

education research

research findings for development policymakers and practitioners

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About this issue

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Is teacher migration a 'brain drain' or a positive move?

The rise in mass international recruitment of teachers has put pressure on developing country education sectors. Developed countries offer much higher salaries and benefit from 'poaching' teachers who have received government-subsidised training in their home countries. What is the impact of teacher migration?

International migration of teachers has occurred across the Commonwealth for many years. Yet organised recruitment from south to north began in the late 1990s and peaked in early 2000. In the UK, the main recruiting country, organised international recruitment developed in response to a crisis in national teacher recruitment.

A study by the University of Nottingham, in the UK, analyses the experiences of four Commonwealth countries: two 'receiving' countries, the UK and Botswana, and two 'sending' countries, Jamaica and South Africa. It aims to identify the extent of international teacher migration, the 'push' and 'pull' factors and the consequences for developing countries.

Despite some negative aspects for sending countries, teacher recruitment and mobility have largely had a positive effect on poverty and international development. This is mainly due to teachers sending money home and returning home with savings:

- In Jamaica, where the state partly funds teacher training by about two-thirds, the loss of qualified, experienced teachers is a serious problem. In South Africa, teachers recruited overseas are rated as above average in effectiveness.
- Professional development and better salaries were the main reasons given for the migration of Jamaican and South African teachers. Jamaican teachers earned three times more in England and South African teachers three to four times more.
- Expatriate teachers in Botswana have made a major contribution to the development of the education system, especially the rapid expansion of secondary schooling.
- In the UK, more than half of secondary schools surveyed had staff shortages. Meanwhile, about 46 percent of UK teachers – 53 percent of secondary teachers – were interested in migrating.

International recruitment of teachers does

present challenges to sending countries. However, this is not the main reason for teacher shortages in some developing countries. Other internal issues need to be addressed:

- Governments need to reconsider salaries, introduce special incentives, improve manpower planning and allow training institutions to expand according to demand.
- While compensation is not recommended, receiving countries could provide assistance to sending countries via their aid budget, for instance by funding teacher exchanges.
- Sending and receiving countries could develop a formal agreement to manage the process of teacher migration. This could include migrant teacher induction and further training, or a two-way teacher exchange programme.

- Sending country governments could allow teachers to take unpaid leave to teach abroad.
- Governments that subsidise teacher training could consider increasing cost sharing or making subsidies conditional on teachers working in a state school for a set time.

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See also

Teacher Mobility, 'Brain Drain', Labour Markets and Educational Resources in the Commonwealth, Researching the Issues 66, UK Department for International Development, by W. John Morgan, Amanda Sives and Simon Appleton, 2006 (PDF)
www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/Researchg-the-Issues-No.66.pdf

Developed countries offer much higher salaries and benefit from 'poaching' teachers who have received government-subsidised training in their home countries

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Flexible models for primary teacher training in Africa

If reasonable student-to-teacher ratios are to be reached in primary education in Africa, it is essential to increase the number and quality of teachers. As the trend in training shifts away from traditional institutions, a more flexible approach is emerging.

The demand for teachers has risen in sub-Saharan Africa due to Universal Primary Education targets, increasing enrolments and the loss of many teachers to HIV and AIDS. In some countries, untrained or underqualified teachers make up a substantial proportion of teachers. Most countries in the region are reforming their education sectors to train greater numbers at a quicker rate.

A report by the International Research Foundation for Open Learning looks at three aspects of distance education teacher training in sub-Saharan Africa: models of decentralised management; student support and assessment of classroom practice; and choice of technology. It examines case studies and reports from Zambia, South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda and Malawi.

The study finds that a new model of teacher education is emerging – the field-based model. Distance education is one element of this, pulling together previously unrelated strands of teacher training, including colleges, schools, ministries, donor-funded projects, decentralised ministry functions and teacher resource centres. The weakest parts of the model are decentralised

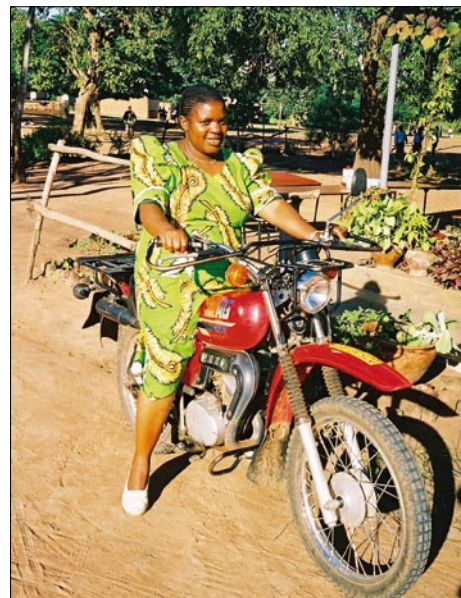
systems of support for students and assessment for school-based students.

The new trend includes:

- creating ministry-led national teacher education strategies
- setting up teacher education directorates, in-service training units and various ministry bodies as independent cost centres responsible for developing and managing central policy
- gradually integrating and rationalising teacher education systems with the aim of providing standardised, accredited training for pre-service and in-service training
- implementing flexible open and distance learning methods, designing new roles and responsibilities for existing providers and transferring training and support tasks to the level of district, zone and school
- common use of print-based materials and little use of ICT-based programmes.

The report finds that there needs to be significant investment in and planning of local-level student support and assessment. It issues a set of guidelines for distance education programme planners:

- Planners need to adopt a continuing plan and flexible model integrating distance education and face to face delivery.
- They should use feasibility studies, audits and baseline studies to determine what institutions and expertise already exist and could be pulled into a delivery and support system
- The political context has to be considered. Governments must be encouraged to be transparent about the budget, consult all those involved and negotiate the distribution of resources, responsibilities and incentives.
- The delivery and support network must be built in a manner that links all those involved with one another.



A Primary Education Advisor in Malawi travels from her Teacher Development Centre by motorbike to the local primary schools in her area, where she provides support and advisory services to teachers. © Elizabeth Mattson 2006

- Student support must be prioritised as the key element for success and delivery must be effective.

International Research Foundation for Open Learning

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See also

Field-Based Models of Primary Teacher Training: Case Studies of Student Support Systems from Sub-Saharan Africa, Researching the Issues 63, UK Department for International Development, by Elizabeth Mattson, 2006
www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/field-based-models-teacher-training-63.pdf

Alternative basic education in post-conflict African countries

Once conflict has ended in an African state, the need to reconstruct basic education becomes a priority. What lessons can they learn in relation to funding, management and access, especially in relation to Alternative Basic Education (ABE)?

This study explores the perspectives of young people, parents, communities, governments, international agencies and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) on what aspects are crucial for reconstructing education in particular contexts. Using detailed country studies from northern Uganda, southern Sudan and Somaliland, plus case studies from Namibia and the Eastern Cape in South Africa, it looks at lessons learned.

There is a need to understand the particular contexts within which education reconstruction takes place in African countries emerging from conflict. A

number of issues are common to post-conflict reconstruction. In situations where the conflict was perceived as a 'war of liberation', the reconstruction of the education system is seen as a continuation of the liberation struggle. After an insurgency or lengthy conflict, lessons need to be learned to ensure the conflict does not happen again.

- Emerging governments must establish a vision for the education system, in consultation with their citizens through community representatives, education experts, women's groups, children, parents and teachers.
- Governments and communities need to take a strong leading role in directing INGOs and donors with regard to how they wish to establish their education system.
- Government ministries and agencies should share examples of good practice and quality programming to avoid any duplication of efforts.
- Systems should be put in place to monitor the progress of programmes in terms of quantity and quality of education.
- In interim periods, the incoming government has only limited control over international agencies and INGOs and there is no established structure. At these

times, appropriate procedures need to be identified.

The challenge is to identify initiatives that have worked and find ways to expand these in the context of each individual country. With regard to ABE in education reconstruction, the study found that:

- ABE is often forgotten in post-conflict states, despite the agreement that a critical component of sustaining peace is ensuring literacy and vocational training for young people who missed out on school.
- This is because the education needs of younger children of school age are given priority by emerging governments, partly due to pressure from communities and international agencies.

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See also

Alternative Basic Education in African Countries: Emerging from Conflict; Issues of Policy, Co-ordination and Access, Researching the Issues 67, UK Department for International Development, London, by Carolyne Dennis and Alicia Fentiman, 2007 (PDF)
www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/education-emerging-conflict67.pdf

Flexible education tackles HIV in southern Africa

Business as usual will not meet the education challenges of the HIV epidemic in Mozambique and South Africa. Governments must radically rethink education delivery to out-of-school youth.

Research by the UK Institute of Education looks at how open, distance and flexible learning (ODFL) can reduce the effects of HIV on young people.

The HIV emergency in southern Africa threatens development, social cohesion, political stability, food security, life expectancy and economic growth. Communities and the education sector are reaching their limits to cope with the needs of children affected by HIV. ODFL has the potential to:

- increase access to education
- improve quality of schooling (and thereby child survival and family health)
- raise public awareness and advocacy for health initiatives
- spread health information and encourage healthy behaviours.

How should governments further develop ODFL to help meet the needs of affected youth? This study in Mozambique and South Africa reveals that:

- Education Ministries focus on delivering basic education through schools, by developing HIV/AIDS and life-skills curricula and training teachers. There is little provision for increasing numbers of children who cannot attend school.
- In South Africa, ODFL primarily relies on television campaigns and media strategies, such as Soul City, loveLife and Khomanani. These produce better knowledge, awareness and attitudes about HIV/AIDS and, to a lesser degree, behaviour change.
- South African universities have developed specialised distance education initiatives for training and development of education, health, counselling and HIV/AIDS professionals.
- In Mozambique, major government HIV/AIDS programmes (My Future My Choice and Geração Biz) use mostly face to face delivery and train peer educators to reach out-of-school youth.
- Mozambique's Secondary Education through Distance Education project is developing a set of ODFL materials for out-of-school youth.

The study found that young people need more opportunities to develop literacy skills and undertake vocational training. They are most easily reached by radio and particularly like to learn through music, drama and stories.

To confront AIDS and meet Millennium

Development Goals in countries with high HIV rates, governments must deliver education more flexibly and empower young people to move their communities towards the post-AIDS era. The research recommends using ODFL to:

- deliver the national curriculum to those out of school
- promote critical thinking, positive group identity and solidarity among young people
- develop, coordinate and share knowledge on HIV/AIDS at the national level
- improve teachers' ability to empathise with young people affected by HIV/AIDS and provide psychosocial guidance and counselling
- give young heads of households access to information, psychosocial support, training on business skills and careers counselling.

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See also

The Role of Open, Distance and Flexible Learning (ODFL) in HIV/AIDS Prevention and Mitigation for Affected Youth in South Africa and Mozambique, Researching the Issues 61, UK Department for International Development, by Pat Pridmore and Chris Yates, 2006 (PDF)

www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/odfl-safrica-mozambique-61.pdf

Gender equality in higher education

Research into gender equality in higher education in low-income countries has shown some astonishing patterns. These include wide-scale sexual harassment and gender violence, barriers to access, and women staff being excluded from promotion and professional development.

Higher education is viewed as critical for developing the skills, knowledge and expertise needed for economic and social development in low-income countries. Higher education

institutions are central to the globalised knowledge economy, the training of professionals, national wealth creation, international competitiveness and scientific and technological innovation. Countries with higher levels of girls' enrolment in education tend to have higher levels of economic productivity.

A study by the University of Sussex, in the UK, looks at how gender equality is promoted and obstructed in higher education institutions in five low-income Commonwealth countries: Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Sri Lanka and South

Africa. It focuses on three areas: access, curriculum transformation and staff development.

The study found that in all five countries, gender has had a large impact on shaping women's academic and professional identity:

- Gender violence ranged from name calling to sexual harassment in Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Uganda and rape in Nigeria and South Africa. Fear of physical attack reduces women's confidence and mobility.
- Despite formal commitment to gender equality, informal practices such as exclusion, humour, sarcasm and non-transparent decision-making can undermine women. Discrimination is often subtle, such as not being invited to apply for promotion.
- Men dominated decision-making, professional development opportunities and resource allocation, among other things. Male teachers pay more attention to and have higher expectations of male students, who tend to dominate classroom time and space.
- The number of women in senior academic and management positions is low, providing few role models. Consequences include continuing views that only men can be leaders and that knowledge is associated with male authority.

Countries with higher levels of girls' enrolment in education tend to have higher levels of economic productivity

Gender equality at higher education institutions needs to be dealt with at all levels: national and international policy, institutional, individually and socially.

- Higher education organisations need to include gender equality in their strategic planning and allocate resources to promote and maintain equality.
- Institutions must improve women's safety via good lighting, campus security and policies involving sexual harassment grievance procedures, as well as challenging discriminatory attitudes.
- Affirmative action programmes must be developed, maintained and evaluated to ensure equal access. Pre-session courses should be set up for women to prepare them for higher education.
- Gender statistics should be kept on staff recruitment, retention, professional development and promotion. Staff development programmes should reinforce gender equality policies and affirmative action schemes.

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See also

Gender Equity in Commonwealth Higher Education: An Examination of Sustainable Interventions in Selected Commonwealth Universities, Researching the Issues 65, UK Department for International Development, by Louise Morley, 2006

Can open and distance learning help make South Asia competitive?

Rapid advances in technology have made open and distance learning (ODL) more attractive to South Asian policymakers, but information about results is lacking. What role can ODL play in building low-income countries' skills for a globalised knowledge economy? Can institutions become more accessible to poor people?

Researchers from the International Research Foundation for Open Learning examined ODL institutions in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka. South Asia has the world's largest numbers of ODL students and some of the developing world's longest-established institutions.

ODL has the potential to offer opportunities to individuals disadvantaged by their location, gender or economic

ODL has the potential to offer opportunities to individuals disadvantaged by their location, gender or economic constraints

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constraints. However, in South Asia ODL generally caters to the same clientele as conventional institutions – lower-middle class urban-based men. They are most likely from the large pool of those unable to obtain places elsewhere. Possibilities of combining employment with education allow them opportunities they might not otherwise have had. Private costs taken on by students are high, limiting accessibility for poorer students.

For Muslim women ODL helps overcome social constraints that limit their ability to travel to pursue higher education. However, ODL does not challenge gender boundaries or help them enter traditionally male-dominated subjects like science and commerce – most of those enrolled study education or nursing.

ODL public sector institutions are not generally successful at providing appropriate and relevant vocational training. Student completion rates vary considerably and tutorial attendance and use of supplementary study material is often poor. However, ODL has

been successful for the private sector in delivering tailored, vocational programmes through in-house training. Private sector providers are better at targeting their programmes to their specific skill needs and ensuring that students complete. In addition:

- Postgraduate programmes provided by ODL institutions have higher completion rates than diploma and bachelors' programmes.
- Institutional costs per student are low and costs for the graduate can be less than for poorer-performing conventional institutions.
- Students who complete ODL degrees usually see benefits due to enhanced promotion prospects, rather than greater incomes.
- Employers are often misinformed about

Students who complete ODL degrees usually see benefits due to enhanced promotion prospects, rather than greater incomes

programmes and wary of hiring ODL graduates, limiting the benefits gained from the qualifications.

The number of programmes is increasing but many attract small numbers and have low completion rates. ODL providers must:

- shift the focus from maximising enrolment to improving student completion rates
- design programmes to focus on qualification levels and subjects where ODL produces better results
- collaborate more closely with public and private sector employers
- cater skills development to a global market
- realise that in the emerging knowledge economy skills become outdated or devalued rapidly
- shift away from rote learning, information transfer and teacher-directed learning so that students know how to take the initiative, rather than to be led.

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See also

Using Distance Education for Skills Development, Researching the Issues 62, UK Department for International Development, by Reehana Raza and Terry Allsop, 2006 (PDF)
www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/distance-education-skills-dev-62.pdf

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