

---

**Teaching Profession: Is It The Women Career?**

---

**By**

**Dr. Mbuotidem EKENG  
School of Education  
Akwa Ibom State College of Education  
Afaha Nsit**

---

**ABSTRACT**

*What do you picture when you think of a teacher? Male or female, most people will probably think of a woman. If you think of a male teacher on the other hand, it is probably a specific teacher you had that made a specific impression in your mind. This made the researcher to undertake the study to find out empirically whether there are more female would-be teachers than male and why more female decide to enter teaching profession and what discourages men from making this 'noble' profession their greatest delight. A survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of all the students who had enrolled for the Nigeria Certificate in Education {N.C.E.} program in Akwa Ibom State College of Education from 2013/14 – 2017/18 Academic Sessions. The instrument used was the Matriculation lists of this institution. Two hypotheses and three research questions were used to guide the study and the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis. Conclusions were drawn that more female students enroll in C.O.E. than male students. Also, the researcher noticed that there are some intrinsic and extrinsic factors of attraction for female into teaching, than male. Recommendations were made that there should be better remuneration for teachers in order to attract both male and female to the profession as this will make for more balanced classroom delivery.*

**Keywords: Female Students, Male Students, Teaching Profession and Colleges of Education.**

---

**Introduction**

Before we have an insight of what teaching is all about let know who a teacher or an Educator is , a teacher is a person who helps student to acquire knowledge, competence and virtue, then the act of transferring knowledge is called teaching. Teaching therefore is a process of facilitating learning through a proper management by the teacher, coupled with the inter-relationship between teachers and students so that they can acquire knowledge, skills, attitude and information. It is an act of imparting knowledge and skills to learners while Onwuka (2004) upheld that teaching involves the determination of worthwhile objectives, the selection and arrangement of learning experiences, guidance and correcting, with a view to ensuring and improving upon learning.

Teaching is an instructional strategy employed by teachers or an Educator during classroom interactions to ensure that learners acquire the expected knowledge, skills or

experiences programmed for them. Therefore it is the art and science of helping others to grow in their knowledge and understanding.

In summary, to teach means:

- To impact knowledge to someone
- To instruct someone as to how to do something
- To cause someone to learn and understand something by example or experience. An Acronym for TEACHING is:

- T - Transferring the knowledge
- E - Enlightening with the present living conditions
- A - Aligning with portion and real life
- C - Character building
- H - Healing touch offer
- I - Involvement with the students in studies
- N - Nurturing the thoughts into reality
- G - Giving a final shape.

On the other hand, a profession in a generic sort of way refers to, what is your trade/vocation. According to Eury, King and Balls (2019), profession is derived from the word ‘profiteor’ meaning to profess. The connotation here is that a professional is a person who possesses knowledge of something and has a commitment to a particular set of values. A profession also connotes the possession and use of expert or specialist knowledge, the exercise of autonomous thought and judgment, and responsibility to clients (e.g. students, parents).

Eury et al gave the following as the characteristics that make teaching a profession (adapted to Nigerian environment).

S/N	CHARACTERISTICS OF A PROFESSION	TEACHING
1.	Entry Assessment process	- Colleges of Education ➤ Faculty of Education (University) ➤ School of Education (Polytechnic)
2.	Expert knowledge	➤ Nigeria Certificate in Education (N.C.E) - B. Ed
3.	Autonomous thought and judgment	➤ Lesson planning, empowerment
4.	Responsibility to students, parents and community	➤ Parents Teachers’ Association (PTA) meetings, community outreach initiatives, etc.
5.	Commitment to life-long learning	➤ Continuing education courses, in- service training, higher degree programs.
6.	Personal reflection	➤ Teaching, observing and evaluating students.

Thus teaching as a profession connotes that teaching has the following characteristics that differentiate it from other occupations, according to Ikpe (2005).

1. Members recruit and admit only the best qualified men and women to their ranks.

2. Applicants must undergo a period of training to meet established requirements. During these years of preparation, they acquire a broad cultural education, a thorough indoctrination in the principles on which the profession is based, and a mastery of the competences that the work requires.
3. Professional people obtain a license to practice or some other forms of control governing their admission to membership, to protect the public against incompetent or unqualified practitioners.
4. The professional is motivated by a desire to serve mankind. They generally place the duties of their calling above thoughts of personal comfort or financial reward.
5. Members of profession continue to study and push back the frontiers of knowledge in their fields.
6. Professional groups form organizations to promote their interest and improve ethical standards.
7. Professional men tend to make their chosen work a lifetime career.

### **ENROLMENT OF FEMALE AND MALE STUDENTS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION**

Ullah (2014), who posited that teaching of young children (in primary and secondary schools) is considered as a ‘soft option’ when it comes to a job in the public domain. He maintained that school teaching has long been believed and thought of as a woman’s profession and job because working with children was associated with child-care rather than teaching. He concluded that school teaching is therefore seen as a suitable job for women who perpetuate the tradition stereotype that women, and not men, are responsible for young children. Also Bassey (2019), quoting Smulyan (2006) argued that joining school teaching is the best option for women to be economically independent, self-sufficient and re-defining their role in the society. Example of this can be seen in table 1 below as regards Colleges of Educations, Afaha Nsit.

**Table 1: Distribution of Female and Male students**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>No. Enrolled</b>	<b>Total No.</b>
C. O. E.	2013/14	F	854	
		M	306	1160
C. O. E.	2014/15	F	1386	
		M	507	1893
C. O. E.	2015/16	F	750	
		M	367	1117
C. O. E.	2016/17	F	512	
		M	158	670
C. O. E.	2017/18	F	597	
		M	204	801

### **Teaching profession appeals more to women than men**

Safalta (2018) gave reasons that make women to choose teaching than men.

1. Teaching jobs are always considered as a reputed job in our society, especially for women.
2. In both government and private sector schools, the timings of classes are fixed and the duty timings of teachers are always fixed.
3. Spending time with kids allow you to stay young and energetic.
4. being a teacher always allow you to gain knowledge, because a teacher study's everyday.
5. Growth opportunity is constant in education (teaching field). Brown (2016) answering the question why there are so many female teachers than male ones, in the lower level of education, gave the following reasons.
6. Women tend to have more of a liking for the little kids and have a temperament suited to working with them.
7. Teaching is an awesome job for a primary care-taker of children, and an awesome job for someone who does not have to be the primary breadwinner in the family. Ndon (2019) added that;
8. The job is really good for women as they can arrange and spend enough time with their kids. When the children are in primary and secondary school, you get off around the same time as your kids, and your get the same holidays. Thus, you can program you schedule to rhyme with theirs.

### **Reasons why men are discouraged from entering into teaching profession**

Contributing to this, Ukpong (2019) gave these reasons:

- Uncertainty regarding the future of the profession; - decline of teaching's social prestige i.e. the profession's lack of social recognition
- Poor salaries
- Limited possibilities for personal ascension
- Precarious working conditions and environment

Thus, these findings corroborate with the result from the table 1 that showed fewer men taking up courses in Colleges of Education and Faculty of Education in the University

Men in the 1970s could gain manufacturing jobs that out paid teacher's salaries so they went and pursued those. They also moved into the ranks of principals and administrators, gaining their perceived difference in income in that manner, as well.

Hall concluded that, for women, education (teaching) became an acceptable form of employment that did not harm their marriage prospect. It paid well. It left them free of the discrimination and harassment faced by 1960s office secretaries, as well as the societal judgment and isolation faced by women who bravely entered the "male"-driven careers. Elementary teaching, along with nursing, was one of the highest forms of employment a woman could hold in the 1950s.

Several factors also contributed to men thinking twice before entering teaching profession or men using teaching profession as a stepping stone, for greener pastures. Contributing to this, Petch (2018) maintained that this is rooted in gender stereotypes and it plays out in two ways. **One:** historically, teaching, which used to be a male dominated profession, was not usually seen as a 'forever' job. Men taught until something 'better' came along and almost

anything was better than teaching. As more women came into the work-force, this low paying, low prestige job was passed onto them. **Two:** today, young males on the path to becoming teachers are often drawn to high schools in order not to be put into any situation where they could be seen as a predator. Sometimes, a student just cries out for a hug and if you put any male into the situation, they are at risk of being accused of something serious.

In summary, men are not in teaching because of

- Low status and pay
- The perception that teaching is “women’s work”
- The fear of accusation of child abuse.

Teilelman (2015) while working on the history of teaching and the value of women’s work, posed a question – What do you picture when you think of a teacher? She answered that most people will probably think of a woman. Depending on your own experiences and views, you might imagine a stern matronly type, a kind motherly person, or a harsh spinster. On the other hand, if you think of a male teacher, it is probably a specific teacher you had – likely a teacher from high school or a college professor. While there are many amazing male teachers out there, they are not necessarily the face of the profession. The general image of teachers today is specific, female dominance.

Hall (2018) maintained that in the past, male teachers were highly sought after than female teachers; in the United States. A woman’s place was the home, so women were not supposed to be holding their employment, and certainly not married women or women with children. In the early 1800s, male teachers were not norm, and female teachers were the exception. One reason for this was that men were virtually the only ones who went out to receive a university education, and a teacher license took three (occasionally two) years to complete. Many adverts then, specifically requested for men and since there were not enough men in supply, smaller and less interested towns had to accept female teachers when there were empty postings.

She maintained that the women entering teaching profession were looked down upon. Their morality was a question for the entire town to criticize. They received less salary than men, and faced worse conditions. For example in mid 1800s, female teachers were paid approximately \$14 a month, with the men earning twice that amount. History went on that these female teachers were unmarried, as the teaching occupation had its posts filled by young men and unmarried women. Female married teachers were banned for many districts across America, as their job would cause them to neglect their marriage.

Things, overtime, changed for several reasons:

1. The democratization of education. When every town wants a teacher for their schoolhouse, there become too much demand, and what gets supplied is female teachers. Rich areas could prefer and pay for male teachers.
2. Female teachers cost less than male teachers because they had fewer economic options. Those poor one-room schoolhouses could benefit from lower salary expectations for female teachers. Women were a far cheaper labor source.

3. The Civil War probably had some destabilizing effect on the education field of employment. Likewise, the creation of modernized public schooling and an increasing urbanization and immigration in the 1800s pushed a need for more teachers.
4. The late 1880s saw the rise of “Teachers Colleges” which were an appropriate college choice for women.
5. World War II was another destabilizing event. After World War II, home had gotten a taste of the labor market, and wanted to seek employment outside of the house. With this, more districts even allowed for married teachers who were mothers to continue their work in the teaching profession.
6. By this point, the justification was that “Women are better care-givers than Men” not that “women’s place is in the home”. Naturally women has a caring nature, they can spend time in instructing a child on what to do compare to men whose times are always valuable they saw teaching has a waste of time. By this time, a 150 years after 1820, people began to see their teachers as preferably women, not as preferably men. Culture changes due to the labor market, due to societal changes and due to opportunity costs for each gender.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As an undergraduate student in the university I noticed that, when we were having lectures in Education Courses, there were more female students than male, in the hall. Also, as a lecturer in the College of Education, I observe (empirically) that most of the students in my lecture halls are girls (women). This prompted the researcher to undertake this study to investigate scientifically, whether there are more female students, than male students aiming at becoming teachers and to establish reasons why female tend to take to teaching, than male and what discourages men from entering or settling down in the profession.

It is a well-known fact that the share of women in the teaching force is growing. Nwagwu (2006) posited that the number of female teachers in schools and female student-teachers in Universities and Colleges of Education continue to steadily increase while those of males tend to be on a steady decline in Nigeria. She asked whether women still regard the prospects for socio-economic advancement through teaching as poor or unpromising, or there is a moderation of the hitherto negative perception of the teaching profession.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study aimed at finding out whether there are more female students enrolled in Colleges of Education than male students. Also, it hoped to establish what attracts and sustain women other than men, into the teaching profession and what tends to discourage or hinder the men from entering into teaching profession.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference in the number of female students and male students enrolled in Colleges of Education.
2. There is no significant difference in the attraction of female students to teaching than male students.

### **Research Questions**

1. Do female students enroll more in Colleges of Education than male students?
2. Does teaching profession appeal more to women than men?
3. Why are men discouraged from entering into teaching profession?

### **Methods**

The research design adopted in the study was a survey design. This was used because the information sought for had already been there in the Admission Unit of the Institution. The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom State College of Education, Afaha Nsit. The population consisted of all the students enrolled for Nigeria Certificate in Education (N.C.E) from 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 academic sessions in the College as well all lecturers in the college of education. Census sampling technique was adopted to select the whole population for research question one while simple random sampling technique was adopted to select 300 respondents, (made up of lecturers and students) for research questions two and three. The instrument used for the study was the Matriculation lists that covered the above academic sessions in the institution studied and a research questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using percentage analyses and bar charts to answer the research questions.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Research Question One**

Do female students enroll more in Colleges of Education than male students?

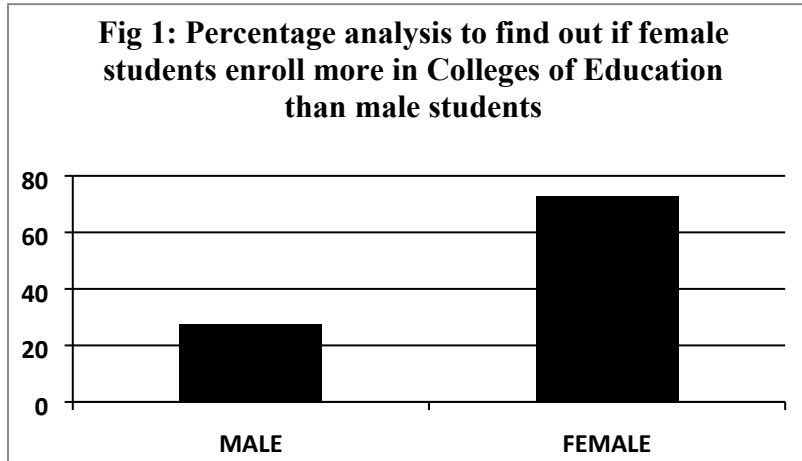
**Table 2: Percentage analysis to find out if female students enroll more in Colleges of Education than male students**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Male	1542	27.3
Female	4099	72.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>5641</b>	<b>100</b>

**SOURCE:** Field survey

\* **The highest percentage frequency**

\* **The least percentage frequency**



**SOURCE:** Field survey

The above table 2 and figure 1 present the percentage analysis of the extent of female and male students' enrollment more in Colleges of Education. From the result, it was observed that 72.7% of the students who enroll in the college of Education were females as compared with their male counterparts who are 27.3%.

**Research question two**

Why does teaching profession appeal more to women than men?

**Table 3: Percentage analysis to find out if teaching profession appeal more to women than men**

<b>Reason for which teaching profession appeals more to women than men</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Teaching is a reputed job for women	21	7*
Spending time with kids allow women to stay young and energetic	42	14
Women tend to have more of a liking for the little kids	87	29**
Teaching is an awesome job for a primary care-taker (Women)	72	24
Teaching profession is a good job for women as they can arrange and spend time with kids.	78	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

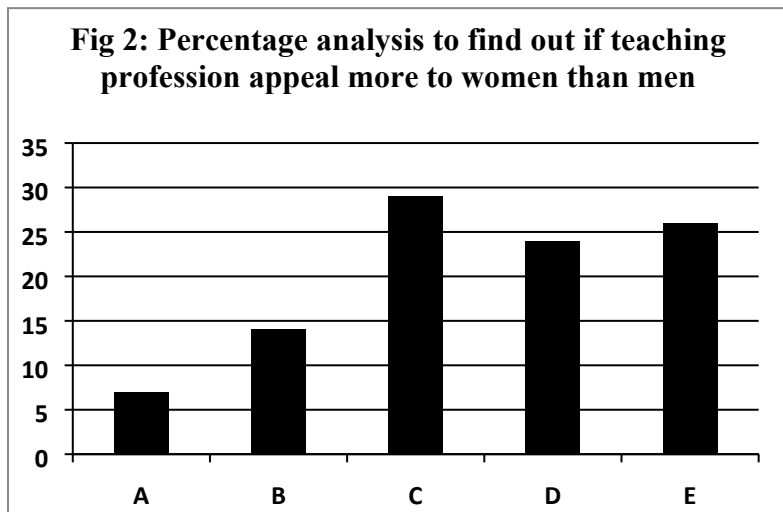
**SOURCE:** Field survey

\*\* The highest percentage frequency

\* The least percentage frequency

A Teaching is a reputed job for women





- B Spending time with kids allow women to stay young and energetic
- C Women tend to have more of a liking for the little kids
- D Teaching is an awesome job for a primary care-taker (Women)
- E Teaching profession is a good job for women as they can arrange and spend time with kids.

**SOURCE: Field survey**

The above table 3 and figure 2 present the percentage analysis of the reason why teaching profession appeals more to women than men. From the result, it was observed that the highest percentage (29%) affirmed that women tend to have more of a liking for the little kids. This was seconded by those who said that teaching profession is a good job for women as they can arrange and spend time with kids, (26%). The third group on the list, (24%), said teaching is an awesome job for a primary care-taker (Women). The fourth group in the list, (14%) said spending time with kids allow women to stay young and energetic, while the least (7%) group said teaching is a reputed job for women.

**Research question three**

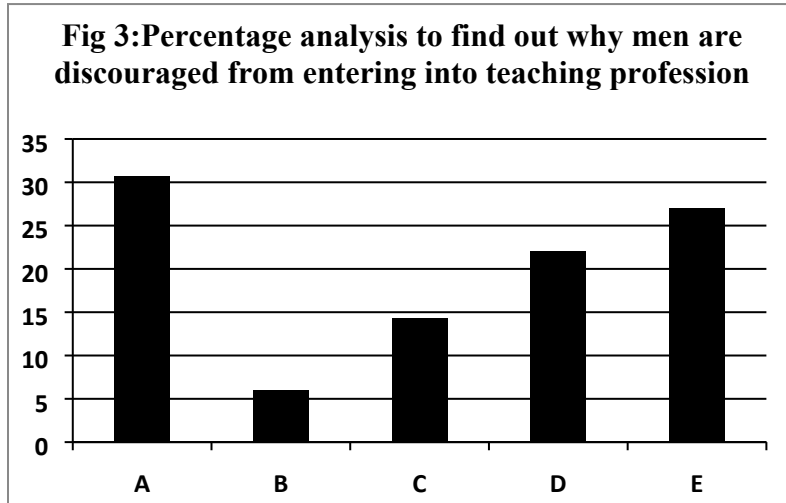
Why are men discouraged from entering into teaching profession?

**Table 4: Percentage analysis to find out why men are discouraged from entering into teaching profession**

<b>Why are men discouraged from entering into teaching profession</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE %</b>
Poor salaries.	92	30.67**
Uncertainty regarding the future of the profession.	18	6*
Decline of teaching’s social prestige i.e. the profession’s lack of social recognition and societal value.	43	14.33
Environmental influence and discrimination	66	22
Limited possibilities for personal ascension.	81	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

**SOURCE: Field survey**

- \*\* The highest percentage frequency
- \* The least percentage frequency



- A Poor salaries.
- B Uncertainty regarding the future of the profession.
- C Decline of teaching’s social prestige i.e. the profession’s lack of social recognition societal value
- D Environmental influence and discrimination
- E Limited possibilities for personal ascension.

**SOURCE: Field survey**

The above table 4 and fig 3 present the percentage analysis of the reason why men are discouraged from entering into teaching profession. From the result, it was observed that the highest percentage of respondents (30.67%) said men are discourage from entering into teaching profession because of poor salaries, while the seconded to the highest (27.0%) said it is because of limited possibilities for personal ascension. (22.0%) of the respondents identified as the third on the list said it is because of environmental influence and discrimination. The fourth group in the list (14.33%) said decline of teaching’s social prestige i.e. the profession’s lack of social recognition is the reason why men are discourage from entering into teaching profession, while the least group of respondents on the subject matter (6%) said uncertainty regarding the future of the profession.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis 1**

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the number of female students and male students enrolled in Colleges of Education. (See table 5)

**Table 5  
Chi-square analysis of the difference in the number of female students and male students enrolled in Colleges of Education**

Gender	Observed Freq	Expected Freq	X <sup>2</sup>
Male	1542	2820.5	1159.06 *
Female	4099	2820.5	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5641</b>	<b>5641</b>	

**\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 1; Critical = 3.84**

Table 5 shows the calculated  $X^2$ -value as (1159.06). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical  $X^2$ -value (8.84) at 0.05 levels with 1 degree of freedom. The calculated  $X^2$ -value (1159.06) was greater than the critical  $X^2$ -value (3.84). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant difference in the number of female students and male students enrolled in Colleges of Education

**Hypothesis 2**

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the attraction of female students to teaching than male students. (See table 6).

**Table 6  
Chi-square analysis of the difference in the attraction of female students to teaching than male students**

Responses	Observed Freq	Expected Freq	$X^2$
A	21	60	50.7*
B	42	60	
C	87	60	
D	72	60	
E	78	60	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	

**\*Significant at 0.05 level; df = 1; Critical = 9.49**

- A Teaching is a reputed job for women
- B Spending time with kids allow women to stay young and energetic
- C Women tend to have more of a liking for the little kids
- D Teaching is an awesome job for a primary care-taker (Women)
- E Teaching profession is a good job for women as they can arrange and spend time with kids.

Table 6 shows the calculated  $X^2$ -value as (50.7). This value was tested for significance by comparing it with the critical  $X^2$ -value (9.49) at 0.05 levels with 1 degree of freedom. The calculated  $X^2$ -value (50.7) was greater than the critical  $X^2$ -value (9.49). Hence, the result was significant. The result therefore means that there is significant difference in the attraction of female students to teaching than male students.

**Discussion of the Findings**

The result of the data analyses in tables 2 and 6 as well as figure 1 were significant due to the fact that the calculated  $X^2$ -value (1159.06) was greater than the critical  $X^2$ -value (3.84). The result therefore means that there is significant difference in the number of female students and male students enrolled in Colleges of Education. The result therefore was in agreement with the research findings of Nwagwu (2006), who posited that, the number of female teachers in schools and female student-teachers in Universities and Colleges of Education continue to steadily increase while those of males tend to be on a steady decline in Nigeria. She asked whether women still regard the prospects for socio-economic advancement through teaching as poor or unpromising, or there is a moderation of the hitherto negative perception of the teaching profession. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

The result of the data analyses in tables 3 and 6 as well as figure 2 were significant due to the fact that the calculated  $X^2$ -value (50.7) was greater than the critical  $X^2$ -value (9.49). The result therefore means that there is significant difference in the attraction of female students to teaching than male students. The result therefore was in agreement with the research findings of Hall (2018), which she concluded that for women, education (teaching) became an acceptable form of employment that did not harm their marriage prospect. It paid well. It left them free of the discrimination and harassment faced by 1960s office secretaries, as well as the societal judgment and isolation faced by women who bravely entered the “male”-driven careers. Elementary teaching, along with nursing, was one of the highest forms of employment a woman could hold in the 1950s. The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative one was accepted.

The result of the data analyses in table 4 and figure 3 showed several reasons why men are discouraged from teaching profession. The result therefore was in agreement with the opinion of Safalta (2018) who stated among others, that the reasons why women tend to choose teaching than men is that Teaching jobs are always considered the most reputable job in our society, especially for the women folks.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, these conclusions were made.

1. Obviously it was categorically seen that there are more of female than male student who are enrolled in Colleges of Education.
2. Some intrinsic and extrinsic factors of attraction for female students into teaching profession were seen.
3. Men’s lack of interest in settling for teaching was mostly from extrinsic factors such as salary and social status.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the research work, the following recommendations need to be implemented because a change in the gender imbalance can sway the way teaching is regarded.

1. Good Remuneration for Teachers: when teachers are well paid and catered for, their social status will change and this can attract more men to the profession. Government can do this by setting up a special salary scale for teachers,

especially those in the primary and secondary schools with incentives. With this, there will be gender balance and more men will 'settle' down in the profession, and not using it as a stepping stone or a second choice.

2. The society must avoid stereotyping of teaching profession to women and work to promote a better understanding and appreciate male working in these lower levels of education. Thus, we need positive publicity that highlights teaching as a good career choice for both male and female.

## REFERENCES

- Bassey, E. (2019). The Teaching Career. *Journal of Education Curriculum and Methods*. 1(2) p.41-47.
- Brown, I. (2016). Why I Love Teaching. Teachers Handbook. Lagos: Merilyn Prints and Pub.
- Eury, A., King, J. and Balls, J. (2019). Teaching Profession. Retrieved online at [www.teacherhub.com](http://www.teacherhub.com), January 26, 2019.
- Hall, T. (2018). Why are there more Female Teachers than Male? Retrieved online at [www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com) on November 21, 2018.
- Ikpe, U. (2005). *The Demands of a Modern Teacher*. Uyo: Billy Pub. Co.
- Ndon, A. (2019). Issues Incumbent upon Teaching as a Profession. *Journal of Nigeria Educational Administration*. 3(1) p.18-23
- Nwagwu, C. (2006). Women in Nigerian Teaching Profession: The Challenges Ahead. Retrieved online at [www.tandfonline.com](http://www.tandfonline.com), March 7, 2019.
- Onwuka, U. (2004). *Curriculum Development for Africa*. Onitsha: Africa Feb Pub. Ltd.
- Petch, A. (2018). Why are there so few Male Teachers in Primary Schools. Retrieved online at [www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com)
- Safalta, T. (2018). 8 Reasons Why Women Choose Teaching as a Career. Retrieved online at <https://safalta.com> on May 2, 2019.