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REBRANDING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' STATUS AS A PANACEA TO ACHIEVING FUNCTIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The effect of the present global economic factors facing the Nigerian nation will no doubt, make any right thinking citizen to be more reasonable, to nurture the process of discovery; to develop the class of education that will serve the supply of trained and authentic workforce to develop the economy. Functional education does not entail expertise in abstract and theoretical knowledge of a discipline, rather a selection of knowledge that is concrete, usable and which can be translated into action. Vocational education, no doubt, meets this standard, but the way and manner this class of education and her beneficiaries are regarded in Nigeria, leaves a lot to be desired. The present study was designed to determine the strategies for rebranding vocational education teachers as a panacea to achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria. A survey design was adopted. Two research questions and two hypotheses tested at 0.05% level of significance guided the study. The population for the study consists of 120 vocational education teachers. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test statistic was employed to test the null hypotheses. The findings of the study among others revealed that poor management of vocational education teachers leads to functional vocational education disdain. It was recommended that rebranding vocational education teachers through adequate remuneration, enhanced training and retraining, proper motivation and management of vocational education teachers, among others, would facilitate functional vocational education to develop Nigerian economy.

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INTRODUCTION

Education according to Ocho (2006), is any knowledge gained in such places as home, school, church, mosque, or anywhere, which facilitates positive change in behaviour. This change in behaviour can only be positive when the knowledge gained is functional. The functionality of knowledge is seen in the beneficiary when he or she serves as an agent for unlocking the socio-political, economic and scientific development of the nation. Balogun (2010) opined, education is regarded as functional when the beneficiaries become the light without which the world would be in darkness. In the views of Akindutire and Ekundayo (2012), functional education is the basis of scientific and technological breakthroughs, and the basis of modernity, which have made all nations of the world accord immense priority to it, even though the levels of

priority range varies from one country to another. Functional education is a selection of knowledge that is concrete, practical and usable, and which can translate into action by transforming the beneficiaries to engineer and consolidate not only the economic well being of self, but that of the entire nation. One aspect of education that meets the criteria of functional education is vocational education. According to United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2005), vocational education is that aspect of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. It is that class of education which keeps food on the table as a reward for efficient use of the head, heart and hands, irrespective of the economic disposition of the nation in terms of paid employment. Therefore, the functionality of vocational education as a programme of studies is measured by the extent it develops in the

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beneficiary, the instinct of wealth creation, employment generation, productivity, creativity, and reorientate her values and ideals for positive economic transformation. Two factors are usually considered prime (the curriculum and the implementer – the teacher) in evaluating the potency of any programme of studies. The National Policy on Education (2013), positioned to revise and update the 2007 draft edition of the policy, spelt out the curriculum ideals for achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria. The policy specified the goals of technical and vocational education to include, provision of trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business, particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels; provision of technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and to give training and impact the necessary skills to individuals for self reliance economically.

It went further to advocate the establishment of Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs), which will offer a variety of end users especially graduates of senior secondary schools who did not make up to five credits and may therefore not continue to tertiary education, an education opportunity to think creatively and transform knowledge through technological processes into wealth at broader economic base. This is a sound curriculum policy and which can transform the economy of any nation to an enviable height. But, the functionality of this programme of studies is dependent on the competency and dedication of the implementer, the teacher. According to Ibukun (2004), the quality of human resources in the form of teachers often dictates the extent of the effectiveness of educational programmes. Also, Akindutire and Ekundayo (2012) observed, in order to achieve any socio-political, economic and scientific development in a country, there is the dire need for qualified teachers who are equipped with the desired knowledge, skills, competence and commitment, and who are empowered to perform their tasks professionally.

Evidence abound that developed nations and rapid growing economies do not joke with their teachers since they are the movers of the economy. Akinduyo (2014) stated that, developed countries of the world often terrace their roots of success in all sectors to the quality of their teaching profession. Akinduyo sees teaching as the axon moving education impulse to deliver growth, development and knowledge. Teaching is a social function, an act of guiding and imparting knowledge in the taught by a more knowledgeable and experienced personnel, the teacher. Because teaching is a social function, the teacher must himself, have an enviable viable social standing in other to perform competently. It is this social standing that is being referred to as status or teacher social status. Status according to Chambers 21st Century Dictionary (2004), is rank or position in relation to others within the society. A high degree or level of importance and prestige. Thus, teachers status refer to their ranking, the level of importance or prestige accorded them by the society, their social standing or position more so in comparison with others in other societal esteemed professions. Njoku (2011:136) adduced, the picture of the status of the teacher can be figured out from the following questions: “How do people feel generally when the term teaching is mentioned in comparison with how they feel when

the three other professions namely, medicine, law and engineering are mentioned? To what extent would parents wish their children become teachers and to what extent would they wish them study other professions? To what extent are teachers accorded recognition in the midst of members of other professions?.”The answers to these questions are clear to sane Nigerian mind, and measures the level of prestige accorded teachers in Nigerian context. Teaching and teachers in Nigeria is regarded as a mere activity, occupation and vocation for academic losers. Some people even refer to teachers as substitutes on the bench of life, who are left with no option than to proceed and get employed into the teaching profession (Akinduyo, 2014). This position is even worse with the vocational education teachers whom in Nigeria context, their programme of studies are regarded as courses for the ‘never-do-wells’. Ehusani (2002) reported that, Nigerian schools are today producing graduates of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary institutions who cannot compete on equal terms with their counterparts trained elsewhere, but more painful is that education is gradually losing its pride of place due to the low status of honour and poor pride of place accorded teachers and teaching profession in Nigeria. Teachers and teaching in Nigeria are so much despised and derided that the best brains who in the past are retained in the classroom seek jobs elsewhere, while those already in the job sees it as a waiting ground, such that when once they find a better job, they quit. The terrible damage on the status of teachers according to Ehusani (2002) was done when Nigerian government in a hurry to find teachers to match the exploding students population in our Primary schools (during UPE), started crash programme Grade II teacher training colleges that admitted dropouts and failures, and trained them within two years to become teachers of our children. At present, teachers are still being trained in crash programmes, sandwich and part-time programmes, where a 3 (three) to 4 (four) months programme are crashed in few weeks.

It is pertinent to note that, the influx of teachers in the teaching profession with less or no regard to actual training and quality, in an attempt to meet the upsurge of students then with UPE introduction, and now with the present population explosion and far reaching awareness on education as a prime legacy each parent can leave for the children, partly caused the damage on teachers status. But, the more devastating damage is experienced with the underdog treatment and welfare package of teachers. Lack of control on entry making teaching all-comers affair, politicization of education in the bid to boost the established private schools of politicians, lack of legal recognition of teachers and freedom of practice, all contribute to the shabby treatment of teachers. Thus, the present day Nigerian teacher ought to be rebranded as a means of resuscitating the former traditional pride, dignity and status of honour of teachers and the teaching profession. Rebranding entails changing the corporate image, the creation of a new look and feeling, or the development of a new differentiated identity in the minds of the former users of a product or service. Rebranding is seen necessary when a product is failing to reach the targeted customers expectation, or when the target customers ignore or feel unaware of the product. With the foregoing discussion, there is no gain saying the fact, that teachers generally and vocational education teachers in particular needed to be rebranded. The status of vocational

education teachers has long been in disrepute, disregarded and ignored by the society and needed to be rebranded. This work is timely especially as the present state of the Nigerian nation presents the fact that 'there are works everywhere but there are no more jobs.' Portraying the fact that the only academic discipline that will resuscitate Nigerian ailing economy especially in the current unemployment crises is that which would make beneficiaries employment creators than job seekers - functional education. The first step to achieving functional education is by placing the needs of the implementers of the academic programme, the teachers, as a priority. Placing vocational education teachers needs as a priority entails repositioning their status to an enviable level. The scope of the study is delimited to suggesting strategies for rebranding vocational teachers to achieve functional vocational education.

This work derives its importance from the theory of relative deprivation as propounded by Robert K. Marton in 1938. The theory states, that individuals experience discontent when being deprived of something to which one believes oneself to be entitled. It allows an objective comparison between the situation of the individual or group, compared to the rest of the society. This theory is significant to this work as it brings to the fore that, teachers dissatisfaction may not necessarily mean that her status is poor in itself but in comparison with other supposed equal or alike or even lesser professions. After all, the teacher taught the doctor, the engineer, the lawyer, even the politician of Nigerian context, thus should not just be compared with them, but must be positioned higher both in status and in social standing.

Statement of the Problem

Teaching generally in Nigeria has been relegated to mere activity, occupation and vocation for the academic losers. Akinduyo (2014) posit that, in Nigeria, teachers are poorly motivated and less paid, and this has made the profession replete with some features of other occupations that make life worth living for practitioners. Majasan (1995) emphasized that, other members of the society regard teaching profession with contempt, feeling that it is a refuse camp for mediocre; people who are industrious but unimaginative; people with average drive for power, average ambition and escapism. These views and positions can be experienced in Nigerian tertiary institutions, in the way and manner other students and lecturers of the assumed esteemed professions sees, treats and places one who is in education faculty. This position has been aggravated to the point that some Provosts discriminate against education certificates in education bias tertiary institutions, the Colleges of Education. Take for instance, where one with Masters Degree in Science Education is seen not qualified for promotion nor competent to handle courses in her area of discipline in a College of Education because his/her Master Degree is Education bias. This is an insult, an aberration, more so when such treatment is meted to one in an academic institution where education as a discipline should be regarded as core. This goes to show the status accorded teachers, teaching profession and even their academic programme and certificates in Nigeria. Erick Hoyle (1969) in Njoku (2011) opined, that the status of the individual teacher, his self esteem, and the manner in which he performs his role are to

some extent, dependent upon the status accorded teaching profession in that society. Little wonder, teachers and teaching profession had lost its prestige in Nigerian society. This status loss is even worse with the vocational education teachers whom even their programme is derided by the society. This work aims at closing the gap in literature by seeking ways of keeping teachers in general, and vocational education teachers in particular, back in track. The work determined ways of rebranding vocational education teachers' status in order to achieve functional vocational education in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- What are the challenges associated with vocational teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria?
- What are the strategies to be adopted to rebrand vocational teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of staff from the higher institutions in southern states of Nigeria and those from the north on the challenges associated with vocational teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria.

H0₂: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of staff from the higher institutions in southern states of Nigeria and those from the north on the strategies to be adopted to rebrand vocational education teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria.

Research Method and Procedure

Design

The researcher employed a survey research design. Survey research design was considered appropriate since opinions and thoughts of a representative group were sought with a predetermined set of questions and their responses used to describe the attitude of the population.

Population

The population for the study is 180 respondents comprising 5 lecturers each from 6 tertiary institutions (2 each of University, Polytechnic and Colleges of Education), selected from each of the 6 geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

Instrument

Structured questionnaire was used as instrument to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was structured in line with the research questions. The instrument consists of 3 (three) sections: section A sought information on the personal data of respondents. This section covers 4 (four) items, items 1 – 4. Section B deals with Research Question 1, which consists

of 13 items that were used to determine the challenges associated with vocational teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria. Section C deals with research question 2, the section consists of 12 items that were used to determine the strategies to be adopted to rebrand vocational education teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria. A 5 (five) point rating scale of strongly agree 5, agree 4, undecided 3, disagree 2 and strongly disagree 1, was used. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the two research questions, and t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05% level of significance. The benchmark for the acceptance value is 3.50 and above. Any item with mean of 3.50 and above was accepted while any item with mean of 3.49 and below was not accepted as a factor. The instrument was validated for content and face validity by three experts. The validated instrument was trial tested using Cronbach alpha and which gave 0.81 internal consistency coefficient level.

Method of Data Collection

The assistance of two College of Education lecturers in each of the 6 geopolitical zone was used in data collection. Through the help of these lecturers 96% return of completed questionnaire was achieved. Thus, 172 instead of 180 instruments were used for the analyses.

Findings

Data were analyzed and results presented in the tables below:

Research Question 1

1. What are the challenges associated with vocational teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses 1

H0₁: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of staff from the higher institutions in southern states of Nigeria and those from the north on the challenges associated with vocational teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria.

Table 1 shows that respondents agreed that 10 out of the 13 items listed are challenges associated with vocational education teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria. These challenges include: poor social status of vocational education teachers in our society; poor working environment of vocational education teachers; poor motivation of students and teachers; low wages and remuneration of vocational education teachers; lack of positive self esteem; societal general disregard for vocational education programme; general disregard of vocational teachers by the society; porous entry of non vocational education professionals as vocational educators; poor professional development of vocational education teachers and absence of vocational education teachers academy. The result also indicated that respondents disagree

with items 1, 2 and 11 as constituting challenges associated with vocational teachers' status. On hypotheses testing, items 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 had their calculated significant (2-tailed) values greater than 0.05; implying that there is no significant mean difference between the responses of teachers from the northern institutions of higher learning and their counterparts from the south regarding the status challenges deterring vocational education teachers from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria. Items 3, 5, 6, 7, and 10 had their calculated significant (2-tailed) values less than 0.05, indicating that there was a significant mean difference in the opinion of northern teachers and those from the south regarding those items as constituting status challenges for vocational education teachers.

Research Question 2

1. What are the strategies to be adopted to rebrand vocational teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses 2

H0₂: There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of staff from the higher institutions in southern states of Nigeria and those from the north on the strategies to be adopted to rebrand vocational education teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria.

The data for answering research question two and testing hypothesis two (H0₂) are presented in Table 2 below. Table 2 disclosed that the respondents agreed with items 1 to 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 as potent means of rebranding vocational education teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria. The implication is that, firm control on entry and appointment of vocational educators; institution of public enlightenment campaign to orientate the society of the importance of vocational education; institution of special in-service training scheme and programme that will make vocational teachers adaptable to the global changing environment; providing vocational education teachers with internship programmes upon graduation; instituting national merit awards and other national honours for deserving vocational educators; and institution of special salary structure for vocational education teachers were regarded as strategies to be adopted for rebranding vocational education teachers to achieve functional vocational education in Nigeria. other strategies include, naming schools, streets and other public places after deserving retired and dead vocational educators; providing conducive office and learning environment for teaching and learning of vocational courses; providing centres of excellence in vocational institutions in Nigeria with state of the arts facilities; and providing a scheme for best vocational teacher of the year award in all states of the federation. The result of the hypotheses as tested shows that 5 out of the 12 items, items 3, 5, 6, 9 and 12 had its calculated significant (2-tailed) values greater than 0.05. The meaning is that there was no significant mean difference between the responses of the northern teachers and that of their counterparts in the south regarding the strategies to be adopted to rebrand vocational education teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education for those items.

Table 1. Mean ratings and t-test statistics of the responses of staff from southern states and those from northern states on the challenges associated with vocational teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria (N = 172)

SN	Challenges associated with vocational education teachers' status include:	X _N	X _S	X _G	t-cal	Sig.(2-tailed)	Remarks	RQ	H0
1.	Low moral and psyche of vocational education teachers	3.22	3.20	3.21	0.10	0.92	D		NS
2.	Lack of true professionalism of teachers	3.46	3.52	3.49	-0.30	0.76	D		NS
3.	Poor social status of vocational education teachers in our society	4.41	4.18	4.28	2.15	0.03	A		S
4.	Poor working environment of vocational education teachers	4.72	4.83	4.77	-1.56	0.12	A		NS
5.	Poor motivation of students and teachers	5.00	4.86	4.93	3.76	0.00	A		S
6.	Low wages and remuneration of vocational education teachers	5.00	4.74	4.87	4.31	0.00	A		S
7.	Lack of positive self esteem	4.69	4.34	4.52	3.62	0.00	A		S
8.	Societal general disregard for vocational education programme	4.46	4.49	4.45	-0.28	0.77	A		NS
9.	General disregard of vocational teachers by the society	3.98	3.69	3.84	1.65	0.10	A		NS
10.	Porous entry of non vocational education professionals as vocational educators	4.08	4.40	4.24	-2.29	0.02	A		S
11.	Lack of vocational educational teachers' commitment to the profession	2.61	2.18	2.40	1.81	0.07	D		NS
12.	Poor professional development of vocational education teachers	3.98	4.20	4.08	-1.31	0.19	A		NS
13.	Absence of vocational education teachers academy	4.35	4.21	4.28	1.26	0.21	A		NS

Key: X_S = Mean of Staff from South; X_N = Mean of Staff from North; X_G = Overall Grand Mean; A = Agreed; N = Number of Respondents; Level of Sig. = 0.05; S* = Significant; NS = Not Significant.

Table 2. Mean ratings and t-test statistics of the responses of staff from southern states and those from northern states on the strategies to be adopted to rebrand vocational education teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria (N = 172)

SN	Strategies for rebranding vocational education teachers' status include:	X _N	X _S	X _G	t-cal	Sig.(2-tailed)	Remarks	RQ	H0
1.	Firm control on entry and appointment of vocational educators	4.68	4.34	4.51	3.49	0.00	A		S
2.	Institution of public enlightenment campaign to orientate the society of the importance of vocational education	4.94	4.84	4.90	2.48	0.03	A		S
3.	Institution of special in-service training scheme and programme that will make vocational teachers adaptable to the global changing environment	3.62	3.91	3.77	-1.66	0.10	A		NS
4.	Providing vocational education teachers with internship programmes upon graduation	4.72	4.19	4.41	4.53	0.00	A		S
5.	Instituting national merit awards and other national honours for deserving vocational educators	4.18	4.32	4.26	-1.17	0.24	A		NS
6.	Encouraging the spirit of enquiry and creativity in vocational educators	2.25	2.50	2.37	-1.05	0.30	D		NS
7.	Institution of special salary structure for vocational education teachers.	5.00	4.84	4.92	3.55	0.00	A		S
8.	Naming schools, streets and other public places after deserving retired and dead vocational educators	5.00	4.20	4.60	7.87	0.00	A		S
9.	Launching a new campaign towards cleaning-up non professional vocational educators	3.30	3.61	3.45	-1.68	0.09	D		NS
10.	Providing conducive office and learning environment for teaching and learning of vocational courses	3.80	3.29	3.60	2.86	0.01	A		S
11.	Providing centres of excellence in vocational institutions in Nigeria with state of the arts facilities	4.87	5.00	4.94	-3.49	0.00	A		S
12.	Providing a scheme for best vocational teacher of the year award in all states of the federation	4.22	4.21	4.22	0.05	0.96	A		NS

Key: X_S = Mean of Staff from South; X_N = Mean of Staff from North; X_G = Overall Grand Mean; A = Agreed; N = Number of Respondents; Level of Sig. = 0.05; S* = Significant; NS = Not Significant.

However, there was significant mean difference in their responses in 7 items, items 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, and 11 whose calculated significant (2-tailed) values were less than 0.05.

Summary of Findings

The following findings emerged from the study and analysis of the data collected.

The challenges associated with vocational teachers' status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education include:

- poor social status of vocational education teachers in our society;
- poor working environment of vocational education teachers;

- poor motivation of students and teachers;
- low wages and remuneration of vocational education teachers;
- lack of positive self esteem;
- societal general disregard for vocational education programme;
- general disregard of vocational teachers by the society;
- porous entry of non vocational education professionals as vocational educators;
- poor professional development of vocational education teachers; and
- absence of vocational education teachers academy.

The strategies to be adopted for rebranding vocational education teachers' status to facilitate the achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria include:

- Firm control on entry and appointment of vocational educators;
- Institution of public enlightenment campaign to orientate the society of the importance of vocational education;
- Institution of special in-service training scheme and programme that will make vocational teachers adaptable to the global changing environment;
- Providing vocational education teachers with internship programmes upon graduation;
- Instituting national merit awards and other national honours for deserving vocational educators;
- Institution of special salary structure for vocational education teachers;
- Naming schools, streets and other public places after deserving retired and dead vocational educators;
- Providing conducive office and learning environment for teaching and learning of vocational courses;
- Providing centres of excellence in vocational institutions in Nigeria with state of the arts facilities; and
- Providing a scheme for best vocational teacher of the year award in all states of the federation.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study are substantiated by some past research works of researchers in related areas. The data presented in table 1 providing answers to research question 1 and hypotheses 1 agreed that challenges associated with vocational teachers' education status which deter them from achieving functional vocational education include: poor social status of vocational education teachers in our society; poor working environment of vocational education teachers; poor motivation of students and teachers; low wages and remuneration of vocational education teachers; lack of positive self esteem; societal general disregard for vocational education programme; general disregard of vocational teachers by the society; porous entry of non vocational education professionals as vocational educators; poor professional development of vocational education teachers and absence of vocational education teachers academy.

The present findings are in agreement with the view of Akinduyo (2014) who outlined the problems that have deprofessionalised teaching and teachers to include: low wages, bad motivation and poor welfare, irregular self esteem of teachers, absence of education professional academy, lack of professional inservice trainings, porous entry qualifications and poor working environment. Also, Ehusani (2002) who emphasized that teachers' status challenges cannot be ostracized from the facts that teachers are the least remunerated workers in Nigeria, making them become notorious for poverty such that the noble profession no longer attract first class graduates from our universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. Ehusani further stated that it is unusual today for a young graduate to wish to make a career out of teaching, rather would only pick up the chalk as a last resort, when all efforts to secure other jobs fail. Table 1 shows also that 8 out of the 13 items or 63%, had their calculated significant (2-tailed) values greater than 0.05. This implies that

there was no significant mean difference in the response of the majority of the respondents on the challenges associated with teachers' status which threaten their achievement of functional vocational education in Nigeria.

The findings of the study in Table 2 revealed that firm control on entry and appointment of vocational educators; institution of public enlightenment campaign to orientate the society of the importance of vocational education; institution of special in-service training scheme and programme that will make vocational teachers adaptable to the global changing environment; providing vocational education teachers with internship programmes upon graduation; instituting national merit awards and other national honours for deserving vocational educators; and institution of special salary structure for vocational education teachers are strategies for rebranding vocational education teachers' status to achieve functional vocational education in Nigeria. Other strategies include, naming schools, streets and other public places after deserving retired and dead vocational educators; providing conducive office and learning environment for teaching and learning of vocational courses; providing centres of excellence in vocational institutions in Nigeria with state of the arts facilities; and providing a scheme for best vocational teacher of the year award in all states of the federation. These results aligns with the views of Okolocha (2012), Nwachi (1991) in Akinduyo (2014), and Ehusani (2002). Okolocha observed that encouraging continuing vocational technical education teachers promotion and proper coordination of education industry and work environment, investing in quality vocational education programme and training, and ensuring intake of high quality and appropriately skilled vocational educators would go a long way in re-instating vocational teachers' status. Nwachi (1991) in Akinduyo in supporting the findings of the present study affirms, adherence to teaching code of conduct and ethics, controlled entrance into the teaching profession and certification based on competency are requisite to improving teaching and teachers image in Nigeria. while Ehusani adduced that, naming schools and colleges, roads and public places after retired and dead teachers, launching a new campaign towards cleaning-up and restoring the lost glory of the traditionally revered teachers title by improving on their general welfare would improve teachers' status and commitment to duty.

The hypotheses testing as shown in table 2 indicates that majority of respondents, 7 out of 12 or 58%, had their calculated significant (2-tailed) values less than 0.05, implying a significant mean difference between the responses of vocational teachers in the north from that of their counterparts from the south. This result simply attests to the decisive and extreme nature of the northerners on issues they believe in more than their counterparts from the south who often are undecided, always thinking they are being wise.

Conclusion

Given the different views expressed by vocational teachers in tertiary institutions from both the northern and southern parts of Nigeria on challenges associated with teachers' status, it is worthwhile to note that the major problems behind poor functional vocational education delivery in Nigeria is the

general societal poor status placement of teachers in general and vocational education teachers in particular. The present study has made it crystal clear that rebranding vocational teachers' status would go a long way to achieving functional vocational education in Nigeria. Functional vocational education will rebrand the present Nigerian poor employment status for improved national development.

Recommendations

In line with the findings and conclusion made, the researcher recommends as follows:

- All and sundry must intensify enlightenment campaign programme to change the already poor construed mindset of Nigerians on the status and importance of vocational education and vocational teachers.
- Teachers 'assumed' professionalism must be strengthened so that teaching will no more be seen as all-comers affair. Teachers professionalism should be strengthened to involve controlled entry and training in teachers' academy, high standard of initial training and continuous updating of teachers through refresher courses, workshops and conferences, and networking with others.
- Teachers Academy should be established, at least one in every geo-political zones of the country for teachers one year internship and certification for practice. Any teacher who did not pass through this Academy must not be allowed to practice, while teachers who flout the rules, regulations and code of conduct of the teaching profession must have their certificate of practice withdrawn.
- Ministry of education should change the long downgrading promotional status of polytechnics and colleges of education lectures cadre of chief and principal lecturers. Chief is a traditional title while principal is the status position of secondary school head teachers and does not have a place in tertiary institutions' academic cadre. The titles of chief and principal lecturers ought to be changed to Professors and associate professors to represent the academic status of lecturers, not traditionalists or secondary school heads.
- General teachers' welfare (promotion as and at when due, state of the arts office/office facilities and staff residential quarters, car, wardrobe and furniture allowances, and adequate remuneration to compare that of the oil

companies) must be fixed, supported by enabling laws to ensure the rebranding of Nigerian teachers' status to achieve functional vocational education in Nigeria.

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