



Perception of Students Towards Teaching As A Career In Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This paper is designed to look into perception of students towards teaching as a career. The study discussed importance of teaching, such as building the hope of the citizens in the society. The paper identified benefits of teaching as a career such as making people to know the person as a scholar and encourages neat dressing while going to office. The research highlighted the goals of teaching such as producing conscious and efficient teachers in all levels of education in the society. The study identified factors that weaken student perception towards teaching as a career such as poor condition of teachers in the society and poor salary condition of teachers. The research identified factors that motivate students such as the use of rewards. The research discussed recommendations that government should endeavour to rehabilitate teachers through incentives and other rewards.

Keywords: Perception, Students, Teaching as a Career.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching has been an old profession right from the creation of man in Nigeria, teaching as a profession constitutes one of the oldest professions in the country. In general, teachers are known as the architects for societal development in the country (Chileman, 2019).

Teachers have the central role of building the society through people relating to the forces of change and development. That is why, the United Kingdom government placed education at the top. And the best salary is been paid to teachers. The best are in the teaching profession. There is a technological breakthrough sound and brilliant teachers in the profession (Orluoima, 2010). Consequent upon this, the new educational policy (UBE) calls for a great concern for teachers' education and development in science and technology and nomadic education in the country (Peter, 2016). They also made emphasis on the difficulties of rural education in Nigeria.

However, despite the important role played by teachers in developing our society, people still have negative feelings towards teaching as a career, which is associated with some factors. Inability and lack of access to participate in the day made Nigerian mostly students to have the feeling that teaching profession is a profession of lazy people and social misfits which was not like that during colonial era. Teachers were regarded to be words and highly respected through the profession, different talents for different individuals has been established by educational psychologist, no two persons are been exactly alike but each differs from one another in natural occupations. The educational implication of this, is that family background can be decisive to effects on the academic performance of students and is not often easy to determine occupational interest or aspiration of students. Until he or she attains higher class. Low recognition in the society, poor condition of service, lack of adequate qualified guidance counsellors in secondary schools delay in salary payment, lack of motivation and incentive and ill intention towards teachers by parents and those in authority made students to be discouraged towards teaching career.

Concept of Teaching

Above all, there is a saying that reward of teachers is in heaven has also been one of the factors that had poisoned the minds of students towards teaching profession. These are some of the negative factors that influence students' attitude towards teaching as a career in secondary school and it is clear that most people have eventually turned their backs at teaching profession. Others have made up their minds towards studying other courses such as accountancy, law and medicine etc. In all, despite the negative and demoralising factors, some students still have interest in teaching, due to some positive factors. The factors include; cordial relationship with children, love in reading in order to update themselves, opportunities for cool salary and others to mention but a few.

Importance of Teaching in the Society

What is Teaching?

Teaching as a career was an impressive profession nowadays because of its dividends or benefits in the lives of the people who chose it as a career. Most importantly, parents encourage their children to engage in teachers training institutions as a profession does to its positive manifestations in producing great men and women in the society.

The role of teaching profession is to bring up role models in the society, such as leaders with variety of charisma or potentials and also to develop full fledge adults with meaningful contributions in the society including development of the nation.

Teaching is a crucial profession that builds the hope of the society and citizenry; teaching people on their obligations. Life without teachers is incomplete in the society because of their role. Teaching career helps the youths and the students to update their knowledge and encourage them to know what to do at any point in time.

The benefits of teaching as a career:

Agba (2017) listed four benefits of teaching as a career. They are as follows:

1. It raises hope on the individual as a pensionable job.
2. It qualifies an individual as a civil servant and restored hope of financial entitlements such as arrears, minimum wage and leave allowance etc.
3. It encourages neat dressing while going to office.
4. It permeates the individual to have hope of monthly payment or salary as the month round up.
5. It makes people to know the person as a scholar.
6. It also encourages reading and daily rehearsal as to meet up one's task.
7. It builds a nation and produces men and women of meaningful contributions to the society.
8. It produces great teachers and unveil hidden potentials among the peoples.

Importance of Teaching

Teaching could be defined as a process or ability to impact knowledge to a person or group, while career means ones area of work or *modus operandi*.

Teaching as a field has patronized so many people who cannot succeed jobs in some to the places they aspire or hope to work. Teaching has transformed a lot of lives in the society despite the how people termed it to be or its nomenclature. It is a field that accommodates qualified and unqualified persons in order to make them survive and have food in their table. Teaching as a friendly field is lucrative compared to other fields. Consequent upon this, peoples in teaching profession are not valued in the society. Chile (2019) asserts that no education or field that can grow faster than teaching profession. It is the rush in teaching field that made federal government of the federation to constitute a body to look into the welfare of teaching in Nigeria.

The body instituted by Federal Government is called Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) and it was established by Act, No. 31 of 1993 to regulate and control the teaching profession. The emergence of (TRCN) as a profession body has sanitize teaching profession, thereby make it more contestable and competitive in the society.

The goals of teaching in the society are as follows:

1. It produces highly motive resource personnel in the society.
2. It produces conscious and efficient teachers in all levels of education in the society.
3. It is in teaching profession that the betterment of the country hinged or hope on.
4. Teaching profession produces creative men and women in the society.
5. Teaching profession provides teachers with intellectual and highly respected talents in the society.
6. Teaching profession enhances the growth and development of the society

Factors that weakens students' perception towards teaching as a career in the society

These are as follows:

1. Poor condition of teachers in the society.
2. Lack of recognition of teachers in the society.
3. Poor salary condition of teachers
4. Consistent negligence of teachers by the government.
5. Lack of recognition attached to teaching profession in the society.
6. Poor learning environment widely experienced by the people.
7. Socio-Economic factors.

Poor condition of teachers

Conditions of teachers in the society are enough evidence or facts to discourage the students' perception towards teaching career. Teachers suffer a lot compared to other civil servants or parastatals in the society. Government treats teachers as the poorest people in the society. They do not care much about their welfare and make them feel weak in discharge of their duties as government subject. Teachers found themselves in unconducive environment and this listed factors motivated some of the students to hate teaching profession with passion (Mercy, 2019).

Lack of recognition of teachers in the society

Ndu (2018), assets that teachers job is the most stressful one in the comity of vocations. It is a job sadelled with stress and pressure which requires patience and diligence to do. But, majority of the teachers are highly committed and dedicated to their job, but yet no good treatment attached to them. Teachers are seen as beggars in the eyes of people in the society because of government lack of recognition to them. Teaching profession is hated today in the society because of government ways of treating them. Teachers are tired of government suppressions on their statutory rights which have been clamped down by the government. To cap it all, government should change their ideology in handling teachers in the society in order to rekindle the hope of people towards teaching profession.

Poor salary condition of teachers

Otams (2019) posited that poor salary of teachers in the society has damaged the mind or feelings of students towards teaching career as a profession. The inequality in payment of salaries between jobs has masterminded the negligence and lack of respect in the teaching field. Salary of teachers in primary and secondary is nothing to write home about even with their high certificates. The ill-treatment meted to teachers makes the public vow not to take up teaching as a career and also help in blackmailing the noble career. The salaries of teachers which contrast remarkably with the salaries paid to other professional personnel. The differences are in the scale of salaries and in rate growth. The difference widens as the year roll by the situation leaves in service and construction firms even find it necessary to offer a salary of the right man for job. This is not alternative but to offer a competitive salary to the teaching profession as a whole in the nation really desire to attract competent personnel. To cap it all, education must be place first in the society (Dimkpa 2017).

Consistent negligence of teachers by the Government

It is obvious, that teachers are been neglected and not recognized by the government. The issues bordering on teachers are not taking seriously by the government because of the nature of teaching profession. Teachers always complain of their rights such as payment of salary allowances, leave allowance, imprest, just too mention but a few. Government do not attach single seriousness on teachers

request which sometimes warrant teachers to embrace on strike, exhibit unseriousness towards teaching in the classroom etc. Consistent negligence of teachers by the government has become a contemporary issue in the society. Government always abuse their civic obligation in resting hope of teachers and the public in issues bordering on teachers appeals to government to take teachers problem as their own and uphold the sanctity of teaching profession in the society.

Lack of recognition attached to teaching profession

Denmane (2016) posited that teaching profession which is a noble profession among all the professions is in shamble because of government unpreparedness and selfishness in recognizing teaching profession. Teaching profession is like mother of all the profession because of key role played by teaching profession in respect to other profession. For example; I am a lawyer or a doctor, you must past through teaching profession. Secondly, I am president or a governor, you must be tutored by a teacher. So, teaching profession should be accorded recognition by government and government should embark on meaningful projects that will restore the image of this noble profession in the society.

Poor learning environment

It is explicit, that poor learning environment in Nigerian schools has become the talk of the day. Some of the schools in Nigeria lack conducive learning environment and government feels retracting in addressing all this issues. When an institution lacks good learning environment, it will certainly affects the individual learning in the school. Government should assist in putting all the schools in shape and ensure effective learning result. Most teachers are faced with the problem of inadequate teaching facilities in primary and secondary schools such as textbooks, notebooks, laboratory equipment etc. all these things were not available, for students and teachers to learn.

Stanley (2019) defines learning environment as the whole range of components and activities which learning takes place. It takes the form of teachers' characters, teaching characters and classroom characters. It is obvious, that class size and infrastructure are primary classroom characteristics that shape learning environment. Learning is reduced if the classroom condition is too hot, too cold or lacks fresh air that leaves them drowsy. Elements like day lightening and indoor air have an effect on student performance and attitude particularly if they are inadequate. So, if the classroom is improved, students will be comfortable, feel relax and in turn facilitate concentration and consequent academic performance. Moreso, observing the above characteristics, made it difficult for secondary school students in Nigeria to key into the teaching career.

Socio-Economic Factors

Denu (2019) pointed that the new minimum wage have change the attitude of students towards teaching profession. These were seen as a good moral and productivity. Must people are now applying for employment in the profession because of the salary increase, as it a heady appears that the problem of increase in wage has declined.

He opined that great teachers help create great students. In fact, research shows that an inspiring and informed teacher is the most important school related factors influencing students' achievements. So, it is critical to pay close attention to how we train and support both new and experience educators.

Tahir (2018) equipped teachers with required skills and knowledge to make them to face the new requirements of basic education training and retraining of teachers by government. These have motivated peoples/students to choose the profession. Originally, teachers are known to be planners, builders of tomorrow and people who are sound in cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains and also versatile in the field of education.

Teaching is one of the noble professions that help in grooming people on how to read and write in the society. Teachers are held in high esteem in the society. Teachers commands such respect because of their moral standard, which students emulate and are influenced to engage in the profession. Socially, the love of children by teacher, taking care of children, teacher relating with students are some factors that influence students to go into the teaching career. Students are in love with teachers' closeness with them and has impartiality will interest them to become teacher in the school.

Factors that Motivates Student

Chiletex (2011) listed the following factors that motivate students towards teaching as a career. They are as follow:

- (a) The use of rewards
- (b) Increasing students' autonomy and choice
- (c) The use of collaborative or cooperative classroom environment with respect to goal structure attributions and external evaluation.

CONCLUSION

Teaching as a profession generally attracts discussion by people because it is a pensionable job that has job security. It is a profession that requires high degree of learning, training and retraining compared to other professions.

Furthermore, some students hate teaching due to not well paid in comparison to members of other profession with similar or even less training and longer tenure in office and low recognition in the society. Above all, poor salary also contributes to the negative attitude of students towards the profession.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Parents should encourage their children to have passion towards teaching profession.
2. Government should try to rehabilitate teachers through incentives and other reward.
3. Government should make teaching career a competitive profession by ensuring good accommodation, car gift, and good learning environment.
4. Government should motivate students towards teaching career by placing their needs above every other needs.

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