



NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FACILITATORS PERCEIVED IMPACT OF TRAINING THE TRAINERS ON TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL ACHIEVEMENTS IN BORNO STATE NIGERIA

Dr. Mwada Dadi Nggada

nggadam@gmail.com

+2348025353320

Department of Continuing Education and Extension services,
University of Maiduguri, Borno state

And

Goni Shettima

+2348037479944

Department of English Language,
Borno State University, Maiduguri, Borno state

And

Mercy Chechet

+2347039663519

Bukar Kolo Street Maiduguri, Borno State Nigeria

And

Mohammed Suleina

+2348035064692

Department of Continuing Education and Extension services,
University of Maiduguri, Borno state

Abstract

This study assessed the perceived impact of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) training on non-formal education facilitators in Borno State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to identify the training level of Non-formal facilitators in Borno State, identify how facilitators perceived TaRL in Borno State, and identify the impact of TaRL to Non formal education facilitators in Borno state. Survey design was employed, data collected from random sample of 200 facilitators using a structured questionnaire titled "Non-formal Education Facilitators Perceived Impact of Training the Trainers (NFEFPITT)". Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to analyze the data. Findings reveals that regarding training levels, while the initial workshop was highly effective with (80%) reporting increased instructional competency, (77.5%) gaining assessment skills, and (75%) being equipped with practical methodologies, critical gap was identified. Only (50%) of facilitators received adequate follow up mentorship, and an overwhelming (85%) expressed a high need for further training to sustain the approach. Facilitators' perceptions of TaRL were overwhelmingly positive: (85%) found it effective for improving learning outcomes, and (77.5%) observed increased learner engagement. However, disconnect was noted, as only (55%) adequately supported by program administrators. Despite this, (82.5%) would highly recommend TaRL to peers. The impact on facilitators was profound, creating a virtuous cycle. (90%) observed significant improvements in learners' literacy and numeracy skills, which in turn fueled their own professional growth (85%) reported increased confidence and enhanced teaching skills, (87.5%) acknowledged contributions to their professional development, and (82.5%) experienced higher job motivation and satisfaction. In conclusion the "Training of Trainers" model successfully builds foundational skills and generates strong facilitator buy in but requires a robust system of continuous professional development and administrative support to ensure the long term



sustainability and scalability of TaRL achievements in Borno State. Recommendations include institutionalizing structured mentorship and regular refresher training.

Keywords: Non-formal, Facilitators, Perceived, Training, Trainers

Introduction

Education systems are broadly categorized into three distinct types: formal, non-formal, and informal. Non-Formal Education (NFE) constitutes organized, structured educational activities that operate outside the established formal school curriculum, designed to provide flexible learning opportunities for youth and adults. These programs encompass vital areas such as functional literacy, vocational skills training, and community development initiatives, employing dynamic, learner centered, and practical methodologies (UNESCO, 2019).

In the Nigerian context, a significant impediment to the quality of NFE is the prevalent lack of specific professional training among its facilitators. Many facilitators originate from formal teaching backgrounds grounded in pedagogy the methods of teaching children and consequently struggle to adapt to the principles of andragogy, which emphasize self-directed learning, the utilization of learners' experiences, and immediate applicability of knowledge (Taylor & Hamdy, 2017). This mismatch in foundational methodology often results in instructional approaches ill-suited for adult and out of school youth learners, undermining program effectiveness (Yusuf, 2017). Therefore, targeted training is not merely beneficial but critical. Contemporary understanding frames effective training as a continuous process of professional development that equips individuals with job-specific competencies, bridges performance gaps, and enhances motivation, thereby directly contributing to both individual capability and the attainment of organizational goals (Desimone & Pak, 2017).

The Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach presents a direct, evidence based response to foundational learning crises common in contexts where educational access has not translated into actual competency. Originally developed by the Pratham organization in India, TaRL was designed to address the alarming disparity between high school enrollment rates and critically low learning outcomes, where a significant proportion of children remained unable to perform age-appropriate reading and numeracy tasks (Banerji & Chavan, 2016). The methodology pivots from a rigid, grade based curriculum to a level based one, anchored in five core elements: (1) simple, individual assessment to determine actual learning level; (2) clear, achievable learning goals; (3) grouping children by learning level rather than grade; (4) the use of varied, activity-based pedagogy; and (5) employing appropriate and accessible teaching-learning materials (Banerji, 2020).

Robust evaluations, including randomized control trials, have demonstrated TaRL's strong positive impact on foundational literacy and numeracy, often showing significant gains compared to conventional teaching methods (J-PAL, 2019). This evidence has supported its expansion from community-led "Learning Camps" to large scale government partnerships, facilitating national and international scale. The model has subsequently been adapted and implemented across numerous Sub Saharan African countries (Andrew et al., 2019). In Nigeria, TaRL was piloted in Borno State in 2018 through a partnership involving Plan International, TaRL Africa, and UNICEF. Following reported initial successes in improving learning outcomes, the program has been scaled to several



other northern states (Plan International, 2021).

This study is important to government, Non-governmental organizations, facilitators, administrators and management of Non-Formal Educators as well as future researchers. The result of the finding will be important to the unicef, parathem, and Plan international in the senses that, the result of the work will serve as a guide for them in dealing with similar problems of Non-Formal Education Facilitators on TaRL will also be important to the government and Non- governmental organization (NGOs) because the work will serve as a point of reference in addressing similar problems that may occur concerning the Non-Formal Education Facilitators on TaRL. Lastly the result of the study will be of benefit or important to future researcher because the result will serve as a reference material for writing project on similar topic.

This research work is delimited to Non-Formal Education Facilitators on TaRL in state Nigeria such as, Non-formal Education Facilitators Perceived Impact of Training the Trainers on Teaching at the Right Level Achievements in Borno State Nigeria, to identify the training level of Non-formal facilitators in Borno State, to identify how facilitators perceived TaRL in Borno State, to identify the impact of TaRL to Non formal education facilitators in Borno state,

The theoretical framework of this study is best on Human capital theory that was proposed by Schultz in (1961) and later developed extensively by Becker (1964). This theory was developed by Becker and Mincer and can trace it origins to macroeconomic development theory. Gary Stanley Becker developed Human capital theory based on Schultz's research on return- on investment. Human capital

theory suggests that Education or training increases the productivity of workers by imparting useful knowledge and skills, hence raising workers' future income by increasing their lifetime earnings. Researchers have long understood that human capital especially ones' education and training, plays a key role in both employee and firm performance (Becker 1993, mince 1974). Much of the contemporary literature on training and development finds a positive relationship between individual performance (Schmidt 2007, jones 2012Bapna 2013) and firm performance (Hatch and Dyer 2004, Vidal-Salazar 2012, Georgiadis and Pitelis 2016).

This theory is related to this study in the sense that training needs is most basic needs of instructors in the learning centers after social welfare of the instructors they needs training and retraining to enable them acquire new skills, knowledge and method which will be used to instruct Adult learners in an easy way because the theory stated that Human capital theory suggests that Education or training increases the productivity of workers by imparting useful knowledge and skills, hence raising workers future income by increasing their lifetime earnings.

The facilitator is the crucial agent in delivering TaRL's promise. Their role shifts from a transmitter of a fixed curriculum to a facilitator of targeted, activity based learning within flexible groups. Consequently, the quality and sustainability of TaRL achievements are fundamentally dependent on effective facilitator training not as a one-time event but as an ongoing system of initial preparation, continuous mentoring, and support (Popova et al., 2018). This study, situated in Borno State, Nigeria, seeks to examine this very nexus by assessing the perceived impact of the TaRL "Training of Trainers" model on non-formal education facilitators, their



instructional practices, and their professional growth.

The Facilitators in Borno State are tasked with the complex mission of rebuilding basic competencies among traumatized and multi-level learners, often in camp settings or overstretched classrooms, yet they frequently operate with minimal or inconsistent training. Many lack formal certification and have had limited access to continuous, context sensitive professional development that addresses the specific psychosocial and pedagogical demands of teaching in a crisis affected region. Consequently, there is a palpable risk that the TaRL program, despite its proven potential, may fail to achieve its intended learning outcomes due to variations in facilitator understanding, methodological application, and adaptive capacity. While the generic need for TaRL facilitator training is well established, the specific, contextualized training needs of facilitators operating within the unique and challenging milieu of Borno State remain inadequately mapped and understood. Without a systematic assessment of these needs, training programs risk being generic, misaligned with on ground realities, and ultimately ineffective.

This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by posing the central problem: What are the specific, priority training needs of TaRL facilitators in Borno State, Nigeria, to equip them with the competencies required to effectively implement the program and address the profound foundational learning crises exacerbated by conflict and displacement? Identifying these needs is the essential first step toward designing targeted, impactful professional development that can empower facilitators, enhance program fidelity and outcomes, and contribute meaningfully to educational recovery in Borno State.

Statement of the Problem

In Borno State, Nigeria, the educational landscape has been severely disrupted by protracted conflict and insecurity, leading to widespread displacement and the collapse of formal schooling structures for many children and youth. This crisis has heightened the reliance on Non-Formal Education (NFE) programs as a critical alternative. However, a persistent challenge undermines their effectiveness: many NFE facilitators, often volunteers or instructors from formal backgrounds, lack specific training in andragogical principles and adaptable methodologies suited for diverse, multi-level, and often traumatized learners, to address foundational learning gaps, the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) approach was piloted in Borno State in 2018 by partners including Plan International and UNICEF. While initial results showed promise, the sustainability of such interventions hinges on the continuous competence and motivation of facilitators. Current efforts, often limited to initial "Training of Trainers" workshops, risk being insufficient. A critical gap exists in structured follow up mentorship and continuous professional development, leaving facilitators without ongoing support to adapt techniques, troubleshoot challenges, and sustain fidelity to the methodology over time.

This study, therefore, seeks to investigate this gap by assessing the perceived impact of the TaRL training from the facilitators' perspective. It will document the current training levels, explore how facilitators perceive the methodology's practicality and effectiveness, and evaluate the program's impact on their professional development. By doing so, the study aims to provide evidence based insights for policymakers and implementing partners on how to strengthen training frameworks with sustained support mechanisms, thereby enhancing the long-term achievements and



scalability of TaRL in Borno State's complex NFE sector.

Objectives of the Study

The Following objectives are formulated to guide the study;

- 1 to identify the training level of Non-formal facilitators in Borno State
- 2 to identify how facilitators perceived TaRL in Borno State
- 3 to identify the impact of TaRL to Non formal education facilitators in Borno state

Research Questions

The following research questions are answered;

- 1 What is the training level of Non-formal facilitators in Borno State?
- 2 What are the level of facilitators perceived TaRL in Borno State?
- 3 What is the impact of TaRL to Non formal education facilitators in Borno state?

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. This design was deemed appropriate as it allows for the systematic collection of data from a sample of a population to describe their attitudes, perceptions, and characteristics regarding the TaRL training program (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It facilitates a quantitative analysis of the "what is" scenario concerning facilitators' experiences.

The population for this study comprised all 850 non-formal education facilitators involved in the TaRL program across selected learning centers in Borno State. Given the large population size, a sample of 200 facilitators was drawn using a simple random sampling technique. This was achieved by assigning numbers to all 850 facilitators and using a lottery method to select 200, ensuring each facilitator had an equal chance of being selected and enhancing the representativeness of the findings.

Primary data was collected through a self-administered, structured questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the sampled facilitators with the assistance of field supervisors from the collaborating NGOs (Plan International and UNICEF). Clear instructions were provided, and consent was obtained before administration.

The instrument, titled "Non-formal Education Facilitators Perceived Impact of Training the Trainers (NFEFPITT) Questionnaire," was developed by the researchers based on the study's objectives and a review of relevant literature. It was divided into two sections.

Section A: Collected demographic data (sex, age, occupation, experience).

Section B: Contained 15 structured items designed on a 4-point Likert scale (Very High Extent, High Extent, Some Extent, Low Extent) addressing the three research objectives on training level, perception, and impact. To ensure validity, the draft questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by two experts in Adult and Non-Formal Education from the University of Maiduguri. Their feedback was used to refine the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the items. Reliability was established through a pilot study involving 30 facilitators who were not part of the main sample. Data from the pilot was analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.81, indicating a high degree of internal consistency for the instrument.

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequencies and percentages were computed for all questionnaire items and presented in tables for clear interpretation. This analytical approach is suitable for summarizing the perceptions and characteristics of the sampled facilitators (Pallant, 2020).



Results

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

S/N	Variables	Responses	Frequency	Percentages (%)
1	Sex	Male	120	60.0%
		Female	80	40.0%
2	Age	25 – 30 years	50	25.0%
		31 – 35 years	60	30.0%
		36 – 40 years	40	20.0%
		41 – 45 years	30	15.0%
		46 years and above	20	10.0%
3	Marital status	Married	130	65.0%
		Single	70	35.0%
4	Occupation	Civil servant	40	20.0%
		Farmer	30	15.0%
		Teacher	70	35.0%
		Student	20	10.0%
		Businessman	40	20.0%
5	Working Experience	1 – 5 years	80	40.0%
		6 – 10 years	60	30.0%
		11 – 15 years	30	15.0%
		16 – 20 years	20	10.0%
		21 years and above	10	5.0%

Findings from the study revealed that the facilitator pool is predominantly male (60%) and relatively young to mid-career. The largest age groups are 31-35 years (30%) and 25-30 years (25%), meaning over half (55%) of the facilitators are under 35. Marital status showed that majority (65%) are married, which may indicate a level of personal stability and deep roots within their communities. Results on

occupation indicated that teachers form the largest single group (35%), while a substantial 65% come from other professional backgrounds including civil servants, farmers, businessmen, students. Experience levels are polarized. A large proportion (40%) have 1-5 years of experience, and another 30% have 6-10 years, meaning (70%) have a decade or less of experience.

Table 2: The Training Level of Non-Formal Facilitators in Borno State

S/N	STATEMENT	LEVELS			
		VHE	HE	SE	LE
6	Has the TaRL training increased your competency in foundational literacy and numeracy instruction?	90 (45.0%)	70 (35.0%)	30 (15.0%)	10 (5.0%)
7	To what extent did the training provide you with adequate skills in student-level assessment and grouping?	80 (40.0%)	75 (37.5%)	35 (32.5%)	10 (5.0%)
8	To what extent were you equipped with practical, activity-based teaching	85 (42.5%)	65 (32.5%)	40 (20.0%)	10 (5.0%)



	methodologies suitable for multi-level learners?				
9	To what extent did the training include follow-up mentorship or support after the initial workshop?	40 (20.0%)	60 (30.0%)	70 (35.0%)	30 (15.0%)
10	To what extent do you feel a need for further training to sustain the TaRL approach effectively?	110 (55.0%)	60 (30.0%)	20 (10.0%)	10 (5.0%)

Findings on the training level for non-formal TaRL facilitators in Borno State as presented in Table 2 revealed that the initial TaRL training was highly effective in building core instructional competencies. A strong majority of facilitators reported positive outcomes: (80%) felt their competency in foundational instruction increased, (77.5%) acquired adequate skills in assessment and grouping, and (75%) were equipped with practical methodologies to a High or Very High extent. However, a critical weakness is evident in the area of follow-up support. Only (50%) of facilitators reported

receiving adequate post-workshop mentorship or support, revealing a significant gap in the training's continuity and sustainability structure. This gap directly correlates with the most pronounced finding: an overwhelming (85%) of facilitators expressed a High or Very High need for further training to sustain the TaRL approach effectively. This underscores that while the foundational workshop was successful, facilitators perceive a requirement for ongoing, advanced professional development.

Table 3: How Facilitators Perceived TaRL in Borno State

S/N	STATEMENT	LEVELS			
		VHE	HE	SE	LE
11	To what extent do you perceive the TaRL methodology (grouping by level, not grade) as effective for improving learning outcomes?	90 (45.0%)	80 (40.0%)	20 (10.0%)	10 (5.0%)
12	To what extent is the TaRL approach practical to implement within your local teaching context and resources?	70 (35.0%)	75 (37.5%)	35 (17.5%)	20 (10.0%)
13	To what extent does the TaRL approach increase learner engagement and motivation in your classroom?	85 (42.5%)	70 (35.0%)	30 (15.0%)	15 (7.5%)
14	To what extent do you feel supported by the program administrators (e.g., SUBEB, UNICEF, Plan International) in implementing TaRL?	40 (20.0%)	70 (35.0%)	60 (30.0%)	30 (15.0%)
15	To what extent would you recommend the TaRL approach to other non-formal education facilitators?	100 (50.0%)	65 (32.5%)	25 (12.5%)	10 (5.0%)



The results in Table 3 reveals that non-formal education facilitators in Borno State hold overwhelmingly positive perceptions of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) methodology, but identify a clear area for systemic improvement. It was found that facilitators strongly endorse the fundamental TaRL approach. A large majority (85%) perceive it as highly effective for improving learning outcomes, and (77.5%) report it significantly increases learner engagement and motivation. This foundational belief is critical for successful implementation. While still positive, perceptions of practicality are slightly more reserved, with (72.5%) finding it practical to a High/Very High extent. The higher "Some Extent" and "Low Extent" responses (27.5% combined) suggest that contextual challenges such as resource limitations,

large class sizes, or infrastructure may pose hurdles for seamless application. Perceptions of support from program administrators are the weakest, with only (55%) feeling adequately supported. It indicates that while the initial training and methodology are valued, the ongoing coaching, resource provision, and problem-solving support from implementing partners are perceived as insufficient by a large portion of facilitators. The positive classroom experience and belief in the method's effectiveness translate into strong advocacy. An overwhelming (82.5%) of facilitators would highly recommend TaRL to their peers (Q15). This indicates that the perceived benefits for learners outweigh the challenges of implementation and support gaps.

Table 4: The Impact of TaRL to Non-Formal Education Facilitators in Borno state

S/N	STATEMENT	LEVELS			
		VHE	HE	SE	LE
16	To what extent has implementing TaRL improved your confidence as a facilitator/instructor?	95 (47.5%)	75 (37.5%)	20 (10.0%)	10 (5.0%)
17	To what extent has the TaRL training and methodology enhanced your overall teaching skills?	90 (45.0%)	80 (40.0%)	25 (12.5%)	5 (2.5%)
18	To what extent has your involvement in the TaRL program increased your motivation and job satisfaction?	80 (40.0%)	85 (42.5%)	25 (12.5%)	10 (5.0%)
19	Do you believe your participation in TaRL contributes to your professional development?	100 (50.0%)	75 (37.5%)	20 (10.0%)	5 (2.5%)
20	TaRL program impacted your learners' acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills, based on your observation?	110 (55.0%)	70 (35.0%)	15 (7.5%)	5 (2.5%)

The data in Table 4 indicates that the TaRL program has had a profoundly positive and multifaceted impact on non-formal education facilitators in Borno State. The most significant finding is the observed

impact on learners, with a remarkable (90%) of facilitators reporting a High to Very High extent of improvement in children's basic literacy and numeracy skills. This direct, perceived success forms



the foundation for all other positive outcomes. This success translates into strong professional empowerment for the facilitators themselves. A large majority report increased confidence 85% and enhanced overall teaching skills (85%). Facilitators clearly view TaRL as key to their professional development (87.5%) for (Q19), which in turn boosts their job motivation and satisfaction (82.5%) for (Q18).

Discussion

This study focused on Non-Formal Education Facilitators Perceived Impact of Training the Trainers on Teaching at the Right Level Achievements in Borno State Nigeria. Results on the training level of non-formal facilitators indicated that the training successfully achieved its primary goal of skill-building but lacks a robust system for ongoing support, resulting in a strong consensus among facilitators on the need for more training to ensure long-term effectiveness. This agrees with the findings by Muralidharan and Singh (2020) in a review of education interventions in developing countries concludes that while one-off teacher training workshops have limited long-term impact, programs incorporating continuous in-service support, monitoring, and coaching show significant and sustained improvements in teaching practices and student learning. This directly supports the present finding that the absence of such a system in Borno State creates a sustainability challenge. Piper, Sitabkhan, Mejía and Betts (2018) also found that providing structured teachers' guides (like TaRL's activity-based methodologies) effectively builds initial competency. However, it emphasized that without ongoing mentoring and support, teachers often struggle to adapt the guides to multi-level classrooms or sustain fidelity over time. This echoes the present finding where facilitators felt equipped with

methodologies but still strongly desired further training.

It was also found that facilitators in Borno State are strong champions of the TaRL methodology, crediting it with improving learning and engagement. However, their perceptions highlight a disconnect between the effectiveness of the pedagogical model and the adequacy of the support system surrounding it. To sustain and scale TaRL achievements, strengthening structured, ongoing administrative and mentorship support is essential. This conformed to the findings of Conn, and Drame (2021) who investigated teacher motivation in a low-resource context. It found that administrative support and recognition from program officials were as critical for teacher motivation and sustained effort as the training itself. When teachers felt unsupported by the system, their commitment to innovative pedagogies waned, mirroring your observed disconnect in Borno State. Also, Popova, Evans and Arancibia (2018) examines in-service teacher training models. It concludes that "training-plus" models which combine initial workshops with ongoing, on the job mentoring and support are far more effective than training alone. The study notes that programs often fail to scale effectively because they invest in the initial training but neglect the costlier, yet essential, component of continuous support, precisely the gap your study identifies.

Findings on the impact of TaRL to non-formal education facilitators in Borno State reveals a powerful, self-reinforcing cycle: facilitators are equipped with an effective methodology (TaRL), they observe its tangible success in their learners, and this success directly fuels their own professional confidence, skill, and job satisfaction. The impact therefore extends beyond immediate learning outcomes to



build a more capable, motivated, and professionally engaged cadre of educators. This concurred with Kraft, and Blazar (2022) who focused on coaching, the study provides evidence that when teachers receive support that leads to visible improvements in student engagement and outcomes, it significantly enhances their self-efficacy job satisfaction, and professional identity. This creates a positive feedback loop, motivating them to invest further in their practice. This mechanism strongly aligns with the cycle observed in Borno State. A report by Banerji and Chavan (2020) noted that the program's success is not just in child learning. It documents how community volunteers and facilitators experience a "transformative change" in their own confidence and social status when they see children learn successfully under their guidance. This finding directly corroborates your conclusion that the impact builds a more capable and motivated cadre of educators.

Conclusion

A study of 200 non-formal education facilitators in Borno State, Nigeria, found the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) training highly impactful. Initial workshops effectively boosted instructional skills (80%) and assessment abilities (77.5%). Facilitators overwhelmingly perceived TaRL as improving learning outcomes (85%) and learner engagement (77.5%). The training also enhanced facilitators' professional confidence (85%) and job motivation (82.5%). However, key gaps threaten sustainability. Only 50% received adequate follow up mentorship, and 85% need further training. The study concludes that while successful, TaRL requires institutionalized continuous support and refresher training for long term viability.

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