

RESTRUCTURING THE QUALITY OF TEACHERS FOR THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING OF NIGERIAN JOB SEEKERS

Princewill I. Egwuasi

*Department of Curriculum Studies
Educational Management and Planning,
University of Uyo, Uyo.*

Cornelius C. Okoro (Ph.D)

*Department of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counselling,
Faculty of Education,
University of Uyo, Uyo.*

Abstract

This paper examined the issues of academic qualification and job experience of teachers and their influence on the preparation of the Nigeria job seekers (school leavers). Conceptual reviews on the issues proved rather very informative and established a relationship between the variables under discussion. The paper concluded among others, that since the teachers are at the centre of the secondary education, their academic qualification and job experience become very unavoidable in the area of quality. The researchers also recommended among other things, that the teaching practice embarked upon by teachers in training should be extended to one full year, while the sandwich programmes and study centres for teacher training programmes should be discontinued in the Nigerian educational system.

Introduction

Teaching is the process of communicating certain concepts, facts, principles and knowledge to a group of people or learners. The result of teaching can only be identified through the level of mastery or achievement by the learners of what have been taught and subsequent application of those things learnt in their daily activities within the larger society. Unachukwu (1990) was of the view that a teacher in professional language is a person trained or recognized and employed

to help learning in classroom (and outside) situation in order to impart information, or knowledge or merely instruct another. He also asserted that a teacher is one who attempts to help someone else acquire, or change, some skills, attitude, knowledge, ideal or appreciation. In that case, the teacher creates and witnesses desirable changes in the behaviour of his pupils.

In another development, Umoren and Ogbodo (2001) stated that the way a teacher manages the class has a profound

impact on the learners - how they receive and react to the message. For this reason, the teacher is expected to have basic training, skill, and knowledge especially in his area of specialization. Based on this premise, Umoren and Ogbodo (2001) further argued that the quality of teachers or a teacher is very important in the teaching-learning situation. Quality in this regard, refers to both the required basic academic attainment and the experience the teacher acquires for the effective classroom management, and the production of psychologically balanced school leavers (job seekers).

Statement of the Problem

There is a general opinion expressed by the public over the fallen standard of education in the Nigerian polity. To the researchers, this is not to say that the Nigerian educational curriculum is substandard, or that the designers are inexperienced but rather, that the entire system is suffering from some setbacks or the other. Parents and school administrators have reported instances where teachers collect monies from students and award high grades to the students, attend lessons with a laissez-faire attitude, lack mastery of their subject areas and out rightly assist students to cheat in examinations. All these point to the way our children learn in schools. In agreement, Akpan (2004) stated that all these happen as a result of the fact some teachers lack the basic rudiments of teaching and are not effective and efficient in their duty.

The pertinent questions therefore are: How academically qualified are these teachers? What kinds of teaching experience do they possess? And do these two variables influence the psychology of the would-be Nigerian job seekers in secondary schools?

Academic Qualification of Teachers and the Psychology of School Leavers

According to Okeke (1984) in Etuk (2005), it is a stated fact that professional groups are judged by their members. He also argued that the teaching profession cannot be a dumping ground for never-do-wells. In that case, the basic entry requirement and qualification should be the same as in other professions. Therefore, there should be a high selective method of recruitment of prospective entrants (Peretomode, 1992). Furthermore, Peretomode (1992) posited that the basic admission requirement to all professions should be the same or almost the same. The scholar also stated that besides, the duration of the training should be the same, where crash programmes and training for non-education graduates to become teachers should be discouraged. He therefore submitted that the Nigerian Certificate of Education should be the minimum qualification for the teaching profession.

Umoren and Ogbodo (2001) also supported the stance of Peretomode (1992) when they lent credence to high qualification and long period of specialized training for teaching to be recognized as a profession. According to the scholars, this singular act would expose the practitioners

(teachers) to the basic rudiments of the occupation. Richardson (1949) added that the practitioners in the teaching profession require high mental and physical effort, the possession of high level of education, intelligence, job knowledge and a great deal of experience. To this end, Idiong (2001) stated that in any profession such as the teaching profession, there are certain characteristics that qualify it to be professional. These are:

- 1) Possession of educationally communicable technique.
- 2) Tendency to be self organized.
- 3) Deriving up the raw materials essentially from research, science and learning.
- 4) Involvement of intellectual operation with large share of individual responsibility.

In a study on the impact of teachers' qualification and facilities on students' performance in Physics in Imo State, Ukeke (1987) in Etuk (2005) found that many students draw inspiration from competent, good teachers who are essentially qualified. Fakunde (1979) also noted that inspiration derived from the teacher is an important force for motivating learning and that an educational system in which teachers are of low quality will invariably produce students (job seekers) with low inspiration and aspiration.

Sansanwal (1985) also argued that teachers with good quality are popular. Successful class teachers need qualities like quick thinking, easy adaptability, humour, which go a long way to making a

teacher bright and smart in class. Farrant (1980) on his part, stated that any teacher with high qualification will know the way to approach any concept to enhance the understanding of the students.

It is obvious from the foregoing discussion that the qualification(s) a teacher possesses exert(s) some significant influence on the aspiration, performance and attitude of students that pass through him/her. The qualifications a teacher possesses will, therefore, influence most leavers or job seekers who have been taught by him/her.

Teacher- Experience and the Psychology of School Leavers

A number of studies have been conducted on the effects of teacher-training experiences and the performance of teachers in the classroom. Most studies revealed a direct relationship between experiences and teacher performance (Emah, 2001). According to Graham (1982), one of the characteristics to be considered in the selection of a school teacher is experience. Teaching experience is very necessary for the school as a formal organization.

Psychologists, according to Okoro (2002), defined experience as the acquisition of knowledge, attitude or skills through one's perception and participation. Stance (1963) in Etuk (2005) opined that with experience, there is the attainment of desired goals through direct observation and participation in similar activities. In support of this fact, Shutter and Steward (1973) declared that effective discharge of duty by teachers in schools and classrooms

in particular, depends to a large extent on their experience. Nwankwo (1985) also concluded that expertise grows out of experience. Brown (2001) was also of the opinion that teachers with many years of experience perform better than their counterparts who have less.

Similarly, Richardson (1949) affirmed that individuals assigned to the same job differ in performance, noting that some produce two or three times as much as others while the most experienced sometimes produces five or six times as much as the less experienced one. This also applies to school teachers in terms of years of experience. Fagbamiye (1977) in his study revealed that schools with experienced and qualified teachers usually do better than those schools with inexperienced, unstable and poorly qualified teachers. In their study on the inter-correlations between teaching experiences and ability to teach, Butts and Raven (1996) found that with an increase in the length of experience, there is a corresponding increase in the teacher's use of process skills – method in teaching.

Like in every other profession, those in teaching require a lot of skills in the process of executing their jobs. This means that increase in duration of service or work experience is accompanied by increase in the magnitude of knowledge and skills acquired by each individual teacher. Learners taught by more experienced teachers tend to perform better than those taught by less experienced teachers. Such learners tend to benefit immensely from the wealth of experience of their teachers. They also develop self

confidence and a sense of pride. In the end, they will be well balanced and psychologically ready to meet with any challenge posed in their profession of choice, especially in this era of technological dominance.

Conclusion

It is the opinion of this paper that for effective classroom delivery of subjects and the production of psychologically balanced Nigerian job seekers, a prospective teacher must have the basic teaching qualifications of the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) at the pre-primary and primary levels, while a first degree for the secondary schools. He/she must have the basic training, skills and knowledge especially in his/her area of specialization. Furthermore, the teacher is expected to have requisite experience on the job for effective performance, for experience they say is a great teacher. Finally, this paper concludes that secondary school background may have relatively strong influence on the Nigerian job seekers. As such, teachers and their well-being are very vital in this regard, in that when it is well with them (teachers), it will be well with all.

Recommendations

The researchers recommend among other things that:

1. Employers of teachers at Nursery, Primary and Secondary schools should pay particular attention to the qualifications of those that teach in schools.

2. Like in other professions, teachers teaching practice programmes in Colleges of Education and Universities, should be extended to one full year, instead of the three or four months duration that has been the practice currently.
3. There should be a complete discontinuation of the sandwich programmes and the various study centres that offer teacher training courses
4. The minimum qualification for teaching at any level should be the Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) for the pre-primary and primary schools and a first degree for the secondary schools.

References

- Akpan, R. (2003). *Management theories*. Uyo: Met publishers
- Brown, L.O. (2001). *Quality assurance in general education*. London: Oxford Press
- Butts, D. F., & Raven, S. (1976). *Teaching science in the elementary school*. New York. The Free Press.
- Emah, I. E. (2001). The Concept of Teaching. In D. N. Umoren & C. M. Ogbodo (Eds). *A handbook on teaching profession in Nigerian*. Uyo: Prades Books and Press.
- Etuk, M. B. (2005). Demography variables and teachers' performance in secondary school in Akwa Ibom State. *Unpublished Master's Thesis*, Faculty, of Education, University of Uyo.
- Fagbamiye, E. O. (1977). Inequalities in Nigerian education administration towards a genuine reduction in education. *Lagos. Education Review* (1)
- Fakunde, O. (1979). Issues in educational leadership. *Bensu Journal of Education*. Vol. 1 pp. 58.-70
- Farrant, E.T (1980). *Reality therapy*. New York: Harper and Roro Publishers
- Graham, T. (1982). *Educational Administration: An introduction*. New York: Macmillan publishing Inc
- Idiong, B.U. (2001). The Code of Ethics for the Teaching Profession In D.N. Umoren & C.M. Ogbodo (Eds). *A Handbook on teaching profession in Nigeria*. Uyo: Guidepost Publishers pp61-70
- Okoro, C.C. (2001). *Basic concept in educational psychology*. Nsukka: The Academic Publishers Limited
- Peretomode, V.F. (1992). *Introduction to teaching profession in Nigeria*. Owerri: Totan Publishers
- Richardson, Y. (1949). Experience: A pre-requisite or a bonus? *The Academy Management Reua* October, pp 202

Journal of Teacher Perspective

- Sansanwal, D. N. (1985). Review of presage-proless-product studies related to teaching and Teacher Behaviour of Science Teaching. *Journal of Science teachers Association of Nigerian*
- Shutter, S., & Steward, T. (1973). *Emerging patterns of suppression: Human perspectives*. New York: McGraw – Hill Prentice.
- Umoren, D. N. , & Ogbodo, C. M. (2001). *A handbook on teaching profession in Nigerian*. Uyo. Pradses Books and Press.
- Unachukwu, G. C. (1990). Educational Concepts in Mythology Instructions. In G. C. Unachukwu (ed). *Methodology Instruction* Owerri: Totan Publishers Ltd.