

**INFLUENCE OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN REDUCING ECONOMIC  
HARDSHIP AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN TERTIARY  
INSTITUTIONS OF OYO STATE.**

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**Abstract**

This study investigated the influence of teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo state. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Two research hypotheses guided the study. The population for this study comprised all public tertiary institutions students in Oyo state. The target sample was one hundred (150) purposively selected among final students from University, Polytechnic and Colleges of Education in Oyo State. A self-developed questionnaire which contains (20) items structured in a four-Likert scale (Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed, and Strongly Disagreed) was used as research instrument. The face and content validity was carried out by two experts in the field of test and measurement, Department of Educational Psychology, Kwara State University, Malete. The reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained. Inferential statistics of t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level for data analysis. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that the economic meltdown has created an opportunity to rethink the curriculum of teacher education in Nigeria so as to incorporate all the challenges created by the digital revolution, the knowledge-driven society and the global service-oriented economy in which

these perilous time's teachers are trained to work. The study recommended that government should look into the tertiary institutions by giving adequate attention and financial support to students, in order to reduce their educational burden.

**Keywords:** Economic hardship, Undergraduates, Gender, Teacher Education and Tertiary Institutions.

## **Introduction**

Education is an essential and irreplaceable instrument in all human societies. It facilitates the accomplishment of a nation's goals by educating its citizens with essential skills, including values, attitude, and knowledge, that will enable them to embrace patriotism and actively participate to the advancement of society. Education equip pupils with the necessary expertise to offer solutions for financial difficulties. The economic state of the broader society influences the availability of educational resources, lifestyle, and level of motivation of students worldwide (Komolafe, 2016).

A teacher is an individual who has completed professional training and obtained certification to impart knowledge, values, norms, and culture to enable the learner to be applicable in their environment. Teachers have a vital role in imparting practical skills and fostering entrepreneurial mindset in undergraduate students, enabling them to become self-sufficient and make meaningful contributions to the growth of their nation. This inevitably excludes individuals who undertake the task due to circumstances or simple societal obligations. It should be noted that while other professions may have their own criteria for evaluation, the significance of this particular profession lies in its crucial role in the development of human resources and its central position as a source of knowledge. In simpler terms, it is undeniable that other occupations are derived from the teaching profession. One could argue that this understanding is primarily responsible for the high moral character of people who choose this profession, and, to a greater degree, the commonly believed

belief that "Teachers are rewarded in heaven". This is because their functions go beyond being seen as mere storehouses of knowledge and instead involve the change of the learners they educate. The acknowledgment of the teachers' accomplishment and significance in society undoubtedly led to the establishment of World Teachers' Day on October 5th, which has been observed annually since 1994. The significance of teacher education lies in its influence on the quality of teachers. Teaching is a multifaceted and challenging intellectual endeavour that requires thorough preparation in order to be successfully carried out. Teacher education serves the dual purpose of ensuring the ongoing competence of instructors and maintaining their long-term motivation (Eurydice, 2019). Studies indicate that the most efficient method for improving educational standards is to make changes to the initial training and recruitment of teachers, as well as providing ongoing training for teachers who are already working. In fact, teacher education has a substantial influence on the behaviour and teaching abilities of teachers, as well as the academic achievements of students.

The National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER, 2022) defines economic hardship as a substantial decrease in economic activity that affects the entire economy and persists for a certain duration. This reduction is typically observed in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), real income, employment, and industrial production. Business cycle analysts commonly utilise the idea of economic hardship to describe periods of economic weakness that surpass the typical limits in terms of duration, depth, and diffusion. This is why recessions are characterised by their depth and diffusion, which are considered the three essential dimensions of a recession (Faruta, 2013). This indicates that during a period of economic difficulty, there is a significant fall in economic activities, which has a lasting impact on various sectors of the economy.

According to Dornyei (2017), recession is defined as a decrease in the adjusted real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for at least two consecutive quarters. There are several elements that contribute to an economic recession, but the primary culprit is inflation. Inflation is the phenomenon of a widespread increase in the prices of goods and services over a specific duration. As the inflation rate increases, the purchasing power of money decreases. Inflation occurs due to factors such as rising production costs, increased energy expenses, and mounting national debt. During a period of inflation, individuals typically curtail their discretionary expenditures, decrease their overall spending, and increase their savings. However, when individuals and corporations reduce their spending to save expenses, this leads to a decrease in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). All these are likely to affect our undergraduates in Nigerian Institutions.

Tertiary education plays a crucial role in a nation's endeavour to cultivate a highly proficient labour force capable of competing in the global economy. Engaging in tertiary education offers significant advantages both in the private and public spheres. Obtaining a tertiary education degree also brings non-economic advantages such as an enhanced quality of life, improved health, and increased future prospects. Tertiary education has wide-ranging benefits for society as a whole due to the positive externalities that arise from the combined achievements of graduates. These benefits include the creation of new jobs through greater entrepreneurial activity, the prevention of skilled individuals leaving the country, and other positive outcomes for society. Students in tertiary schools (NCE, Polytechnic, and University) in Nigeria are currently facing economic difficulties due to the economic downturn in 2015. In contemporary nations, the education system both generates and influences societal malfunctions. Within the academic setting, economic adversity has been observed to have a substantial impact on students' academic pursuits and

social relationships within the school premises. School functions effectively as a social and academic environment, receiving input from various stakeholders including the government, parents, teachers, and administrators (Anwaka, 2018). He also stated that in this situation, it is crucial to assess the extent of economic challenges faced by kids in order for schools, as social environments, to effectively meet the requirements of students whose families may be struggling due to economic changes.

Students' academic attainment is strongly influenced by the socio-economic position of their parents. Research has indicated that a significant number of parents who have children attending schools are currently facing challenges related to unpaid wages, reduced wages, partial closure of factories, layoffs, increased costs of fuel, food, and transportation, unemployment, and a decline in industrial production and productivity (Sobowale, 2016). The process of incorporating knowledge and skills into one's education and the ability to actively develop knowledge is heavily influenced by economic variables. An economic downturn characterised by decreased economic activities, potential unemployment, reduced industrial productivity, limited currency circulation, and a noticeable dip in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) can adversely impact the attitudes of undergraduate students towards education. The economic difficulties that families face are frequently unwittingly passed on to their children and can contribute to their overall poor academic performance. The socio-economic standing of individuals tends to remain stable across generations (Shea, 2022). One cannot ignore the fact that the prices of books, laboratory sets, calculators, supplies, photocopying, printing, and other educational resources increased when the currency was officially depreciated (Sobowale, 2016). The economic adversity in Nigeria is having a detrimental impact on the attendance of students in tertiary institutions throughout the country.

Sobowale (2016) expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the cost of the bus transportation in our campuses are enormous and burdensome. The bus of N100 in most of our Campus, has now increased to N200 without any indication of a pay increase in the near future. Students lacking financial resources for transport are compelled to be absent from school. Due to inflation caused by an economic recession, The economic adversity renders schooling intolerable and severely hampers classroom attendance, thereby affecting attitude towards academic pursuits inside the educational institution. The inclination towards academic pursuits might serve as an indicator of educational achievement and overall well-being for certain students. Therefore, this perception is considered in conjunction with academic performance, which is a significant result of schooling. However, numerous students have a pessimistic attitude towards school due to their lack of belief in the significant impact that school and academic achievement would have on their future. These negative emotions and attitudes may cause them to become disillusioned with education (Larson, 2000).

Academic activity refers to any assigned task or project that is intended to evaluate academic progress and earn academic credit. This include but is not limited to, examinations, project writing, take-home tests, and similar tasks. The term "schooling" typically refers to the formal education system that follows a structured academic curriculum, usually conducted from approximately 8:00 AM until at least 1:00 PM (Mahoney & Stattin, 2020). Engaging in academic activities offers students numerous opportunity to acquire and enhance the abilities required to have a good impact on their present academic pursuits and to become successful individuals in society after completing their education (Barber, Stone, Hunt, & Eccles, 2015). The prevailing economic adversity in Nigeria has a significant impact on students across all educational levels. This is evident in the academic conduct of students, which

directly influences their attitude towards academic pursuits. For example, students who originate from low-income families, students who come from homes in absolute poverty, and students whose parents are unemployed are more likely to have a negative attitude towards academic activities in the university.

Gender is seen as the characteristic that differentiates organisms based on their reproductive responsibilities as female or male (Kolawole & Ala, 2018). Research has indicated that males from lower-income households are more likely to handle academic tasks under economic difficulties compared to females. According to Odok (2023\3), a significant number of male students have taken up part-time employment in order to cover their education fees. A substantial proportion of these students choose to live off-campus in order to maintain a healthy work-school life balance.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The economic adversity encountered in Nigeria has a significant impact on undergraduates, families, businesses, and social institutions within the country. Businesses, and society as a whole are forced to make significant adjustments in order to adapt to economic downturns. Consequently, certain students enrolled in higher institutions encounter challenges in affording tuition fees, which can result in their discontinuation of studies, which in turn, leaves them without the financial resources to acquire necessary educational materials due to the economic difficulties faced by their parents in society.

Additionally, there is a propensity for an escalation in antisocial behavior among undergraduate students with the campus. The impact of economic adversity on the educational achievement of the students has garnered the interest of researchers and experts. Although, there have been numerous studies on the relationship between hardship and students' academic performance, no research has

specifically examined the impact of teacher education in alleviating economic hardship in tertiary institutions in Oyo state. Therefore, the study investigated the influence of teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Oyo state.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study was to:

1. determine the influence of teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.
2. identify the factors militating against teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the influence of teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the factors militating against teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.

### **Methods**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for this study comprised all Students in tertiary institutions in the study area. The target sample was one hundred (150) students purposively selected among final year students in tertiary institutions (NCE, Polytechnic and University) in the study area. These categories of students were chosen purposely from Emmanuel Alayande University of Education, Oyo State College of Education and The Oke-Ogun



Polytechnics in which 50 students were randomly selected because they feel the most effects of economic hardship being in the penultimate year.

A self-developed questionnaire which contains (20) items structured in a four-response type (Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed, and Strongly Disagreed) was used as research instrument. The face and content validity was carried out by three experts in the field of test and measurement, Department of Educational Psychology, Kwara State University, Malete. A trial testing was carried out on students of Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained using croabach alpha. Inferential statistics of t-test was used to test the null hypotheses.

## Results

### Hypotheses Testing

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the influence of teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.

**Table 1: t-test Analysis Showing the difference in the mean response of respondents on the influence of teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions**

Gender	No	Mean	S. D.	df	t-value	Sig	Remark
Male	52	15.28	3.409	149	1.641	0.132	NS
Female	98	16.79	3.454				

*Source: fieldwork 2025*

\*not significant at  $p > 0.05$

Table 1 shows the t-test Analysis of the difference in the mean response of respondents on the influence of teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions. T-value of 1.641 was obtained with a p-value of 0.132 when computed at 0.05 alpha level ( $t_{149} = 1.641, p > 0.05$ ). Since the p-value of 0.132 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis

is retained. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference in the mean response of respondents in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in mean response of respondents on the factors militating against teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.

**Table 2: t-test Analysis Showing the Difference in the Mean Response of respondents on the factors militating against teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions**

Variable	Mean	S. D.	df	t-value	Sig	Remark
Teacher education	16.65	2.27	149	1.32	0.210	NS
Economic Hardship	16.38	3.10				

*Source: fieldwork 2025*

\*not significant at  $p > 0.05$

Table 2 shows the t-test Analysis of the difference in the mean response of respondents on the factors militating against teacher education in reducing economic hardship in tertiary institutions. As shown in Table 2, the t-value 1.32 is obtained with a p-value of 0.210 computed at 0.05 alpha level ( $t_{(149)} = 1.32, p > 0.05$ ). Since the p-value of 0.210 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is retained. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the factors militating against teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions of Oyo State.

## Discussion

From the result from table 1, it revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean response of male and female students on the influence of

teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Oyo State. This implies that teacher education alleviate economic hardship. Well planned curriculum that enriched with entrepreneurship and vocational course handled by a good teacher will help students to have a better knowledge on skills which will enable them to function in their society. This is in line with the findings of World Bank (2022) on the impact of Teacher education and the challenges of global economic meltdown on academic performance in universities. It could be explained that tertiary institutions have limited resources and educational provisions as a result of the economic hardship.

Table 2 showed that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the factors militating against teacher education in reducing economic hardship among undergraduate students in tertiary institutions of Oyo State. The possible explanation for this observed fact could be as a result of many variables such as inflation in prices of commodities and services, unemployment on the part of parents and guardians, hunger and food insecurity and lifestyle changes as a result of economic hardship. Marzano (2017) explained that prolonged economic pressure and stress have negative effect on learning and on students' wellbeing; this effect is usually evident in lack of motivation. It was evident that students have to make major lifestyle changes as a result of economic hardship. Komolafe, (2016) explained that negative lifestyle changes caused by economic hardship significantly decreases life satisfaction in young people.

## **Conclusion**

The participants in this survey disclosed that the economic adversity has had a detrimental effect on the education system of Nigeria, The majority, if not all, insufficient and functional shortcomings can be attributed to a single prominent cause factor: insufficiency of resources stemming from the economic crisis.

Financial adversity and government policies also influence economic hardship. The current economic difficulties in Nigeria have presented an opportunity to reconsider the curriculum of teacher education. This revision aims to address the various challenges posed by the digital revolution, the knowledge-based society, and the global service-oriented economy. It is crucial to equip teachers with the necessary skills to navigate these complex times.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that;

1. Teacher education should also have a vision of education that seeks to empower teachers in training, teachers on the job and their learners to assume responsibility for creating a sustainable future.
2. Parents should as much as possible provide all needs of their children in tertiary institutions and provide them with the basic needs of students which go beyond food, shelter and clothing but extends to the cost of transportation, healthcare services, stationeries, reading materials, laptop and relevant text books that would help them to achieve their academic pursuit. The availability of these resources and materials would go a long way in reducing the direct effect of the economic hardship on students.
3. Government should look into the tertiary institutions by giving adequate attention and financial support as this can reduce the financial burden of education on parents and undergraduates. Scholarships should also be available for intelligent students as well as to encourage them. Also, school fees, acceptance fees, hostel fees and cost of reading materials should be highly subsidized by the government and the school management should promote access to qualitative education.
4. Furthermore, the government should map and implement economic

programmes that will improve the nation's economy to facilitate a buoyant economy and by extension, a more stimulating environment for students in tertiary institutions across Nigeria.

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