

Effect of Poor Funding on the Teaching and Learning of Research Method in Nigerian Colleges of Education

Ocheola Innocent Ewaoche¹

¹Department of Education, Federal College of Education Technical ISU, Ebonyi State.

Owo Emmanuel Ozuma²

²Department of Agric. Education, Federal College of Education Technical ISU, Ebonyi State.

Maduagwu Ukamaka Marta³

³Department of Education, Federal College of Education Technical ISU, Ebonyi State.

Akinosi Jamiu Atanda⁴

⁴Department of Mathematics Education, Federal College of Education Technical ISU, Ebonyi State.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17471395>

Abstract

This paper examines the effect of poor funding on the teaching and learning of research methods in Colleges of Education across South-East Nigeria. Research instruction serves as a critical foundation for developing inquiry-oriented teachers capable of generating and applying evidence-based knowledge in classrooms. However, the quality of research training in most Nigerian Colleges of Education has continued to decline, largely due to insufficient funding and inadequate infrastructural support. Using a descriptive survey design, this study gathered data from 500 respondents comprising 200 lecturers and 300 students from ten Colleges of Education in the region. The results showed that 75 percent of lecturers and 68 percent of students identified lack of adequate funding as the primary barrier to effective teaching and learning of research methods. Furthermore, 81 percent of respondents reported that restricted access to current journals, research databases, and ICT tools limited their ability to apply contemporary research techniques. Findings also revealed that lecturers' motivation to engage in research was weakened by the absence of institutional research grants, workshops, and incentives. Consequently, students' research projects often lacked methodological rigor, data validity, and originality.

The study argues that poor funding does not only reduce the availability of teaching and learning resources but also undermines the institutional culture of research inquiry. It concludes that the observed deficiencies threaten the professional quality of teacher education and by extension, the future of educational research in Nigeria. The paper recommends that government and tertiary education funding agencies such as TETFund should increase research allocations, upgrade ICT facilities, and encourage partnerships that promote capacity-building and sustainable research development. By prioritizing adequate funding, Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria can significantly improve both the pedagogy and outcomes of research methods instruction.

Keywords: *funding, research method, teaching and learning, South-East Nigeria, Colleges of Education, teacher education*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The importance of teacher education in Nigeria cannot be overstated, given the central role teachers play in shaping future generations. Colleges of Education (COEs) are institutions mandated to prepare teachers for the basic education subsector in Nigeria. Within this mandate, the teaching of Research Methods stands out as one of the most critical aspects of teacher training, as it equips students with the skills of inquiry, logical reasoning, and academic project writing (Nworgu, 2015). However, despite the significance of Research Methods in educational training, the teaching and learning process has been greatly challenged by poor funding of COEs.

In the Nigerian educational landscape, funding inadequacy has been a recurring challenge, affecting not only universities and polytechnics but also COEs that cater for the training of basic education teachers (Saint, Hartnett, & Strassner, 2003). Poor funding is evident in the lack of instructional materials, outdated libraries, poor lecturer-student ratio, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient ICT facilities. The result is a system where students are introduced to the theoretical aspect of Research Methods but lack adequate practical training in statistical software usage, literature search, data analysis, and academic writing. This situation has contributed to weak research culture, poor quality of student projects, and low confidence among graduates to pursue further research.

The paper, therefore, seeks to address the following issues: What are the specific effects of poor funding on the teaching and learning of Research Methods in Nigerian Colleges of Education? How does this funding challenge impact the research competence of graduates? What strategies can be adopted to mitigate these challenges? By addressing these questions, the paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on improving teacher education in Nigeria.

Research plays a pivotal role in teacher education by fostering critical inquiry, problem-solving, and evidence-based practice. In Nigerian Colleges of Education, the course Research Methods prepares pre-service teachers to conduct empirical investigations and final-year projects. However, persistent underfunding has impeded this mission. In the South-East region, data obtained in 2025 show that many Colleges operate with minimal research budgets, outdated equipment, and inadequate ICT facilities, forcing lecturers to rely primarily on theory rather than practice. Without sufficient funding, methodological instruction becomes abstract, limiting students' analytical competence and creativity.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although research capacity is essential for national development, most Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria face chronic financial constraints. Inadequate government subventions, limited TETFund disbursements, and poor internally generated revenue have resulted in obsolete laboratories, poorly equipped libraries, and low staff motivation. Recent field data indicate that 75 percent of lecturers and 70 percent of students face direct obstacles to research due to insufficient funding and lack of ICT access. Consequently, students' project reports often lack methodological depth, while lecturers struggle to model best research practices.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study sought to:

1. Examine the extent to which poor funding affects the teaching of research methods in South-East Nigerian Colleges of Education.
2. Assess how inadequate funding influences students' learning experiences.
3. Identify specific funding constraints hindering research activities.

4. Propose sustainable strategies for improving research funding and capacity development.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Findings from this research provide empirical evidence of the relationship between funding and the quality of research education. The results will assist policymakers, administrators, and donor agencies particularly TETFund and NCCE in designing targeted funding interventions that enhance infrastructure, digital access, and academic productivity in Colleges of Education.

2. Literature Review

Funding in Higher Education

Funding is universally acknowledged as the backbone of educational systems worldwide. Adequate financial resources are critical for sustaining academic programs, equipping laboratories, maintaining infrastructure, and motivating staff (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2006). In Nigeria, higher education institutions have historically been underfunded, with COEs receiving less attention compared to universities and polytechnics (Obasi, 2006). The inability of government to meet UNESCO's recommendation of allocating at least 26% of the national budget to education has worsened the financial state of COEs. This inadequate funding manifests in the poor state of facilities, shortage of modern instructional materials, and weak integration of ICT into teaching and learning processes (Afolabi & Loto, 2012).

Importance of Research Methods

Research Methods is indispensable in preparing students for academic and professional inquiry. It enables teacher trainees to conduct independent studies, write projects, evaluate data, and contribute to knowledge generation (Nworgu, 2015). Beyond academics, competence in Research Methods nurtures critical thinking, innovation, and problem-solving skills. For Research Methods to be effectively taught, students must have access to well-stocked libraries, current journals, online databases, internet connectivity, and statistical

software such as SPSS, R, and STATA. Additionally, lecturers must possess updated skills in both qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques (Ogunode, 2020).

Consequences of Poor Funding

Studies reveal that poor funding leads to overcrowded classrooms, shortage of qualified lecturers, outdated curriculum, inadequate supervision of student projects, and lack of access to modern research tools (Okebukola, 2015). Many COEs operate without functioning ICT centers, and students are forced to rely on outdated manual approaches to data analysis. Libraries are stocked with obsolete textbooks, with limited or no access to online journals and databases (Aina, 2007). These deficiencies result in low-quality student projects, limited research exposure, and weak postgraduate readiness among COE graduates.

Adequate funding has long been recognized as a determinant of educational quality (Okebukola, 2015). It enables institutions to procure instructional materials, support staff training, and maintain modern facilities. Conversely, poor funding leads to inadequate infrastructure and low staff morale (Adebayo, 2019). Owolabi (2020) further observed that most Nigerian Colleges of Education rely almost exclusively on government subventions, which are often delayed or insufficient.

The current study aligns with these findings: data from South-East Nigeria revealed that 77 percent of lecturers felt demotivated due to lack of research grants and incentives. This supports the argument that consistent and adequate funding is a prerequisite for research innovation and sustainable teacher education.

3. Methodology

A descriptive survey design was adopted. The population comprised lecturers and students in ten Colleges of Education across the five states of South-East Nigeria. Using stratified random sampling, 500 respondents were selected (200 lecturers and 300 students). A structured questionnaire, validated by experts in measurement and evaluation, served as the instrument. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics

(percentages and frequency counts) to summarize respondents' views on how poor funding affects the teaching and learning of research methods.

4. Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1 summarizes the responses of lecturers and students.

Indicator	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
Inadequate funding affects research teaching	75	25
Lack of ICT facilities limits practical research	68	32
Poor access to journals and research databases	81	19
Low motivation of lecturers due to poor funding	77	23
Students' projects lack methodological rigor	70	30
Total	371	129

Source: Field Data, 2025

The data reveal that most respondents perceived poor funding as the principal barrier to effective research training. Access to journals and ICT facilities ranked as the most critical deficiencies.

5. Findings

Analysis of field data shows that 75 percent of lecturers identified inadequate funding as a major obstacle to quality teaching. Similarly, 68 percent of students indicated that the absence of ICT laboratories hindered their learning of data analysis tools such as SPSS and Excel. 81 percent reported insufficient access to

current journals, while 77 percent noted low staff motivation. These results demonstrate a strong correlation between financial constraints and the declining standard of research education in South-East Nigeria.

6. Discussion of Findings

The findings corroborate those of Adebayo (2019) and Owolabi (2020), who reported that underfunded institutions produce weaker research outputs. The South-East data highlight that when financial resources are limited, lecturers focus on theory rather than applied methodology. Poor access to ICT facilities also restricts exposure to statistical techniques and data-driven inquiry. This situation discourages innovation and perpetuates dependence on outdated practices. The alignment between empirical evidence and literature confirms that adequate funding is indispensable for effective research instruction and student engagement.

7. Recommendations

1. Increase Government Funding: Federal and state governments should expand budgetary allocations to Colleges of Education, with a focus on research infrastructure.
2. Strengthen ICT Infrastructure: Establish and equip research laboratories with computers, internet connectivity, and statistical software.
3. Promote Research Grants: TETFund should provide accessible grants to lecturers to enhance methodological competence.
4. Digitalize Libraries: Colleges should subscribe to international databases to mitigate the 81 percent deficit in journal access.
5. Encourage Partnerships: Institutions should pursue collaborations with NGOs and private foundations to diversify funding sources.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

6. Increased Budgetary Allocation: The Nigerian government should comply with the UNESCO recommendation of allocating at least 26% of the national budget to education. COEs should be given priority to ensure research facilities are adequately funded.
7. Strengthening ICT Infrastructure: Government and COE management should invest in modern ICT infrastructure, including internet facilities, computer laboratories, and access to statistical software. Open-source software such as R and JASP should also be adopted to reduce cost.
8. Capacity Building for Lecturers: Regular workshops, training, and postgraduate sponsorship should be provided for lecturers to enhance their competence in teaching Research Methods. TETFund interventions should be judiciously used to sponsor conferences, seminars, and training in both qualitative and quantitative methods.
9. Public Private Partnerships: COEs should explore partnerships with NGOs, donor agencies, and private organizations to supplement government funding. Such partnerships can provide research grants, equip libraries, and improve access to digital resources.
10. Efficient Utilization of TETFund: Transparent and accountable management of TETFund resources should be enforced. Priority should be given to equipping libraries, ICT centers, and research laboratories, as well as funding staff training.

8. Conclusion

The study concludes that poor funding exerts a profound negative effect on the teaching and learning of research methods in Colleges of Education across South-East Nigeria. Over 70 percent of respondents confirmed that financial inadequacy contributes directly to poor methodological training, weak supervision, and low student performance. Strengthening funding structures, upgrading digital resources, and supporting professional development are essential to revitalizing research culture and ensuring quality teacher

education. Insufficient resources, poor ICT access, inadequate staff motivation, and weak project supervision collectively undermine the competence of students in research. To revitalize Research Methods education in COEs, strategic interventions in funding, ICT development, lecturer training, and resource mobilization are necessary. Strengthening research capacity in COEs is essential not only for improving teacher education but also for advancing Nigeria's educational system as a whole

References

- Adebayo, T. (2019). *Challenges of research funding in Nigerian higher institutions. Journal of Education Policy, 14(2), 45–59.*
- Afolabi, F. O., & Loto, A. B. (2012). Funding challenges and prospects in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Education and Practice, 3(9), 8–15.*
- Aina, L. O. (2007). Appropriate bibliographic control for effective information management in Africa. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science, 17(2), 125–132.*
- Ajayi, I. A., & Ekundayo, H. T. (2006). Funding initiatives in university education in Nigeria. *Educational Thought, 6(1), 1–12.*
- Ekundayo, H. T., & Ajayi, I. A. (2009). *Towards effective management of university education in Nigeria. International NGO Journal, 4(8), 342–347.*
- Nworgu, B. G. (2015). *Educational research: Basic issues and methodology (3rd ed.). Nsukka: University Trust Publishers.*
- Obasi, I. N. (2006). *New public management and education. Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning, 6(1), 31–43.*

- Ogunode, N. J. (2020). Funding of public higher education in Nigeria: Implications for research and development. *Journal of Educational Development*, 4(1), 45–53.
- Okebukola, P. (2015). Quality assurance in Nigerian higher education. *The African Symposium: An Online Journal of African Educational Research Network*, 15(2), 1–9
- Okebukola, P. (2015). Quality assurance in higher education: Funding as a key determinant. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Management*, 8(1), 1–12.
- Owolabi, K. (2020). The state of research in Nigerian Colleges of Education. *African Educational Research Review*, 12(3), 76–89.
- Saint, W., Hartnett, T. A., & Strassner, E. (2003). Higher education in Nigeria: A status report. *Higher Education Policy*, 16(3), 259–281..