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Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

THE RURALITY OF EDUCATION: BEST PRACTICES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY
AND ACCESSIBILITY OF BASIC EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE RURAL
AREA OF OKE OGUN, OYO STATE IN NIGERIA

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Alice Jokodola

September, 2021

Farzin Madjidi, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Alice Jokodola

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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VITA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria's educational system is riddled with issues and challenges, leading it to have the highest number of out-of-school children in the world. Not only have these issues and challenges led to a high number of out-of-school children, but it has also led to an increase in national poverty and illiteracy rates. Research points to the fact that these challenges result from a lack of quality and accessible basic education in Nigeria. It also indicates that rural areas are often the most vulnerable and affected when it comes to receiving quality and accessible education. This study focused on the rural area of Oke Ogun, which is located in Oyo State, Nigeria. This qualitative study described the current challenges within Nigeria's educational system and, by interviewing educational professionals in Oke Ogun, identified best practices to improve Nigeria's educational system within rural areas. Through the data collected in this study, the researcher was able to propose recommendations on how the government and educational leaders in Nigeria can contribute to the improvement of Nigeria's educational system, particularly in rural areas.

Keywords: education, basic education, universal basic education system, service delivery, accessibility, quality, Nigeria, Oyo State, Oke Ogun, rural

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background and Historical Context

Education is the backbone of society; it plays an instrumental role in the success and prosperity of all people. Indeed, education has the ability to advance economic opportunity and drive social mobility (P. Joshi, 2017). Currently, 40.1% of Nigeria's population is classified as poor and live below the poverty line. When this percentage is broken down, 18% of the population that is classified as poor live in urban areas, whereas 52.2% of them live in rural areas (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Such a high poverty rate demonstrates the inequality within Nigeria's socioeconomic system. Education is a tool that can decrease this inequality by helping citizens to acquire knowledge and skills to secure employment and financial success in their future.

For countries to achieve economic growth and development, their educational system must be viewed as an essential ingredient (Garba, 2010). Aladekomo (2004) emphasized the need for functional education; it must be relevant, be practical, and provide learners with skills and competencies that equip them to contribute to the development of their society. Education empowers individuals and helps them escape poverty and increase their output, income, and wealth (Garba, 2010). According to Awan et al. (2011), education and poverty are related; the higher the educational level of a population, the lower the poverty level. All countries must acknowledge that a country's economic growth and development is based upon its educational system.

Access to education is a fundamental human right. According to international law, governments are obligated to remove any barriers that obstruct its people from accessing a quality education (Todorova & Djafche, 2019). Although governments are legally required to

remove barriers, educational systems around the world are still plagued with issues and challenges that affect the quality and accessibility of education to all students. With a population of over 195 million people, as a country, Nigeria is plagued with challenges in education (World Bank, 2018c).

With over 10 million children out of school, Nigeria's Universal Basic Education (UBE) System has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF], n.d.; Universal Basic Education Commission, 2018). The basic education component of the UBE system spans over 10 years and is structured to provide free and compulsory education to all Nigerian children, beginning with pre-primary from age 3–5, continuing with primary school from age 6–12, and ending with Junior Secondary School (JSS) from age 13–15 (In the U.S., these are equivalent to preschool, elementary/middle school, and high school.). For years, Nigeria's UBE system has been plagued with challenges, such as inadequate funding, high teacher-to-student ratios, poor classroom infrastructure, inadequate instructional materials, lack of qualified teachers, and no professional development (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2018).

According to Nigeria's constitutional law, it is the responsibility of state and local governments to provide basic education to its citizens, and it is the responsibility of the federal government to ensure that this education is free to all citizens (World Bank, 2017). Although the federal government must ensure that basic education remains free in Nigeria, major funding issues within Nigeria's educational sector have affected the quality and accessibility of education. Mismanagement of resources and corruption has contributed to the challenges faced in the educational sector on a financial level (Ejere, 2011). For years, Nigeria has continuously performed poorly in global corruption indicators (Abada & Ngwu, 2019). From 1960–1999,

close to \$400 billion was stolen from Nigerian public accounts, whereas from 2005–2014 around \$182 billion was lost due to illicit financial flows from Nigeria (Hoffmann & Patel, 2017; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2007). This means that from 2005–2014, 15% of Nigeria's total trade value, a total of \$1.21 trillion, was lost due to illicit financial flows (Global Financial Integrity, 2017). As a result of Nigeria's embezzled commonwealth, there is a lack of investment placed back into Nigeria, particularly in sectors of health and education. As it stands, Nigeria's UBE system is grossly underfunded. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2014), countries should allocate 6% of their Gross National Product (GNP) to education, and based on their calculations, Nigeria only spends 1.5% of its GNP on education. Nevertheless, inadequate funding is also a result of ineffective planning, budgeting, and financial management (World Bank, 2017). Due to these issues, Nigeria's educational system continues to deal with inadequate funding that has affected the successful implementation of basic education.

The teacher-to-student ratio in Nigeria plays a significant role in the quality of education students in Nigeria are receiving. Nigeria's National Policy of Education states that the teacher-to-student ratio for Pre-Primary schools should be no more than 1:25, and for primary and junior primary schools no more than 1:35; however, ratios are often three times this proportion in classrooms across Nigeria (Alaba, 2010; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). For example, some areas in Oyo State have a 1:90 teacher to student ratio (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019). When teachers have fewer students in their classrooms, their stress levels are reduced, and they can provide more support to their students. When teacher-student ratios are low, students are also more cooperative during activities and in their interactions with other students, and perform better on cognitive and linguistic assessments (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016).

A child's educational experience is built around a learning environment, typically known as a classroom, located within their school. However, many children in Nigeria, particularly in rural areas of Nigeria, do not have adequate infrastructures such as classrooms, libraries, restrooms, laboratories, desks and chairs, electricity, and computer centers (Ejere, 2011). Many students attend classes in dilapidated buildings that are overcrowded and lack adequate sanitation facilities. Some children have no choice but to use primitive toileting methods, and others have to go to nearby streams to fetch water that will be utilized during their time at school, exposing them to waterborne diseases. This particular problem has been solved in a few areas by non-governmental organizations (NGO) that built boreholes (Babalola, 2018). However, even with support from NGOs, infrastructural challenges remain prevalent.

Nevertheless, the lack of educational infrastructure plays a significant role in the quality and accessibility of education in Nigeria, as does the environmental infrastructure, such as roads. The condition of roads in Nigeria can make it difficult for students to attend school. In some rural areas during the rainy season, roads become flooded, making it difficult for students to access their schools (Bolaji et al., 2019). Olatunya et al. (2014) stressed that to achieve purposeful learning and engagement, infrastructure is vital. The lack of adequate classroom infrastructure is so severe that some students are forced to learn under trees, using wooden planks as desks and cement blocks as chairs (Bolaji et al., 2019).

In order to ensure the delivery of quality basic education in Nigeria, educators need to utilize instructional materials to help students bridge the gap between reality and the abstract (Chukwu et al., 2016). Instructional materials are categorized as printed materials, audio-visuals, audio materials, and electronic materials (Ololobou, 2008). When it comes to instructional materials in Nigeria, the challenge is that 55% of students in Nigeria learn very little due to a

lack or shortage of instructional materials in the classroom (Bukoye, 2019). Some schools in rural areas of Nigeria have no textbooks at all (Moja, 2000). According to Alega (1995), the limited materials that are available at these schools are usually irrelevant and outdated. Moreover, government-owned schools, attended by the majority of students in rural areas, have considerably fewer instructional materials than privately-owned schools (Bukoye, 2019). For authentic learning to take place, instructional material must be available to every student (Ajeyalemi & Ogunleye, 2009). Without them, it is nearly impossible to implement a school's academic curriculum. In order to implement the UBE system effectively, instructional materials are vital; without them, Nigeria will continue to see students' poor academic performance.

Nigerian students have to deal with the challenges of basic education delivery, and so do Nigerian educators. The issue with Nigerian educators is twofold. On the one hand, the UBE system is dealing with a lack of qualified teachers, particularly in rural areas. On the other hand, the system is dealing with a lack of professional development for teachers. There have been many attempts to increase the number of qualified teachers in Nigeria, which have been successful, demonstrated by the fact that the country has seen an increase in the number of teachers who have obtained their National Certificate of Education (NCE), which is the minimum qualification to teach primary school (Babalola, 2018; Moja, 2000). According to UNESCO (2014), around a third of countries have less than 75% of primary school teachers trained according to national standards. This lack of qualified teachers is even more prevalent in schools in rural areas of Nigeria (Ejere, 2011). Most qualified teachers would prefer to teach in urban areas rather than in rural areas because the rural areas are often remote and inaccessible. As a result of this trend, Local Education Authorities in rural areas tend to recruit unqualified teachers to make up for the lack of teachers (Umar, 2005).

Developing countries are also facing the challenge of continuous professional development for teachers, even more so than the recruitment and training of new teachers (UNESCO, 2014). Although the fourth edition of Nigeria's National Educational Policy stressed that "since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004, p. 39), researchers such as Olaleye and Omotayo (2009) and Viatonu et al. (2011) have confirmed that Nigerian teachers still lack much needed continuous educational development (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Through professional development, teachers are meant to learn new teaching techniques to improve the quality of educational instruction they provide to their students. However, this is not the case for most teachers in Nigeria (Amadi, 2013). The Education Sector Support Program in Nigeria (2010) points out that due to a lack of qualified teachers and teacher training, students across Nigeria are denied access to quality education.

Researchers have done an impressive job of identifying challenges within Nigeria's educational system, and the Nigerian government and educational development partners have implemented specific changes based on these challenges. Governmental organizations such as the World Bank and United Nations have played significant roles in helping the government with research and implementation programs, such as school feeding programs, to entice students from poor households to attend school (UNESCO, 2009; UNICEF, n.d., 2004; World Bank, 2017). They have also created new teacher training courses to decrease the number of unqualified teachers in classrooms. New and updated curricula have been developed and distributed to classrooms, as well as the introduction of new learning technologies (Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015).

Nevertheless, even with the implementation of these solutions, Nigeria's educational system is still riddled with challenges that influence the effective delivery of basic education.

Notably, schools in rural areas of Nigeria are experiencing challenges delivering quality and accessible basic education on a greater level than schools in urban areas of Nigeria. Oyo State, located in the western region of Nigeria, happens to be one of the places where basic education is thriving in urban areas of the state compared to rural areas. For instance, there are more teachers in urban areas because many of them fear the social, cultural, and professional isolation that comes with teaching in rural areas, and the fact that urban areas are considered to be modernized (Collins, 1999). Additionally, more affluent Nigerians live in urban areas and education tends to be more of a priority to them compared to Nigerians who live in rural areas; as a result, more schools are being built with higher educational standards in urban areas compared to rural areas (Van Der Berg, 2008). Lastly, there is a higher quality of basic education being delivered to children in urban areas, due to the fact that urban areas have a significant higher number of adequate instructional facilities, technology, and learning materials available to students (Umar, 2005).

However, unlike in urban areas, education in rural Local Government Areas (LGAs) like Oke Ogun in Oyo State has been riddled with issues and challenges that have hindered the delivery of basic education to children residing in these areas. Research has shown that students living in rural areas are at an educational disadvantage compared to students in urban areas of Oyo State. For instance, if we look at the number of schools in Oyo State, 63.2% of them are in urban areas, whereas 32.8% are in rural areas. The problem with this is that out of the 33 LGAs, 28 are considered rural government areas (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019; Popoola & Magidimisha, 2020). This means that the population of those living in rural areas is higher than in urban areas,

yet the number of schools does not reflect this. Another factor is the fact that the teacher to student ratio in rural areas is higher than in urban areas. Although both ratios are not ideal, schools in urban areas still have lower ratios, with pre-primary school ratios being 1:52 and primary school ratios being 1:64. However, in rural areas, pre-primary school ratios are 1:90, and primary schools are 1:80 (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019). Such factors contribute to Nigeria's poor delivery of basic education and the tremendously high number of children out of school in rural areas, in this case Oke Ogun. Due to these challenges, the quality and accessibility of basic education in rural areas such as Oke Ogun has been questioned continuously by researchers.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian government has acknowledged the importance of education in society, which is why the UBE policy was constituted. This acknowledgment can be seen in Nigeria's National Educational Policy, which states, "Education in Nigeria is an instrument 'par excellence' for effecting national development" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004, p. 4). The policy is tailored to provide free, accessible, quality education to all school-aged children in Nigeria. Although many students have completed the 10-year educational plan, many more have not been fortunate enough to do so, particularly school-aged children in rural areas of Nigeria. The problem is that due to a lack of development in rural areas of Nigeria, a lack of quality and accessible basic education is being delivered to school-aged children in rural areas such as Oke Ogun. The complexity of providing quality and accessible basic education to students in Oke Ogun is immense. According to UNESCO (2014), over 4.7 million school-aged children living in rural areas of Nigeria are receiving limited and poor educational development, and some rural children are receiving no educational development at all.

Some of the fundamental challenges these schools face include a lack of funds, high teacher to pupil ratio, poor classroom infrastructure, inadequate classroom materials, and lack of teacher development. Each of these challenges has contributed to the ongoing problem of quality and accessible basic education delivery in rural LGAs. Although these general challenges have been identified, there is a lack of research and data on the particular challenges of basic education delivery in the LGA of Oke Ogun. To improve the delivery of basic education in Oke Ogun and create impactful and lasting changes, these challenges must be identified. General data continues to show that a general disparity between basic education delivery in urban LGAs and rural LGAs, rather than focusing on particular rural LGAs. Students in rural areas of Nigeria, such as Oke Ogun, have been at an educational disadvantage for years compared to their counterparts in urban areas. For this reason, the objective of this study is to identify the best practices to improve education service delivery of basic education in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State in Nigeria, focusing particularly on the quality and accessibility of education in Oke Ogun.

Purpose Statement

The delivery of basic education is a challenge that Oke Ogun has faced for years. Aderinoye et al. (2007) suggested that Nigeria's most significant challenge is achieving the right to quality education. However, the delivery of basic education to Nigerians living in rural areas like Oke Ogun creates a massive challenge for Nigeria's educational system. According to the World Bank (2018d), 49.66% of Nigeria's population lives in rural areas; this means that nearly half the population are not only dealing with general challenges of basic education delivery in Nigeria, but also have to deal with the fact that the delivery of basic education to rural areas like Oke Ogun is even more of a challenge than in urban areas. The International Fund for

Agricultural Development (2007) released a report identifying the significant disparity between schools in rural areas and schools in urban areas, which has led to limited educational opportunities for citizens and encouraged the cycle of poverty to continue.

The purpose of this study is to determine the quality and accessibility of basic education delivered in the rural area of Oke Ogun, in Oyo State. The goal of this research is to identify the challenges and gaps in delivering basic education to children in Oke Ogun. This research will help the Nigerian government and their educational development partners identify where they should focus their attention in order to witness a drastic improvement in educational delivery in Oke Ogun, and exactly how they should go about implementing suggested changes. Through the identification of these challenges and the implementation of solutions, the government can improve and build a stronger educational system that can help to tackle the issues of poverty and economic growth and development in Oke Ogun. Educational challenges and solutions will be identified and achieved through examining responses from one-on-one interviews with school administrators, principals, and teachers in Oke Ogun, also known as educational professionals. Common themes regarding the educational challenges faced in rural areas and the need for radical improvement will be identified using open-ended questions,

Research Questions

The following research questions (RQs) are addressed in this study and were utilized to create open-ended interview questions that were used during the study's data collection process.

- RQ1: What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible Basic Education?

- RQ2: In what strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education?
- RQ3: How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?
- RQ4: What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

This study is highly significant due to Nigeria's current educational system and economic development in the 21st century. Tulder (2008) suggested that Nigeria is one of the world's developing countries where children are receiving an inadequate education or are not receiving an education at all. The rationale for this study was to help government officials start to bridge educational gaps in rural areas of Nigeria, reduce the nation's astronomically high number of out-of-school children, and improve the quality and accessibility of basic education. Recently reported numbers of out-of-school children in Nigeria, mainly in rural areas of Nigeria, highlight the significance of this study (UNICEF, 2012; Universal Basic Education Commission, 2018). Further, the need to decrease Nigeria's national poverty level and increase economic growth contributes to the rationale for this study. Thapa (2010) argued that a lack of education is considered to be another form of poverty. The economic betterment of a nation depends greatly on its educational system.

The findings of this research shed light on the plethora of challenges regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. This study's findings will also

help contribute to the limited existing literature by providing essential knowledge on improving the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Lastly, this study will help educational leaders in Nigeria develop and implement solutions to address the identified challenges regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Governmental leaders and their partners need to have a profound understanding of the issues that affect the country's educational system. However, the significance of effective delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun is more profound than just decreasing the number of out-of-school students; it is also about helping to reduce poverty and increase economic growth in Nigeria because education has the power to combat poverty (Thirlwall, 2006). Above all, this study is a blueprint that can be used to understand the educational challenges facing rural areas across Nigeria.

Assumptions of the Study

This current study was based on four assumptions that are slightly out of the researcher's control but should be acknowledged (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). The first assumption was that the interviewer established a certain level of rapport with participants involved in the study and created a safe environment that supported open and honest reflection.

The second assumption was that the results from the interviews would be sufficient enough to answer the overarching research questions because it was assumed that participants would respond to the interview questions honestly and transparently. A study's internal and external validity are based on the honesty of participants' responses (Ataku, 2011). Furthermore, the research questions should be sufficient since the research questions were based on conclusions and findings of past research.

The third assumption was that study participants, which included educational professionals in Oke Ogun, had substantial knowledge regarding the delivery of basic education and had experience working in Oke Ogun. Nevertheless, participants were selected carefully and specifically based on their eligibility, and it was expected that a sufficient number of experts would be available to participate in the study.

The fourth assumption is that the study interviewer had no influence or control over the participants' responses. The interviewer asked participants the interview questions and allowed participants to answer questions without influencing their answers by sharing personal opinions or biases.

Limitations of the Study

There were several possible limitations for this study, the first one being researcher bias. Researchers bring a certain level of personal bias to their study, which is why it is necessary to identify and clarify biases (Creswell, 2013). For this study, the researcher's bias may have been present when she interpreted the data collected due to her personal experience with and knowledge of Nigeria's educational system.

The second limitation was the inability to obtain a large sample of interviewees due to data collection time constraints. With more time to collect data, the study could have covered several rural LGAs rather than just focusing on one, which would allow for a more diverse data collection sample and a more in-depth look at basic education delivery in rural areas of Nigeria.

The third limitation is the rugged geographical conditions of Oke Ogun; road conditions in rural areas create interviewee accessibility limitations. Most roads in Oke Ogun are inadequate and difficult to navigate by motor vehicles. Some of the roads are so bad that citizens are

sometimes isolated. During the rainy season, the streets are flooded and become inaccessible (Akindola, 2010).

The fourth limitation is the lack of available data that is relevant and current to support the study and research being conducted.

Definition of Terms

- *Education*. The process of developing an individual's potentials through education; the knowledge gained is necessary for the improvement and enhancement of modern-day society. It is seen as the most potent tool used for the development and progress of communities (Adamulikita, 2017; Commeyras, 2011).
- *Educational Service Delivery*. The identification of quality programs, curriculum, and courses that will be delivered in an educational setting, through the use of political systems (A. Joshi, 2006; Newfoundland Labrador, 2011)
- *Access to Education*. The removal of barriers that may hinder a learner from receiving an education, such as access to transportation, information, resources, textbooks, and school supplies (Roy, 2020; Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995).
- *Rural Areas*. Generally, a rural setting refers to a small community with a relatively low population. However, in Nigeria, close to 50% of the population live in a rural area. A rural area in Nigeria means an environment that lacks infrastructure, water, accessible roads, adequate housing, and a conducive learning environment (Bolaji et al., 2019; Shaw, 2010; Shaw et al., 2006).
- *Universal Primary Education (UPE)*. Launched in 1976, the UPE program represented Nigeria's first attempt to universalize primary education. However, the program failed due to insufficient planning, underestimation of enrollment,

- unavailability of teachers, and inadequate funds (Csapo, 1983; Labo-Popoola et al., 2009; Ogunsanmi & Ibimiluyi, 2014)
- *UBE*. In 1999, Nigeria's Federal Government under President Olusegun Obasanjo launched the UBE educational reform policy, essentially re-introducing the UPE system under a new name. The UBE system in Nigeria consists of the Basic Education system, which is 1 year of pre-primary school, 6 years of primary school, and 3 years of JSS. The UBE policy requires the government in Nigeria to provide free and compulsory basic education to all Nigerian citizens (Adeyemi et al., 2012; Ejere, 2011; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013; Obanya, 2002; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008).
 - *Basic Education*. Basic education in Nigeria is based on 10 years of continuous study; it consists of 1 year of pre-primary school, 6 years of primary school, and 3 years of JSS (Ajeyalemi & Ogunleye, 2009; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2005, 2013).
 - *Pre-Primary*. In Nigeria, pre-primary is for children between the ages of 5–6. The goal of pre-primary is to develop children's abilities, allow earlier detection of possible learning disabilities accurately, and equip children with useful tools and knowledge before they enter primary school (Sooter, 2013).
 - *Primary School*. In Nigeria, primary school is for children between the ages of 6–12, lasting a total of 6 academic years. Under the UBE law, primary school is universal, free, and compulsory (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2005).
 - *JSS*. In Nigeria, JSS is for children between the ages of 13 to 15. JSS consists of a combination of pre-vocational and academic education. Like primary school, JSS is also universal, free, and compulsory (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2005).

- *LGAs*. LGAs are created by a country's administrative division. Nigeria has 36 states and 774 LGAs (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).
- *Out-of-School Children*. Nigeria currently has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world, with more than 10 million children who are not attending school due to a variety of reasons (UNICEF Nigeria, 2019).
- *Oyo State*. Oyo State was established in February 1976 in the Old Western Region of Nigeria. It is a part of the Southwest political zone of Nigeria. The most recent census population count for Oyo State is 8,335,357. Oyo State is considered to be one of Nigeria's most urbanized and cosmopolitan states. There are 33 LGAs in Oyo State that are divided into three Senatorial Districts: Oyo North (13 LGAs), Oyo Central (11 LGAs), and Oyo South (9 LGAs; Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019).
- *Oke Ogun*. Oke Ogun is located in the northwestern part of Oyo State; it takes up 60% of the state's landmass and is primarily considered a rural area. On a socioeconomic level, a lack of adequate health and educational facilities and a lack of investment that have led to low quality of living for people living in the Oke Ogun area (Obed et al., 2011).

Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter 1 presented a brief background of education in Nigeria, particularly in rural areas, as well as the multiple challenges facing the delivery of basic education in the country. This discussion laid a foundation for the study of the challenges that affect the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Nigeria with a focus on Oke Ogun in Oyo State. Chapter 1 established the justification for an in-depth analysis of the current state of Nigeria's educational system, the delivery of basic education, as well as educational quality and accessibility in rural

areas. This chapter also identified the problem statement, the purpose of this study, and the significance of this study, all of which tie to the fact that students living in rural areas of Nigeria are at an educational disadvantage compared to their counterparts in urban areas. Due to this problem, Nigeria is witnessing a higher number of out-of-school children and lower economic growth; by studying these challenges, solutions can be developed, which will lower the number of out-of-school children and increase economic growth. The limitations and assumptions of the study were identified and articulated in Chapter 1, as well as the definition of terms.

Chapter 2 examines the existing literature on the history of education in Nigeria while also exploring the current educational system and policies in place. It will also explore Nigeria's basic educational system, which is a part of the UBE system. This chapter will then take a more in-depth look into the current state of education in rural areas of Nigeria, as well as essential factors that contribute to the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria. In greater detail, this chapter examines current studies that show the influence of education on poverty and economic growth. Finally, this chapter will review literature about Oyo State and its current educational policies and status, with a focus on the Oke Ogun LGA.

Chapter 3 focuses on the research design and methodology used for the study. It goes into detail about the steps and methods used to collect data in Oke Ogun. The research design and the protocol of all interviews are explained, and study protections for participants are identified. This chapter also highlights the steps taken to ensure that participants were protected from possible harmful effects attributed to their participation in the study, as well as prospective participants' declining to participate in the study.

Chapter 4 offers a review and analysis of the data and findings from the study. This chapter outlines the steps taken for participant recruitment and their demographic information.

Interview questions formulated from research questions and participant responses are reported in Chapter 4. There is a detailed summary of the data collection process and a write up of the challenges identified during an analysis of the data.

Chapter 5 focuses on key findings from the data analysis and any possible issues that arose during the duration of the study. Lastly, it includes recommendations of solutions to challenges and for future research, as well as a comprehensive study summary.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To understand the current status of education in rural areas of Nigeria, like Oke Ogun, a review of the past and present literature is imperative. This chapter will provide an overview of education in Nigeria by focusing on the history of education in Nigeria and Nigeria's present-day educational policies. The literature review will also provide information and data on the high number of out-of-school children in Nigeria, poverty, and what education generally looks like in rural areas of Nigeria. This chapter also presents information on the current quality and accessibility of education in rural areas of Nigeria. Finally, this chapter will include an in-depth look at education in Oyo State with an emphasis on its rural LGA of Oke Ogun.

History of Education in Nigeria

Traditional Education

Before Christian missionaries arrived in 1842, Nigeria had a traditional (informal) educational system. For example, a Yoruba child was educated through rhymes, folklore, plays, and games, both at home and on the farm. Ultimately, traditional education was based on Nigerian customs and cultural practices. Unlike formal educational systems, Nigeria's informal educational system had no structured centers to conduct learning and was not seen as an organized system. Rather, children gathered around fires and were taught by their elders.

The traditional pre-missionary education a child received was presented in stages. The first stage was *oral information* that was shared through songs and stories. An adult would sit with the children and teach them how to sing different songs and interpret the message of the songs, whereas stories were utilized to teach life lessons. The second stage was considered *practical education*, because it was skills-oriented and created to prepare children for their eventual adult roles. In this stage lessons included preparing women for childbirth, young people

for adult life, and husbands and wives for the responsibility of marriage and family (Adamulikita, 2017).

Ultimately, traditional education was considered a life-long experience. When it comes to traditional education, learning never stops; rather, as a person experiences new stages in life, they will be equipped with new instructions to help them cope with the new phase of life they have entered (Adamulikita, 2017). The beauty of traditional education was that the learner knew exactly when education and learning took place because the learning related to their personal and practical needs. They were immediately able to utilize their newly acquired knowledge. It was learning that added purpose in their lives.

Traditional education was implemented to teach skills, develop attitudes, develop competencies that lead to societal success, instill goal-orientedness, and meet the immediate needs of learners and society. Fafunwa (1974) explains the goals, which can also be considered the curriculum, of traditional education:

1. The development of a child's latent physical skill.
2. The development of character.
3. To instill in children respect for their elders and those in positions of authority.
4. The development of intellectual skills.
5. To cultivate the ability to acquire specific vocational training and establish a healthy attitude toward honest labor.
6. To promote a sense of belonging and encourage children to participate actively in family and community affairs.
7. To help children gain an understanding of, appreciation of, and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.

At one time, traditional education was the sole form of education in Nigeria, and during that time, it was quite an effective system of education. However, no system is perfect, and the traditional educational system did have its blind spots. Ibanga (2016) argued that,

the traditional system of education was stagnated because of its inability to develop a more systematic method of learning, and because of its inability to develop a lettering system. It was also limited because it was a closed system – as a result it could not adopt and domesticate foreign concepts that were relevant to it. (p. 115)

The implementation of a Western educational system helped to fill those blind spots.

Western Education

Western education is considered the most successful educational system in Nigeria because it meets learners' needs for the present and the future. It is also the form of education that the majority of the country receives. Western education, also known as *new education*, was introduced to Nigerians through European Christian missionaries and colonialists (Awofala, 2012). During their time in Nigeria, missionaries brought a curriculum that was centered around the Bible. The British helped to set a foundation for Western education; they introduced Nigerians to the English language, helped eradicate slavery, and introduced Christianity. What is known today as Western education in Nigeria was initially implemented to create semi-literate locals who could run errands for colonial masters (Adamulikita, 2017). The missionaries' educational aim was to teach locals to spread the gospel; train them to work as interpreters, messengers, clerks, and cleaners for British businessmen; and help abolish slavery.

It didn't take long for Nigerians to become dissatisfied with the Western education the British were implementing, and soon enough they began to voice their concerns. They asserted that their educational system should be in tune with economic and social development, focus on

Nigeria's dynamic culture, and consider African feelings and initiative (Amadi, 2014). It took years before Nigerians had an educational system that catered to their economic and social growth and needs.

Nigeria's current educational system was established after Nigeria gained its political independence, which created a genuine shift in the educational system and curriculum development. Nigeria saw a significant boom in Western education in the western and eastern regions of Nigeria, which slowly caused the traditional educational system to be left behind. Many Nigerians now see Western education as "an avenue for obtaining greater influence, affluence and access to political power in Nigeria" (Oluniyi & Olajumoke, 2013, p. 77). The implementation of Western education made way for Nigeria's current educational policy and system. It wasn't until 17 years after Nigeria gained independence from Britain, in 1977, that Nigeria published its first National Policy on Education. Currently, the policy is on its sixth edition, which was published in 2013.

Education Policy in Nigeria

Nigeria's National Policy on Education

Nigeria's National Education Policy states that it is the responsibility of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Education, to provide "equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels of education" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013, p. iii) to citizens in all 36 states. According to the Ministry of Education, it is their vision to "become an economic model, delivering sound education for public good" (Federal Ministry of Education, 2020, para. 1). Under the Federal Ministry of Education's supervision, local and state governments govern pre-primary, primary, and secondary education, whereas higher education is governed by federal and state governments (Scripter, 2010). The National Education Policy

frames Nigeria's current education system, which consists of: (a) early childcare and development (ages 0–4); (b) basic education, which is a combination of pre-primary, primary, and junior secondary (ages 5–15); (c) post-basic education, 3 years of senior secondary school (SSS) and technical colleges; and (d) tertiary education provided in colleges (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Nigeria's educational system was built on the philosophy that individuals should be developed into citizens who contribute to society, and who are provided with equal education opportunities at basic, secondary, and tertiary levels. The following beliefs support this philosophy:

1. Education is an instrument for national development and social change.
2. Education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria.
3. Education maximizes the creative potential and skills of the individual for self-fulfillment and general development of the society.
4. Education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, color, ethnic background, or individual challenges.
5. Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional, and relevant to the needs of society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

This set of beliefs helps Nigeria achieve its specific educational goals, which are to:

1. Ensure that individuals have access and equity to education for personal development.
2. Ensure quality education is delivered to all.
3. Provide education for citizens to help them acquire new skills, create jobs nationally, and help reduce poverty.

4. Provide relevant and effective curriculum that meets the needs of Nigeria's society and the world; curriculum will be under periodic review.
5. Fund and support Nigerian education through partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, and local communities.
6. Bolster information technology capability in all educational settings (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Nigeria's National Educational Policy has been updated and amended several times and is currently on its sixth edition. Over the years, there have been a significant number of changes, such as Nigeria's shift from the UPE system to its current UBE system.

Universal Primary Education (UPE)

Nigerians perceived the UPE scheme as an educational revolution that would have positive implications on social and economic growth. The UPE scheme was launched in September 1976 and was Nigeria's first attempt to universalize primary education (Ogunsanmi & Ibimiluyi, 2014). The UPE scheme was expected to provide free primary education that would assist in balancing educational and economic development, equalize the imbalances between urban and rural areas, and increase the enrollment of females in schools (Csapo, 1983). The UPE scheme was funded by the State and Federal government and encouraged children between the ages of 6–11 to attend school; it became federal law that all 6-year-olds had to be enrolled in primary school by 1981. The scheme focused on primary education, equipping students with fundamental skills and knowledge (Csapo, 1983; Ogunsanmi & Ibimiluyi, 2014).

Although the UPE scheme had a strong start, by the middle of the 1980s, the government realized that the UPE scheme was a failure due to poor planning and implementation. The federal government underestimated the number of students that would not only be interested in joining

the UPE scheme but also required to join. They expected 6.4 million primary aged children to enroll in the program; however, over 8.2 million children were enrolled during the first year of the UPE scheme, and by 1977 more than 9.5 million children were enrolled (Csapo, 1983; Ogunsanmi & Ibimiluyi, 2014). The federal government was unprepared for such a high number of enrollees, and as a result the government lacked a sufficient number of qualified teachers to teach all of the students. There was also a lack of school buildings to accommodate all of the students, and lastly, they underestimated the amount of money that would be needed to run the UPE scheme (Aluede, 2006).

It was challenging to make precise predictions of how many students would enroll in the UPE scheme because at the time in Nigeria, only approximate set of population data existed (Csapo, 1983). Nevertheless, other factors contributed to the immense UPE scheme enrollment rate. Bray (1981) highlighted that during the enrollment period, many children above the age of 6 were admitted into the UPE scheme due to the absence of their birth certificates. To establish an age, they employed a method that required a child to reach over their head and touch their ear. If a child could touch the ear on the opposite side of their head, they were considered of age and could enroll in the UPE scheme. If the child could not reach their ear, they were considered to be underage and could not enroll in school (Abernethy, 1969). The combination of these problems led to high and inaccurate enrollment rates.

In addition to underestimating enrollment, the UPE scheme faced a major teaching staff crisis. By 1980 there were around 234,680 available teachers. Despite this high number, the UPE scheme required double that amount of teachers to meet educational goals. The majority of the teachers only had 2 years of educational training, and the number of unqualified and under-qualified teachers far exceeded the number of qualified teachers. The federal government

ultimately declared a state of emergency for teacher education. They realized that due to the recommended number of 40 students per class, they would need over 600,000 teachers by 1980. The scheme also dealt with issues concerning accommodation for teachers in rural areas, lack of support services for teachers, and a lack of continued professional development (Csapo, 1983).

Just as the federal government underestimated enrollment and the number of teachers needed, they also underestimated the number of schools needed and where they should be built. By 1980, 150,995 classrooms had to be constructed to cater to the UPE's high enrollment rate. However, there was a significant locational imbalance; there were 106,505 classrooms in the north, whereas 43,490 were built in the south. They predicted the number of classrooms that would be needed based on existing educational imbalances. This led to a shortage of classrooms in areas that desperately needed them, forcing classes to be held outside under trees. In contrast, in the areas that had too many classrooms, the rooms would remain unused, and animals would start to occupy the spaces (Cspao, 1983).

Lastly, the federal government grossly underestimated how much money would be needed to fund the UPE scheme. At the time, the federal government pledged ₦3,000 per classroom, which went toward construction and equipment. The government soon found out that ₦3,000 was insufficient, and rather ₦5,000 was needed to build each classroom. The cost to implement the UPE scheme was much higher than the government initially estimated. Due to inadequate funds, some states suggested that they would call on parents to help finance the UPE scheme, which goes against why the UPE scheme was originally implemented. However, in January 1978, the government announced that funding from the public for the UPE scheme was necessary and claimed that their initial assertion that the UPE scheme was free was erroneous. Ultimately, the federal government could not maintain the required funding needed to run the

UPE scheme. After reevaluating the UPE scheme's failure, the government decided to put an end to the program and re-launch it under the name of UBE, which is the current educational system in Nigeria (Csapo, 1983).

Universal Basic Education (UBE)

The UBE program is an outgrowth of the UPE program, based on the UPE scheme's failures. Compared to the UPE scheme, the government took more time and care to plan and implement the UBE program. Under the leadership of President Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria launched the UBE program in November 1999 (Aluede, 2006). The 9-year basic education program was designed to offer free and compulsory education to children starting with 6 years of primary school until they finish 3 years of JSS. However, as of 2013, it also encompasses 1 year of pre-primary school, making it a 10-year program (Etuk et al., 2012; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). The UBE program offers a foundation for Nigerian students to acquire knowledge and skills in diverse fields through formal and informal educational activities (Adeyemi et al., 2012). Furthermore, the primary aims and objectives of the UBE program are as follows:

1. Develop a nation of citizens who have a strong consciousness for education and a strong commitment to its vigorous promotion.
2. Provide free and compulsory basic education to every school-aged child in Nigeria.
3. Drastically reduce the school dropout rate from the formal school system (Ajeyalemi & Ogunleye, 2009; Ejere, 2011).

The three major elements of the UBE program are:

1. Formal basic education that consists of the first 9 years of schooling.
2. Nomadic education for school-aged children of nomads and migrant fisherman.

3. Literacy and non-formal education for out-of-school children and illiterate adults
(Ajeyalemi & Ogunleye, 2009; Ejere, 2011).

Through the Universal Basic Education Act of 2004, the Federal government created the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and established that the commission would be responsible for implementing and maintaining the UBE program in all 36 states. The UBEC must implement the following UBE guidelines:

1. Ensure that the Federal government is assisting state and local governments, in order to ensure uniform and qualitative basic education.
2. Ensure that every government is providing free basic education to all primary and JSS-aged children.
3. Ensure that all parents are held responsible for ensuring that their child attends and completes both primary and secondary school.
4. Ensure that LGAs will ensure that parents are fulfilling the duty imposed on them under the Universal Basic Education Act of 2004.
5. Ensure that the transition from primary school JSS is automatic.
6. Ensure that the secondary school system is structured so that junior secondary and senior secondary schools are separate, as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2020).

Furthermore, according to the UBEC, it is their duty alongside the UBE program to “eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty as well as stimulate and accelerate national development, political consciousness and national integration” (Universal Basic Education Commission, 2020, para. 2). By the time students graduate from the UBE program, they should

have acquired relevant skills, knowledge, and values that will allow them to contribute to Nigeria's social and economic growth.

Basic Education System

Pre-Primary

In Nigeria, pre-primary lasts only 1 year and is for children who are 5 years old; it is equivalent to pre-K in the United States. It wasn't until 2013 that pre-primary was added to the basic education system as mandatory in Nigeria's National Policy on Education (Etuk et al., 2012; Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013; Obiweluzor, 2015). Nigerian students attend pre-primary prior to entering primary school, with the hope that it prepares them for the rigor of the basic education system (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013; Obiweluzor, 2015; Sooter, 2013). Pre-primary is known as the foundation for formal education and is typically a student's introduction to formal education (Awoyele & Ogundipe, 2014). If a student does not attend pre-primary, it can be difficult for them to keep up with their peers on an educational level. The value of pre-primary school should not be underestimated; it is where students began to build their confidence, increase their interaction with peers and adults beyond their parents, begin to explore and understand the world around them, and sharpen their cognitive skills (Obiweluzor, 2015). The objectives of pre-primary in Nigeria are as follows:

1. Create a seamless transition from home to school.
2. Equip students with the skills and knowledge needed for primary school.
3. Provide supervision and care for students while their parents are at work.
4. Instill morals and values in students.
5. Encourage a student's sense of inquiry and creativity through nature, their environment, the arts, and the use of toys.

6. Instill a sense of teamwork in students.
7. Promote good habits, in conjunction with good health habits.
8. Educate students on numbers, letters, colors, shapes, and forms through play (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

To achieve these objectives, the Nigerian government has committed to:

1. Set the standards for pre-primary school, while also monitoring to make sure objectives are being met.
2. Develop a national curriculum for pre-primary schools.
3. Fully fund the 1 year of pre-primary education.
4. Ensure that there are enough teachers qualified to teach pre-primary school.
5. Embark on sensitization of communities and the nation.
6. Ensure that all ministries, departments, and agencies properly implement pre-primary education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Nigeria's National Policy on Education states that to ensure that the objectives of pre-primary classrooms are met, the teacher-pupil ratio should be no more than 1:25 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). According to Kamerman (2006), when children attend pre-primary school, they are more likely to complete and graduate from the basic education system and achieve good results as compared to students who don't attend pre-primary.

Primary School

Primary school in Nigeria is for students between the ages of 6–12. It takes a total of 6 years for a student to complete primary school, which is equivalent to elementary school in the United States (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Primary school is often seen as the first level of formal education in Nigeria, which helps to create a balance between a child's physical and

intellectual development (Bruns, et al. 2003; Kutelu & Olowe, 2013; Moja, 2000). Primary school is where students develop their individual ability to read, write, and calculate (Ojo et al., 2012). According to Bruns et al. (2003), primary school is the educational stage that helps to eradicate illiteracy, which is one of the leading causes of poverty. Based on the National Policy on Education, the objectives of primary school are as follows:

1. Impart literacy, numeracy, and practical communication skills.
2. Lay a foundation for scientific, critical, and reflective thinking.
3. Develop a student's sense of nationalism, patriotism, fairness, and understanding.
4. Instill morals and values.
5. Develop a student's ability to adapt to changing environments.
6. Establish opportunities for students to manipulative skills (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

To ensure that these objectives are achieved, the following plan was created:

1. Primary school will be compulsory, free, universal, and qualitative.
2. Specialized primary school curriculum will be created and utilized throughout Nigeria.
3. Teaching will be centered around the student and will be participatory, exploratory, and experimental.
4. For the first 3 years, students living in monolingual communities will be taught in their native language; however, English will be taught as a subject.
5. During a students fourth year of primary school, a combination of their native language and English will be as the primary languages for instruction, and French and Arabic will be taught as subjects.

7. Specialist teachers will teach mathematics, basic science, basic technology, physical and health education, language arts, music, fine art, home economics, and agriculture (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

According to Nigeria's National Policy on Education, to ensure that primary classrooms' objectives are met, teacher-pupil ratio should be no more than 1:35 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). The success of primary school feeds into the success of JSS and higher education. It lays a foundation for how well students will do in Nigeria's Basic Education system (Etor et al., 2013).

Junior Secondary School (JSS)

JSS is the last stage of the basic education system. JSS is for students who are between the ages of 13–15, and takes a total of 3 years for a student to complete; it is equivalent to high school in the United States. JSS includes a combination of both academic and pre-vocational education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2005). JSS prepares students for higher education and useful living, for those who chose not to further their education (Aja et al., 2018). To prepare students, the following objectives must be met:

1. Equip students with diverse entrepreneurship and educational knowledge and skills.
2. Develop patriotic students who are equipped to contribute to society and perform their civic responsibilities.
3. Instill morals and values; encourage free independent thinking, and an appreciation for the dignity of labor.
4. Encourage unity irrespective of differences in endowment, religion, color, ethnic, and socio-economic background (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

According to Nigeria's National Policy on Education, in order to ensure that the objectives of junior secondary classrooms are met, the teacher-pupil ratio should be no more than 1:35 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). For many Nigerian students, JSS is the stepping-stone to higher education or the start of their lifelong career.

Challenges Faced in Education in Nigeria

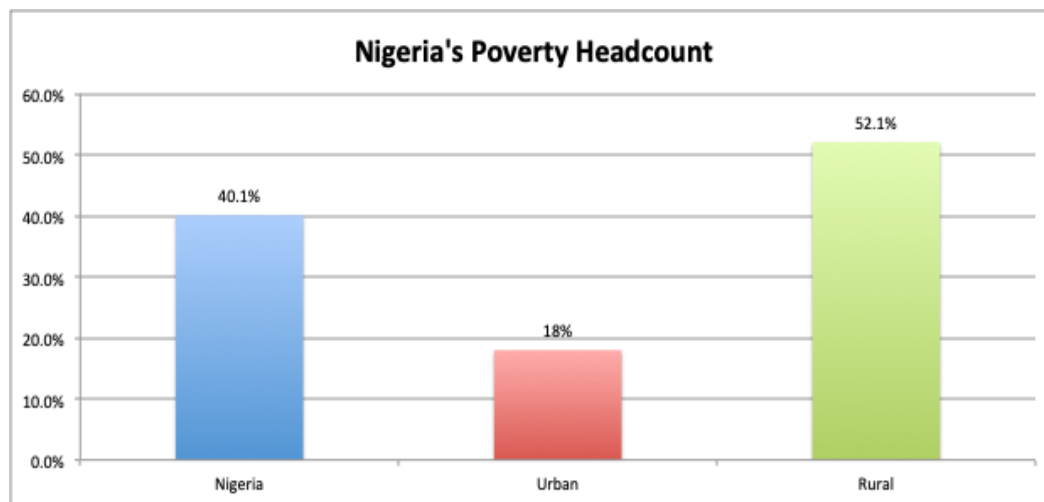
Poverty in Nigeria

For many Nigerians, a lack of education is the key obstacle that hinders them from escaping poverty and improving their quality of life. Poverty is a universal challenge; countries around the world have dealt with the issue of poverty for centuries. Poverty continues to threaten the social and economic development of countries and their citizens, particularly in Nigeria. There is no one definition of poverty because it can be viewed from both an economic and social perspective (Obalade et al., 2019). Instead, you will find a plethora of appropriate definitions. According to Adedokun and Adeyemo (2008), poverty occurs when an individual finds it difficult to maintain a certain level of economic welfare and lacks the fundamental means to meet their basic needs. In this case, fundamental needs refer to clothing, food, housing, health, education, and recreation (Illiyasu & Hamidu, 2006). Nigeria is ranked high on the list of countries whose citizens face a lack of proper housing, malnutrition, unemployment, illness, lack of potable water, illiteracy, and gender and income inequality, all of which are indicators of poverty (Obalade et al., 2019).

Based on the National Bureau of Statistics' (2020) Nigeria Living Standards Survey conducted from 2018 to 2019, 40.1% of Nigeria's total population lives in poverty. The breakdown of this is population as follows; 52.1% of this total population lives in rural areas, whereas 18% live in urban areas (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria Living Standards Survey, 2018 to 2019.



According to the data collected in Nigeria Living Standards survey, 40.1% of Nigeria's population is poor and living in poverty; to be classified as poor, one must live below the poverty line. This means that four out of 10 Nigerians have a real per capita income below 137,430 Naira per year, which based on the current exchange rate is \$354.20. The 40.1% converts to over 82.9 million Nigerians trying to survive and provide for their families on only \$354.20 a year, which is less than \$1 a day (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Nkang (2013) asserted that education empowers individuals to escape poverty by equipping them with skills and knowledge to increase their output, income, and wealth. Thapa (2010) argued that a lack of education itself can be seen as poverty. For individuals to gain the skills and knowledge they need to eradicate poverty, there needs to be an increase in school attendance and a decrease in the rate of illiteracy in Nigeria. Nigeria investing in education will always be profitable due to its power to combat poverty (Thirlwall, 2006).

Out-of-School Children

Nigeria has the world's highest number of out-of-school children: over 10 million (UNICEF, n.d.). Out of 12 other countries that have significant amounts of out-of-school children, Nigeria accounts for 47% of the world's out-of-school population, and since 1999 it has consistently had the highest annual increase in out-of-school children (Babalola, 2018). There are a variety of reasons why Nigeria has such a high number of children that are not attending school. Some of the identified causes of absentee students include: gender issues, financial hardship/child labor, orphans/vulnerable children, geographical area (Bamgboye et al., 2017; Iyamu & Obiunu, 2006; Oghuvbu, 2008; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008; UNICEF, n.d.)

Gender Issues

For many Nigerian children, gender has become a deciding factor for whether they attend school or not. In most cases, daughters are forced to stay home, whereas sons attend school. In developing countries like Nigeria, females receive less education than their male counterparts (Iyamu & Obiunu, 2006; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008; UNICEF, n.d.; UNESCO Institute For Statistics, 2014). According to UNESCO Institute For Statistics (2014) data, 78% of Nigerian females will never attend school, compared to the 70% of boys who will never attend school. For most girls, they will either attend school for a few short years or never attend school at all, which is often due to cultural and religious factors. For many Nigerian parents with larger families and limited resources, they tend to keep their girls at home to help them out with younger siblings and house chores, while enrolling their boys in school (Kazeem et al., 2010).

Keeping girls at home and suspending their education is also seen as an opportunity to train them for marriage. Iyamu and Obiunu (2006) pointed out that in the northern part of Nigeria, parents hesitate to send their girls to school because of early marriage. Parents in the

North tend to withdraw their girls when they are approaching puberty as a way to keep them pure for their husbands and prepare them for womanhood (Iyamu & Obiunu, 2006; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008). On some occasions, boys are also pulled from school to help with farm work, particularly during planting and harvesting seasons (Bull & Smith, 2000; Iyamu & Obiunu, 2006). However, boys are not the only ones pulled from school to work. Girls are also removed from school to help bring in income for the family. They are often found selling items in markets with their mothers or hawking different items such as drinks, snacks, or wares on the streets (Obasi, 1997; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008).

When it comes to receiving an education, there are more obstacles for girls than for boys (Iyamu & Obiunu, 2006; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008; UNICEF, n.d., UNESCO Institute For Statistics, 2014). Girls deserve the same opportunities as boys; the Nigerian Ministry of Education realized this, and in 2003 they implemented the African Girls' Education Initiative (AGEI), which is sponsored by UNICEF (Tuwor & Sossou, 2008; UNICEF, 2004). The initiative has been utilized to raise awareness of the importance of educating girls, hoping to get communities and parents to support and encourage sending girls to schools (UNICEF, 2004).

Child Labor

Although many Nigerian children do not attend school because of their gender, this is not the case for all children; rather, they are not attending school because they have to work odd jobs like street hawking. These children's parents do want to send their children to school regardless of gender; however, they simply cannot afford to do so. Some factors that prevent parents from sending their children to school are poverty, limited resources at home, and the need for assistance with younger siblings. These barriers cause many children who should be in school to start street hawking (Adebayo & Olaogun, 2019). Street hawking consists of someone, in this

case a child, carrying a variety of different products around to sell in public places. One will most likely find a street hawker shouting out what they are selling as they move along the streets, go from door to door, or display their goods on the side of the road (Adebayo & Olaogun, 2019; Umar, 2009). Some children are out hawking from morning to nighttime. For many of the children who street hawk, it is their responsibility to bring home the money that the family will use to eat that same day; their family's livelihood depends on them (Adebayo & Olaogun, 2019).

Some people see no issue with a child working to help their family; however, although the child may be helping their family solve a few of their financial problems, street hawking also creates new problems. According to Okafor (2010), street hawking has a negative impact on a child's personality development and aptitude, and can compromise sustainable development in Nigeria due to the fact that children who hawk will receive very little or no education. Adebayo and Olaogun (2019) conducted a study with 200 Nigerian street hawkers, 93% of their respondents stated that street hawking affected their attendance in school. This finding reveals that street hawking harmed their academic performance and school attendance, which would lead many of them to eventually drop out of school. Hawking is seen as the largest form of child labor in Nigeria. However, it is not the only form of child labor; instead some parents send their children to be used as cheap labor. Many of them will become house boys and house girls who stay at their employer's house taking care of household chores; this particular form of child labor is quite prevalent among orphaned children.

Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC)

According to Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, there are an estimated 17.5 million OVC in Nigeria (Zwinkels & Koniz-Booher, 2016).

According to the World Bank (2005), OVCs are children who experience negative outcomes in

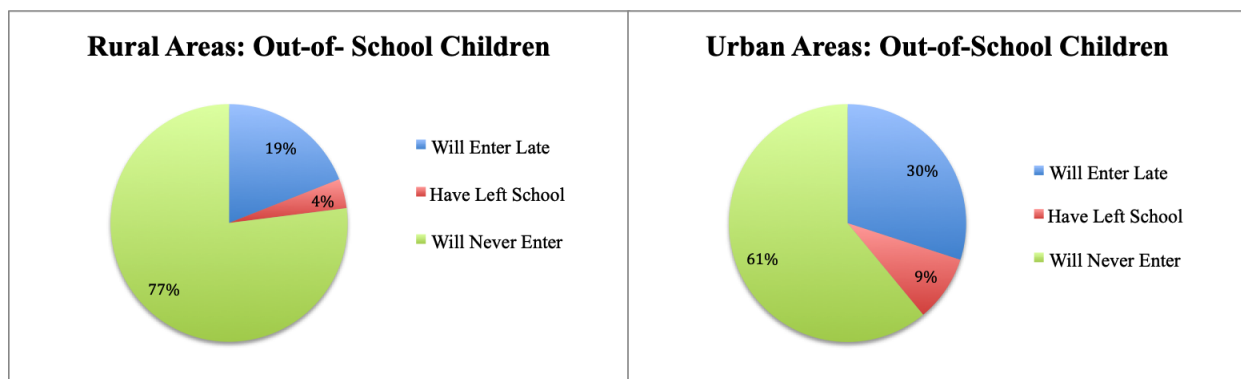
life, such as orphans being separated from their parents, living with caretakers who are sick or have disabilities, or experiencing disabilities that the family needs assistance addressing. OVCs deal with birth or environmental circumstances that are beyond their control, their basic needs are not met, and they lack the care and protection needed for growth and development (Chiroma, 2016). Shann et al. (2013) reported that OVCs have lower rates of school enrollment and attendance, academically perform at lower levels compared to non-OVCs, and half of them do not continue to secondary school after primary school. Additionally, compared to non-OVCs, OVCs are more likely to skip school or not attend school at all (Tagurum et al., 2015). Several factors contribute to this situation. Research conducted by Bamgboye et al. (2017) found that OVCs who do domestic work in homes for their caregivers (31.2%) and those who are sent to bed with no food (40%) are twice as likely not to attend school. Some OVCs live in households where their caregivers cannot afford to take care of them, whether that means feeding them or attending to illnesses or disabilities (Bamgboye et al., 2017). As a result of this phenomenon, many OVCs, particularly girls, have no choice but to forgo their education and turn to street hawking to help their caregivers or families financially (Majanga et al., 2015). For OVCs who have illnesses or disabilities, the lack of specialized equipment at home and schools hinders them from pursuing an education, ultimately diminishing any motivation they have to attend school (Bamgboye et al., 2017). Parental death was also reported as a reason OVCs ceased to attend school. The death of a parent or both in some cases can cause a loss of shelter, school drop-outs, poor health, malnutrition, and abuse. When this happens, older siblings may be expected to step up and take on a parental role to support their younger siblings and to do so, they drop out of school (Tagurum et al., 2015).

School Dropouts

Although a large portion of Nigerian children never attend school or drop out of school due to the death of a parent, illness and disabilities, or child labor, some have never attended school or dropped out of school due to their geographical area. There are more children who have never attended school in rural areas than in urban areas, and some of these children have chosen to drop out of school completely (Figure 2; Ajaja, 2012; UNESCO Institute For Statistics, 2014).

Figure 2

UNESCO Institute for Statistics, School Experience, 2014



There are several reasons why children in rural areas either don't attend school or drop out of school. The first reason is that there is a high level of poverty in rural areas compared to urban areas, which has affected parents' ability to provide financial support for their children's schooling (Ajaja, 2012; Iceland, 2003; Kaufman et al., 2001; Schargel & Smink, 2001). The second reason is that most parents in rural areas are illiterate and do not understand the value of education (Ajaja, 2012). The third reason is that many of the students who attend primary and secondary schools don't perform well, which leads to high failure rates, eventually causing them to drop out of school (Ajaja, 2012; Mohsin et al., 2004). The fourth reason is that many children in rural areas tend to go to the farm with their parents rather than go to school (Ajaja, 2012; Bull

& Smith, 2000; Iyamu & Obiunu, 2006). The fifth reason is that at an early age, girls are given away for marriage (Ajaja, 2012; Iyamu & Obiunu, 2006; Tuwor & Sossou, 2008). The last reason is that the poor quality of education in rural areas has caused many children to lose faith in the education system (Ajaja, 2012). These reasons have contributed to Nigeria having the largest number of out-of-school children in the world.

Illiteracy in Nigeria

The impact of having a large number of out-of-school children is that it increases Nigeria's illiteracy rate. It is also important to note that one of the leading causes of poverty in Nigeria is illiteracy. To understand illiteracy, it is necessary to understand what literacy means. UNESCO (2009) defined literacy as:

The ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve his or her goals, develop his or her knowledge and potential, and participate fully in community and wider society.

(p. 13)

Sylvia Scribner (1984) used three metaphors to explain the importance of literacy. The first one is to view literacy as a form of adaptation that focuses on the survival or pragmatic value gained by acquiring literacy skills. The second is to view literacy as power. This perspective characterizes literacy as a powerful tool that elites can use to keep the less educated and poor down, or it can be used by the poor to secure their place in society. Lastly, one can view literacy as a state of grace, which speaks to society's tendency to bestow literate persons with special virtues. According to the World Bank (2005), literacy is the foundation for economic progression and social mobility. It can be said that illiteracy is the exact opposite of literacy.

In broad terms, illiteracy is seen as an individual's inability to read, write, and utilize arithmetic (Aderogba, 2018). According to data collected by the World Bank (2018b), Nigeria's adult literacy rate is 62%, which is relatively low compared to a country like Ghana, which borders Nigeria and has a literacy rate of 79%. Nigeria's low educational attainment speaks to its high illiteracy rate. The main cause of Nigeria's illiteracy rate is a lack of education; the majority of Nigeria's population has no education or less than a primary education (see Table 1).

Table 1

Nigeria's Headcount Rate By Household Education Level

Level of Education	Gender	
	Male	Female
No education or less than primary	70.82%	39.17%
Primary education	50.33%	32.74%
Secondary education	35.87%	18.96%
Post-secondary education	31.20%	10.15%

Note. Adapted from 2019 Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria: Executive Summary, by the National Bureau of Statistics, 2019, (<https://nairametrics.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2019-POVERTY-AND-INEQUALITY-IN-NIGERIA.pdf>). In the public domain.

The data shows that many Nigerians have either never attended school or are dropping out before they complete their primary education, which is where they are meant to gain literacy skills and knowledge. Illiteracy affects an individual's social status, political participation, cultural expression, health, and opportunities to learn. Not only does illiteracy negatively affect individuals, but it also affects the country where those individuals reside. Illiteracy lowers a country's quality of life by increasing poverty, increasing unemployment, and increasing the need for public assistance and foreign aid (Itasanmi et al., 2019). This data explains not only Nigeria's low literacy rate but also why Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children in the world.

Education in Rural Areas of Nigeria

Quality of Basic Education in Rural Areas of Nigeria

The quality of education in Nigeria is a topic that many have been researched. The research that has been conducted supports the fact that Nigeria's quality of education leaves much to be desired. It is necessary to note that the majority of the research points to the fact that there is an educational quality inequality between rural and urban areas in Nigeria (Adetayo, 2016; Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015; Ajeyalemi & Ogunleye, 2009; Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016; Alaba, 2010; Asiyai, 2014; Babalola, 2018; Bolaji et al., 2019; Biddle & Azano, 2016; Ejere, 2011; Ige, 2014; Iyunade, 2017; Moja, 2000; Ogunsola, 2018; Oyebade, 2012; Ushie, 2009).

Nigeria's education system, particularly in rural areas, faces many challenges that make it difficult to deliver quality basic education to its citizens. Educational disparities between rural and urban areas in Nigeria are due to inadequate or nonexistent classroom infrastructure, inadequate instructional materials, high teacher-to-student ratios, a lack of qualified teachers and professional development, and inadequate funding. Although these challenges have been identified, education in rural areas of Nigeria is still at an undesirable standard (Bolaji et al., 2019). The government's failure to invest adequately in Nigeria's education system has significantly affected the quality of basic education delivered to Nigerians (Babalola, 2018).

Classroom Infrastructure

For effective and meaningful learning to take place, students must feel safe, secure, and comfortable in their learning environment, in this case, their classroom (Asiyai, 2014). The impact of a conducive learning environment is vital. In Asiyai's (2014) study regarding the importance of learning environments, 89.13% of the participating Nigerian students said that they would have increased motivation if their physical classroom/learning environment

improved, whereas 92.53% of the students said that would learn more and achieve high grades if their physical classroom/learning environment improved. These percentages correlate to findings obtained in Ikoya and Onoyase's (2008) research, which was also conducted in Nigeria. They found that 53% of their surveyed schools lacked basic structures such as a classroom, and only 21% of the schools had adequate facilities in functioning condition. To improve the learning environment in Nigeria, there needs to be a tremendous investment in classroom infrastructure; currently, schools in Nigeria lack classrooms, laboratories, libraries, computer centers, potable water, electricity, toilets, and furniture (Ejere, 2011; Ikoya & Onoyase 2008).

Many schools in rural areas are dilapidated buildings that sometimes lack walls, roofs, chairs, and desks (Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015; Babalola, 2018). This lack of infrastructure has caused some students to have to learn under trees, whether there is sunshine or rain (Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015). Based on three demographic studies, it was found that in some primary schools, 12% of the students sit on the floor, and 38% have no classroom ceilings (Adepoju & Fabiyi, 2007). Some schools lack adequate and hygienic sanitation facilities and have no running water; as a result, students have to fetch water for the school before their classes start so they can wash their hands and use the restroom during school hours. One major issue with this situation is that it makes the students susceptible to catching waterborne diseases (Babalola, 2018). Umar (2009) suggested that there is no level playing field between learning environments in rural areas and urban areas; rather, students living in rural areas are at a disadvantage compared to their counterparts in urban areas. For years the lack of quality learning environments has raised questions about the quality of basic education delivered to students living in rural areas of Nigeria.

Many researchers have offered recommendations on how to improve classroom infrastructure. The first recommendation is that the Nigerian government and stakeholders need to join together to provide money and resources that will help to improve and provide quality classroom infrastructure, as well as fund the management, maintenance, and security of the schools (Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015; Bolaji et al., 2019; Etuk et al., 2012; Ikoya & Onoyase, 2008). Second, rather than just focusing on building new schools, for a lower cost, some of the dilapidated school buildings should be renovated (Asiyai, 2014; Ige, 2014). Researchers believe that if these recommendations are taken into consideration, then Nigerian students will be able to physically attend classes in an educational facility that is conducive to learning and supports the UBE program's goals.

Inadequate Instructional Materials

Instructional materials are alternative forms of communication that a teacher utilizes to help their students assimilate the information they are being taught (Dike, 1987). Teachers need instructional materials, such as textbooks, to support their teachings and make them more meaningful and understandable for their students (Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015). However, to ensure that quality basic education is delivered to students in Nigeria, teachers need more than just textbooks; rather, they also need computers, chalkboards, mathematics kits, science kits, audio-visual aids, and teaching guides (Bukoye, 2019; Chukwu et al., 2016; Dabo & Augustine, 2016; Enaigbe, 2009; Ogbondah, 2008). The issue is that a significant number of schools do not have access to these materials, and if they do, they are in poor condition (Abdu-Raheem, 2011; Babalola, 2018; Dabo & Augustine, 2016). Adepoju and Fabiyi (2007) reported that based on three demographic studies, 77% of Nigerian primary students lack textbooks.

The lack of instructional materials is a significant cause of Nigeria's educational ineffectiveness and students' poor academic performance. Iyamu (2005) pointed out the importance of instructional materials by suggesting that without instructional materials, skills-based curriculum cannot be implemented, which leads to a lack of skill acquisition and economic empowerment for Nigerian students. Research has also found that the lack of instructional materials in the classroom negatively affects teacher effectiveness, which then affects their motivation to teach (Ige, 2018). When it comes to the distribution of instructional materials, it was found that not only is there a short supply of materials in Nigeria, but also that they are unevenly distributed between rural and urban areas (Ani, 2005; Nwakpa, 2007; Okoroma, 2000). Starr and White (2008) affirmed that schools in rural areas receive less support than their counterparts in urban areas. A few of the schools that do have libraries are typically filled with books that are old, obsolete, and irrelevant (Okoli & Okorie, 2015). Without adequate laboratories, libraries, and instructional materials, it is difficult to impactfully and adequately implement the UBE program (Okoroma, 2000).

Based on prior conducted research, a plethora of recommendations have been made regarding inadequate instructional materials in Nigeria. The first recommendation is that the government and stakeholders should provide the necessary funds and resources to schools so that they can adequately equip teachers with adequate instructional materials (Bukoye, 2019; Chukwu et al., 2016; Dabo & Augustine, 2016; Ige, 2018; Okoli & Okorie, 2015; Olayinka, 2016). Second, researchers suggest that schools should hire librarians to handle textbooks for the entire school; it would be their responsibility to make sure that the textbooks are in good condition and relevant (Dabo & Augustine, 2016; Okoli & Okorie, 2015). Third, teachers and students should learn to improvise with the materials they have available to them (Ahmadi &

Lukman, 2015; Asiyai, 2014; Chukwu et al., 2016; Olayinka, 2016). Last, through the Ministry of Education, the government should implement a monitoring unit that monitors and encourages the use of instructional materials (Bukoye, 2019). These recommendations have been made time and time again for the past several years. This finding shows that even with these recommendations and possible implementations, there is still a problem in Nigeria's education system when it comes to providing adequate instructional materials, particularly to students in rural areas.

Teacher to Student Ratio

One of the factors affecting the current quality of basic education delivery in Nigeria is the prominence of overcrowded classrooms (Adesina, 1977). When there is a smaller number of students per teacher, it enhances the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, n.d.). When there are fewer students in a classroom, teachers can give each student an increased amount of attention, are less stressed, and can provide proper support to different student's developmental needs (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016; Oyedele, 2017). Huntsman (2008) and Oyedele (2017) both affirmed that when there are fewer students in a classroom, students are more likely to be cooperative when it comes to activities and interaction, and they perform better in cognitive and linguistic assessments.

A key result of overcrowded classrooms is poor academic performance. Babatunde (2015) affirmed that the reason for overcrowding is a shortage of classrooms as a result of increased school enrollment. Oghuvbu and Atakpo (2008) also confirmed that another justification for overcrowding in classrooms is that many schools, particularly in rural areas of Nigeria, have an inadequate number of teachers. The teacher-to-student ratio has gotten so desperate that some schools in rural areas of Nigeria are seeing pre-primary school class ratios of

1:90, and primary school class ratios of 1:80. Although the teacher to student ratios in urban areas are still high compared to what is suggested in the National Policy on Education, it is important to point out that they are reasonably lower than in rural areas, with pre-primary school ratios being 1:52 and primary school ratios being 1:64 (Babatunde, 2015; Mamman et al., 2015; Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019). The issue with these numbers is that based on Nigeria's National Policy on Education, pre-primary classes should have a teacher to student ratio that is no higher than 1:25, whereas primary and JSS should have a teacher to student ratio that is no higher than 1:35 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). It is clear to see that some schools have triple the suggested national average. Overcrowded classrooms make it difficult for students to connect with each other and for teachers to connect with their students, which defeats the purpose of the UBE program (Aliyu et al., 2008; Mamman et al., 2015).

Based on their research, researchers have recommended a few ways to alleviate classes of overcrowding. The first recommendation is that the government build more schools with more classrooms so that schools can reduce the number of students per classroom (Babatunde, 2015; Oghuvbu & Atakpo 2008). Second, the government should recruit more teachers so that students can be evenly distributed into more classes with fewer students. Third, school heads who perform both administrative and academic roles should head the management of overcrowded classrooms, which involves them planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, staffing, and budgeting properly (Babatunde, 2015). Although these recommendations have been made, schools across Nigeria and particularly in rural areas still have an astronomical high teacher to student ratios.

Lack of Qualified Teachers and Professional Development

According to UNESCO (2014), less than 75% of teachers around the world are properly trained to teach based on national standards. Particularly in Nigeria, many qualified teachers are passing on the opportunity to teach in rural areas in favor of urban areas, due to the fact that rural areas are not as modernized, which has created a lack of qualified and properly trained teachers in rural areas (Monk, 2007; Mulkeen, 2006). Umar (2005) asserted that schools in rural areas are typically remote and inaccessible, lacking basic amenities like potable water, electricity, roads, and hospitals, making the idea of teaching at a rural school unattractive to teachers. Shibley (1917) pointed out that one of the major issues with recruiting teachers to teach in rural areas of Nigeria is that most of them are not adequately trained on rural schools and rural life. One of the best ways for a teacher to provide an adequate learning experience for students is for them to be knowledgeable about the environment in which they are teaching (Fram et al., 2007). Connolly (2000) affirmed that rural teachers typically work in isolation and don't possess much power to change their work environments. For some teachers, their work environment is even more important than salary differences; nevertheless, the salaries teachers receive in rural areas are less than in urban areas, which adds to the difficulty of attracting qualified teachers (Bacolod, 2007; Monk, 2007; Umar, 2005). Babalola (2018) argued that millions of students in Nigeria are not being taught basic skills due to poor learning, which is attributed to a lack of qualified teachers and a lack of professional development.

Amadi (2013) affirmed that the need for unqualified teachers has become a necessity in Nigeria due to a lack of qualified teachers. However, it is important to note that teachers that are well-educated and qualified to teach produce students that are well educated (Dabo & Augustine, 2016). The lack of qualified and properly trained teachers has led to the recruitment of less

qualified teachers to teach in rural areas, leading to less properly educated students (Monk, 2007). In some remote areas of Nigeria, some primary school teachers have only completed primary school themselves, have not been formally trained to teach, and have not obtained the minimum qualification to teach in Nigeria, which is the Nigeria Certificate of Education (Amadi, 2013). Dabo and Augustine (2016) pointed out that many unqualified teachers simply go into the teaching profession because they are yet to find better jobs, viewing teaching as a stepping stone to finding a better job. Due to this, Ajibola (2008) affirmed that most of the teachers are under-qualified to teach the subjects that are introduced in their school's curriculum because they have no proper formal training. Nigeria has taken steps to rectify this situation by establishing the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), which was founded to help the government regulate the teaching profession and register teachers in Nigeria. It is the duty of TRNC to develop new codes of conduct for teachers and arrange professional development opportunities for teachers. The TRCN announced that by 2006 all unqualified teachers teaching in Nigeria should obtain all the necessary qualifications needed for them to teach (Ajeyalemi & Ogunleye, 2009).

No matter what industry someone works in, professional development is needed in order to continually enhance their knowledge and improve their sense of professionalism throughout their career (Goble & Horm, 2010). According to the American Federation of Teachers (2008), professional development should:

1. Deepen and broaden knowledge of content.
2. Provide a strong foundation in the pedagogy of particular disciplines.
3. Provide knowledge about the teaching and learning processes.
4. Be rooted in and reflect the best available research.

5. Be aligned with the standards and curriculum teachers use.
6. Contribute to measurable improvement in student achievement.
7. Be intellectually engaging and address the complexity of teaching.
8. Provide sufficient time, support, and resources to enable teachers to master new content and pedagogy and to integrate these into their practice.
9. Be designed by teachers in cooperation with experts in the field.
10. Take a variety of forms, including some we have not typically considered.
11. Be job-embedded and site-specific (pp. 3–8).

Nigeria's National Policy on Education states the teachers should receive career-long professional development through programs and various pathways that provide teachers with consistent opportunities to update their knowledge and skills (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). However, teachers in Nigeria lack professional development (Goble & Horm, 2010; Olaleye & Omotayo, 2009; Viatonu et al., 2011). The high population of unqualified teachers adds to the difficulty of implementing professional development. The challenge becomes offering professional development to teachers who are not qualified to teach in the first place (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016). This is why it is the duty of the TRCN to ensure that teachers in classrooms in Nigeria are participating in professional development. However, professional development in Nigeria is seen as random, haphazard, and accidental rather than planned (Ushie, 2009).

Although the Nigerian government has taken steps toward improving the quality of teachers and providing professional development, much work remains to be done. Researchers have made the following recommendations. The first recommendation is that the government should intensify its efforts to regulate the teaching profession by ensuring that all new teachers at

a minimum possess a Bachelor of Education (Dabo & Augustine, 2016). Ejere (2011) suggested that untrained teachers who are currently working as teachers obtain the minimum required teaching qualification, known as the NCE. The second recommendation is to create incentives and encourage locals who live in rural areas to pursue teaching as a profession (Ataku, 2011). The third recommendation is that rural schools should embrace the multi-grade teaching concept, which consists of students of different ages, grades, and abilities being taught in one classroom simultaneously; however, this practice does require specialized training (Ejere, 2011; Gabriel, 1999). The fourth recommendation is to invest in teacher training; teachers should be sponsored to attend seminars and conferences (Babalola, 2018; Dabo & Augustine, 2016).

Funding

Funding is a vital aspect of an education system because it determines the quality of education students receive (Aghenta, 1993). Kola and Gbenga (2015) attested to the fact that inadequate funding is the greatest problem when it comes to providing quality education. Educational funding in Nigeria, especially in rural areas of Nigeria, has always been lackluster, and for years has been complicated by politics. For years, Nigerian politicians have made promises to improve rural areas when they are campaigning, however, once they secure and win the election, they often break their promises and neglect rural areas (Ataku, 2011).

Regarding educational development, rural areas are behind urban areas due to unequal funding distribution: an issue that has been in the political spotlight for years (Hinchliffe, 2002). Moja (2000) affirmed that there are funding disparities between rural and urban areas, particularly that personnel cost in rural areas takes up to 99% of the allocation budget, whereas urban areas tend to have more funds in their allocated budget for minor expenses. The majority of the issues that riddle Nigeria's education system have to do with poor funding, which is linked

to low budgetary allocation (Alabi & Ijaiya, 2014; Ataku, 2011). Ataku (2011) pointed out that education cannot be successful in rural areas if funding is a constraint barrier, which is why adequate funding must be provided in order to see educational improvements in rural areas. According to Nigeria's National Policy on Education, it is the government's obligation to ensure that all barriers prohibiting Nigerians from receiving a quality education are removed. This is why the government has taken on the responsibility of providing free education at all educational levels by holding the federal, state and local governments as well as the private sector responsible for financing education in Nigeria (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013; Ige, 2014; Moja, 2000).

Despite one of the wealthiest governments in Africa taking financial responsibility for education in Nigeria, according to the World Bank (2014), Nigeria invests and spends the least on education than any other country in Africa. Based on UNESCO's (2014) calculations, Nigeria's government only spends 1.5% of its gross domestic product (GDP) and national budget on education. According to the World Bank (2014), only 1% of Nigeria's national budget is spent on education. However, it is suggested that governments should spend 6% of their GDP and 20% of their national budget on education (UNESCO, 2014). The difference in what is being spent and what should be spent supports the fact that Nigeria's education system is grossly underfunded. An organization that is not adequately funded cannot function effectively, just as an educational system cannot operate effectively if it is not funded properly. An underfunded educational system negatively affects the implementation of well-designed educational curriculum, teachers' salaries, and the purchase of adequate instructional materials (Ahmadi & Lukman, 2015). An underfunded educational system can also be seen in the overcrowding of classrooms and the lack of libraries and laboratories. Ige (2014) pointed out that funding is

needed to pay teacher's salaries, purchase and maintain equipment, and renovate old schools and build new schools.

It should be noted that Nigeria's GDP for 2019 was \$448.12 billion, and for 2020 parliament passed a national budget of \$28.5 billion (Ministry of Budget and National Planning, n.d.; World Bank, 2019). However, even with figures as large as these, Nigeria's educational system is still grossly underfunded, and many researchers point to corruption as the cause (Aja et al., 2018; Ejere, 2011; Obamuyi & Olayiwola, 2019; Todowede, 2016). Corrupt government officials often mismanage the majority of the funds that are allocated to implement educational policies; it is difficult to find a department or organization in the federal, state, or local government that doesn't participate in corruption (Aja et al., 2018; Todowede, 2016). Oghi (2013) and Todowede (2016) both pointed out that money that is meant for repairs of Nigeria's refineries, electricity, hospitals, roads, and schools, is used for private means by public officials through misappropriation and sham contracts. Corruption creates limited public funds, stalls economic progress, and delays policy modifications needed for development and structural revolution in Nigeria (Enofe et al., 2016; Todowede, 2016).

Over the years, Nigeria has earned the accolade of being one of the most corrupt countries in the world; some even view corruption to be a sub-culture in Nigeria (Abada & Ngwu, 2019; Egonmwan, 1992; Salisu, 2000). Corruption reduces access to education, notably reducing the access poor people have to education (Obamuyi & Olayiwola, 2019). A high number of Nigeria's poor population lives in rural areas, further demonstrating why there is a lack of quality education in rural areas of Nigeria. Corruption continues to be a threat to the quality and accessibility of education. As a result, anti-corruption agencies have been established to help abolish corruption, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act

of 2004 and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) Act of 2000. The EFCC was established to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and penalize economic and financial crimes. The ICPC was established to receive and investigate reports of corruption, prosecute offenders if warranted, correct corruption-prone systems, educate the public about corruption, and gain public support to fight corruption (Todowede, 2016).

Recommendations have been made to help combat the underfunding challenges facing Nigeria's educational system. The first recommendation is that the government should continuously and consistently provide and ensure that schools have adequate funding (Aja et al., 2018; Alabi & Ijaiya, 2014; Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016). The second recommendation is that there should be an improved system to manage school budgets that is transparent, is democratic, and increases accountability (Moja, 2000). The third recommendation is that the government should strengthen anti-corruption agencies like EFCC and ICPC; they should be adequately funded in order to address the large degree of corruption in Nigeria (Todowede, 2016). If these recommendations were taken into consideration, there would be major improvement in Nigeria's educational system.

Access to Basic Education in Rural Areas of Nigeria

Oghenekohwo and Torunarigha (2018) insisted that access to education has always been an obstacle in under-developed and developing countries. This is a concern because education is vital to public policy instruments of planned socio-economic development, modernization, and democratization. In the context of this paper, access is the adequacy of educational opportunities for all Nigerian citizens, removing any form of discrimination such as their class or group in society, as well as their geographical location (Duze, 2011; Etor et al., 2020; Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018). However, research shows that there are many disparities in accessing

education in developing countries that are based on race, gender, class, caste, and language (Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018; Stash & Hannum, 2001; Wiley & Richardo, 2002). Bhola (2006) declared that access to education is a matter of educational expansion, which seeks to provide education to as many students as possible, regardless of their background.

It is worth pointing out that one aspect of Nigeria's educational philosophy is "the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system" (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2005, p. 1). Although the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2005) acknowledges the importance of accessible education to all citizens, it also acknowledges the fact that one of the obstacles the Nigerian education system faces is the inaccessibility of education in rural areas. Research also supports this claim of inaccessibility to education in Nigeria (Etor et al., 2020; Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018; Omiyefa et al., 2015). Without improved access to education, Nigeria will continue to see its illiteracy rate increase, which affects economic and social development (Etor et al., 2020; Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018). The quality of education in Nigeria has an enormous influence on the accessibility of education (Etor et al., 2020). It is understood that in order for educational access to be possible, resources like classrooms, laboratories, teachers, instructional materials, among other factors, need to be present and adequate (Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018).

Ajeyalemi and Ogunleye (2009) and Etor et al. (2020) stated that one of the major factors that should be considered regarding access to schooling is the availability of schools in the areas and their physical proximity to a student's home. This particular factor is more prevalent in rural areas. The poor conditions of accessibility make schools in rural areas of Nigeria harder to access compared to schools in urban areas of Nigeria. Geographic conditions play a large role in the

poor accessibility of schools in rural areas. For example, some rural areas are a part of the geographical rainforest; the terrain in these areas is swampy, making it difficult to navigate, which ultimately makes commuting difficult (Ataku, 2011).

Other conditions that prohibit access are poorly built roadways. Some roads are so decrepit that cars cannot drive on them, and some roads are badly flooded when it rains, making it difficult for students to access their schools (Ataku, 2011). Duze (2011) pointed out that most students in rural areas walk to school because most of their parents do not have personal cars and likely cannot afford to pay for daily public transportation. For many of the students, the stress of navigating the roads and having to walk long distances to access their schools is seen as a burden, and parents often worry about their children returning home safely. In some cases, students have to walk up to 5 kilometers (3.11 miles) to school. Parents prefer to keep their children at home rather than send them to school if they believe the distance their child has to walk to school is too far. These factors have also contributed to the vast number of out-of-school children in Nigeria.

Over the years researchers have recommended ways to improve access to education in Nigeria; the first recommendation is that authorities in charge of approving school locations should take into consideration the maximum distance students in the area should travel to reach their schools (Duze, 2011; Etor et al., 2020). The second recommendation is that more schools should be built in different communities (Etor et al., 2020; Oghenekohwo & Torunarigha, 2018). The third recommendation is that schools should be built no more than 1 kilometer (.62 miles) away from the community being served. The fourth recommendation is that a school transportation system should be implemented that will take students to and from school, especially in the rural areas where students walk a longer distance to school (Duze, 2011).

Researchers believe that if these recommendations are taken into consideration, Nigeria should see a vast improvement when it comes to accessing education.

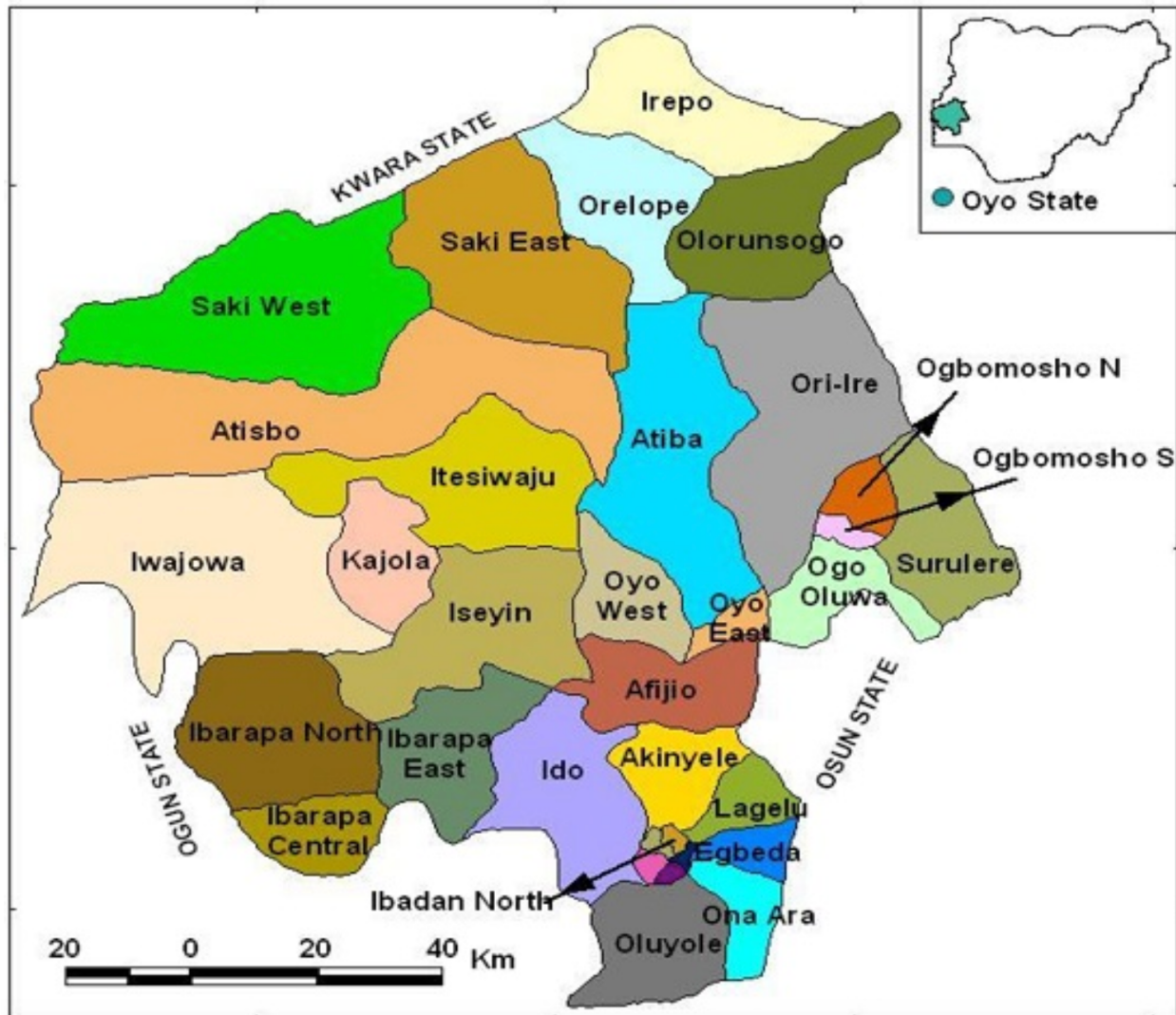
Education in Oyo State

Demographics

Oyo State was established in February 1976 and is located in the southwest region of Nigeria. Oyo State is one of the 36 states in Nigeria and consists of 33 LGAs, which are divided into three senatorial districts: Oyo North (13 LGAs), Oyo Central (11 LGAs), and Oyo South (9 LGAs), shown in Figure 3. Of the 33 local governments, 28 are considered to be rural areas. Oyo State is populated by the Yoruba ethnic group who are a mixture of the Oyos, the Oke-Oguns, the Ibadans, and the Ibarapas. The primary language of Oyo State is Yoruba; however, there are variations depending on intonation and accent. In terms of religion, Oyo State residents practice Islam, Christianity, and Traditional worship (Akindola, 2010; Oyo State, 2020; Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019; Popoola & Magidimisha, 2020). As of 2018, the population of Oyo State was 8,335,357. Most of the population lives in one of the five major cities, which are Ibadan (state capital), Ogbomoso, Oyo, Iseyin, and Saki (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019). Despite Oyo State being one of the largest states in the southwestern region of Nigeria, it is considered less planned compared to other states like Lagos or Ogun (Popoola & Magidimisha, 2020). Ipingbemi (2010) indicated that Oyo State's organic and traditional approach to growth, as well as its arrangement and formation, have limited state planning, and rural areas of Oyo State are the most affected.

Figure 3

Map of Oyo State with Local Government Areas



Note. From Oyo State of Nigeria, by Nigeria Galleria, n.d.
(https://www.nigeriagalleria.com/Nigeria/States_Nigeria/Oyo/). In the public domain.

The predominant source of income and occupation in Oyo State is agriculture. Farmers grow crops like maize, yam, cassava, millet, rice, plantain, cocoa, palm products, etc. Cattle ranches can be found in Saki, Fasola, Ipapo, and Ibadan; the Oyo State Agricultural Development Programme (OSADEP) can also be found in Saki. There is also a bounty of clay, kaolin, and aquamarine (Oyo State, 2020; Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019).

Current Status of Education in Oyo State

When it comes to education, Oyo State has its own vision, mission, and policy thrust statements that are meant to guide the state's educational system.

1. Vision Statement: "To ensure that the citizens of the State have a holistic growth through affordable quality education and all-round development of sound minds in the fields of technology, sciences, commerce and humanities with total cognizance to the values, norms and belief of the entire constituents of the State" (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019, p. 2).
2. Mission Statement: "Achieving free, Qualitative and economic driven education such that 'No child is left behind' in the acquisition of holistic knowledge" (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019, p. 2).
3. Policy Thrust: "Provision of all-encompassing basic, scientific and technological education with a view to promoting entrepreneurship at all stages of educational development" (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019, p. 2).

According to Oyo State of Nigeria (2019), there are 5,313 pre-primary and primary schools in Oyo State, 60% of which are located in urban areas, whereas 40% are located in rural areas. There are only 356 JSS only schools; however, there are 1,224 that are a combination of JSS and SSS. When all of the schools are combined, there are more schools in urban areas (63.2%) than rural areas (36.8%).

The Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) in Oyo State is 55.5%. Based on the population count from 2018, this means that 2,201,284 who are of schooling age (2–17 years old) are not enrolled in school. The breakdown of enrollment per educational level can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2*Gross Enrollment Rate by Education Level*

Education Level	Enrollment Status	
	Enrolled	Not Enrolled
Pre-primary	30.50%	69.50%
Primary	70.90%	29.1%
JSS	41.10%	58.90%

Note. Adapted from “Education Sector Plan” [Unpublished Report], by Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019. Copyright 2019 by Oyo State of Nigeria. Adapted with permission.

Findings show that a larger percentage of students living in rural areas drop out of school or never attended school compared to their counterparts in urban areas. Table 3 shows the percentage of out-of-school children based on location.

Table 3*Percentage of Out-Of-School Children by Location*

Location	Drop-out	Never attended	Total Out-of-School
Urban	41.10%	13%	27%
Rural	58.90%	87%	73%

Note. Adapted from “Education Sector Plan” [Unpublished Report], by Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019. Copyright 2019 by Oyo State of Nigeria. Adapted with permission.

Research also shows that there are many reasons as to why there are such a high number of out-of-school children in Oyo State. Table 4 shows the reasons responsible for the out-of-school children in Oyo State.

Table 4*Factors Responsible for Out-of-School Children in Oyo State*

Reasons	<u>Drop-out</u>		<u>Never attended</u>	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Distance	5.4	21.8	11.2	31.6
Financial Constraints	65	40.3	48.5	24.2
Special Needs	3.3	4.1	1.9	9
Marriage	2.4	1.3	7	2
Nomadic	2.5	4.5	3.8	5.8
Cultural/Religious Belief	0.6	1.8	1.9	2.7
Orphan/Vulnerable Children	8.5	8.1	18.9	9.6
Domestic/Farming	4.6	5.8	2.5	3.9
Street Begging	0.7	2.3	1.7	7.7
Apprenticeship	3.6	6.1	0.6	1
Hawking	2.1	2.6	1.1	1.9
Others	1.3	1.3	0.8	0.6

Note. Adapted from “Education Sector Plan” [Unpublished Report], by Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019. Copyright 2019 by Oyo State of Nigeria. Adapted with permission.

Oyo State of Nigeria (2019) found that nine out of 10 students who enter primary school during the first grade eventually reach and complete primary school; however, the rate of primary school completion has fluctuated between 92–98.1%, primarily showing a downward trend. In contrast, the rate of students transitioning from primary to secondary school has declined consistently, dropping from 82.9% in 2011 to 57% in 2018. The transition of students from primary to secondary school in Oyo State is lower than that of the southwest region of Nigeria’s transition average of 63.7%. However, the completion rate for students who have completed primary and secondary school is 76.2%, whereas 38.1% do not complete both primary and secondary schools.

According to the results of the National MLA conducted during 1997, 2003, and 2011, students who were in primary 4 and 6 had mean scores that ranged between 26.19% and 44.92%, which means that they scored less than 50% in literacy, numeracy, and life skills. These results confirm that in Oyo State, there is a low learning outcome in primary schools. It is suggested that

having inadequate teachers in classrooms contributes to low scores. Research shows that between 2013–2017, there were 79.5% qualified teachers and 20.5 unqualified teachers teaching in Oyo State; however, in 2018, the number of qualified teachers decreased to 76.5% and the number of unqualified teachers increased to 23.5%. Oyo State does provide Teacher Professional Development (TPD) training; however, due to inadequate funds, a significant number of teachers are not able to participate in the training. It is also important to note that, since 2014, due to attrition and non-recruitment, the number of teachers in Oyo State has decreased; in the last eight years, more than 15% of teachers have retired. Due to having fewer teachers, there have been cases where there were less than 800 teachers for 60,000 enrolled students. As a result of this of this situation, Oyo State is dealing with high pre-primary and primary student to teacher ratios; some classes have two to three times the recommended ratio (see Table 5). When it comes to secondary school, some schools have computer science classes with a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:85; there are even schools whose Health Education classes have a ratio of 1:923 (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019).

Table 5

Student-Teacher Ratios in Pre-Primary and Primary Schools in Oyo State

Education Level	Rural	Urban
Pre-primary	90:1	52:1
Primary	80:1	64:1

Note. Adapted from “Education Sector Plan” [Unpublished Report], by Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019. Copyright 2019 by Oyo State of Nigeria. Adapted with permission.

Inadequate infrastructure is a major issue in Oyo State; much of the current infrastructure is insufficient and decaying. According to Oyo State of Nigeria (2019), infrastructural facilities like classrooms, libraries, desks, seats, and laboratories are hard to come by. Based on research conducted by Oyo State of Nigeria, Oyo State’s school infrastructural issues are as follows:

1. Inadequate and overcrowded classrooms; 3,578 (26%) classrooms need major repairs.
2. Only 7% of schools are connected to a power source.
3. Only 4% of schools have computer facilities.
4. Only 7% of public schools have library facilities.
5. Only 46% of schools have playgrounds.
6. Only 22% of public schools are fenced.
7. Many schools don't have toilets; however, some schools in urban areas have two or more toilets.
8. Only 3% of schools have clinics on the school premises.

Oyo State has found that the current system for managing education is inefficient and ineffective. There is an inadequate number of Management Development Advisors (MDAs), who have failed to receive professional development training for the past 4 years. Education Management Information System offices are ill-equipped, and the vehicles they are required to use to visit schools are in poor condition. It has also been identified that there is poor synergy among the MDAs in Oyo State. There is also a lack of collaboration among educational service delivery stakeholders in Oyo State, and contributions from International Development Partners toward education is minimal (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019).

The primary funding source for education in Oyo State is the government. However, the government affirms that from 2015–2018, the educational budget has fluctuated up and down, and the actual expenditure is significantly less than the set budget (see Table 6; Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019).

Table 6*Oyo State Public Expenditure on Education*

Year	Total State Budget (₦)	Education Sector Budget (₦)	Education Budget as Percentage of Total Budget (%)	Education Sector Actual Expenditure (₦)	Percentage of Education Sector Actual Expenditure (%)
2015	143,108,660,700.00	40,626,200,700.00	28.40%	21,482,167,744.00	52.90%
2016	173,429,404,444.00	29,276,396,554.60 (Excluding Teachers' Salary)	16.90%	19,859,076,381.99	N/A
2017	208,654,111,854.05	69,341,578,412.02	33.20%	27,385,923,542.23	39.50%
2018	271,731,742,260.30	45,343,838,735.89	16.77%	25,605,959,980.95	56.50%

Note. Adapted from “Education Sector Plan” [Unpublished Report], by Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019. Copyright 2019 by Oyo State of Nigeria. Adapted with permission.

Based upon research, the Oyo State government and stakeholders have identified and agreed upon five key issues that need to be focused on in order to improve education in Oyo State, which they plan to address between 2020–2022. Presented subsequently are the five identified issues and recommendations that were made regarding the issues.

1. Expansion of access, equity, and inclusiveness
 - a. Improve access and coverage to reduce the number of out-of-school children.
 - b. Arrange for more pre-primary and primary school in rural areas.
 - c. Provide conditional cash transfer to parents of out-of-school children.
 - d. Create care homes for street children and OVC.
 - e. Main the free and compulsory education policy and provide uniforms, backpacks, and textbooks.
 - f. Expand school feeding programs.
2. Improve educational quality and relevance
 - a. Reposition available qualified teachers to rural areas.

- b. Recruit more qualified teachers to fill in gaps of retired and inadequate teachers and to reduce the high student to teacher ratios.
 - c. Provide continued professional development to teachers.
 - d. Acquire adequate vehicles to improve supervision of schools to advance the teaching and learning process.
 - e. Supply textbooks for students, teaching guides, and other instructional materials.
- 3. Improve infrastructural sufficiency
 - a. Build perimeter fences around public schools.
 - b. Build more classrooms to decrease student to teacher ratios.
 - c. Create more mobile schools around the state.
 - d. Provide more toilets in public schools, and create separate facilities for females, males, and teachers; also increase the number and quality of wash facilities.
 - e. Provide adequate furniture for students and teachers, ensuring that all students have access to a seat.
- 4. Improve management and system efficiency
 - a. Recruit education officers and support staff.
 - b. Provide computers and other types of equipment to education officers.
 - c. Execute assessment surveys based on the requirements of launching e-management in the education system.
 - d. Expand the capacity of e-management education administrators and support staff.

- e. Coordinate policy dialogue workshops for all MDAs and Ministry administrators.
 - f. At each MDA office, create an Information Communication Technology Resource Center.
5. Adequate funding and resourcing
- a. Increase the state’s budgetary allocation and the ensure appropriate release of allocated funds.
 - b. Collaborate with pertinent stakeholders, practically on funding out-of-school children—IDPs, NGOs, CSOs, philanthropists, corporate organizations, and community and religious leaders.
 - c. Revive school governing boards and school-based management committees to improve educational outcomes (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019).

In order to address these issues and implement the recommendations that the government has identified, it has been estimated that it will cost a total of ₦57,020.84 billion to fund the plan over the next 3 years (Oyo State of Nigeria, 2019).

Fundamentals of Success

Oyo State’s government has the potential to improve its educational system. States in the same region as Oyo State are doing far better when it comes to education, which shows that there is room for Oyo State to improve and grow its educational system. Although Ogun State is located in the same southwest region of Nigeria as Oyo State, the success of their education systems is vastly different. According to UNICEF (2012), 4.3% of Ogun State school-aged children were out of school, whereas Oyo State had 20.3% of out-of-school children. The Ogun

State government has shown that education is a top priority by spending 20% of the state's total budget on education (Government of Ogun State of Nigeria, 2019).

Due to the government's efforts regarding education, Ogun State is known as the Nigerian state with the highest level of literacy, and it is also known as one of the most educationally advanced (Government of Ogun State of Nigeria, 2019; World Bank, 2018b). In order to maintain the state's educational record, the government continues to introduce numerous measures and initiatives to address educational issues (Branco, 2019). Recently, Ogun State launched its *adopt a school* initiative, which is a request to private organizations and individuals to join the Ogun State government in restructuring and improving the state's education system. The plan is to renovate schools across the 236 wards in Ogun State in order to create adequate learning environments for students and to reevaluate the current curriculum being used in schools to generate conformity within the school system (Ogun State Government, Nigeria, 2019c).

Ogun State has placed focus on the quality of education children are receiving as well as their nutrition by partnering with corporations as a part of their corporate social responsibility initiatives; they have been able to provide 450 desks, 11,000 instructional materials, and food products to schools in Ogun State (Ogun State Government, Nigeria, 2019a). The Ogun State government has also recently started taking steps toward recruiting more teachers to fill vacancies in public schools across the state (Ogun State Government, Nigeria, 2019c). However, not only are they hiring more teachers, but they are also focusing on teachers' training and evaluation as another way to ensure quality delivery of basic education in Ogun State. The training and evaluations are led by the state's Education Quality Assurance team. Ogun State

noted that consistent training and evaluation helped to improve education service delivery (Ogun State Government, Nigeria, 2019b).

Ogun State students are benefitting from the efforts their government has taken to ensure that they receive a quality education. All of these efforts have contributed to why Ogun State is known as one of the most educationally advanced states in Nigeria (Government of Ogun State of Nigeria, 2019). As stated previously, researchers have suggested that if Oyo State makes the same efforts Ogun State has made in order to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education delivered in Oyo State, then Oyo State should see a drastic improvement in its educational system.

Oke Ogun

There isn't much information or research on Oke Ogun. What is known is that Oke Ogun is located in the northwestern territory of Oyo State; it is the largest zone and takes up 60% of the state's landmass, it is primarily considered a rural area, and it is partially cut off from civilization (Ajani, 2017; Channels Television, 2018a; Obed et al., 2011). Based on the 2006 census, Oke Ogun has a population of 1.5 million residents. Some of the most notable towns in Oke Ogun are: Atisbo, Oorelope, Iseyin, Itesiwaju, Kajola, Irepo, Olorunsogo, Iwajowa, Saki East, and Saki West (Channels Television, 2018a). The region is considered to be one of the materially richest parts of Nigeria, and greatly contributes to the development of Oyo State and Nigeria; however, it remains one of the most underdeveloped and marginalized areas of Nigeria, and it also has a high level of poverty. It is estimated that 70% of the population relies on agriculture such as farming to provide for their families. They are known for growing crops like cassava, and Oke Ogun is even known as the *food basket* of Oyo State (Ajani, 2017; Channels Television, 2018b). Agriculture is such an essential industry in Oke Ogun that the Oyo State

governor, Seyi Makinde, announced that the headquarters for the Oyo State Agribusiness Development Agency (OSADA) would be moved from Ibadan to Saki, which is located in Oke Ogun (Today, 2020).

Although the governor is making efforts to develop Oke Ogun, on a socio-economic level, there is a lack of adequate health and educational facilities and a lack of investment that has led to a low quality of living for people living in the Oke Ogun area (Obed et al., 2011). Ajani (2017) affirmed that Oke Ogun is often an area that is neglected by state government leaders until it is election time and they need votes from the locals, when they make promises that they tend not to fulfill. Some of those promises include fixing infrastructures such as the roads that lead to Oke Ogun and the ones within Oke Ogun. Many of the roads in Oke Ogun are destroyed; they are filled with potholes, and when it rains the roads flood making them inaccessible. Living conditions in Oke Ogun are also unfavorable; some locals live in houses made of mud and tin, and often lack electricity, potable water, or toilets (Channels Television, 2018b). When it comes to education, locals have been promised improved education for children in the area. It is important to point out that even though research on education in Oke Ogun is nearly nonexistent, the basic education system in Oke Ogun is not adequately supported by the government (Channels Television, 2018b).

Growth and Economic Development Theory

The aforementioned research points to the fact that these educational challenges result from a lack of quality and accessible basic education in Nigeria. It also points to the fact that rural areas are often the most vulnerable and affected when it comes to receiving quality and accessible education. In turn, this situation has affected multiple areas of Nigeria's economy and slowed down national development and growth. Nigeria's educational system needs further

development to see growth, and without development, Nigeria's economy will continue to feel the negative impacts of a poor educational system.

Economic Development Theory

Economic development refers to the “process of progressive transformation of an economy leading to higher productivity and increases in income for the majority of the population” (Lee, 2020, p. 1). In terms of substance, characteristics, and goals, economic development is seen as a multifaceted and multidimensional process. According to Aluede (1993), the amount of development a nation experiences is based on the extent to which nations are able to develop themselves and their environment through collective and individual efforts. There are three integral elements of economic development: growth, distribution, and innovation. According to Lee (2020), growth is essential because it creates an economic foundation for a country to meet its economic development objectives, such as poverty reduction, increasing employment, and increasing income for the population. Lee's second element of economic development is income distribution, which is seen as a good proxy for objectives such as poverty relief, inequality, and unemployment. The third element of economic development is innovation, particularly technological innovation; according to Lee, innovation has played a significant role in successful growth and development by implementing evolving production techniques and adopting new technologies.

Economic development has played a large role in the economic process of developing countries like Nigeria (Lee, 2020). When it comes to the idea of economic development, it has been understood and seen as the “progress of the international community” regarding the increase in income, employment, and welfare of a country or region (Papi, 1960, p. 90). Economic development is also seen as a concept that can be utilized to address economic issues

in developing countries and developed countries because even in developed countries, specific regions experience large income gaps that continue to grow substantially (Lee, 2020).

Various factors contribute to the success or failure of economic development: relief of poverty, inequality, and unemployment (Seers, 1970). Additionally, World Bank (1991) noted that better education, improved health and nutrition standards, cleaner environments, equal opportunities, increased individual freedoms, and richer cultural lives are all goals of development, all of which lead to economic development. Jwa (2017) argued that economic development is not merely measured by an increase in productivity but also “consists of increasing complexity created in the evolutionary transformation process” (p. 17). According to the general theory of economic development, economic development is a scarce phenomenon that doesn’t materialize spontaneously; instead, innovation, know-how by front-runners, and other externalities are the source of economic development. Jwa suggested that three institutions are responsible for transforming the economy, helping to create and sustain economic development: markets, corporations, and the government, also known as the *holy trinity* of economic development. When these three institutions work together, they become an essential institutional framework for economic development (Lee, 2020).

Economic Growth Theory

Economic growth is often categorized as an indicator of economic development. It lays the foundation for countries to meet the goals and objectives of economic development, such as: poverty relief, increased employment, and increased income for the population (Lee, 2020). According to Lee (2020), new economic growth theories affirm that an increase in growth is mainly attributed to knowledge rather than labor and capital, and decreased investments in human capital (education), infrastructure, or research and development hinder growth potential.

Additionally, the co-evolution of technologies, firm and industry structures, and governing institutions have also emerged due to economic growth (Nelson, 2008). To achieve these results, Pieterse (2010) insisted on the importance of deregulation, liberalization, and privatization, emphasizing the fact that economic growth is the “centerpiece of social change” (p. 26).

Chirtoc and Medar (2019) suggested that economic growth “rests on four wheels no matter how rich or poor the country is” (p. 189). These four wheels, also known as factors, are: human resources (labor supply, education), natural resources (minerals, environmental), capital formation (machines, roads), and technology (science, engineering). These factors explain why economic growth is desirable in any country because it increases the population’s consumption of goods and services while ensuring a high quality of goods and services, such as health and education. Chirtoc and Medar also pointed to the fact that an increase in the population’s demand for work is often associated with economic growth. However, to ensure that the population demanding work can secure employment, human capital must be generated through investments made in education and professional training of human resources, which in turn will contribute to economic growth. This growth is represented by the professional knowledge, skills, abilities, discipline, and health that lead to an individual’s increased ability to gain an occupation that allows them to effectively produce goods and services, which will enable them to contribute to society. Ultimately, economic growth is a complex process that focuses on increasing the national economy’s dimensions based on a combination of efficient production factors, GDP, and national income per inhabitant.

Growth and Economic Development Theory in Practice

According to Duze (2011), there is a high chance of Nigeria not being able to attain sustainable growth and development, due to a combination of underfunding, inadequate human

and material resources, insufficient technological advances, high levels of poverty, and mass illiteracy and unemployment. These issues have severely affected growth and development in Nigeria and have continued to do so. Many of these issues result from a lack of education. Without education, Nigeria will continue to increase poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and a decrease in technological advancements, particularly in Nigeria's rural areas. However, if we apply economic development theory and economic growth theory and address the issues of education and poverty in rural areas, we should be able to identify ways to improve these issues within Nigeria's society.

Education

According to research conducted by Duze (2011) and Harber and Mncube (2011), education plays a part in sustainable national development through economic, social, and political development. Aluede et al. (2003) suggested that nations worldwide should periodically review their educational systems to achieve the highest and most desired level of national development. This should be done because policymakers and other government agents have realized that education is a vital instrument that can lead to their societies' advancement (Aluede et al., 2003; Eregha et al., 2018). Osmanković et al. (2011) suggested that economic development theories have supported the need for investment in human capital, in this case education, which is seen as a critical factor of the national development process. Aluede et al. further pointed out the role of education in development by emphasizing that "education helps in expansion of men's own consciousness, and therefore of his power over himself, his environment and his society" (p. 18). Furthermore, the relationship between education and development has the ability to address and conquer some of Nigeria's most pressing problems, such as poverty, low productivity levels, poor living conditions, and high unemployment levels.

However, Duze (2011) also pointed out that one of the problems with education in Nigeria is that education is too politicized rather than meeting the educational sector's needs. Instead, the government in power politicizes the sector to meet their personal needs. This phenomenon has affected the success of Nigeria's educational system; in turn, illiteracy rates have increased, and as noted by Aluede et al. (2003), illiteracy makes it difficult for people to learn new skills that are required for development. According to Wolf (2003), economies could survive with a significant number of professional, highly skilled, and literate citizens. However, Nigeria's current educational system has left many of its citizens lacking the ability to provide the basic necessities for themselves and their families due to illiteracy and a lack of professional skills (Aluede et al., 2003).

To combat these issues and increase economic growth and development, governmental and non-governmental agencies must invest in education, particularly to help the less privileged who typically reside in rural areas, which happen to be a large part of Nigeria's population (Aluede et al., 2003). Odior (2011) and Adesoye (2010) examined the impact of increased government spending on education, finding that reallocating resources to Nigeria's education sector plays a significant role in economic growth. Doing so should be highly prioritized because it can lead to substantial long-term growth of Nigeria's economy. Investment in education is seen as a pro-growth policy that promotes economic growth. The movement of resources from "unproductive ventures" over to education has the power to improve the quality of education and reduce poverty levels (Eregha et al., 2018, p. 64). According to Yogish (2006), the return on investment in education is a skilled workforce that caters to the needs of economic development and improves the quality of society as a whole. Osmanković et al. (2011) also suggested that investing in education directly affects national income growth through increased knowledge,

skills, and the workforce's overall capacity. Eregha et al. (2018) pointed out that many economists believe investing in education/human capital helps increase the nation's output and labor productivity. Through further research, Babatunde and Adefabi (2005) also established that a well-developed labor force positively and significantly affects economic growth. As stated previously, economists and policymakers have observed the connection among education, growth, and development, recognizing education as an engine for both economic growth and development (Aluede et al., 2003; Eregha et al., 2018).

Poverty

Lee (2020) pointed out that poverty conditions in a country cannot change or improve unless the country can provide their population with the necessary resources to lift themselves out of poverty through economic development. It is important to note that poverty means a lack of basic resources needed for survival and a lack of civic, social, and cultural activities, as well as the hindrance of opportunities for political employment and social mobility (Chirtoc & Medar, 2019). However, Ajayi (2007) affirmed that Nigeria's capital investment that should alleviate poverty is meager, hindering Nigeria's growth and development. Nwosa (2019) pointed to the widening income inequality, elevated poverty level, and decline in economic development as a means to better understand the relationship between poverty and economic growth in Nigeria. Researchers like Alacevich (2017) have acknowledged that less-developed countries, like Nigeria, need a plan that will help steer the country out of vicious cycles of poverty and create a path to sustainable growth.

According to Datzberger (2018), an extensive review of multiple development frameworks and education plans and policies revealed that strategies to reduce poverty through

education requires a robust assimilation-based development plan that focuses on three areas of intervention:

1. Increasing access to education and improved retention.
2. Improving the quality of education.
3. Generating employment through education.

An assimilative approach focuses on creating equal opportunities and access through education. Based on this approach, it is suggested that education will lead to better employment opportunities, which will help to alleviate poverty (Datzberger, 2018). However, Datzberger (2018) did point out that when it comes to education, assimilative models are decidedly dependent on transformative approaches, which highlights the need for transformative policies that are designed for the educational sector and other sectors. It is vital to note that alleviating poverty through education is not only achieved through equal access, quality, and opportunity in education, which is supported by assimilative approaches; instead, it is primarily achieved through the transformation of society's political, social, and economic structures.

Rural Areas

Aluede et al. (2003) affirmed that due to Nigerian citizens' low educational development and the country's economy, Nigeria's physical development is slow and unbalanced. This slowness and imbalance is mainly seen in rural areas of Nigeria. Garza and Eller (1998) identified the challenges rural areas face when attaining a sustainable economy: geography, infrastructure, inadequate social services, poor education, and continuous exploitation. These challenges have left rural areas without much-needed human and civic capital to help build and sustain economic growth and development. Kačar et al. (2016) pointed out that rural areas have no capacity for endogenous growth because rural areas are often oppressed and inactive.

Nevertheless, it is also suggested that the rural regions' economic development relies on a combination of tangible/material and non-material stationary resources, like education.

According to Zhang (2018), the lack of quality education in rural areas of Nigeria has led to a slow increase in rural income, leading to poor economic growth and development. This trend has caused mass movement from rural areas to more urban areas (Aluede, 2003). To combat this problem, Zhang (2018) suggested that more funding should be invested in rural education. The educational resources/funds would go toward helping locals in rural communities gain skills and knowledge through education, which would eventually be used for economic development.

Goulet (1975) asserted that development occurs through the process of change, and in order to make said changes, members of society need to have access to decision-making. Nevertheless, many Nigerians do not have access to decision-making or even know that it is their right due to a lack of education. This lack of knowledge, which can be gained through education, has led to persistent poverty and illiteracy, negatively affecting Nigeria's growth and development, particularly in rural areas. According to Eregha et al. (2018), education is the engine for growth and development. If Nigeria wants to see the growth and development it so desperately needs, education has to be at the forefront of its national agenda.

Chapter 2 Summary

Based on previous research, it is clear that Nigeria's educational system is plagued with many challenges, such as poverty, out-of-school children, and illiteracy. Furthermore, previous literature has also identified the challenges and gaps in delivering quality and accessible basic education to children in rural areas like Oke Ogun, Oyo State, such as lack of classroom infrastructure, inadequate instructional material, teacher to student ratios, lack of qualified teachers, lack of funding, physical proximity of schools, poor road conditions, and inhospitable

geographical conditions. However, further research is needed to help the Nigerian government and their educational development partners identify where they should focus on in order to see a drastic improvement in educational delivery in Oke Ogun, and exactly how they should go about implementing suggested changes. Through the identification of these challenges and the implementation of solutions, the government can improve and build a stronger educational system that can help to tackle the issues of poverty and economic growth in Oke Ogun. Moving forward, educational challenges and solutions will be identified and achieved through examining responses from one-on-one interviews from research participants, educational professionals in Oke Ogun. Using open-ended questions, common themes regarding the educational challenges faced in Oke Ogun, and the need for radical improvement will be identified.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter reiterates the research questions, examines the nature of the study, and explains the phenomenological research method used for this study. Chapter 3 also describes the research design and continues on to explain the protection of human subjects and Pepperdine's IRB approval process. Additionally, this chapter details the data collection process, as well as the interview techniques and protocol. Last, this chapter looks at the researcher's personal biases, concluding an analysis of the data collection process.

Restatement of Research Questions

The research questions were designed and structured to be broad, open-ended questions intended to explore the concept of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study aims to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible basic education?
- RQ2: In what strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education?
- RQ3: How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?
- RQ4: What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?

The interview questions that will be utilized when conducting interviews were developed based on these four research questions.

Nature of the Study

This study was designed as a descriptive qualitative study. Qualitative research starts “with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2013, p. 37). Qualitative research is utilized to help create an understanding of the context or settings in which research participants address a problem or issue based on their personal experiences, from various perspectives (Bolaji et al., 2017; Golafshani, 2003). The broad definition of qualitative research is “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 17). However, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) offered the following detailed definition of qualitative research:

[Qualitative research is] a situation activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

By using a naturalistic approach, qualitative research pursues an understanding of particular phenomena through content-specific settings; in these real-world settings, researchers

cease their attempt to manipulate the phenomenon or idea (Golafshani, 2003; Patton, 2002).

When conducting qualitative research, researchers can use various qualitative approaches. Pope and Mays (2006) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) identified five approaches: ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, narrative, and phenomenology. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), when researchers study individuals they utilize a narrative or phenomenological approach. When researchers explore processes, activities, and events, they use case studies or grounded theory. Lastly, when researchers are studying culture-sharing behaviors of individuals or groups, they utilize ethnography.

For this study, a qualitative phenomenological research approach was utilized. This approach helps a researcher to gain a detailed description and understanding of lived human experiences around a central phenomenon. This particular approach involves researchers conducting interviews to collect data. During the interviews, participants are asked to describe and explain their lived experiences by sharing their thoughts, feelings, images, sensations, and memories related to the central phenomenon (Charles & Chinaza, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this particular study, data were collected by interviewing educational professionals in Oke Ogun regarding the central phenomenon of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun through the use of open-ended questions.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Qualitative Research

Dudwick et al. (2006) suggested that the use of qualitative methods is vital when it comes to examining complicated issues that deal with causality, process, and context. Although a qualitative method was deemed ideal for this study, it is important to look at both the strengths and weaknesses of a qualitative study. According to Choy (2014) the strengths of a qualitative method are as follows:

1. The first strength is that qualitative research allows researchers to explore views of homogeneous as well as diverse groups of people who help the researcher to unpack different perspectives within a community.
2. The second strength of qualitative research is its ability to probe for understanding values, beliefs, and assumptions. It allows researchers to gain a full understanding of what drives the behaviors of a community or organization.
3. The third strength of qualitative research is that the nature of its inquiry is broad and open-ended, enabling participants to raise and discuss issues that matter most to them (Choy, 2014).

According to Choy (2014) the weaknesses of a qualitative method are as follows:

1. The first weakness of qualitative research is that it is time consuming, particularly during the interviewing and coding processes.
2. The second weakness of qualitative research is that important issues can be overlooked when it comes to interpreting the data, and personal knowledge and experiences can influence the observations and conclusions.
3. The third weakness of qualitative research is that due to its open-ended nature, the participants tend to have more control over the content of the data that is collected.
4. The fourth weakness of qualitative research is that the results from the data collected are not objectively verifiable (Choy, 2014).

Methodology

The methodology for this research study was qualitative. Many researchers have created a list of basic characteristics of qualitative research (e.g., Creswell, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hatch, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2014). The first characteristic is a natural setting. It is

suggested that qualitative researchers collect their data at the site where participants experience the phenomenon of the study; for this study, the sites were schools in Oke Ogun. The second characteristic is that the researcher is a key instrument in collecting data; data may be collected through exploring documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants. However, it was ultimately up to the researcher to gather and interpret the data; for this study, the researcher interviewed participants and interpreted the data collected from the interviews. The third characteristic is inductive and deductive data analysis. When working inductively, qualitative researchers build patterns, categories, and themes by organizing the data collected into abstract units of information until a clear set of themes is identified. When it comes to working deductively, the researcher examines the themes to determine whether more evidence can support the themes or whether more information is needed.

The fourth characteristic is for qualitative researchers to focus on participants' meanings. Researchers must focus on understanding the meaning behind what participants say during the interview process. The fifth characteristic is that qualitative research is emergent by design, meaning that the initial research process has the potential to change or shift, which can cause the participants studied and sites visited to be modified. This shift shows that the researchers are diving deeper into the phenomenon being studied. The sixth characteristic is reflexivity. Qualitative research requires researchers to reflect on their role in the study, as well as their personal background, culture, and experiences because they hold the potential to shape a researcher's interpretations of the themes and meanings they attribute to the data. It is essential to understand how the researcher's background can shape the direction of the study. The last characteristic of qualitative research is to create a holistic account of the phenomenon being

studied by reporting multiple perspectives, identifying factors involved in the situation, and depicting the larger picture that emerges from the data.

As mentioned previously, this study utilizes a phenomenological research design. Phenomenology focuses on a detailed description of a person's life experiences around a central phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the central phenomenon was the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. The researcher enabled the participants to each provide an account of their experiences within the educational system in Oke Ogun through the use of open-ended questions, which is the most common form of collecting data in phenomenological research. The researcher examined the data collected and identified the themes that emerged from the interviews. This process allowed the researcher to identify common themes regarding the successes and challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun in order to develop best practices for improvement. After identifying the themes, the researcher then established a narrative that summarized the themes from the experiences the participants described (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Golafshani, 2003).

Structured Process of Phenomenology

Phenomenological research focuses on the detailed descriptions and experiences individuals offer regarding a central phenomenon in their everyday lives (Creswell, 2013; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). The detailed descriptions should explain *how* the individual experienced the phenomenon being studied rather than a researcher's preconceived perception of the phenomenon (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). This is where the phenomenological reduction process becomes vitally important because it helps the researcher to keep an open mind and listen to the individual's experiences of the phenomenon in a receptive manner (Moustakas, 1994). The reduction process is achieved through epoche, also known as bracketing, which occurs when

researchers put aside all their previous knowledge, experiences, and beliefs about the phenomenon. The imaginative variation follows the reduction and bracketing processes. It helps the researcher identify the structural themes collected from the descriptions given during interviews; this process allows the researcher to understand the essence of the individuals' experience. Lastly, the researcher developed best practices based on the textual and structural descriptions of the phenomenon collected from interviews with individuals (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015).

Appropriateness of Phenomenology Methodology

It was determined that a phenomenological approach was best for this study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the first step of phenomenological research is to determine whether a phenomenological approach is best for the study. The type of study that is best suited for phenomenological research is one that requires the researcher to understand several participants' common or shared experiences regarding a particular phenomenon. It is vital to understand their shared experiences in order to develop and suggest best practices. In this study, the researcher sought to understand educational professionals' experiences in Oke Ogun and identify strategies, challenges, and best practices for delivering quality and accessible basic education. The researcher determined that the best way to extract the experiences of educational professionals in Oke Ogun who have experienced the study's phenomenon was through interviews. According to Eddles-Hirsch (2015), the interview transcripts form the basis of the data. The data from the interviews were analyzed to identify common themes, which were then utilized to create best practice strategies for basic education delivery in Oke Ogun.

Weaknesses of Phenomenology

Creswell and Poth (2018) identified a few challenges associated with a phenomenological study. The first challenge is that phenomenology requires some understanding of broader philosophical assumptions, which the researcher must be able to identify in their study. The second challenge is that it can be difficult for the researcher to find participants who have experienced the phenomenon being studied. This is why the participants in the study must be chosen carefully. The third challenge is that bracketing personal experiences with the phenomenon can be difficult for the researcher. This is due to the fact that when interpreting the data, there is always a chance that the researcher will incorporate their own personal assumptions. It is vital that the researcher understand these challenges in order to work through them.

Research Design

To answer the research questions for this research study, the researcher utilized a qualitative phenomenological approach (Creswell, 2013). Thus, selection criteria were established by considering the analysis unit, population, sample size, and sampling technique to ensure that sufficient qualitative data was collected from research participants.

Analysis Unit

The purpose of this study was to identify best practices to improve the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria. This study's unit of analysis was educational professionals, such as principals and teachers, in Oke Ogun, Oyo State. They have experience working within Nigeria's UBE program, particularly within the basic education system, which encompasses pre-primary, primary, and secondary school, for a minimum of 1 entire school year.

Population

Mays and Pope (2000) suggested that the study population should have the characteristics or have lived in situations relevant to the research study when conducting qualitative research. The population for this study required educational professionals such as principals and teachers in Oke Ogun who have experience working within Nigeria's UBE program, particularly within the basic education system. The educational professionals worked in public schools in the most notable towns in Oke Ogun. Therefore, the populations chosen for this study were selected based on their ability to offer a deep-seated understanding based on their first-hand experience and knowledge of the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Sample Size

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), the sample size of a study depends on the qualitative design being used. They suggest that for a phenomenological study, the sample size should range from three to 10, whereas Creswell and Poth (2018) suggested five to 25 participants. Typically phenomenological studies do not have a large sample size because the data collection process takes significant time due to the fact that it requires an in-depth study of each participant's experience (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). Some researchers have suggested that data collection should continue until saturation, also known as the point when no new information or themes are observed (Guest et al., 2006). For this study, a purposive sample of 20 to 25 participants was selected from the identified population. Purposive sampling is often associated with qualitative research. It focuses on ensuring that the study participants meet the researcher's proper criteria, such as having knowledge of and experience with the phenomenon (Boz & Gorgulu, 2020).

Although the purposive sample was 20–25 participants, the goal was to interview at least 15 participants. Based on previously cited literature and the aforementioned data, the study's sample size of 15 participants was large enough to collect sufficient data and ensure saturation during the coding process. The researcher chose 20–25 participants to ensure a maximum pool of availability within the given research time frame. The sample size for the study was reviewed by peers and approved by the dissertation committee.

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling is a form of sampling frequently used by qualitative researchers (Patten, 2006). According to Creswell (2009), purposive sampling occurs when the researcher selects the study's participants based on the information they can provide about the phenomenon; the researcher believes that the individuals selected will give the best information regarding the phenomenon (Patten, 2006). Therefore, potential participants for this study were selected based on their capability to share their experiences relative to the research study.

Participant Selection

Creswell and Poth (2018) affirmed that participants chosen in a qualitative phenomenon study must have experienced the phenomenon being researched. The following steps were taken to finalize the list of educational professionals who have experience with the delivery of basic education in Oke Ogun. The first step was to create a master list or sampling frame. Second, the sampling frame was reviewed to identify all eligible participants using the criteria for inclusion and exclusion. Lastly, the maximum criteria for inclusion were applied to generate a sampling frame of 20–25 participants to ultimately interview 15 participants.

Sampling Frame

A sampling frame, also known as a master list of potential participants (Patten, 2006), was generated using the TRCN website. The mission of the TRCN is to:

assure excellence and professionalism among teachers at all levels of the nation's education system, using effective registration, licensing, accreditation, monitoring and supervision of teacher education programmes, promoting continuing professional development and maintenance of discipline as paradigms for the overall renaissance of the teaching profession in Nigeria. (Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, n.d., para. 1)

All Nigerian educators are required to register with the TRCN to teach in Nigeria; as a result, the TRNC has an extensive database of teachers in Nigeria.

First, from the TRNC website homepage, the drop-down menu titled *About Us* was accessed, and from the menu the *TRCN State Offices* option was selected. This process yielded a list of all the current TRCN State Coordinators. The list includes coordinators' names, office addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers for each state. Second, the Oyo State coordinator's contact information was located on the list, and the coordinator was contacted. Through the coordinator, a list of active teachers within the Oke Ogun area was generated. The list was later narrowed down with the use of the established criteria of inclusion and exclusion. Lastly, the sampling frame was narrowed down to 20–25 potential participants, with the goal of interviewing 15 participants who have experience with the research phenomenon.

Criteria for Inclusion. The following were the criteria for inclusion in this research study:

1. The participant has taught either pre-primary, primary, or secondary public school in Oke Ogun, Oyo State.
2. The participant has taught for at least 1 full academic school year in Oke Ogun, Oyo State.

Criteria for Exclusion. Once the criteria for inclusion were established, there was a need to further reduce the sample size by establishing the criteria for exclusion. The following were the criteria for exclusion in this research study:

1. The participant is unavailable to meet for in-person interviews between January to February 2021.
2. The participant is resistant to having the interview audio-recorded.
3. The participant does not speak English.

Criteria for Maximum Variation. Upon selecting the criteria for inclusion and exclusion, maximum variation was applied to a purposive sampling approach to narrow down the list of participants to 20 to 25. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), maximum variation helps the researcher document diverse variations of individuals based on specific characteristics. By maximizing the study participants' diversity, the researcher enhances the validity of the study (Bringle et al., 2011). The participants for this study were chosen in order to provide the researcher with a deep reflection of their experiences teaching basic education in Oke Ogun. They were also selected particularly because:

1. They were from various towns within Oke Ogun.
2. They had various years of teaching experience. Preference was given to educators who have taught more than 1 full academic school year.
3. They were of various genders.

Protection of Human Subjects

When conducting qualitative research, before the researcher can engage potential participants, they must seek college or university approval from the institutional review board (IRB) to ensure participants' safety (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), to ensure the safety of participants, three ethical principles are associated with ethical qualitative research that a researcher must bear in mind: "respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice" (p. 95). The first principle is respect for persons, which focuses on the researcher respecting each participant's privacy and clearly communicating the consent process. The second principle concerns welfare, which focuses on researchers providing protection for their participants and providing evidence that no harm will come to them. The last principle is justice, which focuses on the researcher treating each participant fairly and equitably.

The researcher completed the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Course (Appendix A), which is a part of the IRB application and a requirement set by Pepperdine University in order for the researcher to work with human subjects. For the researcher to contact participants for interviews and data collection, approval was secured from the Pepperdine IRB committee (Appendix B). The application included a copy of an Informed Consent for the Participation in Research Studies form (Appendix C), the Recruitment Script (Appendix D), and a copy of the Interview Protocol (Appendix E). The application provided to IRB indicated that the research study met their guidelines and requirements for conducting ethical research.

Potential participants for the study were contacted via email, and the IRB-approved recruitment script was utilized to confirm their participation in the study as professional educators in Oke Ogun. Once participants agreed to participate in the study, a follow-up email

was sent to thank them for their interest in participating in the study and to set a time to meet. Preceding the interview, participants were sent copies of the Informed Consent for Participation in Research Studies and were required to sign the agreement in order to participate in the study. The consent form informed participants that the information collected in the interviews would be utilized for research purposes. The researcher also ensured that the participants received a copy of the interview protocol.

Each participant was given an alias in order to guarantee confidentiality. They were referred to as Participant 1, 2, 3, etc., in documentations and narratives; only the researcher knows the participants' true identities. Participants were assured that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw consent at any time during the interview with no consequences, as well as the option to refuse to answer certain questions. Participants were informed of the minimal risk of participating in the study but that it could have caused triggering of emotions or unpleasant thoughts regarding the research subject matter. Finally, participants were informed that even though participating in the study would not benefit them personally, the findings from the interviews would help to inform practitioners, scholars, and instructors on best practices to improve the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. All the data collected from the interviews were stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office, to which only the researcher had access.

Data Collection

The researcher made interview appointments with potential participants via phone or email, utilizing an IRB-approved recruitment script. In the script, the purpose of the study was explained, confirming the participant's interest in participating in the research study. Once a potential participant agreed to participate in the research study and provided their preferred time

for the interview, a follow-up email was sent to confirm the date and time the interview would take place; the Consent for Participation Form was also attached to this email. The forms were sent back to the researcher via email, after which the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews in-person and recorded each interview. The interviews lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and were later transcribed using professional transcription software. The transcripts were edited to replace any references to the participants and their institutions with aliases. In the data collection Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, participants were referred to as Participant 1, 2, 3, etc. To reduce the risk of breach of confidentiality, only the researcher knows each participant's identity. All the data collected were stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office and were destroyed at the completion of the research study. All audio recordings were kept on a USB flash drive and locked in a cabinet alongside the data documents; the recordings will be destroyed after 3 years.

Interview Techniques

The researcher collected data by interviewing participants who have experience teaching basic education in Oke Ogun. The researcher used an established interview protocol to obtain responses that would assist in gathering research data. In qualitative research, the interview process gives participants the opportunity to describe their experience (McCracken, 1988). The study used semi-structured interviews and the researcher utilized open-ended questions, which allowed the participants to share their experiences freely (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In preparation for the interviews, the researcher secured one quality audio recorder, an iPad, three pens, and a notebook. All interviews were conducted face-to-face in a neutral and comfortable environment for both the researcher and participants. Prior to the start of the interview, each participant was asked if they had taken the time to read and understood the

consent form and if they consented to have the interview audio recorded. The researcher explained that the interview and questions were semi-structured and that in order to gain clarity, follow-up questions might be asked. The interview began with an icebreaker, which helped the researcher establish rapport with the participants. Once rapport was established, the participants were then asked 10 different interview questions that related to the four research questions. Through active listening and limiting responses to comments to a few words, such as “thank you” or “interesting,” the researcher was able to encourage continued response from the participants and confirm that their responses were understood. The researcher asked follow-up questions if the initial response was not clearly understood and needed clarification. The researcher did not guide participants’ responses; instead, the researcher noted responses and observations such as hesitations and other evident behaviors. Once the interview concluded, the researcher thanked the participant for taking the time to participate in the study.

Interview Protocol

Relationship Between Research and Interview Questions

When conducting qualitative data collection, each of the interview questions should correspond with one of the research questions. Interview questions are constructed to extract the participants’ experiences with the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018). By utilizing open-ended interview questions, the participants have the opportunity to expand on their personal experiences with delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. For example, the literature review acknowledged that previous recommendations to improve education in rural areas of Nigeria have been made. However, the educational system is still battling challenges that have hindered its growth. As a result, the researcher constructed interview questions to explore participants’ knowledge and experiences in this area. Each

interview question (IQ) allows the participants to expand their knowledge and experiences regarding the challenges, strategies, and proposed recommendations for the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Table 7 shows the relationship between the research questions and the IQs.

Table 7

Research and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible basic education?	IQ1: What challenges have you faced implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun? IQ2: Why do you think there are difficulties implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun? IQ3: Why do you think minimal improvements have been made even though plenty of recommendations have been made to improve the UBE systems in rural areas?
RQ2: In what strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education?	IQ4: What have you or other educators done to improve the delivery of quality and accessibility basic education in Oke Ogun? IQ5: Which educational strategies do you believe work best to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun? IQ6: What resources do educators in Oke Ogun need to implement these strategies?
RQ3: How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?	IQ7: How do you gauge whether you have successfully delivered quality basic education to your students? IQ8: What changes or improvements have you personally seen or experienced within education in Oke Ogun?
RQ4: What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?	IQ9: Based on your experience teaching in Oke Ogun, what advice would you give to other educators that want to teach in Oke Ogun? IQ10: What is the most valuable lesson you have learned working as an educator in Oke Ogun?

Note. The table identifies four research questions and corresponding interview questions as developed by the researcher.

Validity of the Study

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative validity is considered one of the strengths of qualitative research, focusing on whether the research findings are accurate, trustworthy, authentic, and credible. Golafshani (2003) affirmed that when it comes to qualitative research, validity provides a qualifying “check and measure” (p. 602). For this study, a three-step validation process was utilized to establish the research questions’ accuracy as they relate to the overall research study and the accuracy of the interview questions as they relate to the four research questions (Creswell, 2013). The three steps were prima-facie and content validity, peer-review validity, and expert review validity. These three steps helped the researcher to establish the validity of the research.

Prima-Facie and Content Validity. The first step of validation for this study was prima-facie and content validity. According to Thomas (2013), prima-facie refers to the initial questions drafted by a researcher, which can change and become more refined as the researcher’s study progresses. In this case, there was a chance of the researcher’s initial research questions being changed or refined during the peer and expert reviews. As a result, the initial research questions shown in Table 7 are prima-facie, which means “on its first appearance” or “at first sight” (Thomas, 2013, p. 20). Once again this meaning acknowledges the fact that the researcher knows that the questions are tentative and will possibly change.

Based on the four established research questions and the literature review information, the researcher drafted 10 related interview questions, as shown previously in Table 7. The validation process that followed the establishment of the questions was used to ensure that each IQ was valid and aligned with the research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Each research question was developed based on the literature review related to the delivery of quality and

accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Each IQ was established to relate to the research questions and was validated for clarity and ease of use. Through this step, prima-facie validity was established within the interview protocol.

Peer-Review Validity. The second step of the process required the designation of a review panel that consisted of three doctoral students within the Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership and Doctor of Education in Learning Technologies programs at Pepperdine University. The panel of hand-selected doctoral students was also conducting doctoral research at Pepperdine University, utilized qualitative research as their chosen research method, and have completed both required quantitative and qualitative research methods courses.

Each of the selected peer reviewers was given the opportunity to view the interview questions and was asked to:

1. Comment on if they believed the IQ directly related to the research question.
2. Comment on the relevance of the interview questions in relation to the research questions.
3. Suggest any revisions to the interview questions.
4. Suggest additional recommendations that relate to the interview questions.

Based on the feedback received from the peer-reviewed validity process, adjustments were made to the prima-facie interview questions. The changes are delineated in Table 8.

Table 8*Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions (Revised)*

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible basic education?	IQ1: What challenges have you faced implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun? IQ2: What factors have contributed to the challenges you have faced implementing the UBE system? IQ3: Why do you think minimal improvements have been made even though plenty of recommendations have been made to improve the UBE systems in rural areas?
RQ2: In what strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education?	IQ4: What have you or other educators done to improve the delivery of quality and accessibility basic education in Oke Ogun? IQ5: Which educational strategies do you believe work best to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun? IQ6: What resources do educators in Oke Ogun need to implement these strategies?
RQ3: How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?	IQ7: How do you gauge whether you have successfully delivered quality basic education to your students? IQ8: What changes or improvements have you personally seen or experienced within education in Oke Ogun?
RQ4: What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?	IQ9: Based on your experience teaching in Oke Ogun, what advice would you give to other educators that want to teach in Oke Ogun? IQ10: What is the most valuable lesson or professional experience you have gained working as an educator in Oke Ogun?

Note. The table identifies four research questions and corresponding interview questions with revisions based on feedback from peer-reviewers. Subsequent changes were made to the order and phrasing of questions within the interview protocol.

Expert Review Validity. Upon the changes made following the peer review validity, the updated questions were submitted for expert review. The interview questions were given to a dissertation review committee who served as the expert review panel. The panel consisted of

three Pepperdine University faculty members: Dr. Farzin Majidi, Dr. Gabriella Miramontes, and Dr. Maria Brahme. They reviewed and approved or suggested modifications of the peer-reviewed interview questions and determined if the peer-reviewed recommendations should be utilized and implemented within the interview protocol. If the peer review feedback conflicted with the expert review feedback, the faculty dissertation chair made the final recommendation of any changes needed to be made to the interview questions and protocol. The final outcome of the expert reviewed research questions can be found in Table 9.

Reliability of the Study

Reliability refers to the stability or consistency of the instrument used to collect data during the study and the data analysis process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). One of the most important aspects of the reliability process is the consistency of the instrument used to collect data. In this case, the data was collected through interviews and, in order to ensure consistency, a pilot test was conducted. The pilot test consisted of the researcher conducting a mock interview with a person who was vaguely familiar with the research topic. Through the pilot test, the researcher was able to identify whether the interview questions were understandable and appropriate for the study. The overall data collection instrument was validated and found to be reliable based on the results from the pilot testing. However, changes were made to the interview questions based on the recommendations given during the peer and expert reviews.

Table 9*Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions (Second Revision)*

Research Questions	Corresponding Interview Questions
RQ1: What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible basic education?	IQ1: What is your single largest challenge you have faced in implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun? IQ2: What other challenges have you faced implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun? IQ3: What factors have contributed to the challenges you have faced implementing the UBE system?
RQ2: In what strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education?	IQ4: What have you or other educators done to improve the delivery of quality and accessibility basic education in Oke Ogun? IQ5: Which educational strategies do you believe work best to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun? IQ6: What resources do educators in Oke Ogun need to implement these strategies?
RQ3: How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?	IQ7: How do you gauge whether you have successfully delivered quality basic education to your students? IQ8: What changes or improvements have you personally seen or experienced within education in Oke Ogun?
RQ4: What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?	IQ9: Based on your experience teaching in Oke Ogun, what advice would you give to other educators that want to teach in Oke Ogun? IQ10: What is the most valuable lesson or professional experience you have gained working as an educator in Oke Ogun?

Note. The table identifies four research questions and corresponding interview questions with revisions based on feedback from the expert reviewers (committee). Subsequent changes were made to the order and phrasing of questions within the interview protocol.

Statement of Personal Bias

This study focuses on the phenomenon of quality and accessible basic education in the rural area of Oke Ogun. The researcher's biases should be stated during the research study, but

they must be controlled in order to avoid interfering with the data collection process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Creswell and Poth (2018) also affirmed that it is vital that the researcher details their experiences with the phenomenon and that the researcher must also remain aware of how these experiences can shape and affect the study findings. For this particular research study, it is essential to note that the researcher does possess previous knowledge regarding education in Nigeria, which was gained through multiple trips to Nigeria where the researcher witnessed firsthand the conditions of schools and children, as well as from speaking to governmental workers about Nigeria's educational system. During the interview, the researcher refrained from mentioning personal experiences that could be seen as bias; this was done to avoid influencing the participants' recollection of their own experiences. The researcher aimed to collect data that would inform the study and be free of personal biases. To do this, the researcher approached the study with no preconceived notions regarding the phenomenon being studied but rather relied on the data collected to help form and shape ideas.

Bracketing and Epoche

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), bracketing or epoche is the first step of "phenomenological reduction" (p. 406), which is the process of the researcher setting aside any preconceived notions during the data analysis process. It is important that the researcher set aside their experiences to gain a fresh and new perspective from the participants about the phenomenon being studied (Moustakas, 1994). Giorgi (2009) argued that bracketing is not about the researcher forgetting their past experiences, but rather it is about not engaging in their past experiences when conducting their research. Ideally, bracketing is achieved through noting major themes or ideas and reflective journaling during the interview process to help identify biases (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

For this reason, prior to participant interviews, the researcher identified all personal preconceived notions and biases about the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education in the rural area of Oke Ogun in a reflexive journal. Furthermore, the researcher took notes during each interview, reflecting on personal thoughts and reporting on observations. Doing this allowed the researcher to set aside personal assumptions regarding the phenomenon and focus only on research participants' information.

Data Analysis

According to Creswell and Poth (2018), analyzing qualitative data consists of three steps. The first step is organizing the data to be analyzed; in this case it was transcribed from audio to text to analyze the data. The second step is to categorize the data into themes by coding and condensing the codes, which involves combining textual, visual, or audio data into smaller categories of information. The final step is to present the analyzed data using figures, tables, or a discussion.

The researcher had the audio data collected professionally transcribed via a transcription service. The audio recordings sent through the transcription service were labeled as Participant 1, 2, 3, etc. in order to provide continued identity protection for all participants. Once the transcriptions were completed, the researcher proofread each one to ensure accuracy. Subsequently, once again, the researcher read the transcripts, this time the applying memo writing and annotating each transcript by making notes of identified themes and concepts that informed possible strategies, practices, challenges, and recommendations of the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in the rural area of Oke Ogun (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The themes and concepts that were identified were coded using keywords that were eventually organized into categories.

Upon completing the coding, the researcher created tables organized by research questions that helped cluster related concepts. According to the open coding process, in order to form broader thematic categories, the identified themes were grouped based on their relation to each other (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The categories that were created were color-coded in the tables. Within the tables, the themes identified by the researcher were utilized as column headings, and within each column, some keywords/phrases were used to arrive at the theme. The researcher also identified significant and relevant quotes that related to the selected themes. To ensure the continuity of each participant's confidentiality, the participants remained identifiable by using assigned numbers, as mentioned previously. Through interrater reliability, the identified themes were developed further and supported by charts and excerpts from participants' interviews. Chapter 4 will discuss and describe the major identified themes and provide quotes from participants to support these themes.

Interrater Reliability and Validity

Establishing validity and reliability in qualitative research is vital for designing a credible, quality research study and analyzing its results (Golafshani, 2003). Validating the coding process enhances a qualitative study. Furthermore, the data's interrater reliability offered the researcher an informative method for checking the coding (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The following four-step process was used to ensure the validity and reliability of the data analysis results.

1. **Baseline Themes.** The first three initial interviews conducted by the researcher were transcribed and coded. Through the coding process, major themes and categories were identified. The information gathered from the interviews were condensed into notable statements or quotes, which were eventually combined into themes.

2. Interrater Review. Three peers who were doctoral students and were also in the process of completing their dissertation were recruited to validate the reliability of the data analysis. These peers were equipped with knowledge regarding qualitative research and had practice with coding and categorizing themes. The themes collected from the interviews during the first step of this process were given to the three peers. They reviewed the material given to them and eventually met with the researcher to confirm whether they agreed or disagreed with how the data was coded. If consensus was not reached during this period, further guidance and review were enlisted from the dissertation committee.
3. Baseline Themes. The feedback provided during step two allowed the researcher to move forward with analyzing the data collected in the 12 remaining interview transcripts. Upon completing the remaining 12 transcripts, the coding output was once again given to the three peers who initially reviewed the first three transcripts.
4. Interrater Review. After the peer review, the peers and researcher collaborated and developed the different categories for the interviews' data and researched a consensus on the themes and categories.
5. No Consensus. If consensus was not reached during this period, further guidance and review were enlisted from the dissertation committee.

Chapter 3 Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the phenomenon of the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in the rural area of Oke Ogun. This chapter restated the study's research questions while also detailing the qualitative research design. It further explained the researcher's decision to utilize a phenomenological design for this study. This chapter also

detailed the research design, analysis unit, population sample size, and purposive sampling, as well as the criteria for inclusion and exclusion. All possible ethical issues were addressed, as was the process to ensure all human subjects' safety and protection through utilizing IRB. The researcher also described the prima-facie, content, and the peer-reviewed validity of the data collection instrument. Lastly, all the data analysis steps and the interrater reliability process were explained.

Chapter 4: Findings

Nigeria's UBE system is experiencing myriad challenges that negatively affect its citizens' access to quality and accessible basic education. However, Nigerians living in rural areas, such as Oke Ogun, face these challenges on a larger scale. It is vital to identify and understand the challenges that the UBE system faces in Oke Ogun to improve the delivery of basic education. However, gaining this understanding can be difficult due to the lack of research that has been conducted on education in Oke Ogun.

To gain a deeper understanding of the UBE system's challenges in Oke Ogun, this study sought out education professionals who have experience with delivering basic education in Oke Ogun. The study participants were asked to share their personal challenges with delivering quality and accessible basic education and their recommendations on how the UBE system can be improved. To achieve this task, this study focused on answering the following four research questions:

- RQ1: What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible Basic Education?
- RQ2: What strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage in to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education?
- RQ3: How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?

- RQ4: What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?

The following interview questions derived from the research questions were devised to create an opportunity for the researcher to gain a thorough understanding of the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. The open-ended interview questions were formulated in a way that allowed each participant to share his/her personal point of view, insight, and lived experience with the study phenomenon. Each participant's openness to answer questions during the interviews facilitated effective coding and analysis of the data collected. Initially, the researcher identified 10 research questions; however, the researcher settled on eight research questions upon further thought and deliberation. The participants were asked the following questions during the interview:

- IQ1: What challenges have you faced implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun?
- IQ2: What factors have contributed to the challenges you have faced implementing the UBE system?
- IQ3: What have you or other educators done to improve the delivery of quality and accessibility basic education in Oke Ogun?
- IQ4: What resources do educators in Oke Ogun need to implement educational strategies?
- IQ5: How do you gauge whether you have successfully delivered quality basic education to your students?
- IQ6: What changes or improvements have you personally seen or experienced within education in Oke Ogun?

- IQ7: Based on your experience teaching in Oke Ogun, what advice would you give to other educators that want to teach in Oke Ogun?
- IQ8: What is the most valuable lesson or professional experience you have gained working as an educator in Oke Ogun?

All participants answered each IQ; however, if their answers were unclear and the researcher needed further clarification, the participant was asked to expand upon or clarify their answers so that the researcher thoroughly and accurately understood the meaning of their responses. During the interview process, the researcher observed that each participant was comfortable participating in the study and answering all questions, as no question was met with objection.

This chapter highlights the responses from each of the participants and codes them in a way that enabled the researcher to summarize the data and analyze the output, illustrating the experiences each participant shared about the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Furthermore, this chapter addresses the methods utilized to collect the data and the inter-rater review process used to attain consensus on the themes developed during the coding of participants' answers.

Participants

The study focused on interviewing 15 educational professionals in Oke Ogun who openly shared their experience in detail. All of the participants worked in Oke Ogun for a significant portion of their careers. The participants who participated in this study have worked as educational professionals in Oke Ogun for 5–40 years. The titles held by the 15 participants in this study are principal and teacher.

A sample size of 15 participants was identified as the point at which saturation would be reached to capture themes in response to the eight interview questions. Although saturation was met around interview 10, the researcher proceeded with conducting all 15 interviews. However, no new themes were identified in the last five interviews.

Initially, the researcher planned to generate a sampling frame by contacting the Teachers Registration Council Nigeria and coordinating with the Oyo State coordinator. However, after multiple failed attempts to contact the Oyo State coordinator, the researcher had to change tactics. The official process of selecting the study participants involved making contact with Oke Ogun's Local Inspector of Education (LIE), who suggested particular schools and principals the researcher could contact. Upon receiving the schools and principals' contact information, the researcher reached out to school principals to invite them and their teachers to participate in the study. Four principals agreed to participate in the study. Each principal coordinated with their schoolteachers to inform them about the study and ask for permission to give the researcher their emails. The principals sent the researcher email addresses for each of the teachers interested in the study. The researcher contacted each one via email to ask them to participate in the study. The researcher emailed 23 teachers and received 17 replies. When the time came to schedule the interviews, 11 out of 17 teachers confirmed and committed to an interview. With the four principals that initially committed to the interview and the 11 schoolteachers, the researcher confirmed commitment from a total of 15 participants.

Data Collection

The data collection process required all 15 interviews to be recorded, transcribed, and coded to identify multiple themes. This stage of the study required the researcher to schedule interviews with each of the participants. The principals worked with the researcher to create a

schedule for participation during school hours. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews could not be conducted in-person as initially planned; instead, all 15 interviews were conducted via the Zoom video platform.

The study received full IRB approval on February 23, 2021. The first interview was conducted on March 2, 2021, and the final interview was conducted on March 8, 2021. Prior to the interview, each participant was sent an informed consent form to sign and a list of the interview questions. Each interview started with a casual conversation to help break the ice and make the participants feel comfortable. This time was also allotted for the participants to ask any additional questions they may have had. Each pre-interview discussion lasted around 5 minutes. Once the official interview started, each participant was informed that the Zoom recording was being activated. Each interview ranged in length from 15–30 minutes. The interviews ranged in time due to the amount of detail the participants gave in their answers and their stories to support their answers. If the researcher needed clarification on an answer, a follow-up question was asked. Below are the interview dates for each participant.

Table 10

Dates of the Participant Interviews

Participant	Title	Interview Date
P1	Principal	March 2, 2021
P2	Schoolteacher	March 2, 2021
P3	Schoolteacher	March 2, 2021
P4	Schoolteacher	March 2, 2021
P5	Schoolteacher	March 3, 2021
P6	Schoolteacher	March 3, 2021
P7	Principal	March 3, 2021
P8	Principal	March 4, 2021
P9	Principal	March 5, 2021
P10	Schoolteacher	March 5, 2021
P11	Schoolteacher	March 5, 2021
P12	Schoolteacher	March 8, 2021
P13	Schoolteacher	March 8, 2021

Participant	Title	Interview Date
P14	Schoolteacher	March 8, 2021
P15	Schoolteacher	March 8, 2021

Data Analysis

Based on the interviews conducted, a coding scheme was created to analyze the output. This process entailed the researcher to identify any personal biases that could affect the interpretation and analysis of the code, referred to as epoché or bracketing (Moustakas, 1994). The process of epoché ensured that rather than the researcher's personal experiences being considered, only the participants' experiences would be considered throughout the data analysis process. The participants' statements and phrases were transcribed and utilized in the coding process.

Subsequently, the researcher identified purposeful statements and phrases utilized by the participants to explain their experiences, which is also known as the process of clustering and thematizing. Following this process, a set of frequency charts was created to summarize the interview data. The data was documented, color-coded, and utilized in the inter-rater review phase.

Inter-Rater Review Process

After the first three interviews were conducted, the researcher created a spreadsheet to capture the key responses in each interview from each participant. The key responses were analyzed to identify commonalities in statements, which were utilized to develop themes from the group of common key responses. The responses were then color-coded so that common responses could be identified easily and grouped into themes. The themes were shared with two other doctoral candidates for review and feedback. Upon receiving feedback from the peer group, discussions were held among the group to ensure clarity, and changes were eventually

made to the original coding. The identified themes were eventually utilized to create a central and common understanding of the participant's responses to each question. Table 11 shows the four modifications made to the coding process based on the peer inter-rater review.

Table 11

Inter-rater Coding Table Edit Recommendations

Interview Question	Items	Inter-rater Recommendations	Modification Applied
1	Certain categories could be combined	The categories "lack of teachers" and "crowded classrooms" refer to one common theme	Place "crowded classrooms" under the theme of "Lack of teachers."
3	Clarifying what the category "financially" means	What do you mean financially? Consider expanding on the term "financially."	Change to "financial support" to show that you are referring to the fact that they financially support their students and school
4	Certain categories could be combined	The categories of "more teachers" and "in-service training" can refer to one common theme.	Replace both of these themes with "teachers."
7	The use of "living conditions" to explain the environment of Oke Ogun.	They mention more than just the living conditions. Use a term that encompasses more than just living conditions.	Replaced "living conditions" with the term "environment"

Data Display

Each participant was referred to anonymously as Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), and so on, up to Participant 15. This section's frequency charts are utilized to show a visual summary of the data collected from each interview transcript's coding and analysis. The charts are organized in order of each IQ and are grouped under each respective research question. The themes displayed in the charts are results of a commonality of key phrases and comments made by the participants during the interviews. Each IQ produced multiple themes. A description of each theme accompanies each chart. Within each theme description, there are quotes from one or

more of the participants to provide a greater level of context to the coding and the meaning of participants' answers. During this process, the researcher made an effort to remove her personal point of view.

Research Question 1

RQ1 (What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible Basic education?) sought to identify the perceived challenges educational professionals in Oke Ogun face when trying to implement basic education. To uncover the challenges educational professionals are facing regarding the implementation of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun, two specific interview questions were asked:

- IQ1: What challenges have you faced implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun?
- IQ2: What factors have contributed to the challenges you have faced implementing the UBE system?

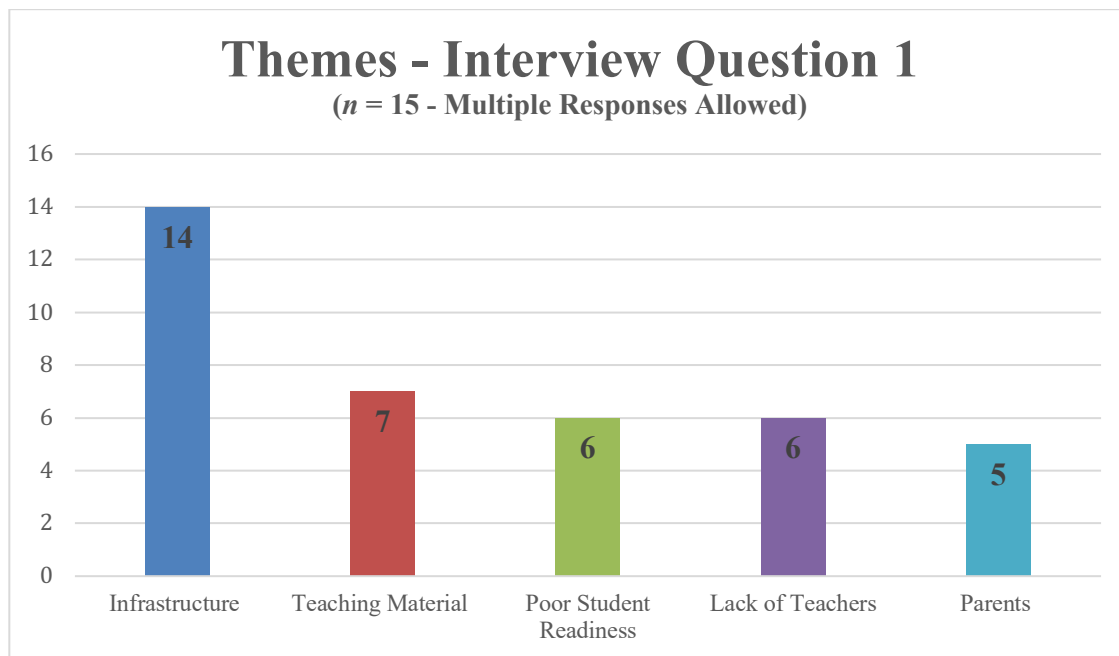
Through these two questions, participants were able to identify the challenges they face regarding implementing quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Interview Question 1

IQ1 asked, What challenges have you faced implementing the UBE system in Oke Ogun? The challenges the participants identified focused primarily on what schools in Oke Ogun are lacking. The responses centered around the fact that a “lack of” the themes identified has made delivering quality and accessible basic education difficult. The responses from the 15 participants produced five main themes that identified the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education: (a) infrastructure, (b) teaching material, (c) poor student readiness, (d) lack of teachers, and (e) parents (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Themes Related to Interview Question 1



Infrastructure. The lack of infrastructure was listed as the biggest challenge basic education in Oke Ogun is facing. School infrastructure includes elements such as classrooms, furniture, toilets, laboratories, computer centers, etc. Fourteen participants cited that a lack of infrastructure has caused many challenges for them and their colleagues. They each pointed to various infrastructural needs and how they are “not adequate and appropriately provided” (P7). Six of the participants mentioned the lack of furniture in the classrooms and how there are often not enough chairs for all students. According to P6, “You will see like three to four students sitting in a chair, managing to learn.” P12 mentioned that many of the students in the school are sitting on the floor. The need for furniture is so desperate that, according to P12, “Yesterday our students were busy doing carpentry work, they are making tables and chairs for themselves.” The participants also pointed to issues outside of the classrooms. For example, P4 pointed to the fact that the students have no toilets. “So, students need to go outside before they can ease

themselves, which makes our environment to be dirty” (P4). P8 and P12 also mentioned the lack of water and electricity, which hinders teachers from utilizing computers and projectors to make their teaching more effective. According to P10, the lack of infrastructure has led to an “environment that is not conducive for teaching, and as a result, it affects the process of learning.” Based on the participants’ responses, it is safe to say that infrastructural issues have contributed heavily to the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Teaching Material. The second major theme focused on a lack of teaching materials. Teaching materials includes tools that teachers need and use to help their students during learning activities (Chukwu et al., 2016). Seven different participants pointed out that a lack of teaching materials has made it challenging for them to deliver quality education to their students. Classrooms in Oke Ogun lack textbooks and teaching aids, also known as instructional materials. According to P11, there is an overall lack of textbooks in the schools; however, the few textbooks they do have “are obsolete and are no longer relevant to the new curriculum.” Six of the seven participants placed a heavy focus on the lack of textbooks for their students, which makes delivering their subjects difficult for them and also makes it difficult for students to grasp a thorough understanding of what they are being taught. Aside from textbooks, participants like P14 also mentioned the lack of teaching aids like boards, projectors, pens, paper, etc. “Like this morning, I’ve been looking for chalk to work in the classroom, and there is no chalk in the entire school” (P14). The lack of these vital materials has contributed to the challenge of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. The participants believe that they are unable to do their jobs effectively without adequate and appropriate teaching materials.

Poor Student Readiness. Many students come to school physically but are not mentally ready to learn; their minds are often elsewhere, making it difficult for them to engage effectively in learning. Six participants (P2, P3, P6, P9, P12, and P15) were quite adamant that students' readiness to learn is poor. The participants mentioned a lack of cooperation from students and a lack of seriousness about education. P12 lamented that students "come at will and some will not even stay in the class." P12's observation supports P9's comments that "the attitude of the student towards education is not good at all." P2 and P3 pointed out that students show up late to class and refuse to listen to teachers during lessons. Participants believe that, overall, students are not ready to learn, and the ones that are ready and willing to learn can often be distracted. When asked to expand on what is distracting students, P6 explained that "these children are exposed to what they should not be exposed to." For example, P15 stated that "some of them are still learning some industrial thing at home after school like tailoring...and other things, so they have no time for education." Still other students are "engaged in selling items after school, so during the school hour the mind of those students is not totally in school" (P6); rather, they are thinking about the money they will make. P3 pointed out the reason why students are learning trades or selling items after school. "Most of them will not concentrate as a result of not having something to eat, or maybe they have financial problems at home." Whereas one of the reasons for poor student readiness is attitude, the other reason identified by participants is out of the students' hands. Many of the students have no choice but to work if they want to eat for the day. These factors have made it challenging for them to be fully present in the classroom mentally and physically, affecting the quality of basic education they receive.

Lack of Teachers. P9 complained of having "insufficient manpower in terms of teachers." There simply aren't enough teachers for the number of students in each school. Six

participants explained how a lack of teachers in Oke Ogun has negatively affected basic education delivery. P1 was quick to point out that the school had over 600 students enrolled but has only one mathematics teacher for the whole school, when they should have three or four mathematics teachers. P4 also stated, “We only have one English teacher to cater to students from JS1 to SS3. How will such a teacher be able to deliver effectively?.” At P11’s school, there are also over 600 students but only two English teachers who are also in charge of teaching literature. According to P10, “the population is increasing and as the population is increasing, we have less teachers. Most schools don’t have enough teachers. The teachers are overwhelmed in the classroom due to the small number of teachers in each school and the large number of students. This has caused classes to be overcrowded, which is why some classes have 80+ students. There are not enough teachers to go around, so the best they can do is pack more students into each classroom. This echoes P4’s statement, that a lack of teachers affects teachers’ ability to provide quality and accessible basic education to students.

Parents. The last major theme that was identified in the responses to IQ1 is parents. When it comes to education, parents play a major role in their child’s educational success; however, in Oke Ogun, parents do not value education highly, which has made the delivery of education difficult. According to the participants, parents pose a challenge to the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in a multitude of ways. P8 and P15 spoke about the lack of parents’ financial commitment and contribution to support their child’s education. “They don’t want to contribute to education by buying some textbooks for their children” (P15). P9 pointed to another challenge with parents, which focuses on their attitude toward education. P9, who is a principal, shared experiences of parents trying to pay teachers and exam administrators to help

their child pass. Due to this phenomenon, some students put less effort into their schooling because they rely on their parents to pay for them to pass.

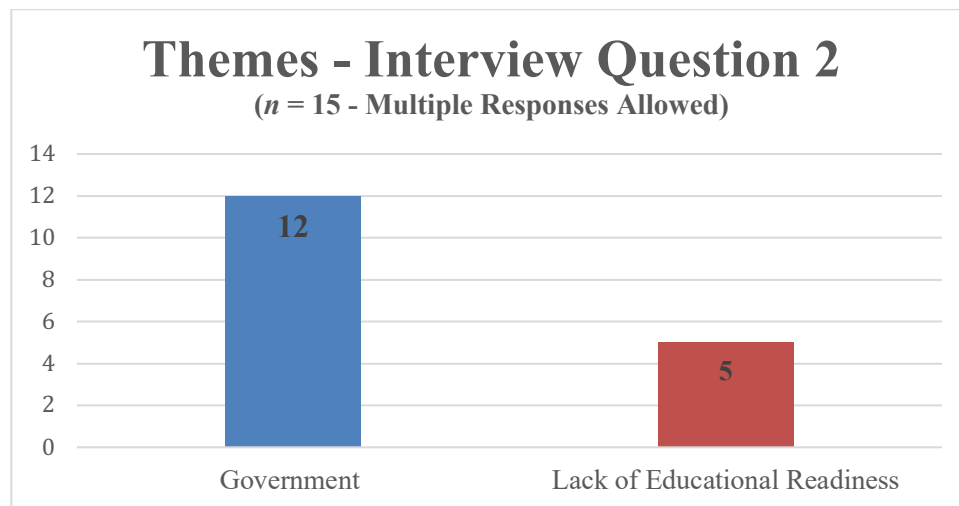
Furthermore, P12 also pointed out that parents often come to the school to complain when a teacher disciplines a student, stating, “When you try to instill discipline, the parents will be complaining.” Thus, it can be difficult to get students to listen and pay attention in class because they often believe there are no consequences for their actions. The responses to this question show that parents are vital when it comes to the academic success of a student, whether financially or through encouraging them to do better. It is clear that the participants believe parents have made the delivery of quality and accessible basic education more challenging in Oke Ogun.

Interview Question 2

IQ2 asked, What factors have contributed to the challenges you have faced implementing the UBE system? This question was designed to expose who or what the participant believes is responsible for the challenge of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. IQ2 allowed participants to identify what factors have contributed to the challenges identified in IQ1. The two major themes that emerged from responses to the question are: (a) government and (b) educational readiness (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

Themes Related to Interview Question 2



Government. Twelve of the participants asserted that the government is the number one contributing factor to challenges within the UBE system and the delivery of basic education. When it comes to education, it is the government's role to establish and implement educational policies to ensure that all Nigerian citizens are receiving a quality and accessible education. Participants acknowledge that the government should be held responsible for providing up-to-date infrastructure, teaching materials, and textbooks, as well as hiring teachers. P2 suggested that "the government should provide enough materials so as to enhance effective teaching." P3 believes that if the government were to provide all "facilities, we will not have a problem." When it comes to the hiring of teachers, according to P5, the government has not recruited new teachers in Oke Ogun since 2014. The issue with this is that Oke Ogun is losing teachers due to natural causes like death and retirement, but the government is not replacing these teachers once they are gone. Some participants like P7 and P11 believe that the government just doesn't care due to its "nonchalant" and "lackadaisical attitude." P8 claims that the government is all about principle and not practice, meaning that they have created a great educational policy, but are not

supporting and funding the policy properly, making it difficult for teachers to execute the UBE system effectively. P12 gave an example regarding one of the key issues with the policy:

In the past, students who failed usually have to repeat, but in recent times if a student should fail an examination, maybe a promotional exam, whether you like it or not, such student must be promoted and move to the next class. Then when the government starts a particular policy, so hardly will a civil servant and employee be able to criticize such policy even if the policy is not all that good. You cannot negate it because it would look as if you are trying to be a saboteur to such a government.

P10 suggested that the issues regarding lack of funds, infrastructure, materials, teachers, and educational policy are due to “a kind of mismanagement by the government.” “If our government listens to what we are in need of, attends to us, we will not be lacking these kinds of things” (P13). Based on the participants’ responses, Oke Ogun’s educational professionals blame the government for the region’s lack of quality and accessible basic education.

Lack of Educational Readiness. The second theme identified is educational readiness, which can be viewed in the same light as lack of student readiness: in this case, a lack of educational readiness on the part of students, teachers, and parents. Participants believe that, with students, “the readiness is not there, our students are not ready” (P4). According to P6, many of the students are distracted by technology, which “derails them from paying attention to whatever we are teaching them in class.” If the students are not ready to learn, that defeats the whole purpose of why students are attending school and why teachers are teaching. When it comes to the parents, P4 stated,

The readiness is not there, the parents, you know, they are very important in the educational system as well. If parents are not able to complement the efforts of teachers

at school, because we expect that the parents should be able to take students through what we teach in the school when they get home.

P8 also pointed out that parents are not ready or willing to provide the materials their students need to succeed. Parents in Oke Ogun are not prepared to take responsibility for their child's education, which P15 believes is because "they don't value education in this area." As for the teachers, P9 stated, "The teachers should invest more into the students." P9 gave an example that many of Oke Ogun teachers come from Ibadan to teach in Oke Ogun. The issue is that most of them still reside in Ibadan and have decided not to move to Oke Ogun, which means that teachers are traveling a minimum of 3 hours to work at the start of every week and then traveling back at the end of the week. However, P9 pointed out that the majority of the teachers "will report to the school on Monday evening or Tuesday and by Thursday they'll be packing their load" to go back to Ibadan. This means that they are missing at least 2–3 days in the classroom with their students each week. This trend affects the quality of education the teacher can give to the student because of their inconsistent attendance and the fact that there are insufficient teachers to cover for absent teachers. This finding demonstrates the lack of commitment and readiness some teachers have regarding their jobs as educators. A lack of educational readiness by these three stakeholders is one factor contributing to the challenges the UBE system is facing.

Summary of RQ1

The idea behind RQ1 was to identify the challenges within the UBE system. Responses to this question identified several themes regarding the challenges, which were identified as: (a) infrastructure, (b) teaching material, (c) poor student readiness, (d) lack of teachers, and (e) parents. RQ1 also focused on identifying the factors contributing to these challenges, which we identified as: (a) government and (b) educational readiness. The participants discussed each of

these themes in detail and considered them to be vital issues that negatively affect the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Research Question 2

The interview questions under RQ2 (What strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage in to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education?) gave the participants the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas on ways they believe the delivery of quality and accessible basic education can be improved. These questions were:

- IQ3: What have you or other educators done to improve the delivery of quality and accessibility basic education in Oke Ogun?
- IQ4: What resources do educators in Oke Ogun need to implement educational strategies?

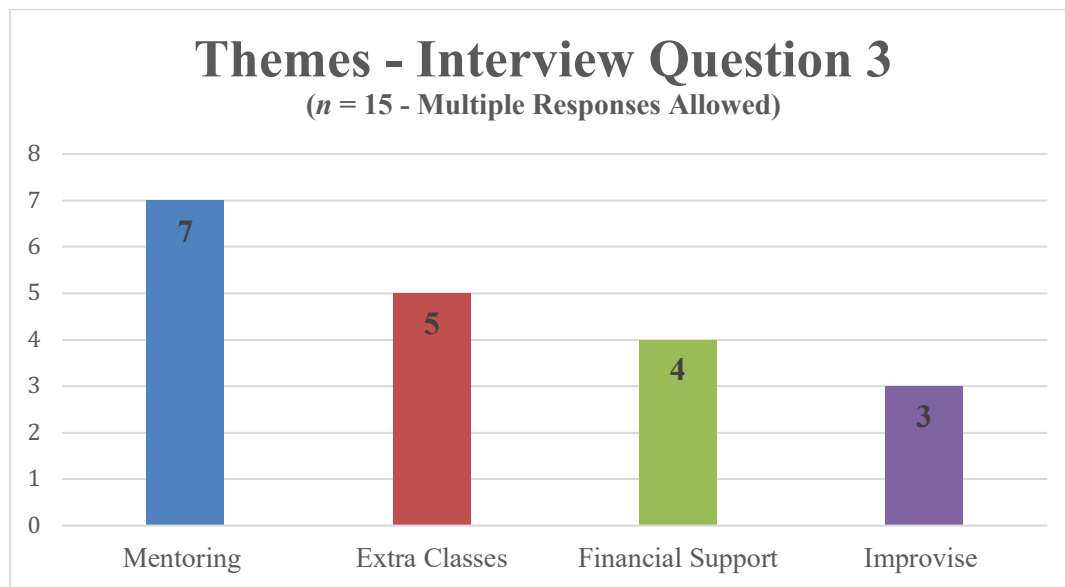
The themes identified from the responses to these interview questions illuminated possible best practices and strategies for improving the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Interview Question 3

IQ3 asked, What have you or other educators done to improve the delivery of quality and accessibility basic education in Oke Ogun? Having identified several challenges with the UBE system and the causes of those challenges in IQs 1 and 2, IQ3 granted the participants the opportunity to self-reflect and explain how they have personally contributed to improving education in Oke Ogun despite all of the challenges they face. The following themes were established: (a) mentoring, (b) extra classes, (c) financial support, and (d) improvise (see Figure 6).

Figure 6

Themes Related to Interview Question 3



Mentoring. Mentoring focuses on educational professionals' ability to provide extra attention to their students outside of the classroom, which allows them to focus on their students' personal needs rather than their academic needs. Seven of the participants mentioned the importance of mentoring students, which they believe it is a way for them to connect with students outside of the classroom, eventually translating to them connecting with students inside the classroom. P4 stated, "I make sure I talk to these students. We advise them so that they'll be able to be a good Nigerian, a functional and a good Nigerian." P6 mentioned how even though there isn't enough time during the class period, "I will make sure that I counsel them and open their eyes to what they don't see." P12 explained the importance of counseling students so that they "understand the challenges that are ahead of them." Mentoring their students has allowed the participants to gain their students' trust to the point that some students willing come to them to share the problems they are facing. Mentoring enables them to have a better understanding of each of their students' educational and personal needs.

The participants also spoke about their efforts to mentor students, but they also mentioned that they take the time to advise and mentor the parents as well. P3 stated, “We are advising the parents to monitor their ward at home and to give them support because they are very, very important in the education of their children.” P10 also emphasized the importance of “talk[ing] to the parents and let[ting] them know they have a role to play in the education of their children, such as the role of ensuring that their children attend school. P15 stated, “we encourage and advise the parents to send their children to school.” Many of the participants who mentioned counseling and advising said that they have seen a slight improvement among some of the students and parents, which is encouraging, but there is still a long way to go.

Extra Classes. This theme falls closely in line with mentoring, but focuses instead on educational professionals providing their students extra attention that focuses on their academics. Five of the participants discussed that they organize extra classes for the students after school. The classes are free of charge to the students, and the teachers are not paid for the extra time they spend with the students. The participants pointed to different reasons for needing to provide extra classes. For example, P8 mentioned that during the class period, “I’ll make reference to the textbook, but out of 40 students, only two are with the textbook,” which slows the participant down in the classroom. Due to this problem, P8 suggested that “the next of action is to create extra time in order to take care of them.” Doing so allows P8 to give the students extra time with the few textbooks available without having a time constraint. P13 stated, “We are the ones waiting behind closing hour to teach them, even without the government paying us.” Some teachers like P11 even make themselves available at the school during holidays. “The last holiday we had, I was with my students, all through the New Year.” Some principals have even found themselves teaching in the classroom. P9 didn’t necessarily provide extra classes;

however, as a principal, P9 has had to teach classes due to a lack of teachers. “I would go to JSS1 and JSS3, just to manage the gap because we don’t have enough teachers.” Whether providing extra classes or covering classes lacking teachers, educators in Oke Ogun are making efforts to ensure that students can attain some level of quality and accessible basic education by extending themselves beyond their duties.

Financial Support. Based on Nigeria’s educational policy, it is the duty of the Nigerian government to support schools and students financially; however, educational professionals in Oke Ogun have found themselves needing to support their schools and students financially themselves. Four different participants explained how they often find themselves using their salaries to supply their classrooms with teaching materials and textbooks, as well as feed students. P1 and P9 both referred to the fact that they have used their salary to pay for their schools’ supplies. However, P2 gave a specific example of having to pay “from my own personal purse:”

So, when I go to the person in charge of the textbooks, he has to tell me that I have to prove the textbook on my own, for the meantime, so that I will be able to be using it for the time being and after the school is given, I think, some kind of grant or something, that he will repay me. So, I was like, why would that be? He said there is not enough funds in the school yet.

Teachers like P2 will purchase the textbooks themselves because, without the textbooks, they cannot teach their students. For many teachers, the issue with this is that they are often not reimbursed for what they spent on the textbooks. P13 shared another example of how teachers are supporting schools and students financially; “Now we are the ones feeding them, especially in school, giving them money to buy food because majority of them are coming to school with

no food, which isn't supposed to be." The teachers realize the consequences of students not eating before school or during lunchtime, and they acknowledge that when students are hungry, they will not be able to concentrate. Due to this problem, some teachers and principals take it upon themselves to feed their students. Although the participants find the burden of using their salary disheartening, they ultimately decided they would prefer to relieve themselves of other burdens such as lack of materials, textbooks, and hungry students.

Improvise. Improvising in an environment like Oke Ogun is a necessity due to a lack of resources available to educational professionals; when teaching materials like textbooks are not available, teachers must find alternative ways to deliver their lessons. P6 mentioned the importance of thinking, "How am I going to teach today to make my class effective?" The participants pointed out that they often have to improvise when it comes to delivering their lessons due to a lack of materials and textbooks. Teachers like P4 look for resources outside of textbooks. "I do go to the internet to browse. So that I'll be able to give the students relevant and up to date information. Then most of the times I improvise." P5, who is a physical education teacher, shared how due to the fact that the school lacks the equipment and facilities for the students to partake in certain sports, he uses his personal laptop and downloads videos to show the students different types of sports. Even with the challenges of effectively delivering quality and accessible basic education to Oke Ogun students, educational professionals are putting in their best efforts by improvising with the little that they do have.

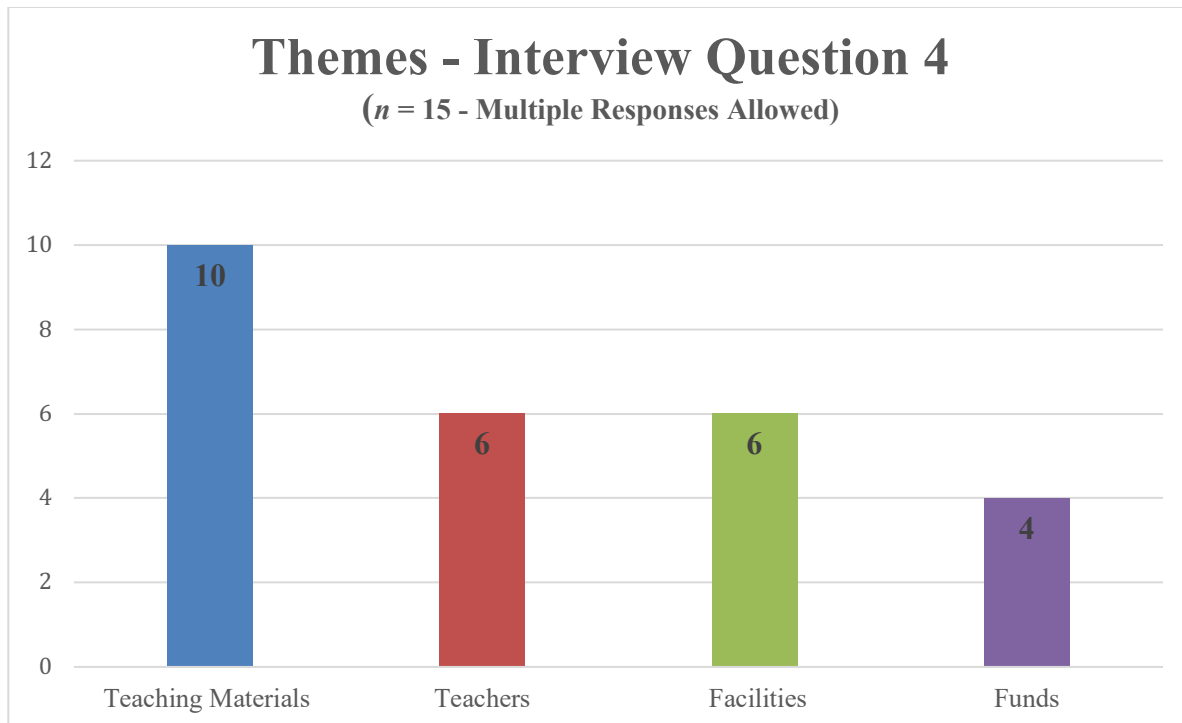
Interview Question 4

IQ4 asked, What resources do educators in Oke Ogun need to implement educational strategies? Although IQ 4 identified what educational professionals are currently doing to improve the delivery of basic education Oke Ogun, the responses also revealed many resources

educational professionals in Oke Ogun need. IQ4 helped to uncover what educational resources are needed in Oke Ogun. The following themes were identified: (a) teaching materials, (b) teachers, (c) facilities, and (d) funds (see Figure 7).

Figure 7

Themes Related to Interview Question 4



Teaching Materials. The majority of the participants were adamant about the need for the government to make provisions for teaching materials, such as textbooks and teaching aids. P2 stated, “Materials in the schools should be properly handled by the government and the head of the school, in order to make teaching more conducive for teachers.” Some participants pointed out that schools are not given enough textbooks and that the textbooks they are given do not align with their syllabus. P6 explained why it is vital for teachers to have relevant textbooks in the classroom, stating, “When the material is available, and you are able to show it to the

students, they will quickly pick what you are talking about.” All 10 participants confirmed the challenges they face delivering their lessons without teaching materials.

One of the teaching materials which five of the participants were adamant about is the need for computers. They acknowledged the need for both students and teachers to be computer literate. To do this, they emphasized that the government needs to provide computers to their schools so that students can attend Information Computer Technology classes, which will improve their computer literacy. The majority of the participants pointed to the fact that teaching materials such as textbooks, teaching aids, and computers are vital to implementing quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. The lack of these materials has made their jobs as educational professionals difficult.

Teachers. Teachers are the backbone of any educational system because they facilitate the exchange of knowledge within classrooms. Six participants mentioned the need for more teachers in Oke Ogun. As P7 put it, “We need more teachers.” Very few participants expanded on their thoughts regarding the need for more teachers, because it was seen as self-explanatory. However, P6 explained the desperate need for teachers and the impact more teachers would have on schools in Oke Ogun:

Enough teachers, if we have enough teachers, it would be easier for us, for the students to learn. Physics teacher we do not have, we do not have Literature teacher, we do not have enough English teacher. You know, if we have all these kinds of teachers, it should be easier for us to teach and for the students to learn in terms of pronunciation, written and spoken English, it will be easier for us.

The lack of teachers also affects the number of students in a class. One participant mentioned how she often has more than 80 students in her class due to the school’s lack of

teachers. Other participants mentioned that with such a high number of students in the class, it can often be difficult to maintain control of the class, leading to teachers feeling frustrated and easily burned out.

Along with the need for teachers, participants also mentioned the need for in-service training for current teachers. According to P7, “If they improve teachers by allowing them to further their education, it will help them in their deliveries of subjects in their various classrooms.” Participants were quick to point out the fact that there is a lack of continuing education opportunities for them. They often have to rely on past knowledge, which can be outdated. P4 stated, “In-service should be given to the teachers so that we will be able to update our knowledge. Very, very important. I think the last time I was opportune to have what is called training is 2004.” P10 pointed out that “some teachers are relying on past knowledge, they need to be updated.” The participants made it very clear that the need for more teachers and to provide continuing education to current teachers in Oke Ogun is desperate and vital to the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education.

Facilities. Within this study, facilities and infrastructure were viewed as part of the same construct; however, when asked this question, the majority of the participants used the term facilities. Six participants mentioned the need for new and improved facilities. P7 stated that “the infrastructure needs to be supplied adequately and appropriately.” Most schools in Oke Ogun lack necessary facilities like restrooms and computer labs, and the available facilities are not up to standard. According to P14,

[The] number one provision, regional educational facilities such as standard classroom, standard laboratories. For example, in this school we have no library and nowadays we

are in the digital age, but there is no modern computer lab in this area. If government can provide that one for us, that will help us to improve the standard of education in this area.

Participants explained that the educational facilities in Oke Ogun leave much to be desired and make teaching a challenge. A lack of electricity makes the idea of a computer lab seem unimaginable. A lack of running water means that students have to take time out of their school hours to fetch water. P13 stated,

We need infrastructure, we need chairs, we need light, we need water. You know even if there is water and even if they are hungry, and they have water to drink it, it will be easier for them to listen to us, to what we are teaching them, we need the government to please help us to start from there.

Without proper and “modern facilities” (P11) in Oke Ogun, the quality of education students will receive will continue to be negatively affected.

Funds. Funds refers to the money needed to pay for improved facilities, teaching materials, teacher salaries, etc., which are all essential to the delivery of a quality and accessible education. Participants pointed out that without adequate funds, little can be done. According to P11, the government must make funds available to schools. It takes money to build infrastructure, supply textbooks, hire teachers, and run a school in general. P4 stated, “There is no how you can do anything successfully without money. We are seriously in need of money because money will be needed to bring about all this, which I’ve identified” (P4). P6 even mentioned that the government doesn’t even need to provide textbooks; as long as they provide the funds, teachers are willing to obtain the textbooks for their students. The problem is that there are little to no funds coming to the schools. P4 believes that “when we get money, I think we will overcome all these problems.”

Summary of RQ2

The idea behind RQ2 is to identify what educational professionals are doing to improve education in Oke Ogun and what still needs to be done. Responses to this question identified several themes regarding the effort educational professionals are putting in to improve the UBE system, which are: (a) mentoring, (b) extra classes, (c) financial support, and (d) improvise. RQ2 also focused on identifying what resources are needed in Oke Ogun, which were identified as: (a) teaching materials, (b) teachers, (c) facilities, and (d) funds. The participants discussed each of these themes in detail and consider them vital to improving the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Research Question 3

RQ3 (How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?) included the following two interview questions:

- IQ5: How do you gauge whether you have successfully delivered quality basic education to your students?
- IQ6: What changes or improvements have you personally seen or experienced within education in Oke Ogun?

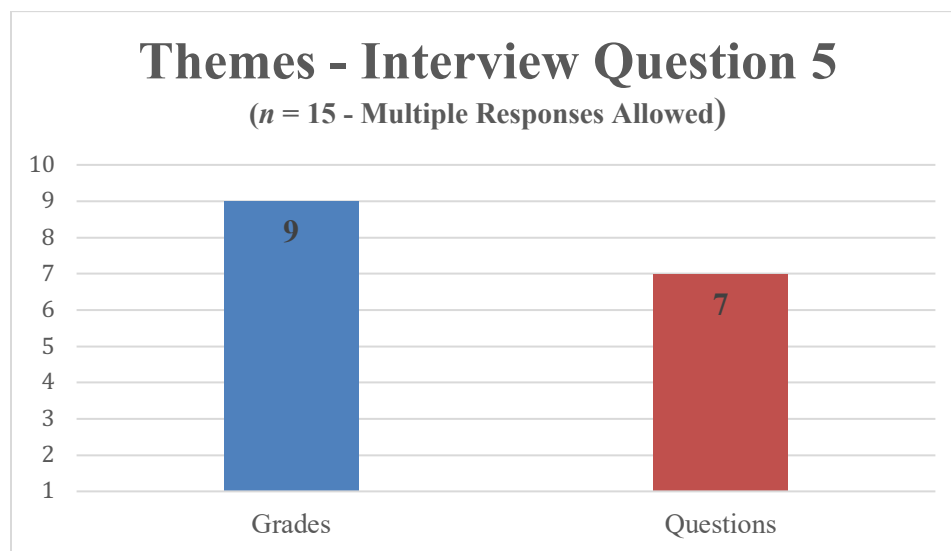
Interview Question 5

IQ5 asked, “How do you gauge whether you have successfully delivered quality basic education to your students?” Delivering effective education in an educational system that is riddled with challenges can be difficult; however, no matter what challenges a teacher faces, the goal is to educate their students. Measuring their efforts and gauging whether they have effectively delivered quality education is vital to their success as educators. This question sought

to understand how each educational professional measures their efforts to ensure they deliver quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Two themes emerged from their answers: (a) grades and (b) questions (see Figure 8). Although it is quite uncommon for there to only be two identified themes related to an IQ, this just so happened to be the case for IQ5. All 15 participants either mentioned grades or questions, and some even mentioned both.

Figure 8

Themes Related to Interview Question 5



Grades. Grades are given to students once an assignment or assessment has been completed. Conferring grades helps teachers and students identify a student's level of understanding and progress. For years, the determination of whether a student is learning or not in a classroom has been based on their grades on assignments and exams. Based on the participants' responses, grades are still the go-to to know whether students understand what is being taught in the classroom. Nine participants identified that evaluations, assignments, and exams are how they gauge how successful they are as educational professionals. Some briefly explained their measurement process by saying, "We normally assess through giving them test" (P1), "When I give them assignments, and they do well" (P6), and "You evaluate the students

and discover they are making it and passing” (P10). Whereas others, like P8, who is a math teacher, explained that “I give them classwork, I give them assignments. I want to know that you can solve that question by yourself and then immediately you solve it, I believe that you know it.” When asked this particular question, P11 stated, “By the results we have been having. Particularly last year, with what our students came out with, it was highly impressive, and that shows that we are doing our best.” Based on the responses given by the participants, it is clear to see that they use grades not only to gauge whether their students are doing well, but also to gauge whether they are doing well when it comes to delivering quality and accessible basic education to their students.

Questions. Questions help teachers to understand and identify educational gaps; when a student asks a question, it helps them to know what students understand want and what they do and do not understand. Seven participants mentioned that questions were another effective way to gauge whether they have successfully delivered in their classrooms. P6 stated, “When I’m teaching them, and I’m asking them questions, their responses back to me let me know that they are learning.” P2 also mentioned the use of questions and stated, “When I notice that the reply they give me is not that good to my satisfaction, then I will teach again by summarizing what I’ve taught them.” P12 explained that when a teacher asks questions, it can help them to gauge if they have made an impact and that “if there was no response, then I have not made an impact.” However, according to P5, asking questions should be a two-way street. The students themselves must also be asking questions:

When they ask questions as well because when you teach, and you ask the students is there any question, and they say no question, it actually shows that they have not picked

anything. If you have been able to touch their lives, if you have been able to inspire them, of course, the students should ask questions.

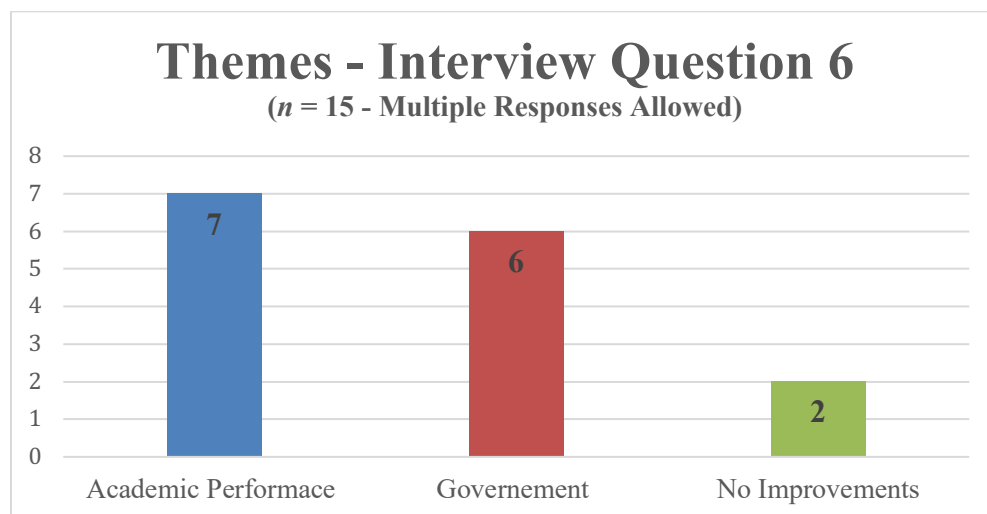
Questions, whether asked by teachers or students, ultimately help an educational professional “to know of your performance” (P13) and gauge whether quality and accessible basic education has been delivered.

Interview Question 6

IQ6 asked, “What changes or improvements have you personally seen or experienced within education in Oke Ogun?” This question was designed to shed a positive light on education in Oke Ogun. Even though the educational system is battling quite a few challenges, the participants were able to identify some positive changes and improvements they have seen in recent times within the system. The themes identified from responses to this IQ were: (a) academic performance, (b) government, and (c) improvements (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

Themes Related to Interview Question 6



Academic Performance. Academic performance focuses on how well students are performing academically both in and outside of the classroom. Three of the seven participants

mentioned that their students have shown major improvement when they attend quiz competitions against other schools, showing that they are improving academically. According to P5, “In Oke Ogun, whenever we go for big competition, like a quiz competition like that, we are not always the last, at least we always come up with good positions.” P4 shared similar thoughts regarding competitions, stating, “At least whenever our students go out for competitions, they’ve been performing wonderfully well.” Even within the school, participants said they saw major improvements among the students academically based on their results. P14 insisted that “the performance of our students has drastically improved, for instance, the recent National Examinations Council (NECO) results that is out, the total number of students that made their result is more than the previous year.” P14 credited this improvement to the extra classes teachers are offering. Participants also spoke about the overall academic improvement in Oyo State. P8 and P13 both mentioned that Oyo State used to be ranked 26th in education out of all the states and now the state is ranked 11th, and they believe Oke Ogun students have contributed to this change. P8 believes this improvement in academic performance is why “50% of passing out students are furthering their education” when previously a limited number of students would attend high institutions.

Government. In previous responses, the majority of the participants blamed the current state of education on the government. However, in their response to this question, a few of them gave the government credit and acknowledged some of the government’s improvements. P3 gave credit to the government for making benches and chairs available in some classrooms. P11 also mentioned that “although not to all schools, the government supplied new textbooks to schools.” P15 shared a similar thought, stating, “The governor has tried his best, by providing textbooks, some not all, of the textbooks for the students.” On a different topic, P3 and P11 gave credit to

the government for putting a stop to school fee payments, making public school 100% free to all children with the hope of making it more accessible to everyone. Although Nigeria's educational policy states that school should be free, often parents were asked to pay certain fees for their child to attend school, which goes against the government's policy. This policy hindered quite a few children from attending school because their parents could not afford to pay the fees. Last, P3, P9, and P11 mentioned that the government has also started paying teachers' salaries on time, in full, and consistently, which has helped increase their motivation. Previously, teachers would go months without being paid, and when they were paid, it would only be a portion of their salary. These government improvements have given some educational professionals a little hope that things are changing little by little to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education.

No Improvement. Although most participants believe that a lot needs to be improved, they still identified certain elements that have improved. However, two of the participants were adamant that they felt there have been no improvements. P2 stated, "I think personally, there's no improvements from my own perspective. There is no improvement yet. Maybe there will still be improvements as time goes on, but presently there is no improvements." When asked this question, the only response P10 had was to list the challenges he sees in the system, stating,

Most schools don't have enough teachers, and besides that one, the parents are not ready to take care of their children, they are only giving birth to children. At times some students may not even eat, and as a teacher, you have to give them food to eat.

This situation ultimately led P10 to the determination that no improvements have been made.

Summary of RQ3

RQ3 identified how educational professionals define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education. Responses to this question identified two themes regarding how educational professionals gauge whether they have successfully delivered quality and accessible basic education, which are: (a) grades and (b) questions. RQ3 also focused on what improvements have been made regarding education in Oke Ogun, the themes identified were: (a) academic performance, (b) government and (c) no improvement. The participants discussed each of these themes in detail and consider them to be vital in understanding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Research Question 4

RQ4 (What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?) was answered through the following interview questions:

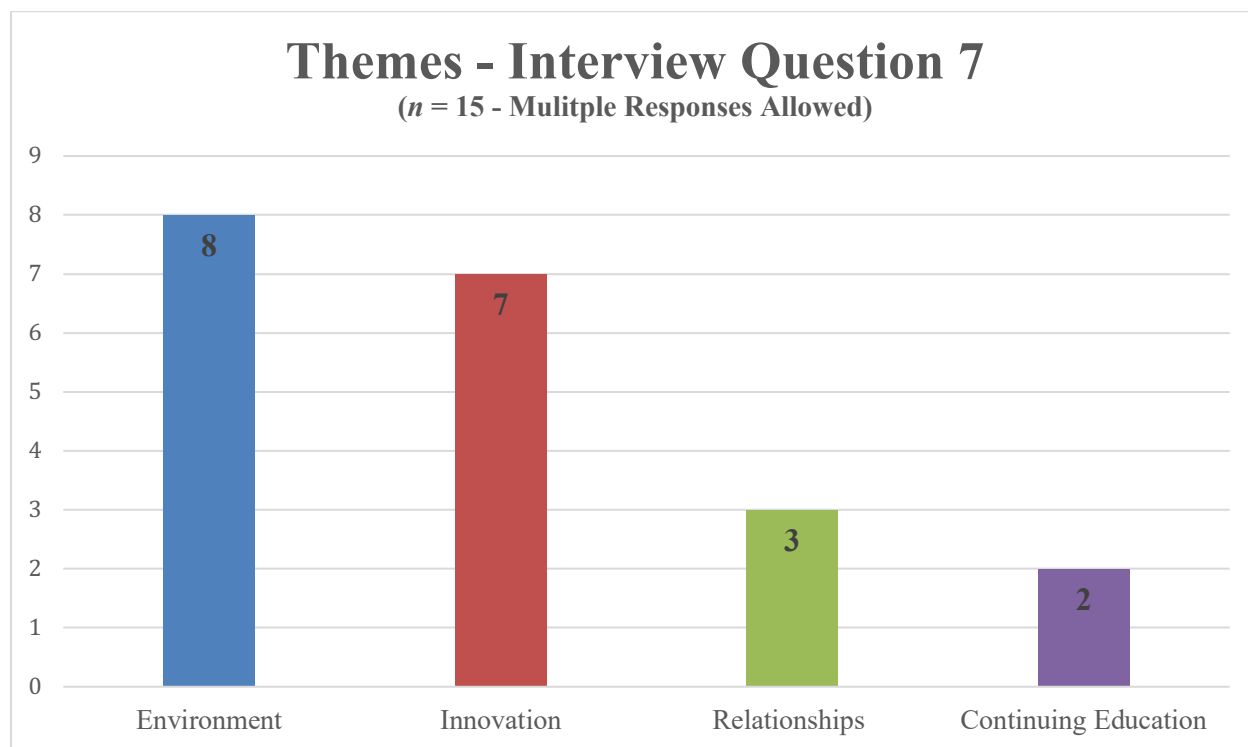
- IQ7: Based on your experience teaching in Oke Ogun, what advice would you give to other educators that want to teach in Oke Ogun?
- IQ8: What is the most valuable lesson or professional experience you have gained working as an educator in Oke Ogun?

Interview Question 7

IQ7 asked, “Based on your experience teaching in Oke Ogun, what advice would you give to other educators that want to teach in Oke Ogun?” This question helped to identify important factors that future educators should consider and prepare for if they chose to teach in Oke Ogun. The four key themes identified were: (a) environment, (b) innovation, (c) relationships, and (d) continuing education (see Figure 10).

Figure 10

Themes Related to Interview Question 7



Environment. Environment focuses on the importance of understanding what it takes to live and teach in a rural environment like Oke Ogun. Participants were quick to identify the pros and cons of working and living in a rural area like Oke Ogun. When asked what advice she would give to other educators who want to teach in Oke Ogun, P6 stated, “I am going to tell a person that is coming here is to first look at the environment.” Oke Ogun is far from major cities, making it difficult for some people to adjust to the environment. However, participants like P8 insisted that “Oke Ogun is peaceful and very accommodating.” P9 pointed out that the cost of living is much cheaper compared to the major city of Ibadan, which is a 3-hour drive from Oke Ogun. This allows them to save more of the money they make because the price of accommodation and food is lower, which has helped increase the appeal of living and working in Oke Ogun. Although the participants mentioned some of the benefits of living and working in

Oke Ogun, they also mentioned some difficulties. P12 believes that anyone moving from bigger cities to Oke Ogun will have to be okay with giving up “the social amenities that you have in cities.” P13 advised that anyone moving to Oke Ogun should “be able to cope with us because here we are in a village and we are not in a city here, there is no market, no mall.” Anyone moving to Oke Ogun needs to take the time to understand the area because, according to P4, it is important to “try to cope with the prevailing environment and prevailing condition” in Oke Ogun.

Innovation. Seven participants focused on the need for an educational professional to be innovative in Oke Ogun. P5 suggested that educators should “try as much as possible to innovate new ideas, look for ways to drive home the subjects he wants to teach the student, not making it too abstract.” Lessons in Oke Ogun are often delivered in an abstract manner because of the lack of resources available to educators. It can be difficult to find materials that help educators illustrate a concept or idea visually, which leads educators to explain things verbally that, ideally, students should physically see. This is why participants are adamant about the need to be innovative in the classroom. P4 urged educational professionals to “make use of the scanty resources that are available.” P10 and P11 both spoke about the importance of an educational professional being creative and a visionary in the classroom. The participants believe it is their duty to create a way to make their teaching effective despite the lack of resources given to them. According to P12, Oke Ogun needs educational professionals who are willing “to improve our standard of education,” and to do so, innovation is required.

Relationships. The theme of relationships focuses on the relationship teachers need to establish with their students in order to be effective educators. The relationship a student has with a teacher can be life-changing for most. Three participants spoke about the importance of

teachers building relationships with their students. P3 advised that educational professionals should “see the student[s] as if they are our children.” P3 went on to explain that when you see the students as your children, the way you interact with them shifts in a way that allows you to build a strong relationship with them. P12 suggested that “if you want to affect the students positively, you come down to their level, then make sure they are very close to you.” To come down to the students’ level, P12 suggested that sometimes a teacher may need to shift between the roles of teacher and friend. Ultimately, the participants believe that educational professionals need to establish a friendly relationship with their students in order to be effective in the classroom.

Continuing Education. The theme of continuing education highlights the need for educational professional to receive continual professional development in order to update their knowledge as educators. Although stated in different ways, two participants spoke on the importance of continuing education as educational professionals. P10 and P13 suggested that teachers need to attend seminars and in-service trainings in order to update their knowledge if they truly want to “help in fixing the problem at hand” (P10). Educational professionals cannot continue to rely on their past knowledge to teach students. In an environment that does not contribute to educational professionals’ continuing education, it is their responsibility to take the initiative to learn and gain new knowledge.

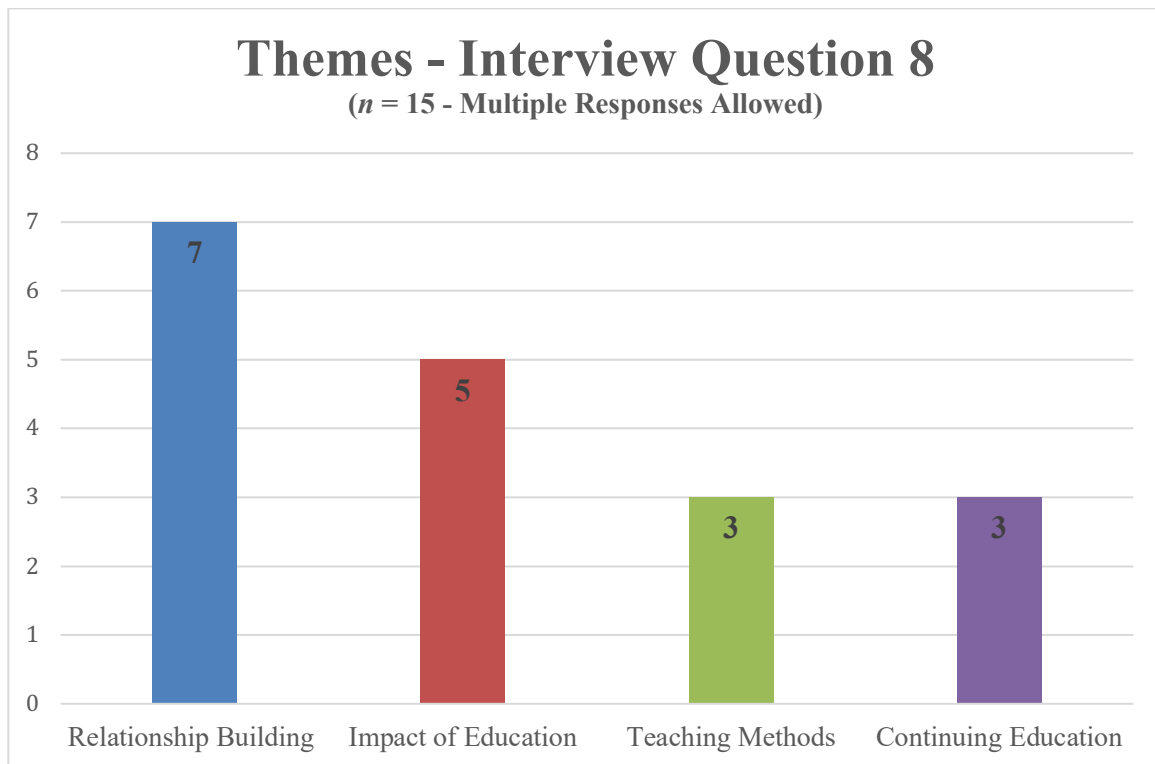
Interview Question 8

IQ8 asked, “What is the most valuable lesson or professional experience you have gained working as an educator in Oke Ogun?” The participants identified four themes regarding lessons they have learned during their time as educational professionals in Oke Ogun: (a) relationship

building, (b) impact of education, (c) teaching methods, and (d) continuing education (see Figure 11).

Figure 11

Themes Related to Interview Question 8



Relationship Building. Seven participants identified the need to build relationships with their students as one of the most valuable lessons they have learned. P2 explained that he learned the importance of building relationships with his students, stating, “You get close to them to know what they are passing through outside from the school system.” P4 learned that interacting with students and building relationships with them is vital “because they are our future, and nobody knows what these children will become in the future.” According to P12, educational professionals are the “ones to affect our wards positively.” P1 and P11 pointed out that all students are different, and in order for a relationship to be built, an educational professional must acknowledge and accept these differences.

Impact of Education. The theme of impact of education shines a spotlight on the positive impact educational professionals have on their students and society. The five participants who acknowledged the impact of education realize that their work is greater than them, so much so that P5 stated, “It’s a calling; you are not just a teacher because there is nothing else to do.” P9 mentioned that he learned just how powerful teaching is and how, as an educational professional, he helps shape and mold the future of his students. P15 even referred to teaching as a “dangerous job” because of the impact educational professionals have on their students’ lives. This statement echoes P7’s thoughts about morals and the fact that “education without morals is incomplete” and that it is the duty of an educational professional to help students establish their morals. Educational professionals help students develop their morals; helping students establish a moral code that will guide their life decisions is not a job that participants take lightly. Based on their responses, participants have learned and recognized the impact education has on the life of their students and society as a whole.

Teaching Methods. The theme of teaching methods focuses on the fact in order for educational professionals to deliver their lessons effectively, they must implement a variety of teaching methods. Although not identified by most participants as a key lesson, three participants mentioned that they learned the need to understand and implement a variety of teaching methods. P14 shared that when he first arrived in Oke Ogun, he learned how to implement what he calls the “play-away method.” P14 explained that the play-away method is about being able to dramatize his lessons through visuals to make his lessons less abstract. P11 also acknowledges that she learned the need to turn “theoretical knowledge into practical teaching” and that her students won’t assimilate what they are being taught without practical teaching. In contrast, P1

mentioned the need to utilize different teaching methods to cater to his students' varying educational needs. According to P1,

There is a need to use different methods whenever you are teaching. You can use the fast method when you are teaching, but you must carry those that are the average learners. For those students you will have to make sure you pause when you come to certain points.

P1 learned that all students learn at a different pace. As a result, an educational professional may have to change their teaching method to deliver quality basic education to their students.

Continuing Education. Also not identified by most participants as a key lesson, only three participants mentioned that they learned the importance of continuing education. P4 learned that “if you are not updating your knowledge, you become outcasted [sic], you become an obsolete teacher. So, one needs to want to be updating his knowledge.” P6 also shared that she learned the same lesson regarding the importance of updating her personal knowledge every day. According to P13, “As a teacher the more you live the more you learn,” and what you learn and the knowledge you equip yourself with will be your strength in your classroom when it comes to delivering quality and accessible basic education.

Summary of RQ4

The idea behind RQ4 was to enable the participants to reflect on their own internal personal experiences as educational professionals. Responses to this question identified several themes regarding the advice the participants would give to other educational professionals about teaching in Oke Ogun, which are: (a) environment, (b) innovation, (c) relationships, and (d) continuing education. RQ2 also focused on identifying the personal lessons the participants

learned as educational professionals in Oke Ogun. The themes identified are: (a) relationship building, (b) impact of education, (c) teaching methods, and (d) continuing education. The participants discussed each of these themes in detail and consider them to be vital aspects of their journeys as educational professionals in Oke Ogun.

Essence of Shared Experiences

It is important to paint a true picture of what educational professionals in Oke Ogun are dealing with daily. As an educational professional, imagine waking up in a rural environment where you do not have stable light or water, but must still find a way to get ready for work. You then arrive at the primary school, where you teach both English and literature for the whole school because there are not enough teachers. This means that every week you are teaching more than 600 primary school children, which means that for every class you teach you can have over 80 students at a time. When it is time for you to teach your students, the experience becomes even more frustrating, due to the fact that all you have is a chalkboard in your classroom, and today you have run out of chalk and can't seem to find any in the entire school. All you can do now is verbally explain the lesson to your students; you cannot write down notes or big ideas for them that would hopefully help them to grasp what they are being taught. However, at this point it truly does not matter if you can write on the board, because the majority of your students do not have pencils or paper to write down what you are teaching them. It would be nice to be able to simply point them towards their textbooks in the meantime, but your classroom only has 20 English textbooks; with 80 students in your class, four students must find a way to share one book during the 45 minutes you have to teach them. In addition to a lack of textbooks, some of your students are sitting on the floor because there are not enough desk and chairs.

By this time, you are almost halfway through the school day, and you need to use the restroom but unfortunately your school does not have a toilet. So, you find yourself having to go behind one of the buildings, which happens to be the same area other teachers and students use. It smells and has created a dirty environment, but there is no other option for you or anyone else in the school. Now, at lunchtime, you notice that some of your students are just standing around while other students are eating the food they bought from the food vendors that come to the school. You know that there is a high possibility that these same students did not eat before they came to school, and their hunger will affect their ability to focus and concentrate. So, you decide to use your own money to buy food for some of your students; this is not always financially feasible for you, but you do the best you can. The issue is that not only do you find yourself feeding your students, but you also pay for some of the teaching materials you need in your classroom, such as textbooks and teaching aids. This choice has become a financial burden because it was only recently that the government started paying your salary in full and in a timely manner, and you are now trying to catch up with your own finances.

As the day goes on, you are finding it more challenging to keep your students on track in the classroom; their minds seem to be elsewhere. You also notice that majority of them have not completed the assignments you sent home with them. It later comes to your attention that the majority of the students in your class must work, panhandle, or learn a trade after school, which has become a source of distraction for them, leaving them little to no time to do their assignments. You now have concerns about how students are progressing in your class, but you know from previous experience that when you reach out to their parents, they will have no sense of urgency and will not see the value in the education you are trying to give their children. So, you take it upon yourself to provide mentorship and extra classes to your students. After a long

day teaching multiple overcrowded classes, you are now going to spend extra time after school to mentor your students, go over what you taught in class, and give students the opportunity to spend more time with the limited number of textbooks available; you are also doing this with no extra pay. Luckily you have been seeing a slight improvement among your mentees, but it is not enough. By the end of the day, you are exhausted, frustrated, and a little hopeless about the educational environment in which you work. You know that tomorrow, next week, next month, and even next year things will be the same or worse. You love to teach, but you are tired of dealing constantly with these challenges throughout the school year. You know that the government needs to step up, but after years and years of facing the same challenges, you have lost faith in their ability to effect real educational change.

Chapter 4 Summary

This chapter's focus was to identify and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria. The method used to acquire this insight was a qualitative phenomenological study designed to capture the lived experiences of educational professionals in Oke Ogun who are familiar with the challenge of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Data were collected by conducting in-depth interviews with 15 educational professionals in Oke Ogun. Through a series of interview questions, the researcher uncovered and identified key themes relevant to the four research questions.

Once the researcher identified the study's potential participants and solicited their participation, interview days and times were scheduled with all 15 participants in the study. The study entailed a rigorous coding process and analysis was performed on each participant's transcribed interview. Through this process, themes were identified from each participant's

responses and documented and supported using specific participant quotes. As the interviews progressed, the themes uncovered from the participants' responses became redundant. After the first 10 interviews, no new themes were identified, the study was determined to have reached saturation. However, the researcher proceeded with conducting all 15 interviews. The shortest interview recording was 15 minutes, and the longest interview recording was 30 minutes.

Following the coding and analysis of the 15 participants' interview transcripts, a set of charts was created to provide a visual of the data gathered from the coding and analysis. The four research questions and eight interview questions yielded 27 themes that were analyzed for meaning and relevance to the central research questions. Beginning with RQ1—which identified the challenges educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible basic education—the answers to this question uncovered six themes. RQ2 focused on the strategies and best practices in which educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education. Eight separate themes were identified for RQ2. RQ3 was designed to understand how educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education; this question produced five different themes. Lastly, RQ4 sought to determine what recommendations and lessons educational professionals should know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria; this question yielded eight themes.

The established themes and frequency charts are considered to be the findings of this study and will inform and support the researcher's conclusions and recommendations. A few of the 27 themes identified appeared more than once. In Chapter 5, the grouped themes will be

outlined and discussed in detail. The 27 themes uncovered from the qualitative coding and analysis are laid out subsequently and grouped by research question (see Table 12).

Table 12

Summary of Themes for Four Research Questions

RQ1. (Challenges)	RQ2. (Best Practices)	RQ3. (Measuring Success)	RQ4. (Recommendations)
Infrastructure	Mentoring	Grades	Environment
Teaching Materials	Extra Classes	Questions	Innovation
Poor Student	Financial Support	Academic	Relationships
Readiness	Improvise	Performance	Continuing Education
Lack of Teachers	Teaching Materials	Government	Relationship Building
Parents	Teachers	No Improvements	Impact of Education
Government			Teaching Methods
Educational	Facilities		
Readiness	Funds		Continuing Education

Note. This table displays a summary of all the themes identified during the data analysis process.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The challenges within the UBE system in Nigeria have negatively affected educational professionals' in Oke Ogun ability to deliver quality and accessible basic education effectively. The purpose of this study was to identify these challenges and the best practices to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun. This study interviewed 15 educational professionals in Oke Ogun regarding their experiences with the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun, the strategies they use to improve basic education in Oke Ogun, how they measure success, and their recommendations for other educational professionals seeking to work in Oke Ogun. The titles of the participants ranged from principal to teacher. Each of the participants had unique insights regarding the challenges within the UBE system. However, they also highlighted ways they believe the system can be improved to ensure that students in Oke Ogun are receiving quality and accessible basic education.

This study sought to add to the existing body of knowledge and create support for current and future educational professionals in Oke Ogun. This chapter will summarize the study, discuss key findings, and offer implications of the study, a study conclusion, applications, recommendations, and final thoughts.

Summary of the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to identify and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and best practices regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria. The participant sample selection process for this study was based on specific criteria that would allow for the highest level of credibility. The sample criteria were as follows: (a) has taught either pre-primary, primary or secondary public school in Oke Ogun, Oyo State and (b) has taught for at least 1 full academic

school year in Oke Ogun. The final sample consisted of 15 educational professionals in Oke Ogun who provided detailed responses to the eight interview questions.

The eight interview questions that were conceived from the four central research questions were presented to each study participant. Each interview was recorded and later transcribed for analysis. The analysis process required the researcher to go through each interview transcription and highlight “significant statements, sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon;” this process is also known as horizontalization (Moustakas, 1994, p. 61). Next, the researcher developed what is known as clusters of meaning from the statements and created key themes (Creswell, 2013). The clustering process produced 27 key themes that correlate with the four research questions.

Further analysis of the 27 themes allowed the researcher to identify the challenges and best practices for improving the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Identifying these challenges and best practices met the goal of this study, enabling the researcher to develop a strategy for improving the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in the rural area of Oke Ogun.

The newly developed model that incorporates the findings of this study is named Jokodola’s Educational Needs model. Jokodola’s Educational Needs model is a roadmap or set of guidelines for educational professionals and government leaders and can be used to set the standard to ensure the delivery of quality and accessible basic education. The model and its application will be discussed later in this chapter, followed by the researcher’s recommendations and final thoughts.

Discussion of Findings

The clustering process of grouping together identical significant statements from the participants' responses to the interview questions produced a set of key themes. The themes identified from each IQ were compiled together to create themes related to the central research questions. For example, seven key themes were uncovered for IQ1 and IQ2, which are associated with RQ1. This process was executed for each research question. The coding and analysis of interview data revealed four key areas where focus should be placed to provide quality and accessible basic education service delivery in Oke Ogun. For this study, the four key areas of focus happen to be four different educational stakeholders. Within these specific areas of focus, more specific educational strategies and behaviors were identified as specific themes based on the participants' commonly shared responses.

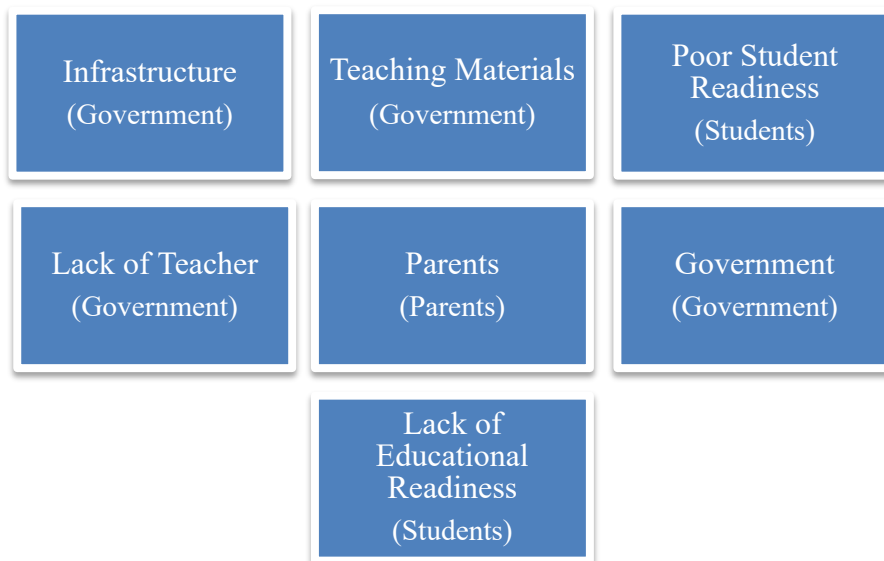
Each of the themes was found to be closely associated and tied to common areas of focus. Listed in Figures 12, 13, 14, and 15 are the themes associated with the research questions, which illustrate the key themes described by the 15 participants. All 27 themes are labeled with the area of focus/stakeholder that best correlates with the theme. The four major areas of focus/stakeholders resulting from the 27 themes are: students, educational professionals, parents, and government. The four areas of focus/stakeholders need to be engaged actively using the identified themes to improve the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Results for RQ1

RQ1 asked, What challenges do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, face regarding the implementation of quality and accessible Basic Education? The themes identified in the responses pertaining to RQ1 are listed in Figure 12.

Figure 12

Summary of All Themes Uncovered During the Data Analysis Process for RQ1



Note. The associated areas of focus are included to identify each stakeholder's needs to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun.

The seven themes that connect to RQ1 help describe the challenges educational professionals face regarding providing quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. According to the participants, these challenges are believed to be in the direct control of the government, parents, and students. Participants explained the need for these stakeholders to make improvements for the identified challenges to be resolved. As depicted in Figure 12, the stakeholders are associated with the challenges for which they are considered responsible.

IQ1 allowed for the identification of these challenges, whereas IQ2 identified the causes of the challenges. This resulted in the participants identifying a constant *lack*, which makes it a challenge to deliver quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Participants pointed out the lack of infrastructure, teaching materials, and teachers provided by the government; the lack of support from parents; and a lack of student readiness to learn. The majority of these challenges and the causes of the identified challenges have been identified in previous studies.

Discussion of RQ1

Participants identified the lack of infrastructure, lack of teaching materials, poor student readiness, lack of teachers, and parents as the prevailing challenges regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. The challenges the participants identified support the findings of many of the studies that have been done on rural education in Nigeria. For example, Ikoya and Onsyase (2008) found that 52% of the schools they surveyed lacked basic infrastructure and only 21% had adequate facilities. School infrastructure is defined as “both physical and spatial enablers of teaching and learning,” which includes classrooms, libraries, laboratories, restrooms, as well as water and sanitation (Ikoya & Onoyase, 2008, p. 12). The majority of the participants pointed out that their schools lack toilets, laboratories, computer centers, water, electricity, and furniture. Participants suggested that the lack of infrastructure has hindered their ability to deliver education to their students because their teaching environment is not conducive enough for effective teaching. According to Asiyai (2014), in order for effective teaching to take place, the learning environment must be safe, secure, and comfortable. However, it has become a challenge for educational professionals to provide a safe, secure, and comfortable learning environment given the lack of infrastructure. To improve the learning environment in Nigeria, the government needs to make a tremendous investment in classroom infrastructure; currently, schools in Nigeria lack classrooms, laboratories, libraries, computer centers, potable water, electricity, toilets, and furniture (Ejere, 2011; Ikoya & Onoyase 2008).

Additionally, participants identified the lack of teaching materials as a challenge they are facing. Teaching materials are alternative forms of communication that a teacher utilizes to help students assimilate the information they are being taught (Dike, 1987). Without teaching materials, it is nearly impossible for them to deliver their lessons effectively, and students have a

hard time comprehending and assimilating what they are being taught. Ige's (2018) research also supported this finding, indicating that a lack of teaching materials negatively affects a teacher's effectiveness and can even affect their motivation to teach, which ultimately affects an educational professional's ability to deliver quality and accessible basic education. A few of the schools that do have libraries are typically filled with books that are old, obsolete, and irrelevant (Okoli & Okorie, 2015). Without adequate laboratories, libraries, and teaching materials, it is difficult to implement the UBE program adequately and meaningfully (Okoroma, 2000). Iyamu (2005) emphasized the importance of teaching materials by suggesting that without teaching materials, skills-based curriculum cannot be implemented, leading to a lack of skill acquisition and economic empowerment for Nigerian students.

Next, participants identified the lack of student readiness as a challenge. Targowska et al. (2015) defined readiness to learn as a "child's capacity to effectively engage in learning in formal and informal settings' (p. 12). They blame this on the fact that many of the students have to work (selling or hawking) or learn a trade after school. They mentioned that the students are often not mentally present in school because they are thinking about either the money they need to make after school to help feed their families or the artisan trade they are learning. For many of the children who work, it is their responsibility to bring home the money that the family will use to eat that same day; their family's livelihood depends on them (Adebayo & Olaogun, 2019). As a result, their minds are preoccupied, and their readiness to learn what is being taught diminishes. This finding supports the research conducted by Adebayo and Olaogun (2019), whose study revealed that out of 200 child hawkers, in Nigeria, 93% of them believed that working negatively affected their academic performance and school attendance. If students are mentally preoccupied, it is nearly impossible to teach them and ensure genuine learning.

Equally important to the participants was the lack of teachers, which has led to overworked educational professionals and overcrowded classrooms. When there are fewer students in a classroom, teachers can give each student an increased amount of attention, are less stressed, and can provide proper support to different students' developmental needs (Akinrotimi & Olowe, 2016; Oyedeki, 2017). They pointed out how these conditions contradict Nigeria's National Policy on Education, which states that the teacher-to-student ratio should be no higher than 1:25 for pre-primary and 1:35 for primary and junior secondary (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). The participants noted that the inadequate number of teachers has led some of them to have 80+ students in their classes, which increases their stress levels and makes it difficult for them to give students the proper attention they require. When there is a smaller number of students per teacher, it enhances the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, n.d.). Lastly, the participants identified how parents can make the delivery of quality and accessible basic education a challenge. According to the participants, the lack of support students and teachers receive from parents is having a negative impact on education. They stated that sometimes parents cannot support the teachers' efforts due to their own lack of education. They found that these parents don't value education as they should and can often pass this mentality on to their children, who will still attend school but will have no interest in learning. According to Ajaja (2012), most parents in rural areas are illiterate and find it difficult to understand the value of education. All of the participants' challenges have been uncovered in previous studies, which shows that little to nothing has been done to combat these challenges and improve the quality and delivery of basic education in rural areas like Oke Ogun.

Although identifying these challenges was vital, identifying the causes behind these challenges was just as crucial. To solve a problem, it is important to understand what is causing the problem. In this case, the participants identified the government and lack of educational readiness as the two factors they believe contribute to the challenges facing the delivery of quality and accessible basic education. The participants believe that ultimately the Nigerian government is not doing enough. They pointed out that the government has not recruited enough teachers, not provided enough textbooks and teaching materials, has not improved infrastructure, and has not provided adequate funds. According to Babalola (2018), the Nigerian government has failed to invest in its educational system, which has negatively affected the quality of education delivered to students. As stated previously, despite one of the wealthiest governments in Africa taking financial responsibility for education in Nigeria, according to the World Bank (2014), Nigeria invests and spends the least on education than any other country in Africa. Some of the participants even believe that the government does not care about the state of education in Nigeria. Based on UNESCO's (2014) calculations, Nigeria's government only spends 1.5% of its GDP and national budget on education. According to the World Bank (2014), only 1% of Nigeria's national budget is spent on education.

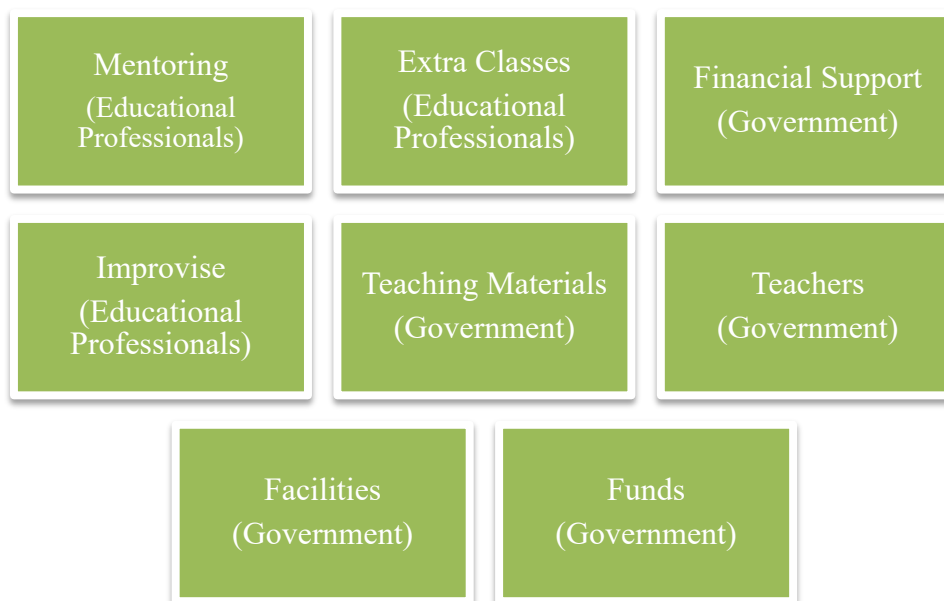
Furthermore, the participants also attributed the lack of educational readiness as a cause of the challenges they identified. The rationale behind a lack of educational readiness is identical to the theme of poor student readiness. The participants believe that poor student readiness is caused by students and parents' lack of educational readiness. Their explanations for this theme were nearly identical to their explanations for poor student readiness.

Results for RQ2

RQ2 asked, What strategies and best practices do educational professionals in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, engage in to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education? The themes identified in the responses pertaining to RQ2 are listed in Figure 13. The associated areas of focus are included to identify what each stakeholder needs in order to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun.

Figure 13

Summary of All Themes Uncovered During the Data Analysis Process for RQ2



These eight themes were uncovered from the participants' interview responses regarding the strategies they use to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun. Regarding the participants' strategies, most of them identified providing mentorship and extra classes as their top strategies. Not far behind were strategies of providing financial support to their schools and improvising in their classrooms with the little resources they have.

Participants also described what additional resources they need, in this case from the government, in order to provide quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. They

identified the need for the government to provide them with teaching materials so they can teach effectively, more teachers so they can reduce the number of students in the classroom and reduce the workload on current teachers, adequate facilities such as restrooms and classrooms, and funds for supplies and upkeep of schools.

Discussion of RQ2

The participants described their various efforts toward improving the delivery of quality and accessible basic education, which consists of mentoring their students, providing extra classes after school and during holidays, using their own salary to purchase textbooks and teaching materials, and finding ways to improvise with the little they are given. Participants believe that they cannot rely fully on the government if they want to see changes and improvements, which is why they have all found ways they can contribute to the improvement of the delivery of quality and accessible basic education.

The majority of the participants explained the important role mentoring has played in their efforts to improve the delivery of quality education. Engle (2019) described a mentor as someone who has a positive and guiding influence on others' lives: someone who has the ability to prevent mistakes that could have long-lasting effects. Through the use of mentorship, they have built relationships with their students, which they believed has helped certain students take their education more seriously and has increased the consistency with which students attend school. Alongside mentoring, the participants shared that providing extra classes allows them to ensure that students are getting the quality time they need and deserve in class. Due to the lack of textbooks and teaching materials, it can be difficult for them to deliver their lesson in their allotted class time effectively, so providing extra classes allows them extra time to deliver their

lessons. Participants stated that due to these extra classes, they have seen an improvement in their students' academic performance.

Apart from spending their time mentoring and providing extra classes, participants also mentioned spending their own money to supply their classrooms with needed materials. Without using their own money, educational professionals would continuously lack the necessary materials they need to teach effectively. According to Aghenta (1993), funding determines the quality of education that students receive. The participants recognize this relationship, which is why some of them insist on using their own financial resources. However, not only are they using their money to purchase materials, but also some educational professionals are purchasing food for their students who cannot afford to eat. They realize that many of their students come from poor backgrounds and cannot afford to pay for school lunches. A study conducted in Nigeria by Bamgboye et al. (2017) found that 40% of children who go to bed without food are twice as likely not to attend school. The participants realize how hunger can negatively affect a student's ability to focus in class and how it can ultimately affect their attendance at school, so they use their personal money to buy food for their students.

Last, the participants revealed how they improvise due to a lack of textbooks and teaching materials available to them. Ahmadi and Lukman (2015) affirmed that teachers need teaching materials to support their teaching and make their teaching understandable for their students; without them, education cannot and will not be effectively delivered. Teachers are encouraged to use improvised teaching materials because it helps to increase a learner's participation in a lesson (Abdu-Raheem, 2014). Teachers need to be resourceful and search for necessary teaching materials that are available in their in their local environment that can supplement and replace standard ones (Ogbondah, 2008). Although it is not easy for them, they

often improvise by turning to outside sources to help them teach and deliver their lessons effectively.

Although educational professionals are putting forth effort to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun, they still require many resources to help them with their efforts. The first resource is teaching materials, without which they believe their efforts are aimless, affecting their effectiveness as educators. Many educational professionals are dealing with a lack of teaching materials or teaching materials that are inadequate. The participants were adamant about the fact that teaching materials encompassed more than just textbooks. They also identified boards, chalk, computers, and teaching aids as teaching materials that they desperately need. A significant number of schools in Nigeria do not have access to teaching materials, and if they do, they are in poor condition (Abdu-Raheem 2011; Babalola, 2018; Dabo & Augustine, 2016). According to Enaigbe (2009), basic teaching materials, like the ones listed previously, are not available in most schools. Ige (2018) reported that a lack of teaching materials in the classroom negatively affects a teacher's effectiveness, affecting their ability to provide quality and accessible basic education. Teaching materials are vital due to the fact that they help to broaden understanding of concepts and spark students' interest in the subject (Kochhar, 2012).

Participants repeatedly emphasized the need for more qualified teachers in order to reduce overcrowding and teacher burnout. The issue for some schools is that they have seen an increase in enrollment but have yet to hire more teachers who can handle the increase. Participants suggested that when there are a smaller number of students in a class, the attention they can give to each student increases, increasing the quality of education they can deliver to their students. Based on studies by Huntsman (2008) and Oyedeji (2017), when teachers have fewer students in their classrooms, they will see an increase in cooperation from students when it

comes to class activities and interactions, which improves their performance on cognitive and linguistic assessments. However, the issue for many schools has been finding teachers who are qualified to teach and willing to move to a rural area like Oke Ogun.

Another equally important resource to participants is the need for improved facilities, also known as infrastructure. Participants mentioned how the lack of adequate facilities has negatively affected them as educational professionals as well as their students. According to a study conducted by Asiyai (2014), 83.19% of the students who participated in the study said they would have increased motivation, and 92.53% of the students believed that their grades would improve if their physical learning environment improved. This study's participants were adamant that their classrooms needed to be updated and that new facilities such as toilets needed to be constructed for the students. They believe that improved facilities will make their jobs easier and make learning easier and more enjoyable for students.

The identification of funding as a resource came as no surprise; participants believe that most of the challenges they listed can be resolved if they receive the right funding from the government, NGOs, or even philanthropists. Ige (2014) found that schools need funding to pay teachers, purchase and maintain equipment, and renovate and build new facilities, and without funds, achieving these goals becomes nearly impossible. The participants believe that they are an afterthought when it comes to funding and that schools in urban areas receive more funding than schools in rural areas like Oke Ogun. Moja's (2000) study affirmed that there are funding disparities between rural and urban schools in Nigeria. The study found that 99% of the allocated budget for schools in rural areas goes toward personnel, which leaves little to no funds for teaching materials and facilities. Without proper and adequate funding, schools in rural areas like

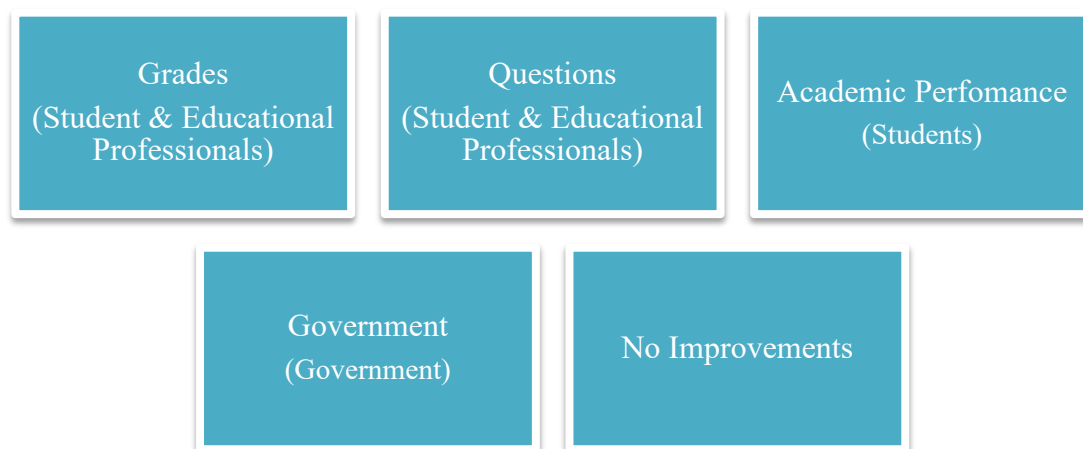
Oke Ogun will continuously face challenges when delivering quality and accessible basic education.

Results for RQ3

RQ3 asked, “How do educational professionals in the rural area of the Oke Ogun, Oyo State, Nigeria, define, track, and measure the success of delivering quality and accessible basic education?” The themes identified in the responses pertaining to RQ3 are listed in Figure 14. The associated areas of focus are included to identify each stakeholder’s needs in order to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun.

Figure 14

Summary of All Themes Uncovered During the Data Analysis Process for RQ3



The aim of RQ3 was to gain an understanding of how educational professionals in Oke Ogun measure their success. Participants mentioned that their key measure of success is the grades their students receive on assignments and exams. If their students’ grades are high, they know that their students are learning and assimilating what is being taught. However, if the grades are low, they know that their students are struggling to understand what is being taught to them. Participants also stated that they are able to measure success through the use of questions.

If a student is asking questions, then they know that the student is engaged in the lesson. The same goes for the educator asking a student a question; if the student answers correctly, they know they have delivered their lesson successfully.

Participants were also asked about the improvements they have seen in Oke Ogun regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education. The majority mentioned that there has been an improvement in their students' academic performance, particularly when they perform in academic competitions against other schools. Secondly, although they mentioned that there is a lot the government needs to do to improve education, they still acknowledged that the government has made a few improvements, such as providing a few books to some schools, paying teachers on time, and providing some chairs to schools. Although most of the participants noted that there have been a few improvements, some were adamant that there have been no improvements in the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun.

Discussion of RQ3

The utilization of grades and questions to measure, track, and define success is common in an academic setting. Participants mentioned that grades help them gauge whether their students are genuinely learning or struggling with the content they are being taught. They utilize grades to provide feedback to not only their students but also themselves as educational professionals. Grades allow them to understand the areas they need to adjust in order to deliver quality education to their students effectively. They specified the use of graded assessments to measure their success as educational professionals and their students' success. For many educational professionals, this is ideal because, according to Tomlinson (2005), the purpose of assessments "is to help both teacher and student see how learning is progressing and to adjust as necessary to make sure learning stays on course" (p. 264). The grade results they obtain from the

assessments help guide the instructional decisions they make. Ultimately, each participant's goal is to communicate clear and useful information to enhance learning, and through the use of grades, they can gauge whether they have done so.

Participants in the study also believe in using questions to measure whether they have successfully delivered quality and accessible basic education. Based on a study conducted by Eshach et al. (2013), when teachers ask questions, it "is mainly to evaluate what students know" and to "draw out students' knowledge" (p. 68). However, when students ask questions, it confirms that they know what is expected of them, which helps educational professionals to fill in knowledge gaps (Eshach et al., 2013). According to participants, when they ask students questions and when students ask questions, they can evaluate whether learning has taken place successfully.

Apart from identifying how they measure success, the participants also identified improvements they have seen regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. The majority of the participants expressed that they have seen improvement in their students' academic performance, which they attribute to the extra classes and mentoring they are providing. This can seem like a contradiction based on some of their previous responses regarding academic performance. However, they acknowledge that their students still have a long way to go academically but that it would be unfair to say that there has been no improvement.

Like academic performance, the fact that they gave the government some credit regarding the efforts being made toward education can seem like a contradiction. They mentioned that unlike in previous years, the government has paid their salaries consistently, which has been a great motivator for educational professionals. They also mentioned that the government provides

a few textbooks and teaching materials to them every once in a while, which is helpful but often not enough. The issue with this is that based on Nigeria's National Policy on Education, the government is supposed to provide free education to all Nigerian citizens, meaning it is the duty of the government to pay the salaries of educational professionals, supply schools with textbooks and teaching materials, and maintain facilities (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). The fact that the participants found the need to give the government credit for something that should be standard speaks volumes regarding the state of education in rural areas like Oke Ogun. This is why one should not be surprised that some participants simply stated that they have not seen any improvements.

Results for RQ4

RQ4 asked, "What recommendations and lessons should educational professionals know about implementing quality and accessible basic education in rural areas of Nigeria?" The themes identified in the responses pertaining to RQ4 are listed in Figure 15. The associated areas of focus are included to identify each stakeholder's needs in order to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education in Oke Ogun.

The purpose of the interview questions for RQ4 was to identify what factors educational professionals should consider if they decide to teach in a rural area like Oke Ogun. Participants were asked to offer advice to other educational professionals who are interested in teaching in a rural area like Oke Ogun; the key theme that emerged from this question was the need to understand and accept the rural environment of Oke Ogun. This was followed by the need for educational professionals to be innovative due to the lack of resources available. Participants also mentioned the need for educational professionals to build solid relationships with their students. They emphasized the importance of getting to know each student on a personal level to create a

true connection. Lastly, a few of the participants mentioned the need for educational professionals to update their knowledge by attending seminars and in-service trainings. They mentioned how the government should provide continuing education courses for teachers to attend and that teachers should take the initiative to continuously update their knowledge and skills, whether the government offers courses or not.

Figure 15

Summary of All Themes Uncovered During the Data Analysis Process for RQ4



RQ4 also gave the participants the opportunity to reflect on the lessons they have learned during their time as educational professionals in Oke Ogun. A few of the themes identified were repetitive, such as relationship building and continuing education. Two new themes that were identified were: impact of education and teaching methods. Participants mentioned that through their years of teaching, they realized the true impact education can have on students' lives, which has allowed them to see and understand just how important their jobs are. Some participants also

noted that they learned the importance of utilizing a variety of teaching methods to effectively deliver their course content to their students who learn and assimilate information differently.

Discussion of RQ4

The recommendations given and the lessons learned by the participants in this study helped set the stage for future educational professionals in rural areas like Oke Ogun. Participants mentioned the need for educational professionals to understand their environment, be innovative, build relationships, and educate themselves continuously.

The importance of an educational professional understanding their environment is crucial to their success when it comes to teaching in a rural area like Oke Ogun. According to Fram et al. (2007), one of the best ways for a teacher to provide an adequate learning experience for students is for them to be knowledgeable about the environment in which they are teaching. Participants identified that this knowledge comes in handy when it comes to the need to improvise. An educational professional must learn to use what is at their disposal in their environment due to the lack of resources provided to them. Next is the need for educational professionals to build relationships with their students. This was identified as a recommendation as well as a lesson learned by the participants. Students need to be able to connect with their teachers. According to Aliyu et al. (2008) and Mamman et al. (2015), a lack of connection defeats the purpose of the UBE program. Last is the need for educational professionals to educate themselves continuously by attending seminars and trainings, and the study participants also identified this as a lesson they have learned. Although Nigeria's National Policy on Education states that teachers should receive career-long professional development, many of the participants said they had received either very little development or none at all (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Due to the lack of professional development opportunities, participants

suggested that educational professionals take matters into their own hands and find ways to update and enhance their personal knowledge.

Aside from the two lessons mentioned previously, participants also identified that they learned the true impact of education and the need to utilize various teaching methods. Participants stated that through their work as educational professionals, they realize the impact education can have on their students and society. As stated previously, education is a tool that can decrease inequality by helping citizens acquire knowledge and skills to secure employment and financial success. Through their work, educational professionals can empower their students, contributing to them escaping poverty and increasing their output, income, and wealth (Garba, 2010). Lastly, participants mentioned that they learned to utilize different teaching methods to teach their students effectively. In a study conducted by Murphy et al. (2018), it is suggested that to facilitate learning, teachers need to utilize a variety of teaching methods that can range from traditional lecture to classroom discussions, in-class actives, and active classroom participation. The teaching methods used by educational professionals will depend on factors like “pedagogical outcomes, the instructor’s own teaching preferences, teacher expectations, student gender and personality type, academic level and discipline, student needs, and class size” (Murphy et al., 2018, p. 307). The participants acknowledged that they need to identify what teaching method should be implemented in order for them to deliver a lesson successfully.

Researcher’s Recommendations

It is easy to say that giving these schools in Oke Ogun money will solve all their problems. Although money does play a major role in improving the quality and accessibility of education in Oke Ogun, what is truly important is what is done with that money and how it is spent. The government can give a school all of money they need—and more—but that does not

mean that the quality and accessibility of education will improve. What makes the challenges identified in this study complicated is that they are multilayered and feed into one another. For example, a school can have all the teaching materials needed to teach students, but if the students are not educationally ready, then those teaching materials become useless. Based on the findings in this study, I was able to identify and offer the following recommendations to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education delivered in Oke Ogun.

The Nigerian government simply needs to do more. It is the duty of the government on the federal and local level to provide an education to Nigerian citizens. As stated previously, simply giving schools money isn't enough. The government needs to set up an adequate and fully functional school monitoring system that focuses on the conditions and management of schools. Doing so will help the government understand what kind of infrastructure is needed at the different schools, whether it be more classrooms, laboratories, toilets, or even major renovations. The same goes for teaching materials; a monitoring system needs to be implemented that ensures schools and educational professionals in the Oke Ogun area have adequate teaching materials, which ranges from textbooks to teaching aids to chalkboards, pens, and paper.

This study found that many students must work or learn a trade after school so they can support their families, which is affecting their readiness to learn. This issue is also one for which the government should take responsibility. There is no reason why a child in elementary school should be working to support a family. This is where the need for job creation becomes important; the government needs to create jobs for the parents of these students. If parents have jobs, they will be able to meet the basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter) of their children, which will significantly reduce or even eliminate the need for students to work after school. Not only will this increase students' readiness to learn, but it will also curtail the need for educational

professionals to spend their own salary to feed students. Educational professionals supporting students financially simply must stop. It is not the responsibility of educational professionals to feed students or supply teaching materials. As stated previously, the government is responsible for providing teaching materials. Additionally, when it comes to feeding students, the government should look into the possibility of implementing a school feeding program.

When it comes to overcrowded classrooms and overworked educational professionals, the Nigerian government needs to start recruiting educational professionals on a yearly basis, focusing specifically on recruiting locals who are already familiar with the Oke Ogun area. The local government should even consider paying 50% of tuition for locals who pursue a degree in education. Additionally, when it comes to training future educational professionals, they need to be trained on the differences between teaching in rural and urban areas. Not all rural areas will have enough teachers and if teachers in urban areas are willing to move to rural areas to teach, they need to have a thorough understanding of what it takes to teach in a rural environment like Oke Ogun. Even after locals become educational professionals, they need continuing education to update their knowledge throughout their careers. Based on Nigeria's educational policy, it is the government's responsibility to provide continuing education opportunities. I suggest that the Nigerian government look into partnering with NGOs to provide continuing education opportunities to educational professionals.

Educational professionals should continue with their efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education Oke Ogun, such as mentoring, providing extra classes, and improvising. However, the reason for some of these efforts will change. For example, extra class time should no longer be provided because of a lack of teaching materials but rather because educational professional want to spend extra time with certain students who may be having a

difficult time with certain subjects. The same goes for improvising. There will always be a need for educational professionals to improvise depending on what they are teaching; however, it will no longer be due to a lack of teaching materials. When it comes to mentoring, educational professionals should always provide mentorship, regardless of the condition of the educational system.

Based on the recommendations I have made, I believe that the Nigerian government needs to partnerships with organizations like United Nations, World Bank, and even individual philanthropists. There are also many smaller NGOs that are always willing to provide goods and services, such as teaching materials and professional development. Aside from seeking outside help, the Nigerian government needs to take a hard look at the current state of education and its educational policies, because the current state of education in rural areas like Oke Ogun does not align with Nigeria's educational policies. As suggested by one of the participants, educational professionals need to be invited to the table to help create and implement educational policies. They know what the issues are; they know what will work and what won't work when it comes to education because they deal with it every day. The government has a large role to play and should be held accountable. With proper governmental intervention we should see an improvement in the quality and accessibility of basic education in rural areas like Oke Ogun.

Implications of the Study

This study's results affirm that educational professionals in Oke Ogun face a variety of great challenges that make it difficult for them to deliver quality and accessible basic education to their students. This study's participants were educational professionals in Oke Ogun; however, the challenges and best practices identified in this study will most likely mirror the experiences of other educational professionals working in rural areas of Nigeria. The challenges the

participants said they face working as educational professionals in Oke Ogun affect them and Nigeria's society. Nevertheless, this study's largest key takeaway is that it is nearly impossible to deliver quality and accessible basic education in rural areas like Oke Ogun given the current challenges participants in this study identified.

Implications for Future Educational Professionals

The study's findings may guide future educational professionals who are considering working in rural areas like Oke Ogun. This study's findings will allow them to have a clear and thorough understanding of the challenges that await them and provide them with the best practices to ensure their success. Although participants indicated that Oke Ogun needs more educational professionals, they are also adamant that they must understand what they are getting themselves into when they decide to teach in a rural area. This study can help lay a foundation for future educational professional training, particularly regarding working in a rural environment. Schools in urban areas face challenges that are often different from the challenges schools in rural areas face. In some cases, the burden of delivering quality and accessible basic education has fallen exclusively on educational professionals' shoulders. Although educational professionals do hold a high level of responsibility when it comes to delivering basic education, doing so is also the responsibility of the Nigerian government.

Implications for Nigerian Government Leaders

Based on participants' responses, it is clear that the Nigerian government plays a major role in delivering quality and accessible basic education in not just Oke Ogun but all of Nigeria. This study's results might offer the government the opportunity to review the current challenges educational professionals are facing regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education. One of the advantages of this study is that it directly identifies some of the major

challenges within the government's UBE system pertaining to basic education. This can provide direction and guidance to the Nigerian government regarding the areas that need to be focused on concerning the delivery of quality and accessible basic education.

The government needs to reevaluate the current system and make adjustments because Nigeria's National Policy on Education and the current state of education are not aligned. The government also needs to invite educational professionals to the table to contribute to educational policies. A few of the participants mentioned that Nigeria's educational policies are often written by individuals who have no experience in education and genuinely do not understand the challenges within the system. Education is an important contributor to Nigeria's growth and economic development, which is why the results of this study are crucial. If the Nigerian government does not take the challenges identified by the educational professionals in this study seriously and work toward making appropriate changes, the continuous negative impact of these challenges will be detrimental to Nigerian citizens and society.

Implications for Nigerian Citizens

The findings of this study can offer Nigerian citizens who are not educational professionals, such as students and parents, the opportunity to enlighten themselves, fight for their rights to quality and accessible education, and hold their government accountable. Parents and students in rural areas have the right to be frustrated with the lack of quality and accessible basic education in their area. However, citizens are often a part of a system that they know does not benefit them, but they fail to truly know their rights within the system. There is a high possibility that most Nigerians have never seen Nigeria's National Policy on Education, much having read it, to know what they are entitled to education-wise. Like educational professionals and the government, parents and students also play a role in the delivery of quality and

accessible basic education in rural areas like Oke Ogun. Like educational professionals, students and parents should be considered when it comes to educational policies.

Study Conclusion

This study has uncovered key challenges regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. Various areas require attention within Nigeria's educational system, particularly in rural areas like Oke Ogun. However, no one solution can solve the problems identified in this study because many of the challenges are interconnected. For instance, the issue of overcrowded classrooms cannot be solved until more teachers are hired. This study revealed that if rural areas like Oke Ogun want to see a change in the quality of education students are receiving, then all of the stakeholders identified in this study need to fully acknowledge these challenges and work toward improving Nigeria's educational system.

The participants identified key challenges within the educational system; however, they also identified ways to improve the system, which are seen as best practices for providing quality and accessible basic education. For these best practices to be implemented, the four educational stakeholders each play a major role. Educational professionals need help; they can no longer carry the load of an entire educational system on their own. They cannot be expected to teach, provide textbooks and teaching materials, and even feed students. Rather they need to work in an educational system that carries the load while they support the system through their efforts as educational professionals. The government has to play its part, and so do students and parents. If the need for infrastructure, teaching materials, teachers, funds, and other necessities are not taken seriously, then the quality and accessibility of basic education in rural areas like Oke Ogun will continue to decline. All stakeholders must understand that the challenges identified in this study

need to be addressed because the current state of education in rural areas like Oke Ogun affects more than just Oke Ogun; it affects Nigeria as a whole.

Applications

According to the study's participants, four primary educational stakeholders contribute to the successful delivery of quality and accessible education: educational professionals, students, government, and parents. Along with identifying educational stakeholders, the participants also identified specific educational needs that need to be fulfilled to ensure the successful delivery of quality and accessible education.

Based on the study's findings, the researcher was able to identify a pattern of giving and receiving that happens among educational stakeholders in order for an educational system to be successful. Each of these stakeholders participates in providing and receiving certain educational needs that contribute to the delivery of quality and accessible education. Some of the stakeholders are receivers and providers, whereas some are strictly providers. Jokodola's Educational Needs model illustrates who the receivers and providers are, as well as what needs they are receiving and what they are providing. These educational needs have been identified as essential for the delivery of quality and accessible education by the study's participants through their responses to the interview questions.

Educational Professionals

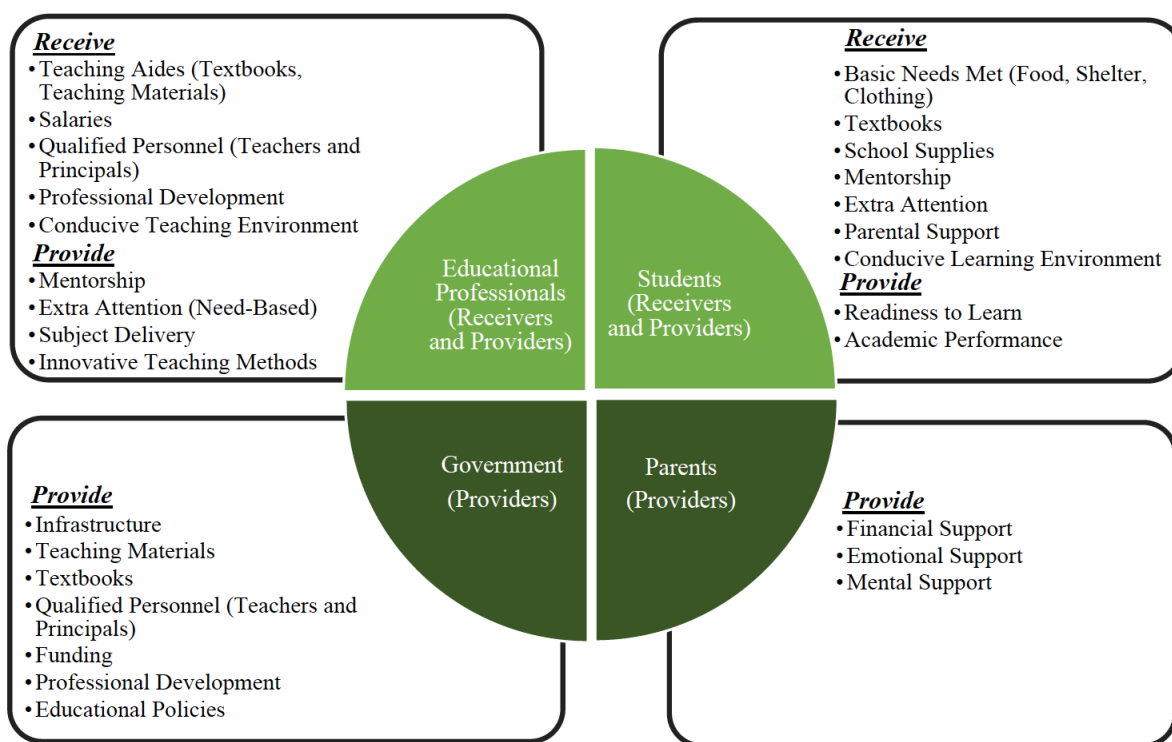
Educational professionals are a combination of receivers and providers. To do their jobs effectively and efficiently, they need to be given tools and resources that will aid and guide them in delivering quality and accessible education, such as teaching aids, professional development, etc. In addition to being receivers, educational professionals are also providers. Whether they are principals or teachers, it is their job to ensure that students receive a quality education once they

step into a classroom. To ensure this, educational professionals need to fulfill educational needs by providing subject delivery, mentorship, etc. See Figure 16 for more educational needs that educational professionals receive and provide.

Figure 16

Jokodola's Educational Needs Model

Jokodola's Educational Needs Model



Students

Similar to educational professionals, students are also receivers and providers. Although students are primarily receivers within an educational system, it is important to note that they are also providers. Students provide two things to the educational system: their readiness to learn and their academic performance. Students provide a readiness to learn to their teachers, allowing an effective transfer of knowledge to occur. Secondly, students provide their academic performance through grades and assessments. Their academic performance helps educational

professionals gauge whether education is being delivered to students successfully. When it comes to being receivers, students are the primary receivers of any and every educational system. Students are the nucleus of an educational system, and when the educational needs of students are not met, there is little chance of an educational system succeeding. For students to thrive educationally, they need to have their basic needs met (food, shelter, clothing), textbooks, parental support, etc. See Figure 16 for more educational needs students receive and provide.

Government

Unlike the previous stakeholders, the government is only a provider in an educational system. The government must provide educational professionals and students with the necessary educational needs in order to have a quality and accessible education system. It is the government's obligation to provide resources like funding, qualified personnel, professional development, educational policies, etc. See Figure 16 for more educational needs the government meets.

Parents

Lastly, parents also play a meaningful role in the educational system. Like the government, parents are providers, and within an educational system, parents need to provide various types of support, such as: financial, emotional, and mental. Parents should financially support their children by ensuring their basic needs (food, shelter, clothing) are met. They should also provide emotional support by taking the time to understand and cater to their children's emotional needs so that it does not negatively affect their performance and interactions at school. Finally, parents should provide mental support by ensuring that their children are mentally healthy enough to process and understand what is being taught to them in class. See Figure 16 for educational needs parents meet. The model presented in Figure 16 is universal and can be

referenced worldwide because the needs identified are basic ones that should be met in every educational system, whether in a rural or urban setting.

Recommendations for Future Research

Many scholars have studied Nigeria's educational system, with different areas of concentration. In truth, there is no one way to approach this topic. Many components of this research could stand alone as a study. For instance, this research focused primarily on the experiences of educational professionals in Oke Ogun; however, future research should be conducted that focuses solely on the experiences of students, parents, and the government in Oke Ogun. Because all of them are stakeholders within the educational system, it is important to understand their thoughts, views, and experiences with the challenges of delivering quality and accessible basic education. It would be valuable to know the challenges students face when it comes to being on the receiving end of Nigeria's educational system; there seems to be very little research based on the students' experiences. The same goes for parents; it would be beneficial to know the efforts parents are putting forth regarding education and the challenges they face having students in the educational system. As for the government, thorough and in-depth research should be conducted regarding why with a national educational policy in place there are so many challenges when it comes to delivering quality and accessible basic education to Nigerian citizens. Doing so will allow for a more detailed and comprehensive view of the educational system.

Furthermore, a study should be conducted in other rural areas in Nigeria, after which those results should be compared with this study. It would be valuable to know if the challenges identified in this study are isolated to Oke Ogun or if these challenges can be seen in other rural

areas across Nigeria. The results will help the government create either a national strategy or localized strategies that focus on improving the delivery of basic education.

Lastly, further research should be conducted regarding the effectiveness of Jokodola's Educational Needs model. I would recommend a deeper dive into the needs listed in the model to know whether more needs should be added to the model or if certain needs are unnecessary to deliver quality and accessible education. Further research may identify needs that were not uncovered in this study that can improve the delivery of quality and accessible education.

Final Thoughts

This study aimed to determine the quality and accessibility of basic education delivered in the rural area of Oke Ogun, in Oyo State. This study was designed to uncover the challenges regarding the delivery of basic education and identify the best practices to improve the delivery of basic education in rural areas like Oke Ogun. However, to identify the best practices, the researcher had to first identify the challenges regarding the delivery of quality and accessible basic education in Oke Ogun. With the assistance of educational professionals in Oke Ogun, the researcher was able to identify what the participants perceived to be the challenges within the educational system. The challenges identified through the knowledge and experience the participants shared were not surprising because they have been identified in previous studies. It was surprising that these challenges still exist on such a large scale and that so little has been done to address them. The participants openly and freely expressed their frustrations with the Nigerian educational system's continuous decline, often saying, "Things should not be this way." In today's modern world, there is absolutely no reason why a school should not have at least one toilet for students to use. There is also no reason why students and teachers are not supplied with adequate textbooks and teaching materials. Furthermore, we should not see one teacher with 80+

students in one classroom; however, this is the current state of education in Oke Ogun. Moreover, there is a high possibility that these challenges can also be observed in other parts of Nigeria.

Studies like this one should be used as a catalyst for change. We have to stop providing Band-Aids and start providing solutions. As stated previously, we cannot expect educational professionals to carry the weight of an entire educational system; they need help. It seems that governmental leaders fail to see the impact education has on society's growth and economic development. According to Joshi (2017), "education has the potential to improve economic opportunity and lead to social mobility" (p. 422). A lack of education leads to illiteracy, which leads to poverty for many. A country with a high poverty rate will naturally experience less growth and development. If Nigeria wants to reduce illiteracy and poverty and produce citizens that can contribute to society, then extra attention needs to be paid to improving the country's overall educational system.

The government plays a large role in the education its citizens receive. "Governments are obliged under the international law to take measures in order to correct inequality in education and remove the barriers that obstruct access to quality education" (Todorova & Djafche, 2019, p. 445). Although it is easy to point fingers at the government for all the challenges the educational system is experiencing, placing the blame will not help solve these challenges. Rather, it is time for the government, educational professionals, students, and parents to all come together if there is any hope of Nigeria overcoming these challenges.

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APPENDIX A:

IRB CITI Certification



Completion Date 06-Oct-2020
Expiration Date 06-Oct-2023
Record ID 38848940

This is to certify that:

Alice Jokodola

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Graduate & Professional Schools HSR
Graduate & Professional Schools - Psychology Division
Human Subjects Training
1 - Basic Course**

(Curriculum Group)

(Course Learner
Group)

(Stage)

Not valid for renewal of certification
through CME. Do not use for
TransCelerate mutual recognition
(see Completion Report).

Under requirements set by:

Pepperdine University

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w01bcc928-fa76-497d-9ee4-1002b0a66111-38848940

APPENDIX B:

IRB Approval Notice



Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: February 23, 2021

Protocol Investigator Name: Alice Jokodola

Protocol #: 20-11-1464

Project Title: Best Practices to Improve the Quality and Accessibility of Basic Education Service Delivery in the Rural Area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State in Nigeria

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Alice Jokodola:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

cc: Mrs. Katy Carr, Assistant Provost for Research

APPENDIX C:

Pepperdine University Informed Consent

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

(Graduate School of Education and Psychology)

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES



IRB Number # 20-11-1464

Study Title: Best practices to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education service delivery in the rural area of Oke Ogun, Oyo State in Nigeria

Invitation

Dear [name],

My name is Alice Jokodola, I am conducting a study on the quality and accessibility of basic education service delivery in Oke Ogun. If you are 19 years of age or older and an educational professional working in Oke Ogun, you may participate in this research.

What is the reason for doing this research study?

This is a research project that focuses on the current challenges within Nigeria's educational system, and by interviewing educational professionals in Oke Ogun identifies the best practices to improve Nigeria's educational system within rural areas. Through the data collected in this study, the researcher was able to propose recommendations on how the government and educational leaders in Nigeria can contribute to the improvement of Nigeria's educational system, particularly in rural areas. In order to participate you must be 19 years of age or older and an educational professional working in Oke Ogun.

What will be done during this research study?

Participation in this study will require approximately 60 minutes. You will be asked to a series of questions aimed at figuring out what strategies are used by leaders in your field. Participation will take place via zoom.

What are the possible risks of being in this research study?

This research presents minimal risk of loss of confidentiality, emotional and/or psychological distress because the interview involves questions about your leadership practices. You may also experience fatigue, boredom, or anxiety as a result.

What are the possible benefits to you?

You are not expected to get any personal benefit from being in this study.

How will information about you be protected?

Reasonable steps will be taken to protect your privacy and the confidentiality of your study data. The data will be deidentified and stored electronically through a secure server and will only be seen by the research team during the study and until the study is complete.

The only persons who will have access to your research records are the study personnel, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and any other person, agency, or sponsor as required by law. The information from this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as group or summarized data and your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

What are your rights as a research subject?

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study.

For questions concerning your rights or complaints about the research contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB):

- Phone: 1(310)568-2305
- Email: gpsirb@pepperdine.edu

What will happen if you decide not to be in this research study or decide to stop participating once you start?

You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study (“withdraw”) at any time before, during, or after the research begins for any reason. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the investigator or with Pepperdine University (list others as applicable).

You will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

Documentation of Informed Consent

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your interview responses, is your given consent to participate in this research. You should print a copy of this page for your records.

APPENDIX D:

Recruitment Script



Recruitment Script

Dear [Name],

My name is Alice Jokodola, and I am a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting a research study examining strategies educators in Nigeria utilize and what challenges they face when implementing Nigeria's Basic Education system and you are invited to participate in the study. If you agree, you are invited to participate in the interview process. The interview is anticipated to take no more than 60 minutes and will be conducted via zoom which will be recorded (password protected).

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your identity as a participant will remain confidential during and after the study. Confidentiality will be maintained using a password protected laptop to store all data collected including informed consent, the recorded interview, and the transcribed data. All data will also be deidentified using a pseudonym which will be assigned to each individual recording. If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact me at alice.jokodola@pepperdine.edu

Thank you for your participation,
Alice Jokodola
Pepperdine University, GSEP
Doctoral Student

APPENDIX E:

Peer Reviewer Form Request

Dear reviewer:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study. The table below is designed to ensure that may research questions for the study are properly addressed with corresponding interview questions.

In the table below, please review each research question and the corresponding interview questions. For each interview question, consider how well the interview question addresses the research question. If the interview question is directly relevant to the research question, please mark “Keep as stated.” If the interview question is irrelevant to the research question, please mark “Delete it.” Finally, if the interview question can be modified to best fit with the research question, please suggest your modifications in the space provided. You may also recommend additional interview questions you deem necessary.

Once you have completed your analysis, please return the completed form to me via email to xxxx@pepperdine.edu. Thank you again for your participation.