



Pre-service Teachers' Personality and the teaching in Secondary Schools in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examines the philosophy of teaching practice students' personality and secondary school students' academic performance in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The papers used John Holland's. personality theory of career choice which stated that occupation is a way of life, and extension of personality as well as an attempt to implement one's broad personality behavioural styles. The paper further examined the six personality types with the corresponding six environmental types as postulated by John Holland. The paper concludes in examining factors that promote the personality of the teaching practice teacher and academic performance. The paper upheld the view that the personality of the teacher is indisputable in his relationship with students and influences the academic performance of students.

Keywords: Personality, teaching practice, students, academic performance, Traits, Learners

Introduction

Teaching is an art as well as a science to bring about an expected change of behaviour. Thus, the skills required to impart knowledge are therefore tedious and tasking. Since teaching makes a difference in the total development of the individual, whatever it takes to ensure maximum utilization of basic skills of teaching must be observed.

The teacher play a significant role in human development and are regarded as engineers in molding the human personality, Asuru (1999). There are three outstanding individuals in our society whose decisions or opinions can hardly be ignored. Whatever that proceeds from their mouth is considered undisputable and unchallengeable. These authorities are: (1) The Pastors; (2) The Referees, and (3) The Teachers. So teachers are highly respected by students. So whatever they tell students is hardly disputed (Torubeli, 2013).

Meaning of Teaching Practice

Teaching practice is the vital segment of teacher education programme worldwide whose emphasis is always in the classroom reality (Paulley, 2012). Thus, teaching practice is an apprenticeship /internship programme in which learning experiences include opportunities



for practice activities whereby students assume the role they will play on successful completion of their training as teachers (Agi 2008). Thus, Teaching Practice is a pre-certification teaching that is intended to offer opportunities for the acquisition, development and refinement of necessary knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes and responsibilities that are basic for successful teaching career. Teaching practice is regarded as a preparatory period and an opportunity for student to put into actual practice many of the things learned concerning effective teaching. As a result, it is regarded as the engine room for quality teacher education programme. Paulley (2012) and Ifeagwu (2000) outlined the following as purposes for teaching practice.

1. Gives the student opportunity to relate his studies to his future career.
2. Helps to evaluate the entire programme of teacher education on whose basis some fine tuning may be made where necessary.
3. Leads to the evaluation of the student's personality as the exercise appraises the student teacher who is forced to play varied and at times difficult roles.
4. Serves as a testing ground for demonstrating professional competency in the subject matter areas assigned to the teacher through constant interaction with pupils, the school environment, co-operating teacher and such other persons in the school system.
5. Provides the student teacher with the opportunity to get involved with the many activities of learning such as classroom management, planning, preparation of materials, presentation of information, problem solving, discussion, evaluation, among others. In the process, the student teacher extends the textbook knowledge on child development into the real world situation.
6. Prepares the trainee teacher attitudinally for the teaching profession.
7. Helps the trainee teacher to develop independent living, interpersonal relationship and thereby exposes the student teacher to life outside the formal school setting and outside his home.
8. Provides schools in the catchments area of teachers thereby lightening the work load of co-operating teacher academically and administratively.
9. Provides an attempt to establish a link between education theory and practical skills, as in the teaching profession, theory should guide and shape practice. There is thus a link to create a link between theory and practice and there is no better avenue to achieve this for the student in teacher preparation institutions than teaching practice.



Teaching Practice exercise therefore enables the student teacher to put into practice the pedagogical training he has received in methodology courses. It is the gate way to one of the world's greatest profession that brings about creativity and innovation. It is for this reason

that teacher preparation involves a traditional practice of teaching to bring about teacher who can create, innovate, and effectively apply the new and innovative concepts to generate new subjects, concept, curriculum, teaching techniques, lessons and courses to drive the reforms (Torubeli, 2013).

The Teaching Practice Student Personality

Generally, personality refers to the stable attributes that totally make-up an individual that are likely to influence others (Torubeli, 2016). Thus, a teacher can be said to be impressive or repulsive, domineering or submissive. This view equates personality to reputation and impression. e.g physical appearance, mode of dressing, conversation and acceptable code of conduct (Azubike, 2006). Thus, the teaching practice teacher can be said to be impressive or repulsive, domineering or submissive. The teacher is either accepted or rejected in the classroom if his personality is impressive or repulsive or domineering. The student teachers are encouraged to be democratic by showing deep understanding of the students' temperament and to adapt all educational materials and strategies to start the needs and abilities of children. A democratic student teacher need to encourage critical thinking, creative and caring among learners and totally eliminates deviant behaviours due to calculated application of diplomacy and tact in all classroom and school activities (Azubike, 2006).

The student teacher is equally encouraged to delegate and share some responsibilities with the students, who may be involved in some educational planning and decision making. This can endear the student teacher to the students, who are already motivated to perform due his personality and high regards for them (Azubike, 2006). The personality of the student teacher can be likened to an actor on the stage, who acts a professional script. Any characteristic problem of the student teacher must be relegated to the background, while the acquired professional characters are projected to the fore front. This implies that all the physical, social, emotional and psychological frustrations of the student teacher must not be noticed by the student or any other person while performing the professional duties in the school and the community. So the personality characteristics of a student teacher go a long way to determine the amount of learning required by the students (Torubeli, 2016).

According to Torubeli (2013), studies have shown that if a teacher makes a mistake, generations yet unborn may suffer the consequences. This is because the action or inactions of a teacher affects eternity and generation of life in the society. Before his retirement, an average teacher would have affected 50,000 people. To this effect, the teacher is considered the key to the prosper development of the child. The student teacher today like the permanent teacher at whatever level is still revered, adored and loved by students. It is widely acknowledged by psychologists that career choice remain the impeccable influence of internal or intrinsic factors. These factors are considered innate or personal to the individual.



They are: interest, motivation, self-concept, intelligence, aptitude etc. There is indeed the connectivity between teaching as a vocation and the teacher's personality in his relationship with students' academic performance and self-actualization (Torubeli, 2013).

Personality Traits of the Teacher

The teaching profession like every other profession has its expected characteristics or qualities that every conscientious, dedicated, motivated and hardworking teacher must possess. It is often said that "without good teachers we cannot have qualitative education and without qualitative education we cannot make successfully, the challenges of the changing world and achieve satisfactory national development. Since this is the case, the role of teachers in students' academic performance cannot be ignored. Teacher no doubt serves as a real life models to students and whatever behaviour or character they exhibit to a large extent goes to influence the moral, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development of the student. This is because going by the theory of observational social learning, children imitate admirable models.

The Teachers Personality, Students' Relationship and Academic Performance

The teacher's personality positively and negatively influences the overall development of the child. A teacher must be aware of children's needs and develop insight into human behaviour if he is to facilitate learning and adjustment (Alhassan, 2013). According to Ikejiaku and Torubeli (2006), John Holland postulated the personality theory of career choice which stated that occupation is a way of life, an extension of personality and an attempt to implement one's broad personal behavioural styles in the context of a job. The following teacher's personality will be looked at from John Holland's contribution.

1. The realistic teacher (Motoric Personality)

The realistic teachers are usually found of task that is demanding much dexterity. They indulge mostly in activities where they can display their energy in the light of Holland's theory. Hence, they love occupations of masculine in nature; they are usually aggressive or sadistic according to Sigmund Freud's theory on the negative fixation of the anal stage. The implication is that an aggressive teacher would definitely scare his students. Students do not like to learn under tension or intimidation. Having chosen this part of career, teachers, even if it is for the time being should watch what they say and how they say it. However, let it be noted that some of such realistic people are found among the engineers, boxers, farmers etc.

2. The investigative teacher (intellectual personality) The investigative teachers are good thinkers. They tend to avoid anything that would bring them very close to the people. They are good in discovery, have high level of cognitive ability. Since they are busy most of the times solving intellectual problems, they hardly give time to listen to others. They are most found among the natural scientists, the biologist, chemists, physics,



mathematics etc. Most investigative teachers like teaching but unfortunately have poor human relations. And since students love caring and understanding, their relationship with such teachers always ends up in a disaster. The investigative teacher of course, has no excuse in this regard, having chosen teaching as a profession. He should as a matter of necessity engage in the training of his temperament because some of them are emotionally unintelligent.

3. The social teacher (supportive personality). The social teacher is a lover of the people. The social teacher is emotionally intelligent. People under this type of personality are extrovert and people oriented, and as such, any services like teaching and counselling they are there. Since they have amiable personality sometimes their passion for students are wrongly interpreted or misdirected. It is therefore, necessary for a social teacher not to abuse his natural empathetic personality at the expense of students which may amount to seduction. This of course classifies such a teacher as morally unintelligent.

4. The conventional teacher (conforming personality). A conventional teacher is usually conservative. He obeys the rules and regulations to the letter. The conventionalists are known for doing the right thing, often very rigid to a fault. Sometimes, the society sees them as good disciplinarians. The conventional teacher is usually distanced and respected by students. Some of the teachers who fall under this category are usually economics teachers, accounting teachers, business studies teachers, commerce teachers, Christian Religious Knowledge Teachers etc. These teachers are highly introverted. The implication is that since students tend to distance such teachers, efforts should be made for them to be able to reach out to others. This can be achieved through counselling and feedback communication.

5. The Enterprising Teacher (Persuasive Personality). An enterprising teacher is the teacher with the gift of eloquence. He has high verbal skills for teaching and convincing his students.

Enterprising teachers are usually ambitious and over-domineering. They are highly extroverted and optimistic. Typical examples of enterprising teachers are history, government, social studies, business studies, management and marketing teachers. Since such teachers are easily admired by students, efforts should be made to always tell them the truth, be honest with them and firm and not losing one's integrity entirely in front of them. Enterprising teachers should as a matter of importance to exhibit some level of decorum, avoid entering into amoral sexual relationship with their students.

6. The Artistic Teachers (Aesthetic Personality). An artistic teacher is usually a good entertainer. He is gifted with artistic touch of making people laugh and happy all the times. Artistic teachers are highly creative. Apart from the fact that they are good in modeling and in public appearance, they can be found among literature, fine arts/creative arts, physical and health education teachers, games masters, choir masters etc.



Artistic teachers are greatly adored and admired by students. The fact that they are highly extroverted makes them reachable and approachable by students. For this singular reason, students easily fall prey to their devilish desires and this is dangerous. To this effect, artistic teachers must avoid any act capable of luring them into irresponsible sexual behaviour with students’.

Factors that Promote the Personality of the Teaching Practice Teacher towards better Academic Performance

Based on the fact that personality can be formed and modified by nature and environment, certain factors which are capable of promoting the personality of the teacher while in and out of the classroom as highlighted by Azubike (2006) are articulated below.

1. Mastery of content:

This implies having adequate knowledge, control and command of the teaching subjects as the case may be, to the point of over learning. The secret of this mastery is that teachers must sufficiently prepare for the presentation of any content or topic, which will involve continuous reading, searching and a good lesson plan.

The lesson plan among other minor details should include discrete topic, specific observable and behavioural objectives, entering behaviour, needed instructional materials, teaching strategies to be applied, and a well-developed content development as well as the teacher’s activities and the student’s activities. The idea of searching is that he will continue to read everything that comes his way, especially when they are related to the teacher’s teaching subjects. This helps in discovering new facts that will aid mastery and improves the vocabulary acquisition of the teacher. A teacher that has sufficient mastery of a content can teach and facilitate for a whole duration of a lesson without looking into any notes or books. This goes a long way in raising the estimation and reputation in which a teacher is held by the students.

2. Love and knowledge of the learners:

This implies that the learner is the centre of all educational intentions and applications and should be closely studied, to identify their needs, interests, abilities, aptitudes and socio-cultural backgrounds. This will enable the teacher to design every educational package to be useful and meaningful to the learners. The teacher that sufficiently show love, understanding and kindness with reasons, becomes more effective and productive in the school than the autocratic teacher. The personality of the undemocratic teacher is usually regarded by students as repulsive, while that of a loving and understanding teacher is regarded as impressive by the same students.



3. Possession of friendly, calm, pleasant and clear voice:

Students prefer to be taught by teachers who possess friendly and clear voice modulation than to those with husky and unfriendly voice and monotone. The ability of the teacher to adapt all verbal sounds to suit the interests and needs of the learner promotes learning, teaching and the reputation of the teacher. The students learn better and faster, when the teacher uses a friendly interactional style, which also allows greater verbalization and participation from the learner.

4. Sense of humour and humility

These qualities are usually distinct in the characters of teachers and promote to a great extent the personalities of the teachers. Humour sense implies the ability to say or perceive things that are funny and amusing, especially when applied to further the course of the lesson. This is capable of easing any tension in students, because it serves as a stimulus variation, in learning.

Sense of humility on the other hand, implies the quality of being humble and modest in all human dealings and interactions with others. Who could be in the classroom. This enables the teacher to wilfully accord the deserved respect to students, staff and other members of the society, without unnecessary arrogation of pride.

5. Flexibility in the use of methods, materials and strategies:

A teacher that uses a variety of productive methods, materials and teaching strategies is always a friend to the students, because his lesson periods are usually interesting, eventual and sufficiently motivating to the learners, who look forward to his lesson with enthusiasm. While students discuss and expect yet another exhibition of attractive professional competence, the personality of such a teacher is soaring high among the populace, because the students will always say good thing about him, anywhere they go.

Flexibility in the use of methods of teaching implies the calculated variation and adaptability of productive methods of teaching and learning to suit varied conditions or circumstances of learning. For instance, a teacher who circumstantially started a difficult topic using the lecture method could easily switch to more students' participatory methods, like activity, discovery, community of inquiry, project etc. The teacher should also vary the use of educational materials and examples to suit the low, normal and exceptional learners in the class, knowing fully well that learners learn at different rate and pace. The needed examples must appeal to the senses of sight, hearing and touching, because they learn more from what they see, hear and manipulate through touching.



Also, flexibility in the use of teaching strategies implies the productive use of all eight isolated skills, chosen in preference to others and intelligent use of other lesser mannerisms at the appropriate times, within the duration of a lesson. Any method, material or strategy used at any moment must be geared towards the achievement of the specific, observable and behavioural objectives of the lesson movement.

6. Appropriateness in dressing:

All trained, committed and competent teachers already know that there is a silent dressing code that is acceptable in the noble profession of teaching and learning. Teachers do not over dress or under dress while going to the school to teach. Students tend to be distracted when a teacher dresses so gorgeously while teaching them. The same students quietly make mockery of the teacher and the profession, when a teacher dresses shabbily. Female teachers particularly, should avoid putting on wears that would reveal the shape and contours of the

breast and buttocks, both in and out of the classroom. Students tend to be distracted when such teacher is writing on the chalk board while backing the learners. So, the mode of dressing of any teacher is capable of making or marring the personality characteristics of that teacher.

7. Maintenance of acceptable decorum:

Due to the fact that the entire society looks up to the teachers as possible models for their growing children, the competent professional teachers and even the remaining auxiliary colleagues are constantly under pressure to maintain acceptable levels of politeness and socially correct behaviours. Teachers are encouraged to use every opportunity to inculcate moral principles and precepts to the younger generations. Precept here, implies the rule of acceptable behaviour which promotes the social norms and values. By so doing, the teacher's personality will be highly respected by the society and would promote academic performance of students and self-actualization.

Conclusion

Teaching is a unique and intrinsically moral enterprise. Whether a teacher likes it or not, he is a moral instructor, a moral educator and a moral model for his students. He is the change agent and transformer of the society. Thus, the role of the teacher's personality is philosophically indisputable influence to the students' academic performance and self-actualization. Therefore, the teacher's relationship with the students should be that of maintaining decorum that would transform the society.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that:

1. Practicing student teachers should be properly supervised by all the stakeholders in the teaching profession like their training institutions, officials of the ministry of



- education, the teachers registration council of Nigeria (TRCN) to ensure that the would be teacher is made to operate within minimum guidelines during their formative years of training to precede being license to teach upon graduation.
2. School authorities should ensure that practicing student teachers who are posted to their schools are fully engaged in all school activities to give them a sense of direction on work schedules and the operations of school duties.
 3. The practicing student teachers should be made to conform to a national dressing code during the period of internship. This will make them develop a sense of identity, dignity and worth like the law or medical students in similar professional training.
 4. The teaching practice student should imbibe the spirit of responsible teacher behavior and obedience to constituted authority. This will help to build on trust between the practicing student teacher, the teachers, students and society at large.
 5. The industrial training fund (ITF) should extend payment of stipend to student on teaching practice. This will assist them meet certain exigencies during the period of their teaching in training to boost their morale and secure from them responsible behaviour.

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