



Concept Paper

Teaching Profession: The Revolving Power for National Capacity-Building

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Abstract

This study examined the teaching profession as the revolving power for national capacity building. No nation can fully develop in isolation of the teaching profession, just like the common saying that no nation is above her quality of education. The teaching profession is the pillar of education from where other disciplines steam. It is the medium through which the human and natural resources are developed and harnessed for national growth, development, and sustainability. Unfortunately, this noble and notable profession that revolves around all aspects of mankind has always been neglected and relegated to the background, due to the value placed on it by society. This has invariably contributed to a loss of motivation and commitment of the teacher to duty, thereby posing difficulty on quality delivery as such the achievement of the educational goal is hampered. This paper, therefore, reviewed the functions of the teaching profession in the society and ways to redeem its image to a cherished and enviable height.

Keywords: teaching profession, revolving power, national capacity building

INTRODUCTION

The teaching profession could be acclaimed the foundation upon which human and societal existence strives. Globally, it has also been identified as the pillar for



economic growth and sustainable development. No doubts, that nature endows potentials, but the fundamental roles of the teaching profession in developing, harnessing, and tapering these innate abilities all-round the spheres of life for the betterment of the society cannot be overemphasized. The teaching profession wields enormous powers in the inculcation of knowledge, values, morals, and attitudes which mold and modify behaviors for peaceful co-existence. This further explains the biblical injunction which states thus “train up a child the way he should go, so that when he grows he will not depart from it”.

Despite the above, national integration, peace and unity, security education, capacity building, economic development, sustainability, and most of all entrepreneurship revolve around the teaching profession. On this note, it will suffice to state that this profession is the anchorage of life, which encompasses instruction, training, tutoring, guidance, and direction from one's immediate environment to the larger society through formal, non-formal, and informal education. Without the teaching profession, there wouldn't be learning, and where there is no knowledge, anarchy, and ignorance will strive, leading the society to total darkness. Based on the above analogy, the purpose of this study is to investigate the contribution of the teaching profession towards national capacity building and how best to fortify the teaching profession for the achievement of these ultimate desires and dreams of the nation. However, the study will address the following:

1. What is the capability of the teaching profession in the nation's capacity building?
2. What is the importance of the teaching profession in society?
3. What is the state of the teaching profession in Nigeria?
4. What are the challenges of the teaching profession?
5. What is the way forward?

The Teacher and the Teaching Profession

A teacher from the layman's view is anyone that gives instruction and direction. In the real sense, a teacher is somebody that undergoes proper and professional training to impart knowledge to other individuals. To Nwanekezi and Ifionu(2010), a teacher is a trained person who helps a learner to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitude through a variety of ways all of which are intertwined. Affirming the above scholars' view, Onojete (2010), posits that teachers are professionals who have acquired the special skill required for effective imparting of knowledge and are actually in the teaching career.

From all indications, a teacher has rated a major stakeholder and the turning point in the achievement of educational goals. He is saddled with the responsibility of translating policy into action and principles, encourage and guide the students, maintain proper order and discipline, and facilitate the teaching-learning process. Accordingly, Baba (2017), avers that the success of the teacher hinges on his/her physical, emotional, and psychological disposition. His operations stem from different circumstances and reasons.

To this effect, he is expected to make sacrifices to ensure effective teaching and learning.²

The concept of a profession on the other hand is derived from the word "profiteer", meaning to profess. This implies that a professional is a person who possesses knowledge of doing something and has a commitment to a particular set of values that are generally accepted. This, therefore, applies to the teaching profession which deals with specialization in teaching skills, styles, and techniques. The teaching profession is a body that facilitates learning in all ramifications. It is the key to the development of human intellect and the ultimate in the achievement of the nation's hope and aspiration. It is on this premise that Maduwesi and Ezeoba(2010), stress that the teaching profession is how an individual is developed so that he will be able to live effectively and efficiently in the present society and contribute to its advancement and upliftment. The subsequent illustration portrays a clearer picture of the efficacy of the teaching profession.

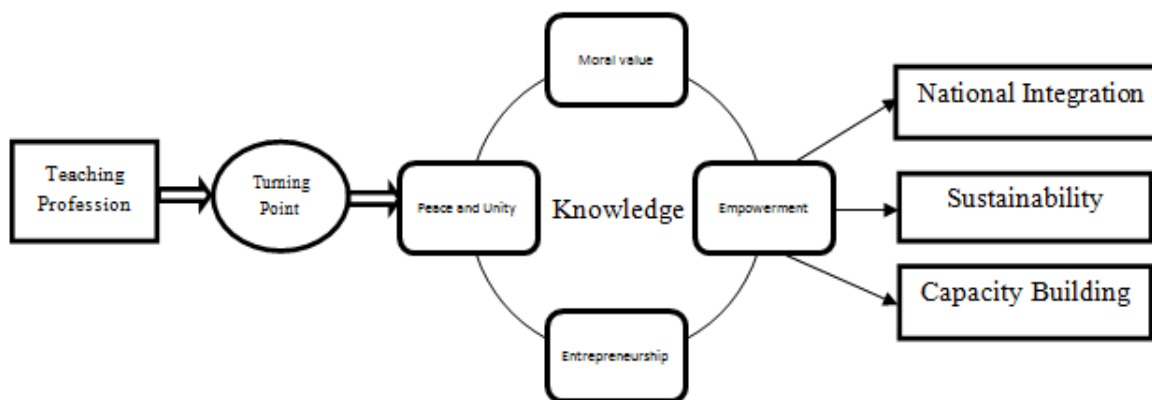


Figure 1. The Efficacy of the Teaching Profession in Nation Building.Label

National Capacity Building

National capacity building is the ability to construct and structure a nation towards her sustainability. Maduiké and Anusiem (2013), assert that it is a concerted effort to bring people together to achieve common objectives. Buttressing the implication of national capacity building, Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2013), express that it is a systematized but gradual stage by stage, fundamentally positive tailored change and modernity focused construction and institutions of geographic configuration for continuous improvement in and sustenance of quality of the mass of people comprising the geopolitical entity. In the words of Nwosu and Oputa(2018), it is a unification of all spheres in the development of the nation. The foregoing confirms that national capacity building involves getting abreast with innovation and creativity to surmount unfolding challenges. This process entails the application of three domains of education; cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domain. It may employ the use of propaganda, infrastructural development to foster social harmony and economic growth. From Nwosu and Oputa

(2018), point of view, the capacity building creates room for the achievement of national objectives, and any developing nation must imbibe and adopt certain measures, techniques, and strategies to be fully developed. These measures include the following:

1. Industrialization
2. Security
3. Human development
4. Democratic society
5. Diversification
6. Entrepreneurship
7. Peace
8. Teamwork
9. Unity and understanding
10. Selflessness

It is pertinent to categorically state that nation capacity building can only be actualized through the teaching profession sense it is an embodiment of education. The teacher imparts knowledge, guides, coordinates, and implements the necessary and required behaviors for the actualization of nation-building. No wonder why Ngobili and Nnodim(2018), conclude that education is the pivot on which the development of any nation revolves. Nation-building cuts across integration, conflict resolution, maintenance of peace, unity, and security for fortification.

Goals of the Teaching Profession

Every profession including the teaching profession is founded on the principle of goal achievement. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014), stipulates thus, regarding the teaching profession: since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development. The minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the national certificate in education (NCE). It further states that the goals of teacher education shall be to:

1. Provide highly motivated, conscientious, and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system.
2. Encourage further the spirit of inquiry and creativity in teachers.
3. Help teachers fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals.
4. Provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations.
5. Enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

These explain the efficacy of the teaching profession in the development of the nation as it is at the forefront of the fight for a better tomorrow.

Importance of the Teaching Profession

The importance of the teaching profession to the citizenry and the totality of the nation cannot be downplayed, even though the frantic efforts of the teachers are being undermined. It is also worthy of note that the strength of every profession in society and globally springs out from the teaching profession. It could be described as the backbone of every society as every part of the social life is dependent on it. It will not also be out of place if it is acclaimed a magnetic power that fixes every piece into the whole, as well as an iroko tree with uncountable and unbreakable branches. No wonder why the nation cannot thrive in its absence.²

The teaching profession is a powerhouse because it is an embodiment of knowledge that makes a nation formidable against odds and challenges. What about its huge contribution to the development and sustenance of the economy. It is based on these assertions that Sharma (2020), supports that the future development of any nation is in the hands of the teaching profession. Arguing further, he identifies the following importance of teachers as: resource persons, supporters, mentors, helpers, and learners. Subsequently, Loyal (2019), identifies the following roles of teachers in the society as;

- Role models
- Provider of educational power
- Economic developers
- Guidance
- Dictators

Merrimark College (n.d.), adds nation-building and inspiration to the role of teachers. The teaching profession is not only important to the students but the entire society. Teachers are needed in every step of life and career of an individual as they play an active role in the political, social, economic, and religious aspects of the society, through delivering the right information. Despite the above, the teaching profession also plays the following roles:²

1. Character molding²
2. Makes an individual constructive and objective
3. Gives hope and confidence
4. Empowers
5. Builds the nation and leaders
6. Knowledge bank
7. Promotes creativity and innovation
8. Enlightens

Teaching Profession and Human Capacity Development

Human capacity development is the process of equipping individuals with the required skills and competences to drive both personal and societal goals. OAbot (2020), explains that human capacity development is the process by which individuals and

organizations obtain, improve and retain the skills, knowledge, tools, equipment, and other resources needed to do their job competently. In line with Bolade (2020), human capacity development deals with series of actions directed at helping the employees in the development process to increase knowledge, skills, and understanding to develop the right attitudes essential in bringing about the desired developmental change.

The above exposes the capacity of human development as it encompasses all aspects of awareness-raising, education, and training, attitude, change, confidence building, participation in decision making, and action. A critical goal of human capacity development is that of maximizing peoples' potentials to contribute to development by participating fully in all its activities (Bolade, 2020). Human capacity development transverse through education, training, professional development, and empowerment. It begins from cradle through the teaching of parents, guidance, siblings, immediate environment, community, society, and finally a professional teacher in formal education. Many individuals born without training stand empty and cannot control their environment and destiny. It is only the teaching profession that can develop and channel the hidden potentials in individuals to work, which in turn makes them independent. This rightly proves Umar, Bakwai, Okonkwo, and Omotayo (2015), opinion that education is an important tool in any human society, which makes man develop faster than other creatures.

Teaching Profession and National Development for Economic Sustainability

The teaching profession is the rallying point of national development for economic sustainability. National development as it were, entails a continuous improvement, change, and advancement of a country. Expressing Emediongokin, Basse, and Akpan's (2015) views, national development is a progressive growth in all aspects of nation-building. Supporting the view, Nwosu (2019a) stresses that a nation can provide and improve on the social welfare of the citizenry, ranging from infrastructure, potable water, quality of education, and other social amenities.

A critical look at the overall activities of national development and sustainability reveals that they revolve around education which is transmitted through the teaching profession. This underscores the fact that the teaching profession is education and education is the teaching profession. The fact that education is the bedrock of all the sectors in the nation cannot be denied. This is why Ukeje (1988) in Wenekezi, Okoli, and Mezieobi (2011), advocates that education unlocks the door to modernization and sustainable development but that, it is the teacher that holds the key to the door. Confirming the above statement, Ajayi and Adu (2000) in Okemakinde, Adewuyi, and Alibi (2013), attest that education is the development of all human potentials and the most powerful weapon we have for shaping the future; enabling the following generations to learn how to enhance greater productivity and live together. Education as the basic building block of every nation possesses the power of transformation through the

teaching profession. This is evident in Ijov, Biam, and Inguram (2015), which declare the teaching profession as the only potential of determining the economic, political, social, and moral destiny of every Nigerian citizen.²

The potency of this honorable profession ignites the functionality of every aspect of society through the following mediums:²

1. Preparing manpower for the development and sustainability of the nation
2. Professing peace and unity for the peaceful coexistence
3. Educating the mind for cultural and national integration
4. Inculcation of moral values to shape the attitudes of the citizenry
5. Develops human potential for economic growth and development
6. Fosters conflict resolution
7. Builds the leadership of the nation
8. Controls the political, social, economic, and religious aspects of the nation²
9. Develops brains in all disciplines.

The above qualities of the teaching profession indicate that it is the gateway for national development as no educational system can succeed without the teacher. The teaching profession transforms society through education on poverty reduction, wealth creation, equitable distribution of wealth, ensuring the health, housing, and security.²

Teaching Profession and the National Integration ²

The feasibility of national integration in isolation of the teaching profession is highly in doubt. The teaching profession possesses the key to uniting people through orientation and sensitization. The ability to fuse into one entity is dependent on the teaching about the pursuit of common interest. In a real sense, the integration of the nation has been a difficult task due to its heterogeneous and multilingual nature. National integration ought to be accorded a serious level of attention as an integral part of national development. But for the accomplishment of a common goal, the utmost interest, and concern of the leaders and the citizenry is to become one. Ab-initio, the overall philosophy of Nigeria is to;²

- a) Live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, in-dissolvable, democratic, and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality, and justice.²
- b) Promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding (FRN, 2014).

Similarly, national integration is the awareness of a common identity among the citizens of a country (Joseph, 2015). To Nwosu (2019a), it refers to oneness, unity, collective responsibility towards the development and growth of a nation. This simply implies that even though we belong to various ethnic groups, religions and speak different languages, with different cultures and traditions, we are one. This is surely a difficult puzzle to solve. Is Nigeria integrated? How can the citizenry integrate into the face of bombing, killing, and maiming of mankind, banditry, rape, kidnapping, nepotism,

tribalism, favoritism, and other social vices? The answer to this is education, which the teaching profession offers. The issue of national integration can be achieved by teaching the citizenry about peace and unity, morals, and values of the society, conflict resolution, patriotism, love, and tolerance. Also, it will promote the feelings of nationalism by creating the understanding that an individual is not only a member of his state but a member of the nation. [2]

Concerning the contribution of the teaching profession to national integration, Goldsmith (2012), adds that teaching promotes the following:

1. National citizenship, peace, independence, and critical thinking.[2]
2. Eradication of racial, religious, cultural, and national prejudices.[2]
3. Redesigning the curriculum to reflect the policy of the national policy on education, including art, language, science, history, economics, philosophy, mathematics, and extra-curricular activities.[2]
4. Construction rather than destruction.
5. Development of students' faiths.

These confirm the immense contributions of the teaching profession to national integration, which wouldn't have been accomplished through any other means.[2]

Teaching Profession for Moral and Value Re-Orientation

The capacity development of any nation transcends the economic and physical structures available in it. For a nation to be declared developed, certain guidelines and principles must be maintained. The moral and value status of every nation contributes to its development. When a nation lacks scrutiny and respect for certain values there is a ban to be chaos. Moral and value teaching fosters in molding and developing the citizenry as civic, good, mannered, and patriotic persons, as well as inculcate knowledge about humanism and a deep concern for the well-being of the citizenry and the nation. This is why Sharma in Nwosu (2019b), maintains that moral education is the education of the heart, without which no individual can be completely human, while the value is an enduring benefit, a specific mode of conduct, or an end state of existence, or continuing of relative importance (Rokeach, 2018). The role of moral value education in sustaining growth and development in the nation cannot be overemphasized, as it has enormous power and ability to mold an individual to the accepted standard of our society. Through moral value education, a child is equipped with norms, ethics, and attitudes which aid him to differentiate between good and right, despite that, it fosters the citizenry to imbibe the culture and benefits of living in harmony with the society, by exhibiting love, brotherhood, respect for others, honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, non-violence, tolerance, sense of responsibility and co-operation (Nwosu, 2020). On the contrary, the heinous activities perpetrated by some groups of individuals against mankind in the society for more than a decade now portrays a clear picture of loss of moral values. [2]

Moral value education through the teaching profession will act as a medium for information dissemination that will train the minds of citizens in a right way, to have a conscience and discerning spirit to determine wrong and right actions, being accommodating, generous, respectful, caring, obedient, considerate, sensitive and having dignity.❏

Teaching Profession for Security and Conflict Resolution

Security education is a capital factor in promoting sustainable growth and development. A nation without security is exposed to infiltration of unwanted violence and attacks which may cripple the achievement of goals. It is also expected that conflict may arise when more than one individual co-habits in an environment. Nigeria as a multi-lingual and heterogeneous nation cannot avoid disagreement, controversy, or opposition due to clash of interests. Speaking from the angle of Igudiatoham (2014), conflict implies struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources in which the aims of the group or individuals involved are not only to obtain the desired values but to neutralize, injure or eliminate rivals. On the part of security, Audu, Lukman, and Muhammed (2014) consider it as any mechanism deliberately fashioned to alleviate the most serious and immediate threats that prevent people from pursuing the cherished values.❏

In recent times, the nation has been witnessing different degrees of unwholesome activities ranging from bombing, kidnapping, banditry, killing, cultism, and rape. Insecurity in Nigeria has manifested itself in various negative ways including hampering the development of the country and weakening the unity of the federation, bringing about distrust and destruction of lives and properties, a drop in economic production, political instability, unemployment, slowing down foreign direct investment, causing dislocation in the educational system, causing fear and anxiety in the population and a general drop in the development of the nation (Ijaiye,2008 cited in Bala 2014).

Understandably, quarrel begets destruction, and a nation whose citizens are at logger's heads cannot strive in her development, struggle over resource control on one side, political, religious, social, and economic dominance on the other side. It is pertinent at this point to state that education is a major way out. The teaching profession can resolve these issues by furnishing individuals with information that will reform their reasoning and reform their minds to accept and cherish one another irrespective of tribe, culture, ethnicity, or interest. By so doing, a curtail of excesses and restoration of sanity will be ensured.❏

Teaching Profession and Entrepreneurship

The teaching profession is the generator that powers knowledge for the growth and sustenance of every nation. Nigeria has continuously been seeking to actualize the national goals which comprise the acquisition and maintenance of:

1. A united, strong, and self-reliant nation.
2. A great and dynamic economy and
3. The land is full of bright opportunities for all citizens.

These are beautiful dreams and objectives which are quite inspiring but cannot be realized without skills and competence. Accomplishing these goals depends majorly on entrepreneurship and vocational studies. Having known that entrepreneurship is the acquisition of skills that make an individual or a group independent, self-reliant, employable, and an employer of labor. Again, it is also a process of vision and creation that requires the application of energy and passion for the creation and implementation of new ideas and creative solutions (Russel, 2012). Maduiké, Nwosu, and Oputa (2017) adding that entrepreneurship education makes one bold and willing to utilize his skills, ability, capability and drive to identify and harness an investment opportunity through the judicious utilization of available resources to achieve a given objective. These suggest that the acquisition of entrepreneurship and vocational skills require proper education and guidance. This gives credence to the teaching profession as the most appropriate tool to drive the goals of sustainable growth and development in the nation. No skill or competence can be acquired without a teacher, even outside the formal classroom setting, entrepreneurship skills are gained through learning. Hence, it is only the teaching profession that can inculcate creative, innovative, managerial, and productive skills needed in business enterprises for self-reliance and consequently in national development.

The State of the Teaching Profession in Nigeria

The experiences of Nigeria in the civil world war gave the credence to the involvement in education after independence in 1960. The reason was that education was the major key for national reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. Concerning this, the universal basic education scheme (UBE) was launched in 1976, giving rise to unprecedented growth in the population of both the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education. Following the trend of events, the federal government took over the financial responsibility for all the Grade 11 Teachers Colleges in the federation and awarded bursaries to all pre-service teachers in the college of education and universities. Besides, the federal government founded more teacher training institutions with diversified programs while universities were expanded.

Consequent to this, the national policy on education (1979 revised in 1981, 1998, 2004, 2008 and 2014), affirms that the importance of teacher education and acclaim that since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, teacher education shall be

continued to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development. The policy further states the goals of teacher education as:

1. Producing highly motivated, conscientious, and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system,
2. Encouraging the further spirit of inquiry and creativity in the teachers,
3. Helping teachers to fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals.
4. Providing teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and make them adaptable for their assignment and make them adaptable to changing situations.
5. Enhancing teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

Currently, the teaching profession cannot yet be regarded as a profession in the true sense of the word. Much uncertified personnel is still retained on the job. Citing Osokoya (2010), many unqualified and un-certificated teachers are still in the employment roll of some states teaching service boards, while most of the higher lecturers are yet to undergo education training. Until the government makes it mandatory for all involved in the task of teaching to be qualified in Nigeria, teaching will remain an all comes affair and cannot claim professionalism like other notable disciplines such as law, medicine, engineering, etc.

Secondly, the teaching profession has been relegated to the background, the teachers are poorly motivated and less paid. This makes the profession replete with some features of other occupation that makes life worth living for the practitioners (Akinduyo, 2014). Ajayi, 1997 in Akinduyo, (2014), emphasizes that the teaching profession since the ages has been an occupation that enjoys the unpleasant nickname of an "ungrateful trade", an occupation for the "never do well" or occupation for the downtrodden. It was on this basis that teachers were compelled to demand;

1. Full professionalism teaching
2. Better condition of service
3. Prompt payment of salaries, gratuities, and pensions on retirement
4. Adequate public recognition for teachers.
5. Special teachers' salary structure (TSS).

Until these issues are addressed, the teaching profession will not be able to achieve the goals of education.

Occupational Hazards of Teaching Professionalism

Occupation is the source of livelihood for every living being as such, none can be devoid of its hazards. Awodele, Popoda, and Akintonwa(2014) address occupational hazards as risk, harm, or danger that an individual is exposed to at the workplace. In line with the above assertion, occupational hazards are risks in form of illnesses, accidents, violence, and stress experienced in the organization. They are unpleasant things that occur to

somebody in course of performing his job. Wikipedia (2020), classifies these risks as chemical, biological, psychosocial, and physical hazards.☒

The teaching profession like any other profession is posed with numerous hazards. As the heartbeat of every other profession and the nation at large, its vital roles and high expectation from the society exposes it to danger. To an outsider, teaching is regarded as a very simple task, but the fact remains that it is a tedious job. From Hyattractions (2015) perspective, teachers and researchers in our country's institution face a series of problems within the school, the same at home as a result of school associated causes. Similarly, Beyond Teaching (2018), points out five health hazards of a teacher as voice disorder, disease transmission, workplace violence, work-related stress, and legal consideration. In the same vein, Ramprasad, Lakshmana Das, and Maruthi (2014) corroborate that teachers are exposed to occupational hazards like vocal problems, respiratory, physical, and psychological problems. They further stress that teachers have been identified as being at increased risk of developing an occupational voice disorder because of the demand put on their voices professionally. Moreover, MedicineNet (2019), confirms that studies carried out on people with speech and language disorders revealed that teachers were three times more than the patients with Alzheimer's disease, meaning that there is a relationship between teaching and incidence of speech and language disorder. ☒

Frankly, the teaching profession is bequeathed with herculean responsibilities of character molding, development of potentials for independence, and fortification of manpower for economic growth and sustainability. Discharging these duties sometimes attracts hatred, death, sack, health issues, and emotional trauma to the personnel. There have been several cases where teachers have been intimidated, molested, harassed, injured, murdered by the students, and some other members of the society due to academic-related issues. On other occasions, they have now been sacked and have also incurred health challenges. The hazards of the teaching profession are not limited to the following;☒

1. Unconducive working environment,
2. Hatred leading to nicknaming and killing
3. Emotional and psychological stress
4. Lack of autonomy
5. Dryness of hands and varicose veins.

Concerning the above, Ramprasad, Lakshmana Das, and Maruthi (2014) commented that the hazard of the teaching profession transcends to the workload of supervision duties, student paperwork, preparation, and evaluation, in addition to implementing the pathway programs like workshops, competitions, lack of enough materials for preparation, and lack of time-period between the lectures affecting the physical and psychological health of the teachers. To this end, Dibbon's study cited in Ramprasad, Lakshmana Das and Maruthi (2014), shows that in addition to 275 hours of

classroom teaching per week, teachers spend almost as much time again preparing lessons, plans, correcting students works, collaborating with other teachers, meeting with parents, supervising students, for a total average of 52.32 hours per week.²

Challenges of the Teaching Profession

Notwithstanding that the teaching profession is acclaimed the overall profession of knowledge, its challenges have been numerous and continuously fighting to overwhelm its capability. Reviewing the activities of the teaching profession, many scholars have identified several problems affecting it. Osokoya (2010), posits the challenges of the teaching profession as;

1. Quality assurance and internal efficiency
2. Professionalization of teaching
3. Brain drain syndrome
4. Low morale of teachers
5. Operation of continuous assessment practice.

Secondly, Akinduyo (2014), uncovers the following;

1. Low wages, bad motivation, and poor welfare²
2. Irregular self-esteem in society²
3. Absence of education professional academy
4. Lack of professional and in-service training

5. A short period of internship²
6. High teacher-pupil ratio
7. Politicizing education²
8. Lack of authority by the national union of teachers (NUT)²
9. Unwarranted governments' intervention
10. Poor budgeting allocation to the teaching profession²
11. Poor work environment (e.g. Infrastructural amenities)
12. Government inability to register NUT as a professional organization²
13. Massive unqualified staff
14. Porous entry qualification.

The aforementioned challenges describe the magnitude of the setback the teaching profession is suffering for decades, which is not in the interest of the nation in terms of educational goal achievement. The profession is fast losing its value and requires urgent attention to return to the original picture it portrayed. Besides the above problems, the teaching profession is experiencing a shortage of personnel, a decline in staff development and information communication technology (ICT).²

Shortage of Personnel

The teaching profession has always experienced a dearth of trained manpower from the primary to the tertiary level. This may have stemmed from the feeling that it is a lowly profession without prestige. The popular maxim that teachers reward is in heaven is not different from their conditions in society. The teachers work to train and sustain the nation but receive peanuts in return. Apart from that, their activities and personality are not always appreciated. How then can effective teaching and learning be achieved in this dilemma? This has been displayed in the work of Williams and Anekwe (2010), which express that shortage of personnel has affected educational activities as most trained and competent personnel are often being attracted to greener pastures in search of better conditions of service either in Nigeria or other countries leading to brain drain.

A decline in Staff Development

The teaching profession lacks adequate staff development. Effective staff training is meant to equip teachers with deep knowledge of their subject areas, sharpen their skills and ability to monitor students' works. To buttress this fact, Nwosu (2019c), affirms that quality delivery of education is actualized through quality staff development programs. In the same vein, Support Council Education Service (SCES, 2014), maintains that the main route of achieving professional and personal development of the three categories of staff in the school system is professional development. It suffices to state that professional development entails the following:

1. Developing the competence of staff for the effective discharge of duty
2. Update of staff knowledge
3. Modification of behavior and enhancement of responsibility.

On the contrary, the teaching profession is lacking in these perspectives. The decline in staff development has constrained the academic exposure of the personnel, leading to low-quality delivery.

Information Communication Technology (ICT)

One of the constraints of the teaching profession in the attainment of educational pursuit is information communication technology. As the saying goes "information is power". This means that every teacher should be rightfully informed through the use of gadgets. This is because ICT could improve the overall environment and operational efficiency and lead to improving the following functional areas and not limited to inventory control, allocating pupil/personnel services, student records, and employee productivity (Roblyer, 2005 in Nwosu, 2015). The teaching profession is not adequately equipped with ICT gadgets for storage and transfer of knowledge. It is said that eighty percent of teachers don't have access to a computer, not even to operate it. This has negatively affected the activities of the teaching profession, as the teaching operation is still carried out traditionally.

The Innovation of the Teaching Profession

The teaching profession in Nigeria has lost its dignity and the only medium through which restoration can be enforced is innovation and reformation. Innovation is the introduction of something new which departs from what has been traditionally known to exist (Obizue, Awuzie, Maduiké & Nwosu, 2015), while reformation is a planned and designed change undertaken to tackle deficiencies for progress through adjustment (Mbachu, 2011). The teaching profession requires the application of new ideas, information, imagination, creativity, initiative, and their translation to create values for the profession. Having known that this noble profession is the bedrock of the society in all aspects, urgent attention is required for its upgrade to halt the further decline of education in Nigeria.

On this premise, the following measures could be adopted to improve on the profession;

1. Professionalization and professionalism
2. Motivation
3. Provision of information communication technology (ICT)
4. Job enrichment
5. Funding
6. Placing a high value on the profession

Professionalization and Professionalism

The professionalization and professionalism of the teaching profession are very essential for its upgrade, although it has been declared a professional body the practicability is still in doubt. Let the teaching profession be made open strictly for those who read education and not an all-comers affair. This will increase the status and the capacity of members. Peter-Deluca (2016), outlines the qualities of a teacher as;

1. The ability to develop a relationship with their students
2. Patient, caring, and kind personality
3. Knowledge of learners
4. Dedication to teaching
5. Engaging students in lessons

Professionalism guides and controls the attitude and behavior of the teachers to work, appearance, and work ethics. The consideration of these factors in the teaching profession will take it to an enviable height.

Motivation

The motivation of the teaching personnel is vital in the achievement of educational goals. When workers are motivated, they are committed, satisfied, and highly productive. The motivation of teachers through adequate salary payment, promotion when due, medical facilities, allowance, loans, payment of gratuity after service like other notable respected organizations will lift the status of the teaching profession.❏

Provision of Information Communication Technology (ICT)

Development in technology is swift and so is knowledge. The universe has been dominated by the change in learning and it is expected that the teaching profession gets abreast of it. The teaching and learning process in Nigeria has been typified by traditional patterns that have remained unchanged. Accordingly, Nbina (2010), posits that today teachers, textbooks, chalkboards, traditional laboratory, and workshop facilities are no longer adequate to cope with the amount and type of information, skills, and competencies required of learners. To embrace global learning for national capacity development and sustainability, the incorporation of computer application programs and computer-assisted packages for teachers is necessary. This will foster in the acceleration of the activities of the teaching profession towards the attainment of educational goals.❏

Job Enrichment Strategy

Enriching the teaching profession is another means of improving and sustaining it. Job enrichment strategies are indispensable tools in the achievement of goals of the teaching profession. It is a qualitative change to the joy that increases the degree of autonomy, feedback, satisfaction, and significance of the job, enabling workers to have greater control and feedback in their work environment. While the role of a teacher is being recognized, the question is whether he is content and happy on his job? A teacher who is happy and satisfied with his job will be effective and as well demonstrate stronger job commitment and less prone to leave the profession. The purpose of using job enrichment for motivation is to give the employee a clear meaning of his/her functions so that it gives more satisfaction (Belyh, 2019). Hence the teaching profession needs to be redesigned with motivational techniques that aim at making the work more interesting and challenging for the employees.❏

Funding

Inadequate funding of the teaching profession has been a major issue to worry about. The profession is lacking in every aspect ranging from emoluments, working facilities, infrastructure, and the condition of service in totality. This has put the profession in a serious dilemma and thus needs to be properly addressed. When the teachers are properly remunerated and the necessary working facilities are provided, the teaching will radically improve.❏

Placing Value on the Profession

Placing high value on the teaching profession will elevate its status. When due consideration and proper attention are granted the profession through professionalism and professionalization, motivation, provision of information communication technology, job enrichment, and funding, its image will be redeemed.☐

Conclusion

A review of the activities of the teaching profession in Nigeria and globally, reveals its enormous contributions to human nature and the development of the nation at large. The teaching profession has transformational powers, as such its neglect is not worthy. The challenges suffered by this profession (the backbone of the nation) amid abundance ought to be squarely addressed. The growth and development of any nation are not solely dependent on the abundance of her natural resources but the development and proper management of the available resources. The teaching profession as the custodian of education requires immediate attention to lifting it from the deplorable state to achieve the hope of the nation which is built on education.☐

Suggestions

The researcher suggests that further studies be carried out in other locations outside Nigeria to find out if differences exist in the operations of the teaching profession. Secondly, the researcher suggests that empirical study be conducted on this same study to determine the level contribution of the teaching profession towards the nation's capacity building.

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