

Attitude of Teachers-in-training to Teaching Profession in the Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

***Ogunlade, J. O.**

Makinde, V. I.

*Department of Educational Psychology, College of Education
Ikere-Ekiti, Ekiti State. *E-mail: obote2011@yahoo.com*

ABSTRACT

This study was a survey of the attitude of teachers-in-training to teaching profession in the Nigerian tertiary institutions taking College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti and the Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti as a case study. The primary aim of this study was to evaluate the quality of intending teaching personnel and their dispositions to the teaching profession. The participants were stratified into two and random sample was used to draw one hundred students in the College of Education, Ikere Ekiti and fifty students in the Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University. A set of validated questionnaire entitled: Attitude of Teachers-in-Training to Teaching Profession [ATTTP] was used to measure their attitude to job roles in the teaching profession. Simple percentage and t-test statistics were used in analyzing the data obtained for the study. Findings revealed among others a deep negative attitude and non committance of the teachers-in-training towards teaching profession. To revert this unacceptable development, the culture of discipline, integrity, hardwork and dedication should be entrenched at the training level of teachers-in-training. Also, government and other stakeholders in education must ensure that they improve upon the welfare of teachers so that other people will be interest in joining the profession.

Keywords: Attitude, teachers-in-training, teaching profession, education

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is an occupation that demands of its practitioners a prolonged and specialized intellectual training. It is regarded as a noble profession because of its democratic nature which allows learners to use their personal initiatives. Meanwhile Fazio and Roskes (2004) opine that attitudes are important to educational psychology because they strongly influence social thought, the way an individual thinks about something and process social information. Emphasizing the ideal attitude of a teacher, Eggen and Kanchak (2002) have posited that positive teachers' attitudes are fundamental to effective teaching. A teacher must be interested, that is, the teacher must work his students into a state of interest in what the teacher is going to teach them and every other object of attention banished from their mind. One would have thought that with the global trends of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETF), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with special reference to teachers' participation such as capacity building programmes, series of governmental efforts in improving teachers' social status such improvements could be in terms of payment of salaries and incentives such as car loans, promotion as at when due like their counterparts in other arms of government establishments and other issues tailored towards enriching

teaching profession in Nigeria. These ought to entice teachers in training to show more commitment and appreciation towards training initiatives bestowed on them. But observation shows that many of these students see their intending profession as the last offer after they have scrambled for lucrative discipline and could not get it. This could be the reason there is an observed non-challant attitude towards their academic work. As it is observed that some of these students were absent from the school, they fail to comply with the rules and regulations guiding student registration, displaying poor study habit, hardly can you see them in the library, they copy assignment from friends instead of engaging in serious research. They do not attend lectures regularly. They are fond of examination malpractices.

Even some of them visited during teaching practice exercise appear very unserious as they fail to write note of lesson, cases of absence without permission, frivolous dressing, flagrant disobedience to their cooperating teachers, insubordination and so on. This observed attitude negates the identified number of attitudes that will facilitate a caring and supportive classroom environment such as enthusiasm, care, firmness, democratic practices to promote students responsibility, use of time for lesson effectively, have established routines and interact freely with students and providing motivation for them. (Eggen and Kanchak, 2001). This might be due to the fact that in teacher training set up, attention seems to be mainly focused on the cognitive development of the students and less on affective and psychomotor domain as against the fact that attitudes possess both cognitive and emotional component. This seems to make the environment boring and uninteresting unlike other Institutions or Faculties. One would expect that some kind of social engagements and games be introduced to make the school lively, for example in some Colleges of Education or Faculty of Education it is forbidden for their ladies to wear trousers or dresses that are in vogue. This has been disclosed to making students of Education unsociable and inferior compared to their counterpart in other faculties.

Research findings on teachers' attitudes (Brunning, Schraw and Ronning, 1999) established the following facts: Teachers characteristics such as personal teaching efficacy, modeling and enthusiasm, caring and high expectation promotes' motivation. These same characteristics are also associated with increase in students' achievement (academic performance) Fisher (1980) also claim that high levels of learning occur, and learners' feel good about themselves and the material they are learning when teachers use instructional time efficiently. Learning takes place with ease and faster under teachers that are well organized. The way a teacher interact with students influences their motivation towards school. How students perceive their teachers attitudes in Nigerian secondary school will be measures based on some of the stated points. As earlier mentioned government is initiating a lot of enriching programmes in teaching profession that could motivate the incoming teachers to be highly dedicated, but the big question is whether teachers in training are aware of this or they are still operating in the world of teachers when their salaries were not being paid, when they lack recognition from both the government and society. Meanwhile, Ambatch (2003) and Jegede (2003) have reported that government has enacted legislation to improve teachers' recruitment, or professional development by establishing Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria all with the aim of ensuring quality in the profession and

that is the why Owuamanam (2005) stresses that every society or association has legal codes that control its members and each profession has some professional codes of ethics, which control the behaviour, and actions of members in the practice of their profession. Such professional ethics in addition, give the profession the right or autonomy to control the conduct of its members though within the limits of the legal and moral ethics of the larger society.

Consequent upon these observations the researchers embarked upon this study to uncover the perception and attitude of teachers-in-training to their chosen profession and to investigate their awareness about the enrichments in teaching and how to develop positive attitude to teaching through their commitment to their academic pursuit in the teacher training. The quality of education in Nigeria has been a source of concern to all stakeholders in recent times. The observed challenges in the system no doubts has a link with the quality of the teaching personnel and the disposition to the teaching profession. Observation reveals that most of the student that gain admission into Nigerian Colleges of Education for (NCE) and the Faculty of Education in the University for B.Ed degree seems not to fully pay attention to their study. It appears as if they are not interested in teaching as a profession. Even it appears choosing the option of the College of Education or courses in Education in the University is the last option they have. They result to studying education because they could not secure admission in the course of their choice, either in other Faculties in the University or the Polytechnic. It is against this background that this study examined the attitude of teachers-in-training to teaching profession.

The study investigated the effect of the factors that are responsible for the negative attitude of teachers-in-training towards teaching profession. Attempt was made to create awareness towards the efforts of the government and individuals in making teaching attractive to guarantee the interest and commitment of students to teaching profession. In an attempt to proffer solution to the problem of poor dispositions of teachers-in-training to teaching profession, hypotheses were formulated.

- H₀ 1. There is no significant relationship between teaching as a profession and other professional job.
- H₀ 2. There is no significant relationship between job attraction and the choice of teaching as a profession.

METHOD

The research design used for this study was descriptive survey. The population consisted of all the students in the College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti and Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti. The sample comprises of one hundred and fifty male and female students of the two tertiary institutions. Each of the tertiary institutions sampled formed a stratum. Hence, 100 students were randomly selected from College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti and 50 from Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti. The sample cut across all levels (Part I - IV). The instrument used for collection of data for this study was a self designed questionnaire titled Attitude of Teachers-in-training to Teaching as a Profession (ATTTP). It was divided into two sections A and B. Section A consisted of

the subject's bio-data while section B contains twenty items that relates to the topic in question. The validity of the instrument was determined by using both face and content validity through consultation with experts in Education, Guidance and Counseling. The reliability of the research instrument was determined by using test-retest technique. A correlation coefficient of 0.83 was obtained. The distribution of the questionnaire to the respondents was by the researchers. All the copies of the questionnaire were duly completed and returned. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and t-test analysis to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicates that majority of the students possess unfavourable attitude towards their academic pursuit. A relatively high number and high percentages of the students responded yes to the items, that is, an average of 100 as against 50 uphold unfavourable attitude towards academic pursuit which is an indication of unfavourable attitude to teaching profession. Table 2 indicates that consequent to extrinsic value of respondents to the subject matter they are not committed to the pursuance of their intending profession. The percentage of "Yes" was incredibly higher than "No", as the average total score of 112 respondents say "Yes" as against 38 who say "No" indicating lack of commitment to teaching as a profession.

Table 3 reveals that the mean score of teaching is a little higher than the mean score of other jobs, the table also shows that the calculated t-test was 5.14, while the critical value of t-test was 1.96 since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value, the null hypotheses was rejected, that is there is a significant difference between teaching as a profession and other professional job. This implies that teachers-in-training prefer other professional jobs to teaching. Table 4 reveals that the mean score of job attraction is fairly lower in other profession than the mean score of teaching as a profession.

It is equally revealed that the calculated t-test 6.124 is greater than the critical value of 1.96 meaning that there is a significant difference in job attraction to teaching and teaching as a profession. This implies that teachers-in-training are of the opinion that there is no job attraction in the course they are pursuing. From the findings of this work it was clear that most of the teachers-in-training takes their academic endeavour with levity as this was evident in their attitude to execution of assignments and tests, they are only a little serious during examination period. This finding is against the submission of Darling (1999) that teaching demands a prolonged and specialized intellectual and exclusive knowledge and training for the acquisition of skill and attitude necessary for the service to the community suffice to say that they do not have positive attitude towards their future endeavour.

It was also discovered that trainees are not committed to the pursuance of their intending profession. This was mostly evident in their attitude to work during teaching practice as many of them were found wanting, displaying some non-challant attitude such as negligent of duties, irregularity at duty post, failure to display pedagogical instructions and the ethics of teaching profession. This finding negates the submission of Owuamanam

(2005), that every society or association has legal codes that control its members and each profession as evolved some professional codes of ethics, which controls the behaviour and actions of members in the practice of their profession such professional ethics in addition, give the profession the right and autonomy to control the conduct of the members, though within the limits of the legal and moral ethics of larger society. It was also revealed that most teachers-in-training see their intending profession as second to none meaning that if they have means they could have opted for another profession which seems to them as lucrative and catchy. This discovery was so because the respondents responded to items on the welfare of teachers such as the kind of salary that teachers are receiving and other fringe benefits available in other profession which was not available in teaching. The value of prestige that is reserved for teachers in Nigeria is not encouraging. All these have made trainees to conclude that teaching cannot offer them the necessary job satisfaction they needed in a job.

Table 1: Summary of Attitude of teachers-in-training to their academic work

Items	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
We offer too many courses	100	67	50	33
I manage to pass my courses	85	57	65	43
The content of my courses are strange to me	87	58	63	42
I read my book during examination only	111	74	39	26
I copy most of my assignment from my friends	120	80	30	20
Total Average	100	77.3	50	22.6

Table 2: Summary of commitment to the pursuance of teaching as a profession

S/N	Items	Yes		No	
		N	%	N	%
1.	I see teaching as a stepping stone to other profession	20	80	30	20
2.	I have no recognition for teachers in the society.	100	67	50	33
3.	The Government has no regard for teachers welfare	100	67	50	33
4.	I see teachers dressing as not been good enough.	120	80	30	20
5.	I don't think there can be job attraction in teaching	120	80	30	20
	Total Average	112	74.6	38	25.3

Table 3: Summary of t-test difference between teaching and other profession

Variable	N	x	s.d	df	t-cal	t-table
Teaching	150	3.58	12.54	298	5.140	1.96
Other job	150	38.58	11.47			

P<0.5 significant

Table 4: Summary of t-test difference between job attraction to teaching and other profession

Variable	N	x	s.d	df	t-cal	t-table
Teaching	150	4.57	13.52	298	6.124	1.96
Other job	150	40.20	12.34			

P<0.5 Significant

CONCLUSION

This study looked into the attitudinal disposition of teachers-in-training to their intending profession. The observation of the authors who are experienced trainers of teachers proves that the symptoms of poor perception and attitude through expected characteristics build up of teachers and performance of their job roles is prevalent among these would be teachers. Consequent upon the findings of this study, it could be concluded that teachers-in-training have unfavourable attitude to teaching profession. They are not committed to the pursuance of the profession, they have seen nothing good in teaching. Efforts must therefore be made to ensure that trainees are made to know that teaching is a noble profession and that a teacher is a model to others in any society. Government and other stakeholders in education must ensure that they improve upon the welfare of teachers so that other people will be interest in joining the profession. Teaching is a profession characterized by discipline, integrity, hardwork and dedication, trainers must make sure that all these virtues and values must be well entrenched in the course of training.

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