

Primary school teachers: Centre of attraction

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Abstract

Indisputably primary school teachers are instrumental to nation building, building of a united and a crime free society, production of good, morally, mentally and emotionally balanced individuals. Primary school teachers remain centre of attraction arising from the hardwork they put in to ensure the expansion of the intellectual horizons of young learners who for sure are seen and will become leaders of tomorrow. To carry out the study successfully importance of primary school teachers were discussed. The study also explained various ways primary school teachers are seen as centre of attraction and also outlined reasons primary school teachers should be appreciated. Finally a conclusion was drawn calling for a collaborating effort for placing profound importance on primary school teachers in order to achieve effective education.

Keyword: Primary; School; Teacher; Learners; Attraction

1. Introduction

Primary school teachers play key role in moulding the intellectual capabilities of primary school pupils. As the starting point of a child's educational pursuit, primary school teachers are indeed the centre of attraction, impacting not only pupils' academic achievement but also, cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. Teachers impact can be abiding on learners, promoting love for studying, overall growth, building faith (Hattie, et al. 2003).

As mentor, coaches, facilitators role models, instructors, primary school teachers play heterogeneous functions in tailoring learners into becoming intellectually independent. Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005) primary school teachers promote in learners critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, and synergy, grooming them for ever changing world. The influence of primary school teachers on pupils go beyond teaching and learning in view of the fact that they foster in learners the capabilities of engaging in peaceful relationships, self-awareness, effective interaction, comportment, self-control and general well-being.

Primary school is a vital level of education where younger and fragile minds are nurtured to adapt into an ever changing world. They are tutored from being fickle minded to stable minded people who will be able to manoeuvre the affairs of their immediate and future environment. To achieve these, primary school teachers functions become very pivotal. Given the character primary school teachers play, it is pertinent to understand and appreciate all the strategies, hard work put up to ensure the purpose of teaching younger minds are achieved.

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2. Importance of primary school teachers

- **In Loco Parentis:** In loco parentis mean “in the place of a parent”. The world is becoming crucial, it has made child upbringing become a joint effort between parents and teachers. Obviously, teacher and parents have a 50-50% influence on young learners giving the fact that pupils spend time at home with their parents and at school with their teachers, but when it comes to intellectual development, teachers play vital role. In loco parentis bestow on teachers the responsibilities of providing a safe, a supportive learning environment, capable of protecting learners from harm and also take decisions that can influence learners emotions, actions and educational attainment positively (Alexander & Alexander, 2017).
The application of in loco parentis has developed overtime, it cannot be abstained from as long as education exist. Education illuminates, sharpens the way we reason, expand our horizon and also guides us on all we do (Lucia, 2024). It is through education that knowledge are imparted into learners who in turn portray the impact of what they have learnt from teachers who play the role of knowledge impartation.
It is in primary school level that young minds are mould intellectually and primary school teachers are key teachers in laying a formidable foundation for younger minds to stand without falling nor leaning. If primary school teachers who assume the responsibilities of parents in classrooms fail, learners will also fail. Educators must sail across difficult issues such as learners discipline, safety and well-being while balancing their jurisdiction with learners entitlement and parental anticipation (Imber & VanGeel, 2015)
- **Foundation building:** Primary school level is the base, beginning of learning activities such as identification of numbers and alphabet, reading and writing which are essential for academic achievement or success. Primary school teachers play vital role in laying good foundation for academic favourable outcome. They establish formidable base that equip learners with intellectual capabilities that navigate them throughout their academic pursuits. It is in primary school level that a young learner is taught how to read write, count or mathematics. Primary school is a nurturing environment that promotes inquisitiveness, enable learners think critically, promote creativity necessary for future academic achievement (Robbinson, 2011).
Notably, there couldn't be professors, lecturers, teachers, scientist, pharmacist, doctors, engineers, lawyers, pilots etc without a foundation builder (primary school teachers) who are builders of all profession.
- **Early intervention:** Primary school teachers identify learners with special needs or learning difficulties and proffer urgent intervention. Identification of learners with special needs is only achieved in the classroom where learners converge to learn. The teaching/learning environment is made up of teachers and learners who from different works of life converge in classroom/school for the purpose of teaching and learning (James, Ogban, Inung & Ogar, 2024). Through the process of teaching and learning in the classroom a primary school teacher identifies and addresses learners with learning difficulties such as beavioural issues, developmental delays, hearing impairment, sightedness etc. primary school teachers are trained to be effective also in recognizing signs of difficulties in learning such as dyscalculia or dyslexia and provide solutions to help learners meet up with their classmates (Shawitz, 2003).
- **Socialization:** In primary school level, no learner can learn from a distant (distant learning) everyone converge in a classroom to receive lesson. Sitting together in the classroom to learn foster socialization in view of the fact that learners exchange pleasantries by doing things in common. This aspect encourages oneness, sense of belonging in the classroom and outside the classroom as primary school teachers help learners in the classroom develop emotional intelligence, synergy and social skills. Hattie (2003) teachers produce opportunities for learners to communicate with classmates, promoting harmony and sense of belonging.
In primary schools especially primary 1-3 learners are taught to say poems, rhymes, dance, sing. In this scenario, the atmosphere is serene, filled with love for one another, no segregation, everyone feels as if they come from same parents in the sense that the learners are taught to live with one another without hitch. Socialization in primary school formulate good starting point for future academic achievement. Primary school teachers prioritize socialization in teaching learning environment in order to equip in learners a long lasting skills and values necessary to flourish in an every changing world. Teachers promote socialization through team work, group discussion and role-playing (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).
- **Building confidence:** Confidence is an important factor in academic achievement without which a learner cannot excel academically. Emotional issues such as panic, shyness, low self-esteem destroys confidence in learners. They are learners who feel shy or scared to answer questions in class being that they are afraid of being laughed at should they make mistakes, many do not say anything even when they know what to say because of shame. Primary school teachers try as much as possible to build confidence in learners through motivation (Canot motivation) notwithstanding if what a learner say is correct or wrong.
Teachers can promote confidence in learners by coming up with assessment, cheering up, and chances for learners to take risk and challenges (Dweck, 2006). Primary school teachers build confidence in learners as a mean of certifying learners become enthusiastic motivated and independent learners who will effectively participate in class work, face risk and stand firm in face of challenges.

- **Community engagement:** Primary school teachers often work in collaboration with parents and the community to promote a collaborative learning environment. Primary school teachers can build in learners a supportive link that can be of great benefit to learners, community and parents through their relationship with parents, and communities (Epstein, 2011).

To further expand community engagement as one of the importance of primary school teachers is the establishment of parent/teachers association in all primary school P.T.A meeting centres on learner's wellbeing and how to move the school achieving desired academic outcome. Primary school teachers who work hand-in-hand with communities/parent gives them courage to entrust their kids into their hands, gain access to resources that can be of help to learners and school, promote in learners civic engagement and social responsibility. Community engagement can promote learners outcomes, foster parental involvement and also boost teachers morale (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

3. Motivation of primary school teachers

i. Respect and appreciation

Primary school teachers put in more effort to ensure learners come out with thing colours in their academic pursuit, mold learners into becoming good citizens impart in learners, ideas, skills capable of catapulting them into becoming dependent people. These hard work of teachers should be valued and respected by parents, communities and employers.

ii. Professional development

As days passes by, modern pedagogies trends emerges. To ensure teachers are not found wanting in any aspects, continues training, workshops, seminars, conferences should be organized for teachers and fully sponsored.

iii. Reasonable workload

Everyone, parents, community, government, employers yearn for quality education. Quality education can be achieved if primary school teachers are made to work with ease and enthusiasm if their work load is less. Primary school teachers do not only teach they set examination questions, administer exams many examination scripts, prepare result. Teaching job is tedious, a teacher should not be burdened with many responsibilities. Class size should be minimal, primary school teachers should teach one or two subject he/she masters on. Teaching all subject and many arms and classes reduces teachers teaching effectiveness.

iv. Fair compensation

Attractive salaries and allowances befitting the vital role teachers play are pertinent as they encourage and promote effective teaching.

v. Autonomy

Parents who go to schools to abuse, warn and even fight with teachers for disciplining their kids jeopardizes learner's opportunity to learn. Any teacher who feel insulted, insecure will cease to effectively impart knowledge into learners. Give primary school teachers full right to lesson designs and teaching methods employed to facilitate teaching and learning.

vi. Upgrade in school facilities

Teachers who happen to teach in dilapidated building, do they feel motivated? No school facilities can boost or kill teachers morale while modern facilities promote effective teaching and learning. Teachers and learners are eager to go to school with positive mindsets because the ambience of the school environment and facilities are very appealing to behold as the boost and illuminate in teachers a strong desire to teach.

Factors that contribute toward making primary school teachers centre of attraction.

- Zealous or passionate teaching:** Primary school teachers who teach with utmost enthusiasm and love
- Innovative methods:** Using interactive and creative methods to inculcate knowledge into learners make primary school teachers attractive.
- One-on-one focus:** Primary school teachers who personally take time to cater to learners, learning styles, interest and needs foster strong and lasting relationship with student.
- Cheerful attitude:** Primary school teachers who show empathy, kindness, love creates a serene ambience that make learners to feel welcomed.
- Mastery of subject matter:** Learners can get inspired and attracted to teacher who demonstrate deep knowledge of their subject area.
- Amusing:** Establishment of humourous atmosphere can create a more delightful and engaging learning encounter.
- Identification and compliment:** Learners who are recognized and rewarded by teachers get motivated while teachers get attracted to them.

4. Reasons primary school teachers should be appreciated

A young learner's mind is intellectually or academically blank requiring the impartation of knowledge by a teacher that would equip and sustain the mind in the ever changing world. The fact remains that Primary school teachers play very vital role in the impartation of knowledge into and should in turn be appreciated by everyone in view of the fact that primary school teachers:

1. Shape young minds
2. Make learning humorous
3. Provide guidance and assessment
4. Encourage curiosity
5. Develop life skills
6. Lay base for future success
7. Assist learners manage emotions
8. Foster strong bond with learners and parents
9. Continuously rejuvenate learners knowledge
10. Encourage synergy
11. Build confidence in learners
12. Foster social skills
13. Encourage creativity
14. Demonstrate good values and behaviors
15. Help learner develop problem solving skills
16. Create safe environment for learning
17. Make learning fun
18. Lead learners to maturity

5. Conclusion

Indeed primary school teachers in securing better future for young learner. All the engineers, doctors, lecturers, accountants, pilots, professors, teachers etc we have today are all young minds (young learners) who sat helplessly in the primary school while primary school teachers teach them how to secure their future. Even in war zones, internally displaced camps, in the midst of insurgencies etc, primary school teachers are there to drive young learners to their different destination.

Primary school teachers are obviously often looked down upon, disrespected, cajoled and treated as trash, no importance placed on primary school teacher despite all the efforts put in to ensure young minds get well equipped intellectually. Arising from the negative treatment melted on primary school teachers, many of them are seen portraying lasses-affair attitude toward duties which has become one of the reasons for the production of half-baked graduate.

As a matter of urgency, the mindset of many ought to be tilted placing utmost importance on primary school teachers, they should not be treated with disdain, by so doing, the future of young learners will be guaranteed.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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