

MALPRACTICES IN TEACHER EDUCATION PAROXYSM ON TEACHERS' COMPETENCE

By

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Abstract

Every nation strives towards the provision of quality education for its citizens, However, achieving quality education would be a mirage if teacher education is not in good shape. This paper examines malpractices in teacher education in Nigeria as it affects the competence of the teacher and education in general. To delve properly into this study the researcher used five research questions to guide the study. The research adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the two thousand three hundred and ninety four (2394) teachers and student teacher in public primary schools in Orumba South Local Government Area. The entire population was used because there was time and resources and a comprehensive result was needed. The instrument for data collection was a 66 item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled "Malpractices In Teacher Education: Paroxysm On Teachers' Competence Questionnaire (MITEPOTC)". The Instrument was face validated by three experts. To establish the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha was used and a reliability coefficient of 0.73, 0.75 and 0.78, 0.78 and 0.81, was obtained for the five clusters with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.78 obtained for the entire instrument. Data collected were analyzed using the mean score. Questionnaires as instrument was distributed throughout the twenty one (21) Local Government Areas of the state. Based on their findings recommendations were made among which are the curriculum of teacher education needs to be reviewed in conformity with global trends. It was also recommended that there should be improved welfare package for teachers to help checkmate examination malpractice.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the key that unlocks the development of personal and national potentials, rights and powers. The increasing awareness of the importance of education to the upliftment of the individual and societal standards has awakened in people and nations a conscious effort at devoting their meagre resources to acquiring qualitative education. Balogun (2010) opined that education is the light, without which, the whole world would be in darkness. It is the basis of scientific and technological breakthroughs and the basis of modernity, which have made all nations of the world accord immense priority to it, even though, the levels of priority range from one country to another. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) asserts that no

nation can achieve economic, social and technological progress and self – sufficiency without a good system of education to sustain its achievement.

However, what makes a good system of education depends on the quality of teachers available in the system. The success of an educational enterprise particularly, in terms of quality, depends to a very large extent, on the regular supply of teachers in adequate quantity and quality. According to Ibukun (2014), the quality of human resources in form of teachers, often dictates the extent of the effectiveness of educational programmes. In order to achieve any socio-political, economic and scientific development in a country, there is the dire need for qualified teachers who are equipped with the desired knowledge, skills, competence and commitment, and who are empowered to perform their tasks professionally. The National Policy on Education (2014) gave credence to this, when it asserted that: no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Hence, there is the need to always appraise the nation's system of teacher education with a view to ensuring adequate supply of quality teachers, in the right mix, to operate the various levels of the educational system in the country. This paper therefore, examines the series of malpractices in the teacher education as a strong challenge to the competence of the present day teachers.

Today almost all the Universities in the country have faculties of Education where qualified teachers are meant to be produced. There is no doubt that teacher education is a veritable tool towards educational development. This fact was given credence to by the National Policy on Education when it stated that Teacher education will continue to be given a major emphasis in all educational planning, because no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. The policy also stated that the purpose of teacher education should be:

- A. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system.
- B. To encourage further, the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- C. To help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives;
- D. To provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation, not only in the life of their country, but in the wider world; and
- E. To enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession (FRN, 2004).

The policy emphasized that all teachers in the nation's educational institutions from pre-primary to University, would be professionally trained. Anything beside the above is a deviation from normal practices and therefore malpractice.

Etymologically, malpractice is an illegal action by which a person seeks a benefit for himself while in a position of trust. In the law of torts, **malpractice** is an instance of negligence or incompetence on the part of a professional. Merriam Online Dictionary defines malpractice as a dereliction of professional duty or a failure to exercise an ordinary degree of professional skill or learning by one rendering professional services which results in injury, loss, or damage, an injurious, negligent, or improper practice. It is synonymous to malfeasance. In this context, It is simply an evil practice; illegal or immoral conduct; practice contrary to established rules; specifically, the treatment of a case by a teacher in a manner which is contrary to accepted rules and productive of unfavourable results. It is tantamount to misconduct, abuse, dereliction, mismanagement, misuse, negligence, unprofessional conduct, delinquencies, recklessness, carelessness, botches and failures. All these and more that goes on in our teacher education institutes (by implication all the tertiary institutions) by the lecturers, administrative officers and the students, aiding incompetence in the classroom teaching and learning are the purpose of this study. These can be summarised in one word ‘Corruption’.

Teacher education institutions serve as key change agents in transforming education and society. Teacher Education Institutions have the potential to bring changes within educational systems that will shape the knowledge and skills of future generations. Some functions of Teacher education institutions include Educating new teachers; Provision of professional development for practicing in-service teachers by updating their knowledge and skills; Creating teacher education curricula; Carrying out research; Contributing to quality textbooks; Provision of expert advice to local schools upon request; Provision of expert opinion to provincial and national ministries of education; Education and certification of headmasters, principals, and other school administrators. The obstacles facing the underdeveloped countries in the area of teacher education are vast. Many teachers in these countries are untrained or under-qualified or teaching subjects in which they are neither qualified nor trained for.

A teacher is described as the professional, who imparts knowledge, learning experiences at his disposal to stimulate, guide, direct and facilitate learners to acquire adequate mastery of the skills being imparted. Ajayi, (2004) defined a teacher as someone who causes learning to take place; someone who imparts knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to a group of learners. From the definitions, it is clear in this context that a teacher is one who helps the learners often in a school, as well as in a family, religious and community setting. Learning cannot take place without the teacher, even though he is not physically present; he is indirectly represented by the medium through which learning takes places.

Various authors have submitted that a good teacher has a lot of attributes that singles him out among his contemporaries. According to Bamidele, Ajayi as cited in Balogun (2010) a good teacher must be brilliant and business-minded, clever, creative, diligent, disciplined, friendly, firm, and forceful, good looking, godly and gentle. Other attributes of a good teacher according to the authors include humility, innovation, integrity, magnanimity, neatness, responsibility, punctuality, simplicity, serious-mindedness, reliability and radiance. Above all, a good teacher must be academically qualified. In a similar dimension, Akindutire (2015) also highlighted the following as attributes of a good teacher: initiative, patience, sympathy, respect, flexibility, firmness, honesty, intellectual curiosity and keenness. Suffice it to say that these attributes make a teacher a model to learners and an embodiment of exemplary citizenship, integrity and industry in the society.

The teacher is an important factor in the quality of education in any nation. They are the last post to translate government policies and intentions into practical form. A teacher performs a number of functions in the school system to facilitate effective teaching and development. According to Adepoju in Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010), the functions of every teacher include: explaining, informing and showing how; initiating, directing and administering; unifying the group, that is, making students to relate to him and others very well; giving security; clarifying attitudes, beliefs and problems; diagnosing learning problem; making curriculum materials; evaluating, recording and reporting; enriching of community activities; participating in school activities; and participating in professional and civil life. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (1998) in the Nigeria Teachers Service Manual highlighted the extra-curricular activities of teachers thus:

- a) All teachers shall participate in extra-curricular activities as part of their regular duties.
- b) Without the express written permissions, the relevant school board, a teacher shall not, outside school hours, undertake any other business for profit.
- c) Without the express written permission of the relevant school board, a teacher shall not act as editor or take part directly or indirectly in the management of any commercial newspaper or broadcasting service.
- d) Unless necessitated by the discharge of his duties, a teacher shall not disclose to any member of the public the contents of any official document or report which has come into his possession in the course of his employment. The roles of a teacher as stipulated above suggest that the teaching exercise is a 24-hour service and when properly done suggests competence.

The word “Competence.” is increasingly being used in education circles today. It is a description of one’s ability, a measure of one’s performance. A person’s competencies may be defined in terms of one’s knowledge, skills and behaviours. To understand the competencies required of a teacher, we must first define the job of a teacher. Today’s classrooms call for teachers to prepare virtually all students for higher order thinking and performance skills once reserved to only a select few. Researchers and practitioners are becoming increasingly aware that the character of the 21st century classroom – and thus the demands on both students and teachers – is undergoing significant change. The Association of International Educators, (2015) says that Global competence in teachers is a set of essential knowledge, critical dispositions, and performances that help foster development of learners' global competence. A globally competent teacher has knowledge of the world, critical global issues, their local impact, and the cultural backgrounds of learners; manifests intercultural sensitivity and acceptance of difference; incorporates this knowledge and sensitivity into classroom practice; and, develops the skills to foster these dispositions, knowledge, and performances in learners. The teacher models socially responsible action and creates opportunities for learners to engage in socially responsible action. They enhance the thought process of the child and bring the relevance of what is done in the classroom to the workplace and the society in general. Some of the roles identified included: nurturing the whole child, providing quality learning, working with others, and developing a strong set of personal values. They then made a list of core competencies that every trained teacher should have. These competencies are classified into three broad performance dimensions, Professional practice where a competent teacher seizes every opportunity to encourage learning, believing that all students can learn. To this end, the teacher takes every opportunity to improve on his or her own professional practice, in order to provide quality learning. Second, leadership and management where a competent teacher as a leader wins the hearts and minds of the students. Such a teacher sees the value in developing and working with others, including parents and colleagues, and actively seeks out opportunities for professional collaboration within and beyond the school. Lastly, Personal effectiveness where a competent teacher understands the importance of developing oneself before he or she is able to provide support for others. As a professional, this teacher maintains high standards of personal and professional integrity when carrying out all duties and responsibilities. Every competent teacher also needs to possess a strong set of **values, skills and knowledge**. These values guide the application of relevant skills and knowledge on a day-to-day basis.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher Education Institutions have the potential to bring changes within educational systems that will shape the knowledge and skills of future generations. Teacher education institutions serve as key change agents in transforming education and society, so such a future is possible. By implication, teachers at the primary, secondary, including the tertiary levels, are trained in the tertiary institutions. It is therefore of immense importance to find out if there are any malpractice in them. This makes this study a crucial one as the misconducts that prevail in the tertiary level are likely to be perpetuated at the lower levels. The effective solution to social vices can best be suggested after a thorough knowledge of the vices. For this reason, it is envisaged that the process of breeding of corrupt practices in tertiary institutions, particularly our teacher education institutes, if eventually established, will assist in arresting the situation. On a closer look, it seems that they are as a result of the malpractices that is corrupt practices going on in our teacher education. The focus of this investigation is to determine the malpractices going on in our tertiary institution that must have adversely contributed to the poor image of the classroom teacher in recent times and the incompetence in the teaching profession .

Research Questions

1. What are malpractices as perceived in our teacher education institutions by the students?
2. What are malpractices as perceived in our teacher institutions by lecturers?
3. What are malpractices as perceived our teacher institutions by the Administrative officers?
4. What are the influence of malpractice on teachers' competence?
5. What are strategies that can be can be used to curb them ?

Methodology

The study was on the Malpractices In Teacher Education: Paroxysm On Teachers' Competence. Five research questions guided the study. The research adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all teachers in two hundred and fifty nine public (259) secondary schools in Anambra State. The researchers adopted the simple random sampling technique and selected the sample for the study which is one hundred and fourteen (114) teachers and student-teachers on teaching practice from each of the twenty one (21) Local Government Areas of Anambra State. The questionnaires were administered to two thousand three hundred and ninety four (2394) teachers and all the questionnaires were returned. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation and one expert from Educational Management and Policy. These experts vetted the instruments and made some corrections. However, their corrections were taken into effect and the items of the questionnaire were modified and used for data collection. The researchers adopted a test re-test method of reliability using Pearson Product Moment (PPM) correlation co-efficient. The results obtained from the two variables are 0.78 which shows a very high correlation indicating that the instrument was reliable enough for the study. The responses to the questionnaires were collected and analysed using

the mean. The data was analysed using the frequency table and weighted mean category which includes; Strongly agreed (SA) 5 points Agreed (A) 4 points Disagreed (D) 3 points Strongly disagreed (SD) 2 points. The decision rule was drawn on the criterion mean for agreeing or disagreeing on the item used for the analysis. The criterion mean score is 2.5. Therefore, weighted mean score of 2.5 and above for any item indicated that the respondents agree on the item whereas a weighted mean score below 2.5 revealed that the respondents disagreed on the item.

Results

The data obtained from retrieved questionnaires are presented below to answer the research questions drawn up for the study.

Research Question 1. What are malpractices as perceived in our teacher education institutions by the students?

Table 1: Mean ratings of malpractices going on our teacher institutions by the students.

ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
Examination malpractice	504 2016	1323 3969	63 126	504 504	2.8	Agreed
Sex in exchange for marks/practice	567 2268	1134 3402	441 882	252 252	2.8	Agreed
Money for marks/practice	630 2520	1134 3402	189 378	441 441	2.8	Agreed
Absenteeism	252 1008	1197 3591	504 1008	441 441	2.5	Agreed
Forging of receipts	315 1260	819 2457	630 1260	630 630	2.3	Disagreed
Truancy	126 504	1323 3969	504 1008	441 441	2.5	Agreed
Sorting	441 1764	1197 3591	126 252	630 630	2.6	Agreed
Impersonation	189 756	1323 3969	441 882	441 441	2.5	Agreed
Blocking	189 756	1071 3213	567 1134	567 567	2.4	Disagreed

2. What are malpractices as perceived in our teacher institutions by lecturers?

Table 2: Mean ratings of malpractices going on our teacher institutions by the educators.

ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
Blocking	63 252	1071 3213	693 1386	567 567	2.3	Disagreed
Trading of mark/scores	252 1008	1449 4347	441 882	252 252	2.7	Agreed
Inflation/deflation of marks	504 2016	1134 3402	441 882	315 315	2.8	Agreed
Sex for marks/sexual harassment	693	1134	189	378	2.9	Agreed

	2772	3402	378	378		
Absenteeism from classes	189 756	1386 4158	441 882	378 378	2.6	Agreed
Sexual harassment	1008 4032	756 2268	252 504	378 378	3.0	Agreed
Aid and abet examination practice	630 2520	1197 3591	252 504	315 315	2.9	Agreed
Fail students for not buying their books	1134 4536	756 2268	189 378	315 315	3.1	Agreed
Some are incompetent	441 1764	1386 4158	315 630	252 252	2.8	Agreed
Exchanging themselves for textbooks	252 1008	1197 3591	567 1134	378 378	2.6	Agreed
Money for marks	816 3264	882 2646	252 504	441 441	2.9	Agreed

3. What misconducts are perceived in our teacher institutions by the Administrative officers?

Table 3: Mean ratings of malpractices going on our teacher institutions by the administrative staff.

ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
Aid students to cheat in examination	378 1512	1134 3402	378 756	504 504	2.6	Agreed
Leak examination papers	315 1260	882 2646	630 1260	567 567	2.4	Disagreed
Alteration of scores/ falsification of document	378 1512	1008 3024	693 1386	315 315	2.6	Agreed
Extortion from students	504 2016	1134 3402	504 1008	252 252	2.8	Agreed
Poor attitude to work	441 1764	1449 4347	126 252	378 378	2.8	Agreed
Payment without receipts	315 1260	1323 3969	441 882	315 315	2.7	Agreed
Collection of money for admission	441 1764	630 1890	945 1890	378 378	2.4	disagreed
Aiding and abetting examination malpractice	315 1260	1260 3780	378 756	441 441	2.6	Agreed
Misappropriation of funds	816 3264	630 1890	630 1260	315 315	2.8	Agreed
Not attending to students files	252 1008	504 1512	816 1632	816 816	2.1	Disagreed

4. What are the influence of malpractice on teachers' competence?

4. Table 4: Mean rating of how these malpractices hamper teachers' competence in the classroom.

ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
Production of half-baked graduates	1386 5544	816 2448	189 378	0 0	3.5	Agreed
Lowering the standard of our education	1638 6552	630 1890	63 126	63 63	3.6	Agreed

Lack of zeal to study among students	1512 6048	756 2268	63 126	63 63	3.6	Agreed
Low academic performance	1449 5796	693 2079	189 378	63 63	3.5	Agreed
Lack of respect for teachers	1134 4536	756 2268	378 756	126 126	3.2	Agreed
Low productivity	1323 5292	816 2448	252 504	0 0	3.4	Agreed
High rate of moral decadence	756 3024	1260 3780	378 756	0 0	3.2	Agreed
Production of not employable graduates	1197 4788	756 2268	252 504	189 189	3.2	Agreed
Erosion of moral values	882 3528	1260 3780	252 504	0 0	3.3	Agreed
Unskillfulness	945 3780	1260 3780	126 252	63 63	3.3	Agreed
Reduces the level of national development	756 3024	1323 3969	252 504	63 63	3.2	Agreed
Inability to defend certificates	1071 4284	1260 3780	63 126	0 0	3.4	Agreed
Mediocrity	1512 6048	693 2079	189 378	0 0	3.6	Agreed
Poor instructional materials	630 2520	1008 3024	630 1260	126 126	2.9	Agreed
Discourages serious students	816 3264	1323 3969	126 252	126 126	3.2	Agreed

5. What are strategies that can be used to curb them ?

Table 5: Mean ratings for strategies that can be used to curb the malpractices.

ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	X	Remarks
Sound scrutiny before admission	1890 7560	441 1323	63 126	0 0	3.8	Agreed
Admission based on merit	1764 7056	567 1701	0 0	0 0	3.7	Agreed
Teaching should be seen as a vocation not profession and inculcated as such	1701 6804	315 945	189 378	189 189	3.5	Agreed
Better remuneration for teachers	1827 7308	441 1323	0 0	126 126	3.7	Agreed
Bring external supervisors during teaching practice	1197 4788	945 2835	126 252	126 126	3.3	Agreed
Executing penalties for defaulters	945 3780	1260 3780	126 252	63 63	3.3	Agreed
Making use of good monitoring gadgets to bring perpetrators to book	1197 4788	1071 3213	63 126	63 63	3.4	Agreed
Using unidentified means to detect perpetrators	816 3264	1386 4158	126 252	63 63	3.2	Agreed
Using electronics means of writing exams	504 2016	1071 3213	693 1386	126 126	2.8	Agreed

Extending the period of our teacher education for practicality	504 2016	945 2835	756 1512	189 189	2.7	Agreed
Mixing students up during examination	693 2772	945 2835	693 1386	63 63	2.9	Agreed
Bring sound critical thinking to our education	1323 5292	567 1701	441 882	63 63	3.3	Agreed
Using a more practical means in our education	1260 5040	816 2448	315 630	0 0	3.4	Agreed

DATA ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

From the information gathered above, it can be noted that our student-teacher (teachers in the making) are involved in the following act of educational misconducts: exam malpractice, give sex in exchange for marks, give money for marks, absent themselves from school regularly, truancy, sort their way to success and impersonate in exams. Our respondents on the other hand say they are not involved in forging of receipts and blocking. The margin with which they disagreed is 0.2. This can be understood that some are involved in it, but it does not yet conform to the very notorious misbehaviours.

The respondents agree also that the lecturers (teacher of teachers) involve themselves in trading of marks, inflation and deflation of marks, exchange sex for marks, absent themselves from school regularly, harass students sexually, aid and abet examination malpractice, fail students for not buying their textbooks and collect money for marks. They disagreed that they do not involve themselves with blocking. The administrative staff are said to be involved in the following transgressions: they aid students to cheat in exams, alter exam scores, extort students for legal and illegal jobs, have poor attitude to work, collect payment without issuing receipts, aid exam malpractice and misappropriate funds. They do not leak examination and they attend to students file.

The aftermath of these cankerworms can be summarised in the following: production of half-baked graduates, lowering the standard of our education, lack of zeal to study among students, decrease in academic performance, reduce the respect meant for teachers, hampers productivity, increases the rate of moral decadence, production of not employable graduates, erosion of moral values, unskilfulness, reduces the level of national development, inability to defend our certificates, mediocrity, poor instructional materials and discourages serious students.

Suggested ways of curbing these misdemeanours can be abridged to include: Sound scrutiny before admission, Admission based on merit, Teaching should be seen as a vocation not

profession and inculcated as such, Better remuneration for teachers, Bring external supervisors during teaching practice, Executing penalties for defaulters, Making use of good monitoring gadgets to bring perpetrators to book, Using unidentified means to detect perpetrators,, Using electronics means of writing exams, Extending the period of our teacher education for practicality, Mixing students up during examination, bringing sound critical thinking to our education and using a more practical means to our education. The researcher among other things suggested that the curriculum of teacher education needs to be reviewed in conformity with global trends. It was also recommended that there should be improved welfare package for teachers to help checkmate examination malpractice.

SUMMARY

Teachers form the hub of the education process. It is in this context that teacher education becomes a matter of great concern. Teachers are an extremely important facet of any society for a number of reasons and their role in society is both significant and valuable. Teachers are the people who educate the youth of society who in turn become the leaders of the next generation of people. Teachers are the people who are teaching children and imparting knowledge upon them in their most impressionable years. What children learn from their teachers at a young age will most likely stay with them in some facet for the rest of their lives

Teachers play an extraordinary part in the lives of children for the formative years of their development and the importance of teachers is something that cannot be understated. They involve themselves in moulding their students into responsible citizens of their country. Within a school, if teachers are well educated and if they are intellectually alive and take keen interest in their job, then only success is ensured.

Research revealed that our teacher education is plagued by rigged calls for tender, embezzlement, illegal fees/dues and academic fraud. Malpractices in tertiary education may take the form of bogus degrees and accreditation fraud. And as a result of corruption in teacher Education, Nwaze (2012) opined that the admission processes are characterized by shady deals of irregularities and malpractices as candidates of low quality now flood the institutions. This ultimately reduce the quality of graduates.

The role of a teacher in society is both significant and valuable. It has far-reaching influence on the society he lives in, and no other personality can have an influence more profound than that of a teacher- Shiben Raina (2007). Many educationists have described the teacher in

different ways. Some describe him as a dispenser of knowledge, while others see him as a leader, counsel or coach, facilitator and a role model. Whatever description one would want to use, the underlying issue still remains that the teacher plays a lead role in determining the future of students and society. Shibem Raina (2020)maintained that good and visionary teacher can play a prominent role in making the future of his students, while a corrupt teacher can only harm his students, than a class of corrupt and perverted judiciary, army, police, bureaucracy, politicians or technocrats'. Some people also argue that a corrupt and incompetent teacher is a bad individual and an embodiment of a corrupt and incompetent generation. It illustrates how disastrous it is for a nation to have bad teachers. The roles of the teacher are numerous and challenging. The teacher is an architect of any future generation. So to assume the responsibility of a teacher, one has to be competent, morally upright and knowledgeable.

CONCLUSION

Each profession occupies a specific niche in society — doctors heal, engineers design and bankers handle our money. Teaching, however, stands out as a subsumptive entity. At a preliminary stage, teachers instil the transcendent faculties of communication, decision making and awareness of social responsibilities. Later in life, no matter which field we choose to pursue, we again turn to teachers for training. A strong information base and well developed capabilities of comprehension and analysis are critical for progress. These crucial responsibilities of inculcating knowledge, kindling inspiration and encouraging creative thought are all vested in the teacher. Keeping in mind the increasing trend of both parents working long hours, the teacher is also expected to build a strong moral character and provide emotional support. Thus, the teacher has to build a rapport with the student and be simultaneously approachable and authoritative. His/her role encompasses that of an instructor, friend, role model and confidant. God creates, parents nurtures and teachers mould.

A great person once said, "Teaching is a profession that teaches all other professions." From ancient times, teachers have been playing an important role in our society. Behind every successful engineer or doctor there is a teacher. A teacher is a person who moulds them into engineers or doctors. A person who teaches us moral values, a person who encourages us is a teacher. Alexander the Great once said, "I am indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well." If teaching is as important as expressed, care must be given to make

sure that traces of impurities are removed in its formation, and our societies will be shed from corrupt practices.

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