

**Teacher's perception towards the teaching profession and its effects on teaching performance in selected government secondary schools in Mbinga district.**

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the perception of teachers towards the teaching profession. Specifically, the study intended to explore how teachers perceive the teaching profession in selected government secondary schools in Mbinga district, factors leading to the teachers' perception and the effects of the teachers' perception on teaching performance. Data were collected through observation, documentary reviews, questionnaire and interviews with DEOs, TSD Officers, school inspectors, heads of schools, teachers and pupils. Simple random, stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used to obtain the target respondents. The data were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings revealed that the majority of secondary school teachers in Mbinga District have negative perception towards the teaching profession. The teachers perceive the teaching profession as one that absorbs poor performing students, a low status profession, a ladder towards easy acquisition of employment however there were some teachers who viewed it as the best career. It was also found that the majority of teachers dislike their profession due to low salaries, lack of incentives and motivation and the low status of the profession in the community. The study indicated that among the factors leading to negative teachers' perceptions towards the teaching profession included: poor career path, unattractive remuneration, lack of extra duty allowance, individual goals, attitudes of the community towards the teachers and the teaching profession, limited promotion. Moreover, the study disclosed that teachers' negative perception towards the teaching profession is a problem as it discloses several effects such as ineffective teaching, persistent absenteeism and lack of punctuality. All these in turn affect the quality of education at large. The study recommends the need for educational stakeholders including the government through the MoEVT to set short, medium and long-term plans for improving teachers' salaries, paying teachers extra duty allowances and improving living and working environment in secondary schools for effective and efficient teaching and learning process as well as achieving of education goals.