

Attitude of Pre-service Social Studies Teachers towards choosing Teaching Profession as Career

David Toyin Aladejebi and Samuel Olanrewaju Oladapo

AdekunleAjasin University, Akungba-Akoko

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ABSTRACT

This study examine the attitude of pre-service Social Studies Teachers towards choosing Teaching Profession as Career. The survey research design was adopted and the instrument used for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentage.

The results showed that the attitude of pre-service Social Studies Teachers towards choosing Teaching Profession as career was positive; Teachers have a lot to contribute toward the development of our society. Based on the findings, it was recommended among other thing that government at all levels should do everything possible to motivate thepre-service teachers and also that the curriculum for training professional teachers should be reach enough to prepare teachers for the task of nation-building.

Keywords: Pre-service Teachers, Teaching profession, Attitude, Career, Nation-building.

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching being a dynamic activity needs a favourable attitude and certain definiteproficiencies from those involved in it. In the views of Bhargava and Pathy (2014), teachers' proficiency depends on the attitude he/she possesses for the profession. The positive attitude helps teacher to develop a conductive learner friendly environment in the classroom. This also casts a fruitful effect on learning of the students.

All over the world, Teaching is considered as a very important profession with the teachers being accorded a professional status (Chakraborty & Mondal, 2014;Hussain, 2004). Being professionals, teachers are expected to use the best practices and strategies to meet challenging demands of their carrier, which involves impacting knowledge and developing essential skills and

attitudes in the students. Accomplishing these goals in teaching is demanding. They have to use the best of their abilities to achieve this outcome and use those practices and strategies that have been found as more efficient and effective. Chakraborty and Mondal (2014) assert that the development of a nation always relies on knowledge acquired through education and its practical Implications. To achieve this, the teachers have more responsibilities in shaping and building the character especially mental characters of students. Teachers are expected to use the best practices and strategies to meet the challenging demands of their career. If the teachers are well trained and highly motivated, learning will be more enhanced. The teaching profession demands a clear set of goals, love for the profession and obviously a more favourable attitude towards the professions.

Hollins (2011, p. 395) asserted that teaching is a "multidimensional process that requires deep knowledge and understanding in a wide range of areas and the ability to synthesize, integrate, and apply this knowledge in different situations, under varying conditions, and with a wide diversity of groups and individuals" To achieve the above roles of teachers, training of professional teachers becomes a very important activity, this makes School to be considered fundamental to society and is the basis for professional activity. Training of professional teachers is essential to provide proper education for students (Alkhateeb, 2013).

The nation need well trained and professionally qualified teachers, and so a lot of responsibilities fall on teacher training institutions (Hussain, 2004). The teacher teaching skills should be a positive professional attitude. The role of a teacher in the educational process is always challenging and dynamic. This is so because the teachers' job is much more than the transmission of

knowledge. Teachers' great task is inspiring and guiding the students towards cherished goals. The teacher in a naturalistic set up is only a setter of the stage, a supplier of materials and opportunities, a provider of an ideal environment, a creator of conditions under which unnatural development takes place. Teaching is the core profession and the key agent of change in today's knowledge society, the issue of teacher quality, training and continuous professional development is vital to the improvement of not only our education system, but also achieving the goal of education for all.

The maxims that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers and that no nation can rise above the level of its teaching staff shows the importance of teachers and teacher education programme in national development (NPE, 2004, 2013). Iniobong (2008) opined that the future of any nation depends on the quality of its teachers. Even though much has been said about teaching as a profession in Nigeria, very little have been done to ensure its quality and quality assurance (Ajayi&Adgbesan, 2006). Some however has seen teaching as a helping profession (quacks or unqualified teachers). Sotanwa (2003) was of the view that quality teachers are needed for quality teaching in order to ensure quality universal basic educational system in Nigeria.

Oyekan (2000), asserts that teaching professions is one of the most stable and noble professions in Nigeria, yet the present status of the 21st century Nigeria in terms of career choice among education students cannot be compared with what obtained in the 19th and 20th centuries when teachers are regarded as "lords", "nation builders", "transmitter of culture", "epitome of knowledge" and so on. In Nigeria today, teachers have little or no social standing and acceptance, they are regarded as nobody (Ogunyemi, 2012). Parents in the past wished their children would go into teaching profession; take up teaching as a career via teacher training colleges available to them after secondary school as compared to what we have today. The situation becomes more pathetic and devastating as all stakeholders of education even the society at large detests the profession. According to Osibogun (1998), the reasons for this state of affairs in the professions are numerous. They include; poor image of teachers, low status of teachers when compared with other professions such as Doctors, Lawyers, Accountants and inability to make teaching a real profession in outlook. Invariably, teaching has become a haven for "all comers" without the necessary standards

and requirement which other professions demands (Ogunyemi, 2012)

Oruc (2011) stated that the effects of a teacher on the nation and the future of the nation are unquestionable as it was stated by the philosopher Henry Adams, a teacher affects eternity, he can never tell where his influences stops. According to Alkhateeb (2013) teaching is a profession that profoundly affects the lives of every individual and ultimately the strength and well-being of the nation. This author opined that people who love teaching are generally attracted by the process and the spontaneous aspects of teaching. They take full advantage of every teaching moment and make the most of it. Pre-service teachers in our higher institution of learning across the country who are being trained as teachers finds it difficult to aspire or take up teaching as their future career, a profession they are actually trained for. When teachers in schools are not motivated, committed or productive, even respected, how much more student teacher? What will make them choose teaching as their future career or reject this and find their way into any other "prestigious" professions in the near future? What are the factors responsible for these choices into future aspirations towards a career? (Rots, 2012). It is often said that the skill and potentiality of a teacher as evident in his/her qualities will go a long way to determinestudent's interest and likely choice of becoming teachers in the future (Akintomide&Oluwatosin, 2012). Because teaching remains a germane concept in career choice among education students, even the so-called secondary school teachers are being influenced by numerous factors that go a long way in determining their interest, motivation level and content delivery, productivity, family background, peer influences, society, orientation and willingness(Kamau, 2012). Generally, the present day Nigeria does not accept teaching as a befitting profession. According to Bha (2005), any individual who choose teaching, does so for a variety of reasons. For some, teaching is a respectable profession, one that will increase the individual's prestige in the community. For others, it may be seen as an opportunity to live a life of service. For some as well, teaching may be seen primarily as an occupation that offers short working hours, long vacations and long-term job security. The factors that lead to these choices are multi-faceted, and they interact to produce a pattern that varies from one teacher to the next (Akintomide & Oluwatosin, 2012)

Education has a very decisive influence on student career choice after school. However, the

society which is a composite of many factors influences the development, attitude and career choice towards education, teacher education and training profession. Teacher education, educational and technical knowhow, opens occupational doors into various fields of work, irrespective of whether such student is trained as a teacher or not, which remains closed to other professions outside the teaching profession. Factors like home background, peer groups, school location, curriculum, staffing of personnel, infrastructures etc. would affect the attitudes of student teachers. This study was therefore conceived to investigate the factors that encourage or discourage students from choosing teaching as a life-career in AdekunleAjasin University, AkungbaOndo State. The study was designed to investigate the attitude of pre-service teachers towards teaching profession and choosing teaching as a career.

Research Questions

The following research questions are stated to guide the study:

1. What are pre-service teachers’ attitudes towards teaching as a profession or career?
2. What reason will make pre-service teachers’ choose teaching as a career?
3. What are the factors that discourage pre-service teachers towards choosing teaching profession as a career?

Methods

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. 200 pre-service Social Studies teachers of the Department of Social Science Education, AdekunleAjasin University, AkungbaAkoko were use as the study population. Data generation was through the administration of questionnaire to the Pre-service teachers. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count, mean and standard deviation.

Table 1: Personal information of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	74	37.8	40.2	40.2
Valid Female	110	56.1	59.8	100.0
Valid Total	184	93.9	100.0	
Missing	12	6.1		
Total	196	100.0		

Table 1 above shows that 196 students were involved in this study out of which 40% are male while 60% are female.

Answers to research questions.

Research question one: What is the Pre-service Teachers’ Attitude towards Teaching as a Profession?

Table 2: Pre-service Teachers’ Attitude towards Teaching as a Profession

S/N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Respondents
1.	Teaching profession is the best profession of all	53.6	36.2	6.6	3.6	3.40	.7	196
2.	Teaching is the noblest profession	38.3	52.6	7.1	1.5	3.28	.6	196
3.	Teaching profession is highly prestigious than other professions	29.1	47.4	16.3	6.1	3.01	.8	196
4.	I like teaching as a profession	35.7	45.4	17.3	1.5	3.15	.7	196
5.	Teaching profession is considered as the most ideal profession	36.2	45.9	14.8	3.1	3.15	.7	196
6.	Everybody loves the profession of teaching	14.3	18.4	41.3	25	2.22	.9	196

The above table in respect of research question one revealed a mean and standard deviation scores as follows

Teaching profession is the best profession of all (3.40; 0.7), Teaching is a noble profession (3.28; 0.6), teaching profession is highly prestigious than other professions (3.01; 0.8), I like

teaching as a profession (3.15; 0.7), Teaching profession is considered as the most ideal profession (3.15; 0.7) and everybody loves the profession of teaching (2.22; 0.9). This result implies that respondents have positive attitudes toward the teaching profession.

Research question Two: What reasons will make Pre-service Teachers Choose Teaching as a Career or Profession?

Table 3: Reasons that will make Pre-service Teachers to Choose Teaching as a Profession.

S/N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Respondents
1.	Teaching profession is the best educational social service for mankind	38.8	47.4	10.2	3.6	3.21	.7	196
2.	Teaching profession is highly skilled and competent job	37.8	54.1	6.6	1.5	3.28	.6	196
3.	Teaching profession is the most simplest and easiest professions for everybody	20.9	35.2	30.1	13.8	2.63	.9	196
4.	Only the averagely educated persons enter the job of teaching profession or career	14.3	29.6	36.7	17.9	2.41	.9	196
5.	Everybody can become a most successful and ideal teacher after passing B. Ed course while entering the job of teaching.	30.6	41.8	19.9	7.1	2.96	.8	196
6.	I took the B. Ed course for getting the job of teaching easily	23.0	38.8	27.6	10.2	2.75	.9	196

Result from above table shows that 86.2% of the respondents agreed that teaching profession is the best educational social service to mankind while 13.8% disagreed; 91.9% of the respondents agreed that teaching profession is a highly skilled and competent job compared to 8.1% that disagreed; 56.1% of the respondents were of the view that teaching profession is the simplest and easiest profession for everyone while 43.9

disagreed; 43.9% of the respondents agreed that only averagely educated persons join the teaching profession compared to 56.1% that disagreed; 72% of the respondents agreed that everybody can become a successful teacher one he/she has a bed while 27.4% disagreed; 61.8% agreed that the B.Ed. degree is needed only to be able to secure teaching job compared to 38.2 that disagreed.

Research question Three: How Committed are Pre-Service Teachers’ Towards the Teaching Profession?

Table 4: Pre-service Teachers’ Commitment towards Teaching as a Profession

S/ N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Respondents
1.	Teaching profession is disregarded by most of the people in present day society	31.1	46.9	15.3	4.6	3.07	.8	196
2.	Teaching profession is the best job for those who are not willing to face challenges	11.2	27.0	37.8	21.9	2.28	.9	196
3.	Choosing of teaching profession is a wrong career in one’s life	12.2	10.7	23.0	51.5	1.83	1.0	196
4.	If one neglects teaching profession, it neglects the development of the society	36.7	41.3	11.7	7.7	3.10	.8	196

From the table above, 78% of the respondents agreed while 19.9% of the respondents disagreed that teaching profession is being disregarded by most of the people in present day society; 38.2% of the respondents agreed while 59.7% of the respondents disagreed that teaching profession is the best job for those who are not willing to face challenges; 22.9% of the respondents agreed while 74.5% of the respondents disagreed that choosing of teaching profession is a wrong career in one’s life and 78% of the respondents agreed, while 19.4% of the respondents disagreed that if one neglects teaching profession, such a person neglects the development of the society.

II. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings from research question one revealed that pre-service Social Studies Teachers’ have positive attitudes towards choosing teaching as a profession. This is revealed by the larger percentage of respondents that agreed to the question bothering on their attitudes to teaching profession as their future chosen career. Findings from research question two revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that teaching profession has numerous roles to play in achieving meaningful societal development, hence the pre-service Social Studies teachers agree that it’s a profession that will allow them contribute meaningfully towards the development of their society. Moreover, given that “teaching appears to be an occupation considered central to a country’s development and well-being” (Watt et al. 2012), there is an understandable concern for teachers with respect to

the mission of nation-building. Findings from research question three revealed that teaching profession require high level of commitment, dedication and hard work, hence it’s not a profession for the lazy ones or those afraid of facing challenges.

This study established that the pre-service teachers have positive attitudes towards the teaching profession. According to Scocco (2006), success in the teaching profession is derived from three main aspects; knowledge, competencies and attitudes. There is also global recognition that the success of any educational reform strongly depends on the quality and performance of the teachers (Ingersoll and Smith 2004; Kennedy 2008; Tatto 2007). However, due to the demanding workload mentioned above, teacher’s performance is likely to be adversely affected. Teaching is a profession that requires a high degree of responsibility and altruism.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

From the findings of this study, it is revealed that pre-service Social Studies teachers has positive attitudes towards choosing teaching profession as a career as it will serve as a means of contributing towards the development of our society. It is recommended therefore that government at all levels should do everything to motivate pre-service teacher towards choosing teaching as a career. This resonates with Konig and Rothland(2012) submissions that there is an underlying factor to be investigated concerning teaching as a career which is motivation of the pre-

service teachers. Also, the curriculum for training teachers should be rich enough to prepare teachers for the important task of building a virile nation.

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