

Assessment of Prospective Teachers Attitudes towards Teaching Profession: The Case of Northwest University, Kano-Nigeria

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Abstract: *Quality education is an indispensable instrument for national development. However the provision of quality education depends largely on the quality of teachers. Similarly, teacher education programme is designed to produce teacher with requisite training and sound professional background which requires a favourable attitude and certain specific competencies. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the Northwest University, Kano prospective teachers' attitudes towards profession of teaching. Field of study, gender and level of study's influence on their attitude were also examined. A descriptive survey design was adopted with a sample of 220 prospective teachers selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Professional Attitude Scale for Prospective Teachers (PASPT) constructed and validated by the researchers was used to collect data. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and Independent Sample t-test to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that prospective teachers have positive attitude towards the profession. Similarly, a significant gender difference was observed in their attitudes towards the profession. However the results further showed no significant difference in the prospective teachers' attitudes towards the profession in relation to field of study and level of study. The implication is that, this favourable attitude towards teaching profession will bring about professional competence in the future practice. The study recommended among others, that further study should be conducted to investigate the factors responsible for the favourable or unfavourable attitude of prospective teachers towards teaching profession which will provide an insight on how stakeholders can bring attitudinal change towards the teaching profession.*

Keywords: *Attitude, Prospective Teachers, Teaching, field of study, Profession.*

I. Introduction

Education is a major tool for national socio-economic development and for individual socio-economic empowerment and poverty reduction. The educational system is vital, because it produces the personnel that are required to function in various facets of national life and development process [1]. Every society requires adequate human and material resources. Education has proven to be a pre-requisite for quality manpower development and creation of wealth, a sure path to success in life and service to humanity [2]. The success of an educational enterprise particularly in terms of quality depends to a large extent, on the regular supply of teachers in adequate quantity and quality. It is also asserted In the National Policy on Education, the Federal Republic of Nigeria [3] that no nation can achieve economic, social and technological progress and self-sufficiency without a good system of education to sustain its achievement. The training and production of the manpower required for the attainment of national objectives should be framed on the quality and quantity of teachers. [4] Stressed the dependency of manpower training and development on teachers. He argued that teacher education should be basically related to every phase of development in Nigeria, be it economic, political or social spheres of activities, one is faced with the over-reoccurring problem of trained manpower needs. However, no adequate training can take place without competent teachers to handle the programme. Thus, teachers have important role to play in preparing the young for their roles in the society in order to achieve the set national objectives. Teachers' influence is always felt in every aspect of the society. All other professionals and workers within the society have at one time or the other passed through the tutelage of a teachers. The saying that no nation ever rises above the quality of its teacher illustrates the pivotal position which teachers occupy in the society. Thus, schools should always provide a solid training in basic skills with educational arrangements that are friendly, democratic and communal. This requires a supportive teacher education programme that can render such specialized training to the prospective teachers.

Teacher and Teaching Profession

[5] defined a teacher as someone who causes learning to take place; someone who imparts knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to a group of learners. A teacher can be viewed as the professionally trained person, who imparts the necessary skills, guide, and facilitate learning hence learning cannot take place without a train professional that is the teacher. Teaching is the profession which comprises activities towards starting, directing, facilitating, and realising the learning process in individuals in line with a certain objective.

The person executing these activities is the teacher [6]. The teacher is the indispensable component of the education system. No matter how well educational or instructional objectives are established, no matter how functional the content of the subject is selected and organized, it is impossible to achieve the desired results from education unless they are performed by teachers with those objectives and insights [7].

Professionalisation in any field of human endeavour has a well-defined processes and procedures or requirements such as sound training and of course licensed, before one becomes eligible to practice and professionalism remained a very fundamental to the quality of service offered by the field in its contribution to societal development.

The term profession is described as a set of activities which are performed to produce goods or services for the public interest and to earn money in turn, based on some systematic knowledge and skills acquired through some certain training, and whose rules are established by the society [8]. In this sense, when regarded as a social institution and a system, education has some major components including students, teachers, curriculum, administrators, educational experts, educational technology, and both physical and financial sources. Among them the teacher is the most critical component [9]. [6]Further explain that, the profession of teaching is dealt with and defined from different aspects (i.e. teachers' role expectations, where and how they should be trained, qualifications they should have, the characteristics of a good teacher etc.).

The Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) [10] categorized registered teachers in Nigeria into four main classes based on the provisions of the TRCN Act 31 of 1993, Section 2(e) namely:

Category A: (Doctoral Teachers): Holders of PhD in Education or PhD in other field plus teaching qualification e.g. Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE); Professional Diploma in Education (PDE); Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE).

Category B: (Master Teachers): Holders of Masters Degree in Education or Masters Degree in other fields plus a teaching qualification, e.g. PGDE, PDE, NCE.

Category C: (Graduate Teachers): Holders of Bachelors Degree in Education or Bachelors Degree in other field plus a teaching qualification, e.g. PGDE, PDE, NCE.

Category D: (NCE Teachers): Holders of the Nigeria Certificate in Education which is the national minimum teaching qualification.

Attitude towards teaching profession

Attitude plays an important role in determining people reactions to particular situations [11]. Attitude is a predisposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, or event [12]. [13]Defined it as "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (p.810). Other researchers define attitude as a positive or negative emotional reaction toward a specific situation. [6]Assert that Attitudes are evaluation; positive or negative statement about objects, people or events.

Thus the successful attainment of the teacher training goal of providing season professionals to cater for the manpower need of the education system depends strongly on the students' attitudes towards the profession. It is believed that if students' perception towards the profession is negative, it is likely that, the teacher training goal of providing season professionals will not be realised. [14]Maintained that, the teacher's attitude is an important variable in classroom application of new ideas and novel approaches to instruction. Therefore attitude is one of the main factors that determine the success of any programme [15].

[16] In his study about the attitudes of the students at the faculty of education towards the profession of teaching, he used the scale which was originally developed by [17] in order to measure the attitudes of students towards the profession of teaching. A significant difference was observed between the attitudes of the students in the Faculty of Education towards the profession of teaching according to gender, the order of the program they attend in the preference list, and the reasons for choosing the profession of teaching

[18] Also used the scale which was originally developed by [19], in order to measure the attitudes of students towards the profession of teaching and they found a positive significant correlation between the attitudes of the students attending the non-thesis post-graduate programs for teaching in high school towards the profession of teaching and such positive personal characteristics as trusting others, receiving help, and being supportive, tolerant, cautious, balanced, sensitive, determined and social [16].

[6]Conducted their study to determine the attitudes of the students in the faculty of education at Inonu University turkey towards profession of teaching. Using a sample of 593 students from the faculty of education, results indicated a significant difference between the attitudes of prospective teachers with intrinsic motivations towards the teaching profession and those of latter teachers with extrinsic motivations towards the teaching profession. Other variables for which significant differences were also observed between male and female, female prospective teachers' attitudes were found to be more positive than males, Other variables for which significant differences were observed include gender, the type of the department/program they study, the order

of the program in the UEE (University Entrance Examination) preference list, and the socio-economic status (SES) of the neighbourhood and family they live in

[20] Investigated the attitudes of education undergraduate students towards teaching profession, using a random sample of 160 prospective teachers from Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Nigeria. The result of the study indicated that prospective teachers have negative attitudes towards the teaching profession; there are significant sex differences in attitude of students towards the teaching profession, female attitude was found to be more positive than the male prospective students. However level of study does not significantly influence prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession.

[21] Conducted a study, based on descriptive survey method, to determine the attitudes of prospective pre-school teachers towards teaching profession and their professional self-esteem using the whole population of 203 prospective pre-school teachers at Dumlupinar University, faculty of Education during 2011-2012 academic sessions. Two scales: "Scale of Attitude towards Teaching Profession" and "Scale of Professional Self-esteem". The findings revealed that, the prospective pre-school teachers have positive attitude towards teaching profession in general and their attitudes towards teaching profession is related to their professional self-esteem

Statement of the problem

Teaching as a profession when compared to other professions like engineering, medicine, and Law professions, continues to enjoy low esteem and professional autonomy in Nigeria. This is evident in the number of prospective university undergraduate students who chooses teacher education programme yearly through the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) and most of them choose the courses as a last resort. The situation is the same in Northwest University, Kano. The prospective candidates are so few and to make up for the short fall, candidates who fail to get cut off points in other faculties and those with some deficiencies even after registered in other faculties are pushed to the faculty of education. Similarly, majority of the university administrators who are not academic staff believe that those who are not good enough for specialized studies such as Management sciences, pure and basic medical Sciences should be directed to the faculty of education. This situation creates a negative attitude towards the teaching profession.

Assessing the prospective teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession is so important because faculty of education students at the Northwest University, Kano are train to potentially take teaching responsibilities after completion of their program. Therefore, gaining an appreciation of their attitudes towards teaching profession may provide useful insight into the future of teaching profession and acceptance. The findings of the study might help the Northwest University, Kano in evaluating prospective teachers' attitudes and possible practice.

Objective of the study

This study intends to determine the attitudes of student teachers attending teacher training programs in the Faculty of Education at Northwest University, Kano towards teaching profession. Furthermore, this study also intends to determine whether the attitudes of the prospective teachers towards the profession of teaching differ according to some variables including gender, Program of study, and level of study.

Research Questions

1. What is the prospective teachers' attitude towards teaching profession?
2. Is there significant gender difference in the students' attitude towards teaching profession?
3. Is there significant difference between sciences stream and non-sciences stream students Attitude towards teaching profession?
4. Do level of study influence prospective teachers' Attitude towards teaching profession?

Research Hypothesis

Ho1: there is no significant gender difference in prospective Teachers' attitude toward teaching profession

Ho2: there is no significant difference between sciences and non-sciences based students' attitude toward teaching profession

Ho3: Level of study does not significantly influence prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession

II. Materials and Methodology

Research Design

This study was a quantitative study using the descriptive survey design. The survey was conducted among two (2) Departments of the faculty of education at the Northwest University, Kano-Nigeria.

Participants

The population of the study comprises 630 (Female = 280, Male = 350) prospective teachers from all classes of 10 programmes at Northwest University's Faculty of Education during the 2013-2014 academic session. The participants of the study comprise 220 students who were selected using stratified random sampling method for the departments, programmes and the level.

Survey Instrument

The instrument used for data collection the Professional Attitude Scale for Prospective Teachers (PASPT) contained two sections. Section A of the questionnaire focused on demographic information of prospective teachers: Field of study, level of study, Sex and Age. Section B contained 15 items to measure the prospective teachers' attitude towards teaching profession which was developed by the researchers based on established procedures in the literature. 5-Likert response mode of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) were used.

Validation of the instruments

To test the instrument's validity and reliability, the initial draft of the 21 items arrived after consultations with educationist were pre-tested with 45 prospective teachers. The feedback obtained from this first administration was used to revise the final 15-items instrument. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was determined through Cronbach's alpha coefficient with the overall reliability coefficients of 0.78.

Procedure for data collection

The Professional Attitude Scale for Prospective Teachers (PASPT) was distributed to prospective teachers participating in the study during normal lectures hour. All two hundred and twenty copies were returned, at a return and usable rate of 100%

Analysis Method

The data obtained were analysed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. In this study, descriptive statistics (frequency percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics such as Independent-Sample T-test were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. On the attitude scales the 5-likert scales were merged to three scale for the analysis and interpretation i.e. (SA and A) Agreed, Neutral and (SD and D) Disagreed

III. Results and Findings

Table 1: Demographic Information

Gender		Programmes of study		Level of study	
Male	116 (52.7%)	Science	98 (44.5%)	100L	113 (51.4%)
Female	104 (47.3%)	Non-Science	122 (55.5%)	200L	107 (48.6%)
Total	220 (100%)	Total	220 (100%)	Total	220 (100%)

The demographic information as presented in table 1 show that participant comprises 116(52.7%) male and 104(47.3%) prospective teachers. The distribution by field of study reveals that science based 98(44.5%) and Non-sciences based 122(55.5%). Similarly, The distribution based on the level of study as presented in the Table 1 shows that 100L 113(51.4%) and 200L 107(48.6%) prospective teachers. Based on the distribution presented in the table 1 above, shows that both the different variables; male and female prospective teachers; Science and Non-Science based; and Level 100 and level 200 were fairly represented

Research Question 1: What is the prospective teachers' attitude towards teaching profession?

Table 2: Attitude of prospective teachers towards Teaching Profession

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Agreed	Neutral	Disagreed
1	Teaching profession is well respected	220	3.22	118(53.7)	17(7.7)	85(38.6)
2	My peers would think I made a good career if I became a teacher	220	3.30	103(46.9)	34(15.5)	83 (37.7)
3	Teaching is interesting	220	4.42	191(86.8)	13(5.9)	16(7.3)
4	Being a teacher has a lot of prestige	220	3.39	127(57.8)	21(9.5)	72 (32.7)
5	Teaching is a respected profession like Medicine and Law	220	3.47	123(55.9)	17(7.7)	80 (36.4)
6	Teachers find little satisfaction in their work	220	2.47	48(21.8)	22(10)	150(68.2)
7	I would enjoy being a teacher	220	3.40	130(59)	17(7.7)	73 (33.2)
8	Teachers are boring people	220	3.67	50(22.7)	23(10.5)	147(66.8)
9	My family would like me to become a teacher	220	3.00	108(49.1)	24(10.9)	88(40)
10	I like teaching	220	3.73	149(67.7)	21(9.5)	50(22.7)

11	Professionally qualified teachers interact with lots of people	220	3.55	121(55)	17(7.7)	82(37.3)
12	I prefer to do any other job than to teach after my graduation	220	2.87	92(41.8)	29(13.2)	99(45)
13	I feel teaching will not make any impact in my life.	220	3.32	86(39.1)	24(10.9)	110(50)
14	I hate teaching because there is nothing creative in it	220	3.89	57(25.9)	13(5.9)	150(68.2)
15	Teaching is all-comers job no need of special training	220	3.42	83(37.7)	11(5)	126(57.3)

**Figures in parentheses represent percentages

The result of the descriptive statistics on the prospective teachers' attitude towards teaching profession as presented in Table 2 above, revealed positive attitude towards teaching profession by the prospective teachers, responses on positive statements (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 11) show on the overall that over 60% of prospective teachers have a positive attitude towards teaching. It is seen that respondents agreed that teaching is interesting and a well-respected profession and they would like to become professional teachers after their graduation. However, for negative statements (items 6, 8, 12, 13, 14 and 15) show on the overall that only about 21.8% of the respondents agreed that Teachers find little satisfaction in their work, while about 68.2% disagreed on that statement, Item 10 shows that 22.7% of respondents agreed that, teachers are boring people, while about 66.8% disagreed, Item 12 shows that about 41.8% of the respondents agreed I prefer to do any other job than to teach after my graduation, the results on item 13 show that only 39.1% of the respondents feel that teaching will not make any impact in my life. Similarly, results from items 14, and 15 shows that 68.2% and 57.3% disagreed with the negative statements. Generally from the analysis in Table 2 above, we can therefore further summarised it by taking the overall mean score of the prospective teachers attitude as presented in table 3 to make the overall decision.

Table 3: Overall Prospective Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Overall %
Prospective Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching	220	3.41	0.86933	68.2%

Table 3 above reveals the mean attitude of the Prospective Teachers' towards the profession to be 3.41 out of a total score of 5. This is 68.2% in favour, which means the attitude of the students above average and positive. Based on the descriptive analysis from the two tables above it can be concluded that, the Prospective teachers' attitude towards the profession at the Northwest University, Kano is positive.

Hypothesis 1: there is no significant gender difference in prospective Teachers' attitude toward teaching profession

Table 4: Gender difference on prospective Teachers attitudes towards Teaching Profession

	Mean		Std Deviation		t	df	p
	Male	Female	Male	Female			
Teaching Attitude	3.28	3.54	0.90122	0.81513	-2.223	218	.027

From data presented in Table 4 above, there is an indication of statistically significant difference in the prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession, between male (M=3.28, SD = 0.90122) and female (M= 3.54, SD = 0.81513), where $t(218) = -2.223, p = 0.027, \alpha = 0.05$. The mean score for male and female indicated that female developed more favourable attitude on teaching than male (Mean for male=3.28, Mean for female=3.54) Calculated P- value of 0.027 is significant at 0.05 level of significance, therefore, the null hypothesis which says, there is no significant gender difference in prospective Teachers' attitude toward teaching profession is rejected since the gender difference is statistically significant.

Hypothesis 2: there is no significant difference between sciences and non-sciences based students' attitude toward teaching profession

Table 5: Difference between science and non-science based prospective teachers' attitudes.

	Mean		Std Deviation		t	df	p
	Science	Non-science	Science	Non-science			
Teaching Attitude	3.37	3.46	0.87316	0.86634	-0.773	218	.440

The results presented on the table 5 above, showed that there is no statistically significant difference in the prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession between the sciences based (M=3.37, SD =

0.87316) and Non-sciences based (M= 3.46, SD = 0.86634), where $t(218) = -0.773$, $p = 0.440$, $\alpha = 0.05$. Calculated P- value of 0.440 is insignificant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis which says, there is no significant difference between sciences and non-sciences based students' attitude toward teaching profession is accepted since the observed t is not statistically significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that field of study has no significant influence on prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession.

Hypothesis 3: Level of study does not significantly influence prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession

Table 6: Prospective teachers' attitudes towards teaching according to level of study

	Mean		Standard Deviation		tdfp
	100L	200L	100L	200L	
Teaching Attitude	3.34	3.47	0.88317	0.85349	-1.111 218 .268

The result in Table 6 above shows very little differences in the prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession between the levels of study, 100 levels (M=3.34, SD = 0.8817) and 200 levels (M=3.47, SD = 0.85349), where $t(218) = -1.111$, $p = 0.268$, $\alpha = 0.05$. Calculated P- value of 0.440 is insignificant at 0.05 levels of significance. This implies that level of study does not significantly influence prospective teachers attitude towards the teaching profession, hence the null hypothesis which states that, Level of study does not significantly influence prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession is accepted

IV. Discussion of Findings

The main purpose of this study was to assess the prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession. Similarly influence of their attitude with respect to some variable like gender, field and level of study were also examined. The result of the descriptive analysis as presented in table 2 and 3 revealed an overall mean attitude score of 3.41 (68.2%). Based on the descriptive analysis the Prospective teachers' attitude towards the profession can be considered as positive. This finding revealed a clear positive attitude for future profession and practice and the stake holders should to try to encourage the students in this regards to sustain this disposition. This study is supported by the study of [21] and [22] whose findings revealed a positive attitude towards teaching profession. However the finding of this study does not support [20] and [23] findings that student teachers have a negative attitude towards the profession

The result of the first hypothesis as presented in table 4 revealed a statistically significant gender differences in the attitude of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession, meaning female developed more positive attitude on teaching than male (Mean for male=3.28, Mean for female=3.54) and $t(218) = -2.223$, $p = 0.027$, $\alpha = 0.05$. The finding of this study is consistent with the findings of [21]; [20]; [16]; [24] and [25] whose findings indicated significant differences in male and female students' attitudes towards the teaching profession. However the finding of this study disagrees with that of [26] whose finding revealed that gender has no effect on pre-service teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession.

The result of the second hypothesis as the result of the analysis presented in table 6 revealed a statistically insignificant difference, and that the level of study does not significantly influenced the prospective teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession. This can be clearly seen by a close look at the mean scores of (100Level, M=3.34 and 200 level, M=3.47), where $t(218) = -1.111$, $p = 0.268$, $\alpha = 0.05$. This finding is consistent with that of [20];[27]; and [28] whose studies found level of study does not influence students attitude towards teaching profession.

The third hypothesis as indicated by the result of the analysis presented in table 5 revealed a statistically insignificant difference between science and non-science based students' attitude towards teaching profession. A close look at the mean scores of the sciences based (M=3.37) and Non-sciences based (M= 3.46), where $t(218) = -0.773$, $p = 0.440$, $\alpha = 0.05$. The finding shows that, prospective teachers irrespective of their subject stream have favourable attitude towards teaching profession. In agreement with that of [29] and [30] whose findings revealed no significant difference in student teachers' attitude towards teaching profession with respect to subject's streams. However the findings of this study is contradict that of [16] and [6] whose studies revealed a significant difference on students attitude towards the teaching profession with respect to subject streams and that courses of study does not significantly influence students attitude towards teaching profession.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

In line with the above results, the Northwest University prospective teachers' attitude towards teaching profession was found to be positive. Researches have shown that teachers' attitudes and behaviour can

positively or negatively affects the students' scholastic success and participation in lessons [31]. Teachers' attitudes towards teaching play a major role in shaping the attitudes of students towards learning. This can be concluded that, the Northwest University prospective teachers are motivated towards their profession and they participate in the school academic activities enthusiastically. Based on the results also female students were found to have more positive attitudes towards the teaching profession than their male counterparts. The findings of this study share similarities with findings of other studies in this field as cited in the discussion of the findings of this study. The teaching profession is rather preferred by female students and the attitudes of this kind of students towards the teaching profession are more positive than that of male students who are coming from the same faculty and programmes. While a significant gender difference was found on the prospective teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession. The attitudes of the prospective teachers coming from sciences and non-sciences streams and those from different level of study have found to be positive and indifferent. This finding is found to be consistent and at the same inconsistent with the findings of previous studies. Though they are small in number, it is disturbing to think how they will perform when they start the profession of teaching.

The implication of current state of prospective teachers holding a favourable or positive attitude towards teaching profession is very encouraging as it gives the profession a hope and can also bring about professional competence and acceptance in the future practices.

As being established by this study that the Northwest University prospective teachers' irrespective of their gender, level of study and subject stream have favourable attitude towards teaching profession. It is recommended that

1. The study should be conducted to assess the factors responsible for the favourable or unfavourable attitude of prospective teachers towards teaching profession.
2. Similar studies can be conducted at various levels of teacher education programmes in Nigeria.
3. In line with [32] opinion that favourable attitude of student teachers are formed at the end of teacher training programme, further study should be conducted on the same population at the final year of their programme to see whether training has a significant influence on their self-concept and attitude towards teaching profession

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