

Journal of
Education and Practice
(JEP)

Professionalization of Teaching in Nigeria



CARI
Journals

Professionalization of Teaching in Nigeria

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Accepted: 29th Jan 2024 Received in Revised Form: 11th Feb 2024 Published: 25th Feb 2024

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine professionalization of teaching in Nigeria.

Methodology: A descriptive survey approach and the population of the study consists of secondary school teachers in Edo State. One research question was formulated to guide the study while three hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 alpha level. The sample of the study was 546 teachers (males 285 females 261). The method of collecting data was by the use of questionnaires. Data collected were analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics to answer the research question and inferential statistics t- test and analysis of variance to test the hypotheses. Results were presented in tables.

Findings: The results showed that there is significant difference in the variables (gender, ($X = 35.13$; $SD = 9.38$) age, ($F_{(2,545)} = 7.880$; $P < .001$) and academic status, ($F_{(2,545)} = 21.507$; $P < .001$) in the study of professionalization of teaching in Nigeria. The findings indicated that professionalization of teaching in Nigeria is not a mirage but a reality, due to a lot of positive efforts the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) had made towards teachers' registration, accreditation, certification, promotion, and development, discipline and making regulations to control the practices of teaching as a profession.

Unique Contribution to theory, Policy and Practice: The study recommended among others that the Teachers' Registration Council Nigeria should stand up to their responsibility and continue to create the enabling environment and bring up innovative ideas to upgrade the quality of teachers in the teaching profession in Nigeria. Vibrant Orientation and enlightenment should be carried out at intervals nationwide by TRCN

Keywords: *Professionalization, Teaching*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a noble and respectable profession and it is often described as the mother of all professions.

Teaching is an occupation dating from the time of human existence. However, despite its age it has consistently lacked the command of prestige and power accorded the classical professions such as law and Medicine. In Nigeria, the need for better professionalization of teaching has always been stressed by educators.

Yusuf, Afolabi & Oyetayo (2014) asserted that teaching in Nigeria has been patronized by the people who could not succeed in their chosen vocations and the people who believe that teaching is a “spare time job” that allows them to simultaneously engage in other profit-making businesses which they considered more lucrative than teaching. In the olden days, teachers were given due honour and respect in various society in Nigeria (Ozano, 2013). Today, they are being looked down upon as people who could not find anything better for themselves in their society (Ivowi & Ben 2012). Poor working environment (e.g. infrastructures amenities etc): the working conditions faced by teachers in many schools are not conducive for the practice of his profession. Inadequate facilities coupled with dilapidated buildings do not help matters. Massive unqualified staff: in the practice of the professions, many quakes who are not qualified are found in schools: This makes it difficult to reach a full flesh profession. Porous entry qualification: the entry qualification into teaching profession in Nigeria is very porous. Compared to other professions, people gain entrance into teaching right as they complete their programmes. Others even take it as a stepping stone to their major professions. Entrance and certification are not strictly controlled by the set standards. This is believed to open the gate for unqualified teachers to erode the standard of teaching profession. With these myriads of problems faced by teachers, what then is the fate of professionalization of teaching in Nigeria?

Problem Statement:

Teaching is a noble profession, and as an activity which consists of actions intended to induce learning through the conscious and deliberate effort by an experienced person to impart knowledge, information, skills, attitudes and beliefs to an immature or less experienced individual (Oluremi, 2015).

Teaching profession in Nigeria have been faced with a lot of criticisms on whether it is a profession or not. These criticisms have been making needed changes difficult and as it often incur resentment. Critics of teaching profession have said, teaching lacks the germane characteristics of a viable profession. For example, in Nigeria, teachers are poorly motivated and less paid with poor welfare. This makes teachers in the teaching profession have low self-esteem coupled with no pride in saying one is a teacher. Some are even ashamed to mention they are teachers. Many teachers themselves do not even believe in the teaching professionalization in Nigeria as they have been thrown to the background over the years. Hence, peoples’ perception

about teachers has made the younger ones to shy away from teaching profession. Nwaokocha, (2013), lamented that people who are not teachers are found in different schools teaching. This has made teaching a dumping ground for other professions. Youths seeking jobs are found to take teaching jobs before they get their dream jobs in their areas of speciality.

Even with the establishment of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (a body mandated to regulates the teaching profession in Nigeria); the prestige and power conceded to other professions such as law and medicine are still not experienced by teachers in Nigeria. There is therefore need to create awareness about the teaching professionalization in Nigeria. What then is the level of awareness of teaching professionalization among teachers themselves in Nigeria? An attempt to answer this question formed the major thrust of this study as it x-rayed the level of awareness of teaching professionalization among teachers in Nigeria based on teachers' gender, age and academic level.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review: This study is hinged on social cognitive theory by Albert Bandura (1986,1997). This theory shows the interactions between people, their behaviour and environments. In this theory, Bandura, (1997) demonstrated how Individuals are proactive and self -regulating; as they exercise observational self -control and self-efficacy. This theory is relevant to this study because both self-efficacy, beliefs and outcome expectations constitute the major motivational beliefs leading to actions, performance and outcomes in professionalization of teaching.

2.2 Conceptual Framework:

2.2.1 Teaching

There are several definitions of teaching. Some defined it as an activity, and others says it is an act or science. Oyekan (2000), defined teaching as the process of making it possible for someone to learn. Teaching has to do with the systematic presentation of facts, ideas, skills and techniques to students. (Orubite,2010)

Teaching is the process of providing opportunities for students to learn. It is an interactive process as well as intentional activity. Teaching is defined as the systematic process of transmitting knowledge, attitudes and skills in accordance with the profession ethics. Bua (2022), defined teaching as a system of interaction and process of guiding the learner in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It involves the system of interaction between the teacher, the learner and the learning materials.

Teaching has been described by various scholars; Okunloye (2003) sees teaching as an activity aimed at bringing about meaningful learning through a method that is morally and pedagogically acceptable. According to Okunloye (2003), teaching involves a teacher, a learner, and content in form of knowledge, facts, information and a skill to be imparted. Oluremi, (2015) sees teaching

as a nomadic interactive human process involving complex decision making on different aspects of classroom interaction.

2.2.2 PROFESSION

A profession is referred to as a type of occupation that meets certain criteria that raises it above that of an occupation. A profession is an occupation based on specialized intellectual study and training, the purpose of which is to supply skilled services with ethical components and others. A profession are those occupations possessing a particular combination of characteristics generally considered to be the expertise, autonomy, commitment and responsibility. Webster (2022), defined a profession as a chosen, paid occupation requiring prolonged training and formal qualification. A profession is a paid vocation that involves significant education and training. A profession is an occupation based on specialized intellectual study and training with the goal of providing professional service with ethical components to others for a set fee or salary.

2.2.3 PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism means the demonstration of high level of persona, ethical and high level of skill characteristics of a member of a profession. It is defined as possessing both unique or special expertise and a self-imposed commitment to assist the community.

However, Ajayi (2007) puts up six criteria for a professional

1. Is basically intellectual (as opposed to physical) and is accompanied by a high degree of individual responsibility.
2. Is based on a body of knowledge that can be learned and is refreshed and refined through research
3. Is practical in addition to being theoretical
4. Can be taught through a highly specialized professional education
5. Has a strong internal organization of members and well-developed group consciousness
6. Has practitioners who are motivated by altruism (the desire to help others) and who are responsible to human interests.

2.2.4 THE PROFESSIONAL TEACHER

The Professional Teacher is the teacher that have a firm grasp of the subjects he teaches and is devoted to the intellectual demands of his discipline. Such teacher is able to analyze the needs of his students he teaches. The professional teacher understands the standards of his practice and know that he is accountable for meeting the needs of the students he teaches. Hence, the Professional Teacher can be referred to as the status of a person who is paid to teach. This can be teachers who represent the best in the profession and set the highest standard for best practices in teaching (Adesina 2005).

2.2.5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER

The responsibilities of a teacher according to Bua (2022), are the assigned duties that the teacher must perform in teaching and learning process. These responsibilities include;

- **Continuous learning;** it is the responsibility of the teacher to devote himself to learning at all times. He must be prepared to learn and improve his knowledge through research, internet etc.
- **Competency;** it is the responsibility of the teacher to be competent in his chosen profession and must be innovative in his field of endeavour. He must be able to add to existing knowledge.
- **Role model;** it is the responsibility of the teacher to serve as a role model to the students. He must be able to live an exemplary and emulative lifestyle.
- **Maintenance of good relationship with students:** it is the responsibility of the teacher to maintain good relationship with students. Such relationship must be within the operations of the ethics of teaching profession.
- **Application of teaching principles:** it is the responsibility of the teacher to apply the principles of teaching in such a way as to motivate learners and encourage them to learn. He must be able to bring about positive change in behaviour of learners.
- **Moral standard;** it is the responsibility of the teacher to imbibe high moral standard in the learners. He should be able to develop in learners, positive attitudes, values, norms to bring about unity, peace and solidarity of the nation.

2.2.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHING PROFESSION

Teaching as a profession is a public service which requires teacher's expert knowledge and specialized skills, acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing study. Thus, professions are appreciated for their intellectual competence, knowledge and skills. Examples include; law, medicine, engineering, teaching e.t.c. Some known criteria or features of any profession include, freedom to practice, professional code of conduct or ethics, professional organization, legal recognition, controlled entrance in to the profession and services to members of the society.

Knowledge: Teaching is said to be the oldest and noblest of all profession ever known. The place of teaching in human and national development cannot be overemphasized. There is no doubt that the acquisition of knowledge by a professional usually takes a lengthy period of years so as to expose the trainee to the core knowledge competence required which includes: ethical conducts, practical skills, handling different circumstances, industrial training, strategic competence and mental alertness needed. More also, a professionals exhibit high standard of professional and intellectual excellence. Therefore, the governing policy into the preparation for teaching should rest on the need to provide society with an adequate supply of teachers who possess the necessary moral, intellectual and physical qualities and who have the required professional knowledge and skills.

Period of Internship of Apprenticeship: This is carried out during the period of teaching practice in education. During teaching practice, the student teachers put into practice theories and the knowledge they acquired in school. In the process of acquiring professional knowledge needed to practice the occupation, extensive period of internship of apprenticeship is needed for practical knowledge and excellence. A teacher requires a period of twelve weeks of teaching practice. And they must be dedicated and faithful in all professional undertakings being punctual, thorough, conscientious and dependable.

Professional Code of Ethics: Teachers occupy positions of great honour and influence in the society. But over the years things appear to have changed for worse. In order to maintain and restore the teacher's enviable status and qualities, there is the need to determine the minimum standards expected of professional teachers in terms of their thoughts, words and actions. Teachers Code of Conduct which was first established in the year 2004 and lot of efforts went into the development of that first edition.

Controlled Entrance: Nobody is expected to belong to the teaching profession without possessing a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), Bachelor's Degree in Education (B.Sc.Ed, B.Ed, B.Tech. Ed) Master's Degree in Education (M.Ed) , Doctorate Philosophy in Education (Ph.D), however, those who possess Higher National Diploma (HND), Bachelors, Masters or Doctorate in any subject matter is eligible to read a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) or a Professional Diploma in Education (PDE) to be admitted in the profession by TRCN through the Professional Qualifying examination conducted by TRCN. Hence, entry into the teaching profession is guided by setting and enforcing standards for selection, training, licensure and certification by TRCN.

Professional Organization: A profession should have a strong organization that would see to the welfare and protection of their members. Besides all other provisions, practitioners are better protected by the organization they belong to. All professional organizations are duly registered in Nigeria. Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) is a body that was established by Act 31 of 1993 as an agency of the Federal Ministry of Education. The Act, determines the standards of knowledge and skills to be attained by persons seeking to become registered as teachers under this act and raising those standards from time to time as circumstances may permit.

Freedom of Practice: As a profession, teachers are given the freedom to practice and perform their work as they fit. The policies of government do not inhibit the autonomy of a profession. There is a total and absolute freedom to practice a profession. (Okunleye,2022). A practitioner has an unshakable display of quality job as a result of freedom granted him to perform altruistic service in the affairs of others.

Legal Recognition: Decree No. 31, of May 1993 gave legal recognition to teaching as a profession in Nigeria. Jekayinfa (2003), observed that the public trust their judgements and

skills. The society cannot do away with teachers' unique service to humanity. This is because all other profession is traceable to the services of teachers.

Professional and in Service Growth: Just as practiced by TRCN, different organizations have avenues for training and retraining their practitioners. Various professions believe that knowledge is dynamic and ongoing. Practitioners attend mandatory and instituted seminars, lectures, conferences, workshops, presentations and exhibitions to update their practical skills and knowledge.

2.3 Research Gaps

Different areas of teaching profession have been studied as seen in literature but none of these studies have actually studied professionalization of teaching viz-a-viz the level of awareness of professionalization teaching among teachers themselves in Nigeria. It is this gap the study sort to fill.

2.4 Objectives of the study

The main purpose of the study is to examine professionalization of teaching in Nigeria. The objectives of the study include the following;

1. To ascertain the level of awareness of teachers on professionalization teaching in Nigeria
2. To examine the level of awareness based on gender in professionalization of teaching in Nigeria
3. To determine whether age affect the awareness of teachers on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria
4. To find out how academic status of teachers affect their awareness on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria.

2.5 Research Questions

1. What is the level of awareness of teachers on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria?
2. What is the level of male and female teachers' awareness on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria based
3. Does age affect the awareness of teachers on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria?
4. Does academic status of teachers affect their awareness on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria?

2.6 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at .05 alpha level.

1. There is no significant difference in awareness between male and female teachers on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria.

2. There is no significant difference in awareness of teachers on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria based on age
3. There is no significant difference in awareness of teachers on professionalization of teaching based on academic level.

3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design and Location: The study took a descriptive survey approach to direct the study as questionnaire was used to collect information from a relatively large group of people with the intent of determining the relationship that exist between the variables of study.

Population: The population of the study consisted of secondary school teachers in Edo State.

Sample and Sampling technique: A sample of 546 teachers; (males 285 females 261) were selected through stratified random technique.

Data Collection: Questionnaire instrument which was designed by the researcher was based on teachers' awareness of professionalization of teaching in Nigerian in the area of teachers' sex, age and academic level difference was used to collect data. A four-point scale which ranges from 1 'Not sure', 2 'Disagree', 3 'Agree' 4. 'Strongly Agree. The questionnaire has four major subsections each containing seven items namely; level of awareness of teachers' professionalization (items 1-7), sex difference in teachers' professionalization (8-14), age difference in teachers' professionalization (15-21) academic difference in teachers' professionalization (22-28). Scores of the participants in each subsection range between 0 and 21. For the whole scale, the scores range between 0 and 84. The higher the score, the higher the level of awareness of teachers' professionalization. The reliability coefficient of the instrument resulted in 0.78 while the internal consistency of the scale yielded $\alpha=.72$.

Statistical Analysis: Data collected were analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics to answer the research question and inferential statistics, t- test and analysis of variance to test the hypotheses.

4.0 FINDINGS

Findings are presented in tables as shown below;

Research Question One

What is the awareness status of teachers on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria?

The result is as shown in table 1

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics on the awareness Status of Teachers on Professionalization teaching in Nigeria

| Variable | No | % | X | SD |
|----------|-----|------|-------|------|
| Not sure | 97 | 11.4 | 15.61 | 7.13 |
| Disagree | 47 | 7.0 | 5.0 | 9.66 |
| Agree | 402 | 81.7 | 35.09 | 5.92 |

Table 1. Shows that 11.4% ($x= 15.61$; SD 7.13) of the participants were not sure of teachers' professionalization in Nigeria. However, 7.0% ($x= 5.0$; SD 9.66) shows that they disagree on teachers professionalization in Nigeria, while as high as 81.7 % ($x= 35.09$; SD 5.92) showed that they are aware of teaching professionalization in Nigeria.

Hypotheses One

There is no significant difference in awareness status between male and female on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria was analyzed with t-test statistics. The outcome is contained in table 2.

Table 2. Gender comparison of awareness status of Teachers on Professionalization of Teaching in Nigeria

| Variable | Gender | No. | X | SD | df | t-cal | Mean Diff. | Sig. |
|---------------------|--------|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|------------|------|
| Professionalization | M | 285 | 32.81 | 9.80 | 544 | 2.82 | 2.32 | .005 |
| | F | 261 | 35.13 | 9.38 | | | | |

The outcome as showed in table 2 revealed that there was significant difference between the two genders in their status of Professionalization. The calculated t- value ($t_{(544)}=2.82$; MD =2.32; $p=-005$) was significant at .05 alpha level. Females ($X =35.13$;SD=9.38) scored higher in the measure of awareness of teacher professionalization when compared with their males ($X =35.13$;SD=9.38) indicating that females are more aware of teaching professionalization in Nigeria than males. The hypothesis was upheld.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in awareness of teachers on professionalization of teaching in Nigeria based on age. The result was subjected to statistical scrutiny using analysis of variance (ANOVA). The analysis is presented in table 3.

Table 3. Age comparison of Teachers Awareness on Professionalization of Teaching in Nigeria

| Source | Sum of squares | df | Mean square. | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|--------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 1435.733 | 2 | 717.866 | 7.880 | .000 |
| Within Group | 49464.802 | 543 | 91.095 | | |
| Total | 50900.535 | 545 | | | |

There was significant difference in the degree of measurement of teachers' professionalization among teachers in Nigeria based on age disparity as shown in the result in table 3. The F- ratio calculated ($F_{(2,545)} = 7.880P < .001$) was also significant at 0.05 alpha level. The implication is that age variance is a factor in teachers' professionalization in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference in awareness of teachers on professionalization of teaching based on academic level. This hypothesis was also tested with ANOVA and the result shown in table 4.

Table 3. Academic comparison of Status on Teachers Professionalization in Nigeria

| Source | Sum of squares | df | Mean square. | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|--------------|--------|------|
| Between Groups | 5414.649 | 3 | 31804.883 | | |
| Within Group | 45485.886 | 542 | 83.922 | 21.507 | .000 |
| Total | 50900.535 | 545 | | | |

Table 4 revealed that the F ratio calculated ($F_{(2,545)} = 21.507; P < .001$) was significant at .05 alpha level. The hypothesis that predicted no significant is therefore not accepted as academic level of teachers is discovered to affect variation of awareness of professionalization among teachers in Nigeria.

4.1 Discussion

The study aimed at finding the status of the awareness professionalization of teaching among teachers in Nigeria. The outcomes revealed that large number of the participants are aware of

teaching professionalization in Nigeria. The reason is that more have been done by Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria.

The study found difference in awareness status of both genders in teaching professionalization in Nigeria. The outcome is in the variance that could be adduced to the fact that females are more in the teaching profession compares to their male counterparts.

Age variance was found to be a factor among teachers in professionalization teaching in Nigeria. The more the age of the teachers, the more the awareness on professionalization teaching in Nigeria.

Academic level of teachers was discovered to affect variation of teachers' awareness of professionalization of teaching in Nigeria. This is as a result of the fact that the higher the academic level, the more awareness about professionalization of teaching in Nigeria.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is significant difference in the variables (gender, age and academic) status in the study. This implies that the three variables has bearing with the awareness status of teacher's professionalization in Nigeria. The professionalization of teaching in Nigeria is not a mirage but a reality, due to a lot of positive efforts the Teachers Registration Council on Nigeria (TRCN) have made towards teachers' registration, accreditation, certification, development, discipline and making regulations to control the practices of teaching as a profession. The council has also directed those who want to take up career in teaching and any uncertified teaching in the school system to obtain professional certificates and licenses from TRCN as a condition for either being employed or retained as professional teachers.

5.2 Recommendations

The body charged with the responsibility of regulating the teaching profession is the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). Therefore, it is the duty of the TRCN to continue to create the enabling environment and bring up innovative ideas to upgrade the quality of teachers in the teaching profession in Nigeria.

Vibrant Orientation and enlightenment should be carried out at intervals nationwide by TRCN so that all teachers can take part in the professional examination by TRCN and be registered as professional teachers.

TRCN should be up to their responsibilities. All persons who tagged themselves as teachers without teaching qualifications should be sent out of the system.

The government should make the profession an enviable one by boosting the self-esteem and morals of the teachers through the provision of adequate facilities for teachers and regular

payment of teachers' salary. Teachers should be paid more than their counterparts in other ministries.

There is a great need to put teachers on the same pedestal with other highly valued professionals in Nigeria, and make teaching profession attractive and an enviable profession

TRCN should ensure that only registered teachers are practicing the profession

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