

TEACHER EDUCATION, TEACHER PRACTICE, GENDER AND GIRLS' SCHOOLING OUTCOMES

A STUDY IN FIVE NIGERIAN STATES



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

■ AIMS OF STUDY

To investigate the relationship between what teachers learn about gender and girls' education in pre-service (PRESET) training and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) and their capacity to support education outcomes associated with rights and gender equality in junior secondary schools in Nigeria.

■ INTRODUCTION

This research project was funded by the Macarthur Foundation through the British Council, Nigeria, co-ordinated by researchers based in Abuja and at the University College London Institute of Education. It is based on survey data and some interviews collected by research teams working in Jigawa, Kano, Lagos, Rivers, and Sokoto states from June 2014 - April 2016.

An assumption the research team took from national policy on gender in programmes on Universal Basic Education (UBE) was that a broad national strategy for inclusion was developing. The NCCE minimum standards for teacher training, with their focus on building teachers' understanding of the significance of gender and skills in gender sensitivity, was one element in taking this forward. However, a key finding from this study was that there are multiple interruptions to the intended flow of ideas and practice in the direction of gender sensitivity and equality. Leaks are evident all along a pipeline that leads from educating teachers about gender to realising learning outcomes for girls at Junior Secondary School (JSS) level. At every point intended connections were not made. Few student teachers were responsive to the discussions of gender and inclusion in their initial training (PRESET). Only a small proportion of students who completed PRESET were able to find jobs in education, with this trend most pronounced in the 3 northern states (Jigawa, Kano and Sokoto). Most classroom teachers had little experience of CPD. A majority of teachers working in schools had very negative attitudes on gender equality and girls' rights to schooling. Only a quarter of girls surveyed in JSS, and just 12% of boys, had positive views about girls' rights and the value of gender equality. Thus enormous work is needed to place teachers in schools, support their professional development in all aspects of teaching, including gender equality and girls' rights, and to encourage girls and boys to think about inclusion, equalities, and rights as a key aspect of their education.

The study team was led by Professors Philip Olu Jegede (Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) and Elaine Unterhalter (University College London Institute of Education) and comprised researchers based in Abuja, the five focus states, and at the University College London Institute of Education (IoE). (See back cover for a list of all those who have contributed to this study). The research design followed a cohort of 4,494 student teachers (21% enrolled at universities and 79% at Colleges of Education) who were in the final phase of their studies in June 2014. Initial surveys amongst students were complemented with interviews with key informants at their higher education institutes. Follow up surveys with the initial cohort by telephone in January and November 2015 provided information on

labour market destinations. In November 2015, more detailed investigation in 6 purposively sampled Junior Secondary Schools in each state, where members of the initial cohort were working, yielded information on the views of teacher colleagues and learners. Some of the findings were explored further through focus group discussions in each state in April 2016 with a selected group of informants from the initial cohort.

✓ RESEARCH DESIGN



■ SOME DEMOGRAPHICS OF STUDENT TEACHERS

The initial sample surveyed comprised 57% men and 43% women, but the distribution varied across states. In Lagos and Rivers there were more women than men, while the situation was reversed in Sokoto, Jigawa and Kano. The sample reflected the gender distribution among teachers in those states. Students from Lagos state had a higher mean socio-economic score (SES) than students from other states. Household mean socio-economic status was calculated by adding together the occupation of students' fathers and mothers. Thus this may not reflect higher status occupations amongst students studying in Lagos, but that they were more likely than those in other states to mention their mother was in formal employment. Surprisingly, in all states students studying at Colleges of Education had a somewhat higher mean family socio-economic score than those studying at universities.

Student teachers were asked about their family locational histories. Three quarters of the students surveyed in Lagos and up to two thirds of those surveyed in Rivers, Kano and Sokoto came from medium or very large towns. In Jigawa only 40% had this background, and 20% came from locations that had only one primary school or no school at all.

■ STUDENT TEACHERS AND FUTURE WORK INTENTIONS

In the initial survey the cohort was asked about why they had enrolled in a course in teaching and what their future work intentions were. While overall two thirds said they wanted to work as teachers, in Lagos and Rivers this comprised less than half of all respondents. In these two states, a substantial proportion said they did not want to be teachers and were interested in studying something else, but were not successful in gaining admission to another course. The mean family SES score was lower for those who said they wanted to become teachers, and the highest for those who said they had taken a teaching course but were not interested in a career as a teacher. In Jigawa, where a larger proportion in the sample came from very small villages or rural areas, where the mean household SES was amongst the lowest in the sample, and where we did not interview any university students, there is less avowal that teaching is not the student's first choice course of study.

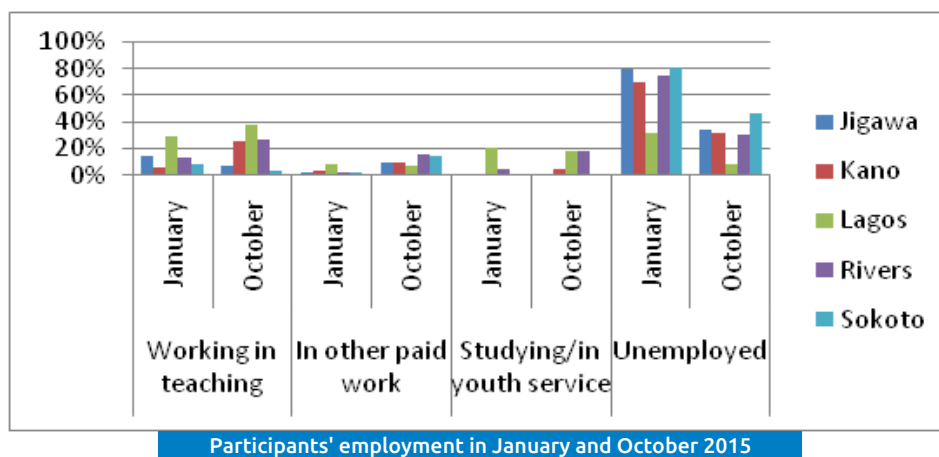
■ TEACHER EDUCATION AND TEACHER DEPLOYMENT

Six months after completing their Education studies, the vast majority of newly qualified teachers from the initial cohort reached in the follow up telephone survey were unemployed. A small minority (16% of sample reached) were working in teaching, the largest proportion (30% of sample reached) in Lagos. Eighteen months after graduation in the second follow up telephone survey, the proportion reporting unemployment had reduced to 29%, but in some states it was nearly half – 47% in Sokoto, for example. While the proportion of graduates of teaching courses who were reporting themselves unemployed had reduced, the proportion working in schools in a paid or voluntary capacity was small in all states except Lagos. In Sokoto it was 7% and in Kano, Jigawa and Rivers it was between a quarter and a third of those surveyed. By contrast, in Lagos this figure was 41%, the vast majority in very small private schools.

A sizeable proportion of university graduates surveyed were doing their National Youth Service six months after graduation, but the proportion who had studied at Colleges of Education and reported themselves unemployed was concerningly high (31%).

In Sokoto the failure to issue certificates on completion of studies was a reason 40% gave for not taking up work. In Jigawa nearly a third of new graduates gave this as a reason and in Kano a fifth. Non-issuing of certificates was only mentioned by a small proportion in the two southern states. Similar proportions of men and women responded that they could not get teaching work despite having the appropriate qualifications, but a larger proportion of College of Education graduates, compared to those from universities, noted this difficulty.

In all 5 states group interviews with employed and unemployed teachers who had been in the initial interview cohort took place in April 2016. In all these group discussions, corruption was mentioned as a reason that teachers could not get work. In addition participants mentioned that jobs were allocated on the basis of who supported which political party, ethnicity, and state of origin. In Sokoto issues of status of applicants and to what extent they had the respect of elders were also mentioned. Thus it is clear that the labour market for teachers is far from rational, and that aspects of politics, identity and affiliation play key roles. Many focus groups discussed that work in teaching was not well paid, and that even in state schools, where pay could be higher than in private schools, there were so many delays in salary payments that people would take other jobs. The military and police were mentioned as alternatives. In Rivers there was special mention of how insecurity resulted in a reduction in jobs, as school rolls reduced when communities moved because of violence. In addition, participants noted that women teachers who were married could not always find work where their husband lived, and in some northern states there could be religious barriers to women working in some communities.



Respondents were asked about their plans for work over the coming year (2017). 56% said they hoped they would be working in teaching, either paid or volunteering. One quarter hoped they would be studying or doing NYSC. A larger proportion of former College of Education students, compared to university graduates, hoped to take up further study. Only 6% of the sample overall said that they hoped for paid work outside teaching in the coming year. However 11% of the sample overall (comprising 16% of respondents in Rivers and 18% in Lagos) hoped to engage in other kinds of economic activity, possibly self-employment. A quarter of university graduates hoped for this kind of activity.

The state breakdown of these aspirations for the coming year indicates around three quarters in Sokoto and Jigawa hope for work in teaching, despite the very small proportions of students that gained work in this sector after completing their studies. Less than a quarter in Lagos want to remain in teaching, despite having been successful in finding work in education. In Kano and Rivers only half want to remain in teaching. Nearly half of those in Lagos want to go on to further study, and a sizeable proportion (18%) envisage some self employment.

■ UNDERSTANDING GENDER IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Students and key staff informants in Colleges of Education and universities were asked about the amount of attention given in the education courses to topics concerned with gender, girls' education and various aspects of schooling, inclusion and exclusion. Neither students nor staff indicated very in-depth coverage of these issues, although women students reported more coverage, compared to men, suggesting that they may be more receptive to these issues being raised, although neither group notes very extensive engagement. There were no large differences based on the type of institution (i.e. university or College of Education).

Students completed an in-depth survey relating to their attitudes on a range of questions concerning gender equality in education, public and professional life and private relationships. The survey included questions on appropriate behaviour for men and women, and how teachers might deal with sexual harassment and assault of girl pupils.

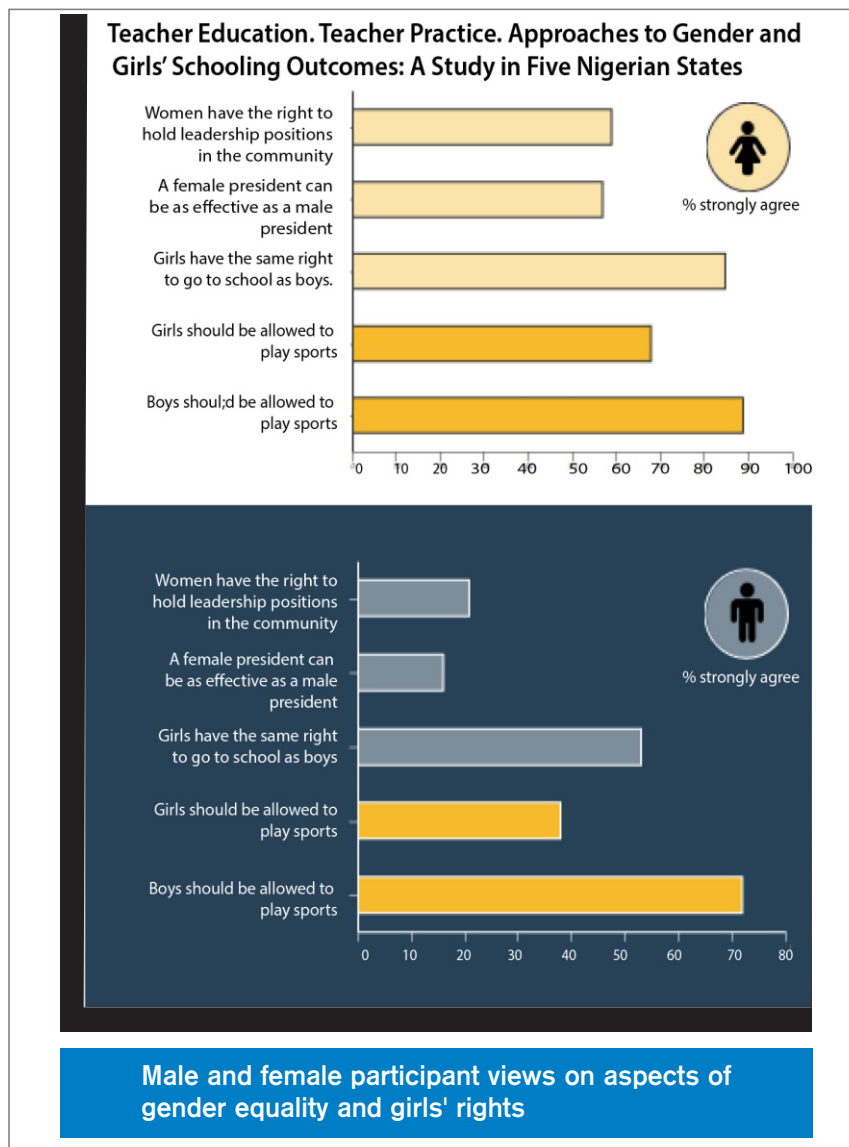
Significantly larger proportions of female students, compared to male students, surveyed in 2014 strongly agree that women have the right to hold leadership positions at community and national level, and that girls should be allowed to play sport. However larger proportions of men, just over half, strongly agree that girls have the same right to go to school as boys, compared to just about one fifth of male students who strongly agree that women can take political leadership positions. Only just over a third of male students consider girls should be allowed to play sport.

Views on women's leadership are quite polarised, with more agreeing or disagreeing strongly about women having the right to leadership positions or women being effective presidents than those agreeing/disagreeing somewhat. Women's and men's responses differ starkly – men are much more likely to disagree with women performing leadership roles. Gender equality in schooling is less controversial, with most agreeing, but again women teacher trainees are more likely to have gender equitable views than men. In the southern states of Lagos and Rivers a larger proportion held views strongly in support of women's participation in the public sphere. In the northern states, respondents in Jigawa had the least gender equitable views.

Most teacher trainees surveyed in 2014 believed both men and women have rights with regard to choice of marriage partner, but a larger proportion of women compared to men agreed strongly on women's rights in this area. However, other areas with regard to family relationships, particularly in respect of family planning, and joint decision making, showed smaller proportions of men in favour of women's participation and equality in these areas.

Male teacher trainees were much more likely to blame female students for sexual harassment or pregnancy, and only two thirds of male students surveyed thought girls who had an early pregnancy should be allowed to return to school, while 81% of women surveyed thought this course should be open after an early or unintended pregnancy.

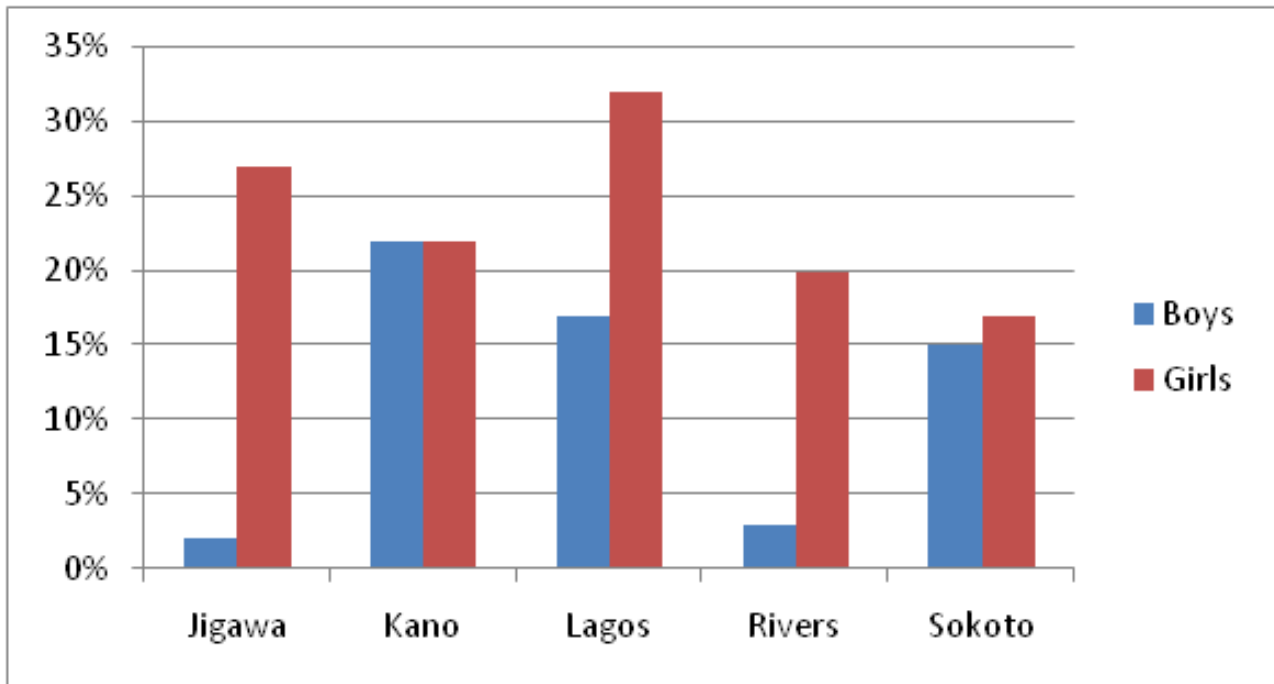
Overall we see a pattern where women tend to hold more gender equitable views than men; students studying in Lagos and then Rivers hold the most gender equitable views and those studying in Jigawa the least. Students with more gender equitable views are also more likely to be located in universities. However, the labour market studies show that university students are less likely to have taken up jobs in teaching.



■ UNDERSTANDING GENDER IN SCHOOLS

We conducted surveys with teachers and learners in six JSS schools in each state, where newly qualified teachers from our original cohort had taken work, to investigate gender attitudes. We found that a larger proportion of head teachers had gender equitable views, compared to teachers. About a fifth of girls had gender equitable views, but only around 10% of boys. However, there were marked differences by state in the proportion of children who expressed views in favour of gender equality. For both boys and girls there was a statistically significant relationship between their gender attitudes and how included they reported feeling in the classroom, suggesting that more confident children,

who experience inclusive teaching practices, are more likely to feel comfortable with ideas around equality and girls' rights.



Percentage of learners with positive gender attitude scores by state

The level of training teachers had received through PRESET or CPD did not appear to have any statistically significant relationship with their understanding or attitudes to gender, girls' rights to education or views about inclusion. However, we did see a pattern that teachers who were most actively trying to support inclusion also reported themselves most unhappy with their work conditions, suggesting that trying to put ideas about inclusion into practice in an environment with minimal support is extremely stressful.

The study thus suggests a number of missed opportunities: to better support knowledge and engagement with ideas about gender and girls' rights to education in teacher education; to support the graduates of teacher education into work in schools; to supplement this work with CPD that develops in-depth knowledge and understanding of gender, related inequalities, and the ways in which schooling can help challenge and change these. Better training around gender in teacher education may not be the whole answer to the many facets of gender inequality in society in general and schooling in particular, but it is a useful place to start.

■ KEY FINDINGS

1. There are multiple interruptions in the smooth flow of ideas and practice about inclusion and gender equality from teacher training to classrooms.
2. Few student teachers respond to teaching about gender and inclusion received during training; women trainees are more responsive than men. There is limited provision of gender and inclusion in initial teacher education.
3. Only a small proportion of trained teachers find work in schools.
4. Teachers in school receive minimal CPD.
5. A majority of teachers working in schools had very negative attitudes on gender equality and girls' rights to schooling.
6. Only a quarter of girls surveyed in JSS, and just 12% of boys, had positive views about girls' rights and the value of gender equality.

■ PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Deepen the curriculum and pedagogy around gender and inclusion in the implementation of the current NCCE policy.
2. Draw on lessons learned during implementation in the next round of consultation and the next iteration of NCCE policy reform to ensure that gender quality and girls' rights to schooling are prioritised.
3. Harmonise the training and implementation of CPD to produce a consistent and sustained programme of CPD for all teachers, in both public and private schools, particularly with regard to issues of gender and inclusion.
4. Improve strategic workforce planning on a state by state basis to take account of the need to match schools with effectively trained teachers, including addressing inefficiencies in the system to ensure that newly qualified teachers are able to take up their posts.
5. Encourage state and federal level policymakers to improve the quality of teacher education as a whole, with specific reference to the National Teacher Education Policy.

3 WAYS

TO IMPROVING GENDER SENSITIVITY AND EQUALITY

Work is needed to place trained teachers in schools, support their professional development in all aspects of teaching, including gender equality and girls' rights. Girls and boys will be supported to learn about inclusion, equalities and rights

Promote engagement with ideas about gender and girls' rights in teacher education

Few student teachers engaged with discussions of gender and inclusion in their initial training. A majority of teachers working in schools had negative attitudes on gender equality and girls' rights to school.

1

Support the continuing professional development of teachers

Most classroom teachers had little experience of CPD. Data reveals an extensive unmet need for support, building insight into gender equality

3

2

Place trained teachers in schools

Only a small proportion of students who completed PRESET were able to find jobs in education. This trend was most pronounced in the 3 Northern states.

RESEARCH TEAM

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For further information about this project, and to download the full project report, please visit:

[https://www.britishcouncil.org.
ng/programmes/education/research-policy-projects/macarthur-training-research](https://www.britishcouncil.org/ng/programmes/education/research-policy-projects/macarthur-training-research)

We would like to thank members of our External Advisory Group for their invaluable advice and support. A full list of EAG members can be found in the final report.

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