



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING PROFESSION THROUGH EFFECTIVE COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING AND VALUE RE-ORIENTATION OF FACILITATORS

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Abstract

Achievement of successful adult learning is premised on arrays of factors of which quality facilitation is one. In addition to the qualifications and years of experience of facilitators, their cognition must be in perfect order to resist anxiety provoking thoughts while their moral knowledge must also be sharpened to imbibe core values required to become role models in their chosen career. To this end, the paper examined cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation of facilitators as functional tools required for achieving excellence in the teaching profession. In this regard, the paper discussed teaching profession, cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation under conceptual clarifications. Problems facing teaching profession and the need for cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation of facilitators in Nigeria were also discussed. Finally, the paper discussed cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation of facilitators in relation to teaching profession. Based on the conclusion of the paper, it was recommended among others that the recruitment of facilitators into teaching profession should not be tied to political influence or any other form of favouritism. The exercise should follow due process in order to give opportunity to candidates who are genuinely endowed to take up the jobs. The governments should sincerely show more interest in the teaching profession and they should be more alive to the welfare of the facilitators. If these facilitators receive their salaries, bonuses and other benefits as at when due, things will eventually change for better in the teaching industry.

Keywords: Cognitive restructuring, Excellence, Facilitator, Teaching profession and Value re-orientation

Introduction

The process of teaching and learning will not be complete where teaching personnel are left out. The teaming up of these personnel to create a platform through which their interest and welfare are tabled and discussed has lead to professionalization of teaching. According to Farooq, Yahaya and Wushishi (2021) cited in Javis (2012), professionalization of teaching is an act of establishing control of an interest group over the field of professional practise. In order to present a clearer view of the concept, Farooq, Yahaya and Wushishi (2021) further described professionalization of teaching as a reflection of the main elements of teaching profession. Such elements include professional autonomy, professional standard, social control of the profession and a host of others.

In addition to facilitator's qualifications and their years of experiences, reformation technique in form of cognitive restructuring and value reorientation can

be employed to restructure their brain and mindset to bring out the value and beauty of teaching profession. Olorunishola (2014) argued that the significance of cognitive restructuring of facilitators lies in its potentials to enhance creative thinking, independence, self awareness, initiative taking, analytical ability, interpersonal skills and personal competence of facilitators. On the other hand, values reorientation plays a significant role in the restructuring of the facilitators' minds for optimal performance. Idowu, Sodipe-Lawal and Awe (2020) affirmed that there is need to reorder the commitment, dedication, motivation and a host of other desirable qualities expected of a facilitator.

In a bid to justify the importance of value re-orientation of facilitators towards achieving excellence in teaching profession, Idowu, Sodipe-Lawal & Awe (2020) cited in Ajayi and Omiyefa (2011) noted that value re-orientation offers moral vision against acquisition of negative values,



oppressive and explorative society that would reawaken Nigerian facilitators to their duties and responsibilities to the nation. Teaching as a means of instructional delivery is a sensitive process that requires the full concentration of the facilitators if it must be achieved. Based on this assumption, application of corrective measures like cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation to compliment other desirable attributes required by the facilitators to perform optimally is a factor to reckon with since human behaviour can never be static.

Conceptual Clarifications

Teaching Profession

The term 'profession' simply refers to job, career, occupation or work one performs to earn a living. Williams (2021) posited that profession is a field of study, a career, a job path like accounting, law, medicine, teaching among others. For the purpose of clarity, Ojekhata (2019) itemized a unique body of knowledge, standard of entry, code of ethics, a service orientation to the profession and a sanctioning organization as the attributes that are generally associated with profession.

Teaching profession is an indispensable medium for advancing the frontier of knowledge; hence it remains a viable platform through which large portion of the nation's work force is produced. Besides, teaching profession stands as the mother of all professions since teachers are personnel that build students towards choosing their careers. Idowu and Martins (2021) reported that teaching profession has remained the only medium through which knowledge in all other disciplines is transmitted to learners. Sequel to the huge contributions made by teaching profession towards knowledge economy and intellectual development in the country, the need to professionalize teaching is non-negotiable. The critical role of teaching profession in Nigeria is evident in the establishment of Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) in 2007.

The body is saddled with the responsibility of registering all categories of teaching personnel (teachers, instructors and facilitators) in Nigeria. According to Abduljabbar and Dauda (2022), this action is equally matched with comprehensive training and in-service training, seminars and workshops in the six geographical zones of Nigeria. Besides, TRCN has conformed to the directive of National Policy on Education (NPE) to engage all teaching personnel in educational institutions including Universities in professional training (FRN, 2004). This is also in conformity with the goal of teacher education which propagates adequate supply of manpower in Nigerian schools (FRN, 2004)

Teaching profession provides special services to

the entire community. Instructional delivery experts like teachers, facilitators and instructors with teaching qualifications such as NCE, PDGE, B.Ed, M.Ed and Ph.D who have acquired knowledge, skills, experience and wisdom are being guarded and controlled by the teaching profession. Teaching profession determines and controls the work standard of its members. For instance, to become a facilitator of adult learning, such a person must possess NCE as the minimum qualification in addition to reservoir of knowledge, skills and experience. In addition, the person must also possess sound intellectual foundation in subject matter knowledge in addition to good mastery of andragogy theory. Teaching professionals in collaboration with the Ministry of Education had prescribed the qualifications required for recruitment as a facilitator. By implication, any facilitator without the minimum teaching qualification of NCE cannot be recruited and registered as a facilitator to handle adult learning.

Facilitators in Education

Facilitator is the name given to instructional delivery personnel in adult learning. The underlying philosophy of facilitating lies in improving service delivery to adult learners by simplifying learning tasks and guiding learners in such a way that they can comprehend their subject matters easily. The unique attribute of facilitation is evident in the belief that learners are reservoir of knowledge and as such, facilitators can only build on what they already know. Omoregie and Akara (2021) argued that, for facilitators to achieve this, they need to demonstrate attributes like open mindedness, self-discovery, selflessness, empathy, cultural mindedness, intrinsically motivated among others.

In Nigeria, facilitators are normal instructional delivery personnel that have graduated from the Department of Adult Education in Colleges of Education and Universities. They are categorized as instructional delivery personnel under the command of teaching profession since they also have teaching qualifications like NCE and B.Ed. The similarity between facilitators and teachers is premised on the fact that they are both instructional delivery personnel with the same teaching qualifications. This submission is evident in the cases of teachers who work for the state in the morning and still work in government owned literacy centres in the evening as facilitators.

Facilitators are not just instructional delivery personnel; but those with the ability of helping adult learners to build on their residual knowledge for possible upgrade and subsequent improvement in their chosen profession. For instance, an adult learner who has been driving for a long time may need to

enrol in a literacy centre to learn about the different types of road signs, their applications and the general driving conducts expected of a professional driver while driving on the road in a subject like Social Studies. In other words, facilitators are regarded as animators, change agents, lifelong learners, promoters of self-directed learning, motivators and mobilizers (Omoregie and Akara, 2021).

Facilitation affords learners the opportunity to decide on what to learn, how to learn it, when to learn it and where to learn such contents. This makes facilitation a flexible instructional delivery method designed to cater for adult learners' learning needs; unlike teaching where a figure representing an authority will stand in front of the class to dish out instruction to pupils or students without considering their views. Facilitation offers learners the opportunity to fully participate in their learning process; as the content to be learnt must be practically relevant to their needs. The rationale for this is hinged on the fact that adult learners will make themselves available for learning when the contents to be learnt will be of immense benefits to their social and economic lives.

Cognitive Restructuring

The world of work, teaching inclusive; is filled with series of dynamics that sometimes stand as obstacles against facilitator when discharging their duties. On most occasions, such facilitator will continue to experience distorted reasoning which will definitely mar the free flow of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. A situation like this calls for timely cognitive restructuring of such facilitator. Cognitive restructuring in this regard refers to all efforts tailored towards changing facilitators' orientation and mindset in discharging their duties. Idowu and Gbenro (2024) posited that cognitive restructuring focuses on facilitators' thoughts and how those thoughts can be transformed from the initial irrational state to a more reformed, creative and innovative one.

Cognitive restructuring stands as a vital mechanism employed in correcting distorted cognition and minds. It is employed to correct facilitators' thoughts and beliefs that often discourage them from discharging their duties diligently. According to Baxter (2010), cognitive restructuring is a technique that can help people identify, challenge and alter anxiety provoking thoughts and beliefs that sometimes discourage them from rendering quality services or performing their duties to conform to acceptable standard.

In many instances, some facilitators may not believe in themselves; especially when it comes to issues concerning further education. Such facilitators

tend to shy away from the reality that they must strive to possess higher qualifications, acquire new knowledge and skills in order to measure up with the demand of job dynamics which may include advance technology and other job related developments. Facilitators who find themselves in this situation need timely intervention strategy in form of constructive cognitive restructuring aimed at re-ordering their minds towards discarding anxiety provoking thoughts and beliefs. This will further help them to embrace factual and logical thinking required for positive transformation that will in turn pave way for improved productivity.

In other words, cognitive restructuring is a technique used in helping people to change the way they think. It is a process through which negative thoughts are replaced by positive ones that are more realistic and purposeful. According to Olubusayo (2014), cognitive restructuring is a technique employed to reduce anxiety provoking thought which can lead to irrational action. Similarly, Ogugua (2010) noted that cognitive restructuring is a type of therapeutic technique which refute one's irrational ideas and replaces them with rational ones. Anyamene and Ogugua (2019) listed psychiatric conditions to include depression, anxiety disorder, social phobia among others as conditions that call for urgent cognitive restructuring.

The need for cognitive restructuring is premised on the understanding of the relationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviour. It is worthy of note that thoughts are the sole determinants of emotion while feelings influence behaviour. Cognitive restructuring has tremendous transformative impact on mental health by promoting positive thinking, enhancing emotional regulation, boosting self-esteem, improving problem solving skills and reducing anxiety driven thoughts.

Value Re-orientation

Naturally, every individual has a preferred mode of conduct that often guide their action. This collection of conceptions that are either considered as proper or improper are regarded as values. According to Zaleznik and David (2019), values are ideas in the mind of men that direct their next line of action or mode of behaviour. Values represent beliefs and ideas that help to guide people's behaviour towards deciding what is right, wrong, just, unjust, good, bad, desirable, undesirable among other conceptions. Values in its positive state act as motivators in the life of every individual.

When values are re-echoed to the hearing of facilitators in order to bring to their consciousness the acceptable norms in the teaching profession, then value re-orientation is said to be intensified. Value re-

orientation is the medium through which the general ways of life of facilitators are re-ordered to conform to the acceptable standard of the teaching profession. It is pertinent to note that when such acceptable standard is met, productivity is assured in the teaching profession. In order to corroborate this, Ali, Shehu and Na'Allah (2024) argued that value re-orientation is the process of altering one's belief and perspective on particular behaviours or viewpoints that have been recognized as improper.

In a broader view, value re-orientation is seen as high moral intelligence and entrenchment of strong values for the development and prosperity of the Nigerian society. It is the act of adjusting or aligning behaviour, attitude and beliefs of Nigerian citizens in a new or different direction within the public discourse of contemporary Nigerian society (Osisioma, 2012). Value re-orientation preaches against negative values like dishonesty, indiscipline, corruption, self-centeredness, disregard for human lives, intolerance and many others while it propagates and embraces core values like patriotism, unity, love, hard-work, honesty, integrity, respect for other people's culture and religion and a host of other values that will help to foster peace, unity and general development.

Factors hindering cognitive restructuring and value-reorientation process of facilitators in Nigeria

Some factors are practically working against the process of cognitive restructuring and value-reorientation of facilitators in Nigeria. These factors are highlighted and discussed as follows

(i) Mental poverty: This basically refers to a situation whereby a facilitator is characterized by a strong feeling of hopelessness which may arise due to lack of contentment, lack of inspiration and a belief that thing will never change for better. Such individuals may have everything they need at their disposal; yet they usually feel trapped and helpless. Getting out of mental poverty through planned intervention strategy like cognitive restructuring and value-reorientation can be extremely difficult because of the characteristics that define it. Although, it is achievable; but can be time consuming as it requires a high degree of patience, perseverance, understanding and tolerance.

(ii) Social inequality: Social inequality can render cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation process less effective; especially, when administered on facilitators that have the mindset that they have less opportunities which bar them from living a

standard life. Having such mindset may be difficult to change; and this can be detrimental to the development of such facilitators since their condition may not totally respond to any form of treatment. Ali, Shehu and Na'Allah (2024) listed gender, race, socio-economic standing among others as factors responsible for social inequality among nation's citizens while Adegboyega (2017) emphasized the need to be weary of social inequality by stating that it can weaken the foundation of a society based on share ideas by fostering animosity, mistrust, and a breakdown in social cohesion.

(iii) Neglect of moral values: The nation's educational system is laying much emphasis on intellectual disciplines; while paying little attention to teaching of morals. As a result of this, facilitators who passed through such educational system may find it difficult to exhibit good moral behaviour since they cannot offer what they do not have. Besides, such facilitator may resist any form of treatment since the culture of moral was not imbibed in them right from their early life. Barakat (2018) corroborated this by arguing that kids that are raised in this manner may not have a firm grasp of morality, ethics, or the significance of social duty.

(iv) Wide acceptance of immoral behaviour: The magnitude of the decay in the nation's educational system is better imagined than experienced. Facilitators are integral part of the society; hence, some of them may be influenced by the wide acceptance accorded immoral behaviour. Besides, a good number of these immoral behaviours are money generating avenue which can as well help in luring some facilitators into immoral acts, capable of destroying their personality and professional career. At this point, such facilitators may find it difficult to respond to any kind of corrective measures since they are deeply engrossed in perceived money spinning acts.

(v) Poverty: Poverty has a powerful influence on attitudinal change. Poor remuneration, lack of incentives, non-payment of bonuses and other entitlements may combine to trap some facilitators in the web of poverty. In order to find a route of escape, such facilitators may start indulging in illegal or immoral acts which could spell doom for their existence. The more they engage in such acts, the more addicted they become. A situation like this may defile different forms of treatment including



cognitive restructuring and value-reorientation since the facilitators involved are only finding means to escape from the cycle of poverty.

The Need for Cognitive Restructuring and Value Re-orientation of Facilitators in Nigeria

The call for cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation is a welcome development. Besides, cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation will help to restore facilitators' attitude towards a number of things that have been identified as wrong action, bad behaviour, unpleasant attitude, low self-esteem and anxiety provoking thoughts. At present, the country is passing through a hard time occasioned by vices ranging from armed robbery, kidnapping for ransom, fraudulent acts, corruption of varying types, insurgency, militancy, vandalization of public facilities, ritual killings, thuggery, religious and ethnic violence, restiveness, political violence to banditry. The prevalence of all these vices has affected the thinking faculty and the mindset of many of the nations' citizens; facilitators inclusive. According to Erinoshio (2008), Nigeria has earned a despicable reputation for all manners of fraudulent practices and vices.

These vices arose as a result of sensitive national issues that are yet to be attended to. Such national issues include unemployment, underemployment, uneven distribution of nation's wealth, inequality among other issues that have confined many of the citizens to a state of hopelessness. In addition to the joint effects of the aforementioned national issues, the present harsh economic condition of the country has compounded the woes of many citizens, including facilitators as the impact seems to be unbearable.

The terrible state of the nation's economy has invariably led to the lackadaisical attitude exhibited by many facilitators in the teaching field. Deren (2020) lamented that the nation's educational system has deteriorated to the extent that it has become agent that impart negative values in the minds of many of instructional delivery personnel as against its original mandate of empowerment and transforming minds.

Lack of cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation among many facilitators is evident in the corrupt practices, lack of commitment and enthusiasm demonstrated in the course of discharging their duties. Deren (2020) further stressed that the existence of different forms of corruption in many of Nigerian institutions has led to the decay of positive moral values in schools. Unproductive ideas and beliefs, wrong thoughts and corrupt practices exhibited by facilitators must be curtailed since they have negative effect on the output of learners in the area of productivity; hence the need for cognitive

restructuring and value re-orientation of facilitator is not negotiable.

Cognitive Restructuring of Facilitators and Teaching Profession

Facilitators are major components of the teaching profession. Their involvement in teaching profession is sometimes met with series of interventions which can bring about adjustment in their cognition. This adjustment in facilitators' cognition is also determined by the dimension assumed by the happenings around them. When such happenings affect them negatively, an alteration in their cognitive make up is imminent. At this point, there is need to employ a functional brain adjustment technique in form of cognitive restructuring to arrest the situation. Cognitive restructuring which involves helping facilitators to dislodge their unproductive beliefs and ideas cum anxiety provoking thoughts remains a viable tool to be employed.

Cognitive restructuring of facilitators remains an indispensable tool for advancing frontiers of knowledge in the teaching profession. Facilitators are humans and as such, they can be plagued by problems relating to anxiety, low self-esteem, depression and many other issues having to do with mental health. Facilitators who find themselves in this situation will definitely perform below expectation; and they can as well be helped through the timely intervention of constructive cognitive restructuring.

Owolabi (2017) identified cognitive restructuring as one of the veritable strategies of assisting learners overcome the problem of poor academic performance. Similarly, Ogugua (2010) reported that cognitive restructuring was found to be effective in enhancing high academic achievement among learners. Through cognitive restructuring, facilitators who cannot perform their duties diligently due to decline in academic prowess can be helped to regain their original academic status within a short period of time.

More so, cognitive restructuring can be employed as behavioural intervention strategy to check social anxiety, specific phobias, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic disorder and general anxiety among facilitators (Anyamene and Ogugua, 2019). By implication, facilitators who do not believe that they can go for further studies and excel can be helped through the application of cognitive behavioural therapy aimed at helping people behave more adaptively by modifying their unproductive thoughts to a more reformed and productive one. Ogugua (2010) asserted that cognitive restructuring is a type of therapeutic technique which dislodge one's irrational ideas and replaces them with rational ones.

Likewise, Ahmed (2016) argued that cognitive restructuring has proved to be effective in the treatment of various conditions ranging from school phobia, mood, anxiety, personality, depression, social phobia, psychiatric condition to psychotic disorder. In agreement to this, Meichenbaum (2002) cited Olubusayo (2014) posited that cognitive restructuring is capable of changing misconceptions, strengthens coping skills, increase self-control and encourage self-reflection.

Value Re-orientation of Facilitators and Teaching Profession

Like every other instructional delivery personnel, facilitators are guided by ethnics of teaching profession. These teaching ethnics are codes of conduct which stipulate the acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as dictated by the teaching profession. Due to the prevalence of the ills which are perceived to be norms in virtually all the sectors of the nation, many facilitators are forced to disregard these professional ethnics guiding them while they tend to bow to pressure caused by the ills which majorly arise from economic hardship. On many occasions, facilitators have been alleged of involving in corrupt practices of varying types. According to Njoku (2015), materialism has taken over government, educational institutions, political institutions, traditional and cultural institutions while the Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) seem to be more materialistic than the secular society.

Narrowing it down to educational institutions and teaching profession, Mbanefo (2000) cited in Owolabi (2017) observed that lack of value re-orientation is manifesting in all the levels of education as teachers involve themselves in financial mess of varying kinds, aiding students in examination malpractices, involving in sex for marks and cash for marks, forceful sales of handouts, textbooks and other learning materials among others. In a bid to further describe the state of some of the Nigerian schools, akinniyi, Erinsakin and Emma-Ayire (2021) listed blocking, upgrading of scores, forceful sales of handouts, cash rewards and a host of other corrupt practices in the education sector as the major causes of setback in the educational sector.

Going by the corrupt tendencies inherent in many facilitators and other teaching personnel, it is imperative to re-echo the core values that propagate good tidings to their hearing. Re-echoing of these values will definitely help to redeem the lost image of the teaching profession. According to Bolarinwa (2015), such values include detesting laziness, dignity of labour, respect for parents, guardians and elders, honesty, hospitality, public spiritedness, respect for constituted authority, hard-work, respect

for sanctity of life, love, unity, commitment, respect for other people's religion and culture, selflessness and many others. Unarguably, bringing these values to the consciousness of facilitator will go a long way to put them back on the right track while the level of their commitment to duties assigned to them will also be raised.

A couple of instances will be critically examined for better understanding. These instances are:

- A facilitator who imbibes the philosophy of dignity of labour will not see any profession as being superior to teaching profession; yet, he will not discriminate against any job; rather he will continue to show respect for such jobs. Facilitators that discharge their statutory duties based on this philosophy often display selflessness in all their dealings while issued relating to inferiority complex, fear, insubordination and other unproductive thoughts capable of running down teaching profession will not arise.
- A committed facilitator often demonstrates high degree of seriousness toward the job. Such facilitators always strive to discharge assigned duties with all sincerity. Sometimes, they may be given merit awards in return for uprightness. Facilitators who are committed to their jobs act as pace setters who do not only show good examples to other lazy ones but propagate the value and beauty of teaching profession to the entire nation.
- A facilitator who shows great deal of respect for constituted authority will have interest in helping the people in the position of authority. Facilitators who exhibit this invaluable character usually discharge their duties with great sense of dedication and they also contribute immensely to the growth of their organizations. Apart from this, these can act as catalyst to accelerate the pace of development in teaching profession.
- Honest and reliable facilitators usually discharge their duties with the rule of law and fear of God. They always show love to their colleagues and try as much as possible to reunite them even when they have conflict or hold grudges against one another. This crop of facilitators usually work with minimal supervision since they have proved to be trustworthy, dependable and result oriented. As a matter of fact, teaching profession needs honest and reliable facilitators for achieving optimum productivity required for subsequent development.



- Any facilitator who shows immeasurable love and empathy to his superiors and subordinates will not plot evil against them. Besides, such facilitators will always work towards the progress of the teaching profession. It is important to note that showing love and empathy to people within one's vicinity and to those in far places is a recipe for promoting culture of peace. This gesture will undoubtedly make sanity reign in the teaching profession.

Conclusion

Cognitive restructuring and value reorientation have proved to be indispensable tools for tackling issues relating to distorted mental condition and decline in moral values of facilitators. These cognitive and behaviour therapies are capable of resetting the thinking faculty of the facilitators while lost values which are also re-echoed into the hearing of the facilitators is capable of changing their behaviour and attitude to pave way for successful learning; much agitated by the teaching profession.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the paper, the following recommendations are made:

Recruitment of facilitators into teaching profession should not be tied to political influence or any other forms of favouritism. The exercise should follow due process in order to give opportunity to candidates who are genuinely endowed to take up the jobs.

- Governments should sincerely show more interest in the teaching profession. They should be more alive to the welfare of the facilitators. If facilitators receive the salaries, bonuses and other benefits as at when due, things are bound to change for better in the teaching industry.
- To the government and other stakeholders in the teaching profession, infrastructural development meant for the smooth running of the teaching profession should be considered as priority since teaching and learning process will be adversely affected by inadequate and poor infrastructure.
- Functional monitoring and supervisory mechanism should be put in place to check the lackadaisical attitude often exhibited by many of the facilitators in adult learning centres. This gesture will not only boost productivity but help to redeem the lost glory of the teaching profession.
- Many research findings on teaching profession,

cognitive restructuring and value re-orientation in relation to teaching personnel are not being put into use by the stakeholders in teaching profession. This should not be so as concerned agencies and stakeholders are enjoined to periodically examine the findings and bring out the workable ones that will identify solutions to some of the problems facing teaching as a profession.

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