

# Exploring Strategies for Preparing and Recruiting a Professional Somali Teaching Force

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**Abstract:** *The paper explored the strategies for preparing and recruiting a professional Somali teaching force. The importance of education in improving society is recognized, with educated teachers serving as the foundation of effective learning environments. The paper examines the history and challenges of teacher preparation and recruitment in Somalia, finding a complex landscape impacted by historical legacies, political instability, and conflict. Against this backdrop, the requirement for a skilled teaching force to propel educational development becomes clear. The main challenges facing teacher preparation and recruitment in Somalia include a shortage of qualified teachers, a lack of a well - coordinated policy framework for teachers, low salaries, and inadequate training programs. A number of strategies are recommended to overcome these challenges. These initiatives argue for investments in teacher training programs, increases in teacher pay, and the creation of a comprehensive national teacher policy framework. Collaborations with universities are also recognized, as are improvements to working conditions and the integration of local culture into training. In navigating educational challenges, effective teacher preparation and recruitment emerge as a promising avenue toward a brighter educational future in Somalia.*

**Keywords:** Education, preparation, professional teachers, Teacher education, Teacher recruitment

## 1. Introduction

Education is a fundamental right of every individual, and a well - educated population is critical to the economic and social development of a country. There is strong evidence to support the idea that among all school resources, qualified and experienced teachers are one of the most crucial factors in determining student performance. As a result, Darling - Hammond (2017) argued that as more nations become convinced that teaching is one of the most significant school - related factors in student achievement and that teacher preparation and development are essential building blocks in developing effective teachers, teacher effectiveness has quickly risen to the top of the agenda for educational policy. One of the top priorities for our country should be preparing and recruiting qualified teachers.

Teachers play a crucial role in helping students acquire the knowledge and skills they will need in the future. It is challenging for schools to maintain the kinds of transformative and supportive learning environments that students need and deserve without competent teachers working in every classroom. One way to build a strong and professional teaching force is by recruiting and selecting candidates who have strong academic backgrounds, are dedicated to teaching, and are well - prepared for the job. By doing so, it is hoped that these teachers will be able to provide high - quality education to their students and contribute to the overall improvement of the education system (Teachinplaybook, 2018) .

However, with 263 million children and teenagers still not in school, access to education continues to be a major obstacle for many children. One - third of primary school students, whether they attend a school or not, are unable to acquire basic skills because of poor quality education, which is preventing them from learning. To achieve the universal primary and secondary education targets, 69 million new

teachers are required. These teachers must have the abilities, expertise, and support necessary to provide a high - quality education (G20, 2018) .

The long - running hostilities in Somalia have had a significant impact on the educational system there. Only 37% of Somalia's population is literate, and less than half of primary - age children attend school, according to UNESCO. This has led to a shortage of qualified teachers in the nation, as many teachers lack the qualifications and expertise required to instruct children effectively.

Despite the government's and international organizations' attempts to restore the education sector, Somalia continues to face tremendous obstacles in providing excellent education to its people. One of the key issues is a lack of trained and professional teachers, which is crucial to increasing educational quality. According to UNICEF (2021) , Only a small portion of Somalia's primary school teachers have formal training, and even fewer of those have degrees in education. Overcrowding in classrooms, poor educational standards, and high dropout rates are all effects of the lack of trained teachers. The cycle of poverty, ignorance, and underdevelopment in Somalia has also been worsened by a shortage of qualified teachers. Therefore, it is crucial to consider how to prepare and recruit a skilled teaching force in Somalia. This paper examines strategies for preparing and recruiting a professional Somali teaching force.

### Concept of Teacher Preparation and Recruitment

Teacher preparation and recruitment are two interrelated aspects of teacher policy that aim to ensure the availability and quality of teachers in the education system. Teacher preparation refers to the process of developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of prospective teachers through various forms of education and training. The initial or ongoing training you receive to develop your skills and competencies as a teacher can also be considered preparation

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for teaching, along with elements like lesson planning and coming up with daily activities (Indeed, 2023). According to Delaware (2016), teacher recruitment refers to the process of attracting, selecting, and hiring qualified candidates for teaching positions.

According to Ball (1989) teacher preparation is usually composed of three main components: subject matter preparation, pedagogical training, and clinical practicum. Subject matter preparation involves acquiring the content knowledge and understanding of the curriculum that teachers are expected to teach. Pedagogical training involves learning the theories and methods of teaching and learning, as well as developing the professional skills and competencies of teachers. Clinical practicum involves applying the knowledge and skills acquired in real classroom settings under the guidance and supervision of experienced mentors or tutors (*A Guide to the ASHA Clinical Fellowship Experience*, n. d.). Teacher recruitment is usually influenced by several factors, such as teacher supply and demand, teacher quality and diversity, teacher incentives and motivation, teacher retention and career development, and teacher governance and management. Teacher recruitment strategies may include setting high entry standards, offering attractive salaries and benefits, providing scholarships or loans for prospective teachers, creating alternative or flexible pathways into teaching, promoting teaching as a noble and rewarding profession, and ensuring fair and transparent selection processes.

### Importance of a Professional Teaching Force

Enhancing educational outcomes in any nation requires having a qualified teaching workforce. On student success and overall school performance, well-prepared teachers have a significant impact (Roberts et al., 2022). They possess adequate subject knowledge and pedagogical skills that enable them to effectively deliver instruction that meets students' needs. When normal schools were established in the 19th century to train teachers, the history of teacher training and recruitment began. In the 20th century, alternate paths to teaching were created, and later programs to educate teachers were integrated into universities. These teachers are better equipped to engage students actively in learning processes, promote critical thinking skills, provide appropriate feedback on assignments and assessments, maintain classroom discipline effectively while creating an inclusive learning environment (Wang & Zhang, 2021). A high-quality teaching force leads to increased student engagement levels which subsequently results in higher academic achievements. Therefore, the importance of professional teaching force include improved teaching skills, enhancing students' performance, effective use of time, fewer disciplinary issues, and increased confidence.

### History of Teacher Preparation and Recruitment in Somalia

Teacher recruitment and preparation in Somalia has gone through significant changes over the years. During the colonial period, there were only two teacher training centers for elementary schools for the whole of Somalia. In Somalia, a teacher training center was established in 1946 at both north and south regions of Somalia. Prior to 1967, Somalia had four training centers for pre-service primary teachers,

including Teacher Training Center Hargeisa, Teacher Training Center Magistrale, Teacher Training Center Takasus, and National Teacher Education Center (NTEC) Afgoi. After independence, there were four teacher training centers; Amoud, Magistrale, Takhasus, and National Teacher Training Center (NTEC). One was in north and the rest were south Somalia. In 1963, National Teacher Education Center (later the Lafoole College of Education), was built to train secondary teachers (*Somalia - Teaching Profession - Teachers, Education, National, and Built - State University. Com*, n. d.). The first center for training elementary school teachers in Somalia was established at Sheikh in 1946 and provided a one-year course (El-Shibiny, 1970). The problem of training and retaining qualified Somali teachers proved to be one of the most persistent challenges faced by the Somali government in 1960s. In 1968-69 reports estimated that 50% of elementary teachers were unqualified teachers. In the 1970s, the Ministry of Education took on the responsibility of monitoring schools in Somalia and improving their performance (Mohamed & Nkomo, 2023).

There was no elementary teacher training center in Somalia between 1968 and 1972. This occurred after the Ministry of Education stopped accepting new applicants for three primary teacher training programs in Somalia in 1967, and the National Teacher Education Centre was changed to a secondary teachers college in 1968. A two-year primary teacher program was formed within the faculty of education from 1972 to 1975, and this program prepared a total of 675 teachers. To address the issue of teacher shortages, the Halane Teacher Training Institute was created in Mogadishu in 1975. The training lasted one year after intermediate school and two years from 1978 to 1984. The Halane Teachers Training Institute closed its doors in 1985. From 1968 through 1990, secondary school teachers were trained at Afgio's Lafole College of Education. This was Somalia's only teacher education college, and it was used to train secondary school teachers. Somalia had one of the highest rates of teacher attrition in the world. Between 1965 and 1981, approximately 24,000 primary school teachers were trained, but only 8,211 remained in the classroom by 1984. According to the World Bank and UNESCO (1987), this corresponds to a 66 percent attrition rate, or 12 percent every year. As a result of the high dropout rate, both the quantity and quality of education in Somalia have declined. The school system was largely damaged after the civil war (Ali, n. d.).

### Current Challenges in Teacher Preparation and Recruitment in Somalia

Teacher preparation and recruitment in Somalia face several challenges, including:

- **Shortage of qualified teachers:** In Somalia, there is a shortage of trained teachers; many of these teachers lack the skills and expertise required to impart knowledge to students. Numerous factors contributed to this shortfall, including the ongoing civil war, which caused disruptions in schooling and made hiring and retaining instructors challenging. According to GPE (2018), Somalia faces shortage of qualified teachers, especially in rural areas and among marginalized groups.

- **Lack of a well - coordinated managerial and policy framework for teachers:** Due to the federal system of Somalia, every region has its own educational standards and authority. This makes it difficult to build a uniform framework for teacher policy, regulate certification requirements, ensure equal distribution of teachers across regions and schools, and give teachers the support and supervision they need.
- **Low salaries:** Teachers in Somalia are typically paid very low salaries, which makes it difficult to attract and retain qualified teachers. This is especially true in rural areas, where salaries are even lower.
- **Inadequate teacher training programs:** Inadequate teacher training programs are common in Somalia, leaving teachers lacking the knowledge and skills necessary to instruct children successfully. This is because of the persistent conflict as well as a shortage of finance and resources. The government is expanding the number of qualified teachers and supplying better instructional materials by recruiting and training about 3000 new teachers to teach in public schools of most of the federal member states and Banadir regional administration.
- **Inadequate funding for teacher preparation and compensation:** The education sector in Somalia is heavily reliant on external donors, who frequently have competing interests and agendas. Domestic education financing is extremely low, amounting for only 2.5% of the federal government budget in 2020. This reduces the availability and quality of teacher training programs, as well as teacher incentives and salaries. Many teachers are paid irregularly or not at all, which has an impact on their morale and retention.

### Strategies for Recruiting and Preparing Professional Somali Teachers

To attract more individuals towards pursuing careers in teaching, several strategies can be implemented in Somalia. These include:

- **Increase the number of trainings:** increasing the number of trainings is important to ensure that teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach effectively. This can be done by providing more training opportunities for prospective teachers, as well as for current teachers who want to improve their skills.
- **Make the teaching profession more attractive:** As mentioned earlier, one of the biggest challenges in recruiting teachers in Somalia is the low salaries. The Somali government and international donors need to raise teacher salaries in order to make teaching a more attractive profession. They can also provide teachers with other benefits, such as housing and transportation allowances.
- **Provide professional development opportunities:** Teachers need ongoing professional development opportunities in order to stay up - to - date on the latest teaching methods and techniques. The Somali government and international donors can provide teachers with professional development opportunities through workshops, conferences, and online courses.
- **Developing a comprehensive and coherent national teacher policy framework** that defines the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders, sets clear

standards and criteria for teacher recruitment, training, certification, deployment, evaluation, and career progression, and aligns with the federal structure and regional diversity of Somalia

- **Partnerships with educational institutions:** Collaborating with universities or colleges can provide pathways for graduates interested in pursuing careers in teaching by offering specialized teacher education programs or fast - track options that merge academic coursework with practical experience through internships or apprenticeships.
- **Provide training based on Somali culture and life:** providing training that is based on Somali culture and life can help to make the training more relevant and effective. This can be done by involving local communities and teachers in the development of training programs.
- **Improve working conditions:** improving working conditions can help to attract and retain professional teachers in Somalia. This can be done by providing teachers with the necessary resources and support to do their jobs effectively, as well as by ensuring that they have a safe and supportive working environment.

## 2. Conclusion

This paper explored strategies for preparing and recruiting a professional Somali teaching force. The importance of well - prepared and trained teachers stands out among the various factors determining educational performance. Giving teachers knowledge of the subject, pedagogical skills, and the ability to build inclusive and engaging learning environments results in increased student engagement, academic accomplishment, and overall school performance. However, problems exist in many regions of the world, like Somalia, where a teacher shortage is hindering educational progress. In Somalia, the history of teacher preparation and recruitment has been influenced by colonial legacies, political instability, and violence. The nation's educational growth has been hampered by the conflict to offer enough training, retain talented teachers, and establish a unified policy framework. Several solutions should be considered to address these challenges and develop the Somali teaching force. Improving the attraction of the teaching profession by improving salary, benefits, and working conditions can encourage more people to seek teaching careers. Continuous professional development opportunities founded on global best practices as well as local cultural settings can empower teachers to deliver high - quality education. Collaborations between educational institutions and government agencies can pave the road for more efficient teacher education and entrance into the profession. Furthermore, a well - structured national teacher policy framework that addresses Somalia's different regional needs can provide clear guidelines for recruitment, training, deployment, and career advancement. Somalia may lead the way for educational change by prioritizing the recruitment, preparation, and encouragement of a professional teaching force, assisting its citizens in acquiring the knowledge and skills required for a brighter future. While the road ahead will definitely be difficult, it will also lead to a wealthier and educated nation.

### 3. Recommendations

To address the challenges of teacher preparation and recruitment in Somalia, a comprehensive and strategic approach is required. The following recommendations are made to improve teacher quality and the educational system:

- **Invest in Teacher Training Programs:** With the help of foreign organizations, the Somali government should invest in strong and successful teacher training programs. Offering ongoing professional development opportunities can ensure that teachers stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies and approaches.
- **Improve Teacher Salary:** Improving teacher salary is critical for attracting and retaining talented teachers. Raising compensation, and providing performance - based incentives might make teaching attractive and financially feasible.
- **Create a National Teacher Policy Framework:** It is critical to create a unified and comprehensive national teacher policy framework. This framework should lay out clear standards for teacher recruitment, training, certification, and evaluation. It should also take into account regional diversity.
- **Increase Education Funding:** Both the Somali government and international donors should increase education funding. Increased funds can help to support teacher training programs, improve infrastructure, and provide the materials required for effective teaching and learning.
- **Increase Recruitment Efforts:** Conduct focused recruitment initiatives in order to attract a variety of prospective teachers. This could include reaching out to new graduates, people from disadvantaged communities, and people who have a real desire to become teachers.

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