

ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS INFLUENCING TRAINEE
TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHING
PROFESSION IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: AN EVIDENCE
OF EDUCATION TRAINING INSTITUTIONS IN MBEYA,
TANZANIA

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Abstract

Attitude of trainee teachers towards teaching profession in Tanzania secondary schools is a challenge to the education system development at large. However, little information on factors that influence attitude of trainee teachers is available. Therefore, the present study examined the factors that influence trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching profession in secondary schools. Quasi-experimental research design and purpose sampling plan were used to select trainee teachers from Tukuyu teachers' college, Tumaini University, and Teofilo Kisanji University in Mbeya region. The study used semi structured questionnaires, in which a sample size of 183 trainee teachers was collected. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data using SPSS. Results showed that trainee teachers disliked teaching profession because of low salaries and poor perception of the society towards the professional. Therefore, it is concluded that low salary and bad perception towards teaching profession are factors that influenced negatively the attitude of trainee teachers towards teaching professional. It is therefore, recommended that the government should improve salaries for teachers in secondary schools and the society should regard teaching profession like other professions.

Key words: Trainee teachers, teaching attitudes, teaching professional, secondary schools and education institutions.

1.0 Introduction

Teaching profession is among of the oldest professions comparable in age to law, medicine, engineering-architecture and accountancy (Ishumi, 2012). It is an educational tool that is entrusted with the objective of providing good education equitably to all citizens in Tanzania. It has been found that good education which is a cornerstone for the country's all forms of development; it must be given by teachers who are in turn well prepared from teachers training colleges (Oral, 2004). According to Tanzania Education and Training Policy (TETPO) (1995) secondary schools students are taught by diploma and graduate teachers. Most of these trainees are aged between 20 to 22 years old and this is the age of high expectation in life for both female and male teachers due to socio-cultural and schooling (Slavin, 2012). However, human development and schooling have a socio-cultural basis; cultural values such as motivation, language, values, attitude, emotions and interpersonal behavior that influence human development while schooling include what learners are taught and learning. An attitude as a cognitive, affective and behavior response is organized on the basis of experience and knowledge to individuals or any object or event around learners' environment and individual's attitudes towards teaching profession have an effect on students' performance (Hussain *et al.*, 2011).

Currently, Tanzania face a problem of some trainee teachers who are having negative attitude towards teaching profession which affects performance of students at ordinary level (URT, 2012). Some trainee teachers fail to report to their posting locations and others after reporting tend to shift to other professions like accountancy, architecture, law, engineering and medicine due to negative attitude in teaching profession (Rungwe District, 2012). Poor living conditions, poor teaching management, teachers' working load, teachers' competence, and schools location are problems reported to affect attitude of trainee teachers toward teaching profession (Tweve, 2012; Bennel and Mukyanuzi, 2005). In order to encourage trainee teachers to have positive attitude and remaining in teaching profession, the government in 2010 introduced incentives for all newly qualified teachers who are in the way to be employed to receive an allowance for their up keep as they begin working (United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2010). This meant for cost of settling in their posting area which includes transport costs and purchase of their basic needs. The allowance is a grant of Tsh 500,000 or approximately 20% of annual basic salary paid from the District office, on the teacher's arrival at the post. For teachers who receive this allowance

has to commit to remain in the school for at least three years (URT, 2010). Although, the introduction of incentives by the government was to solve the problem but trainee teachers are still having negative attitude towards teaching as evidenced by poor performance students at ordinary secondary school level from 2011 to 2012 (Rungwe District, 2012; Regional Education Office, 2013).

Tweve (2012) and Bennel and Mukyanuzi (2005) suggested on how to improve the attitude of trainee teachers towards teaching profession in Tanzania. On one hand, Tweve (2012) proposed that, good living environment and work load which need to be proportional to the payments that can help improve the attitude of trainees towards teaching profession. In additional, Bennel and Mukyanuzi (2005) reported that, teachers' competence, poor living conditions, poor teachers' management, students' behavior, teachers' working load, school location and infrastructure are some problems which lead to poor attitude for some teachers towards teaching profession. Despite of this information, little is known about factors that influence trainee attitude towards their professional upon graduation. This study assessed factors that influence teachers' attitude towards teaching professional in secondary schools.

2.0 Statement of the problem

It is argued that good education may be transmitted to the learners in schools with the help of well trained teachers and who have positive attitude towards teaching profession (URT, 2001). Schools whose students perform poorly may be blamed for having teachers who demonstrate poor attitude towards their teaching profession or teachers who are on the way of moving from teaching profession to other professions (Allen, 2010).

Rungwe District also suffers from the similar problem of teachers not reporting to their respective places that has been allocated for them and some after reporting tend to shift to other professions. The reports from the District Education Officer (DEO) of Rungwe (2013) showed that, in the year 2010 allocation of teachers was 150, but 16 (11%) did not report and 6 (4%) left the profession. Moreover, in 2011 allocation of teachers was 98, but 9 (9%) did not report and 4 (4%) left the teaching profession while in 2012 allocation of teachers was 231 but 12 (5%) did

not report and 14 (6%) left the profession (Rungwe District, 2013). As a result, this led to a loss of 61 teachers within three consecutive years in the District as a result some schools had severe shortage of teachers. This shortage could continue to turn down by its trend shown and it affects the quality of education due to the attitude shown by trainee teachers. Mkonongwa (2012), Tweve (2012), Allen (2010), Bennel and Mukyanuzi (2005) observed poor living environment, work load which was not proportional with their payments, teachers' incompetence, poor teachers management, students' behavior, school location and infrastructure as problems facing teachers. But, little information is available on particular factors that influence trainee teachers' attitude as teachers who are on their final year of studies to join the professional. Moreover, it is anticipated that some factors that affects the attitude of teachers trainee towards teaching profession in universities and teachers' colleges are unknown (Tweve, 2012). Therefore, the present study assessed the factors that influence trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching profession two universities education institution TEKU and Tumaini University Mbeya centre and Tukuyu Teachers College so to encourage stake holders to promote the quality of education with teachers who have positive attitude towards teaching profession.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Study Location

The study was conducted in Mbeya City and Rungwe District in Mbeya region in which Teofilo Kisanji University, Tumaini University Mbeya Centre in Mbeya City and Tukuyu Teachers' College in Rungwe District were purposively chosen. This is because those institutions were teaching trainee teachers for secondary schools who were best expected to answer research questions so as to meet research objectives (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

3.2 Research design

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009) and Krysik and Finn (2007) explain that research design is the arrangement of conditions for selection and analysis of data in manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose and economy in procedure. The study employed quasi experimental research design in which there was no random assignment to three groups of institutions under consideration (Krysik and Finn, 2007, Saunders *et al.*, 2009). The study aimed at collecting information from respondents on the factors that influenced attitudes of trainee

teachers towards teaching profession in Tanzanian secondary schools and three educational institutions were assumed to be similar in terms of trainee teachers interviewed.

3.3 Sampling techniques

This study employed a stratified purpose and random sampling technique to obtain heterogeneous sub-groups information to meet research objectives (Krysiak and Finn, 2007). Trainee teachers for both undergraduates and diploma were randomly obtained from their trainee sampling frame. A random sampling was used for both undergraduates and diploma trainee teachers in order to avoid bias in each training institution surveyed (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, a sample size of 183 respondents were interviewed which was comprised of 100 undergraduate third year trainee teachers from Teofilo Kisanji University, 33 trainee teachers from Tumaini University Mbeya Centre and 50 diploma trainee teachers from Tukuyu Teachers.

3.4 Data collection

Both closed and open administered questionnaires were employed to collect cross sectional data from trainee teachers in education institutions surveyed. Consistent with the notion that the methods and instruments chosen depended largely on the extent to which they could serve the purpose of the study. All respondents' filled questionnaires, because the target sub groups were literate, however, little explanations were provided where it was not clear. The use of open-ended questions enabled the respondents to feel free and afford them the opportunity to provide in-depth responses, whereas the close-ended questionnaires provided guided response. (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003, Krysiak and Finn, 2007; Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

3.5 Data analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze cross sectional data (Newman, 2007, Saunders *et al.*, 2009) in which statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was employed. Also, frequency distribution tables were used to examine variation with percentages (Kombo and Tromp, 2006).

4.0 Results and discussion

4.1 Respondents characteristics

4.1.1 Gender of respondents interviewed

Results (Table 1) showed that, 52.6 % and 46 % of undergraduate and diploma trainee respondents were female while 47.4% and 54% were male trainee respondents, respectively. This indicates that the number of female undergraduate respondents was high compared to diploma respondents. This variation was due to the fact that, female trainees were more likely to participate and give their views than male.

Table 1: Gender composition of respondents

Gender	Category of trainee			
	Undergraduate teachers		Diploma teachers	
	Frequency	Percent, %	Frequency	Percent, %
Female	70	52.6	23	46.0
Male	63	47.4	27	54.0
Total	133	100.0	50	100.0

4.1.2 Age of respondents interviewed

Results (Table 2) showed that 46.6%, 42.9% and 10.5% of undergraduate respondents were in the range of 25-27, 21-24, and above 28 years old, respectively. While 72%, 24% and 4% of diploma respondents were in the range of 21-24, 25-27 and above 28 years old, accordingly. This showed that, the majority of undergraduate respondents ranged between 25-27 years old and the minorities were above 28 years old while the majorities in diploma ranged between 21-24 and minority were above 28 years old. The variation between could have been attributed by fact that the majorities of diploma trainees join teachers college direct after completing form six level of education while undergraduate trainees tends to join one or two years after completing form six because of financial constraints.

Table 2: Age categories of respondents

Age categories	Category of trainee			
	Undergraduate teachers		Diploma teachers	
	Frequency	Percent, %	Frequency	Percent, %
21 - 24	57	42.9	36	72.0
25 - 27	62	46.6	12	24.0
>28	14	10.5	2	4.0
Total	133	100.0	50	100.0

4.1.3 Education level of respondents interviewed

Findings (Table 3) showed that 19.5% and 80.5% of undergraduate respondents had attained form four and six education level, respectively, while 100% of diploma trainee teachers had

attained form six education level. Findings suggest that undergraduates are admitted in universities after either form six graduation (direct entry) or experience on teaching profession based on form four entry qualifications. Contrary, diploma trainees are admitted after form six graduations as an entry qualification.

Table 3: Education level of respondents

Education level	Category of trainee			
	Undergraduate teachers		Diploma teachers	
	Frequency	Percent, %	Frequency	Percent, %
Form four	26	19.5	50	100.0
Form six	107	80.5		
Total	133	100.0	50	100.0

4.2 The likes or dislikes of trainee teachers towards teaching career

Survey results (Table 4) showed that 53.4% of undergraduate respondents like teaching professional while 46.6% dislike. Also, 62% of diploma respondents dislike while 19% of them like teaching profession. These results indicate that, diploma trainees had negative attitude towards teaching profession compared with undergraduate trainees. This may be due to fact that diploma trainees had low expectation in achieving what they anticipate since their starting scale of salary is low compared to undergraduate teachers. Also, undergraduate trainees had wide chance to teach either in government, private schools or even to join other professional institutions.

Table 4: Preference for the teaching profession by interviewed trainees

Preferences	Respondents categories			
	Undergraduate teachers		Diploma teachers	
	Frequency	Percent, %	Frequency	Percent, %
Likes	71	53.4	19	38.0
Dislikes	62	46.6	31	62.0
Total	133	100.0	50	100.0

4.2.1 Responses of Trainees on reasons for liking the teaching profession

Study findings (Table 5) showed that 19.6% and 18.8% of undergraduate respondents reported that teaching career updates and expands teachers' knowledge and skills and it brings teachers close to the society, respectively. Similarly, 20% and 14% of diploma respondents reported that

teaching career is also a source of other knowledge and it brings them close to the society, in that order while 46.6% and 62% of undergraduate and diploma respondents had no reason for why they like teaching professional, respectively. This indicates that there are different reasons for liking teaching profession for undergraduate and diploma respondents though both are expected to teach secondary schools. These differences may be due to the level of respondents in education which they are pursuing and the intention of each individual. The study observed that undergraduates were trained on how to deal with challenges so as to mold the students' direction in education while diploma were trained on how to condition student in learning through teaching methodologies as directed by (TETPO, 1995). These differences make trainees to have different attitude on teaching profession.

Table 5: Reasons for liking the teaching profession

Reasons	Respondent categories			
	Undergraduate teachers		Diploma teachers	
	Frequency	Percent, %	Frequency	Percent, %
Updates knowledge	26	19.6	2	4.0
Brings close to the society	25	18.8	7	14.0
Source of other knowledge.	20	15.0	10	20.0
No reason	62	46.6	31	62.0
Total	133	100.0	50	100.0

4.2.2 Reasons of Trainees for disliking teaching career

Results (Table 6) showed that 15.8% and 32% of undergraduate and diploma respondents reported that low salary is the most reason for trainee teachers to dislike teaching career, respectively. While poor working conditions and lack of incentives are the least reasons for both undergraduate and diploma respondents. These signify to both groups under study that the dislike of teaching career is caused by low salary, however; lack of incentives appeared to be another limiting factor for undergraduates. The study observed that most respondents tried to compare the work load in teaching profession which was not proportional to their salaries paid per month. The present findings contradict with Bennel and Mukyanuzi (2005) on reasons for disliking teaching profession that teachers' competence, poor living conditions, poor teachers' management, students' behavior, teachers' working load, school location and infrastructure were reasons for trainee teachers to have negative attitude. Similarly, Joseph *et al.* (2000) observed that teachers' respect and promotions were the problems of negative attitude. Probably, this is

caused by low salary and lack of incentives which have appeared at the present study to be the most reasons of negative attitude for trainee teachers.

Also, observation (Table 6) showed that, both 15.8% of undergraduate and 32% of diploma respondents suggested that salary is the cornerstone for all problems facing teachers. Probably, high salary motivate teachers, increases the morality in teaching and help teachers to remain in teaching profession. Both respondents reported that, if the government will raise amount of salary like other professions majority will like teaching profession and the performance of students will be improved.

Table 6: Reasons of trainee teachers for disliking teaching profession

Reasons	Respondent categories			
	Undergraduate teachers		Diploma teachers	
	Frequency	Percent, %	Frequency	Percent, %
Low salaries	21	15.8	16	32.0
Lack of incentives	20	15.0	6	12.0
Poor working environment	15	11.3	5	10.0
Poor marking conditions	6	4.5	4	8.0
No response	71	53.4	19	38.0
Total	133	100.0	50	100.0

4.3 Factors influencing trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching profession

Survey findings (Table 7) showed that 34.6% followed by 15% of undergraduate and 36% followed by 24% of diploma respondents reported that low salary and insufficient of teaching and learning materials as problems towards teaching profession, respectively. This indicates that trainee teachers' problems towards teaching profession are homogeneous regardless of educational level. Present study findings agree with the observation made by Tweve (2012) that low salary on work load which is not proportional to payments makes some trainee teachers to have negative attitude towards teaching profession. Mkonongwa (2012) observed that insufficient salary make some trainee teachers hate teaching profession. These similarities made the researcher to believe that low salary as observed in the study area is the key problem in teaching profession that influence trainees to have negative attitude towards teaching profession. The present observations suggest that these problems have an impact on whether to apply for teaching profession or other profession, whether to receive pre-seminar of professionalism before

joining in any profession, or whether to know problems that face teaching profession before joining to teaching profession.

Table 7: Factors influencing trainee negative attitude towards teaching profession

Reasons	Respondent categories			
	Undergraduate teachers		Diploma teachers	
	Frequency	Percent, %	Frequency	Percent, %
Low salaries	46	34.6	18	36.0
Insufficient teaching/ learning materials	20	15.0	12	24.0
Poor teaching environment	14	10.5	10	20.0
Bad perception of people towards teaching	13	9.8	5	10.0
Lack of incentives	9	6.8	5	10.0
No response	49	36.8		
Total	133	100.0	50	100.0

5.0 Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the results, it is therefore concluded that low salaries, insufficient teaching/learning materials, poor teaching environment and bad perception of society influence the trainee teachers towards their teaching profession. It is recommended that, the government should improve salaries, facilitate teaching/learning materials, improve working environment while the society should consider teaching profession as other professions.

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