

PERCEPTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS ON STRATEGIES FOR REPOSITIONING SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The study highlighted the problems associated with the low social status of teachers in Nigeria and investigated ways for improvement. The survey was based on two research questions and three null-hypotheses. The population consists of all the rural and urban primary school, school in Onitsha Education Zone of Anambra State. A sample of 35 rural, 315 urban teachers, selected through proportionate stratified-random sampling, responded to a 17-item questionnaire. Data were analyzed using mean ratings, standard deviation and t-test. The results of the study indicated that both the government and the teachers should play roles in the improvement of the social status of the teachers in Nigeria. This is through provision of adequate required equipment, infrastructure, materials, and funds, promotion and salary structure of teachers should be the same with other civil servants by the government while the teachers ensure high entry requirement for students, love their career,¹ enforce their code of conduct as well as showing high sense comradeship and professionalism. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers should be given a pride of place and be fully recognized in the society.

Introduction

The plight of Nigeria teacher has not improved over the years, especially after the civil war. Their welfare is usually neglected and the society looks down on them because of their dismal condition, as a result of this, teachers become disenchanted with their work, which leads to ineffective teaching and learning. Babatunde (1992:63) states that, 'only stratified teachers will be more sable and committed to their jobs'. This will produce "people who are intellectually, morally, emotionally ... above all, financially and relevantly equipped for useful living within the society".

Hence, there may exist the most sophisticated equipment, facilities and funds but if these are not effectively utilized and managed by efficient and dedicated teachers, the educational objectives for which they are meant will not be attained. The schools therefore, are highly reflective of the extent to which teachers carry out their responsibilities of transmitting knowledge and skills as well as attitude to the students.

Furthermore, in the classroom, the teacher is expected to arouse, motivate and sustain the interest of students in the lesson being taught and it is only the self-esteemed and satisfied teacher that carry out these functions. For any educational plan to materialize, the teacher must be there to see to its full implementation for according to Ukeje (1999:12) "no educational system can rise above its teacher-education is the key that unlocks the door to modernization but it is the teacher that holds the key". Thus in any educational system, the success of education depends largely on the quality and caliber of teachers who are the interpreters and transmitters of desirable attitudes and knowledge to the children who are leaders of tomorrow.

In line with the above view's, the *National Policy of Education* (2004:55) stated "teacher education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all our educational planning, no education can be rise above the quality of its teachers. The purpose of the teacher education according to the national policy should be:

- a. To provide highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system.
- b. To encourage further the spirit of enquiring and creativity in teachers.
- c. To help teachers fit into the life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives.
- d. To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make adaptable to any changing situation not only in the life of their country but in wider world.
- e. To enhance teachers commitment to the teaching professional as well as teachers from pre-primary to university being professionally trained.

The above statements appear laudable and comprehensive but, with the perennial phenomenon of inadequate statistics, the astronomical expansion in the school population of 1976 *Universal Primary Education* which led to the production of low quality of teachers immensely. Numerous problems seem to be paining the teaching profession, which have negative effects on the self-esteem or status of teachers in Nigeria. These Problem include, low entry requirement, lack of enforcement of code of ethics, low socio-economic status associated with poor salary and

remuneration, poor self image, low professional qualification, lack of motivation which leads to rapid drift to other, lack of freedom to practice, lack of in-service training, continued practice of nonqualified personnel and lack of strong sense of professionalism and comradeship among teachers themselves.

These problems plaguing the teachers should be a concern to all and sundry because the quality of teachers will also affect the quality of their products. It is in the light of the foregoing that after identifying the problems that is deemed right that strategies for improving the teachers' social status should be addressed. The penitent question then is what should be done to improve the social status of teachers?

Research Questions

1. What are teachers' perceptions on the role of the government in improving the social status of teacher?
2. What are the teachers' perception on the roles of the teachers in improving their social status?

Null Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean perception of score of rural and urban teachers on the roles of the government in improving their social status.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of urban and rural teachers in the improvement of their social status.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean perception of teachers on the role of government and teachers in improving the social status of teachers irrespective of years of experience.

Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey design as an approach to problem solving. This is because the researcher elicited the opinions of the respondents on how the social status of the teachers can be improved.

Area and Population of Study

The study was conducted in Onitsha Education Zone of Anambra State. The zone has three Local Government of Onitsha North and South as well as Ogbaru. The population comprised all the urban and rural teachers in all the state owned primary schools in the zone.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of 315 urban and 35 rural teachers were selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique.

Instrument for Data Collection

The major instrument for data collection was open ended questionnaire, which was developed by the researchers titled primary school-teachers perception of ways of improving the teachers social status.

It is an instrument with three sections. Section A was on bio data, section B on the roles of the government in improving the social status of teachers and section C contains items on the roles of teachers in improving their own social status.

The responses were structured on a four-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Two lecturers in Educational Administration and supervision face validated the instrument. To test the reliability of the instrument. 20 teachers from Onitsha Education Zone of Anambra State were used. Cronbach alpha test showed co-efficient alpha values of 0.81 obtained for internal consistency of the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

The researchers used a directly delivery technique in the administration of the instrument to the respondents. At the end of the exercise all the 350 copies were retrieved and used for study. The research question were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. A mean rating of 2.50 was adopted as the agreement level for items. The t-test was equally used to test the null hypotheses.

Presentation of Results Research Question

1
 what are the roles of the government in improving teachers' status in Nigeria?

Mean Rating and Standard Deviation Scores on the Roles of the Government in Enhancing Teachers Status

S/N		Urban Teachers		Rural Teachers		Decision
		X	SD	X	SD	
1.2	Provision of adequate equipment, infrastructure, material and funds	3.00	1.02	2.95	0.93	Accepted
	Ensuring that	2.86	0.98	2.59	0.97	Accepted
3.	teachers and counterparts in other professions are same salary scale and remunerations					
	Provision of Conducive working environment for the teachers like other civil servants	2.57	0.09	2.88	0.93	Accepted
4.	Involving teachers in policy decision making process to ensure effective implementation	3.38	0.78	3.60	0.88	Accepted
5.	Promoting teachers as when due to ensure advancement	2.70	1.12	2.60	0.91	Accepted
6.	Opportunities for teachers' development such as seminars, service and on the job training being provided.	3.77	0.66	3.58	0.63	Accepted
	Grand Mean	3.04		3.03		

Table 1 shows the mean ratings of urban and rural teachers on how the government could improve the status of teachers.

It reveals that all the items for both the respondents had mean rating above the agreement level of 2.50
 This implied that the respondents agree that the government should improve the status of teachers.

Research Questions

What are the roles of the teachers in improving their social status?

Table 2
 Mean Rating of Urban and Rural Teachers on the Roles of the Teachers in Improving their Social Status

S/N		Urban Teachers		Rural Teachers		Decision
		X	SD	X	SD	
7.	The NUT ensure a mode training that will be uniform all teachers and qualification required.	2.70	0.87	2.59	0.93	Accepted
8.	The NUT should establish effective machinery to enforce teachers' conduct.	2.88	1.00	3.00	1.06	Accepted
9.	The NUT should ensure the freedom to practice teaching professional without hitch only those teaching background.	3.14	1.24	2.88	1.00	Accepted
10	The NUT ensuring that like in profession that like the qualification teaching is degree.	2.53	0.91	2.12	1.11	Accepted
11.	Teachers whether in the secondary tertiary institution forming a organization fighting the of teachers.	3.60	0.88	3.53	0.82	Accepted
12.	Teachers should	2.51	0.95	2.64	1.12	Accepted

	develop a sense comradeship professionalism.					
13.	Teachers should love their career.	3.38	0.78	3.60	0.88	Accepted
14.	Teachers should attend conferences, seminars and service regularly professional growth.					
15.	Teachers who have acquired • higher degrees masters and Ph.D's especially in primary secondary schools should stop running into other fields but should stay improve system.	3.38	0.78	3.57	0.72	Accepted
16.	Primary, secondary and tertiary levels of irrespective of their qualification should be addressed "teacher "teacher etc.	2.8	0.98	2.59	0.97	Accepted
17.	Teachers should stop shabbily to work	2.87	0.93	2.12	1.11	Not accepted
	Grand Mean	3.01		2.80		

The table shows a total of 11 items identified by the respondents as wheat teachers should do to improve their social status. The urban and rural teachers agreed on item 1, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16 while their mean rating differ on items 10 and 17. The grand mean of 3.01 and 2.08 were got respectively which implies that the urban and rural teachers agree that teachers should play roles in their social status.

Null Hypotheses

HO1

There is no significant difference between the mean perception of urban and rural teachers on the roles of government in improving the social status of teachers.

Table 3

Mean Perception of Urban and Rural Teachers on the Roles of the Government in Improving the Social Status.

Types of Respondent	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	P	Decision
Urban Teachers	315	3.04	1.06					
Rural Teachers	35	3.03	1.05	348	0.299	1.960		Do not reject Ho

The table reveals that at 0.05 level of significance and 34 degree of freedom, the t-calculation of 0.299 is, less than t-critical of 1.960. as such, the null hypothesis was upheld.

HO2

There is no significant difference between the mean perception of urban and rural teachers on the roles of teachers in changing their social status.

Table 4

Mean Perception of Urban and Rural Teachers on the Roles of Teachers in Enhancing their Social Status

Types Respondent	N	X	SD	DF	T-Cal	T-Crit	P	Decision
Urban Teachers	315	3.01	1.03	348	1.46	1.960	0.05	
Rural Teachers	35	2.80	1.00.					Do not reject Ho

In table 4, the calculated-t is less than the critical-t, thus leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

HO3

There is no significant between the mean rating of respondent irrespective of years of experience.

Table 5

Mean Perception of the Roles of Government and Teachers in Improving the Social Status of Teachers Irrespective of Respondents Years of Experience

Years experience	No	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	P	Decision
0-10years	39	3.16	1.56					
10 years and above	311	2.98	1.45	0.48	0.35	1.960	0.05	Do not reject HO

Since calculated-t 0.35 was less than critical-t 1.960 the null hypothesis was

accepted and the decision reached that no significant difference between the mean rating of less experienced and more experienced teachers on the roles of the government and the teachers on the improvement of teachers status in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The Roles of Government in Improving the Social Status of Teachers in Nigeria

The result of this study showed that from the opinion of the teachers in Onitsha Educational Zone of Anambra State, the government could improve the social status of teachers in Nigeria. The entire item for both rural and urban teacher had mean ratings above the agreement level of 2.50. This implies that the Government should improve the social status of teachers and their equipment, infrastructure, materials and funds; ensuring that teachers and their counter parts in other profession being entitled to the same salary scale and remuneration, involving teachers in policy making processes for effective implementation, promoting teachers when due for enhancement as well 'as provision of opportunities for teachers development, all together the teachers suggested six roles for the Government.

The Role of Teachers in Involving their Social Status in Nigeria

The result of this study is that teachers in Nigeria have greater roles than the government in the improvement of their social status. This is because while the teachers suggested only six roles the government, they suggested up to eleven roles for themselves. These roles are in the areas of the NUT ensuring a mode of training that will be uniform for teachers and required qualification, establishing effective machinery to enforce the teachers code of conduct, freedom to practice the profession without hitch by only those with teaching background; ensuring that first degree should be the least qualification for teachers and teachers at all levels of education forming a united front in fighting the cause of teachers. Others include teachers developing a sense of comradeship, loving their career, attend conferences, seminars and in-service training regularly for professional growth, those who have acquired higher degrees like MED and Ph.D's should stop running into other professions but should stay to improve the system, they equally ascertained that teachers should stop dressing shabbily to work and as "teacher Okeke" or "Teacher Okafor" irrespective of qualification. All the null hypothesis were upheld because no significant difference existed between the main rating of the teachers irrespective of school type, location and years of experience.

Conclusion

From the discussion it has been highlighted that both the government have various roles in other to enhance the social status of teacher in Nigeria. It is worthy to note that all the factors were listed by teachers themselves and if implemented will go a long way in repositioning the teaching profession in Nigeria. This is because when the social status of teachers is enhanced they will become more effective and efficient in their duty, which implies high goal achievement. This is because the qualities of products from the schools are very crucial and indispensable to our country. Therefore, if the education system should improve teacher should be given a pride of place and be fully recognized.

Recommendations

1. Government should endeavour to provide adequate required equipment, infrastructure, materials' and funds.
2. Teachers should be promoted, paid the same salary structure with other civil servants and reinforced so as to be motivated to work,
3. The NUT should ensure high entry requirement for students, enforce the code of conduct as well as sweep out non-professionals from teaching so as to make teaching attractive.
4. Teachers should love their career by not drifting to other profession as well as depicting a high since of comradeship and professionalism.

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