree holders) residing in rural areas. Multi-purpose sampling technique was used to select a sample of 55 persons representing 68.6% of the population of the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Perception of Rural Dwellers for Teacher Education towards meeting the Challenges and Needs of the Adult". The questionnaire consisted of two sections 'A' and 'B', Section 'A' elicited information on the demographic background of the respondents while section 'B' focused on perception for teacher education issues.

The distribution and collection of completed questionnaire was carried out by the researcher aided by eight persons who had previously assisted the researcher in a study all of them have formal education. The researcher adopted descriptive statistic to analyze data on the four research questions. The mean response was based on four point likert-type scale namely strongly Agree -4, Agree -3, Disagree -2 and strongly Disagree -1, Criterion mean score of 2.5 and above was used as the basis for decision.

**Research Question I:** To what extent is the manpower needs for teacher education adequate for meeting the learning needs of the adult in Rivers State?

### Data Analysis and Presentation

**Table 1:** Mean Score Distribution of Responses on extent of Perceived adequacy of Manpower for Teacher Education in River State

S/N	Extent of manpower adequacy	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	$\bar{x}$	Remark
1	No opinion	233 (932)	293 (879)	91 (183)	83 (83)	3.0	Agree
2	Highly Adequate	221 (884)	226 (828)	115 (230)	88 (88)	2.9	Agree
3	Inadequate	249 (996)	273 (819)	110 (220)	58 (68)	3.0	Agree
4	Adequate	100 (400)	127 (281)	262 (524)	211 (211)	2.0	Disagree
5	Highly adequate	95 (380)	136 (408)	258 (516)	211 (211)	2.1	Disagree

Data in table 1 show that the mean score for inadequate manpower was 3.0. This in effect means that manpower was inadequate in teacher education program.

**Research Question II:** To what extent is the curriculum for teacher education adequate for meeting the learning needs of the adult in Rivers State?

**Table 2:** Mean score distribution of responses on extent of perceived curriculum adequacy for teacher education in Rivers State

S/N	Extent of Manpower Adequacy	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SA (1)	$\bar{x}$	Remark
1	No opinion	309 (1,236)	204 (612)	119 (238)	68 (68)	3.1	Agree
2	Highly inadequate	175 (700)	204 (612)	184 (368)	137 (137)	2.6	Agree
3	Inadequate	312 (2648)	241 (735)	124 (348)	23 (23)	2.5	Agree
4	Adequate	306 (1,224)	205 (615)	123 (246)	66 (66)	2.2	Disagree
5	Highly adequate	201 (804)	125 (375)	315 (630)	59 (59)	2.0	Disagree

Data in table 2 indicate that mean score of highly inadequate curriculum content was the highest. This in effect means that curriculum content of teacher education program is inadequate

**Research Question III:** To what extent is the instructional strategies adopted for teacher education adequate for meeting the learning needs of the adult in Rivers State?

**Table 3** Mean score distribution of responses on extent of perceived adequacy of instructional strategies adopted for teacher education in Rivers

S/N	Extent of Adequacy of Strategies	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SA (1)	$\bar{x}$	Remark
1	No opinion	73 (292)	139 (417)	341 (682)	147 (147)	2.2	Disagree
2	Highly inadequate	100 (400)	127 (281)	260 (524)	211 (211)	2.0	Disagree
3	Inadequate	95 (380)	136 (408)	258 (516)	211 (211)	2.1	Disagree
4	Adequate	233 (932)	293 (879)	91 (183)	83 (83)	3.0	Agree
5	Highly adequate	175 (700)	204 (612)	184 (368)	137 (137)	2.6	Agree

Data in table 3 show that the mean of adequate instructional strategies was the highest. In effect this means that instructional technology adopted the teacher education are adequate

**Research Question IV:** To what extent is the funding for teacher education adequate for meeting the learning needs of the adult in Rivers State?

**Table 4:** Mean score distribution of responses on extent of perceived funding adequacy for teacher education in Rivers State

S/N	Extent of Adequacy of Strategies	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SA (1)	$\bar{x}$	Remark
1	No opinion	309 (1,236)	240 (612)	119 (238)	68 (68)	3.1	Agree
2	Highly inadequate	306 (1,224)	205 (615)	110 (220)	79 (79)	3.1	Agree
3	Inadequate	200 (292)	221 (417)	49 (682)	230 (147)	3.4	Agree
4	Adequate	73 (800)	139 (663)	341 (98)	147 (230)	2.2	Agree
5	Highly adequate	246 (984)	36 (108)	182 (364)	236 (236)	2.4	Agree

Data in table 4 indicate that the mean score of highly inadequate funding was the highest this in effect funding for teacher education was inadequate.

### Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that manpower for teacher education was inadequate toward meeting the challenges and needs of the adult among rural dwellers in Rivers State as in table 1. The study also revealed in (table 2) that the respondents believed the curricular for teacher education was inadequate toward meeting the challenges and needs of the adult. The report of the study corroborated to UNESCO (2010) and Umar (2006) that the pitfalls in teacher education include inadequacy or lack qualified teachers and facilities and inadequate number of appropriate courses. The study showed respondents indicated that the instructional strategies used for teacher education are adequate as in table 3. The study revealed that the respondents believed that funding for teacher education was inadequate as can be seen in table 4. Umar (2006) opines that teacher education was faced with dwindling attention from government in terms of funding teacher education programmes.

### Conclusion

The global demand for teacher education in adult education resonate the desire to meeting minimum learning the needs of the adult population. Tacking these depend on the perception for teacher education towards meeting the learning needs of the adult. The study concludes that teacher education is a necessary pre-requisite for meeting the learning needs of the adult but lacks the needed resources to assume this responsibility. The study concluded that teacher education needs to be broadened from all angles in order to meeting the learning, needs of all adults in the contemporary society.

### Recommendations

The following are the recommendations of the study

1. There is need to review the curriculum for teacher education to accommodate the needs and challenge of the adult that are neglected by planner in existing curriculum.
2. There is need to equip tertiary institution providing teacher education with the right caliber of staff and infrastructure for effective and learning.

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