



Threat of Perceived Stereotype on Behaviour Related to Choice of and Practices in Teaching as a Career among Teacher Trainees

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Abstract

The extent to which teachers perceive the existence of pressure emanating from negative stereotype of teaching as a career by the society tends to reduce the amount of affective and cognitive investments on teaching and learning by teachers and teacher trainees. Given this problem, the purpose of this study was to determine the level to which stereotype threat as perceived by University of Botswana (UB) teacher trainees influences their learning- and teaching-related behaviour. To test the nine research hypotheses posited to guide the study, data for the inferential survey study was collected using a validated 48-item questionnaire from a sample of 452 UB teacher trainees. Data analyses were done using t-test of single mean, chi-square (χ^2) test and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The findings showed that the level to which UB teacher trainees perceived teaching as a stereotyped career significantly influences the amount of affective investment they are making on their training programme and hope to make on their teaching. These findings were discussed and recommendations that emanated from findings were made.

Keywords: Teaching; Stereotype Threat; Teacher Training; Dissatisfaction; Motivation; Attitude; Willingness.

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Over recent years, the professional status and motivation of teachers have been declining worldwide while the expectations of parents, employers and others towards teachers are steadily on the increase. In both developed and developing countries, teachers suffer from a decline of their professional image (IIEP, 2001). There abound in the society several stereotyped views of teaching as a profession. For example, according to the Department of Education, Science and Training [DEST] (2003, p.3) “students who were not considering teaching as a career said that they saw teaching as a low status job, negatively perceived in the community, and ‘semi-professional’”. Parents in Australia also complained that ‘low university entrance requirements have lowered the status of teaching and resulted in a lower quality teaching workforce’. To them teaching is low-paid, low status work, and there is a negative publicity about the teaching profession and teachers.

Career stereotyping occurs when one applies negative attributes, views, opinions or roles towards a career or a profession. Some stereotypes are so powerful that members of the stereotyped groups tend to believe them (Stevens, et al., n.d.). Gardner in Jones (2002) stated that over the last decade:

the voice of the teaching profession at the end of 1996 is cynical, pessimistic and profoundly weary ... A deep sense of impotence...declining professional status...and what they perceive as constant 'teacher-bashing' by the Government, the Opposition and the press has destroyed confidence...Passion has been replaced by a sort of *fin de siecle* fatalism

Stereotype threat refers to “the threat of being viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype” or “the discomfort targets feel when they are at risk of fulfilling a negative stereotype about their group” (Aronson, Quinn, & Spencer, 1998, p. 85). Such threat operates subtly to influence a lot of what we do and how we perform task related to the stereotype. A lot of what is done under the spell of a stereotype threat is done to confirm the expectations of the stereotype. It is so powerful that members of the stereotyped group, encapsulated within the influence of the stereotype, tend consciously or unconsciously to accept or believe them. And this has a great influence on their performance. According to Stevens et al. (n.d.),

often the derision someone suffers who attempts to break out of the stereotype is so severe that s/he retreats and therefore the stereotype is perpetuated. Because of this, sometimes, members of the stereotype category fail to try different behaviors because of a fear of failure. They are unsure, because they have bought into the stereotype themselves that they are able to succeed. (p.3)

Teaching and Stereotype Threat

Stereotype threat affects members of any group about whom there exists some negative stereotype especially if a situation makes them believe that they will be viewed in light of the negative stereotype even if they believe in the threat or not (Steele, 1997). Such stereotype must be relevant to one's self and one must care about the behaviour or practice that the stereotype describes. Different groups experience different degree of threat depending on the content or intensity of the stereotype and the situation. Within the context in which teachers are bombarded with several negative stereotypes from different groups in the society they are bound to be prone to stereotype threat. In the context of the teaching profession, this is more so provoked when they are especially wary of situations in which their behaviour can confirm the negative reputation that their profession lacks a valued social, economic or especially professional qualities. The extra pressure caused by the fear of reinforcing the negative interferes with their ability to perform, resulting in low performance.

Underlying the stereotype threat among teachers is the fact that many dissatisfying conditions under which the teachers work impact on their professional and personal lives. They are alienated from and ill-understood by the society, they are frustrated by their low status within the community and whereas their role has intensified and the expectations placed on them by the community in relation to this role fulfillment have become even greater, their profession is looked down upon as if it is not providing any significant service to the society (Jones, 2002). African teachers suffer from 'implicit occupational stereotype' (Bennell, 2003) and because of the stereotyping of their profession, there is alienation from the community and a feelings of frustration and powerlessness in relation to role fulfillment; desperation from the unsuccessful desire to involve parents and the community in the school environment, the lack of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards; all these impact on their professional and personal satisfaction, and embolden the effects of the threat from the stereotype.

Steele in Bergeron, Block and Echtenkamp (2006) presented three conditions for the phenomenon of stereotype threat to take place. The society must be aware of the negative stereotype against a group. In the case here, the society is the one stereotyping teaching as a profession and all are very conscious of it. Secondly, there must be individuals who identify themselves with the profession as a part of their life and they stake their self-image on the profession. Here teachers are domain-identified as a profession. The last of the conditions to be satisfied for the existence of stereotype threat is 'the relevance of the negative stereotype to the individual during a domain performance situation' (p.137). This is a situation in which the teachers are at risk of confirming the negative stereotype of teaching as a profession. A teacher devalued in a domain that is important to the maintenance of his/her self-regard experiences a very threatening condition (Bergeron, Block & Echtenkamp, 2006). They see themselves as performing under a name 'profession,' a name that is shared with other groups that are highly regarded by the society as being true to type, truly professionals.

The Research Problem and Purpose of the Study

According to DeRouin, Fritzsche and Salas (2003, p. 1), ‘because stereotype threat increases the cognitive burden placed upon victims, it has the power to reduce test scores. In addition, stereotype threat may impact training outcomes as well’. Stereotyping a profession tends to undermine both the cognitive and affective dispositions of members of that profession in carrying out what is required of them in the professions. It is an ‘important variable that can impact training effectiveness and that has not been addressed in the training literature’. Just as stereotype threat increases the cognitive burden placed upon its victims (Aronson, Quinn & Spencer, 1998), it does also place a huge affective burden on them and such burdens tend to reduce the cognitive and affective prowess of teachers. Hence it impacts on the training and performance effectiveness of professionals and these have not been addressed in the training literature.

To Stevens (n.d.), ‘most stereotypes are not based on personal experience, but are the result of hearsay or images concocted by the mass media or are generated within our own heads as ways of justifying our own prejudices and cruelty.’ Stereotypes are so powerful that members of the stereotyped groups tend to believe them. If we believe that teachers are socially low-class people, then when we meet a teacher in any occasion we tend to treat them as low-class persons hence robbing them of their right to be treated as an individual. ‘We consciously set up social conditions in such a way that our suspicions about a group are met and instead of being open minded, we gather confirmatory evidence for our stereotype’. Considering the identified problem this study aimed at determining the extent to which, in the perception of UB education students, Botswana society stereotypes teaching as a career and how this influences teacher trainees’ perception of and behavior in the career.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Given the purpose of the study as indicated, the under listed research questions and hypotheses served as guide to the achievement of the aim of the study:

1. To what extent does the society stereotype teaching as a career?
2. To what extent does being trained into a stereotyped career influence one’s perception of and behaviour in the career?

To answer these research questions, the following null hypotheses were tested:

1. Botswana society does not significantly stereotype teaching as a career.
2. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their ranking of teaching as a career.
3. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their perceived effectiveness of the training programme.
4. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their achievement motivation.
5. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their attitude towards teaching.
6. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their attitude towards their training programme.
7. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their willingness to teach.
8. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence the amount of effort they put into the programme.
9. The level to which teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their perceived usefulness of the programme.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Results of several studies tend to agree that exposing a group of people to negative stereotypes about the group increases anxiety and stress and thus reduce performance on a task related to that stereotype (Dobbs, 2007). For example, to determine the influence of stereotype threat, Aronson, Quinn and Spencer (1998) told a sample of White males that the aim of their study was to examine why Asian students tend to perform better than Caucasian students on tests of

mathematical ability. They gave them articles describing the White-Asian mathematics performance gap. After this they gave the subjects a mathematics test. As a result of the stereotype threat, White males in the threat condition performed significantly poorer on the mathematics test than White males in the control condition. In addition, stereotype threat may impact training outcomes as well.

After several years of studying situations such as choking under pressure or succumbing to "stereotype threat" scientists are learning how emotion combines in the brain with memory, attention and other cognitive skills to affect performance (Vajda, 2007). To him, 'getting in touch with our emotions and learning to express them effectively has the potential not only to make us feel better, but also to help us perform better' (p.2). In the final analysis, stereotype threat can produce several additional consequences beyond short-term underperformance. Situations that produce consistent exposure to stereotype threat as with teachers can reduce the degree that they value the domain in question (Aronson, et al. 2002; Osborne, 1995; Steele, 1997). It can also lead students to choose not to pursue teaching as a profession or be serious at it. This limits the range of professions that are open to them, thus contributing to educational and social inequality (Good et al., n.d.; Schmader, Johns & Barquissau, 2004).

Studies from Human Performance Lab., University of Chicago [HPLUC] (n.d.). show that introducing a negative stereotype about a social group in a particular domain can reduce the quality of task performance exhibited by group members. For instance, when negative group stereotypes are activated in performance situations, African-Americans perform more poorly on cognitive tasks reputed to assess intelligence, women perform more poorly on math problems for which they have been told gender differences exist, and Whites perform more poorly on athletic tasks that purportedly are diagnostic of athletic ability rather than athletic intelligence. Hence professions can experience underperformance under the influence of stereotype threat (Good, Aronson, & Harder, in press).

From studies by Heafford and Jennison (1998) as well as Sinclair (1990) it is concluded that '... diminished status of teachers were crucial factors that generate dissatisfaction, low commitment, low moral, and greatly detract from the enjoyment of teaching' (AARE, n.d., p.9)]. Teachers feel somewhat alienated from the society; they are confused, frustrated and powerless by their perceived low status within the society (Australian Association for Research in Education, [AARE] n.d.). They are compelled to justify or defend their profession, or at worst to even feel ashamed of their profession (Australian Senate Employment, Education and Training Reference Committee [ASEETRC], 1998). According to these studies, 'the compulsion to justify or defend one's profession, or at worst, to even feel ashamed of their profession, is often felt by teachers' (ASEETRC, 1998, p.1; Dinham & Scott, 1998, p.1; Scott, Cox & Dinham, 1999, p.297). Heafford and Jennison (1998) as well as Sinclair (1990) found out that '... diminished status of teachers were crucial factors that generate dissatisfaction, low commitment, low moral, and greatly detract from the enjoyment of teaching' (AARE], n.d., p.9).

METHODOLOGY

This study is survey inferential in design as it surveyed and analysed the views and perceptions of a representative sample of all education students in University of Botswana (UB) and based on the results inferred the general views of perceptions of UB education students. It is assumed that such views and perceptions would not be drastically different from those of students in similar institutions in Africa. Out of 742 students in the first semester of 2007/2008, a sample of 500 was randomly drawn for the study. A total of 452 of those sampled actually took part in the study because some refused to take part and some of them submitted questionnaire that were not completely and correctly filled. Out of 150 envisaged, 129 Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) students took part, while out of 350 envisaged, 318 were Bachelor of Education students took part five students did not indicate in which programme they were registered. These 318 students were drawn from each of the eight departments in the Faculty of Education in close proportion to their population. There were 261 female and 182 male students while nine students failed to indicate their gender.

An instrument consisting of two sections was developed for the study. The first section – Section I with five items demanded for demographic information and students' ranking of teaching as a career. Section II with 44-item Likert-type items with six options – from 'very strongly agree' through 'very strongly disagree' – was developed, face-validated by three colleagues in the area of assessment and used for the study. After validation, a pilot study of the instrument was carried out on a sample 39 randomly selected students from the population of the study. Negatively worded items were scored in the reverse direction. A Cronbach alpha analysis of the reliability of the measurement of the variables involved in the study showed that for achievement motivation with 16 items, alpha was .945; for attitude towards programme with 10 items, alpha was .904; attitude towards teaching with 3 items, alpha was .759; willingness to teach with 6 items, alpha was .827; usefulness of programme with 3 items, alpha was .744; programme effectiveness 2 items alpha was .658. These

were deemed as good measures for each of the variables (see Appendix I - during administration the items were all mixed up and randomly ordered).

Data were collected through the help of five graduate teaching assistants and mainly during the dying minutes of classes where the selected students were enrolled. Permission to collect such data was secured from the different lecturers and each student had an option not to participate in the study.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

Data analysis was performed per hypothesis using the Statistical Package of the Social Science (SPSS) version 17. In the null form, the first one which has it that in the perception of UB teacher trainees, Botswana society does not significantly stereotype teaching as a career was tested using one-sample t-test. This was done to compare a single mean of the sample with the population mean. This analysis ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.60$, $n = 411$) resulted in a t-value of $t(410) = 8.31$, $p < .001$, hence the null hypothesis was rejected meaning that Botswana society significantly stereotype teaching as a career as an inferior profession.

The null form of the second hypothesis has it that the level to which UB teacher trainees perceive teaching as a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their ranking of teaching as a career. Given that the data here were the number of cases (frequencies) in each ranking category for each perceived level of stereotype, grouped into three categories (low, average, high) based on its mean and standard deviation, a chi-square (χ^2) statistical analysis was employed (See Table 1) to test this hypothesis. This gave a chi-square value of 11.41 .

Table 1: Chi-square (χ^2) Analysis of Dependence of Ranking of Teaching as a Career on Perceived Level of Stereotype of Teaching as a Career by UB Education Students.

Perceived Level of Stereotype View of Teaching by the Society	Rank of Teaching as a Career				Total
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	
Low	29 (27.8) ^a	14 (13.8)	12 (12.8)	13 (13.6)	68
Average	84 (77.8)	45 (38.4)	34 (35.8)	27 (38.0)	190
High	61 (68.4)	27 (33.8)	34 (31.4)	45 (33.4)	167
Total	174	86	80	85	425

^aExpected frequencies are in parentheses

$\chi^2(6, N = 425) = 11.41, p > .05$.

which was found to be less than the critical value of 12.59 at .05 alpha level. ($\chi^2(6, N = 425) = 11.41, p > .05$). Hence the null hypothesis was retained, meaning that the level to which teaching is perceived as being a stereotyped career by the UB teacher trainees does not significantly determine their ranking of teaching as a career.

The other seven hypotheses taken together in the null form posited that the level to which UB teacher trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career does not significantly influence their: (1) perception of the effectiveness of their training programme; (2) achievement motivation; (3) attitude towards teaching; (4) attitude towards their training programme; (5) willingness to teach; (6) effort they put into the programme, and (7) their perceived usefulness of the programme. The significance of the influence of the level to which UB teacher trainees perceive teaching as a stereotype career on each of these dependent variables was tested by performing a one way analysis of the variability (ANOVA) of each of them (See Table 2). A one-way ANOVA was deemed suitable here because the nine dependent variables were measured at the interval level while the independent variable, level to which UB teacher trainees perceived teaching as being stereotyped, was categorical with three levels.

For the first dependent variable on the list, perceived level of programme effectiveness, the ANOVA showed a significant influence, $F= 5.84, p < .003$, of the level to which UB teacher trainees perceived teaching as being a stereotyped career on the perceived level of programme effectiveness. The significant F-value demanded a post hoc analysis and using the least significant difference (LSD) method, it was found that students with perception of a high level of stereotype of teaching differed significantly ($p < .01$) from those who perceive average and low level of stereotype of teaching in their perception of programme effectiveness.

Generally, the result of the analyses showed that the higher the level of perception of teaching as a stereotyped career, the lower their perceived level of programme effectiveness. For achievement motivation, the analysis showed a significant influence, $F = 6.75, p < .01$, of the level to which teaching is perceived as being stereotyped on the achievement motivation of teacher trainees in UB. The significant F-value called for a post hoc analysis and using the least significant difference (LSD) method, it was found that students with a high level of perception of teaching as stereotyped career differed significantly ($p < .01$) with those who perceive average and low level of stereotype of teaching. Generally, the analyses showed that the higher the level of perception of teaching as a stereotyped career, the lower the achievement motivation of teacher trainees.

For attitude towards their programme the analysis resulted in a significant F-value [$F(2, 317) = 7.25, p < .01$], which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. In other words, the level to which teacher trainees perceived teaching as being a stereotyped career has a significant influence on their attitude towards their programme. The significant F-value prompted a post hoc analysis using the LSD method. This analysis showed that teacher trainees with high perceived level to which teaching is stereotyped differed significantly ($p < .05$) from those with low and average levels of perceptions in their attitude towards their programme. The higher the level to which they perceived teaching as being stereotyped, the less favourable their attitude towards their programme. In the case of attitude towards teaching, the analysis resulted in a significant $F = 5.46, p < .01$, which again led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. In other words, the level to which teacher trainees perceived teaching as being stereotyped has a significant influence on their attitude towards teaching. Given the significant F-value a post hoc analysis using the LSD method was done. This analysis showed that teacher trainees with high perceived level to which teaching is stereotyped differed significantly ($p < .01$) from those with low and average levels of perceptions in their attitude towards teaching. For teacher trainees' perceived economic status of teachers, the ANOVA resulted in a non-significant $F = 1.73, p > .05$, influence of the level to which teaching is perceived as being stereotyped on the perceived economic status of teachers. Considering their perceived social status of teachers, the analysis showed a significant influence, $F = 17.37, p < .01$, of the level to which teaching is perceived as being stereotyped on teacher trainees' perception of the social status of the teacher. The significant F-value called for a post hoc analysis and using the least significant difference (LSD) method it was found that students with a perception of a high level of stereotyping teaching differ significantly ($p < .01$) with those who perceive average and low levels of stereotyping teaching in their perception of social status of teachers. The analyses showed that generally, the higher the level to which a teacher trainee perceives teaching as a stereotyped career, the lower his/her perceived social status of teachers.

Table 2: One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Influence of Perceived Level of Stereotype of Teaching as a Career on Teachers Behaviour by UB Education Students.

Variable	Perceived Level to Which Teaching is Stereotyped	n	Mean	Std. Dev0	Std. Error	Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Programme Effectiveness	Low	62	9.82	2.34	.297	Between Groups	68.69	2	34.34	5.84	.003
	Average	188	9.58	2.03	.148	Within Groups	2406.66	409	5.88		
	High	162	8.82	2.84	.223	Total	2475.35	411			
	Total	412	9.32	2.45	.121						
Achievement	Low	42	75.55	11.14	1.72	Between Groups	2029.87	2	1014.94	6.75	.001
		125	72.18	11.54	1.03						

	Average					Within Groups	42731.04	284	150.46		
	High	120	68.13	13.33	1.22						
	Total	287	70.98	12.51	0.74	Total	44760.91	286			
Attitude Towards Programme	Low	47	52.28	13.10	1.91	Between Groups	2342.84	2	1171.42	7.25	.001
	Average	143	48.24	10.69	0.89						
	High	130	44.45	14.50	1.27	Within Groups	51249.54	317	161.67		
	Total	320	47.29	12.96	0.72	Total	53592.39	319			
Attitude Towards Teaching	Low	61	12.67	3.81	.488	Between Groups	156.38	2	78.19	5.46	.005
	Average	180	12.35	3.34	0.25						
	High	167	11.19	4.20	0.33	Within Groups	5804.26	405	14.33		
	Total	408	11.92	3.83	0.19	Total	5960.65	407			
Economic Status of Teachers	Low	66	3.21	1.52	0.19	Between Groups	7.11	2	3.56	1.73	.179
	Average	192	3.47	1.23	0.09						
	High	172	3.21	1.60	0.12	Within Groups	879.31	427	2.06		
	Total	430	3.36	1.44	0.07	Total	886.42	429			
Social Status of Teachers	Low	60	4.58	1.46	0.19	Between Groups	70.08	2	35.04	17.37	.000
	Average	184	4.31	1.12	0.08						
	High	167	3.56	1.67	0.13	Within Groups	823.14	408	2.02		
	Total	411	4.04	1.48	0.07	Total	893.212	410			
Willingness to Teach	Low	56	26.23	7.50	1.00	Between Groups	679.28	2	339.64	7.61	.001
	Average	175	25.49	5.84	0.44						
	High	154	23.01	7.24	0.58	Within Groups	17060.71	382	44.67		
	Total	385	24.61	6.80	0.35	Total	17739.99	384			
Amount of Effort Put into	Low	69	4.49	1.42	0.17	Between Groups	33.35	2	16.67	7.73	.001
	Average	194	4.16	1.36	0.10						
	High	173	3.73	1.60	0.12	Within Groups	933.74	433	2.26		
	Total					Total					

	Total	436	4.05	1.49	0.07	Total	967.08	435			
Usefulness of Programme	Low	58	13.86	2.81	0.37	Between Groups	79.64	2	39.82	4.62	.010
	Average	175	12.82	2.60	0.20						
	High	164	12.50	3.29	0.26	Within Groups	3396.05	394	8.62		
	Total	397	12.84	2.96	0.15	Total	3475.68	396			

In the case of their willingness to teach, the result of the analysis showed a significant influence, $F = 7.61$, $p < .01$, of the level to which teaching is perceived as being stereotyped on teacher trainees level of willingness to teach. Following the significant F-value a post hoc analysis was done using the least significant difference (LSD) method. It was found that teacher trainees with a perception of a high level of stereotyping teaching differ significantly ($p < .01$) in their willingness to teach from those who perceived average and low levels of stereotyping teaching. The analyses generally showed that the higher the level to which a teacher trainee perceives teaching as a stereotyped career, the lower his/her willingness to teach.

When it came to the amount of effort they put into the programme, the result of the analysis showed a significant influence, $F = 7.73$, $p < .01$, of the level to which teaching is perceived as being a stereotyped career on the amount of effort teacher trainees put into the programme. Given the significant overall F-value, a post hoc analysis using the least significant difference (LSD) method was done. This again showed that teacher trainees with a perception of a high level of stereotyping teaching differ significantly ($p < .01$) in the amount of effort they put into the programme from those who perceived average and low levels of stereotyping teaching. The analyses showed that generally the higher the level to which a teacher trainee perceives teaching as a stereotyped career, the lower the amount of effort he/she puts into the teacher training programme.

For perception of the usefulness of the programme, the result of the ANOVA showed a significant influence, $F = 4.62$, $p < .01$, of the level to which teaching is perceived as being stereotyped on teacher trainees perception of the usefulness of the programme. The significant F-value called for a post hoc analysis and using the least significant difference (LSD) method it was found that teacher trainees with a perception of a high level of stereotyping teaching differ significantly ($p < .01$) in their perception of the usefulness of their teacher training programme from those who perceived average and low levels of stereotyping teaching. Generally, the analyses showed that the higher the level to which a teacher trainee perceives teaching as a stereotyped career, the lower his/her perception of the usefulness of their teacher training programme.

In summary, UB teacher trainees have confirmed that teaching is a highly stereotyped career in Botswana and this perception has been seen to have insignificant influence on their ranking of teaching as a career and their perception of the economic status of the teacher, but to have significant influence on their perception of the effectiveness of their training programme; on their motivation to achieve in teaching; on attitude towards the programme; on attitude towards teaching; on the perception of social status of teachers; on their willingness to teach; on the amount of effort they put into the programme; as well as on their perceived usefulness of the programme. Generally, the higher the level to which UB teacher trainees perceived teaching as being stereotyped, the less they are affectively disposed toward and are willing to invest both cognitively and affectively in the training programme as well as in their teaching .

DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Being trained into a stereotyped career has been shown to influence one's perception of and behavior in the career. There are levels to which UB teachers trainees perceive teaching as being a stereotyped career and though these levels relate insignificantly to their ranking of teaching as a career, they have significant influence on: the effort they put into the programme, their attitude towards the training programme, the level to which they perceived their programme to be useful, their achievement motivation, attitudes towards teaching and willingness to teach.

The stereotype view of teaching as a career by Botswana society creates a psychologically hostile working environment within which teachers operate. This reduces teachers' cognitive and affective investment on teaching and learning by the teacher and the teacher trainees. It builds a load of high psychological pressure on the teachers' head and

some tend to ‘choke’ under such pressure. Their work suffers as such pressure tends to ‘compromise performance’ (Dobbs, 2007). Some boggle under such psychological pressure and quit the profession while some stay back miserable and under-productive. Consciously and unconsciously, teachers get choked under the societal expectation and hence pressure-induced performance decrement results. Hence, Botswana society is contributing to the poor and deteriorating performance by our children in school by disempowering our teachers by negatively stereotyping teaching as a profession.

To the question of whether negative stereotype of the teaching profession affects the performance of teachers during training and at work, this study gives an emphatic “yes” answer. It significantly affects the main human resources in the educational process. This leads to a significant reduction in professional prowess of teachers because their sense of professional self is not sustained by the evaluation of the society. Stereotype belittles teachers as it deprives them of the means of sustaining the sense of self. But come to think of it, are teachers professionally inferior? How can inferior professionals produce members of ‘superior’ callings? (Steven et al., n.d.).

The findings of this study confirm DeRouin, Fritzsche and Salas’ (2003) view that ‘stereotype threat may interrupt learning during training and, as a result, reduce training effectiveness’ (p.1). Teachers feel somewhat alienated from the society; they are confused, frustrated and rendered powerless by their perceived low status within the society. The society’s negative stereotypic view of teaching activates negative feeling in performance situations and hence teachers experience underperformance under the influence of stereotype threat (Good, Aronson, & Harder, in press). Sinclair (1990), as well as Heafford and Jennison (1998) see the stereotyping of teaching, diminished status, expanded teaching load, declining provision of resources and working conditions, as crucial factors that generate dissatisfaction, low commitment, low morale among teachers and these greatly distracts them from the enjoyment of teaching.

The society, which is the ultimate stakeholder in education, has contributed in no small measure to the alienation of the people at the very hub of the education process – the teachers. The quality of education in any system cannot be higher than the cognitive and affective dispositions of the teachers in that system. Findings of several studies have shown that learners’ performance depends significantly on these qualities. The level to which the teaching profession has been stereotyped by the society itself erodes these qualities. ‘As the society makes her bed, so shall she lie.’ It is the society that provides for her education system and if that society turns around to deprive its teachers of the psychological foundation for the attainment of success by looking down on them then she deserves the consequences. Teachers are the very people that matter most in the operation of such educational system.

According to AARE (n.d.), the primary motivation for teachers to remain in the profession is the satisfaction and enjoyment they derive from working with the students. One teacher or the other contributed in one way or the other to the success of every successful member of the society. Teachers should look at such colleagues as role models which symbolize success for teachers. Encouraging teachers to think of themselves in ways that reduce the salience of a threatening identity can attenuate stereotype effects. Another way the effect of stereotype threat could be reduced for teachers is to modify task descriptions so that ‘such stereotypes are not invoked or are disarmed’ (Stereotype threat, n.d.). Teachers should be encouraged to think about their characteristics, skills, values, or roles that they value or view as important (Schimmel, Arndt, Banko & Cook, 2004). If the chief operators of an educational system are inferior then the quality of education in the system must be inferior. Again, the question is: ‘how can inferior professionals produce members of “superior” callings?’ Teachers should be made aware that like any other professionals they are performing a unique and vital function in the society and they can and do meet highly valued standards. Such feedback increase motivation and preserves domain identification (Cohen, Steele & Ross, 1999). They should view actions and views that pose stereotypic threat to their profession as distractions that have nothing to do with, and hence should not diminish their affective and cognitive investment in teaching. The findings of this study concur with DeRouin, Fritzsche and Salas’ (2003) contention that potentially important variable that can impact training effectiveness and that has not been addressed in the training literature is stereotype threat. It is evident that the dissatisfaction that is permeating the lived realities of teachers indicates the existence of a serious problem that clearly warrants further research (AARE, n.d.).

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**Questionnaire on Attitude toward Teaching, and Achievement Motivation
Among Students in UB BEd & PGDE Programmes,**

Your participation in this study is solicited for the interest the study has on contributing a solution to the damaging consequences of stereotyping teaching as a profession by the society; and will be useful only to the extent to which you give honest reaction to every item of this questionnaire

Section I

1. Gender: F ____ M ____
2. Programme: PGDE ____ BEd ____
3. What is your area of concentration/teaching subject? _____
4. Number of years you have taught before _____ Years
5. Teaching is your First ____; Second ____; Third ____; Fourth ____; Fifth ____ Career choice (Tick one only) Other (indicate) _____

Section II

Please react honestly to each of the following statements by ticking under one of the following options:

#	Statement	Very Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Very Strongly Disagree
	<i>[Motivation to achieve in the programme; $\alpha = .945$]</i>						
1.	I am putting a lot of effort in this programme						
2.	I would feel ashamed if I do not do well in this programme						
3.	I would hate to get someone to do all my assignments for me						
4.	I am determined to do well in this programme						
5.	I will be very proud if I do well in this programme						
6.	I will make do with any grade in this programme (-ve)						
7.	I am very excited about this programme						
8.	I feel this programme is good for me						
9.	I am putting in all I have to do well in this programme						
10.	This programme is a big waste of my time (-ve)						
11.	Academically, I am highly motivated in this programme.						
13.	I do not feel like attending classes in this programme (-ve)						
14.	I have to get very good grades in this programme						
15.	I wish I could get a job now and run out of here (-ve)						
16.	I lack the urge to do well in this programme (-ve)						
	<i>[Attitude towards the programme; $\alpha = .904$]</i>						
17.	I hate this programme (-ve)						
18.	This programme is not adding a lot to what I knew already						
19.	I am learning a lot of useful things through this programme						
20.	I am very interested in this programme						
21.	I have a good attitude towards this programme						
22.	I am happy I had the opportunity to registered for this programme						
23.	I like this programme						
24.	This is a very nice programme for me						
25.	I refer this programme to others						
26.	My interest in this programme is very minimal (-ve)						
	<i>[Attitude towards teaching; $\alpha = .759$]</i>						
27.	Generally I hate teaching (-ve)						
28.	I have a good feeling toward teaching						
29.	Teaching is a very good profession						
	<i>[Willingness to teach; $\alpha = .827$]</i>						

30.	I never really wanted to be a teacher (-ve)						
31.	I see myself as a very effective teacher in the future						
32.	I like to be a teacher						
33.	Though I am undergoing this programme I would prefer not to teach						
34.	I cannot imagine myself as a teacher (-ve)						
35.	I cannot wait to get into my classroom and teach my pupils.						
	<i>[Usefulness of the programme; $\alpha = .744$]</i>						
36.	To me this is a very useless programme (-ve)						
37.	This programme meets my professional needs						
38.	This is a very useful programme to me.						
	<i>[Effectiveness of the programme; $\alpha = .658$]</i>						
39.	This programme has not achieved its objectives in many areas (-ve)						
40.	This programme is very effective in the achievement of its goals						
41.	Being a teacher tends to enhance one's economic status						
42.	Generally teachers are of low social standing (-ve)						
43.	I am putting in all I my effort to do well in this programme						
	<i>[Level to which teaching is stereotyped]</i>						
44.	To the society teaching is an inferior profession.						

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