

## **Influence of Remuneration, Teaching Anxiety and Occupational Stress on teaching as choice of career among undergraduates of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study investigated the influence of remuneration, teaching anxiety and occupational stress on teaching as a choice of career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. These factors were selected as major precursors of teaching as a career choice among undergraduates. The study employed a descriptive survey method. A simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 255 using the Taro Yamane formula from a population of 700 respondents. Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire. The data retrieved from the questionnaire were analysed using mean deviation. A major finding of the study revealed that remuneration, teaching anxiety and occupational stress do not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. The study recommended that teachers should be provided with better monetary and non-monetary remunerations to encourage more undergraduates toward teaching as a career choice.*

**Key Words:** *Career, National Open University of Nigeria, Occupational Stress, Remuneration, Teaching Anxiety and Undergraduates*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Career choice is a fundamental part of an undergraduate's life. Several factors influence the choice of career among undergraduates. Career choice-making involves a dynamic process that propels and stimulates individuals to passionately identify with a career that appeal to their future orientation and hope of becoming a successful and productive individual in society. Diverse factors such as level of stress, anxiety, social status, salary, family influence, religion, passion, creativity,

educational requirement, occupational benefits and natural skills or talents could influence one's career decision.

These factors could make the process of choosing a career difficult, cumbersome, frustrating, and anxiety-laden. According to Utibe (2020), because of diverse factors to be considered in choosing a career, students in Nigeria are often faced with the complexity involved and these challenges make some of them make wrong career choices which make them find it difficult to gain employment at the end of the day. Therefore, understanding possible factors that might impact on career choice making process is a significant issue of concern in present day contemporary Nigerian society. It further makes this study necessary and timely.

Ito et al. (2018) stated that the present challenges of modern society influence the decision of people to identify with a particular career. For example, the economic challenges of being financially buoyant to take care of basic needs, maintain a good standard of living and quality of life. Thus, students would endeavour to choose careers that will enable them to have good financial status, and be economically independent. Baglivio et al. (2014) averred that the beginning of success in a career and recording good achievement is first making a good career choice for which an individual has the required passion, intellectual and personality dispositions required for success in that career path.

It implies that making a career choice could be tasking and frustrating. For example, Borgen and Hiebert (2006) revealed that some undergraduates are often faced with the problem of career choice indecision when they appear not to be satisfied with their chosen career probably because they are faced with challenges of adapting to higher educational standards, overseeing the transition from secondary school to higher institution and reality in the larger society. In support, Chai et al. (2013) posit that the wrong career choice can open the door to life-long negative developmental career consequences. However, a well-planned career choice path could enhance positive career developmental progression that would be rewarding and satisfying. Also, a good career choice could ensure career commitment that would make employees be well focused on their job, be productive, functional, and put in their very best to fulfil their intentions and actualise their dreams. Thus, it is of note that when an individual makes a wrong career decision, it could impact that individual's performance, level of commitment, organizational performance, and job satisfaction because over time individuals who have made the wrong career choice will feel very dissatisfied, stressed, and unhappy, dissatisfied while doing the task or job. But a good career choice could ensure success in job search, adjustment, and stability (Chai et al., 2013).

Interestingly, studies have shown that career choice is an essential part of undergraduates' life because the choice of career made by students may affect how they will live the rest of their lives. Many undergraduates gain admission into higher institutions without knowing what career they want or desire. Therefore, it is pertinent for a student to understand a career before choosing it (Authur, 2010; Adamu, 2019). For example, professions such as teaching, medicine, engineering, and law have attributed expectations and occupational hazards that require individuals to be acquainted with before choosing a career.

Teaching, though a unique noble profession that involves positive character formation and modification of human behaviour during the process of teaching and learning experience and transmission of knowledge is one of the least professions that people would desire to choose as a career. Most people choose to teach as a career after running out of luck in their initial career pursuit (Utibe, 2020). This is the reason why so many teachers do not enjoy their jobs. According to research conducted by Philemon (2019), 88% of teachers or lecturers graduated from the Faculty of Education in various higher institutions in Nigeria. This, therefore, led to the conclusion that most teachers in Nigeria only chose the teaching profession because of the course they studied and not because they wanted to make an impact on the society and Nigeria at large (Philemon, 2019).

Despite this development, the services of teachers are quite indispensable in the society because without teachers hardly would a country achieve its educational goals (Salifu, 2013). Because of this important role, teacher self-motivation needs to be considered as one of the most important measures to possibly ensure that highly qualified teaching staff is attracted and retained in the teaching profession in order to provide quality teaching in Nigerian schools. This is especially important as there have been many reports recently of teachers leaving the profession to take on other jobs in the country. For example, it has been estimated that around 10,000 teachers in preschool (i.e., preschool, elementary, middle, and high school), which represent 5% of the country, leave the classroom each year (Salifu, 2013).

Beside studies carried out in Nigeria, studies in other countries have shown that there are various factors influencing teaching as a choice of career among undergraduates. In Ghana, the USA, and New Zealand, for example, Ibidapo-Obe (2007), Anthony and Ord (2008), and Claeys (2011) identified huge salaries, attractive bonuses and job recognition as factors influencing the teaching as choice of career among undergraduates. The result of these findings was contrary to the findings conducted by other researchers in other countries like Canada and Malta, where Mathew (2005); Watt and Richardson (2007; 2012) found family time, job

security and teaching anxiety as the factors influencing teaching as a choice of career among undergraduates. Generally, these factors have been found to link to internal and external factors affecting the choice of teaching according to den Brok *et al.* (2013). These factors propose that both practicing teachers and future teachers in various countries around the world can be influenced by various factors, both in the decision to remain as a teacher or in the decision as a career choice.

Remuneration is termed as a pay, salary or financial benefit given to an employee for services provided. According to Oyebamiji (2013), Herzberg's theory, remuneration is essential for continuous operation and progressiveness because it stimulates employee's willingness to be committed to an organisation. Salary paid as remunerations to employees is part of an organisation's fundamental obligation to an employee which in turn affects the employee's short- and long-term satisfaction and commitment to the organisation. Remuneration also takes the form of bonuses or increased wages, salaries, allowances, employers' appreciation in the like of giving rewards to high achievers and other forms of payments. Also, Oyebamiji (2013) found that good remuneration predicts job satisfaction collectively and independently predict job performance. Also, it determines the quality of relationship that exists between supervisors and subordinates, and the opportunities for employee promotion, all of which have a significant impact on career satisfaction.

Utibe (2020) reported that most individuals, in the course of making career choice, their choice pattern is influenced by the assumed salary structure attributed to a profession vis-à-vis the amount people are paid in the profession. "For instance, many students choose to become petroleum engineers simply because oil company workers are known to earn a lot of bonuses. Others go into politics due to the amount of money allocated to politicians. In terms of teaching in Nigeria, most teachers are not well-paid especially in public primary and secondary schools. According to research conducted by Moses and Obi (2020), the average salary of a primary schoolteacher in Nigeria is about N10,000 while the average salary of a secondary schoolteacher is about N20,000 to N45,000. This is the main reason why teachers go the extra mile of performing extra lessons just to balance up the payment. An undergraduate from the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) for instance would not graduate after four years and choose to become a secondary school teacher. On the other hand, lecturers in universities earn big salaries. The basic salary for a lecturer-1 in the university is nothing less than N190,000 (Moses & Obi, 2020). This may propel the undergraduate towards choosing a teaching job in the university as a career choice.

Teaching anxiety is a source of grave concern to educational researchers for quite some time now spanning more than six decades. Williams (2011) found that teachers' teaching anxiety appears to be a neglected topic in classroom research. Williams noted that teachers in the process of teaching could sometimes express anxiety due to being scared or apprehensive of the topic to be taught. However, it is observed that previous studies have failed to determine the types and levels of anxiety or fear teachers experience while teaching that might generate teaching anxiety. To address these issues, specific scales have been developed to systematically measure student-teachers' teaching anxiety (Williams, 2011). Teaching anxiety is one of the components of emotions that interfere with teachers teaching performance and wellbeing. It is said that teaching anxiety occurs when a teacher in the course of teaching becomes jittery, afraid, and unable to control their fear which could eventually erupt into psychological and emotional maladjustment (Williams, 2011).

Likewise, occupational stress is a common element in all types of work that appears to impact negatively on the wellbeing of most individuals. According to Robbins and Sanghi (2006), occupational stress is a dynamic state in which an individual is faced with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what they want and the outcome of which is felt to be both uncertain and important. He also found that stress at work is linked to almost every aspect of a job or work situation, extreme heat, noise and light or too much or too little responsibility. Javeed (2012) identified that workers express occupational stress due to the factors such as extra workloads, pressure by employers and supervisors, insufficient communication, no recognition, unjust appraisal system, poor working conditions and poor salaries and other rewards. Javeed (2012) further indicated that occupational stress leads to counterproductive work behaviours and a strong correlation exists between occupational stress and career choice. Also, Khan (2013) conducted a study to assess the occupational stress level of operational staff of Islamic Banks. These included age, gender, organizational climate, and work stress as variables used to determine job satisfaction among employees in these banks. Khan (2013) concluded that job satisfaction is significantly influenced by the organizational climate and work stress.

The challenges of making career choice among undergraduates are quite tasking and frustrating. The competitive nature of global labour market, the unavailability of jobs and the poor reservations society have for some jobs make the choice of such jobs dejecting. Teaching happens to be one of such jobs as experienced in Nigeria. Most people opt for teaching as the last resort because they see teaching in Nigeria as a profession that is poorly paid, highly intellectually

tasking, stressful and worst of all looked down upon. These observational experiences often discourage some passionate individuals to align with teaching profession in Nigeria mostly at the primary and secondary school level. In view of this context, this study investigated influence of remuneration, teaching anxiety and occupational stress on teaching as choice of career among undergraduates of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), using Ibadan Study Centre as a case study.

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of remuneration, teaching anxiety and occupational stress on teaching as choice of career among undergraduates of the National Open University of Nigeria and specifically to:

1. Determine the influence of remuneration on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan.
2. Examine the influence of teaching anxiety on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan.
3. Ascertain the influence of occupational stress on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan.

### **Research questions**

1. Does remuneration influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan?
2. Does teaching anxiety influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan?
3. Does occupational stress not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan?

## **METHOD**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design using the *ex-post facto* type of a quantitative nature using questionnaire to collect valuable data. It is a type of design that the researcher usually has no control over the variables of interest being investigated and therefore cannot manipulate them. The population of this study consisted of undergraduates attending the National Open University

of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. The researcher used a population of 700 undergraduates from various departments in NOUN, Ibadan. This study employed a simple random sampling method to select 255 undergraduates attending the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) at the Ibadan study centre as sample. The researcher utilized Taro Yamane formula to calculate the sample size of 255 used for the study.

The main instrument for data collection used in this study was the self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was organized to provide answers to the study research questions. The questionnaire was structured under two (2) sections. Section A represented the socio-demographic data of the respondents while Section B contained research statements proposed in accordance with the research questions. The self-structured questionnaire was validated by experts in the field of measurement and evaluation and counselling psychology. The researchers ensured the validity for content, to ensure that the questions were clear, understandable, and concise for the respondents to comprehend. The reliability of the research instrument was gotten from a “test-retest method”. The researchers distributed 50 copies of the questionnaire to undergraduates at the University of Lagos outside the study sample. After 2 weeks, the same copy of the questionnaire was distributed to the same people to test the reliability. A reliability coefficient of 0.75 was calculated using Pearson moment correlation.

The researchers sought the permission of the authorities of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) Ibadan study centre and also the consent of the undergraduates used for the study. The essence of the study was explained to them and instructions read out to them on how to fill the questionnaire. Also, they were assured that the information given will be used strictly for academic research purpose after which questionnaire was administered to them and collected back upon completion for data analysis. The study employed mean deviation in analysing the responses from respondents.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 showed responses to 12 items pertinent to the influence of remuneration on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. Table 1 showed that 7 items were rejected on the basis that the amount of money paid to teachers as salary influences undergraduates to choose teaching as a career with mean score of 2.80, teachers are paid mouth-watering teaching bonuses that encourage undergraduates to become teachers with mean score of 2.45, teachers are provided with cumulative tax-free

investment returns such as deferred compensation with mean score of 2.14, teachers are provided with remunerations such as childcare support, advance payment, meals, transportation for services rendered with mean score of 2.11, teachers enjoy the luxury of insurance benefits such as accidents and life insurance with mean score of 2.39, teachers are paid for the amount of work input with mean score of 2.73, and the strike caused by the disagreement in payment between the Federal Government and ASUU encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career with mean score of 1.74. Furthermore, 5 of the items were accepted; item 3, item 4, item 5, item 8 and item 10 with mean scores; 3.80, 3.48, 3.25, 3.63 and 3.92 respectively. The grand mean of 2.87 revealed that remuneration does not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan.

Table 2 presented the responses to 8 items on the influence of teaching anxiety on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. Table 2 showed that 5 items were rejected on the basis that teaching anxiety encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career with mean score of 2.94, stage fright in teaching encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career with mean score of 2.48, fear of teaching presentations influences teaching as choice of career among undergraduates with mean score of 2.72, the fear of completing the note of lesson before time for classes encourages undergraduates to become teachers with mean score of 2.79, and the fear of controlling students, especially older students encourage undergraduates to choose teaching as career with mean score of 2.67. Contrary to this, only 3 items were accepted: item 1, item 3, and item 4 with mean scores of 3.34, 3.25, and 3.61 respectively. Additionally, the grand mean for table 2 was 2.88 showing that teaching anxiety does not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan.

Table 3 presented responses to 10 items on the influence of occupational stress on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. Table 3 showed that 5 items were rejected on the basis that occupational stress influences teaching as choice of career among undergraduates with mean score of 2.63, the tedious workload faced by teachers encourages undergraduates to become teachers with mean score of 2.37, the complexity of the school syllabi encourage undergraduates to become teachers with mean score of 2.25, the stress involved in attending to assignments, projects, tests and examinations encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career with mean score of 1.86 and noisy classrooms lead to occupational stress

with mean score of 2.68. Furthermore, 5 items were also accepted: item 3, item 4, item 5, item 8, and item 10 with mean scores of 3.63, 3.21, 3.09, 3.14, and 3.25, respectively. Table 3 presented a grand mean of 2.80 which revealed that occupational stress does not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan.

The findings of the first research question showed that remuneration does not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan, with a grand mean score of 2.87. The main reason why remuneration does not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan could be that the sampled participants used for the study naturally has passion for teaching as their field of study is mostly in education. This is consistent with the findings of Baglivio *et al.* (2014) that the beginning of success in a career and recording good achievement is first making a good career choice for which an individual has the required passion, intellectual and personality dispositions required for success in that career path. Also, Itoro *et al.* (2018) stated that the present challenges of modern society influence the decision of people to identify with a particular career. For example, the economic challenges of being financially buoyant to take care of basic needs, maintain good standard of living and quality of life. Thus, students would endeavour to choose careers that will enable them to have good financial status and be economically independent. This implies that aside of remuneration, diverse factors such as level of stress, anxiety, social status; salary, family influence, religion, passion, creativity, educational requirement, etc. could influence one's career decision of becoming a teacher.

Also, the result of the second research question revealed that teaching anxiety does not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan, with a grand mean score of 2.98. The reason for this development could be that naturally teaching is understood to be intellectually tasking and challenging and this require teachers to always be up and doing as they dispense knowledge to desired learners. This is the reason why so many teachers do not enjoy their jobs. According to research conducted by Philemon (2019), 88% of teachers or lecturers graduated from the Faculty of Education in various higher institutions in Nigeria and still prefer to work in servicing and manufacturing sectors, banks, government establishments, military or paramilitary services.

Furthermore, the finding of the third research question indicates that occupational stress does not influence the choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan. This

is because people are conscious in the act of teaching in classroom, attending to assignments, projects, tests, and examinations are stress laden and naturally discourages people to choose teaching as a career. Occupational stress is a decisive factor on career choice among undergraduates. This corroborates the findings of previous researchers. For example, Javeed (2012) indicated that occupational stress leads to counterproductive work behaviours and a strong correlation exists between occupational stress and career choice. Also, Khan (2013) conducted a study to assess the occupational stress level of operational staff of Islamic Banks. These included age, gender, organizational climate, and work stress as variables used to determine job satisfaction among employees in these banks. Khan (2013) concluded that job satisfaction is significantly influenced by the organizational climate and work stress.

**Table 1:** Influence of remuneration on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan

S/N	ITEMS Focus	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	DECISION
1	The amount of money paid to teachers as salary influences undergraduates to choose teaching as a career.	37	62	19	86	51	2.80	Rejected
2	Teachers are paid mouth-watering teaching bonuses that encourage undergraduates to become teachers.	22	53	15	94	71	2.45	Rejected
3	Teachers enjoy retirement benefits such as gratuity, profit sharing plans and pensions, which influences teaching as choice of career among undergraduates.	108	77	8	34	28	3.80	Accepted
4	Minimum wage paid to teachers encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career.	83	70	36	18	48	3.48	Accepted
5	Teachers are paid for extra hours taught outside teaching periods.	58	76	24	65	32	3.25	Accepted
6	Teachers are provided with cumulative tax-free investment returns such as deferred compensation	35	20	10	81	109	2.14	Rejected
7	Teachers are provided with remunerations such as childcare support, advance payment, meals, transportation for services rendered.	12	34	13	111	80	2.11	Rejected
8	Teachers receive payments for the time they did not work such as maternity leave or sick leave.	84	82	14	72	3	3.63	Accepted
9	Teachers enjoy the luxury of insurance benefits such as accidents and life	15	43	41	83	73	2.39	Rejected

10	insurance Teachers are rewarded with benefits for loyalty to the organization	122	68	6	40	19	3.92	Accepted
11	Teachers are paid for the amount of work input.	52	40	14	85	64	2.73	Rejected
12	The strike caused by the disagreement in payment between the Federal Government and ASUU encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career.	13	33	12	61	160	1.74	Rejected
<b>Grand mean</b>							<b>2.87</b>	<b>Rejected</b>

Source: Field survey, 2021

**Table 2:** The influence of teaching anxiety on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan

S/N	ITEMS Focus	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	DECISION
1	Teaching anxiety is a common experience among teachers because they are the centre of attention	75	59	49	23	49	3.34	Accepted
2	Teaching anxiety encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career.	56	44	29	68	87	2.94	Rejected
3	Teachers who frequently have to teach in stressful conditions are particularly susceptible to anxious thoughts and feelings	58	76	24	65	32	3.25	Accepted
4	Teaching anxiety can be influenced by a number of factors, including issues related to public speaking, classroom management, and teacher preparation.	86	80	14	62	13	3.61	Accepted
5	Stage fright in teaching encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career.	41	28	13	104	69	2.48	Rejected
6	Fear of teaching presentations influences teaching as choice of career among undergraduates.	51	40	15	84	65	2.72	Rejected
7	The fear of completing the note of lesson before time for classes encourages undergraduates to become teachers.	38	63	17	80	57	2.79	Rejected
8	The fear of controlling students, especially older students encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as career.	67	42	14	47	85	2.67	Rejected
<b>Grand mean</b>							<b>2.98</b>	<b>Rejected</b>

Source: Field survey, 2021

**Table 3:** The influence of occupational stress on choice of teaching as a career among undergraduates in the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Ibadan

S/N	ITEMS Focus	SA	A	U	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	DECISION
1	Occupational stress influences teaching as choice of career among undergraduates.	33	35	47	84	56	2.63	Rejected
2	The tedious workload faced by teachers encourages undergraduates to become teachers.	15	43	46	78	73	2.37	Rejected
3	The occupational stress faced by teachers is caused by overwork.	85	81	12	60	17	3.63	Accepted
4	Teachers with large number of students are affected by occupational stress.	62	72	38	25	58	3.21	Accepted
5	Distance from home to place of work causes occupational stress to teachers	57	69	27	43	59	3.09	Accepted
6	The complexity of the school syllabi encourages undergraduates to become teachers.	32	28	8	91	96	2.25	Rejected
7	The stress involved in attending to assignments, projects, tests, and examinations encourages undergraduates to choose teaching as a career	17	29	6	65	150	1.86	Rejected
8	Inadequate facilities in the school causes occupational stress	59	75	32	21	68	3.14	Accepted
9	Noisy classrooms lead to occupational stress	42	46	22	79	66	2.68	Rejected
10	Writing notes of lessons and preparation for classes and lectures everyday leads to occupational stress.	63	72	28	46	46	3.23	Accepted
<b>Grand mean</b>							<b>2.80</b>	<b>Rejected</b>

Source: Field survey, 2021

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of remuneration, teaching anxiety and occupational stress on teaching as choice of career among undergraduates of National Open University of Nigeria. This study employed a simple random sampling method to select 255 undergraduates attending the

National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) at the Ibadan study centre as sample. The findings of this study projects the fact that if the condition of service of teachers are made better, in the like of good remuneration, quality material and work environment made available to ease teaching anxiety and occupational stress teaching as a profession would be one of the best sought career by students while making choice of career in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Teachers should be provided with better monetary and non-monetary remunerations to encourage more undergraduates towards teaching as a career choice.
- ii. Teachers should be encouraged to carry out physical and mental exercises to calm them and eliminate anxiety before and during teaching.
- iii. Teachers should be given regular leaves and better educational syllabi to minimize stress.
- iv. Students should be provided with career counsellors that can give them better information of the world of work as they make their career choice.

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