



DIFFERENCE OF ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE TEACHING PROFESSION AMONG SCHOOL-BASED AND REGULAR STUDENT TEACHERS IN NORTH RIFT REGION, KENYA

Burudi Florah Khahudu¹ Prof. Kennedy Bota, PhD²

¹*Student, Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Psychology, MMUST.*

²*Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, MMUST.*

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the difference in attitudes towards the teaching profession among school-based (SB) and regular student teachers in North Rift region, Kenya. The study was guided by situated learning theory propounded by Lave and Wenger and Functionalist theory of attitudes (FAT) proposed by Daniel Katz. The study was an empirical research based on Mixed Methods research design comprising Ex post facto and Descriptive survey designs. The study population consisted of 1000 student teachers, 85 lecturers, 380 mentors (cooperating teachers) and 66 head teachers, and 2 County Directors of Education. The study sample was 30% of the study population; Purposive sampling was used to select 26 lecturers and 20 head teachers, simple random sampling to select 114 mentors (cooperating teachers) and 300 student teachers who then were stratified into categories of school based and regular programmes while Census sampling was used to select 2 County Directors of Education. Split half method was employed to establish the reliability of the instruments. A pilot study was conducted covering 10% of the target population which was excluded from the final study. Content validity was established by availing the instruments to experts in the area from the Department of Educational psychology. Qualitative data was transcribed and reported as emerging themes while quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, means and percentages. Inferential statistics such as One Way ANOVA and Simple Linear Regression Analysis was applied using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version. The study carried out ANOVA test to establish if there is any relationship between attitude towards teaching profession and program of students. From the results, the F-statistics was recorded as 62.911 at $p=0.000$, at 95% confidence level, implied the model fitted between the attitude towards teaching profession and the program of students. It is envisaged that the findings of this study would add to the existing knowledge base in the area of teacher education that may benefit the Ministry of Education (MOE). Furthermore, from the results of the study, there might be a necessary consideration for an improved policy framework development and implementation for teacher training colleges pertaining to teaching practice programme.

KEY WORDS: *Student teacher's attitudes, teaching program, North Rift Region, Kenya*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of teaching practice is to produce effective and successful teachers who would subsequently produce successful citizens in future. Teaching practice provides opportunities for the students to develop professional competencies, knowledge, understanding, skills and personal characteristics and values in pedagogy. Nweke in Oyinloye (2010) summarized the objectives of teaching practice as: Provision of opportunities to put theory into practice; Giving practical experience, opportunities and

facilities for self-confidence and expertise; Provision of ability to organize, control and manage classroom with due disciplinary measures; and Development of an integrational and mutual sense of co-operation as well as interchange of ideas and attitudes.

Student teachers enter the initial teacher training programme with already established beliefs and value systems. Their perception of teacher and teaching profession can play a significant role in developing competencies to be an adept teacher (Orissa, 2011). Therefore, the relevance of teaching



practice exercise in the training of would be teacher is important. However, the perception of the student teachers about this important exercise in their training seems not to be impressive. It has therefore been noted that, if prospective teachers are to take up their responsibility and be able to face the challenges on the job ahead of them, then, it is imperative that these future teachers are engaged with those experiences that would arouse their interest and challenge their curiosity about teaching and learning. According to Ogunojemite (2010) the importance of teacher education is to provide functional education and training for the learners within and outside the school settings. It is the training outside the school that is referred to as teaching practice. However, the two aspects – students' perceptions of teaching practice and teachers' attitudes towards their job are closely connected (Egwu, 2015).

Teaching practice is a component of being trained to teach in teacher education, which provides a transition from theory to real teaching contexts (Saban & Cocklar, 2013). The aim of teaching practice therefore, according to Altintas and Gorgen (2014), is to ensure that pre-service teachers are well prepared for the teaching profession. Teaching practice denotes the preparation of student teachers for teaching by practical training. Much as professional preparation on the part of the educators is crucial in developing competent teachers, the attitude of the students towards adequately preparing themselves ready for the tasks ahead is important. The students must be prepared for teaching practice exercise which is a major aspect of their professional training. They need to submit themselves for the training and guidance of their educators and also personally prepare to undertake the exercise.

The period of learning to practice a skill is very important to any discipline that is professionally inclined. It is therefore imperative that those aspiring to enter into such profession are well prepared before they can be inducted or allowed to join the profession. This explains the inclusion of teaching practice exercise in the training of prospective professional teachers in the primary teacher training colleges. Ogbazi in Jegede (2009) noted that one of the problems of industrial development in Nigeria is that of inadequacy of sufficiently trained human resources. These much needed human resources were enumerated to include qualified teachers, technicians and workshop attendants. Jegede also felt that there should be joint involvement between the institutions and the industrial world to produce skilled graduates that would adequately serve the society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is becoming increasingly clear that although teaching practice is an important stage in teacher training, teacher students in Baringo and West Pokot Counties perform poorly in teaching practice and subsequently in the end of course examinations. This is evidenced by the consistent low mean grades of between 6.185, 5.8895 and 5.639 in Primary Teacher Examinations (PTE) over the past three years respectively (Kenya National Examinations Council, 2017, 2018, 2019). Teaching practice being one of the examinable core units contributes to this poor performance. The results also reveal that the number of students referred has been rising year after year, for instance, there were 343 referrals in 2017, 421 referrals in 2018 and 551 referrals in 2019. This shows that between 60% and 72% of the candidates have been referred in various subjects including teaching practice within the last three years. It is further noted that at least 4% of the student teachers fail the examination every year.

Coupled with this, North Rift region is predominantly volatile in terms of security which poses a lot of challenges to student teachers during teaching practice. This area is also designated as a hardship area due to the semi-arid (ASAL) climatic conditions. The topography is generally rugged and therefore, primary schools in this area are spread far apart from each other. Some schools are located on top of hills with rocky compounds; some are inaccessible due to impassable roads while others are occasionally closed down due to ethnic animosity. For instance, hundreds of teachers were forced out of their working stations, and others were killed in Baringo ("Teachers killed in Baringo", 2017). Furthermore, some student teachers have occasionally been forced to transfer from one school to another during teaching practice in order to complete their teaching practice due to insecurity. This is believed to be a set back to their progress and performance in teaching practice. There is also little research to the researchers' knowledge that has been undertaken to determine the difference of attitudes towards the teaching profession among school-based and regular student teachers in North Rift Region of Kenya.

Therefore, it is against this background that a study aimed to determine the difference of attitudes towards the teaching profession among school-based and regular student teachers in Baringo and West Pokot Counties was conducted.



PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to determine the difference of attitudes towards the teaching profession among school-based and regular student teachers in North Rift Region of Kenya.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

H₀₂: There is no difference of attitude towards the teaching profession among School- Based (SB) and Regular student teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was guided by situated learning theory propounded by Lave and Wenger, (1991) Situated Learning Theory posits that learning is unintentional and situated within authentic activity, context, and culture. In contrast with most classrooms learning activities that involve abstract knowledge which is and out of context, Lave argues that learning is situated; that is, as it normally occurs, learning is embedded within activity, context and culture. It is also usually unintentional rather than deliberate. Lave and Wenger call this a process of “legitimate peripheral participation”. Knowledge needs to be presented in authentic contexts: settings and situations that would normally involve that knowledge. Social interaction and collaboration are essential components of situated learning: learners become involved in a “community of practice” which embodies certain beliefs and behaviors to be acquired. As the beginner or novice moves from the periphery of a community to its center, he or she becomes more active and engaged within the culture and eventually assumes the role of an expert.

Situated learning is a theory on how individuals acquire professional skills, extending research on apprenticeship into how legitimate peripheral participation leads to membership in a community of practice. Situated learning "takes as its focus the relationship between learning and the social situation in which it occurs"(Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia). Situated learning was first proposed by Jean Lave and

Etienne Wenger as a model of learning in a community of practice. At its simplest, situated learning is learning that takes place in the same context in which it is applied. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning is a social process whereby knowledge is constructed; they suggest that such learning is situated in a specific context and embedded within a particular social and physical environment.

This theory is relevant in explaining teaching practice. In teaching practice the roles of the master teachers (mentors) and the apprentice (student teachers) in a practical or situated learning is based on two principles as follows; Learning takes place as a function of the context, culture and activity in which it occurs. This theory views learning as a process that occurs in a participatory social context. The participants are the master teachers while the apprentice learners are the student teachers. Learners (student teachers) acquire the knowledge, skills, values and other attributes they need to perform in the classroom by engaging in the school situation (teaching practice). Thus, they apply the abstract knowledge they acquired in their institutions of study (training colleges) to real life situations during teaching practice. Two concepts are relevant for situated learning, these are; “community of practice” and “legitimate peripheral participation”. Learners identify with the practices appropriate with a specific community. Three elements define a community of practice namely mutual engagement of participants in action, negotiation of a joint enterprise and development of a shared repertoire (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Petro, 2013). Student teachers are legitimate peripheral participants in the practices of the teaching community during their practical teaching under the guidance of experienced teachers as mentors.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1.1 shows the interaction between attitude towards the teaching profession among School- Based (SB) and Regular student teachers.

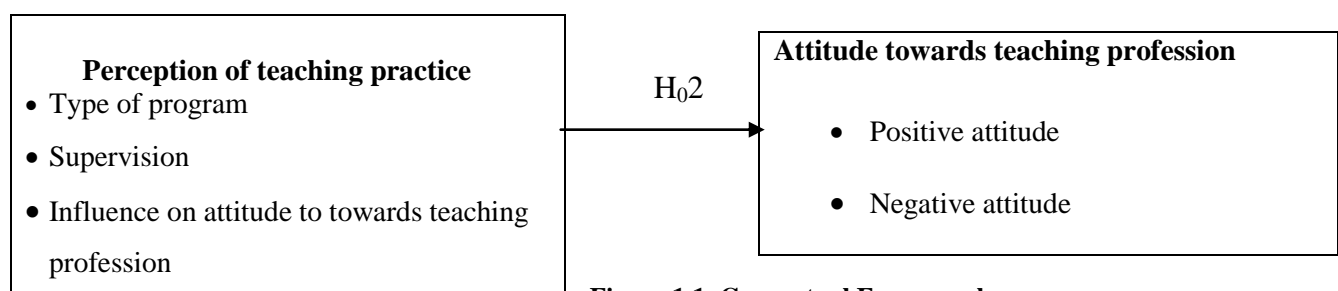


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's own conceptualization (2021)



EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Sahayarani and Stanly (2014) study aimed at identifying the attitude towards teaching profession of B.Ed trainees in India. 104 students from four different colleges of education in Pondicherry were randomly selected as participants. Results revealed significant difference in attitude towards teaching profession in the subcategories: sex, subject and locality. While in the study by Sahayarani et.al (2014) 104 students from four different colleges of education were randomly selected as participants the current study had 462 respondents who were selected randomly, purposively and through census sampling techniques.

Theresal and Benjamin (2011) also found that male student-teachers and female student teachers have no significant difference in their attitude towards teaching profession as well as self-esteem. Most of the researchers conclude that student teachers (female) possess more favourable attitude towards teaching than their male counter parts. Difference in attitude towards teaching profession is observed between male & female (Tribal) student teachers of Science stream, social science stream and Tribal & Non-tribal (female) student teachers of science stream. In all the three groups, Tribal (female) student teachers showed favourable attitude towards teaching profession. Accordingly, as prospective teachers' positive attitudes towards the teaching profession increase, so does their life satisfaction (Recepoglu, 2013). In addition, as prospective teachers positively develop attitudes towards the teaching profession, their self-efficacy beliefs in being able to perform their teaching profession effectively also increase (Dadandi, Kalyon, and Yazici, 2016). The current study sought to determine the student teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession.

Research on teaching practice in the Northern part of the Rift Valley Region of Kenya has been done on perceptions and attitudes towards teaching, for instance, Koross, (2016) carried out a study on the student teachers experiences during teaching practice and its impact on their perception of the teaching profession at university of Eldoret.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a non-experimental research design. It was an empirical research based on Mixed Methods Research Design. This design was preferred on the grounds that it combines quantitative and qualitative approaches by including both quantitative and qualitative data in a single research study (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2009). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) define mixed methods research as those studies

that include at least one quantitative strand and one qualitative strand. The strand encompasses the basic process of conducting quantitative or qualitative research: posing a research question, collecting and analyzing data and interpreting the results.

This design was appropriate for this study because; one data source is insufficient, qualitative data provides a deep examination of a phenomenon of interest, but only with respect to a handful of participants. On the other hand, quantitative data can provide information across a much broader sampling of participants, but the depth of that information is certainly limited. Depending on the goals of a research study, as well as its guiding research questions, one type of data alone may not tell the complete picture or adequately answer the research questions. Moreover, the results from qualitative and quantitative data may be contradictory, which cannot be discovered if only one type of data are collected and analyzed. Therefore using both types of data in a single research study provides depth as well as breadth.

Study Population

Northern Rift Valley region has four public primary teacher training colleges namely; Moi Teachers Training College, Tambach Teachers Training College, Mosoriot Teachers Training College, and Chesta Teachers training college. Moi teachers training college and Chesta teachers training college were used in this study. The respondents used in this study were drawn from a total population of 1533 comprising of lecturers from the selected teacher training colleges, primary school head teachers, mentors (cooperating teachers) from the teaching practice schools, student teachers in the selected colleges in Baringo and West Pokot Counties. The two colleges (Moi-Baringo and Chesta teachers training colleges) used for this study, had, School Based as well as regular teacher training programmes. The respondents included; twenty six (26) lecturers, twenty (20) primary school head teachers, one hundred and fourteen (114) mentors (cooperating teachers), three hundred (300) second year School Based (SB) and regular teacher trainees.

Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling was used to select respondents for the study. Student teachers and mentors (cooperating teachers) were randomly selected. This technique was preferred because it ensures that each member or element of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample. It also allows generalizability to a larger population and the use of inferential statistics because



statistical indices calculated on the sample can be evaluated to determine the degree to which they accurately represent the population parameter. Stratified sampling technique was used to select samples according to students' level of training, programme of study and gender. However, respondents from each stratum were randomly picked. This is a more expedient method of randomly selecting participants than if a researcher was to rely solely on simple random sampling (Mertler, 2018). In this study, the goal of stratified random sampling technique was to ensure there is desired representation from the various subgroups in the population. Thus using stratified random sampling technique, respondents were selected in such a way that the existing subgroups or strata in the population were more or less represented in the sample. Stratified random sampling technique was relevant since it ensures that each group's characteristics are represented in the sample hence catering for external validity of the study, (Mukherji & Albon, 2018).

Purposive sampling technique was used to select, Lecturers and Head teachers of primary schools. Purposive sampling technique allows the researcher to use cases that have the required and focused information with respect to the objectives of the study. According to Johnson and Christensen, (2012) purposive or criterion based selection is similar to theoretical sampling where cases are chosen that provide the information needed for the purpose of the research, (Robinson, 2011).

Selection of colleges for this study was based on several factors. First, the teachers' college must be located in North Rift region, secondly, it must be public, and third, it must have had a School Based programme for at least three years. The primary schools selected should be public, be located within North Rift region, specifically in Baringo and West

Pokot counties and the schools should be among those used for teaching practice purposes.

Sample size

A sample of 462 participants was drawn from a population of primary teachers training colleges located in North Rift region representing 30% of the total population of 1533. Basing on the distribution of public primary teacher training colleges in the region, two (2) colleges representing 30% sample size of the population will be selected as units for the study. These two colleges are located in the volatile area of north rift region that is; Moi teachers training college in Baringo and Chesta teachers training college in West Pokot Counties. The selected colleges also have School Based programmes which have existed for at least three years. In line with this, 300 student teachers and 114 mentors (cooperating teachers) representing 30% of the total population of 1000 second year student teachers and 380 mentors (cooperating teachers) from teaching practice primary schools in Baringo and West Pokot Counties were selected using simple random sampling respectively. This gave all members an equal chance to be selected (Coolican, 2014).

Stratified sampling technique was used to select samples according to students' category that is; programme of study and gender and location of teaching practice school. This included School Based and Regular programme students; male and female students respectively. However, respondents from each stratum was randomly picked. Using purposive sampling technique: Stakeholders, including; twenty six (26) lecturers and twenty (20) primary school Head teachers were selected. Finally, Census sampling was used to select 2 County Directors of Education, one from Baringo County and one from West Pokot County.

Table 3.1: Sample Distribution

Category of participants	Population (N)	Sample size (n)	Percentage (%)	Sampling Techniques
Student teachers	1000	300	30	Simple random
Lecturers	85	26	30	Purposive
Assistant Teachers	380	114	30	Simple random
Head teachers	66	20	30	Purposive
C.D.E.	2	2	100	Census
Total	1533	462	30%	

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Selection of research tools is guided by the nature of data to be collected, the time available as well as by the objectives of the study. The overall aim of

this study was to investigate the student teachers' perception of teaching practice and its influence on their attitude towards the teaching profession. The study used triangulation method of data collection



which involves more than one instrument to collect data. According to Edwards, (2010) no single method of collecting data is perfect; therefore using more than one method is recommended. Data for this study was collected using a variety of data collection instruments to achieve the objectives. These are; questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussion guide (FGD), and content analysis schedule.

DATA ANALYSIS

Both qualitative and quantitative data analyses was done. This is based on the fact that, the study employed mixed methods research design, therefore; both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. Analysis of the data was based on the objective of the study.

STUDY RESULTS

The study used different questionnaires for the sampled groups which comprised of student teachers, assistant teachers and head teachers. Table 4.1 shows the Questionnaire Return Rate for the three sampled groups that participated and returned. A total of 434 questionnaires were issued to the respondents out of which 388 questionnaires were correctly filled and returned. This constituted 89.4 percent of which was considered adequate and in line with Kothari (2004) who recommended that a return rate of more than 50% was acceptable in social science research. Table 4.1 show summary of questionnaires returned.

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

No	Sampled group	Total issued	Total returned	Percent Returned
1.	Student Teachers	300	275	91.7
2.	Assistant Teachers	114	103	90.4
3	Head Teachers	20	16	80.0
Totals		434	388	89.4

The reason for the response rate received from study respondents was due to the fact that they were in the schools at the time of carrying out the research. Secondly, not all the respondents completed and returned the questionnaires. This might have been caused by their day to day school routine hence getting some time to respond was not easy. The researcher issued three categories of questionnaires in each school which was to be filled by the student teachers, assistant teachers and head teachers. Given the nature of the study on student teachers' perception of teaching practice and its influence on their attitude towards the teaching profession, respondents might have felt the study was relevant and would shade more light on

perception of teaching practice on the attitude of teaching profession.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

Gender of the head teachers and assistant teachers was identified to establish whether gender had any influence on student teachers' perception of teaching practice and its influence on their attitude towards the teaching profession. The response on distribution of respondents by gender was as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Category	Gender	Frequency	Percent
Student Teachers	Male	145	52.7
	Female	130	47.3
	Total	275	100.0
Assistant Teachers	Male	49	47.6
	Female	54	52.4
	Total	103	100.0
Head Teachers	Male	12	75.0
	Female	4	25.0
	Total	16	100.0

The results in Table 4.2, 52.7 percent of student teachers who participated in the study were male while the remaining 47.3 were female. The results further

shows that out of 103 respondents who participated in the study 47.6 percent of assistant teachers were male while 52.4 percent were female. Separately, 75 percent



of head teachers were male while the remaining 25 percent were female. This finding goes against gender parity as articulated in Kenyan constitution, (2010). This could be attributed to the fact that majority of girls are admitted to teacher training colleges than boys. In addition, from the head teacher analysis, the study attributed a high percentage of male head teachers than female to the fact that leadership in primary school is still perceived to be men's' role. Despite the

discrepancy in gender, the representation of both gender is adequate for further analysis.

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY TRAINING PROGRAMME

The study established the programme in which student teachers belonged to. This was the first demographic question that was asked in this study. Summary of the findings were as shown in Figure 4.1

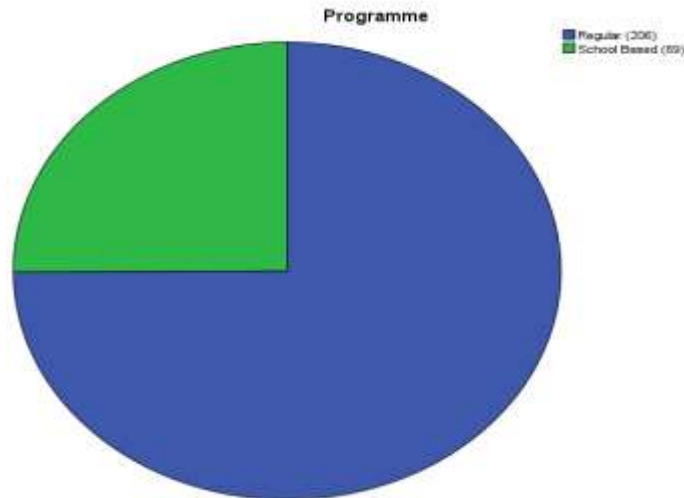


Figure 4.1 Programme they belong

According to the results in Figure 4.1, 206 student teachers, equivalent to 74.9 percent belonged to regular programme while the remaining 69 equivalent to 25.1 percent were in school based programme. This findings are of importance to the study to avoid issues of subjectivity of student teachers with reference to the programme they were enrolled in.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PERCEPTION OF RESPONDENTS ON TEACHING PRACTICE

The study established the mean and standard deviation values of statements regarding perception of

teaching practice amongst the respondents all the students who participated in the research. Respondents were asked to respond to various statements by ticking (✓) in the blank spaces provided, the extent to which they agree with the statements provided. The respondents were to agree with some of the statements made and disagree with others of the five choices offered, depending on their true feelings. There were five possible responses: Strongly agree (SA), A (Agree), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Summary of the findings regarding respondent's perception of teaching practice is as presented in Table 4.3

Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics

Category	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Student Teachers	275	4.0489	1.1664
Assistant Teachers	103	4.1445	1.1800
Head teachers	16	3.4513	1.4213

The results in Table 4.3 show that student teachers perception on teaching practice had a composite mean of 4.0489 with standard deviation of 1.1664, composite mean of assistant teachers perception on teaching practice was 4.1445 with

standard deviation of 1.18 while head teachers perceptions perception on teaching practice scored a composite mean of 3.4513 with standard deviation of 1.4213. From the descriptive statistics, student teachers were in agreement with all the statements regarding



perception on teaching practice given the composite mean of 4.0489, with standard deviation of 1.1664. On the Likert scale the composite mean was near 4 which was representing agree (A). The composite mean of assistant teacher's perception on teaching practice was 4.1445, with a standard deviation of 1.18 mean they were in agreement with the said statements. In addition, the composite mean of head teacher's perception of teaching practice had a composite mean of 3.4513, with a standard deviation of 1.4213 meant they were undecided given that the value of composite mean was between 3 (Undecided) and 4 (Agree) on the Likert scale.

INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

Difference of attitude towards the teaching profession among School- Based (SB) and Regular student teachers.

The study set out the following null hypothesis;

Ho2: There is no difference of attitude towards the teaching profession among School- Based (SB) and Regular student teachers.

The study further established if attitude towards teaching profession was affected by the school program. The study carried out ANOVA test to establish if there is any relationship between attitude towards teaching profession and program of students.

Summary of the results were as shown in Table 4.4

Table 4.4 ANOVA Test between Attitude towards Teaching Profession and program

Model	Sum of Squares	ANOVA ^a			Sig.
		df	Mean Square	F	
1 Regression	120.541	1	120.541	62.911	.000 ^b
Residual	1517.583	273	4.299		
Total	1638.124	274			

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude
b. Predictors: (Constant), program

From the results in Table 4.4, the F-statistics was recorded as 62.911 at $p=0.000$, at 95% confidence level, implied the model fitted between the attitude towards teaching profession and the program of students.

The study therefore rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that attitude towards teaching profession is affected by the program of students.

The interview schedule carried out on County directors of education portrayed the following scenario;

"It goes without saying that students who are undertaking school based programs appear to know what they want in life as opposed to the university students. This is because the school based ones are already in the field working and most of them are already in the teaching industry. They come back to college to add some value to their professional qualification"

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study set out the following null hypothesis;

Ho2: There is no difference of attitude towards the teaching profession among School- Based (SB) and Regular student teachers.

The study further established if attitude towards teaching profession was affected by the school program. The study carried out ANOVA test to establish if there is any relationship between attitude

towards teaching profession and program of students. From the results, the F-statistics was recorded as 62.911 at $p=0.000$, at 95% confidence level, implied the model fitted between the attitude towards teaching profession and the program of students. The study therefore rejected the null hypothesis and concluded that attitude towards teaching profession is affected by the program of students.

CONCLUSION

The study established that school program had a statistically significant effect on attitude towards teaching profession. The results showed that student teachers on a school based program had a more positive attitude towards teaching profession as opposed to regular based student teachers.

RECOMMENDATION

Student teachers on teaching practice undergo various challenges ranging from school factors to external factors. The school management need to proactively provide a platform of supporting student teachers on teaching practice.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following were suggestions for further research;



1. The study was carried out in primary teacher training colleges in North Rift region. Further studies are encouraged to cover other counties to check whether the findings are consistent.
2. Further studies are encouraged to cover both public and private colleges and compare the findings with the current research.
3. The research was restricted to education sector. Further studies are encouraged to have other sectors and compare the findings.
4. Further studies are encouraged to establish the moderating influence of organizational factors on the relationship between perception and teaching profession.

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