

## **Teachers' Negative Characteristics and Its Impact in Curriculum Implementation In**

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**Abstract:** *The quality of graduates found in Nigeria today calls for worry. Education has been described as the bedrock of any nation. Thus, going by the quality of graduates found in our nation today, Nigeria as a nation is heading for doom if the nation's educational system is not checked. Corruption has eaten deep into all the levels of the nation's system of education. It is on this basis that this paper decided to investigate teachers' negative characteristics in alphabetical order from A-Z vis-a-vis the implementation of the school curriculum. The paper, therefore, recommends among others that government should make the salaries of teachers the highest in the land as every other profession is dependent on the teaching profession.*

**Keywords:** *Teachers, Negative, Characteristics, Curriculum, Implementation.*

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### **I. Introduction**

The teaching profession can be described as the father to all other profession. It is therefore regarded as a noble profession, which serves as an engine room for the viability to all other sector of the nation's economy. Little wonder, why education is described as the bedrock of any nation. Education can also be described amongst others as a tool for developing the full capacities and potentials of human resources, as well as the development of competent work force through the acquisition of practical life skills relevant to the world of work as a viable means of developing sound, intelligible learning societies fit and relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In fact, according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on the following set of beliefs:

- a) Education is an instrument for national development and social change;
- b) Education is vital to the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria;
- c) Education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individuals for self-fulfilment and general development of the society;
- d) Education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of the gender, social status, religion, ethnic background and peculiar individual challenges;
- e) Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society.

For all these laudable goals to be achieved, the teacher who implements the curriculum must come into play. According to Bell-Gam (2004), the teacher is described as the hub of education. No wonder, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), declared that no nation can rise above the quality of its teachers. Obanya (2014) declared that a threat to teacher can automatically lead to a threat to teaching, which eventually becomes a threat to education. Therefore, this paper shall look at the concept of a teacher, teaching, A-Z negative characteristics of a teacher and curriculum implementation vis-a-vis corrupt practices of the teacher.

### **Concept of a Teacher**

A teacher according to Hornby (2010) is a person whose job is teaching, especially in a school. A teacher according to Oloyede (2012) is a professional involved in the act of changing human behaviour and transformation of the society for the better. This definition implies that the teacher must possess knowledge and method of imparting such to bring about positive changes in the learner's attitude/behaviour. The teacher can be described as a strong factor joining the learners and the learning environment. The learning environment consists of infrastructure, instructional materials and other institutional resources that interact to provide learners with appropriate learning experiences. The teacher is in a position to help the learner to understand what knowledge, ideas, skills, attitudes, beliefs and feelings he/she intends to negotiate with the students Bamidele, Ajibade and Oloyede (2010). Thus, the successful implementation of the curriculum and the success of the learner in learning are dependent on the teacher. In fact, the teacher is the key factor that can create conducive teaching/learning environment that will increase the interest of the learner in the learning environment.

The teacher can be described as one and several things at the same time. He has to put on the mantle of a coherent communicator, a just evaluator, a skilled manager, a strict disciplinarian, a healing therapist and a clever team leader, and even an in-loco parentis (a surrogate parent). It is on this premise that a teacher is described by Obanya (2014) in the following imageries:

- I. Flowers that are always colourful and spreading the fragrance of sweetness;
- II. bee who works cooperatively with zeal and enthusiasm;
- III. brooks flowing towards their goal unhindered by the obstacles on the way;
- IV. sun that gives warmth and light;
- V. moon who is cool and calm even in the hours of darkness and trouble;
- VI. mountain that existed a long time but never shrunk nor change with changing season-faithful and strong;
- VII. a wise farmer, who ploughs, tills and manures a hard and infertile field before sowing seeds.

The above description implies that a teacher must possess knowledge, positive attitude and methods of imparting such to bring about positive change in the learners who would be able to adapt to, and participate in a changing society. From the foregoing, it is pertinent to mention that successful teachers are not charismatic, persuasive, and expert presenters, but rather, they provide learners with powerful cognitive and social tasks and teach them how to make productive use of them in order to contribute positively to their society. This is elucidated by Agbo (2000), who maintained that the influence of a teacher is long lasting, because effective teaching makes a society better while ineffective teaching destroys a society. It is pertinent at this juncture to look at the concept of teaching.

### **What is Teaching?**

Teaching is a very complex and significant human endeavour which cuts across all academic disciplines because it is concerned with imparting knowledge or skills. It is the principal means of bringing about the education of individuals. Teaching is defined as the process of guiding the learners through planned activities so that learners may learn from their experiences (Olojode, 2012). Teaching is the concerted sharing of knowledge and experiences, which is usually organized within a discipline and, more generally, the provision of stimulus to the psychological and intellectual growth of a person by another person or artefact.

Teaching is often used erroneously. The term teaching according to Hornby (2010) is the act of showing somebody how to do something... This definition is vague in the sense that different categories of people fit into this definition. In fact, the word teaching embraces several types of processes, behaviour and activities that no single theory can adequately explain. Teaching has been defined as an attempt to help someone acquire or change some skills, attitude, knowledge and idea. Therefore, the work of the teacher is to create a desirable change in the behaviour of the learner (Asaya and Alufohai, 2006). John Dewey, the great philosopher opined that, for one to say teaching has taken place there must be some change in the behaviour of the learner. Teaching thus, describes the various activities undertaken by a more experienced and more knowledgeable person in order to enable others learn. Essentially, teaching consists of setting the stage so that someone can learn. The setting of the stage involves the teacher to influence desirable changes in the behaviour of the learner.

The teacher therefore, amongst his/her role sets the stage and the learners make appropriate responses. For appropriate responses to be made by the students, the teachers' characteristics come into play. According to Dibu-Ojerinde (2010) teachers have the power to control the behaviour of children in their charge. Thus, a teacher with a negative behaviour cannot positively influence the behaviour of the learners. This view was earlier enunciated by Agbo (2000) who maintained that the influence of the teacher is long lasting, because effective teaching makes the society better while ineffective teaching destroys the society.

## **II. A-Z Negative Characteristics of a Teacher**

The teacher has been described as the hub of the educational system. Therefore, to achieve the laudable goals of education in Nigeria, teachers with negative characteristics should be identified and where possible corrected in order to achieve the goals. Majority of teachers are good at what they do, there are far too many who are not as good and are not ready to change. For this group of teachers that are not ready to learn, all they know is that they are teachers and that is all that matters to them. This group of teachers have negative characteristics which can hinder effective learning. Below are some of the negative characteristics which have been highlighted and discussed in alphabetical order.

**a. Assisting Students to Write Exams:** Examination malpractice is the worst kind of corruption that has eaten into the fabrics of the educational sector. Examination malpractice can be described as a dishonest way/manner used by academic personnel (teacher) to help students earn good results or grade. In most cases, students are blamed for examination malpractices; however, teachers are most guilty of this act. It is not possible for examination malpractice to take place if the authorities involve are not corrupt. The school authorities are largely made up of the teachers. Experience has revealed that students are exposed to examination malpractices

right from primary school. At the junior secondary school level (precisely, JSS 3 certificate examination), teachers ask students to pay certain amount of money for examination. This is very common with core subjects like Mathematics and English language. Since this evil act is perpetrated by students, teachers and parents, report has it that teachers approach parents of students to pay money for the success of their students. Thus, the culture of reading by students is destroyed. Little wonder why people talk about falling standard of education when the teachers assists students to write exams from lower basic, through to middle basic, to the upper basic and the senior secondary certificate examination. A child who has been assisted by the teacher from the primary through secondary level will expect the same thing at the university level. Hence, the axiom these days that some Nigerian graduates cannot spell their names or write simple sentences without errors.

**b. Bully:** One of the roles of a good teacher is that of in-loco-parentis. The teacher must play the role of parents to the learners under his control. Thus, he must show love when it should be shown, he must be patient and manifest anger when it is appropriate just like the learners biological parents. This will endear the students to the teacher who will not only love the teacher in return, but also love his subject; the students will do well in that particular subject. However, report has shown that some teachers are bullies. A bully is a person who is cruel to others, especially, those who are weaker or have less power. A teacher who is a bully scares students away from him, and the students will hate him and invariably hate his subject. Once a student's hates a teacher and his subject, such a student will not do well in that particular subject. Thus, bullying students will hinder the effective implementation of the curriculum.

**c. Careless Habits:** There are teachers who display the laissez-faire (careless attitude) towards their jobs. These careless teachers hardly prepare for their lessons. A teacher is supposed to be prepared and organized before going to teach. A teacher who displays careless habits cannot effectively implement the curriculum. A teacher who is careless ends up being a cheat instead of a teacher. According to Torpe and Rabi (2016), teachers' nonchalant attitude to teaching process is tantamount to setting a big trap which many learners would fall into, except with a special therapy that they will be able to come out of such trap. For instance a teacher that has been teaching a particular subject for years and decides not to prepare for his/her lessons relying on the old lesson plan is a cheat.

**d. Divided Attention to Teaching:** A teacher with divided attention towards his career will surely be lost out of the profession (Torpe and Rabi, 2016). A teacher with divided attention will hardly carry out his duties effectively. Thus, such a teacher will live below expectation and this will affect the students learning under him. An example of a teacher with divided attention is a teacher who does a personal business such as buying and selling during school hours.

**e. Egoist:** An egoist is a self-centred person. A teacher who is self-centred cannot succeed in the teaching profession. To be able to handle students effectively, the teacher must remove the attitude of self-centredness. Moreover, a self-centred teacher cannot have a cordial relationship with his fellow members of staff and the students. For effective teaching and learning, there must be a good climate i.e, a good and cordial relationship with staff and students. Students confide in teachers who are good.

**f. Financial Laxity:** A good teacher should be open-minded in solving problems relating to students. A teacher who always looks at the financial benefit of every situation in the school will end up collecting money from students to help them in examination malpractices and other negative vices found in schools. A teacher who is financially loose can do anything to get money. This can hamper the learning of the students.

**g. Gloomy:** Some teachers are in the teaching profession because of lack of jobs. For this group of teachers, they are usually sad and without hope. A man with an unhappy state of mind will not effectively implement the curriculum as he will transfer his state of mind to his job.

**h. Hollowness:** For a teacher to be able to effectively implement the school curriculum, such a teacher must be knowledgeable, both in his subject area and in handling the students. A good teacher is supposed to have good knowledge of the subject he or she specializes in. He must also have a good knowledge of his or her students. A teacher that is empty, that is, not academically strong will end up cheating rather than teaching the students. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), you cannot give what you do not have. It is only what you have you can give.

**i. Inducement in Kind:** In the school system, teachers who are supposed to handle students are there tormenting and harassing innocent students. Sexual harassment abounds in all levels of the educational system. It is however, rampant at the university level. This, to a large extent is a corruption in education. A student can

be given a score he or she did not merit because such a student has paid in kind. To a large extent, this act hinders the effective implementation of the curriculum.

**j. Janus-Faced:** Literally, the Janus is the Roman god of gates and doorways; having two faces facing the opposite directions. Thus, a teacher who is not totally committed to his job and engages in activities like businesses, politics etc, stands a chance of not being effective. This type of teacher who is doubled-minded will never be fully prepared for academic activities.

**k. Know-All:** Learning should be learner centred. One of the best approaches to teaching is to involve the learners in the learning activities while the teacher serves as a guide in making the learning a success. There are teachers who dominate the entire teaching learning process. This group of teachers are regarded as 'know-all'. A teaching learning process that is dominated by the teacher is prone to students learning and forgetting. Therefore, an effective teacher should always cultivate knowledge in the learners rather than impacting knowledge.

**l. Lazy Attitude:** There is a group of teachers who lack passion and therefore, lost their focus and energy long ago. They do not prepare for their lessons. They do not enhance themselves; thus, they do not know anything new. Therefore, their teaching pattern has not changed in decades. To this group of teachers, it is 'as it was in the beginning, so ever shall it be'. A lazy teacher can hardly complete his/her syllabus. A syllabus is simply a lot of subjects, topics, texts etc included in the course of study. It is seen in Asaya and Alufohai (2006) to consist of a description of what subject matter or content to be taught or covered in each of the disciplines (Mathematics, English Language, Economics etc). Thus, a syllabus can be described as a brief outline of the task to be mastered or covered in a subject. It therefore, serves as a guide to the teachers and students as to the topics to be covered within a certain period. However, because of the lazy, nonchalant and ill-prepared attitude of some teachers, the syllabus is hardly covered by them thereby cheating the students. A teacher who goes into the class to tell stories outside the topic or concept ends up not completing the syllabus. Teachers who tell irrelevant stories to while away the time are 'cheaters', not teachers.

**m. Moving from the Unknown to the Known:** The teaching process is a gradual process which starts gradually from what the students already know (it could be within or outside the classroom). Thus, educators have often declared that teaching must move from the known to the unknown or from simple to complex. A teacher who therefore, moves from the unknown to the known will end up confusing the students as they will perceive the subject or topic as very difficult. This will hinder the effective implementation of the curriculum as majority of the students will find it difficult to learn.

**n. Naughty:** A badly behaved teacher will not be loved by students. It has been discovered that students tend to respect teachers who respect them, as respect is reciprocal. Experience has shown that students hardly do well in the subjects they do not like the teachers. A teacher who is rude or badly behaved will certainly have problems effectively implementing the curriculum as the students will transfer their hatred for him to his subject.

**o. Out-wit Display:** Some teachers display out-wit behaviour in their classrooms. A teacher who organizes tutorials for his personal gains is a perfect example of a teacher with out-wit behaviour. Most of these tutorials are motivated by the gains to be derived from them. This group of teachers will not engage the students properly during the normal school hours, but will however convince parents to allow their students stay for tutorials organized by them for monetary gains. Thus, the students end up paying the normal fee and paying for the tutorials organized by their teachers. However, students whose parents are unable to pay for such tutorials end up suffering from the greed of this group of teachers. In other words, such students might not do well in such a teacher's subject. This to a large extent can hamper the effective implementation of the curriculum.

**p. Puerile Behaviour:** To be puerile is to be silly or childish. Some teachers exhibit puerile behaviour over issues exhibited by students. A teacher with puerile behaviour who is supposed to serve as a guide will end up frustrating/misguiding the students. A teacher with a childish behaviour for instance will not be able to effectively guide a student with one need or the other as the saying goes, "you cannot give what you do not have". One of the roles of an effective teacher is that of an in-loco parentis. In other words, the teacher acts as parents surrogate for the students and they confide in him because he meets their psychological needs. An effective teacher is a clever team leader and a healing therapist.

**q. Questionable Character:** A teacher is a model to his/her students. Therefore, students tend to copy the character of their teachers. A teacher who openly lies or smokes for instance, is indirectly teaching the students terrible ideas that they may end up practising. Thus, teachers with questionable characters should not be allowed to teach as students often see their teachers as role models.

**r. Rigidity of Teachers:** Sherin (2000) provides a conceptual framework for understanding what effective teachers actually do in the process of change. In Sherin's formulation, learning in the act of teaching occurs as teachers negotiate among three areas, "their content knowledge, i.e. their understanding of the subject matter, views of the curriculum materials and knowledge of students' learning". Effective teachers draw on the wealth of established routines for thinking about and teaching particular subject matter. Thus, rather than just using these familiar practices, effective teachers apply their knowledge flexibly (Hattie, 2002). Specifically, they adapt and modify these familiar practices and in turn, these practices initiate the development of new pedagogical routines and new understanding of domains. Sherin (2002) refers to these content knowledge complexes as "pieces of Subject Matter Knowledge" (SMK) and "Pedagogical Content Knowledge" (PCK). These are accessed together repeatedly during instruction and become gradually connected. Therefore, a teacher must be able to apply different strategies/techniques to effectively cultivate knowledge in the learners.

**s. Stagnation:** Knowledge is not static and this being the case, teachers are supposed to enhance themselves through training from time to time in order to be able to meet up with the knowledge explosion. Thus, a teacher who is stagnated cannot effectively disseminate knowledge effectively.

**t. Threat to Cover Inadequacy:** These are teachers who issue threats on students in order to cover their shortcomings. For instance, a teacher that insults students when asked question has some skeleton he/she is covering.

**u. Unqualified Teachers:** A teacher who has not done training in teacher education cannot have a good idea of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). In Grossman's (1990) model, PCK is given a structure containing overarching idea of teaching, knowledge of students' conception and difficulties, knowledge of curriculum and knowledge of strategies and representations. Highly professional teachers are more likely to use a range of teaching strategies and interactive style that respond to students' needs and learning styles (Darling-Hammond and Youngs, 2002). From the foregoing, it is clear that qualified teachers are better than unqualified teachers who are found in our schools.

**v. Vindictive Attitude:** The role of a teacher in the classroom includes planning, organizing, directing, leading, controlling, reporting, In-loco-parentis among others. Therefore, a teacher that is vindictive in nature cannot effectively play these roles, especially when he/she has been offended by a particular group of students. Students are by nature supposed to be moulded all round, morally, socially and otherwise.

**w. Waste of Students Time:** One of the characteristics of a bad teacher is that of wasting the time of students. This teacher goes into the classroom and tells the students stories that are not related to the topic of the lesson. Though, some of the students (weak students) enjoy such teachers, the intelligent ones do not.

**x. X-rated:** Literally, x-rated is a film or movie that people under 18 years of age are not allowed to see because it contains sex and violence. A teacher acts as parent surrogate to the pupils and they confide in him/her because he/she meets their psychological needs. However, experiences have shown that some teachers capitalize on this role and use it as an opportunity to have sexual/canal knowledge of their students. This attitude destroys the life of the unfortunate child. Teachers who violate their students ought not to be in the noble profession of teaching.

**y. Yell:** To yell means to shout loudly either because you are angry, in pain or excited. Some teachers yell at students in the classroom when they are angry. This scares the students away from such teachers. This can automatically lead to hating the teacher and eventually the subject the teacher is teaching. An effective teacher should have self-control in dealing with his students, colleagues, those in authority and even outsiders because to some extent, he is an image maker of the school.

**z. Zombie-Like-Attitude:** A zombie is somebody without feelings or interest in what is happening around him/her. A teacher who is not happy being a teacher cannot effectively perform his/her role as a teacher. Some people are in the classroom because they could not get any other job. This group of people exhibit the

zombie-like-attitude and thus, do not possess endearing humanitarian qualities like perseverance, physical energy, sincerity, self-control, humour etc.

### **Concept of Curriculum Implementation**

Curriculum implementation refers to the act of working out the plans and suggestions that have been made by curriculum specialist or subject experts in a classroom or school setting. According to Mezieobi (2013), curriculum implementation is putting a plan, scheme, decision, proposal, intention, agreement, policy or idea into effect. According to Ehindero (2010), it is the translation of curriculum proposal into classroom realities through teaching and instructional strategies. He further reiterated that the teaching and instructional strategies require considerable professional expertise, ingenuity and imaginations from the teacher. Thus, in line with Torpev and Rabi (2016), however lofty a plan is, if not properly executed, its loftiness will not be tenable. This is the situation of the education in Nigeria today which has led to the fall in the standard of the nation's education. It is therefore, pertinent to declare that the teacher's characteristics which make up the teacher, places him at the central point of the implementation of the curriculum. It is in line with this view that Bell-Gam (2004) described the teacher as the hub of the curriculum. It is against this background that Banabas (2007) declared that if the characteristics of teachers are not enhanced through effective teacher preparatory programme, education will be doomed and technological and scientific dreams of the nation will remain a mirage. This is reiterated by Yunusa (2002) who opined that the classroom teacher forms the cornerstone in the curriculum implementation and the driving force that ensures that a curriculum is implemented according to specification.

Going by the above views and observations, it is clear that the curriculum cannot be properly implemented without the help of a good teacher whose characteristics will positively influence the students and in turn the standard of education.

### **How Teachers' Negative Characteristics Affects Curriculum Implementation**

The word characteristics, according to Hornby (2010) is derived from character which is a strong personal quality such as the ability to effectively handle difficult situation. The characteristics of a teacher therefore, play an important role in the success or failure of the implementation of the curriculum. According to Darling-Hammond (2002), teachers' effectiveness is tied to teachers' personal characteristics. This assertion was further reiterated by Okoye, Momoh and Aigbomian (2008) who declared that the quality of teachers in any educational system determines to a large extent the quality of the system itself. Therefore, the characteristics and disposition of the teacher will go a long way to mar or make the students achievements.

The ability of the teacher to arouse the interest of the learner to respond to issues around him depends on a large extent to his characteristics. It has been asserted that learning occurs as a result of what the teacher does to the students (John and Joseph, 2011). Teachers' characteristics are major factors which help a teacher to expose the learners to issues that will enable them discover things by themselves. Thus, a teacher with negative characteristics will also expose the learner to negative issues and ways of life which will automatically destroy the learners' tomorrow and the nation at large. It is what one has that he/she gives, it is impossible to give what one does not have. This view is corroborated by Utulu (2007) who maintained that implementation of the school curriculum depends on the teacher's intellectual capability, commitment and right attitude to work. Furthermore, Asuquo and Igbokwe (2001) declared that commitment and preparedness for duty determines to a very large extent the success and failure of educational goals. Teachers' characteristics according to Torpev and Rabi (2016) are therefore, a cornerstone in the viable implementation of the school curriculum. The foregoing observations of the scholars/researchers point to the fact that teachers' negative characteristics will definitely mar the effective implementation for the achievement of education in Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **III. Conclusion**

Teachers' characteristics are a sine qua non to the achievement of any child in any subject area. Thus, the teacher has an important role to play in the teaching/learning process. The ability of a learner to perform is increased by the presence of the teacher whose task is to guide the students in the right direction. Therefore, a teacher who is negatively disposed to his duty as a result of his negative characteristics will not effectively implement the school curriculum and this will negatively influence the achievement of the students.

#### **Recommendations**

Consequently, the following recommendations would assist in the effective implementation of the curriculum. They include;

- 1) Emphasis should be laid on basic professional qualification to teaching appointment. In other words, concerted efforts should be made by the government in the appointment of qualified teachers whose hands lie the future of the nation tomorrow leaders.

- 2) Professionalization of teaching should be strictly applied. Therefore, a body should be set up to monitor strict adherence, particularly, with the influx of private schools that employ anybody that can stand on two legs irrespective of the person's qualification.  
As part of the criteria for the appointment of teachers, applicant should be subjected to clinical test to determine their psychological relevance and balance. This is necessary because they will be saddled with the responsibility of taking care of the young ones. Such test should continue at determined intervals while on the job.
- 3) Teachers' remuneration should be reviewed. Since several other professions are dependent on the teaching profession, their remuneration should be the 'highest' in the land. When this is done, teachers will no longer out-wit parents nor have the divided attention on their duties.
- 4) Regular training programmes and retraining should be organized to sharpen the skills of teachers to ensure better performance. These training and retraining should be in the form of conferences, seminars, workshops which should be organized periodically by the state, minister of education, post primary education board etc.

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