Lecture Notes: Introduction to the Teaching Profession

**Unit 1: Introduction to the Teaching Profession**

1. Who is a Teacher?

A teacher is a professional who facilitates learning by guiding, instructing, and nurturing students' intellectual, emotional, and social development. Teachers are responsible for creating a positive learning environment, developing educational materials, and ensuring that students achieve their full potential. The role of a teacher extends beyond just imparting knowledge; they serve as mentors, role models, and advocates for their students' overall well-being.

In Nigeria today, a teacher is a person who has undergone

approved professional training in education at a College of

Education or Faculty of Education in a University, University of

education. The national policy on education (2004) proposal of

producing teachers by the National Mathematical Centre has not yet

materialize. Gone are the days when Grade II and Grade III

Teachers’ Colleges were in existence. As an innovative approach,

we have open education which is synonymous to distance

education, correspondence education and the Open University.

Graduates of these institutions are capable of imparting knowledge,

right attitudes and skills to learners.

The Teacher’s Registration Council handbook (2002) as cited in

Molagun and Taiwo (2004) defines teaching as a systematic

process of transmitting knowledge, attitudes and skills in

accordance with professional principles.

The child is like a young plant which needs proper growth, nurturing,

shaping and pruning, while the teacher, is like a gardener who

understands the plants, some require bending, some straightening and

others pruning. For successful teaching/learning processes, the teacher is

required to understand thoroughly the child and the subject matter which

must be considered and chosen according to the child’s state and

standard. Since the child is the subject of education, the teacher should

be able to guide him successfully to become an achiever in life.

The teacher is trained in both the theory and practice of education. He is

very important through his influence, his character and his example. The

child is his responsibility. He must be patient and be fond of the child. The

teacher needs perseverance, high ideals and a desire to give time,

energy, thought and cares to his work. He must have the power of

imparting knowledge and should master the knowledge to impart.

**Key Points:**

- A teacher guides and facilitates learning.

- They provide instruction and educational resources.

- They support students’ academic and personal growth.

- Teachers also act as role models and mentors.

**2. Duties of a Teacher**

A teacher's duties are diverse and critical to the educational process. Their responsibilities often go beyond the classroom and involve planning, assessing, and managing the learning environment.

Key Duties Include:

- Instructional Delivery: Teaching lessons that align with the curriculum, adapting teaching methods to suit students’ needs, and ensuring content is comprehensible and engaging.

- Lesson Planning: Preparing lesson plans that meet educational standards and address students’ learning objectives.

- Assessment: Designing and administering tests, quizzes, assignments, and projects to evaluate students' progress.

- Classroom Management: Creating a conducive learning environment by maintaining order, discipline, and fostering respect among students.

- Guidance and Mentorship: Providing emotional and academic support, identifying students’ strengths and weaknesses, and offering advice for personal development.

- Professional Development: Continuously improving their skills through workshops, courses, and staying updated on educational trends.

- Communication with Stakeholders: Collaborating with parents, other teachers, and school administrators to support students’ growth.

The teacher serves as a model, a person to be emulated.

Therefore, he must be a good example for others around him. In

fact his motto must be “leadership by example”.

The teacher as a dispenser of knowledge must be well enriched, a

resource person who can help students acquire the knowledge they seek.

Salami (1999) and Ibrahim (2005) differently took in-depth look at

the duties of a teacher, some of which are enumerated below:

- The teacher must be capable of promoting the moral, social

and cultural heritage of the community which he serves.

- The teacher must be prepared to learn all the time. He should have

the ability to carry out research, he should be computer literate and

have knowledge on how to get, information from the internet.

- For the educational objectives to be attained, a teacher must

have positive influence on the student and should inspire the

students under his care to learn.

- He must be competent and have professional qualification. He must

be sensitive to changes in his field and be capable of innovation.

- The teacher must be able to communicate effectively and be

able to give a clear, simple and logical lesson.

- He must be capable of meeting emotional, physical,

intellectual and social needs of the student. He must help the

student to have a good and cordial interpersonal relationships.

- He should be capable of helping students to develop attitudes,

morals, and norms that promote the unity and solidarity of the

nation.

- The teacher should be able to help the students develop

critical thinking and scientific attitudes to life.

- The teacher must be able to cater for the students’ individual

differences in learning and wage war against mediocrity.

- A teacher should be able to evaluate his own performance and

also the performance of his students.

- Teachers in the early era were respected because they were

diligent and morally upright. Teachers were the encyclopedia

of the societies to which they belonged. All the events and

happenings of their time were recorded by them. To crown it

all, they were strong disciplinarians.

**3. Qualities of a Teacher**

A good teacher possesses both personal and professional qualities that contribute to their effectiveness in the classroom.

**Important Qualities Include:**

- Patience: Ability to handle students of varying abilities and personalities without frustration.

- Empathy: Understanding students' individual challenges and supporting them emotionally and academically.

- Adaptability: Adjusting teaching methods and materials to accommodate different learning styles and needs.

- Passion for Teaching: A genuine interest in education and a desire to inspire students to learn.

- Strong Communication Skills: The ability to explain concepts clearly and interact effectively with students, parents, and colleagues.

- Creativity: Designing engaging and innovative ways to teach and stimulate students’ interest.

- Integrity: Maintaining professionalism, fairness, and ethical standards in interactions with students and colleagues.

**4. How to Become a Teacher**

Becoming a teacher requires both academic qualifications and personal dedication. The path to the profession varies depending on the educational system and country.

**Steps to Becoming a Teacher:**

1. Earn a Degree:

- Most teaching positions require at least a bachelor’s degree in education or a related field. Specialized degrees may be required for teaching specific subjects or grade levels.

2. Complete Teacher Training:

- In many regions, prospective teachers must complete a teacher preparation program that includes coursework in pedagogy, child psychology, and instructional methods.

3. Participate in Student Teaching:

- Student teaching provides practical experience in a classroom under the supervision of an experienced teacher. This is a critical step in gaining hands-on teaching experience.

4. Obtain Certification or Licensure:

- Teachers must be certified or licensed to teach in most regions. Certification requirements typically include passing exams and meeting specific educational criteria.

5. Continuous Professional Development:

- Teachers are expected to engage in lifelong learning, attending workshops, seminars, and additional training to improve their skills and stay current in their field.

Conclusion

Teachers play an essential role in shaping future generations through education. Understanding their roles, duties, and the qualities needed to succeed can inspire and prepare those who wish to enter the teaching profession. Becoming a teacher requires dedication, academic qualifications, and a genuine passion for impacting lives.

**Lecture Notes: The National Policy on the Teaching Profession in Nigeria**

**Unit 2: The National Policy on the Teaching Profession in Nigeria**

1. The Establishment of TRCN and the Enabling Act

TRCN (Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria):

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) is a regulatory body established by the Federal Government of Nigeria to oversee the teaching profession in the country. TRCN was founded under \*\*Decree No. 31 of 1993\*\*, now known as the TRCN Act CAP T3 of 2004, to ensure the professionalism, quality, and standardization of teaching in Nigeria.

Key Objectives of TRCN:

- Regulate the teaching profession: TRCN monitors, regulates, and controls the practice of teaching in both public and private schools.

- Certification of teachers: TRCN certifies qualified teachers, ensuring only registered and licensed professionals can teach in Nigeria.

- Professional development: The council organizes training and workshops for teachers to improve their skills and keep up with new teaching methods and technologies.

- Enforce standards: TRCN establishes and maintains professional standards for teacher education, certification, and practice.

Enabling Act (TRCN Act CAP T3 of 2004):

- This Act empowers TRCN to enforce strict regulations on who can be considered a qualified teacher.

- It mandates that all teachers, including those in private institutions, must be registered and licensed.

- It provides legal backing for sanctions against unqualified teachers or institutions that do not comply with the rules and standards set by TRCN.

2. Teacher Training

Teacher Training in Nigeria:

Teacher training refers to the formal education and preparation teachers undergo to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for effective classroom instruction and professional growth. Teacher training in Nigeria follows a structured path that begins with pre-service education and continues throughout a teacher’s career with in-service professional development.

Pre-service Teacher Training:

- Teacher Education Programs: Pre-service teachers are trained in colleges of education, universities, and institutes that offer teacher education programs. They undergo courses in pedagogy, curriculum development, educational psychology, and subject-matter knowledge.

- Diploma and Degree Programs: The key qualifications for teachers in Nigeria are the National Certificate of Education (NCE), a Bachelor’s Degree in Education (B.Ed.), or a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) for those with non-education degrees.

- Field Experience: Teacher training includes practical teaching experiences, such as teaching practice or student teaching, where trainee teachers gain hands-on experience in classrooms.

**In-service Training and Professional Development:**

- Teachers are required to engage in continuous professional development (CPD) programs, seminars, and workshops to stay current with teaching methodologies, curriculum changes, and classroom management skills.

- TRCN plays a vital role in promoting lifelong learning for teachers, ensuring they update their skills regularly.

3. **Ethics in the Teaching Profession**

Ethics refers to the moral principles that guide teachers’ behavior and professional practice. Teachers are held to high ethical standards because they are responsible for shaping the future of their students and upholding the integrity of the education system. Adherence to professional ethics is essential to maintaining trust, respect, and fairness within the educational environment.

**Core Ethical Principles for Teachers:**

- Integrity: Teachers must demonstrate honesty and fairness in all their dealings with students, colleagues, and the community. They should avoid favoritism, bias, or discrimination.

- Confidentiality: Teachers are entrusted with sensitive information about their students’ academic performance, personal issues, and behavior. Maintaining confidentiality is critical to protecting students’ privacy.

- Professionalism: Teachers should exhibit professional behavior in the classroom, maintain proper conduct, dress appropriately, and respect school policies. This extends to how they interact with students, parents, and peers.

- Respect for Students: Teachers must show respect for the dignity and rights of every student, regardless of background, gender, ethnicity, or ability. They should promote an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

- Non-exploitation: Teachers should not use their position of authority to exploit students for personal gain or influence.

- Accountability: Teachers are accountable for their actions and must take responsibility for students' learning outcomes. They should be punctual, prepared, and committed to students ’ academic and emotional development.

- Continuous Learning: Ethical teachers recognize the importance of lifelong learning and actively seek to improve their teaching skills, staying updated with educational trends and methodologies.

**TRCN’s Role in Ethics:**

The TRCN enforces the code of ethics for teachers, which outlines expected behaviors and practices. The council also has mechanisms to address ethical violations, ensuring teachers adhere to professional conduct and standards.

- Conclusion

The National Policy on the Teaching Profession in Nigeria aims to regulate and elevate the standards of teaching in the country through institutions like the TRCN. Teacher training, ethical conduct, and adherence to the TRCN’s regulations are essential for professional development and ensuring the teaching profession is both respected and effective in shaping the future of Nigeria.