

IMPROVING TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

Leonard Dokbisa Padung; Isaiah Geoffrey Chorlime & Dung, Nvou Theresa

Department of Educational Foundations, Federal University of Education, Pankshin

Department of Physical and Health Education, Federal University of Education, Pankshin

Department of Educational Foundations, University of Jos, Plateau State

Abstract

This work is on improving teacher training and development in marginalized communities, which is crucial for enhancing educational equity and fostering an inclusive learning environment. This initiative recognizes the unique challenges that teachers face in under-resourced areas, where socioeconomic barriers often hinder the effective delivery of quality education. Comprehensive training programmes tailored to the specific needs of these communities can significantly elevate teaching standards and student outcomes. This work x-rayed the conceptual framework of how to improve teacher training and development in marginalized communities, which includes: culturally responsive pedagogy, and technology to enhance teacher training among others. The work also looked at the importance of teacher training and development in marginalized communities, such as improvement in students' achievement, especially in socio-economically disadvantaged settings, enabling teachers to create inclusive classroom environments that recognize and value the cultural identities of their students, among others. Factors hindering teacher training and development in marginalized communities were also addressed, which include limited funding, access to resources, and cultural and linguistic barriers. The conclusion was drawn, and recommendations were made to include, among others, enhancing funding and resource allocation, improving culturally relevant training, and fostering community partnerships. Ultimately, prioritizing teacher training and development in marginalized communities not only empowers teachers but also contributes to the holistic development of students. By investing in the professional growth of teachers, we can create a sustainable cycle of improvement that uplifts entire communities, paving the way for a brighter future for all learners.

Keywords: Teacher training, development, marginalized communities, educational equity

Introduction

Teacher training and development are pivotal for enhancing educational quality, yet these efforts often fall short in marginalized communities due to systemic disparities and neglect. Marginalized communities characterized by poverty, ethnic minority status, geographic isolation, or socio-political exclusion face profound challenges in attracting, preparing, and retaining qualified teachers. As education continues to be recognized as a fundamental human right and a powerful tool for social transformation, improving teacher education in these communities is both an ethical imperative and a strategic necessity (UNESCO, 2023). Research indicates that teachers are the most influential in-school factor affecting student achievement (OECD, 2022). However, in many low-income or rural settings, teacher preparation programs are inadequate, with limited access to updated curricula, professional mentorship, and continuous development opportunities (World Bank, 2023). For example, in sub-Saharan Africa and parts of South Asia, teacher training institutions are underfunded, and many teachers enter classrooms with minimal

pedagogical skills (UNICEF, 2022). These gaps contribute to poor student outcomes, high dropout rates, and cyclical poverty within marginalized populations.

Emerging literature highlights the importance of contextually relevant and inclusive teacher training models that address the unique challenges faced by educators in marginalized areas. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2021), culturally responsive pedagogy and community-based teacher education can significantly enhance teacher efficacy and retention. Moreover, the integration of digital tools and distance learning platforms offers new avenues for reaching remote communities with quality training programs, especially in post-pandemic contexts (Trucano, 2022). Governments and educational stakeholders are increasingly called upon to reform policies, invest in teacher development infrastructure, and collaborate with NGOs and local communities. Initiatives such as the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW) advocate for increased funding and strategic interventions to build sustainable teacher capacity in fragile and marginalized contexts. Strengthening teacher training and development in marginalized communities is essential for bridging educational inequalities and fostering inclusive development. It requires a multifaceted approach that includes policy reform, investment in training institutions, innovative delivery models, and community engagement. Only through such comprehensive efforts can education truly become a transformative force for all, regardless of geographical or social barriers.

Concept of Teacher Training and Development

Teacher training and development are crucial components of educational systems worldwide, focusing on enhancing educators' skills, knowledge, and effectiveness in the classroom. Initial teacher education programmes provide aspiring teachers with foundational pedagogical knowledge and subject expertise. However, the rapidly evolving educational landscape necessitates ongoing professional development throughout a teacher's career (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Effective teacher development programmes typically incorporate active learning strategies, content focus, and coherence with school curricula, sustained duration, and collective participation. Desimone (2009) states that such elements contribute to improved teaching practices and, consequently, better student outcomes. Professional learning communities (PLCs) have emerged as a powerful tool for teacher development, fostering collaboration and peer learning among educators.

In recent years, technology has played an increasingly significant role in teacher training. Online platforms and digital resources offer flexible, accessible learning opportunities, allowing teachers to engage in self-paced professional development (Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008). Additionally, Dede, Ketelhut, Whitehouse, Bait & McCloskey (2009) put it that mentoring programmes have shown promise in supporting novice teachers, reducing attrition rates, and improving instructional quality. The impact of high-quality teacher training extends beyond individual classrooms. Research indicates that well-prepared teachers contribute to improved student achievement, reduced achievement gaps, and enhanced school effectiveness (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Moreover, ongoing professional development helps teachers adapt to educational reforms, integrate new technologies, and address diverse student needs.

As education systems worldwide strive for improvement, investing in comprehensive teacher training and development remains a critical priority. By equipping educators with the necessary skills and support, we can ensure that every student receives high-quality instruction and opportunities for success (Borko, 2004).

Concept of Marginalized Communities

Marginalized communities refer to groups that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political, and economic) from mainstream society. These communities are pushed to the periphery of social, economic, and political spaces due to factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status (Desimone, 2009). The concept of marginalization is closely linked to social inequality and intersectionality. It recognizes that individuals may face multiple, intersecting forms of oppression simultaneously. For instance, a person might experience marginalization due to both their race and gender, compounding the challenges they face (Gay, 2010). Marginalized communities often encounter barriers in accessing essential services such as healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. This limited access perpetuates cycles of poverty and social exclusion. Additionally, these groups frequently face stereotyping, prejudice, and systemic discrimination, which can lead to psychological distress and reduced quality of life (Sullivan & Pate, 2013). The effects of marginalization extend beyond individuals to impact entire communities. Marginalized areas often suffer from underinvestment in infrastructure, limited political representation, and higher rates of crime and social problems. This creates a self-reinforcing cycle where lack of resources and opportunities further entrenches marginalization (Borko, 2004).

Hence, addressing the challenges faced by marginalized communities requires multifaceted approaches. These may include policy interventions, community empowerment initiatives, and efforts to promote social inclusion and equity. Recognizing and amplifying the voices of marginalized groups is crucial in developing effective solutions and fostering a more inclusive society (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

How to Improve Teacher Training and Development in a Marginalized Community

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Teacher Training and Development: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) is an educational approach that acknowledges and incorporates students' cultural backgrounds into the teaching process. This method is particularly significant in improving teacher training and development within marginalized communities. CRP aims to create an inclusive learning environment that respects and values diversity, ultimately enhancing student engagement and academic success (Desimone, 2009). Research indicates that culturally responsive teaching can positively impact student learning outcomes in marginalized communities. According to Ladson-Billings (1994), effective pedagogy requires teachers to understand their students' cultural contexts and use this knowledge to inform instructional practices. By integrating culturally relevant materials and teaching strategies, educators can foster a sense of belonging and empowerment among students.

Furthermore, teacher training programmes that emphasize CRP are essential for preparing educators to work effectively in diverse classrooms. Villegas and Lucas (2002) argue that teacher preparation should include training on cultural competence, which equips educators with the skills to recognize and address the unique needs of students from various backgrounds. This training can lead to improved teaching practices, resulting in higher student achievement. Moreover, CRP encourages collaboration with families and communities, promoting a holistic approach to education. By involving parents and community members in the learning process, teachers can create a supportive network that reinforces students' cultural identities and academic success (Gay, 2010). Culturally responsive pedagogy plays a vital role in enhancing teacher training and development in

marginalized communities by fostering inclusivity, improving educational outcomes, and building strong community ties.

Enhancing Teacher Training through Technology: In recent years, technology has emerged as a powerful tool for enhancing teacher training, particularly in marginalized communities. By providing access to diverse resources and innovative teaching methods, technology helps bridge gaps in education and promotes inclusive learning environments. One significant advantage of technology in teacher training is the ability to offer online professional development programmes. These programmes can reach educators in remote or underserved areas, allowing them to participate in training that might otherwise be unavailable. For instance, platforms like Coursera and edX provide access to courses on culturally responsive teaching and classroom management, equipping teachers with essential skills (Garrison & Anderson, 2003). Moreover, technology facilitates collaborative learning among educators. Tools such as Google Classroom and Zoom allow teachers to connect with peers across different regions, sharing best practices and resources. Research indicates that collaboration fosters a sense of community and enhances teaching effectiveness (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). Additionally, technology supports the integration of multimedia resources into teacher training. By utilizing videos, podcasts, and interactive simulations, educators can engage with diverse teaching strategies and cultural contexts, making their training more relevant and impactful (Mishra & Koehler, 2006).

Leveraging technology in teacher training programmes significantly improves educational outcomes in marginalized communities. By providing access to professional development, fostering collaboration, and enhancing instructional quality, technology plays a vital role in preparing teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students.

Community-Based Mentorship Programmes in Teacher Training and Development:

Community-based mentorship programmes have proven to be effective in enhancing teacher training and development in marginalized communities. These programmes leverage local expertise and resources, providing novice teachers with tailored support and fostering a sense of belonging within the community. One key benefit of community-based mentorship is the cultural relevance it brings to teacher training. Experienced local teachers serve as mentors, guiding new teachers in understanding the unique cultural contexts of their students. This alignment helps novice teachers develop culturally responsive teaching practices, which are crucial for engaging diverse learners (Hollie, 2017). Additionally, mentorship programmes facilitate collaboration and networking among educators. By connecting teachers with local organizations, community leaders, and families, mentors can help build supportive networks that enhance professional development. Research indicates that strong professional relationships contribute to increased teacher efficacy and retention (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Moreover, community-based mentorship fosters shared leadership within schools. Mentors empower novice teachers by involving them in decision-making processes and encouraging their participation in community initiatives. This approach not only strengthens teachers' commitment to their profession but also promotes community ownership of educational outcomes (Baker-Doyle, 2010). Community-based mentorship programmes are vital for improving teacher training and development in marginalized communities. By providing culturally relevant support, fostering collaboration, and promoting shared leadership, these programmes contribute to creating a more inclusive and effective educational environment. Moreover, community involvement in CPD and

training fosters a sense of ownership and collaboration among educators. By engaging local stakeholders, such as parents and community leaders, programmes can be tailored to reflect the cultural and social context of the community, making them more relevant and impactful (Ball & Cohen, 1999). Continuous professional development and on-the-ground training are vital for enhancing teacher training and development in marginalized communities. By fostering ongoing learning and practical application, these approaches help create more effective educators who can better serve their students.

Continuous Professional Development and On-the-Ground Training in Teacher Development: Continuous professional development (CPD) and on-the-ground training are essential components in improving teacher training and development, especially in marginalized communities. These approaches ensure that educators remain current with teaching methods and are better equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students. CPD programmes provide teachers with ongoing learning opportunities that extend beyond initial training. Research shows that sustained professional development positively impacts teacher efficacy and student achievement (Desimone, 2009). For instance, workshops, seminars, and online courses enable educators to deepen their knowledge and skills in culturally responsive pedagogy, helping them address the unique challenges faced by marginalized students (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009). On-the-ground training complements CPD by offering practical, context-specific experiences. This approach allows teachers to implement new strategies in real classroom settings, receiving immediate feedback and support from peers and mentors. Studies indicate that hands-on training, coupled with reflective practices, enhances teachers' confidence and effectiveness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Resilience and Trauma-Informed Technology in Teacher Training and Development: In marginalized communities, teachers often encounter students who have experienced trauma, making resilience and trauma-informed approaches essential for effective training and development. Integrating technology into these frameworks can enhance teachers' ability to support their students' emotional and educational needs. Trauma-informed practices focus on understanding the impact of trauma on learning and behaviour. Training teachers in these practices equips them with strategies to create safe and supportive classroom environments, which are critical for fostering resilience in students (Sullivan & Pate, 2013). For instance, workshops that incorporate technology, such as virtual reality simulations, allow teachers to experience scenarios that help them empathize with students' backgrounds and challenges (Marsh et al., 2019).

Moreover, technology can facilitate ongoing professional development in trauma-informed care. Online platforms offer resources, webinars, and collaborative forums where educators can share strategies and experiences. This continuous learning is crucial for adapting to the evolving needs of students, especially in high-stress environments (Baker et al., 2019). Additionally, technology can be used to implement social-emotional learning (SEL) programmes that promote resilience. Digital tools can provide interactive and engaging ways for students to develop coping mechanisms and self-regulation skills. Research shows that SEL programmes significantly improve students' emotional well-being and academic performance (Durlak et al., 2011). Leveraging resilience and trauma-informed technology in teacher training can profoundly impact teachers' ability to support marginalized students, fostering a more inclusive and understanding educational environment.

Importance of Improving Teacher Training and Development in Marginalized Communities: Improving teacher training and development in marginalized communities is essential for fostering educational equity and enhancing student outcomes. Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the educational experiences of their students, particularly in under-resourced areas where systemic barriers often impede learning. Research indicates that effective teacher training can lead to significant improvements in student achievement, especially in socio-economically disadvantaged settings (Darling-Hammond, 2000). One of the primary reasons for focusing on teacher development in marginalized communities is the need for culturally responsive pedagogy. Educators must be equipped with the skills to address the diverse backgrounds and experiences of their students. Culturally relevant training enables teachers to create inclusive classroom environments that recognize and value the cultural identities of their students, thereby fostering engagement and motivation (Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Moreover, ongoing professional development is crucial for teachers in marginalized communities, as they often face unique challenges such as limited resources and high dropout rates (Ingersoll, 2003). Continuous training programmes can provide teachers with updated pedagogical strategies, classroom management techniques, and access to the latest educational technologies. This support is vital not only for improving instructional practices but also for enhancing teacher retention rates (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Furthermore, engaging local communities in the training process can create a collaborative framework that supports both teachers and students. By involving parents and community leaders in educational initiatives, schools can ensure that their approaches align with local values and expectations, ultimately leading to a more supportive learning environment (Epstein, 2011). Improving teacher training and development in marginalized communities is fundamental to achieving educational equity and empowering students. By investing in the professional growth of educators, we can create a sustainable cycle of improvement that benefits both teachers and learners.

Factors Hindering Teacher Training and Development in Marginalized Communities

Teacher training and development in marginalized communities face several significant barriers that hinder effective educational practices. Understanding these factors is crucial for creating targeted interventions to enhance teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.

- **Limited Funding:** Financial constraints are a primary barrier to teacher training in marginalized areas. Many schools lack adequate resources to invest in professional development programmes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Without sufficient funding, schools are unable to provide essential training opportunities, leading to a lack of updated teaching methods and strategies.
- **Access to Educational Resources:** Teachers in marginalized communities often struggle with limited access to educational materials and technology. This lack of resources can make it challenging for teachers to implement innovative teaching practices and stay informed about current pedagogical trends (Ingersoll, 2001). The absence of modern tools can diminish the efficacy of training programmes.
- **High Teacher Turnover:** High turnover rates among educators exacerbate the challenges of professional development. Frequent changes in staff disrupt continuity, making it difficult to establish long-term training programmes and relationships with mentors (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). New teachers may also lack the experience needed to benefit fully from training initiatives.

- **Cultural and Linguistic Barriers:** Marginalized communities often comprise diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Training programmes that do not consider these factors may fail to resonate with teachers, limiting their ability to connect with students (Gay, 2010). This disconnect can hinder the implementation of culturally relevant teaching practices.

Conclusion

Teacher training and development in marginalized communities is a critical component for fostering educational equity and improving student outcomes. Addressing the unique challenges faced by educators in these environments such as limited resources, high turnover rates, and cultural barriers, is essential for creating effective training programmes. By implementing tailored professional development initiatives that consider the diverse needs of both teachers and students, communities can cultivate resilient educators who are equipped to inspire and engage their learners. Furthermore, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, including local organizations and educational authorities, can enhance the sustainability of these training efforts. Ultimately, investing in comprehensive teacher training not only empowers educators but also contributes to breaking the cycle of disadvantage, leading to a brighter future for students in marginalized communities.

Suggestions

The following are some recommendations for improving teacher training and development in marginalized communities:

1. **Enhance Funding and Resource Allocation:** Advocate for increased funding from the government and private sectors to ensure adequate resources for teacher training programmes. This includes not only financial support but also access to teaching materials, technology, and facilities that foster professional development.
2. **Implement Culturally Relevant Training:** Develop training programmes that are culturally responsive and reflect the diverse backgrounds of students in marginalized communities. This approach helps teachers connect with their students and implement inclusive teaching practices that acknowledge and respect cultural differences.
3. **Foster Community Partnerships:** Establish partnerships with local organizations, universities, and educational institutions to create a support network for teachers. Collaborative efforts can provide mentorship opportunities, workshops, and resources tailored to the specific needs of the community.
4. **Encourage Continuous Professional Development:** Promote flexible and accessible ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers. These can include online courses, workshops, and peer-led training sessions that allow educators to continually enhance their skills and stay updated on best practices.
5. **Support Mentorship and Peer Collaboration:** Create mentorship programmes that pair experienced educators with novice teachers to provide guidance and support. Additionally, it encourages peer collaboration through professional learning communities, where teachers can share experiences, resources, and strategies for effective teaching in marginalized settings.

REFERENCE

- Baker, S. K., McIntyre, L. L., & Murdock, L. (2019). *Technology in the Classroom: Supporting Teachers as They Support Students*. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 52(5), 285-293.
- Baker-Doyle, K. J. (2010). *The Role of Mentoring in the Development of Teacher Leadership*. *Educational Leadership*, 68(8), 54-58.
- Ball, D. L., & Cohen, D. K. (1999). *Developing Practice, Developing Practitioners: Toward a Practice-Based Theory of Professional Education*. In *Teaching as the Learning Profession: Handbook of Policy and Practice* (pp. 3-32). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Borko, H. (2004). *Professional development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain*. *Educational Researcher*, 33(8), 3-15.
- Cochran-Smith, M., Villegas, A. M., Abrams, L., Chavez-Moreno, L., & Millner, B. (2009). *Teacher Education for Social Justice: A Perspective from the United States*. *Prospects*, 39(3), 309-321.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). *Teacher Quality and Student Achievement*. Education Policy Analysis Archives.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher education around the world: What can we learn from international practice? *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(3), 291-309.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective Teacher Professional Development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
- Dede, C., Jass Ketelhut, D., Whitehouse, P., Breit, L., & McCloskey, E. M. (2009). A research agenda for online teacher professional development. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60(1), 8-19.
- Desimone, L. M. (2009). *Improving Impact Studies of Teachers' Professional Development: Toward Better Conceptualizations and Measures*. *Educational Policy*, 23(2), 210-237.
- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). *The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions*. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405-432.
- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools*. Westview Press.
- Garrison, D. R., & Anderson, T. (2003). *E-Learning in the 21st Century: A Community of Inquiry Framework for Research and Practice*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hollie, S. (2017). *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning*. New York: Eye on Education.
- Ingersoll, R. (2001). *A Comparative Study of Teacher Preparation and Qualifications in the United States and Abroad*. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 23(4), 305-328.
- Ingersoll, R. (2003). *Who Controls Teachers' Work?* Harvard University Press.
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Strong, M. (2011). *The Impact of Induction and Mentoring Programmes for Beginning Teachers: A Critical Review of the Research*. "Review of Educational Research, 81(2), 201-233.
- Ingersoll, R., & Smith, T. (2003). *The Wrong Solution to the Teacher Shortage*. *Educational Leadership*, 61(8), 30-33.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). *The Dream keepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*. Jossey-Bass.
- Marsh, S., Hagger, M. S., & Chatzisarantis, N. L. (2019). *Using Technology to Develop Empathy in Teachers: A Virtual Reality Approach*. *Educational Technology & Society*, 22(4), 80-91.
- Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). *Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A Framework for Teacher Knowledge*. *Teachers College Record*, 108(6), 1017-1054.
- Sullivan, A. L., & Pate, R. (2013). *Trauma-Informed Care: A Social Justice Perspective*. "Social Work, 58(3), 211-219.
- Vescio, V., Ross, D., & Adams, A. (2008). A review of research on the impact of professional learning communities on teaching practice and student learning. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(1), 80-91.
- Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). *Educating Culturally Responsive Teachers: A Coherent Approach*. State University of New York Press.