The Teaching Profession and Teacher Education: Trends and challenges in the twenty-first century

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Abstract

The paper sets out to show that teaching is among the five undeniably oldest and historically character-shaping professions in the world, the others being engineeringarchitecture, medicine, law, and accounting and each of these professions has a unique story in connection with its genesis and its influence on social organisation. The paper indicates, however, that while the other four have had a comparatively better advantage in terms of occupational status, social esteem, popular veneration or respect, teaching has not enjoyed a similar experience and treatment. An analysis is undertaken into the historical and contemporary factors of similarity and contrast among the professions in the varying levels of self-image building, status and public adulation that have made the teaching profession "an unequal among equals". Recommendations and propositions are then offered towards correcting the situation and making the teaching profession attractive to the younger generation of men and women of tomorrow and the future, particularly within the eastern and southern Africa region.