

Position of the Teaching Profession in Nigeria and Its Effects on Potential Business Teachers in the Country

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Abstract

The study investigated the stance of teaching profession and its effect on potential business teachers in Nigeria. The study has six objectives and six null hypotheses. Descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. Data were collected from 224 business education student-teachers who did their teaching practice in 2012/2013 academic year in Zaria and Sabon Gari local government in Kaduna state. Structured questionnaire titled Status of Teaching Profession and Future Teachers in Nigeria (STPFTN) was used to elicit data from the respondents. Data collected were coded and analyzed through SPSS XII. Chi-square was used to test all the six null hypotheses at significant level of 0.05. The result revealed among others that the status of teaching profession has significant effect on the attitudes of potential teachers in Nigeria. It was recommended among others that government should encourage the atmosphere of positive support for education, providing improved training and professional development, increasing teacher salaries, and installing outstanding facilities, this will help to encourage retained existing teachers and attract future teachers into the profession.

Keywords: Stance, Teaching Profession, Potential Teachers.

Introduction

The primary aim of any educational sector is to impact knowledge that can produce recipients with high quality skills, knowledge and competencies. It thus means that education is a powerful instrument for social progress without which no individual can attain any professional proficiency. Bearing in mind all the activities that occur in schools, the interaction between teacher and student is the determinant of student success. Considering this, the role of teachers is crucial role in determining whether or not the desired educational results are achieved. This opinion is similar with the one contained in the report of Quality of Teacher Education (2007), which stressed that teachers are the facilitators and classroom managers who are responsible for extending the boundaries of professional knowledge. Through commitment to the teaching profession, the desired educational results are obtained. Thus the teaching profession should be for those who are intellectually competence, effective and efficient decision-makers, creators of warm classroom environment, seekers of alternative strategies, and possessors of professional interest and pride.

Potential teachers are students who are undergoing training in faculties of education and colleges of education, on whom the academic success of a nation's next generation depends. Training given to potential teachers is supposed to make them develop a high degree of positive emotional feeling towards the teaching profession, and to identify with the teaching profession, and make them favourably disposed towards it. It is also supposed to empower them with skills and competencies required to be successful in the teaching profession (Aijaz. Muhammad and Muhammad, 2011). This was also the opinion of Akbar (2002) who observed that the training provided to potential teachers equips them with skills and understanding needed in the teaching profession, and develop in them the desirable professional interests, attitudes and ideas relative to the teaching profession. During the experience students teachers bridge the gap between theories and practice, this training provides an opportunity to prospective teachers to expand their beliefs and perceptions on the teaching profession. Schlager, Fusco, Koch, Crawford, and Phillips (2003) stated that potential teachers' needs are varied, and they can only be met by an appropriate combination of expert mentoring and professional training. Expatriating on this, Yahaya (2009) found that professional knowledge and skills that have positive impact on attitude and interest of future teachers are consistent with the principles and status of the teaching profession.

The success of the educational sector in Nigeria has a relationship with the quality of the country's teachers, their attitude, interest, self-esteem, self-perception, commitment to duty, and the recognition given to them and the teaching profession. As Husain (2005) rightly observed, the lack of recognition of the teaching profession may have negative effect on the attitude and interest of teachers, and potential teachers, towards the teaching profession. In line with this, the researchers decided to investigate the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria and its effect on potential business teachers.

Statement of the Problem

The training provided to potential teachers is to equip them with sufficient skills and competencies required in the teaching profession. This was emphasized by Akbar (2002) who maintained that training provided to potential teachers is to develop in them desirable professional skills, interest and attitude relative to the teaching

profession. Akbar (2002) continued that it is also to develop in them an understanding of educational principles and their implication for learning. It could thus be argued that the training provided to potential teachers is geared towards equipping them with skills, competencies, ethics, and core values of the teaching profession. Despite the importance of teacher education and the training given to future teachers in Nigeria, it is unfortunate that most potential teachers are not ready for the profession; in fact many experienced teachers are waiting for opportunity to quit the job. Surveys of what teachers' value about their work provide important insights regarding the teaching profession in Nigeria. Halil (2010) opined that the story how prospective teachers experience teacher education programs begins with a questioning who they are and what beliefs they bring to their training. The answers to such questions evolves over time as prospective teachers progress through teacher education programs, which in return may impact teachers' beliefs and perceptions about teaching. Regardless of what beliefs prospective teachers hold, one may wonder about the extent to which prospective teachers' initial beliefs are subject to change by the experiences they gain in teacher education programs, especially those related to subsequent led experiences gained during teaching practice. Husain (2005) reported that many teachers regard the profession as a 'transit job', pending when they will secure another job. What could be responsible for this worrisome attitude by teachers towards the teaching profession in Nigeria? What is the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria and how does that affect potential business teachers in the country? There is the need to investigate the situation.

Objectives of the Study

The study sought to determine the:-

1. Effect of the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria on potential business teachers in the country.
2. Effect of the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria on the need for professionalism among potential business teachers in the country.
3. Effect of the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria on passion for teaching career of potential business teachers in the country.
4. Effect of the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria on career choice among potential business teachers in the country.
5. Effect of the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria on job preparation of potential business teachers in the country.

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in the course of the study:

1. The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on potential business teachers in the country
2. The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on the need for professionalism among potential business teachers in the country
3. The position of teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on the on passion for teaching career of potential business teachers in the country.
4. The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on career choice of potential business teachers in the country
5. The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on job preparation of potential business teachers in the country.

Review of Empirical Literature

The study was based on the theory of Reasoned Action by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). The theory stated that attitudes, (i.e. the individual's positive or negative feelings about performing something - behaviour), subjective norm (i.e. the individual's perception of whether people important to the individual think the behavior should be exhibited), perceived behavioral control (i.e. The individual's perception on the self skills and ability of exhibiting a behavior) and behavioral intention (i.e. an individual's readiness to exhibit a given behavior) are the four components that direct an individual's behaviour. The founders of this theory maintained that the four components have serious effects on individuals. Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith, and Huo (1997) are proponents of this theory. They argued that professional recognition makes individuals in a profession to perform more efficiently, and it also increases their overall sense of self-worth, and ultimately they will be more motivated.

Empirical Studies

Researchers have investigated the relationship between the status of the teaching profession and interest and performance of teachers. Osunde and Omoruyi (2005) did an assessment of the status of teachers and the teaching profession in Nigeria. In the study, 400 post-primary school teachers were randomly selected from 40 post-primary schools in Nigeria. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The result of the study revealed,

among others, that teachers were not properly financially remunerated, and that they were looked down upon in the society. The result also revealed that poor conditions of service and teachers' negative personal and professional behavior were critical factors responsible for teachers' low status.

Osunde and Izevbigie (2006) assessed teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession in Nigeria obtain empirical evidence on teachers' attitude towards teaching profession in Midwestern Nigeria. In the study, 700 post primary school teachers were randomly drawn selected from 50 post-primary from 25 states. The questionnaire was used for data collection. The result of the study showed, among others, that the condition of service in the teaching profession was the main factor responsible for the negative societal attitude towards the profession.

Research Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. The population of the study consisted of all the 224 prospective business teachers who carried out their teaching practice in Zaria and Sabon Gari Local Government Areas of Kaduna State, Nigeria in the 2012/2013 academic year. The students were from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and Federal College of Education, Zaria.

Four-rating structured questionnaire; Strongly Agree (SA) – 4 points, Agree (A) - 3 points, Disagree (D) – 2 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1 point. The instrument, titled Status of Teaching Profession and Future Teachers in Nigeria (STPFTN), was used to elicit data from the respondents. The face and content validity of the instrument were established by three experts who went through initial drafts of the instrument and made inputs. To determine the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was conducted using forty students who were not part of the study. Cronbach's alpha was used in ascertaining the reliability of the instrument. The result gave a value of 0.80.

Considering that student teachers are considered as the bridge between theory and practice and future teachers, the researchers randomly distributed copies of the questionnaire to them, assisted by permanent staff in various the schools. The data collected was analysed. Chi-square was used to test all the six null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Findings

The findings based on the analysed date are presented in Tables 1 to 6.

Null Hypothesis One: The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on potential business teachers in the country

Results of test of null hypothesis one is presented in Table 1

Table 1: Chi-Square Test of position of Teaching Profession and Status of the Profession among potential business Teachers

Variables	S.A.	A	D	S.D.	Df	Chi-Cal	Chi-Crit	P-value
Position of teaching profession and its status among potential business teachers	39	51	109	92	3	9.646	7.815	0.0601

Result, presented in Table 1, showed that $X^2_C > X^2_{t 0.05}$ i.e. (9.646 > 7.815). The analysis indicated that the position of the teaching profession has significant negative effect on the status of the profession among potential business teachers in Nigeria. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected.

Null Hypothesis Two: The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on the need for professionalism among potential business teachers in the country

Analysis of data used to test null hypothesis two is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Chi-Square Test of position of Teaching Profession on need for professionalism among potential business Teachers

Variables	S.A.	A	D	S.D.	df	Chi-Cal	Chi-Crit	P-value
Position of teaching profession and need for Professionalism among potential business teachers	29	42	141	79	3	14.122	7.815	0.0920

From table 2, the calculated chi-square value was 14.122, against table value of 7.815 ($X^2_C > X^2_{t 0.05}$). The analysis showed that the position of the teaching profession has significant negative effect on need for professionalism among potential business teachers in Nigeria. The null hypothesis was thus not retained.

Null Hypothesis Three: The position of teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on the on passion for teaching career of potential business teachers in the country.

Table 3 present summary of the result of test of null hypothesis three.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test of stance of Teaching Profession on career intention of potential business Teachers in Nigeria

Variables	S.A.	A	D	S.D.	df	Chi-Cal	Chi-Crit	P-value
Position of teaching profession and passion for teaching career of potential teachers	30	77	127	57	3	14.172	7.815	0.0610

The result in Table 3 revealed calculated value of 14.172 which was found to be greater than the Table value of 7.815 i.e. ($X^2_C > X^2_{t 0.05}$). The result therefore shows that the position of teaching profession in Nigeria has negative effect on the passion for teaching career of potential business teachers in the country. Hence the null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Null Hypothesis Four: The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on career choice of potential business teachers in the country

Analysis of data used to test null hypothesis three is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Chi-Square Test of Position of Teaching Profession on career intention of potential business Teachers

Variables	S.A.	A	D	S.D.	Df	Chi-Cal	Chi-Crit	P-value
Position of teaching profession and career choice of potential business teachers	44	31	119	97	3	21.018	7.815	0.121

Result of data used to test null hypothesis three showed a calculated value of 21.018 against table value of 7.815. The result revealed that $X^2_C > X^2_{t 0.05}$. Hence the researchers concluded that the position of the teaching profession has significant negative effect on career intention of potential business teachers in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not retained.

Null Hypothesis Five: The position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has no significant negative effect on job preparation of potential business teachers in the country

Table 5 present summary of the result of test of null hypothesis five.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test of position of teaching profession on job preparation of potential business teachers

Variables	S.A.	A	D	S.D.	df	Chi-Cal	Chi-Crit	P-value
Position of teaching profession and job preparation of potential business teachers	30	77	127	57	3	14.172	7.815	0.0610

The result in Table 5 revealed a calculated value of 14.172 which was found to be greater than the table value of 7.815 i.e. ($X^2_C > X^2_{t 0.05}$). The result therefore meant that the position of teaching profession in Nigeria has significant negative effect on job preparation of potential business teachers . Hence the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion of findings

The result of test of null hypothesis one showed that the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria is affecting the status of the profession among potential business teachers. This outcome confirmed the finding of Hussain (2005), who affirmed that, generally, the teaching profession is not attractive both to prospective and practicing teachers Riga (2007) reported that the low status of the teaching profession is considered as one of the main reasons of the increasing lack of qualified teachers in Nigeria.

The study showed that the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria has negative effect on the need for professionalism among potential business teachers in Nigeria. This was also the finding of Ejiogu (1991), who reported that, as a result of poor motivation inherent in the teaching profession in Nigeria, the rate of labour turnover was high in the industry. Yahaya (2009) reported that people were leaving teaching because of its low status in the society. Hargreaves et al. (2008) reported that the low status accorded to teaching in Nigeria significantly made teaching unattractive.

The finding of the study established that position of teaching profession in Nigeria is affecting career choice of potential business teachers in the country. This finding affirmed that of Nwagwu (1994), who reported that over 80% of student-teachers sampled would not like to make teaching a life career even though they were interested in teaching as a profession. Similarly, Obinaju (1996) reported that the option, 64.4% of student-teachers involved in his study would opt out of teaching job should the opportunity arise to do so. Studies conducted by Nwagwu (1998) and Okoro (2002) showed that the prevalence of unqualified teachers in Nigeria was because majority of those in the profession were there on a 'stop gap' basis, waiting for the slighted opportunity to change jobs.

The result showed that the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria affects the job preparation of potential business teachers in the country. This result is similar with the one reported by Hoyle (1969) that the level of job

preparation of student-teachers was adversely affected by the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the outcome of the study, the researchers concluded that doing nothing to improve the position of the teaching profession in Nigeria is not the best, as this could continue to impact negatively on the profession.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:-

1. All the three tiers of government in Nigeria (federal, state, local) should channel adequate funds in the education sector: provide improved training and professional development for teachers, increase teachers' salaries, provide facilities in schools. This will help to attract people into the profession
2. The teaching profession is held in disdain in Nigeria The Nigerian society needs some form of re-orientation regarding the manner in which the teaching profession is viewed. .
3. Special incentives should be provided for anybody who wants to become a teacher. This could include scholarship and automatic employment on completion of study
4. Teachers should be proud of who and what they are. They should readily identify with the profession wherever they are. This can go a long way in improving the image of the profession in the eyes of the Nigerian public.

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