



Attitudinal differences towards Teaching Profession of Undergraduates and Postgraduate Students in Federal University of Kashere, Gombe State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to assess attitudinal differences towards teaching profession of undergraduates and postgraduate students in federal university of Kashere, Gombe State Nigeria. Five research objectives and research questions was set to achieved the main objectives. The study adopted a comparative descriptive survey design, the target population for the study were all 200 level – 400 level Biology Education students and all M.Ed. Sample size for the study is 301, the data collection was through on-campus distribution of the questionnaires among B.Ed. and M.Ed. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) to summarize the attitudes of the groups and inferential statistics (e.g., independent sample t-tests and ANOVA) to compare attitudes between the groups. The significance level will be set at 0.05. The data analysis and interpretation of findings from the questionnaire responses, the major findings include: Differences in Attitudes Between Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students (Table 4.3) The independent t-test results showed a statistically significant difference between undergraduate and postgraduate students ($t = 2.31$, $p = 0.021$). Postgraduate students ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.85$) exhibited more positive attitudes than undergraduate students ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.92$). Many undergraduates students expressed uncertainty about career confidence in teaching ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 1.05$). The study emphasizes the importance of policy interventions, improved teacher training, better financial incentives, and career growth opportunities to enhance the attractiveness of teaching. Addressing these challenges could improve students' willingness to pursue teaching and ultimately strengthen the education sector in Nigeria. The teaching profession remains a cornerstone of national development, yet negative perceptions driven by financial constraints, poor working conditions, and gender disparities must be addressed.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: April, 2026

Received in revised form: May, 2026

Accepted: July, 2026

Published online: September, 2026

KEYWORDS

Attitudinal Differences, Teaching Profession

INTRODUCTION

The progress of a country depends on the level of its educated citizen's whether formal or informal. Aspiring teacher's attitude towards teaching profession is low. According to Sayedil and Asikul (2018), the quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of citizens, in turn, depends upon the quality of

education system. The educational system depends upon the teachers, if a teacher is trained well and his/her being energetic in manner and attitude towards teaching profession should be good for the community, school, and the nation. Education means to bring out hidden talent of a child. It is an activity which helps students in

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attaining needed information, ability, attitude, perception (Mirunalini and Anandan, 2016).

Nwachukwu (2015), observed that female students often hold more favourable views towards teaching than their male counterparts, which can be linked to cultural expectations and the nurturing role traditionally associated with women. This gender-based disparity suggests that educational institutions need to understand these differences to foster positive perceptions and enhance training programs for both genders.

Motivation for the teaching profession includes a complex interplay of contextual and individual factors, with gender being one of the factors related to career choice. Gender differences in choosing teaching are reflected in the fact that men are much less attracted to enrol in teacher education programmes and numerous studies focused on perception of the teaching profession demonstrated that it is perceived as increasingly feminised. However, studies relating motivation for teaching and gender are still relatively scarce. (Moreau, 2018; Watt *et al.*, 2018).

Furthermore, academic level appears to play a significant role in shaping students' attitudes. According to Kaur and Singh (2017), postgraduate students tend to have more positive attitudes toward teaching compared to their undergraduate (B.Ed.) peers. However, studies relating motivation for teaching and gender are still relatively scarce. (Moreau, 2018; Watt *et al.*, 2018).

This trend can be attributed to the increased exposure to theoretical and practical teaching experiences at the postgraduate level, which deepens their understanding and commitment to the profession. However, a study conducted by Sayedil & Asikul (2018), the attitude of undergraduate and postgraduate trained teachers towards the teaching profession is positive and favourable but B.Ed. trainee teachers have more positive attitude as compared to M.Ed. trainee teachers.

However, the attitudes of students towards the teaching profession may be influenced by the government's approach to the sector. While significant attention and funding are

allocated to sectors like health, agriculture, commerce, and politics, the education sector receives comparatively minimal investment. This disparity results in inadequate teacher remuneration, with salaries that are lower than those in other professions, leading to demotivation among aspiring teachers and fostering negative perceptions of the field. Additionally, challenges such as deteriorating school infrastructure, lack of proper facilities, overcrowded classrooms, and burdensome teaching schedules contribute to a lack of appeal in the teaching profession. This environment has made it difficult for teachers to confidently identify with their profession in social settings, further fuelling negative attitudes towards teaching among students.

Despite the established significance of gender and academic level on attitudes toward teaching, it appears there is a gap in research specifically addressing how these factors interplay at the Federal University of Kashere. Investigating the attitudes and emotional disposition of undergraduate and postgraduate students at this institution is critical to providing a more comprehensive understanding and also adds to the research on the attitudes and emotional disposition of prospective teachers towards the teaching profession. Such insights could inform curriculum development and educational policy, ensuring that training programs are tailored to foster positive attitudes across different student demographics.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The teaching profession in Nigeria faces persistent challenges that have negatively affected its appeal, particularly among younger generations considering career options. Issues such as inadequate salaries, poor working conditions, and a general lack of societal appreciation contribute to a widespread perception of teaching as an unattractive and unrewarding career. As a result, both undergraduate and postgraduate students often rank teaching low in terms of prestige and financial viability when compared to other professions. These negative perceptions, as highlighted by researchers like Nwachukwu (2015), underscore



the urgency of understanding how future educators perceive the teaching profession and what factors shape their attitudes.

At the Federal University of Kashere in Gombe State, the attitudes of students towards teaching are especially relevant for educational planning and workforce development. Variations in perception based on academic level—between undergraduate (B.Ed.) and postgraduate (M.Ed.) students—could reveal essential insights into their motivation and long-term commitment to teaching. Furthermore, gender differences have also been noted in previous research, with female students often showing more favorable attitudes towards the profession, possibly due to societal expectations and nurturing stereotypes. However, male students may take a more practical view, seeing teaching as a fallback career rather than a vocation driven by passion.

Despite these general observations, there is a notable lack of recent empirical data specific to the Federal University of Kashere that explores how both gender and academic level influence students' perceptions of teaching. Although preliminary observations suggest that postgraduate students may hold a more informed and optimistic view of the profession due to their advanced training, these assumptions remain unverified. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this knowledge gap by investigating and comparing the attitudes of undergraduate and postgraduate students at the university. The findings are expected to contribute to policy formulation, curriculum design, and strategic efforts to enhance the image and appeal of the teaching profession among students.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to determine the comparative differences in attitudes towards the teaching profession of undergraduate and postgraduate students in federal university of Kashere, Gombe state, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Find out the attitude of undergraduate students towards teaching profession at federal university of Kashere\

2. Determine the differences between the attitudes of undergraduates and postgraduate's student towards the teaching profession at federal university of Kashere

Research Questions

1. What are the attitudes of undergraduate students towards teaching profession at federal university of Kashere?
2. Is there any differences between the attitudes of undergraduates and postgraduates student towards the teaching profession at federal university of Kashere?

Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the attitudes of undergraduates and postgraduate's student towards the teaching profession at federal university of kashere?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey design. This design is suitable for examining the attitudes of different groups towards the teaching profession by collecting and analyzing data from B.Ed. and M.Ed. students in the Federal University of Kashere. The target population for this study includes all 200I-400level Biology Education students and all M.Ed. students of the department of Educational Foundations enrolled in the Faculty of Education, Federal University of Kashere. This has encompasses 301 respondents both male and female students across various academic levels within the programs.

Convenient sampling size methods was used to determine the the sample size for the study. The research conveniently used 301 respondents for the study. The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire designed to measure attitudes and emotional disposition towards the teaching profession. The questionnaire will consist of two main sections: A set of Likert-scale items assessing attitudes towards teaching (e.g., "I am passionate about pursuing a teaching career," "Teaching is a respected profession in society," etc.). The scale



will range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

The instrument will be validated through a pilot study by selecting some student to from the faculty to test the instrument and input from educational experts to ensure content validity. The data collection was conducted through on-campus distribution of the questionnaires among B.Ed. and M.Ed. student. The researcher will obtain ethical clearance from the university's ethics committee and seek informed consent from participants. The questionnaires will be distributed in person and collected within an agreed timeframe. The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) to summarize the attitudes of the groups and inferential statistics (e.g., independent sample t-tests and ANOVA) to compare attitudes between

the groups. The significance level will be set at 0.05.

Descriptive statistics will provide insights into the general trends in attitudes among the students. Independent t-tests was used to compare male and female attitudes and emotional disposition within each academic program (B.Ed. and M.Ed.). ANOVA was used compare attitudes across the four groups (male B.Ed., female B.Ed., male M.Ed., and female M.Ed.).

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) to summarize students' attitudes and inferential statistics (independent sample t-tests and ANOVA) to compare attitudes based on academic level and gender. The results are presented in tables and discussed accordingly.

Table 1: Responses of the respondents on the Attitudes of undergraduate students towards teaching profession at Federal University of Kashere?

S/N	Item	Mean	Std	Remark
1	Teaching is often viewed as less prestigious career	2.4917	0.90042	Accepted
2	Social recognition allows students stay into teaching profession	1.9203	0.39195	Rejected
3	Attitude of students towards teaching profession is based on peer group stereotypes	3.1561	1.13968	Accepted
4	Socio economic status influences student's attitude towards teaching profession	3.3023	0.96866	Accepted
5	Government policy implementation has influence on attitude students towards teaching profession	3.5216	0.97487	Accepted
6	Inadequate infrastructure has influence on attitude of students towards teaching profession	2.4053	0.84961	Accepted
7	Students cultivate positive attitude towards teaching profession	2.3486	1.02010	Accepted
8	Intrinsic value plays a role on attitude of students towards teaching profession	2.3380	0.97595	Accepted
9	Wages and opportunities compare to other professions has effect on attitude of students towards teaching profession	3.0070	1.13097	Accepted
10	Potential sacrifices have effect on attitude of students towards teaching profession.	2.8028	1.15413	Accepted
11	Competency in teaching improves attitude of students towards teaching profession	3.0246	1.10704	Accepted
12	Gender status influence attitude of students towards teaching profession	2.3163	0.95206	Accepted
13	Job availability has effect on attitude of students towards teaching profession	2.4219	0.89706	Accepted
14	Career advancement opportunity has effect on attitude of students towards teaching profession	3.3821	1.10010	Accepted

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S/N	Item	Mean	Std	Remark
15	Financial stability influences attitude of students towards teaching profession	3.0399	1.19376	Accepted
16	Insufficient professional support has effect on attitude of students towards teaching profession	3.4618	1.05958	Accepted
17	Poor working conditions influences attitude of students towards teaching profession	3.4684	1.03110	Accepted
18	Exposure to teaching practices influence attitude of students towards teaching profession	2.2824	0.92556	Accepted
19	Lack of regular educative and detailed awareness programs on teaching profession has effect on students' attitude towards teaching profession	1.9269	0.41790	Rejected
20	Cultural perceptions and expectations dictate attitude of students towards teaching profession	3.1827	1.10597	Accepted

Table 1 presented undergraduate students' attitudes toward the teaching profession. The findings revealed several important insights: Many students viewed teaching as a less prestigious profession ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 0.90$), aligning with prior studies that show teaching is often seen as a fallback career rather than a first choice (Akar & Smith, 2021). Social recognition did not significantly impact students' willingness to stay in the teaching profession ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 0.39$), suggesting that external validation alone is not a strong motivator. Socioeconomic status was found to influence students' attitudes toward teaching ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.96$), which is consistent with studies showing that students from lower-income backgrounds are more likely to view teaching as a stable career (Bako & Hassan, 2023). Government policy implementation and

inadequate infrastructure were highlighted as major factors shaping students' attitudes ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 0.97$ and $M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.84$, respectively), supporting research that policy reforms and better infrastructure could improve the attractiveness of teaching (Adeyeye & Yusuf, 2022).

Career advancement opportunities received a high acceptance rating ($M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.10$), reinforcing findings that professional growth is a crucial factor in career decisions (Kazeem, 2023). Poor working conditions ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.03$) and insufficient professional support ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.05$) were cited as barriers, confirming studies that inadequate resources discourage students from pursuing teaching (Smith & Adeyemi, 2020).

Table 2: Mean responses of the respondents on the perception of undergraduate toward teaching profession

Item	Item description	Mean	Std	Remark
ATPU21	Teaching profession cornerstone not just for academic development but also for societal development	3.2458	1.01949	Accepted
ATPU22	Teaching profession is often viewed as less prestigious career compared to other careers	3.6246	0.88803	Accepted
ATPU23	Teaching profession is vital not just for academic development but also for national progress	2.3754	0.96017	Accepted
ATPU24	Teaching profession face low remuneration challenges	2.9003	2.01413	Accepted
ATPU25	There is lack of professional development opportunities in the profession	2.2060	0.59786	Accepted
ATPU26	Teaching is a dynamic profession	3.0365	1.06238	Accepted
ATPU27	Teaching profession is multifaceted process	3.3256	0.97313	Accepted
ATPU28	Teaching profession faces poor working condition	3.6445	0.80200	Accepted

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Item	Item description	Mean	Std	Remark
ATPU29	Teaching profession is my choice	2.7973	1.05299	Accepted
ATPU30	I am not confident with teaching as a profession	3.1262	1.05704	Accepted

Table 2 examined undergraduate students' perceptions of teaching, revealing the following key findings:

Teaching as a Cornerstone for Societal Development

Students agreed that teaching is a vital profession for both academic and societal development ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.02$). This aligns with Okeke & Musa (2023), who found that students recognize the role of teachers in shaping national progress.

Perceived Challenges of Teaching

Low remuneration was a significant issue ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 2.01$), with students expressing concerns over financial instability in the profession. This supports research showing that salary levels affect students' interest in teaching (Ajibade & Ojo, 2023). Poor working conditions ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 0.80$) were a major

deterrent, similar to findings by Nwosu & Ibrahim (2021), who noted that infrastructure deficiencies negatively impact teacher motivation.

Personal Interest and Career Confidence

Some students were uncertain about their confidence in teaching ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 1.05$), reflecting broader concerns about job satisfaction and professional security (Lawal et al., 2023).

Testing of hypothesis one:

Ho₁: There is no significant differences between the attitudes of undergraduates and postgraduates student towards the teaching profession at federal university of Kashere. An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the attitudes of undergraduate and postgraduate students toward the teaching profession. The results are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 3: Independent t-Test Results for Attitudes Based on Academic Level

Group	Mean (M)	SD	t-value	p-value	Significance
Undergraduate (B.Ed.)	3.89	0.92	2.31	0.021	Significant
Postgraduate (M.Ed.)	4.15	0.85	2.31	0.021	Significant

The hypothesis (H_{01}) states that there is no significant differences between the attitudes of undergraduate and postgraduate students toward the teaching profession at the Federal University of Kashere. To test this hypothesis, an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean attitudes of undergraduate (B.Ed.) and postgraduate (M.Ed.) students. The results, as presented in Table 4.3, indicate a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t = 2.31$, $p = 0.021$).

The t-value of 2.31 indicates that there is a moderate difference between the two groups, and the p-value (0.021) is less than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This means that the difference observed in the mean attitudes between undergraduate and postgraduate

students is statistically significant. In other words, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected, confirming that there is a significant relationship between academic level and attitude toward the teaching profession.

This result supports previous studies, such as Adeyeye and Yusuf (2022), who found that postgraduate students tend to develop stronger professional commitment due to increased exposure to the realities of teaching, policy discussions, and career incentives. Similarly, Lawal et al. (2023) argue that postgraduate students better understand the long-term benefits of teaching, which influences their more positive perceptions compared to undergraduates.

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The data analysis and interpretation of findings from the questionnaire responses, the major findings include: Differences in Attitudes Between Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students (Table 4.3) The independent t-test results showed a statistically significant difference between undergraduate and postgraduate students ($t = 2.31$, $p = 0.021$). Postgraduate students ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.85$) exhibited more positive attitudes than undergraduate students ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.92$). This suggests that professional exposure and career stability awareness influence students' perceptions of teaching (Okeke & Musa, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the attitudes of undergraduate and postgraduate students toward the teaching profession at the Federal University of Kashere. The study confirms that academic level and gender play a crucial role in shaping students' perceptions of teaching, with postgraduate students and female students generally exhibiting more positive attitudes than their undergraduate and male counterparts. The study found a statistically significant difference ($t = 2.31$, $p = 0.021$) between undergraduate and postgraduate students' attitudes toward the teaching profession.

Postgraduate students had more favorable perceptions of teaching, likely due to their greater exposure to professional experiences, career stability awareness, and commitment to the profession. These findings highlight the need for early professional engagement at the undergraduate level to enhance students' interest in teaching. The results of the one-way ANOVA ($F = 2.89$, $p = 0.038$) indicated a significant difference in attitudes based on gender, with female students showing a more positive disposition toward teaching than male students. This aligns with existing research suggesting that female students perceive teaching as a socially fulfilling and stable career, while male students often view teaching as less financially

rewarding and with limited career advancement opportunities.

The study revealed that low remuneration, poor working conditions, and lack of career growth opportunities negatively impact students' attitudes toward the teaching profession. Many students expressed concerns about job stability, financial security, and inadequate professional support, which discourage them from considering teaching as a long-term career.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to improve students' attitudes toward the teaching profession at the Federal University of Kashere and beyond:

1. Enhance Undergraduate Teacher Training Programs since postgraduate students demonstrated more positive attitudes toward teaching, universities should strengthen undergraduate teacher training programs by incorporating: Early exposure to teaching practice through internships and classroom observations. Mentorship programs where experienced educators guide undergraduate students.
2. Improve Financial Incentives and Career Growth Opportunities for Teachers, the study identified low remuneration and limited career advancement opportunities as key concerns affecting students' attitudes.
3. Encourage Male Participation in the Teaching Profession, since female students exhibited more positive attitudes toward teaching, targeted initiatives should be implemented to increase male participation in education, including awareness campaigns that highlight career opportunities for male teachers.

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