

Prior teaching impressions and classroom reality



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Teaching profession has a unique standing among the professional fields. Education student do not begin to study their field with a blank mind but from a prior impression about what teaching means. Unlike other fields where student have not come into contact with those practicing, education students has personal experiences with different teachers. Before deciding to become a teacher, the students usually have opportunity to learn about teaching as profession. They know much of what a teacher does and have witnessed several teachers doing teaching practically (Natalia et al, 2006).

Teaching as a profession has various responsibilities ranging from knowledge impartment to grooming pupil personal attributes. These responsibilities involve processes like socializing effectively, providing emotional and spiritual support, and provision of foundation that will ensure stable adult citizens (Arends, 2001, Natalia et al, 2006). With these responsibilities, teaching then is not everybody's choice as a career and it require certain attitude, aura and particular perception. The prior impressions of teaching are established in someone life when they see a teacher teaching and admires the teacher's role in someone's life and creating a picture that teaching is an exciting job that provides student with academics, emotional, and spiritual support. Interaction with admirable teachers at early life of a child makes one admire the career not for the actual material in it but for the effectiveness and efficiency of the teacher (Beryer, 1984). This means that effectiveness and efficiency of a given teacher becomes a source of inspiration for the pupil who builds an image of teaching as a noble profession. At this point, the hassles and the practical work involved in teaching are not given a consideration. This is because the student has no

experience hand on or has not come in contact with such situations (Arends, 2001).

Contrast and Similarity of Prior Teaching Impression and Classroom Reality

Two dimensions exist in the explanation of the contrast between the prior perceptions of teaching and the reality of the same. One is when it becomes unfavorable to the new teacher and second when it conforms to the expectation (prior impressions) of the new teacher. In the first instance where the new teacher who has certain impression of the profession begins his or her teaching profession, enters the classroom. The classroom, which he or she has viewed from the pupil desk becomes very different and in many cases becomes uncomfortable (Natalia et al, 2006). Bearing in mind that the new teacher had a positive perception of teaching and was very much willing to take up the job as a career, this difference may be a negative shock of the reality to him or her. In addition, new teachers who take teaching as an easy and simple knowledge transfer task and expect it to be fun and exciting have this notion blown off easily as soon as they enter the classroom and face the realities of the teaching profession (Arends, 2001). These realities include; demand for responsibility, being determined, being effective, communication skills, creativity, and hard work. This may not be the expectation of new teachers on the teaching profession (Natalia et al, 2006).

To give an example of such unfavorable situation, during teacher training teachers are taught to prepare or develop a scheme of work before placement with a perception that this will prepare them to teach effectively.

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A new teacher has no idea on the capabilities of the student he or she will be teaching and once they are in classroom, they discover how their scheme of work is unworkable and not appropriate (Natalia et al, 2006). For instance, the resources that they have included in their schemes because they consider them to be appropriate in transferring knowledge are found not to be available within the school. This happens as a result of the new teacher having no prior knowledge of the learning environment that they will be working under and using the resource because they show another teacher in their student life use the resource effectively or the resource was recommended during his or her training (Arends, 2001).

Making work plans requires the teacher to have some knowledge about the learning environment which in most cases a new teacher does not have. Teaching for example a 12 year old class, a teacher will need to know how such student behave, what excite them, how they respond to various activities, and different ways of presenting the topic and so on. A new teacher has no such knowledge and in most cases the way they plan their work makes the delivery ineffective. They could adopt a teaching method that is not compliant with the class age and this makes delivery of the content impossible. Out of this error of selecting the best teaching method for the new teacher due to lack of prior understanding of the nature of the student he or she will be handling, he or she becomes disillusioned about teaching as a profession (Beryer, 1984).

Another contrast to this is when a new teacher has high hopes in the teaching job and aims to get a respectable status in the society by engaging in teaching profession. In the current world, this may not be applicable in <https://assignbuster.com/prior-teaching-impressions-and-classroom-reality/>

every region and culture (Arends, 2001). As there are different channels of education, pupil do not entirely depend on the teacher and the student say increment in the education system has left the teacher in an endangered position. In some instance, a teacher is at the mercies of school management or student choice. This denies the teacher the just share of his or her qualification and dedication in the teaching profession (Natalia et al, 2006).

The similarity of prior impression of teaching is seen when a new teacher getting into the teaching profession finds the environment conforming to his or her expectations. This is most common to new teachers who have friends or relatives in the profession or are familiar with cultural background and teaching modes being practiced in the region (Beryer, 1984). This prior knowledge assists the new teacher in a big way to adapt to the reality of teaching profession more than being disillusioned abruptly. An enthusiastic teacher willing to take up teaching profession regardless of knowledge of the reality and practice of the job adapts quickly in the profession and develops excitement and enjoyment as he or she does not consider teaching to be a burden but a profession taken up by choice (Arends, 2001).

Great differences are evident between prior impression of teaching and administration issues and teacher's accountability and deadlines. This may affect teaching and learning activities negatively. School administration may give rules and regulation that may not conform to the new teacher's prior impressions of the teaching profession. For example, the school may direct the teacher to take up extra classes to tutor weak student or require the teacher to check student notebooks on weekly bases. This may seem to be <https://assignbuster.com/prior-teaching-impressions-and-classroom-reality/>

an extra burden to the new teacher for it was not envisaged in his or her prior impressions of teaching job. But in reality, this does not come as part of the package of job description and is hard to avoid it (Arends, 2001). New teacher who have the impression that teaching profession as a knowledge provision activity may see deadlines for lesson plans, result records, and student reports to be burdening and do not expect those tasks to be the responsibility of the teacher. Teacher who had an initial impression different from this reality may not like to be responsible and accountable of student progress, decadence, completing syllabus, and deadline adherence (Beryer, 1984).

The impacts of prior impressions of teaching profession on the teaching task are significant. If these prior impressions becomes positive in the classroom setting and are favorable to the teacher, they may producer far reaching output in towards achieving educational goals. On the other hand, if the prior impressions are different from the reality and proves to be unfavorable to the teacher, the impact is a decreased interest and deterioration in the teaching tasks. This leads to the recommendation that teacher training should be carried in such a way that teachers are trained and made familiar with the environment under which they will work and be allowed to make a decision on whether to continue or not. In addition to training on educational subjects, teacher training should also include practical experiences and management of work so that they become efficient and effective in delivery of service in the noble profession and eventually translate education goal in to a reality (Natalia et al, 2006).