

Professional Ethic of Special Education Teachers in Nigeria: Challenges and Way Forward

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Abstract. The paper examined the professional ethic of special education teachers, the challenges and way forward. However, the study focused on the concepts, the characteristics of professional the professional ethics of special education teachers, the major challenges and the way forward. Suggestions were however proffered that would enhance professional education ethics among the special education teachers.

Keywords: Professional Ethics Special Education Teachers, Challenges and Way forward.

1. Introduction

Education is regarded as an instrument for transformation, social change and national development. To achieve the national goals of education, the teacher is the answer, the teacher needs to be acquainted with pedagogical approaches necessary for achieving effective teaching teaching-learning process. Teaching profession according to Abbah (2009), is an act of having the features or traits of profession which differentiate teaching from other professions. The author stated that as a professional teacher, one should be trained and acquired educational qualifications such as Grade II NCE, B.Ed, M.Ed, Ph.D in education, PGDE. Without these anybody that goes into the classroom to teach would be regarded as a cheater and not teacher. One must be a registered member of a professional body or Association such as special Education Teacher Association, Science teacher association, Teachers Registered Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Nigeria Union of Teacher's among others.

Professional teachers therefore have the following characteristics according to Kautrich (2010), knowledgability about the subject matter, vest in interpersonal relation, model and acquisition of basic pedagogical skills, interest in the student, honesty, accountability in financing management, effective leaders and profession of all the quality that will enhance integrity to the teaching profession in the society.

However, as an ideal special education teacher should have good understanding of special education students with various disabilities such as students with visually impaired and all people that need to be handled with care and special training. It should be noted that professional special needs education teachers need to be trained in the method of teaching and efficient utilization of resource specially designed for the special education students. Ayeleso (2016) stated that ideal, special education teachers should be personate, careful, knowledgeable, and skillful in handling special education, equipment he should not have hatred for the special education students the teacher should be capable of teaching the students with special needs, under any environment conditions possession of thee trait mentioned above made the teachers to become an ideal special education teacher.

2. Ethics of Professional Special Education Teachers

Ethic is the philosophical concept which printchard (2014), described as a process of determining what is right or wrong, good or bad, fair or unfair, responsible or irresponsible, obligatory or

permissible, praise worthy or blame worthy, guilt or shame, identification and sticking to the favorable one known as ethic. It is defined ethic as the code of conduct or practice and formulated precepts of behaviours relevant to the human virtues. Ethic of teaching profession is therefore defined as the process of realizing good action and the Strule against bad ones as applied in the day today practice of professions in the society and the individuals (Jimba, Ogundele and Daniel 2015) defined ethics as the process of identifying the favorable actions in an individual behavior and ability to struggle against the bad ones in the school system. It is concerned with the moral conducts and standards that guide the behaviors in the school system.

However special needs education as name implies is the type of education or knowledge skills, ability and attitude imparted on the people with peculiarities of hearing impaired blindness, dumb and handicapped. These categories are special to the teachers because, the peculiarities are special, people that need to be treated with special care. This is to say that the special education teachers need to respect the worths and dignity of the special students with special needs. It should be noted that for quality of special needs education students to be enhanced in Nigerian schools, special needs education teachers need to be morally upright do the right things at the right time to identify the good behaviors and struggle to avoid bad ones.

3. Professional Ethics and Special Education Teachers

The professional special needs education teachers are guided by certain principles of code of conduct and professional standard. The guided code of conduct enables special needs education teachers perform their job to expectation. Ogundele, Gyot and Bwoi (2015) identified the basic ethical issues that guid code of conduct or behavior of teachers as follows:

Commitment: Commitment should be one of the principles of the special education because, the professional teachers should be commitment to students by guiding them aright to the parents. By sharing with the parent how to shape the PTO, students behaviors and building healthy relationship with the schools and home to the community through effective interaction, to the employer through building healthy relationships between employer and employee. The relationship will bring about mutual respect understanding and good faith. The professional teacher should also be committed to the

profession as a unique occupation and positively contribute to the support planning and programme of the professional special needs education programme in Nigeria.

Honesty and prudence: In the utilization of the allocated resources for special education objectives are to be achieved, the teachers need to be honest in the use of human, material and financial resources like. Professional special education teachers need to struggle to avoid misappropriation, embezzlement, and financial mismanagement. It should be noted that honesty prudence in the management of the allocated resources will enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the teaching learning process in special education programme in Nigeria.

Moral stability: Sound moral special education teachers should be morally convinced to avoid any form of immoral act with special education students. It should be noted that special education students are helpless. They need assistance and should be carefully treated. The special educator should develop sound moral standard on sexual harassment and examination malpractice, drug abuse, drunkenness, smoking and other forms of immoral act. It should be noted that a morally and ethically sound teachers will surely avoid all forms of unethical uses in the school system and coordinate the students into the right paths Ogundele, Jimba and Luka (2016).

Personal traits: A special educator should be patient sincere, humble, and hardworking and should always be a model of emulation. Since teachers are models to the school children they are their parents and the behaviors in the school should be worthy of emulation. Special education teachers dealing with the students, and handle them with care. Indolence and laziness are unethical issue that special education teachers be avoided. The teachers should be hardworking and be able to strict to their responsibility since it is an ethical issue for the special education teachers to work closely with the special students so that they can be counseled helped assisted and aided the special education teachers need to struggle to go against any form of indolence and laziness which are unethical to the spirit of teaching professions in Nigeria.

Emotional stability: This is another ethical issue that a special educator should have, Mangwvat (2013). Opined that teachers should help each child to use his emotions in the right way. It is unethical for teachers to act angry about evil things such as ignorance, unkindness, injustice for the special education teachers need to put them in right ways.

Interpersonal relationships: It is an ethical issue in the teaching profession to have interpersonal

relationship with other teachers and students. i.e they should be sympathetic, kindness, helpfulness patience good manners, self control, impartial, sense of humor, honesty and developing creative minds. In order to help the students it is ethical for special education teachers to develop the mentioned ethics in himself in order to help the students to be morally alright in the society.

4. Suggestion for Improving Ethics of Special Education Teachers

In order to resolve ethic issues that affect special education professions, the following suggestion are made:

Organization of Teachers Capacity Building: Teachers' capacity building should be organized by the institutions, governments and associations for teachers in order to acquire basic knowledge the methods of handling special students. The knowledge is acquired through workshops, conferences and distance education. Integration of inclusive education to curriculum: special education should be integrated into the education curriculum.

Effective Guidance and Counseling Services: Effective counseling service be provided for both the special education teachers and students. The counseling service provided will enable the students to understand themselves and have a rational decision toward developing ethical conviction and integrity.

Professional Ethics should be Integrated to Curriculum: Integration of professional ethical behavior into the special education programme. However the integration of the content will introduce the students to the ethic of the profession, and the challenges that teachers and other special education profession encounter during the practice, the integration will therefore allow the students to take a rational decision in resolving ethical issues for the students with special needs.

Provision of Institutional Support Services: Institutional support service should be provided for the students with special needs. The institution support service should include recreational, welfare, library, information and the orientation service. The service provided by the institution will go a long way to keep the special education student safe in the schools and create sense of belongingness.

Centres for Special Education Needs Should be Established: The center should be established by the three tiers of government and be charged with the responsibility of supervision monitoring of the

quality and necessary assistance to the student with special need especially in Nigeria.

Provision of Educational Facilities: The list of equipment below should be provided and used for effective teaching and learning of the special need braille and jigsaw puzzle, typing machine, tape recorder while the deaf need cart, histogram, real objects computer among others.

Need for Efficient Parent Teachers Associations: A formidable Parents Teachers Association should be established for the benefit of students with special needs. The collaborative efforts of the PTA will encourage adequate monitoring of special students and their homes and be able to provide adequate discipline and struggle against bad behavior in the society which is regarded as unethical issue.

5. Conclusion

The chapter however, discussed the concepts and basic types of ethical issues among special education teachers and students, the professional ethical challenges and ways forward towards the provision of quality special education products especially the students with special needs.

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