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PROCEEDINGS

School of Educational Studies,
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Penang, Malaysia

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A Dimensional Model for Promoting Best Practices in Teaching Profession through Capacity Building

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Teachers constitutes the most important asset in teaching profession, thus, it is important to continuously train and develop them for better improvement. Capacity building has been widely adopted as a means towards improving teaching performance in Nigerian schools for long period of time. However, it is rather ironic that of all the world's leading profession, teaching profession which is the mother of all other professions has the shortest period given to its professional training. This study examines a comprehensive measure in promoting best practices among professional teachers through capacity building using a confirmatory factor analysis approach taking public secondary school teachers in North Central region of Nigeria. The method adopted was a quantitative research of the survey type which provide a numeric description of portion of the population. The proposed model explores four factors to reflect the criteria of teaching profession which include; professional organization, training period, condition of service and social status of teachers. The data analysis was done through structural equation modeling (AMOS) with results showing a good fit of model with the data. The findings revealed that capacity building have significant influence on teaching profession in Nigeria.

Introduction

The concept of capacity building in education has been widely adopted world-wide as a tool required for enhancing professional capabilities of teacher. The purpose of which is to equip teachers with necessary training needed in organizing and performing their duties in school to be able to attain a well specified goal (Babalola and Ayeñi, 2009). Globally, more emphasis have been placed on teacher education quality. This is in line with the submission of Niyozov (2008) which stipulates that, no nation can rise in its education without continuous improvement of its teacher. Thus, capacity building has become one of the key strategies adopted by many countries in developing its teacher (Egbo, 2011). However, over the years, studies have shown that, disregarding the professional needs of teacher has contributed to the retrogression of Nigeria education system. It is therefore important to examine those challenges encountered by teachers in their professional development in order to shed more light on the absence of highly qualified teachers and problems associated with teaching profession especially in Nigeria.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (1828) defines teacher as one whose occupation is to instruct especially in the four walls of a classroom. By the way of contrast, the same dictionary describes Doctor as a physician, Dentist, or Veterinarian who is trained and licenced to practice. The same dictionary that define as teacher distinguish the profession from that of a Doctor with "LICENCE". The contrast in those two words *trained* and *licenced* sum up the problem of teaching profession in Nigeria. This raised an unending question on how much education is required to be a professional teacher?

In Nigeria, teachers have been classified by Obanya (2004) into five categories. The first are the practicing teachers whose task revolves round daily face-to-face contact with learners in classrooms, laboratories, workshops, and in field setting. This category forms the bulk of the teaching force of most nations. Second category of teachers are those administrators practicing within schools whose operation is more of the school rather than the classroom. Third categories are those whose field of operation goes beyond a single school. Fourth teachers are those whose activity involves planning,

curriculum development, delivery of education services. They cover the entire education system, usually on specialized function within the system. And finally, the education scholars who are charged with teacher education and education research promotion. These categories of teachers are based mainly in the tertiary institutions and are specifically in units (faculties, departments and colleges).

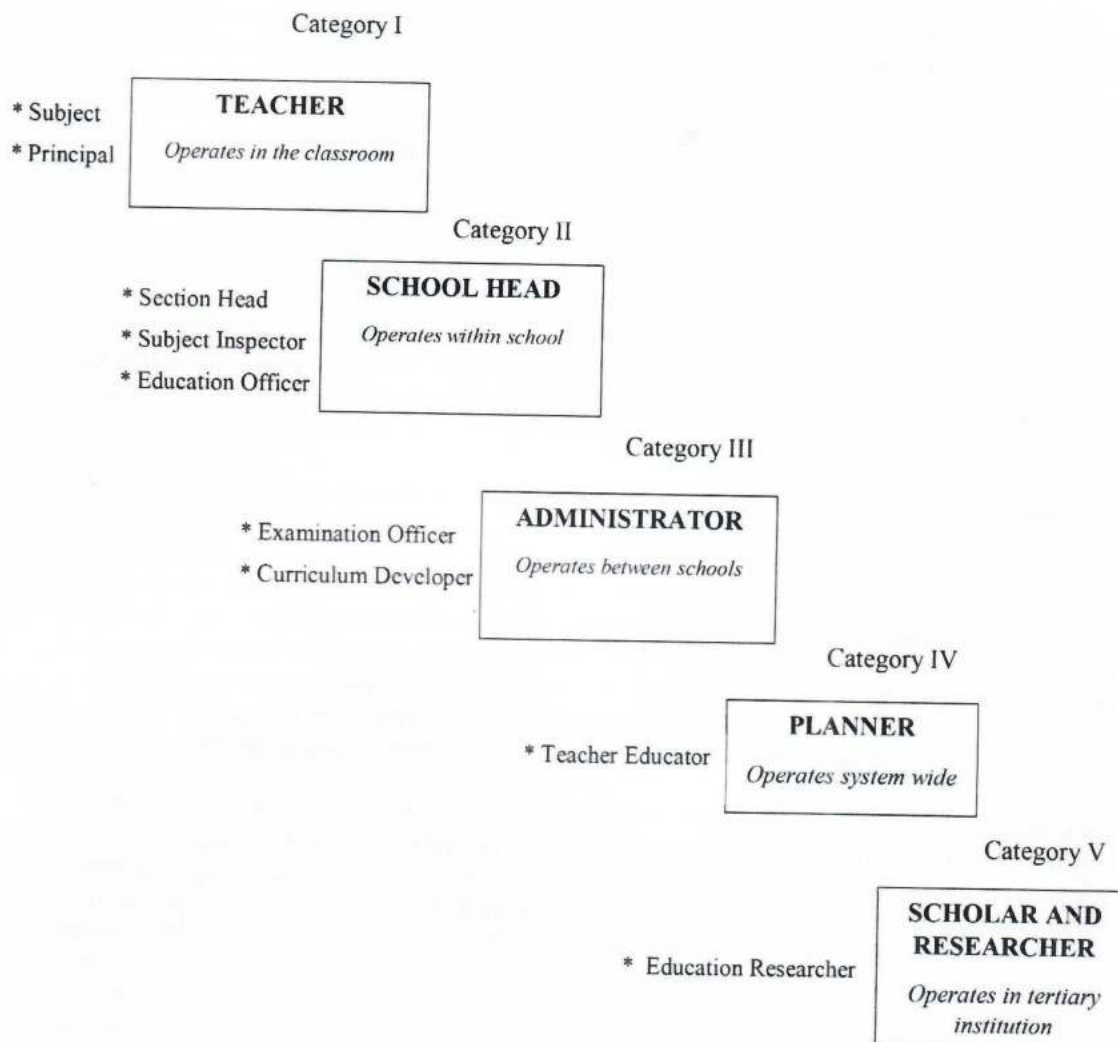


Figure I: Categorization of teacher

Capacity building is a life-long process. The United Nation Development Programme UNDP (2010) describes capacity building as any activity put in place by an institution to strengthen the skills, abilities and knowledge of individual and institutional structure to be able meet and sustain its mission and goals. It is related to the development of full capacity of individual skills, knowledge and attitude to be able to function well in an institution or social context (Menter & Murray, 2009; Osinem & Nwoji, 2010; Egbo, 2011). Indeed, capacity building is an essential part of professionalism. Chukwu (2009) has confirmed that capacity building is a factor in teacher professional development, thus, the need to equip teacher with the necessary skills needed to impact knowledge and have confidence in his profession to meet with global competitiveness is very critical. Darling-Hamond and Post (2000) submitted that evidence from industrialized countries asserts that students of teacher with full professional preparation for teaching learn more than students of teacher with no professional preparation. It is therefore important for teacher,

school head, administrator, educational planner and researcher to understand the importance of capacity building in their work particularly, the profession.

There has been a condemnable cycle of poor quality in teaching professional standard in most African counties especially in Nigeria. Teaching profession in Nigeria have been handed a lot of criticisms of whether it is a profession or not. Critics of teaching profession have said that teaching lacks the germane characteristics of a viable profession, as certification and entrance into the profession is not strictly controlled by the set standards (Akinduyo, 2014). This is evident in the process of skill acquisition needed for practical knowledge and excellence. For instance, In Nigeria, profession like engineering, pharmacy, medicine, and law requires one year mandatory practical knowledge of internship while a period of 12 weeks of internship is required for teaching profession (Akinduyo, 2014). As a result of the short period of internship, it has resulted to many problems which hinders the professional status of teachers part of which include: irregular self esteem of teachers in the society, massive unqualified teachers in the profession, porous entry qualification and guts inability to register NUT as a professional organization in Nigeria. Therefore, this study aim to examine teacher perceptions of the teaching profession in Nigeria and to also examine whether capacity building is significantly related to teaching profession.

Hypothesis: There is a significant influence of capacity building on teaching profession in Nigeria.

Methodology

The population comprise of all teachers whose operation lies in classrooms, within school, between school, system-wide and in tertiary institutions. A convenience sample of 329 teachers were selected from primary and secondary schools from North Central Geo Political Zone to participate in this study without any incentives for participation. The teachers were assumed to be fully trained teachers who operates within schools and classrooms from schools within the North Central Zone of the Country. The demographic data on the sampled teachers is presented in Table 1.

This study adopt the quantitative research method of the survey type to gather relevant data on teachers' perception towards teaching profession. Descriptive statistics was used to find out the overall attitudes toward the teaching profession. A 34-item Attitude Scale Towards Teaching Profession questionnaire by Tezci & Terzi, (2010) was adapted to measure teachers' perception towards the profession. Several statements were modified to express and reflect teachers' perception of the teaching profession. A letter of introduction stating the purpose of the study as well as assurance of confidentiality was attached as cover letter to each questionnaire. Demographic information of participants which include age, gender, employment status, highest level of education and years of teaching experience were required in the first section of the questionnaire followed by their response to all statements. The items were rated on a 7-point Likert Scale of Entirely Disagree (1), Mostly Disagree (2), Somewhat Disagree (3), Neither Agree nor Disagree (4), Somewhat Agree (5), Mostly Agree (6), and Entirely Agree (7). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the entire scale was calculated as .841, indicating adequate internal consistency reliability.

Table 1- Participants' Demographic Data

Statement	Category	Percentage
What is your gender?	Female	57%
	Male	43%
How old are you?	≤ 25	24%
	26-45	40%
	46-55	30%
	56 and above	6%
What is your employment	Permanent	84%

status as a teacher in this school?	Contract	16%
What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed	Nigeria Certificate in Education	27%
	Bachelor Degree in Education	44%
	Master Degree in Education	19%
	Others	9%
How long have you been working as a teacher?	≤ 10 years	22%
	11 - 20 years	36%
	21 - 30 years	24%
	≥ 31 years	18%

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. The data on frequencies of respondents as shown in the table revealed that 57% of the respondents were female and only 43% are male; about 70% of these respondents are between ages 26-55 years, while 24% are less than 25 years and only 6% are more than 56 years. Majority of the sample teachers have many years of experience in their various responsibilities. The factor loading, mean and standard deviation are calculated for each item of the ASTTP scale were presented in Table 2. Factor analysis has been used to reduce the number of items on the questionnaire from 34 to 22 with only items having $\geq .60$ retained. Table 3 presents the fitness of the data to the model. All fitness measure were met in this study.

Table 2: Teachers' perception of teaching profession in Nigeria

Variables	Description	Loading	Mean	SD
Condition of service (Cronbach's Alpha = .730)				
CS1	Teaching profession is appropriate for me	.738	4.71	1.51
CS2	The teaching profession is tedious for me	.685	4.37	1.77
CS3	I have difficulties in the teaching profession	.753	4.63	1.83
CS4	I enjoy working as a teacher even under difficult conditions	.765	4.93	1.58
CS5	I have much to do as a teacher	.721	4.84	1.63
CS6	The working conditions of the teaching profession attract me	.758	4.42	1.95
Training (Cronbach's Alpha = .731)				
TR1	I am confident of the demand of teaching profession	.824	5.04	1.59
TR2	I believe I have an exceptional talent for teaching	.850	5.08	1.59
TR3	Teaching has provided me with productive and creative opportunities	.701	4.59	1.59
TR4	I enjoy teaching people things they do not know	.698	4.89	1.66
TR5	I consider success in the courses on professional teaching knowledge as important	.798	4.79	1.82
Social Status (Cronbach's Alpha = .797)				
SS1	I prefer being a teacher	.709	4.60	1.74
SS2	If I had to choose a profession again, I would prefer becoming a teacher	.847	4.36	1.87
SS3	Teaching grants me a prestigious status in society	.857	4.06	1.66
SS4	Being a teacher, I am sufficiently esteemed by the society	.843	4.05	1.59
SS5	Teaching profession makes me feel secure.	.843	4.19	1.77
Professionalism (Cronbach's Alpha = .763)				
PR1	I am proud to be a professional teacher	.760	4.68	1.49
PR2	Teaching is a suitable profession for me	.773	4.63	1.60
PR3	I have no regret to have chosen the teaching profession	.693	4.47	1.65

PR6	I would recommend teaching to those who are to choose a profession	.811	4.86	1.69
PR7	I like conversing with other teachers	.756	4.81	1.54
PR8	I like to discuss issues of education, learning, teaching, and the teaching profession	.729	4.49	1.85

Table 3: Goodness of fit of teachers' perception towards teaching profession (N=329)

Fit Index	Value
X ²	431.804
df	185
X ² /df	2.334
GFI	.947
CFI	.965
RMSEA	0.068

Note: Threshold for model fit as recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010) : X²/df = <3, GFI = >.95, CFI = >.95, RMSEA <.08

Hypothesis testing: There is a significant influence of capacity building on teaching profession in Nigeria.

The regression weight estimate of capacity building to teaching profession is .49 which indicates that for every unit increase in capacity building, its effect would contribute .49 unit increase in teaching profession. The probability of getting a critical ratio as large as 3.084 in absolute value is less than 0.001. In other words, the regression weight for capacity building in the prediction of teaching profession is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed). Therefore, the hypothesis which stipulates that there is a significant influence of capacity building on teaching profession in Nigeria.

Table 4: Hypothesis Testing

			Estimate	C.R.	P-Value	Result
Capacity Building	<---	Teaching Profession	.49	3.084	***	Supported

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