

**RETHINKING TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM AND POLICY
REFORMS IN THE NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT**

OTEGBEYE COMFORT UROWOLI

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Table of contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Table of contents | 1 |
| List of Tables | 4 |
| Abstract | 5 |
| Impact Statement | 6 |
| Acknowledgment | 8 |
| Reflective Statement | 9 |
| | |
| Chapter One | 15 |
| 1.1 Introduction | 15 |
| 1.2 Background to the study..... | 16 |
| 1.3 The Emergence of Formal Education and Policy Initiatives in Nigeria..... | 20 |
| 1.4 Structure of the Thesis..... | 25 |
| | |
| Chapter Two | 27 |
| Literature Review | 27 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 27 |
| 2.2 Concept of Teaching as a Profession..... | 27 |
| 2.3 Conceptual Framework..... | 29 |
| 2.3.1 Knowledge Attributes | 30 |
| 2.3.2 Autonomy Attributes | 34 |
| 2.3.3 Responsibility Attributes..... | 37 |
| 2.4 Teacher Identity | 40 |
| 2.5 Teacher Professional Identity | 42 |
| 2.6 Teacher Personal Identity..... | 46 |
| 2.7 Teacher Professionalism..... | 48 |
| 2.8 Professionalism in Teaching | 49 |
| 2.9 Regulatory Standards on Teaching Professionalism..... | 52 |
| 2.10 Research Questions..... | 54 |
| 2.11 Summary..... | 54 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Chapter Three | 56 |
| Research Methodology | 56 |
| 3.1 Introduction..... | 56 |
| 3.2 Theoretical Perspective..... | 56 |
| 3.3 Research Methods..... | 59 |
| 3.4 Data Collection Strategies / Analysis..... | 64 |
| 3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique..... | 68 |
| 3.6 Transcription of Data..... | 69 |
| 3.7 Data Theming..... | 70 |
| 3.8 Initial Coding..... | 72 |
| 3.9 Thematic Statement..... | 73 |
| 3.10 Ethical Consideration..... | 74 |
| 3.11 Role of the Researcher..... | 76 |
| 3.12 The Schools' Settings..... | 77 |
| 3.13 Summary..... | 81 |
| | |
| Chapter Four | 82 |
| Data Presentation and Analysis | 82 |
| 4.1 Introduction..... | 82 |
| 4.2 Theme 1: Becoming a Professional..... | 83 |
| 4.2.1 Basic Teacher Education..... | 83 |
| 4.2.2 Training on the Job..... | 87 |
| 4.2.3 Teamwork..... | 90 |
| 4.2.4 Continuous Professional Development..... | 94 |
| 4.3 Theme 2: Autonomy and Accountability..... | 97 |
| 4.4 Theme 3: Moral Dimension of Teaching..... | 101 |
| 4.5 Theme 4: Being a Professional..... | 107 |
| 4.5.1 Knowledge of Subject Matter..... | 107 |
| 4.5.2 Versatility..... | 108 |
| 4.5.3 Commitment and Passion..... | 109 |

| | | |
|---|--|------------|
| 4.5.4 | Relationship with Students, Love and Caring..... | 109 |
| 4.5.5 | Being Prepared and Proactive..... | 112 |
| 4.5.6 | Humility and Tolerance..... | 112 |
| 4.5.7 | High Student Achievement..... | 113 |
| 4.6 | Theme 5: Challenges and Concerns..... | 115 |
| 4.7 | Theme 6: Policy Changes..... | 119 |
| 4.8 | Regulatory Authority in Teaching..... | 122 |
| 4.9 | Summary..... | 124 |
| Chapter Five..... | | 126 |
| Discussion of Findings, Recommendations and Implications of the Study..... | | 126 |
| 5.1 | Introduction..... | 126 |
| 5.2 | The Context for Teachers in Nigeria..... | 126 |
| 5.3 | Themes and Literature Review..... | 128 |
| 5.4 | Key Findings..... | 131 |
| 5.5 | Implications of the Study..... | 138 |
| 5.6 | Limitation of the Study..... | 139 |
| 5.7 | Contribution of the Study: Rethinking Teacher Professionalism..... | 139 |
| 5.8 | Recommendation for Further Study..... | 140 |
| 5.9 | Summary..... | 141 |
| References | | 144 |
| Appendix 1 (Informed Consent Form) | | 161 |
| Appendix 2 (Attribute Coding) | | 163 |
| Appendix 3 (Interview Schedule) | | 165 |

List of Tables

| | | |
|-----------|---|----|
| Figure 1. | Conceptual Framework 1..... | 44 |
| Figure 2. | Conceptual Framework 2..... | 47 |
| Figure 3. | The Simple Relationship Between Epistemology, Methodology and Method..... | 61 |
| Figure 4. | Contrast of Constructivism and Positivism..... | 63 |

Abstract

Teacher Professionalism continues to be one of the most complex and contested areas in the education spectrum. This study explores secondary school teachers understanding of themselves as professionals. It is a qualitative project grounded in the participants' own experiences and perceptions. The knowledge to be generated in this study is subjective as it involves teachers expressing their opinions and beliefs in the context of their own experiences as teachers. The data were generated in a semi-structured interviews conducted with secondary school teachers, which is underpinned by a constructivist paradigm. I analyse the data using themes, which provides a structure for the argument. The history of the education system in Nigeria is assessed in order to provide a context for the development of teaching as a profession. The literature review outlines the key elements of professionalism and considers these in relation to teaching in secondary schools. The study revealed that the teachers in the sample were acquainted with the issues of professionalism and sought to enhance their professional development. They also stressed the importance to be afforded opportunities for continuous professional development. The study further expands the understanding of the factors that affect teachers' professionalism, professional development and professional identity. The study is one of the first to explore Nigerian teachers' views on their professional identity in relation to a context of constant policy changes and uncertainties.

Impact Statement

Enhancing Professionalism in the Nigerian Educational Context

The role of a teacher in supporting modernization and sustainable development in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. It is clear that no professional and adequate training of manpower for the education sector can be successful without competent teachers to drive the process. Quality teacher education is a sine qua non for the development of a developing country like Nigeria. A carefully planned and executed teacher education program will result in a greater grasps of teaching techniques, more professional self-assurance and improved quality of education.

Teacher education in Nigeria needs to be seen as a coherent practice in which professional development is always improving. This will impact on the structuring of teacher education policy and the continuity of teacher learning. Initial teacher education provides a solid base of knowledge, skills and responsibilities that teachers need to perform their tasks and continuous professional training allows for updates and adaptation to changes in the teaching profession.

Continuous professional development is an integral element of teachers' professional responsibilities and necessarily needs to be anticipated with initial teacher education. I argue that programmes will be effective when they are based on teachers' needs and also allow for interaction among teachers. Enhancement of teachers' professional competence will be achieved when they have close contact and diverse interaction with the environment as well as being able to anticipate and influence factors which will bear upon teaching in the future. A good understanding of concepts and instructional strategies is necessary in presenting different aspects of the instructional process.

The establishment of professional standards to raise and monitor the requirements to certify teachers, will enhance the improvement of teacher quality and bring clarity and predictability into the system. Teacher professionalism has become imperative in view of the advent of new techniques and global knowledge explosion. This trend demands better trained and equipped teachers at the various levels of the educational sectors. Essentially, teacher professionalism should be seen as the ability of the practitioners of the profession to enforce its rules and regulations in term of the knowledge base autonomy, responsibility, ethics, work conditions, training certification and registration. However, in Nigeria, the teaching profession is yet to be

fully accorded the status of a profession because it has no direct and systematic control or adequate status and the lack of political will on the part of Teachers' Registration Council to enforce its code of ethics and standards.

In Nigeria, education has undergone series of changes and every state by its transformation is spurred by the need to promote enlightenment and bring a just equalitarian and advanced society and to achieve this properly, teaching has to take its rightful place of being professional. Thus, the teaching profession should essentially be for those who are intellectually competent, effective and efficient decision makers, creators of warm classroom environments, seekers of alternative strategies and possessors of professional interest and pride.

This thesis contributes to our understanding of the tensions and dilemmas faced by the teaching profession with regards to their understanding of themselves as teachers and the perception of their identity within the Nigerian context. It will enable teachers and policy makers to reflect on the process of professionalization in the specific context of Nigeria and comparatively on a global level.

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I would also like to express my appreciation to the principals who supported me to complete my research in their schools. I would like to thank all the participants who volunteered to participate in this study and for sharing their stories with me.

To my friend and mentor, Dr. Babajide Abidogun for his constructive criticism at every stage of the study, for this I say, thank you.

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Reflective Statement

The following is a reflection of my experiences of the EdD Programme and how it has helped to sharpen and influence my professional development as a school manager and an educational consultant. It is a narration of my drive for enrolling in the course and how I have developed my professional proficiency. These reflections provide a context for the study and illustrate how the various taught courses have contributed to expanding my own knowledge and developing and sharpening my critical thinking and analytical skills. This statement also describes how the EdD has developed my professional understanding and narrates the implications it has for my future career.

Background

As a school manager, the general tone or success of the school is my responsibility which also includes the effectiveness of the teachers under my supervision. My work to date has helped me become more supportive to my colleagues in a manner that recognises the performativity driven culture that we work in. I feel immensely more confident working with colleagues and parents as I offer valuable and appreciable support in alleviating challenges they are faced with. Providing policy guidelines for academic, social and corporate life of the school with regard to the spread and scope of the curriculum is carried out more efficiently and now involves input from teachers and parents.

After many professional years of criticizing my colleagues with the view of helping them to improve, I have come to recognise the need to choose my words carefully because of my relative position of power as the manager and someone who is supposedly in authority to pass judgement on their competences.

As an independent educational consultant, the EdD has made me question education practices in relation to policies. I have questioned policies on teacher's professionalism, the inspection process and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in Nigeria. I have observed that where policies are in place, they are not evenly distributed among the various levels causing implementation to be haphazard. Today, I am on the lookout for ways of contributing to the professional development of teachers and improving professional practices in other sectors of educational development. This has provoked me into pursuing further study. I realised that I

needed a theoretical basis for my concerns and I was ready for an intellectual and professional challenge. This propelled me to find a programme that would both teach me and make academic demands of me and one that would give me the opportunity to be part of a larger professional/practitioner community with whom I could debate issues and learn about new thinking and theories in education. When I applied for the course, I had not been involved in academic discourse for some time and I had burrowed away on my own in my professional setting. I originally intended to investigate the situational devaluation of self-esteem and its effect on student's performance with the hypothesis that student's performance will increase if self-esteem is devalued.

At the first interview, the interviewer had no idea how my proposal could fit into the varied dimensions at the Institute of Education and she suggested that I look into other areas of interest with the thought that my proposal may not get past the ethics committee whilst wondering how devalued self-esteem can bring about students' progress. This propelled me to think harder on other areas of interest relating to my position as an education consultant. In undertaking the EdD, I did not start with a set of significant targets to meet nor did I want to change my career path. Rather, I wanted to become more theoretically grounded and find a discourse for my current work area. I was also ready to be stretched in terms of developing criticality in my thinking and in my academic knowledge. Since this course was self-funded it was imperative that it would have practical outcomes for my work, but also personal gains for me in developing my awareness and skills in an area to which I had committed a lot of time, energy and passion.

The Taught Courses

I was particularly drawn to the EdD because of the taught courses which were fundamental to developing my skills both in research and writing at doctoral level. In my first taught course (Foundation of Professionalism) assignment, I explored teachers' professionalism in Nigerian public primary schools. My paper examined the concept and elements of teachers' professionalism, the evolution of the teaching profession in Nigeria, how primary school teachers are produced, what on the job training and development are available for graduate teachers, the regulatory standard on teachers' professionalism and the impact of teachers' professionalism in Nigeria.

My interest in this field of study stems from the fact that it is common practice in Nigeria to plunge a teacher as early as possible in his/her training into the midst of a classroom after only a brief encounter with student teaching practice. To my mind, teachers' professionalism should be fully developed but not without acknowledging the challenges of the structures and systems in place in our educational system. Initial feedback enabled me to understand that assertions should be avoided where they cannot be substantiated. Final feedback however helped me realise more importantly that literature review and key concepts derived from it could be more directly used to examine and analyse the Nigerian context. It also made me think harder about whether western constructions/analysis of professionalism are wholly relevant in describing the situation in my context.

Feedback from my FoP, which indicated that I was making good progress, propelled me to look forward to the MoE 1 module. At the beginning of the week, I had no idea about how to go about putting together a proposal of research study that would stand up to academic scrutiny. At the end of the week, thankfully, I came up with the topic – *Quality assessment process and its effectiveness: the experiences of managers and teachers of primary schools in Nigeria*. This piece of research set out to explore the weaknesses in the current system of inspection as it relates to feedback which had been identified as incoherent and also to explore what the perceptions and expectations that school managers and teachers have of school inspectors. I wrote this proposal from the perspective of one who is involved with school management. It started out like a simple topic (since I was involved in the inspection process when inspectors visit my school) until I commenced work on it.

The major challenge I was confronted with was engaging deeply with the theories and here my tutor was very supportive at directing me to think critically. I also realised that I tried to hide under an extensive literature review. I struggled to integrate all the comments made by my tutor in the initial feedback into my final draft but I discovered later in the final feedback that there were other aspects I had not touched upon that should have been considered. My tutor was kind enough to discuss the final feedback comments with me. This was very useful.

I found the Specialist Course in International Education inspirational. The lectures and discussions were thought provoking and, even though this was complex material, it propelled me to ask so many questions. The readings enabled me to reflect a great deal on the parochial quality of

education offered in my context. One pertinent question was – how can we (Nigeria) participate fully in a global society? It involved looking at education and considering the extent and scope of present school activities. I became aware that global education should be contextualised. Therefore, whatever kind of international education is to be introduced, it must take cognisance of local cultures and differences for it to be acceptable and workable.

For this module, I considered the topic titled – *UN Millennium Development Goals on Universal Primary Education: A Task or a Wish – the Nigerian case*. In this research, I endeavoured to examine the state of UPE in Nigeria within the context of the UN Millennium Development Goals. I attempted a critical assessment of Nigeria’s response to the MDGs and the likelihood of achieving the goals on UPE in 2015. I was of the opinion that an official response of nonchalance or fiscal neglect will amount to treating the goals as a mere wish. On the other hand, a response of responsible structural and fiscal planning is a demonstration that the goals are perceived as an urgent task.

More determined, I approached the MoE 2 with much enthusiasm. I was able to use the same proposal as a basis for my research but with some modifications as I thought more about it and was fortunate to have the support of my tutor and supervisor. I also gained a lot from the invaluable presentations of my peers. Again I tried hard to bring all I have learnt from all the taught courses to bear. I was determined to present an exceptional piece of work having missed out on the best grade in the SCIE course.

This marked the end of the coursework. I thought it was unbelievable at first but indeed, it really had come to an end. I had worked with four different tutors on the modules and found that each one was distinct in their approaches but was directed towards one goal – to make sure I succeeded in my quest. I had begun gained some insight into the level at which I was expected to be critical, reflexive, thorough and analytical. I have developed my appetite to follow up on references which I would normally gloss over having understood the fact that the literature survey is partly about eliminating things that are not relevant. I have learnt that originality is important as I identify a topic and interrogate literatures, and I realise the need to find my own voice and demonstrate creativity within the frameworks I am adopting.

I appreciate the fact that differing perspectives abound and even though we may seek to buttress our work, we will never be immune to criticism, challenge and debate. In this respect, my module tutors were very supportive and the mentoring role of my supervisor has impacted on my development academically by providing constructive criticisms and academic guidance.

The Institution-Focused Study

I began the IFS with a piece of research in mind. The research set out to focus on the importance of students' perception of caring and its appropriateness in enhancing caring qualities in school relationships. It also sought to challenge the positioning of students as equal players with educators towards understanding of approaches to enhance caring in schools. I considered that this account would be meaningless without the involvement of the key stakeholders, the students, and so I incorporated their perspective as core to the research design. This was a challenging piece of work as its scale was broader and more academically demanding than the taught courses. I was engaging with the literature and with critique of the theories in the field. In effect, I was being challenged to find and express my own voice as an experienced practitioner and at the same time, to position this within a developed critical understanding of academic theory at doctoral level.

By the end of the IFS, I was confident I had become a more competent researcher, having gained confidence from all the readings as well as the analyses that I engaged with. The outcome of the IFS led to a solid research proposal for the final thesis.

The Thesis

Writing the thesis was very much a brick-and-mortar job, but I cannot bemoan the workload, for as pressure for results build up, so does the ability to profit from one's own work. It has been delightful to transform the heaps of evidence gathered during the interviews into a coherent project. The most fulfilling element of my research was speaking with teachers, transcribing and analysing the data, and analysing the qualitative data which was exciting because it not only provided results, but also served to identify new and unexpected opportunities for further research.

I had an opportunity to undertake teaching duties during the EdD. I loved interacting with the students (teachers in training) and learned something new from them every day. Teaching was a

great way of transferring knowledge and engaging the audience with my research study. In hindsight, doing the EdD has been highly beneficial for me. Throughout this period, I had learned to stretch the limits of my intellectual ability. There were difficult stages in this journey, from which I learned and developed the most.

There were many times throughout the EdD that I wanted to quit because my supervisor had high expectations of me and the end seemed so far away. There were constant physical health issues on my part and the thought of giving up, but the dream of helping to make a difference in teacher professionalism made me continue. I also experienced several family and personal illnesses as well as bereavement during my EdD journey which have been difficult but have made me more resilient.

Research is not always easy, but I found out that with the right support, and equal amounts of determination and hard work, the journey was enjoyable and fulfilling. Finally, the EdD experience has developed my skills in areas such as data analysis, writing, presentation and developing my own authoritative argument. It has also been instrumental in offering my commitment to developing better professional opportunities for teachers in Nigeria and I look forward with confidence, to making further contributions to this area of education.

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

Teacher professionalism is a crucial aspect of recent educational development in Nigeria. Its historical emergence and development has been tied into Nigeria's educational system and has influenced teachers' identity, but teachers' understanding of what it means to be a professional in their field of work is an area little understood. The nature of teacher professionalism in Nigeria is contested against a background of rapidly changing educational policies which, crucially, do not position the teacher as the locus of change in the school system. How teachers perceive themselves as professionals in this sort of unstable environment, and how this affects them professionally and personally, are issues that need urgent exploration.

These issues reflect broader social changes. The antecedents of educational policies in Nigeria and the current educational processes are interconnected, and the impact of the pre-colonial era on the development of the educational system can also be traced. More recently, education in Nigeria has come to be regarded as an 'instrument par excellence' for national development; it is an axiom that 'no educational system may rise above the quality of its teachers' (National Policy on Education, 2004, p. 4). The basis for this assertion in the policy arena is the global recognition of the importance of teachers to human development and the consequent admission of teaching to the comity of professions. This was evidenced by a joint declaration, in 1984, by two organs of the United Nations – the International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – that teaching should be regarded as a profession (Nwosu, 2011). However, this wider recognition has been tempered by issues ranging from instability in leadership, unrealistic and unachieved policy objectives and a lack of capacity for educational planning which constitute major challenges to the Nigerian educational system.

Teaching is a changing profession, and the work of teachers has been profoundly affected over time. Intensification and bureaucratisation, increased forms of managerialism, and greater accountability and public scrutiny are but a few examples of the most recent changes which have arguably led to a decrease in teacher motivation, job satisfaction and their sense of professionalism (Day, 1999; Helsby, 2000; Estrela, 2001).

Consequently, this research was conducted with a view to examining the present nature of teacher professionalism, its relevant significance to education and how it affects the role of the teacher and his or her pedagogy. It aims to explore and articulate how constant changes in educational policies affect teacher performance. Overall, I argue that the whole school evaluation process should be looked at, considering the fact that assessment of competence is deemed an important factor in teacher professionalism.

Teacher professionalism itself is a contested concept, marked by ambiguity and complexity (Helsby, 1995). Understanding its meaning implies, consequently, the consideration of the historical, cultural and political context in which it is embedded. Not only is it a concept under permanent construction (Gimeno, 1995) and subject to different and sometimes competing interpretations and analyses, but it also entails different voices which are rooted in different political, professional and institutional settings (Helsby, 2000; Hargreaves, 2000).

Continuing learning, both structured and self-directed, is critical to professional practice. However, the changing role of teachers, together with the increased demands and expectations placed upon them, significantly influences the types of knowledge teachers require in their undergraduate education and ongoing professional development. It would seem that the process of becoming a teacher is increasingly being acknowledged as a multi-faceted process which involves the person intellectually, socially, morally, emotionally and aesthetically (Beattie, 1995). If teaching must fulfil its professional mandate of cultivating generations of highly responsible and useful Nigerians, then the necessity for teacher education as a central responsibility of the government cannot be overemphasized. This aptly describes the case in Nigeria, where teachers' continuous learning is largely a personal responsibility. This is a tension I intend to explore in this research.

1.2 Background to the Study

Teaching as a profession is concerned with the systematic presentation of facts, ideas, skills and techniques to students. It includes the sharing of knowledge in the process of developing the individual (Fareo, 2015). Teaching developed into a profession as designated people assumed responsibility for educating the young. In ancient India, China, Egypt and Judea, teaching was performed by spiritual men such as priests and prophets, who enjoyed privileges and prestige. In

the theocratic state of the Jews, many adults regarded teachers as the channels to salvation and urged young ones to honour them. The Greeks in ancient times saw the value in educating children, with wealthy people adding teachers to their households, many of them slaves from conquered territories; during the Roman Empire, a similar practice prevailed. In the Middle Ages in Europe, the Church took over the responsibility for teaching, which was conducted in designated places such as monasteries. Many of these centres later developed into higher schools of learning, especially universities. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, knowledge of teaching methods improved as interest in the education of children continued to rise. This led to significant advances in the training of teachers in the use of educational theories and methods (Fafunwa, 1974).

To understand the history of education in Nigeria, adequate knowledge of the traditional or indigenous educational system, which existed before the arrival of Islam and Christianity, is important. This is because most of the features of the traditional education system are prominent in the contemporary education system. For example, according to Fafunwa, (1974), people who study certain trades or vocations spend a specified period of time training and, at graduation, are given, through a ceremony, either tools or materials to begin their own trades. Islamic education was not formally established in Nigeria until the fourteenth century, and Christian education was introduced in the nineteenth century. In old African society, as well as many other contexts, the purpose of education was clear; it was regarded as an important instrument for transformation and development. Education was generally for an immediate induction into society and preparation for adulthood. In particular, African education emphasised social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, and spiritual and moral values. Children learnt by doing – in other words, children and adolescents engaged in participatory ceremonies, rituals, imitation, recitation and demonstration. They were involved in crafts such as practical farming, fishing, cooking, carving, knitting, writing, dancing, drumming, acrobatic display and racing, while intellectual training included the study of local history, legends, the environment (local geography, plants and animals), poetry, reasoning, riddles, proverbs and storytelling. Education in old Africa was a lifelong experience as it combined physical training with character moulding, and manual activities with intellectual training. At the end of each stage, which was demarcated either by age level or years of exposure, the child was given a practical test relevant to their experience and level of

development and in terms of the job to be done. This assessment eventually culminated in a passing-out ceremony or initiation into adulthood. Though there was no written curriculum, training and education of children by adults was the responsibility of all. Traditional education formed the basis for the philosophy of Nigerian education, and this engendered the peculiarities of the teacher training in the Nigerian education sector today.

The history of modern teaching in Nigeria can be traced as far back as 1842, when missionaries trained and employed indigenous Nigerians to help in teaching various communities in the western and southern regions. Adeyinka (1971) affirms that the missionaries trained their teachers through the pupil-teacher system, a system where the teachers and pupils lived in the same compound as one big family. This system closely monitored pupil activity and progress and, at the end of the training, subjected them to an examination which qualified them to be recruited as teachers. Fajana (1978) highlighted that the pupils who were below the age of 14 years had to pass the Standard V examination before they could be recruited as teachers. The successful ones who became teachers received an hour of daily instruction from their head teacher in the elementary technicalities of teaching in the late nineteenth century.

With the establishment of a teacher training school in the northern part of Nigeria in 1909, the system of teacher recruitment started to take a new shape. Having passed the Standard V examination, a candidate had to serve as an assistant pupil-teacher for two years before enrolling on another two-year course at the teacher training school, where they would be trained and made to sit and pass a prescribed teaching certificate examination (Fafunwa, 1974). By the 1920s, criticisms of the missionary system had mounted and, in 1925, the Phelps-Stokes Commission was set up by the colonial administration to look at the issue. According to the report of the commission, as stated by Jekayinfa (2005), teacher training was unsatisfactory; the pupil-teacher was overworked and underpaid, and the curriculum was poorly conceived. An effective teacher cadre was recommended by the commission, along with significant improvements to the conditions of teacher service, in order to attract the best candidates into the profession. Many of these proposals were implemented, and teaching became a highly respected profession with teachers playing a key leadership role in local communities and often being viewed as role models. They were next to colonial masters in order of ranking, so they were valued; because of the respect

attached to them, communities provided for almost all their daily needs. Not until 1955, when the western part of Nigeria introduced universal primary education, which led to massive enrolment of students into schools, were untrained teachers taken on again, creating difficulty for the colonial government. A few years later, a commission was set up to review the policy for teacher employment. It recommended the gradual elimination of untrained teachers from schools, improvement of teachers' conditions of service, and the promotion of efficient teachers to the highest professional grades (Adelabu, 2005).

By 1948, the total number of teacher training colleges assisted by the government had risen to fifty-three, with a student-teacher population of 3,026 (Fakoya, 2009). In 1932, the Yaba Higher College started a three-year course for teachers. When the college merged with University College, Ibadan, twenty-one of the transferred students were in education. In the 1957-58 session, in order to train graduate teachers, the University of Ibadan implemented one-year courses for graduates, leading to a Diploma in Education. In 1961, it started a one-year associateship course for selected Grade II teachers, who would take over the headship of primary schools after the successful completion of their study.

Some historical antecedents have impact on how educational policies are formulated and implemented in Nigeria. The Lagos Colony and the Southern and Northern Protectorates were British colonies, which were amalgamated in 1914 and named Nigeria. The territory remained a British colony till 1960 when it attained independence. The colonial administrators introduced an indirect rule policy. Indirect rule was an administrative system introduced to Nigeria by Lord Lugard, in which the tutelary power recognised the existing traditional administrative structure and used it for the administration of said colony. The indirect rule policy recognised Islamic education in the Northern Protectorate; hence the Christian missionaries were restricted from spreading both Christianity and Western education to the region. The colonial administrators adopted the British form of education in Nigeria, and the following school systems – primary, secondary, sixth form and higher education – were introduced in the early twentieth century. Upon the attainment of independence, it was discovered that this system of education did not meet the aspirations of Nigerians; as a consequence, the current 6-3-3-4 educational policy (6 years of primary education; 3 years of junior secondary education; 3 years of senior secondary education;

and 4 years of university education) was introduced in 1977. The policy sought to introduce a functional technology-based education, which could sustain the economy. The Macpherson Constitution of 1951 put education in a concurrent list, allowing both the central and regional governments to legislate on it. This had great impact on the present arrangement. There are thirty-six state governments and the federal government in Nigeria, each of which can legislate on education. Throughout this period, the idea of teacher professionalism was becoming increasingly important, though it was a concept and a practice that was changing.

1.3 The Emergence of Formal Education and Policy Initiatives in Nigeria

(i) The Pre-colonial and colonial eras

Formal education in Nigeria dates back to the period of British colonialism. Before the advent of the British system of education, Nigeria had its indigenous system of education which had no written syllabus; hence, it was referred to as informal education. The traditional system of education was more of apprenticeship system where children could learn by doing. Islamic education was introduced into Nigeria through the northern part of the country and became entrenched into the country's educational and religious lives. According to Fafunwa (1974), teaching is one of the earliest occupations in Nigeria. Before the advent of the colonial masters, there were learning traditions whereby skilled adults with a wealth of experience were responsible for training the children in local carving, farming, traditional fabric weaving, animal hunting and many other vocations.

The advent of Christianity in the eighteenth century in Nigeria, brought by the early missionaries, launched Western types of education, which gave birth to the formal and intellectual training of indigenous trainers. In 1842, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, led by Thomas Birch Freeman and William de Graft, introduced Western education under the blanket of religion. This led to the incursion of other religious bodies. There arose a need to teach new converts how to read and interpret the Bible – hence, the introduction of reading and writing. The first school, named ‘The Nursery of the Infant Church’, was founded in Badagry in Lagos, in the southwestern region of Nigeria. Other missionaries who came to Nigeria included: Henry Townsend of the Church Missionary Society, in 1845; Reverend Hope Waddell, who was sent to Calabar for missionary work by the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) to establish a mission school called Hope Waddell

Training Institute, Calabar; and Thomas Bowen of the American Baptist Mission, who arrived in Badagry in 1850 and later established schools in Lagos, Oyo, Shaki, Igboho and Ilorin. In 1868, the Roman Catholic Mission also arrived in Badagry and opened a mission school. Various approaches were adopted in the education of teachers in the pre-independence era. These included apprenticeship or on-the-job teacher education, a pupil-teacher system of education, and institutionalised teacher education. In the post-independence era, after Nigeria gained independence in 1960, the National Certificate in Education (NCE) was decreed to be the minimum entry requirement into the teaching profession.

The colonial administrators introduced an administrative system of indirect rule, in which the tutelary power recognised the existing traditional administrative structure and used it for the administration of the Lagos Colony and the Southern and Northern Protectorates. The indirect rule policy recognised Islamic education in the Northern Protectorate; hence, the Christian missionaries were restricted from spreading both Christianity and Western education to the region (Fabunmi, 2005). This accounts for the gap in the level of educational development between the Northern and the Southern Protectorates.

The colonial administrators administered education through the use of certain education ordinances and education codes, especially those of 1882, 1887, 1916, 1926, 1946 and 1966 Education Codes (Ijaduola, 1998). These codes and ordinances served as the basis for the modern-day educational policies, education laws and the development of teacher education in Nigeria.

1.3.1 The 1882 Education Ordinance

Education legislation began in Nigeria with the introduction of the 1882 Education Ordinance for British West African territories – that is, Lagos, the Gold Coast (now Ghana), Sierra Leone and Gambia. Among other provisions, it prescribed criteria for the entrenchment of teacher education, which included annual evaluation of pupils, methods of granting teaching certificates, a system of grants-in-aid, and the establishment of a General Board of Education with the power to establish local boards. Professionalism of the teaching profession gained prominence, with the board of education running the affairs and methods of awarding certificates to teachers (Fabunmi, 2005).

1.3.2 The 1887 Education Ordinance

Consequent to the separation of Lagos colony from the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1886, it became mandatory that a purely Nigerian education ordinance be enacted. This ordinance was enacted in 1887. It created an Education Board and also stipulated rates and conditions for the award of grants, standards of examination, classification of teaching certificates and the board's power to grant scholarships for secondary education (Fabunmi, 2005).

1.3.3 The 1916 Education Ordinance

The 1916 Education Ordinance and Code were approved on the 21st and 24th of December, 1916 respectively. The ordinance tried to reorganise the school system in Nigeria. It also recommended that grants-in-aid be offered in the following percentages:

- (i) Ethos of the school, discipline, organisation and moral instruction – 30 percent
- (ii) Adequacy and efficiency of the teaching staff – 20 percent
- (iii) Periodical examination and general progress – 40 percent
- (iv) Buildings, equipment, sanitation – 10 percent.

The ordinance paved the way for increased financial participation by the government and full cooperation between the government and the missions. It also asserted the government's firm control over education. The Amended Ordinance no.8 of 1919 gave more powers to inspectors by allowing them to inspect any school, whether assisted or non-assisted, and also empowered the Education Board, upon the recommendation of inspectors, to close non-performing schools (Fabunmi, 2005). The teaching profession was given serious attention with the enactment of this ordinance.

1.3.4 The 1926 Education Ordinance

In 1925, a memorandum on 'Education Policy in British Tropical Africa' was dispatched to the colonies as the basis for the British colonial education policy. The ordinance was a landmark in the development of education in Nigeria and an outcome of the recommendations of the 1920 Phelps-Stokes Commission on education in Africa. Its terms of reference included:

- (i) enquiry into existing educational work in each of the areas to be studied,

- (ii) investigation of the educational needs of the people in their religious, social, hygienic and economic conditions,
- (iii) ascertainment of the extent to which these educational needs were being met, and
- (iv) enabling the availability of the results of the study, in full.

The report of this commission geared the British colonial administration to demonstrate increased interest in African education. It issued its first educational policy in 1925. The 1925 memorandum outlined guidelines for operation in the colonial educational system (Osukoya, 2002), while the recommendations of the 1926 Education Ordinance were:

- (i) making registration of teachers a pre-condition for teaching in any school in southern Nigeria,
- (ii) disallowing the opening of schools without the approval of the Director of Education and the Board of Education,
- (iii) authorising the closure of any school which was conducted in any way that was in conflict with the interest of the people or the host community,
- (iv) specifying the functions and duties of supervisors or mission school inspectors, and
- (v) expanding and strengthening the existing Board of Education by including the Director and Deputy Director of Education, the Assistant Director, and ten representatives of the mission and other educational agencies. (Osokoya, 2002)

Most of the colonial educational policies had shortcomings; they did not take into cognisance the Nigerian cultural background, and also did not involve Nigerians in their formulation (Fabunmi, 2003). The pre-colonial education system was aimed at ensuring continuity and sustainability of the traditional social structure, values and skills. It also aimed at increasing the adaptability of the indigenous people to their constantly changing environment. It focused on creating succession and producing skilled individuals who were capable of running the social, spiritual, economic and political affairs of their local communities. In other words, the pre-colonial education system was aimed at ensuring social continuity of life, modernisation of indigenous skills and practices and capacity building which also involved investing in what would today be termed human capital. By contrast, education in Nigeria today is driven by the need for effective modernisation in all areas of life, improvement in science and technology, stable and sustainable economic growth,

national unity and the application of the culture of globalisation. As a result, colonial and modern Nigeria have promoted significantly different educational and cultural values, a fact which does impact upon teacher professionalism.

(ii) Post-Colonial Era

Nigeria gained independence in 1960. The Nigerian government began to sponsor educational content that aligned with national unity and economic self-reliance. To teach in a primary school in Nigeria, one would need to possess a Teacher Certificate Grade II (TC GD II) from a Teacher Training College. This was phased out after 1998, when the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) became the required diploma for all school teachers. This implies that no primary and secondary school teacher in Nigeria is expected to possess a teaching qualification lower than the NCE. This was a significant attempt to improve the quality of teachers. In 1978, the government created the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) to conduct programmes that would upgrade teacher qualifications to the NCE level, with most of this training carried out by distance learning. Between 1993 and 1996, the NTI graduated 34,486 teachers through their distance learning programme; in 2000, it trained 20,000 teachers, and their Bachelor of Education programme received government approval (Ozano, 2013). The NTI also conducts workshops and conferences on curriculum development and other areas of teacher training. To teach in senior secondary schools in Nigeria, one must have either a bachelor's degree in Education or a bachelor's degree in a subject field combined with a Postgraduate Diploma in Education. At the senior secondary level, all staff must possess a bachelor's degree in Education which is offered at major universities. Of the 63 Colleges of Education in the country offering the three-year NCE programme, about a third are owned by the federal government and about half by the state government. The remaining are privately owned, but all of them are under the supervision of the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), which sets and maintains standards and approves courses and programmes across Nigeria (Atipioko, Ajuar and Omoraka, 1997). According to Taiwo (1982), the competence of teachers is central to the education of children, and it is often recognised that what constitutes competence in teaching is intimately connected to the type of teacher education available. Orubite's (2010) definition is particularly suggestive for this study. It argues that a profession is simply a paid job that requires prolonged training and formal educational qualifications. Since teachers undergo both

practical and theoretical training at Colleges of Education and universities and become certified after the training, then teaching in Nigeria is a profession according to this definition. Moreover, the teaching profession in Nigeria is still a topic of serious debate in government and among stakeholders due to its relevance to the growth and development of the nation. Thus, evaluating teacher professionalism and policy reforms in the Nigerian education context remains a timely and important topic of investigation.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter has provided a rationale for the research, exploring teachers' understanding of what it means to be a professional, and their views on their professional identity in relation to a context of constant policy changes and without their participation in policy issues. In order to give context to this development, the chapter began with the historical background to the Nigerian education system and the training of teachers. The second chapter reviews the literature on teacher professionalism and highlights the lack of agreed definition. In acknowledging the absence of a definition, the chapter explores the concept from a historical and cultural point of view and considers whether teaching can be viewed alongside the classical professions and identifies key issues facing the profession in Nigeria. Chapter 3 details the methodological approach adopted in this research, including the design, data collection and data analysis methods. It begins with a consideration of research methodology and illustrates how epistemology, methodology and methods are linked. The research design is outlined and the choice of interviewing as the research method for the study is explained. Ethical considerations are set out and the low-risk categorisation of the study is confirmed. Purposive sampling is introduced as the method used to identify participants, and the interview process is described in detail in the context of good practice recommended by Ribbins (2007). The chapter describes the process used to analyse the data and explains how thematic statements were extracted and then reduced to form themes. In Chapter 4, the findings from the data gathered are analysed and presented. The discussions generated six themes namely, fitting into teaching, autonomy and accountability, moral dimensions of teaching, being a professional, challenges and concerns and policy changes. Chapter 5 discusses these findings in relation to the literature. There was a development of contradictions in teachers' concepts of professionalism and a recognition of gap between the

regulatory body and the teachers. The chapter draws the thesis together and provides a summary of the findings and concludes with recommendations for the future.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This section provides a literature review of teacher professionalism and policy reforms in the Nigerian educational context. It addresses concerns about the nature of teacher professionalism in Nigeria against the background of rapidly changing educational policies, which have marginalised the teacher as the locus of change in the school system. This literature review is discussed under the following categories: conceptual framework, recent policy initiatives, professionalism in teaching, and research questions. It is then summarised.

2.2 The Concept of Teaching as a Profession

There is an obvious tension between the key definitions of a profession and the actual situation on the ground in Nigeria. While there is a widespread intention to professionalise the teaching profession, the process of doing this in a specific cultural setting may create tensions and differences. These may depend on the availability of resources, knowledge and willingness to take on board change. In addition, the academic literature upon the meanings of a profession contain significant differences of emphasis. It is often recognised that every profession has structured knowledge that is used by members to guide their practice or work. This is in terms of their values, constructs and principles, all of which are broadly accepted and agreed upon by members. With reference to Nigeria, Orubite (2010) views a profession as an occupation in which members acquire a body of systematic knowledge on which their work with people is based, develop in-group feelings of belonging and responsibility, assume an attitude of moral concern towards clients, and join together in association to advance the vocation and control members' conduct through established ethics. For example, teachers do certainly acquire specific and specialised knowledge although the nature of this knowledge will be both process- based relating to pedagogy as well as subject- based, especially as one progresses through the education system.

Amaele and Amaele (2003) defined a profession as a service occupation which applies a systematic body of knowledge to problems that are of great relevance to the needs and aspirations of society. While knowledge is relevant, it cannot stand alone, it must exist alongside a range of skills.

Yahiyah (2004) described a profession as an occupation which has its basis on specialised and organised skills, knowledge and intellectual competence. He further stated that a profession derives its raw materials from the society and utilises them to achieve set and desired objectives. Thus, professionals usually have clients who seek their services and terminate the relationship at will. Although, this is less true of teaching where education is compulsory and then voluntary, but even where it is voluntary, there is still an expectation that courses are completed. Oyekan (2004) opined that viable professions are so much appreciated for their crucial and distinct attributes, from their repertoire of cherished knowledge, practical skills and intellectual competence. Among them are teaching, journalism, engineering, medicine, law, accountancy, etc. These occupations render professional activities for certain fees from their clients, but teaching is often funded by government and so the teaching profession does not directly charge its own fee. The National Teachers' Institute (2007) defined a profession as any occupation which demands of all who work in it a prolonged and specialised knowledge, and skills and attitudes that are necessary for providing a particular service in the community. A profession is therefore an occupation which renders vital services useful for the survival of individuals and the society, which are knowledge-based, specialised, managerial, involve problem-solving and require expertise.

Yusuf, Afolabi, and Oyetayo (2014) defined a profession as an occupation or vocation that requires special skills, knowledge of some department of learning and some qualification, especially when it is one with high social status. It utilises functional education and mental ability rather than manual or physical labour. According to Dada and Fadokun (2010), a profession entails an occupation that is dependent upon specialised intellectual study and training for the provision of skilled service to other member of society, government, or non-governmental agencies for a definite fee or salary.

A profession also requires prolonged training and formal educational qualifications (Orubite, 2010). Pratte and Rury (1991) maintain that a profession is an occupation with enviable remuneration and high social status. In many countries teachers tend to have higher status than remuneration. According to Dada and Fadokun (2010), a profession entails an occupation that is dependent upon specialised intellectual study and training, for the provision of skilled service to other members of society, government and non-governmental agencies for a definite fee or salary.

The teaching profession in Nigeria is a profession which involves all stakeholders in the education system – that is, school administrators, teachers, students and government officials – hence the need for proper attention to be given to it vis-à-vis training and development. Okunloye (2005) defined a profession as a symbol for a desired conception of one’s work and, by extension, of one’s self (the worker). This determines what one does and may be reinforced by performance, doing what is expected in a role which has high social status, value and a degree of social responsibility. The definitions above examined the various attributes of a profession, in terms of the key themes of knowledge, skills in practice, training and remuneration, all of which can be ascribed to teaching. This explains the rethinking of teacher professionalism and policy reforms in the Nigerian educational context which is the focus of this research.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

This section posits the theoretical perspectives deemed relevant for the study. There is clearly much debate over the concept of professionalism and the issue of whether teachers can be considered professionals. In writing about the teaching profession, Sachs (2003) maintained that it is impossible to find an actual definition of professionalism. She argued that ‘to seek a fixed position is futile: professionalism has always been a changing concept rather than a generic one’. Whilst accepting that there is no agreed definition of a profession or professional in the literature about teachers and teaching, there are nevertheless dominant concepts and schools of thought in the literature in relation to the situation of Nigerian teachers.

There is a need to take account of the aspects of professionalism which have already been mentioned viz knowledge skills in practice, training and remuneration. However, this only offers a basic outline of the situation facing the Nigerian teacher and it is necessary to embrace wider aspects of professionalism. For instance, a teacher’s own perception of the teaching profession is key, since this drives how he or she might act in daily practice. My discussion of this aspect draws upon Hoyle and John’s (1995) analysis of professions, which can be grouped under three headings: knowledge attributes, autonomy attributes and responsibility attributes.

This framework helped to shape the contextual underpinnings of this research. It also provided purposeful articulation of teachers’ professionalism through the lens of both their personal and

professional lives in what is invariably a changing environment. Further, the framework raised broader theoretical questions about the nature of the teaching profession from the perspective of policy and practice in the geographical and cultural space of Nigeria. This approach helped me to develop research questions that were designed to explore the lived meanings of professionalism, linking the experience of teaching with the conceptual apparatus of professionalism.

2.3.1 Knowledge attributes

Every recognised field is characterised by knowledge, beliefs and skills that are commonly possessed by all of the practitioners in the field and not usually possessed by people not related to the field. These rely on the theory, research, professional values and work ethics of the specific field. Knowledge attributes would include the body of knowledge or knowledge base required for teaching and also the training or education involved, such as teaching skills. According to Darling-Hammond (1997), occupations become professions when they take responsibility for establishing a common knowledge base for fellow professionals and for transmitting that knowledge through education, licensing and continuing peer review:

A profession seeks to ensure that its members understand and use standards of practice that put the interests of clients first and base decisions on the best available knowledge. To establish standards of knowledge and practice for physicians, policy makers ask the medical profession itself to determine the guidelines. In the field of law, the professional lawyers set the standard for practice. Policy makers, however, do not ask teachers to set standards for their chosen field as they do not expect teachers to have knowledge to do so. (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 298)

The standard of practice for teachers in Nigeria is guided by the provided curriculum, quality of recruits, quality of training etc. The quality of teachers produced in any institution depends on the curriculum offered during the period of training. In as much as the curriculum framing process controlled by policy makers does not involve the teachers, it makes it difficult to ascertain the skills and positive attitudes these teachers have developed overtime.

Sexton (2007) conducted an extensive analysis of the literature on the attributes of the classical professions. While this analysis included writings of various authors from varied backgrounds and disciplines, there were many similarities in what they believed were the attributes of the classical or traditionally accepted professions. The five most commonly featured attributes in the literature, according to Sexton's findings, are: personal responsibility / code of ethics; extensive degree of autonomy; intellectually based / extended training; presence of a recognised knowledge base; and spirit of altruism. These findings, he opined, complied with Hoyle and John's (1995) own analysis of the professions, which can be grouped under three headings: knowledge, autonomy and service attributes (Sexton, 2007). These form what Locke (2004) describes as 'the classical triangle'. Here, the professional teacher can be classified into the categories mentioned above in that they must be knowledgeable of their subject matter, must have some degree of autonomy, particularly in terms of class control and decision-making, and must deliver service within the code of ethics of the teaching profession.

While law and medicine are accepted as following the standard pattern for professionalism, teaching is considered by many to be semi-professional, falling short of the pattern. According to Houston (1990), teaching falls short of the pattern because it lacks a specific core or technical knowledge, and the public has not granted individual teachers the autonomy needed in their sphere of practice. Teachers, I would argue, have a great responsibility to live up to expectations with respect to these attributes. This thesis argues that teachers are experiencing increasing constraints with regard to these attributes, which is perceived as diminishing teacher professionalism. Teaching generally does not have the same status as traditional professions. Placing the teaching profession against frameworks of characteristics of traditional professions, it is quite obvious that it does not currently qualify as a true profession for many reasons, such as the fact that teachers do not control the entrance to their occupation, and that there is no freedom of establishment because they are employed by schools. As a result, they have limited autonomy over their work.

The issue of whether teachers possess special knowledge has been a subject of debate among scholars. There are writers, including Lortie (1995), who maintain that there is no knowledge base in teaching. The majority of writers, however, acknowledge that teaching has a knowledge base which is of fundamental importance (Burke, 1992). Sockett (1993) distinguishes between subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge; other writers refer to subject knowledge as research knowledge, theoretical knowledge or scientific knowledge – however, all reference a teacher's

knowledge of the topic or subject being taught. Shulman (1987) regards general pedagogical knowledge as the broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organisation that appear to transcend subject matter. Shulman (1987) also describes pedagogical knowledge as pedagogical content knowledge. Similarly, Browne and McIntyre (1993) argue that knowledge refers to a teacher's grasp of how to teach and also an awareness of the context of the teaching situation, and the values and morals being developed. They provided 10 qualities, proposed by pupils, that create good teaching:

Creation of a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom; retention of control in the classroom; presentation of work in a way that interests and motivates; providing conditions so that pupils understand the work; making clear what pupils are to do and achieve; judging what can be expected of a pupil; helping pupils with difficulties; encouraging pupils to raise expectations of themselves; development of personal mature relationships with pupils; teachers' personal talents; considering how planning interacts with management of classes and lessons; the management of lesson introductions; managing question and answer sessions; building the confidence and trust of pupils. (p. 39)

These qualities, however, which largely refer to general teaching activities and hence pedagogical knowledge, appear to lack any reference to how students learn.

There are a number of impeding factors that can be adduced as to why the teaching profession in Nigeria is sometimes not considered to be a profession. These factors include teachers' poor conditions of service and irregular payment of salaries; lack of a uniform salary scale; poor condition of school facilities; unfriendly school environment; insufficient resources, such as chairs, tables and chalk; running cost and poor in-service development. This assertion is supported by scholars working elsewhere (Hilferty, 2008; Locke, 2001; Bloomfield, 2009; Reeves, 2007; Rizvi and Elliot, 2007; Wood, 2007), who attribute lack of professionalism in teaching to

- lack of any effective system of licensing;
- lack of agreed standards for performance;

- lack of incentives for competent and dedicated people to join the profession;
- work settings that do not provide a collegial atmosphere and appropriate set-up for the growth and development of ‘professionalism’;
- an assortment of prevailing systems of teacher education and the lack of interaction, which hinders standardisation in the teaching profession.

Furthermore, according to Baggini (2005), teachers in modern times believe professionalism means:

Maintenance of authority in the absence of deference; maintaining a sense of vocation without allowing one’s job to dominate one’s entire life; being able to acknowledge shared interests and experiences with students without eroding the teacher/pupil distinction; the ability to conform to the demands of a prescriptive system without losing sight of one’s own values and distinctive skills. (p. 11)

It will thus be crucial to understand what Nigerian secondary school teachers think about themselves as professionals in relation to knowledge attributes. Whilst there are clearly variations in terms of what actually constitutes the knowledge base in teaching, the literature generally acknowledges the existence of a body of knowledge, although the meaning of this may vary considerably.

Effective teaching and learning in schools depends on many factors, which include using appropriate teaching strategies to deliver a lesson in class. However, studies have shown that the quality of teaching in Nigerian schools is poor. A study by Johnson (2007) looked at over 200 lessons taught by Nigerian school teachers and found that most teachers displayed a limited variety of classroom strategies in terms of using effective techniques to introduce lessons, manage various interactions in the main part of the lesson or bring lessons to suitable conclusions. The study also found that there was a direct relationship between the poor teaching quality and weak learning outcomes of the system. Poor teaching strategies accounted for 25.2% of the variation in class 4 reading accuracy scores and for 28.5% of the variation in class 4 reading comprehension scores. Teaching strategies also accounted for 13.9% of the variation in class 6 reading scores, 14.8% of

the variation in class 4 mathematics scores and 21.7% of the variation in class 6 mathematics scores. In another survey into levels of teacher knowledge (Johnson, 2008), almost 20,000 teachers were tested. It was revealed that nearly 60% of teachers were unable to adequately read for information; only 0.4% of teachers achieved the norms established for the study. Interestingly, when the stringency levels were modified quite considerably, less than one fifth of teachers holding degrees were able to achieve the requisite norms.

These studies have shown that there is a lacuna in the process of teacher training in Nigeria. Initial teacher education programmes do not include the development of teachers as reflective, enquiry-orientated, lifelong learners. The relatively short time that teachers are themselves schooled, coupled with the short cycles of teacher training, does not provide and equip them with a sufficient knowledge base to teach. The ineffectiveness of pre-service teacher training, which combines theoretical and context knowledge with teaching practice, remains an issue which needs critical exploration.

2.3.2 Autonomy attributes

The concept of teacher autonomy is defined by many scholars, and these definitions contain important differences. Therefore, it is very difficult to find a common definition. However, these different definitions point to one common aspect, which stresses that autonomy requires recognition of greater power and freedom for teachers in their professional activities. Scholars describe this as being able to ‘control their work environment’ (Pearson and Hall, 1993), ‘encouraging and strengthening the power of teachers’ (Freidman, 1999), or having the freedom to make certain decisions (Short, 1994). The term ‘teacher autonomy’ analysed in this study focuses on the power and freedom of teachers in the selection of subjects to be taught, methods and materials to be used in teaching, and activities to be chosen, as well as in the implementation of decisions taken with regard to educational policies.

A critical aspect of teacher professionalism is the need for group and individual autonomy. The importance of professional autonomy in the enhancement of the teachers’ role in education has been underlined in a number of scholarly works (Castle, 2004; Freidman, 1999; Ingersoll, 2007; Pearson and Moomaw, 2006; Webb, 2002; White, 1992). The concept of teacher autonomy as

identified by Hoyle and John (1995) refers to the professional independence of teachers in institutions of learning, especially the degree to which they can make autonomous decisions about what they teach and how. This is an exceedingly important component of a profession. The teacher is expected to think of various ways and means to assist students in acquiring knowledge and developing academic potential. Autonomy is also viewed as ‘the freedom and ability to implement the theoretical knowledge and technical know-how one has learned in his/her years of training prior to entry into the profession’ (McPeck and Sanders, cited in Macklin, 1981, p. 27). Teacher autonomy is a very important consideration in recognising teaching as a profession and developing professional teachers; if teachers are to be empowered and regarded as professional individuals, like medical doctors and lawyers, they must have power and freedom in their professional practices.

Teacher autonomy encompasses most aspects of teaching and is manifested through a teacher’s own individual autonomy in his/her classroom and the group autonomy of teachers and teaching in general as one entity. The curriculum is set by the Ministry of Education, which exerts apparent ‘control’ over what is taught in class or prescribed for each class level. Teachers, however, do have autonomy in terms of how they plan, organise and teach their lessons. They can also decide how they will actually teach the content. Autonomy, therefore, appears to rest on the presumption of a certain level of knowledge. These categories overlap, as a teacher’s knowledge is viewed in terms of subject matter and pedagogical knowledge expertise. Individual teacher autonomy has focused primarily on the freedom of teachers to make decisions on matters which directly affect them. The element of autonomy of the individual teacher is demonstrated by the desire for shared decision-making regarding choice of curriculum, choice of teaching methods and the right of teachers to judge their own achievement as well as that of their students (Wise, 1989, 1990).

Friedman (1999) argued that organisational efficiency might be further improved via enhancement and enlargement of the professional autonomy of employees. Recognising further staff control in the decision-making process allows them to act and think more freely. Organisations where the sphere of decision making is open to senior managers only are less effective than those organisations in which decision-making is decentralised (Friedman, 1999). Teachers in Nigeria are not usually involved in the nationwide or school-based curriculum

development and renewal activities; their main function, in terms of curriculum development, comes into the foreground with the planning and implementation of instructional activities. In the Nigerian context, teachers still have a crucial role in programme development as, even when they are given the task of implementing a ready-made programme, they must resort to their own decisions and modifications while adapting the curriculum according to their specific context and teaching conditions. Nonetheless, limitations on teacher autonomy form a considerable obstacle for teachers making instructional decisions and applying them (Boote, 2006).

As observed, with most professions that require specialisation, improvement of teacher autonomy envisages the enhancement of the teacher's powers in the processes of planning, decision-making and the materialisation of educational activities (Pearson and Moomaw, 2006). It should be recalled, however, that teacher autonomy does not mean absolute freedom. Studies done so far on this subject show that excessive authority granted to teachers leads to other problems and undesired outcomes (Anderson, 1987). Enhancement of teacher autonomy bears significance in many respects. Paramount is recognition that teachers autonomy is essential to ensure that they fulfil their tasks in schools properly. There are tensions over the power of teachers in the drafting and planning of teaching methods and contents and these are significant tensions within the larger sphere of their responsibilities. Ingersoll (2007) states that teachers are entrusted with the training of the next generation, but they are often not entrusted with much control over many of the key decisions concerned with this crucial work. This suggests that they are accorded with responsibility but not power.

The Nigerian educational system is largely dominated by a tight, central approach to curriculum planning and implementation. The implementation of curriculum goals requires the improvement of the teacher's role and autonomy for defining and planning teaching activities. Focusing on the scope for teachers to express their professional judgement in dealing with any specific and changing situation to deliver in terms of their interests, backgrounds and strengths. Teachers will feel confident about contributing their most dynamic skills. In the Nigerian context, teachers' views, attitudes and practices towards instructional planning are not studied or considered, no particular attention is paid by the central system towards the issue of teacher autonomy and curriculum reform from this perspective.

Teacher autonomy is a sine qua non in teaching, given the unique aspects and requirements of the profession. My experience as a former classroom teacher and an administrator suggests that teachers need a great deal of autonomy if they are to be effective in the classroom, and if they are to be leaders, decision makers and are also to provide effective instruction to their students. I would argue that such a view of teaching requires teachers to have autonomy in order to achieve full potential. The different concepts of professionalism involve different scales of autonomy for teachers. Hoyle (1995) drew a distinction between restricted and extended professionalism. The restricted professional is intuitive, classroom-focused and based on experience rather than theory. The extended professional, on the other hand, is sensitive, values the theory underpinning pedagogy and the adoption of a generally intellectual and rationally based approach to the job. Restricted professionalism diminishes teachers to implementers of policies and programmes created by others (Wise, 1989). Contrarily, extended professionalism emphasises teachers' new role as curriculum developers, critical thinkers and empowered autonomous professionals who can flexibly respond to students' individual needs (Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen and Nevalainen, 2004).

There is an overlap in these different paradigms of teaching. While restricted professionalism infers that teachers cannot be trusted as they are seen as putting a brake on school innovation, extended professionalism puts teachers as professionals who are licensed to practise teaching and act responsibly. Students' abilities to grasp any given subject, their needs, interests and tendencies, as well as their skills and talents are all different. It behoves the teacher, therefore, to understand the classroom reality and be able to make the best and soundest decisions with respect to the students.

2.3.3 Responsibility attributes

Aside from their primary responsibility as directors of student learning, teachers also take on further roles in schools and in their profession. They work with colleagues, family members community members and other stake holders to set clear and obtainable standards for knowledge, skills and values expected from children of the world. They understand that the essence of education is a close relationship between knowledgeable, caring adult and a secure, motivated child. Arthur (2003) regards teaching as 'a self-giving enterprise concerned with the betterment

or good of pupils and society'. He stressed the integral part that values and beliefs play in a teacher's interactions with pupils and sees the teacher-pupil relationship as character-forming, providing an opportunity to promote moral and social development. The literature has suggested that teachers who are committed and responsible or accountable for their classroom and students have greater effectiveness.

The requisite knowledge base for teachers, I would argue, is not simply an understanding of subject matter and pedagogical techniques. What is required is for them to learn to be their own persons, which requires independence of thought, feeling and action, so that they can, in turn, teach their students the same. Teaching the young to each be their own person is likely to be unsound if teachers lack a reasonable understanding of the general capacities necessary for understanding the world view and how to guide their students to formulate their own understanding of the world they live in. According to Fenstermacher (1990), being one's own person involves possessing a strength of personality, an independence of judgement and a degree of self-understanding that permits individuals to use freedom for their own personal as well as social purposes.

Responsibility and ethics raise the issue of codes of practice and professional conduct. Regulatory standards are customarily dictated for many professionals as a means to regulate acceptable ways of doing things. These service agreements or standards are usually tagged as 'codes of conduct' or ethics of profession. Francis (1999) made an important distinction between ethics and law; ethical guidance sets best practice by guiding, leading and informing professionals' behaviour, while the law sets constraints within which professionals operate, and provides punishments for transgressors. Campbell (2008, p. 358) asserts that ethics and teaching seem inherently compatible and unavoidably intertwined. Sanger (2007, p. 169). Lasley and Seidentop (2006, p. 14) assert that the goal of teacher education is to produce a highly qualified and highly effective teacher in every classroom. This effectiveness is often seen as a priority.

However, as Naravaez and Lapsley (2007, p. 2) claim, effective teaching promotes both moral and academic excellence. To achieve the first, two obligations show up. Firstly, teachers would need to know what is good, right, caring and virtuous and be able to enact those things in their practice. Secondly, they would need to know what contributes most effectively to their students' moral

development, and be able to incorporate those things into their teaching practice (Sanger, 2007, p. 175). Yet, the moral dimensions of teaching and the ethical nature of the teacher's professional responsibilities often seem to be overshadowed by cognitive theories connected to teaching and learning, effective approaches to measurement and assessment, classroom management strategies, and other aspects that, while naturally important, are rarely viewed from a moral or ethical perspective (Campbell, 2008, p. 358). This overestimation of the cognitive side of personality may result in a reluctance to consider the systematic moral training necessary for a teacher's work. Sherman (2006, p. 55), however, states that teacher educators should be creating opportunities to situate moral dispositions as central aspects of teacher preparation and assessment.

When considering the goal of teacher education, Lasley and Siedentop (2006, p. 14) state that it is the preparation of teachers who make a difference in the classroom. Sherman (2006, p. 51) argues that it is to create teachers with the vision to nurture candidates, and a commitment to making a difference in the lives of students. Hansen (1998, p. 649) claims that teaching compels teachers to serve students' growth and development, not because some external authority has declared this to be so, but because of the very nature of the work. The role of the teacher as a moral example for students and the importance of providing a 'good example' that serves as inspiration for students to cultivate respect, decency and social etiquette cannot be glossed over. The feeling of responsibility for students' moral, intellectual and social development is an essential motivational force, pushing teacher educators towards a deeper awareness of their potential for shaping the character of a person.

For such reasons as this, moral education as a concept is taught in Nigerian schools. Fundamentally, it is regarded as the process of guiding the character development of an individual in society. Teachers place high premium on moral education; therefore, the influence of teachers in moulding students into adulthood cannot be overemphasised. Consequently, the moral aspects of a teacher's personality convey the qualities expected of him/her as a teacher of moral education. Teachers are expected to be persons of dignity and reputation with high moral values who observe and practice ethical and moral principles.

Having recognised the importance of the three attributes of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility as they relate to the teaching profession, as well as delineating their potential scope in the teaching profession in Nigeria, I will now move on to the issue of teacher identity.

2.4 Teacher Identity

In framing teacher identity, it is necessary to recognise the challenges of adequately defining and operationalising the concept, given its contested meanings (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). Teacher identity is not simply who teachers think they are (Kress, 2011); teacher identity is hard to articulate, easily misunderstood and open to interpretation (Olsen, 2008). However, the varied understandings of identity from different conceptual frameworks share some common elements: identity is shaped by multiple personal and contextual factors; these factors interact in a reciprocal and dynamic way; and identity is continually reshaped over the life of an individual. Gee (2000) argued that identity may be thought of as being seen by the self and others as a particular sort of person in a particular context at a particular time. Indeed, teacher identity is a co-construction involving other agents and the wider society which influence how teachers draw upon their motivation and commitment, work demands and satisfaction and self-efficacy to define themselves as professionals (Avalos and De Los Rois, 2013). Both individual beliefs and experiences, as well as their perceptions of what is expected in a particular context, are an important aspect of teacher identity, and influence the choice of certain teaching practices (Horn, Nolen, Ward and Campbell, 2008; Katz et al., 2011). Such relationships and reciprocity can vary between individuals and between local and national communities of practice (Czerniawski, 2011).

Identity has been re-conceptualised over time within the fields of anthropology, sociology and education, but has slowly gained acceptance and coherence (Varghese, Morgan, Johnson and Johnson, 2005) based upon a common set of understandings.

If identity is a key influencing factor on teachers' sense of purpose, self-efficacy, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness, then investigation of those factors which influence positively and negatively, the contexts in which these occur and the consequences for practice, is essential. (Day, Kington, Stobart and Sammons, 2006, p. 601)

The above citation sheds light on the multiple influences of identity on the lives of teachers, thereby underscoring both its importance and the need for continued research in this area. Consequently, teacher identity becomes a construct, a complex composite comprising what the teacher knows, does, and how he/she feels, as well as how he/she thinks about his/her knowledge, actions and values relative to the discharge of his/her roles and responsibilities. Schwart (2001) argues that identity is a synthesis of personal, social and cultural conceptions.

Presently, in Nigeria, the media (print and electronic) devotes a lot of attention to the teaching profession and the education sector generally. The sector is experiencing more criticism and interference than ever before. Skott (2013) has noted that a characteristic of the field of teacher identity is that it is driven by social interpretations of human functioning to a greater extent than other research on and with teachers. This concept has been used to develop understandings of teachers and teaching in periods of transition or transformation. Certainly, Nigeria over the past twenty years has seen the introduction of different educational policies, bringing changes such as the introduction of a national curriculum, which have engendered a continuous stream of prescriptive requirements upon the teaching profession. The profession has also been under considerable pressures ranging from the changing nature of work and knowledge in information and communication technology (teachers are expected to equip themselves with knowledge of the use of computers), to the changing employment structure of schools and the pressure to raise standards. These pressures will in some ways impact on teachers' professional and personal identities. The current era of globalisation has ushered in new perceptions and new discourse, with considerable implications for the status of teaching and the public image of the teacher. An understanding of teacher identity and the factors that influence it is critical both for designing appropriate teacher education programmes and for the effective implementation of education policies generally in Nigeria. Currently, government policies on education are undergoing significant change, and the educational system is being generally restructured. I contend that these reform efforts do not significantly posit the teacher as the driver of change. There is little evidence of empirical studies directed at teacher identity and professionalism as core determinants of how teachers perform their roles. Paying attention to teacher identity helps us to comprehend the effect

of global trends within national settings. I therefore propose to explore two aspects of identity as they relate to the teaching profession- teacher professional and personal identities.

2.5 Teacher Professional Identity

The teaching profession is generally associated with certain fundamental role categories, which are accepted by most teacher training systems. These include: projecting, management and organisation of the learning activities, psycho-educational, advising, class management, proper communication with pupils, parents and work peers, lifelong learning programmes, active participation in perfecting the educational process and school innovations, and offering educational services to the community. While literature on teaching emphasises the importance of identity in teacher development, understanding identity and issues related to it can be a challenging endeavour.

Goodson and Cole (1994) perceived teachers' professional identity development as rooted both in the personal and the professional. They wrote:

We consider teachers as persons and professionals whose lives and work are influenced and made meaningful by factors and conditions inside and outside the classroom and school (p.88).

Professional identity is not a stable entity, it cannot be interpreted as fixed or unitary (Coldron and Smith, 1999). It is a complex and dynamic equilibrium where professional self-image is balanced with a variety of roles teachers feel that they have to play (Volkman and Anderson, 1998).

The acceptance of new roles by teachers is one of the 'core spots' of teacher training reform, due to the fact that this process of acceptance implies subtle psychological mechanisms which directly impact upon professional identity (Mihaela and Toader, 2014). Becoming aware of one's professional identity and all the facets it entails and, most importantly, knowing the distances and differences between those facets, is one of the fundamental conditions of success and evolution in the teaching profession (ibid). Teachers are a true blend of social representations: the professional identity of the teacher and all of its facets is always confronted by the perceived image that the students have of the teacher. This is why, according to Mihaela and Toader, training and developing teachers' professional identity, as well as raising awareness of it, is extremely

important in order to be able to optimise and exercise control in a positive and formative manner (p.362).

Teachers' professional identity implies both a cognitive psychological and a sociological perspective: people develop their identity in interaction with other people (sociological perspective), but express their professional identity in their perceptions of 'who they are' and 'who they want to become' as a result of this interaction (Bejaard, 2006). Kelchtermans (2005) argues that 'identity' indicates a completed and static state, and recommends the term 'self-understanding' to encompass: self-image – how individuals represent themselves as teachers; job motivation – reasons for entering and remaining in the profession; future perspective – teachers' expectations for the future; self-esteem – appreciation of one's own job performance; and task perception – everyday jobs a teacher completes. In the existing literature, theoretical discussions about Teacher Professional Identity (TPI) acknowledge three levels of analysis: an individual level, including teachers' personal biography and positioning dynamics; an interpersonal level, including social relationship, practices and artefacts; and a cultural level, including representations, norms, values and the organisational context (Ligorio and Tateo, 2008).

From a narrative viewpoint, Connelly and Cladinin (1999) illustrate how knowledge, context and professional identity are connected to teachers' narratives. This gives a sense of what teachers care about the most when telling their stories. It is also an articulation of their motivation, and the role of organisational culture and practical conditions of work. TPI is formed and reformed by stories teachers tell (ibid). In teachers' everyday work, the simplest way of reflecting is to compare actual practice with past experience, in order to check if previous practical solutions can still work. Otherwise, teachers can compare actual practice with other teachers. Through this type of reflection, the teacher draws upon tradition and routines that become part of TPI, which describes how teachers perceive themselves within their occupational context and how this is communicated to others. This could be somewhat difficult to achieve because teachers have a lot of roles to perform; this diversity of roles suggests the multidisciplinary nature of the teaching profession, which often challenges teachers in terms of defining their professional identity.

Furthermore, when the problem of continuous change in educational policies in Nigeria is taken into consideration, each teaching situation becomes complex, unique and situated, which leads to tension between established practices, solutions and innovation with regard to technology, new pedagogical approaches, reforms and so on. Kerman and Meijer (2011) explain that teacher identity is dynamic, continuous and discontinuous. It reflects individual teachers' attempts to incorporate new and diverse understandings of professional lives alongside understandings of themselves as people. Morrison (2007) affirms that the changing, multifarious and responsive nature of teacher identity therefore reflects attempts to align and position oneself to make sense of one's history, while also working towards a preferred future by capitalising on current events.

Considering the complexity of the construct of TPI, it seems reasonable to suggest that any meaningful investigation of it has to be contextual or situation-specific. The figure (2) below identifies the factors that influence TPI in the Nigerian context. I constructed this model from key readings in the literature.



Figure 1. Conceptual framework of Teacher Professional Identity (Researcher).

The factors in the conceptual framework of Teacher Professional Identity above encapsulate the following:

- (i) Self-consciousness: Perception of self, values, attitudes, personal goals, family background, desire to be a teacher, love for the job, past and present experiences, perception of roles and responsibilities, etc.
- (ii) Education: Training, knowledge, skills, professional development, etc.
- (iii) Professional Affiliation: Interaction with education officials, workplace interactions, interaction with other teacher groups and organisations, etc.
- (iv) Environmental Factors: Provision of adequate facilities, educational policies, economic situation, organisational structures and power relations, etc.
- (v) Commitment: Diligence, perseverance, dedication, attentiveness, etc.

It must be pointed out that these categories are not exhaustive, and meaningful research must pay attention to the interaction between them. Moreover, there could be a number of other country-specific factors, which may require the development of additional categories. The image of the self and self-esteem depends on the evolution of the teaching career. As they advance in their career, most teachers refine their professional identity. It could be argued that teachers become more and more aware of their identity and, as a result, self-esteem grows stronger. However, on a practical level, self-esteem becomes lower – particularly in the teaching profession, mostly due to the rapid changes in contemporary society.

Psychologists consider that developing a proper image of the self is the key to success. For Erikson (1968), loyalty is the nucleus of identity; it means the possibility to achieve one's potential, in a context that allows the individual to be himself, loyal to himself and to others. Research conducted by Beijaard, Verloop and Vermut (2000) on professional identity and the perception of one's own professional identity shows that many teachers in Germany perceive themselves rather as specialists and practitioners than as pedagogues. The teachers who believe themselves to be specialists consider that, without sound knowledge in the field, one cannot become a good teacher. This is the basis of the teacher's authority. The ones who believe themselves to be practitioners are interested in the conditions of learning, planning and projecting the teaching activities.

The work of teachers at all stages is complex, and this complexity can increase as teachers encounter the content of their courses and begin to experience work in their school field

placements. Developing a strong, coherent teacher identity is related to teacher retention, teacher resilience and teacher effectiveness, particularly in the early years of the profession (Mansfield, Beltman and Price, 2014). Understanding how teacher professional identity develops over the duration of a teacher education programme will assist teacher educators to better prepare pre-service teachers for the rigours of teaching, and may shed light on how to engage in a productive process of constructing their professional identities (Izadinia, 2013, p. 695). The understanding of teacher professional identity can be established and supported by the infrastructure which contributes to creating a shared sense of commonality among teachers. Even though teachers recognise these identities, they are connected to specific situations which raises the question of how a teacher can maintain any sense of professional self through time and space.

2.6 Teacher Personal Identity

Teacher personal identity is key to the effective professional growth of a teacher. It is a contributory factor that shapes teacher identity and the way teacher identity is developed. A person's identity is fluid; it changes within the environment or context in which the person finds him/herself. Both environment and educational institutions shape the identities of teachers, but these teachers themselves, with their various backgrounds and life histories, are also subjects in constructing the persons and teachers they will become. Identity is dependent upon the contexts in which an individual immerses himself/herself, such as schools, teacher educational programmes, family, religious groups and so forth (Beijaard et al., 2004). Clandinin and Huber (2005) refer to context as 'the landscapes past and present in which a teacher lives and works'. Contexts inevitably shape the notions of individuals, their perceptions of themselves and how others perceive them.

Figure (3) below identifies the factors that influence teacher personal identity in the Nigerian context. This model was also constructed from key readings in the literature.

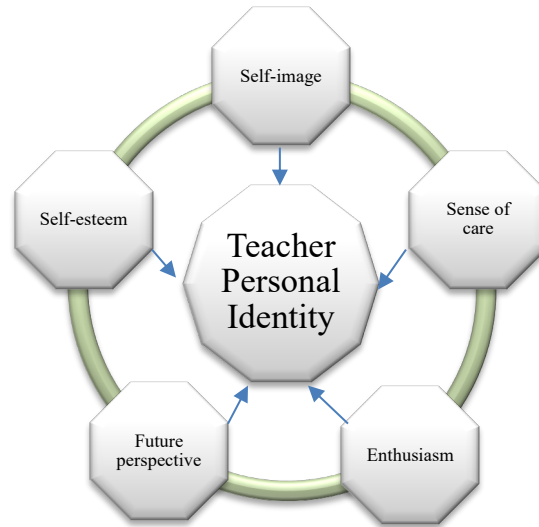


Figure 2. Conceptual framework of Teacher Personal Identity (Researcher)

The factors in the conceptual framework of Teacher Personal Identity above encapsulate the following:

- (i) Self-image: Perception of self, appearance, personality, skills, what you believe others think about you, what kind of person you think you are; the status you feel you have.
- (ii) Self-esteem: Feelings about one's self, images about how you see yourself and how you believe others see you. This view of yourself is shaped by your unique thoughts and beliefs.
- (iii) Sense of care: Knowledge of students, sense of responsibility, burden of care, deep understanding of students' experiences, students having confidence in you, assurance of support, encouragement, attention, calmness, concern, protection.
- (iv) Enthusiasm: Strong active interest in the job, excitement about what you do, intense enjoyment in doing the job.
- (v) Future perspective: Prospects for improvement, future success, and expectations from doing the job.

Again, it must be pointed out that these categories are not exhaustive and meaningful research must examine how they interact. The pertinent questions which arise in the quest for teacher identity include: what the teacher should know for the teaching to be effective; what the teaching

is intended to achieve; what values, principles or code of practice should inform the teaching; and what the teacher needs to do in order to achieve effectiveness in teaching. The concept of identity helps to develop oneself as one evolves over time. This includes a path of life that we have no control over. The understanding of personal attributes and skills helps to compose one's self-assessments. This becomes very important because it affects the way one feels and how one is able to respond to challenging situations.

2.7 Teacher Professionalism

Professionalism concerns the ways that teachers put their professionalism into practice. Conceptions of teachers' practice are connected to teacher professionalism in the sense that a certain definition of teachers' practice follows on from a certain understanding of the professionalism required to carry it out. Hoyle (1975, p. 318) identified two distinct aspects of teachers' professional lives: professionalism and a new term 'professionalism'. He categorised the status-related aspect of teachers' work as professionalism, and the elements of the job that constitute the knowledge, skills and procedures that teachers use in their work as professionalism. Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) defined professionalism as the quality and character of peoples' action within an occupational group. Clement (1995) was more specific; he defined professionalism in terms of expertise and a combination of reflective craftsmanship and mastership, in which craftsmanship refers to having a thorough mastery of instructional skills in the domain of subject content, instruction, educational theory and school organisation. Clement formulated mastership in terms of control, responsibility and flexibility. Other categories to which professionalism refers are named as 'that set of knowledge, skills, values and behaviours, which is exercised on behalf of clients' (Hoyle and John, 1995, p. 16).

Evans (2002) viewed professionalism as 'an ideologically-, attitudinally-, intellectually- and epistemologically-based stance on the part of an individual, in relation to the practice of the profession to which she/he belongs, and which influences her/his professional practice' p. 6-7. Teachers' professionalism is considered as a concept referring to the social constellation of interpretations of how teachers should work in terms of what they should master, and what they should do and aim for (K. van Veen et al. 2001). Professionalism, for the purpose of this research, can be summed up as the professional knowledge and the set of skills and values entailed and

dispensed in professional practice. In relation to this, I think of professionalism in terms of the practice itself and that it cannot be displayed outside of practice, or descriptions of practice as it is always determined action towards one or several purposes. So an action determines professionalism. This is a useful insight to help understand the practice and reflections of Nigerian teachers whose sense of themselves as a professional may be less developed than in the West.

In my view, the pertinent questions which arise in the quest for professionalism are: what should the teacher know for the teaching to be effective? (knowledge); what is the teaching intended to achieve? (goals); what values, principles or code of practice should inform the teaching? (virtues); what does the teacher need to do in order to teach effectively? (competences). Further possible teacher competences include teaching and supporting learning, marking and giving feedback on pupils' work, reviewing and understanding the effectiveness of their teaching, utilising the learning methods applicable, and working towards the continuous improvement of their teaching effectiveness.

2.8 Professionalism in Teaching

A person's professionalism is revealed by how well one is able to meet the specific challenges of one's job by using skills, experience and expertise that are also specific to that job. Wise (1989) describes professional teachers as those who have a firm grasp of the subjects they teach and are true to the intellectual demands of their disciplines. They are able to analyse the needs of the students for whom they are responsible, they know the standards of practice of their profession, and they know that they are accountable for meeting the needs of their students (pp. 304–305). This definition clearly illustrates that teaching, at a professional level, is an advanced and complex undertaking. Clement (2002) points out that becoming a professional teacher is a process that takes time to master. Stronge (2002) categorised the attributes, behaviours and attitudes of effective teachers into six major areas: prerequisites of effective teachers, the teacher as a person, classroom management and organisation, organising for instruction, implementing instruction, and monitoring student progress and potential. The first two areas examine the teacher as an individual, while the remaining four explore the responsibilities and practices of teachers. He further summarised the characteristics of effective teachers as three elements: the effective teacher recognises complexity, communicates clearly, and serves conscientiously. Hoyle (1980) portrays

professionalism as the quality of one's practice. Similarly, Hurst and Reding (2000) associate specific behaviours with teacher professionalism, from appearance and punctuality to using proper language and building strong relationships with colleagues.

The behaviours exhibited are what identify a teacher as a professional. Kramer (2003) contends the most critical elements of teacher professionalism can be classified into three categories: attitude, behaviour, and communication. These three broad areas cover a wide range of behaviours and characteristics that should be demonstrated in the professional lives of teachers – from being on time and dressing neatly, to understanding learning theories, to clearly communicating with colleagues, parents, and students (Kramer, 2003). Additionally, Cruikshank and Haefele (2001) use multiple elements to categorise 'good teachers', including being analytic, dutiful, expert, reflective, and respected. In *The Moral Base for Teacher Professionalism*, Hugh Sockett (1993) lays out a broad theory of the moral foundations of teacher professionalism. He describes professionalism as the 'manner of conduct within an occupation, how members integrate their obligations with their knowledge and skill in a context of collegiality, and their contractual and ethical relations with clients' (p. 9). Using composite descriptions of idealised teachers in three classrooms, he identifies five major aspects of teacher professionalism: character, commitment to change and continuous improvement, subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and obligations and working relationships beyond the classroom. Teacher character refers to personal virtues such as patience, determination, courage, and respect for children. Sockett (1993) claims that we often overlook the importance of character by focusing on teacher performance; however, he believes that it is impossible to separate the character of the individual teacher from the act of teaching. Sockett's (1993) second category of teacher professionalism is commitment to change and continuous improvement. He states that 'striving to adjust to change seems inevitable for a professional if teaching is to be good, since children in classrooms are never replicas of those who have gone before' (p. 7). Teachers exhibiting this behaviour are constantly looking for ways to improve their practice and adjust to the individual needs of students. Mitchell and Kerchner (1983) describe a similar trait in which teachers adapt their teaching strategies based on analyses of their students' learning situations.

There is a need to examine the concept from an international perspective, as these wider developments also influence Nigeria. Hargreaves (1994) notes that, nowadays, societal development – with regard to social and emotional skills in several domains – confronts schools and teachers with various demands. In order to meet these challenges, teachers’ professional development is considered vital (Hoyle, 1989; Vonk, 1989). Professional development may be conceived of as an enhancement of the status of the profession as a whole, exemplified by its evolution as an all-graduate profession, and may also be conceived as an improvement to knowledge, skills and practice (Evans, 2002).

According to Bredeson (2002), professional development is located at the intersection of education reform, teacher work and teacher learning. He defined professional development as ‘learning opportunities that engage educators’ creative and reflective capacities in ways that strengthen their practice’ (p.663). Teachers’ professional development is often conceptualised as a process (Elliot, 1992), as different kinds of learning experiences are brought to play at various times during a career, and the course of this process is determined by the interplay between the individual and the organisation. Indeed, each teacher is confronted with specific tasks during his/her career; he/she has to develop knowledge and expertise on the pedagogical, didactical and organisation levels. Evans (2002) identified two constituent elements of teacher development: functional and attitudinal development. Whereas attitudinal development is defined as the process whereby people’s attitudes to their work are modified, functional development is defined as the process whereby peoples’ performances are considered to be improved. Scholars have presented and documented not only the essentials for effective professional development, but are also looking for alternative models (Hawley and Valli, 1999). In the United Kingdom, Initial Teacher Training (ITT) lays the foundation for subsequent professional and career development. The Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) is the first stage in a continuum of professional development that continues through the induction period and throughout a teacher’s career. Thus, the professional training and development of the teachers involves pre-service teacher preparation, induction and beginning teaching, and ongoing professional learning. Teachers are often considered the backbone of schools, without them there would be no school. Therefore, understanding teachers’ roles is key to establishing them as professionals in the educational system. They have high degree of control over their environment, high prestige and relatively high degree of compensation when compared

to non-professionals. since teaching is a highly complex kind of work, requiring specialised knowledge, skills, intellectual functioning and commitment, it is deserving of the same status and standing as traditional professions.

2.9 Regulatory Standards on Teachers' Professionalism

Regulatory standards are customarily dictated for many professionals as a means to regulate acceptable ways of doing things. These service agreements or standards are usually tagged as 'codes of conduct' or ethics of profession. Francis (1999) made an important distinction between ethics and the law: ethics sets best practice by guiding, leading and informing professionals' behaviour, while the law sets constraints within which professionals operate and provides punishments for transgressors. According to Webster and Lunt (2002), ethics functions as a compass by indicating the direction in which professional behaviour should be heading. In the UK, the Code of Conduct and Practice for Registered Teachers (2009) sets out expectations of conduct and practice to guide teachers' everyday judgements and actions. This code was developed by the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE), along with teachers and others with an interest in teaching and learning. The GTCE aims to contribute to improving standards for teaching and the quality of learning, and to maintain and improve standards of professional conduct among teachers. A functional code of conduct must be 'powerful' in its effectiveness, must encourage learning in its impact, and must be a set of shared values in its acceptability among members.

In Nigeria, training and development of teachers is the direct responsibility of the personnel department of the Education District under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The Welfare and Training unit, under the supervision of the Teachers' Establishment and Pensions Office (TEPO), has a responsibility for training teachers by organising seminars, training and workshops using nominal roles based on the subjects they teach. Sandwich programmes are also organised by Faculties of Education in universities for in-service teachers. The teaching profession in Nigeria has undergone many transformations, which culminated in the establishment of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). This body regulates the teaching profession through the certification of teachers before they are inducted into the profession. In theory, it helps to bolster the professional status of the teachers, making it similar to that of their counterparts in other professions, such as medicine, law, accounting and engineering.

Further on, the TRCN (2012) mandate was to include such responsibilities as: to determine who are teachers?; what standards of knowledge and skills are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered as teachers and raising such standards from time to time; securing the establishment and maintenance of a register of teachers and the publication; classifying from time to time members of the teaching profession according to their level of training and qualification (p.4). The Council is also empowered to investigate and verify allegations of breach of professional ethics by teachers; set knowledge and skills to be acquired by teachers; prescribe internship programme which must be completed by fresh graduates before registration and licensing; compulsory registration prior to practice, and accreditation, supervision and monitoring of Teacher Training Institutions (p. 5-6).

The mission of the TRCN is 'to promote excellence in education through effective registration and licensing of teachers; and to promote professionalism through accreditation, monitoring and supervision of teacher training programmes, mandatory continuing professional development and maintenance of discipline among teachers at all levels of the education system in Nigeria'. No specific statement of objective exists to amplify the so-called vision and mission statement in any articulate manner that would compel compliance by teachers. Most Colleges of Education offer courses which are not appropriate or relevant to the level and needs of most primary school teachers; these teachers largely receive an education that is more suited to the junior secondary level. The courses are largely of an academic nature as opposed to focusing on career development and the development of procedures and skills geared towards primary schools. The issue of inadequate funding has made dreams unrealisable, goals unattainable and has frustrated planning and implementation efforts. These observations were validated by the responses I received when I interviewed a few directors at the Lagos State Ministry of Education whilst working on my Institution Focused Study project.

Akinbote (2000) has attributed the poor quality of teachers turned out from Colleges of Education to, among other things, the quality of students admitted into the colleges. According to him, the lowering of the admission requirement, for whatever reasons, has not only affected the quality of teachers from such colleges but has also impacted the image and prestige of the teaching profession.

This study examined teacher professionalism and policy reforms in the Nigerian educational context vis-à-vis teachers' identity and performance in the field of education. Teacher professionalism should progress in understanding of the service teachers as professionals provide and such understanding should not remain static. Professional development of teachers is pivotal to raising standards in order to improve policy and practice in the educational system and this will foster changes in teacher professionalism.

Research questions were formulated to guide this study, and these questions will be examined in the next section.

2.10 Research Questions

In examining the complexities of professional status and development of teachers in Nigeria, I tailored my questions to a particular set of problems which could be addressed through detailed qualitative interviews. They build upon the insights from the literature review that has outlined areas of teacher professionalism which recognises the responsibility teachers hold in the profession and identify their roles as professionals; identity, which defines the values, beliefs and commitment teachers hold towards their work; professionalism, which defines how professionalism is put into practice and the character of the regulatory body of the teaching profession in Nigeria.

The central research question guiding this study is:

What are secondary school teachers' understandings of being a professional?

Subsequent research questions are:

- How do secondary school teachers perceive their identity within the Nigerian context?
- How is teacher autonomy understood in Nigerian secondary schools today?
- How have the constant changes of policy initiatives affected teachers' professional and personal lives?

2.11 Summary

This chapter discussed professionalism in teaching in relation to teacher training, identity and performance in the field of education. The evolution of formal education from the pre-colonial,

colonial and post-colonial eras was examined, and the various ordinances promulgated were highlighted. Further pertinent concepts were highlighted, and relevant literatures were reviewed in line with the research topic. Research questions were then formulated to guide the study. Chapter 3 will examine the methodology used in the study.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 presented an overview of the literature review relevant to the themes explored in this research. This chapter seeks to explain the key goals of the study and justifies the methods used. It begins with a consideration of research methodology itself and establishes what is accepted as knowledge in the context of this research. The research project is qualitative in nature; this chapter discusses the researcher's role in the process of a qualitative study. Discussion of the data collection and data analysis, as well as steps taken to ensure data quality follow, and the ethical and political considerations relevant to this study are set out. The issues of reliability and validity are raised, and the difficulty pertaining to the concept of validity in a qualitative study of this nature is acknowledged. Finally, the notion of trustworthiness is posited as a valid ethical consideration.

3.2 Theoretical Perspectives

This research is focused on professionalism and deploys a conceptual framework that draws from the various theoretical perspectives of professionalism as well as relevant research. A framework provide the rationale for the development of research questions or hypotheses (Fulton and Krainovich-Miller, 2010). LaBionid-Wood (2010) similarly argued that the framework is crucial for research design and goes on to say that the research questions, purpose, literature review and theoretical framework should all complement each other and help with the operationalisation of the design. My frameworks have been developed from the review of research findings and conceptual meanings of professionalism and professionalism in order to understand the changing nature of teacher professionalism in Nigeria. This framework will enable me to examine the relationship between the theory and practice of professionalism in Nigeria while also paying attention to the conceptual complexities. Specifically, this will be carried out by analysing the work of secondary school teachers, their identity and sense of professionalism within the contemporary Nigerian policy context. I am interested in exploring the work and perceptions of Nigerian teachers and considering how these relate to conceptions of professionalism.

Students' progress is often used as a measure of teacher effectiveness. This implies a functionalist perspective of professionalism. Functionalism is one of two theoretical approaches which feature fairly commonly in the literature on professionalism. The theory's focus is on education as serving the needs of society by passing on knowledge and skills to students. Durkheim (1973), who is largely regarded as the founder of functionalism, also emphasised the less obvious role of education: socialising students into society and transmitting core values. If professionalism is described using a functionalist perspective, then the key element will be trust; a profession is trusted to carry out a service to society, and society confirms this trust in the profession by allowing it to regulate itself in terms of quality assurance. The profession is then rewarded and appreciated by the society for its service. It can be argued that the key motivating factor for carrying out the service is altruism. By placing the teaching profession within this ideological perspective, teachers appear as people with an acknowledged job to do who are also trusted to do it.

Weber's (1949) view focuses on the rewards received rather than on the service provided. Haralambus and Holborn (2000) view Weber's perspective of professions as focused on power, mainly through exclusivity. This concept of exclusivity evolved from Weber, but has been developed by various sociologists over time. It basically points to the possessors of assets in society, which can be economic, cultural or organisational. The possessors of these assets exert and secure their power by excluding those outside the professions. When an organisation is perceived as professional, it implies that the status associated with it adds an element of exclusivity and, presumably, an opportunity for increased reward. In contrast to the altruistic element of functionalism, the motivation, from a Weberian perspective, would be self-interest. I find it problematic to reconcile this concept with what appears to be the more common perception of secondary school teaching: that it is motivated by the desire to help students learn and improve themselves.

Evidently, from discussions about ideologies, the concept of teaching as a profession is fraught with many unresolved issues. As far back as 1981, professionalism is mentioned as a 'form of organisational control' (Ozga and Lawn, 1981) – a view shared by Smyth et al. (2000), who talk of professionalism as being used to control teachers and also being used by teachers themselves as a weapon to maintain and/or regain some control over their work. This appears to place the lack

of clarity over what constitutes professionalism at the centre of industrial relations and union activities. Sachs (2003) refers to the concept and practice of professionalism as ‘a site of struggle’ and one used by the various stakeholders and interest groups. This implies that the concept of professionalism can be used as something of a bargaining tool or instrument.

An idealist way of approaching this issue, according to Hoyle and John (1995), is criterion-based, wherein the performance of a subject can be measured. The normal criteria of measurement are: length of training, body of knowledge, level of skills, code of ethical conduct, client-centeredness, autonomy, independent decision-making and adaptability, and self-governance and the requirement that it play a central role in relevant public policy-making. Though their criteria differ between idealists, yet there is agreement that an occupation must subscribe to stipulated criteria before it can be called a profession. Despite the differences, according to Hoyle and John (1995), there is agreement on the following criteria: knowledge, autonomy and responsibility.

The social constructivist approach sees a profession as a social-political task which is designed to improve the interest of an occupational group. Proponents believe that it is society that gives an occupation its status; therefore, social context is very important. While idealists firmly believe in safeguarding autonomy, for social constructivists, stakeholders also have a say and transparency is required. Idealists see professions as a set of criteria operating in a social context; social constructivists view professions as agendas of the socio-political set-up, which is constantly under restructure to cater to the needs of society. Between these two perspectives, Locke (2001) believes there are concurrences; these beliefs are not necessarily on a collision course. According to Locke (*ibid*), this is a question of professionalisation, and a place exists for both approaches.

Education is expected to impart essentials of knowledge and assist in developing moral and aesthetic values in the child. It is also concerned with a child’s personal growth and development and further direct the child to become her best possible self. To this end, the Nigerian education policy is grounded in the idealist paradigm. In applying the idealist influence to education, Nigeria aimed to give a broad or general education rather than specialised knowledge. Idealists insist that moral values are essential to the establishment of a good life. This belief can be found in the Nigerian educational policy, which emphasises the inculcation of moral and spiritual values in

inter-personal and human relations (NPE, 2004). This has a very strong influence on the various levels of education in Nigeria.

The social constructivist view assumes that the social world of the learner includes the people that directly affect the learner – and this includes the teacher. This takes into account the social nature of both the local process of collaborative learning and the wider discussion and social collaboration in a given subject. By combining both, we get the strength of both approaches. As shown by Freidson (1994), the idealists' present standard of status and conduct of a profession can be measured and compared amongst members in different places at different points in time. This raises the need for unified professional standards on a global scale.

3.3 Research Methods

Qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants' setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of enquiry support a way of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2007).

The process of ontological and epistemological reflection was an important starting point for my research design and it became the lens through which Crotty's elements were applied to my research study. Crotty (1998) describes methods, methodology, theoretical perspectives and epistemology as four elements of social research that inform one another. Convinced that an important way to elicit teachers' understandings of themselves as professionals was through exploration of their views and reflections, I began to engage with their personal realities and the meanings of their experiences.

The aim of this research study is to gain insight into teachers' understandings of what it means to be a professional in their field of work. My personal interest in teacher issues and the quest to

generate new knowledge in the field of teacher professionalism led me to undertake this research. The knowledge generated is subjective, as it involves participants expressing their opinions and beliefs in the context of their own experiences as teachers. This places my research in the qualitative field; it is firmly grounded in people's own experiences and perceptions (Marshall and Rossmann, 1999). Consequently, the data generated from the research participants was heavily influenced by their overall professional development experiences. The interpretative paradigm is described as a view that sees that 'the subject matter of the social sciences – people and their instructions – is fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences' (Bryman, 2008, p. 15). This view is supported by Coleman and Briggs (2002), who assert that the world of educational research is different from the world of the natural science researcher – all educational research needs to be grounded in people's experiences. Cohen et al. (2007) added that the interpretive paradigm treats knowledge gathered from any undertaken research as 'personal, subjective and unique'. This immediately points to my epistemological position. Epistemology is the theory of knowledge and, for a researcher, raises questions about what constitutes knowledge and what is accepted as evidence. Carter and Little (2007) noted that epistemology can be thought of as justification of knowledge. These writers place the researcher's own epistemological position as central to the choices made about the research process and design. This view is also upheld by Mathews and Rose (2010), who averred that our own ideas and perspectives on knowledge, what we know and how we know, will then impact on the way in which we think about and design social research.

My position as both an insider (being a teacher myself) and an outsider placed me at a vantage position which gave me a tacit understanding of the situations and context described by the interviewees. Hargreaves (1995) sees this insider position as significant to research – if one accepts the concept of 'situational' knowledge and certainty, rather than accepting knowledge with scientific certainty only. The knowledge gathered and created as part of this research study adheres to Cohen et al.'s (2000) view, which explains knowledge as description rather than prediction, induction rather than deduction, generation rather than verification of facts, construction rather than enumeration, and subjective rather than objective.

Mauthner and Doucet (2003) see the praxis of social enquiry as an important means by which theories of knowledge can be constructed; this research study belongs to that school of thought and accurately reflects my epistemological position, which in turn influences my methodology in this study. Harding (1987) describes methodology as ‘a theory and analysis of how research should proceed’. Carter and Little’s (2007) illustration (Figure 3) shows how epistemology and methodology are linked, and provides a clear outline of how each element in a research project relates to others.

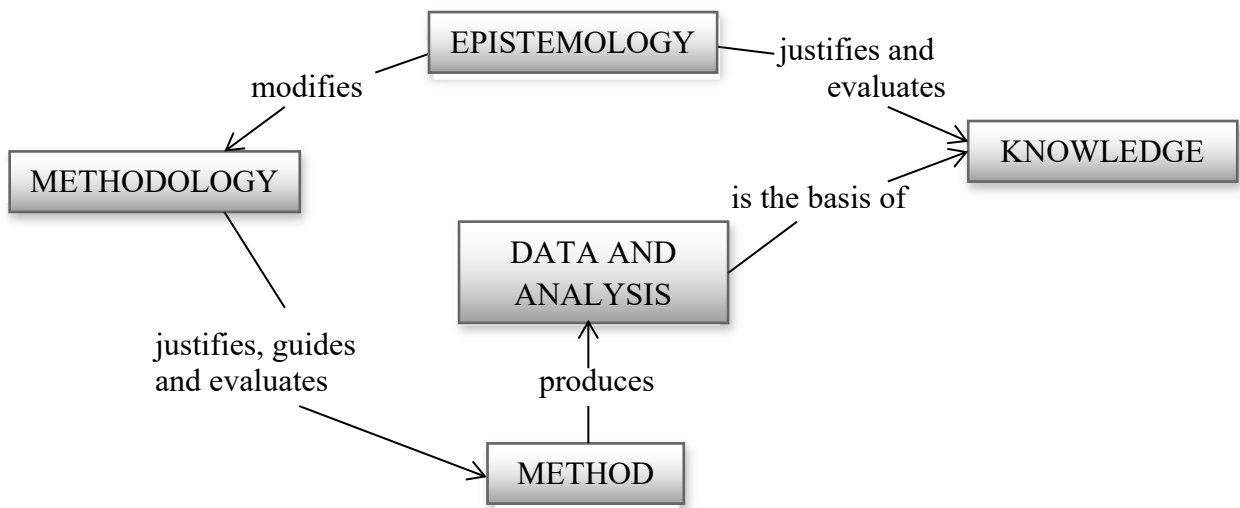


Figure 3. The simple relationship between epistemology, methodology and method. Adapted from Carter and Little (2007, p. 1317).

Carter and Little’s (2007) summary of the diagram explains this very succinctly:

Methodology justifies method, which produces data and analyses. Knowledge is created from data and analyses. Epistemology modifies methodology and justifies the knowledge produced.

My position as an educational consultant and former school teacher conducting research that involved interviewing school teachers points to Denzin and Lincoln’s (2000) view that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings and attempt to make sense of

or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. With regards to this study, the ‘natural setting’ was to interview the teachers in their own school settings. The questions asked were related to the teachers themselves and their understanding of what being a professional means. Interestingly, the teachers involved were comfortable discussing themselves as teachers and expressing their opinions on the issues that arose.

From an ontological viewpoint, this research is constructivist in that the teachers interviewed were actively constructing ideas about teaching. Ontology in social research is about how we view the world and what we can assume about the reality and social phenomena that form the social world. Co-constructivism sees knowledge as coming from experience and interaction with others. All the teachers involved in this study have experience as classroom teachers and all are currently employed in secondary schools in Nigeria. Through their interaction, discussion and reflection during the interviews, they helped to construct new ideas and knowledge. Constructivism can be considered a direct contrast to positivism. A positivist approach would see knowledge as objective and would not take account of opinions and feelings. Positivism is traditionally associated with scientific method. In social research, positivism would seek to gather information and data based on observable facts; it might also seek to create and test hypotheses. Positivists often seek to quantify their findings, where constructivists seek to produce a reconstructed understanding of the social world.

Figure 4 below contrasts constructivism and positivism and illustrates how they differ on issues central to the research process.

| Issue | Positivism | Constructivism |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Nature of knowledge | Verified hypothesis established as facts or laws | Individual and collective reconstructions sometimes coalescing around consensus |
| Knowledge accumulation | Accretion – ‘building blocks’, adding to ‘edifice of knowledge’, generalisations and cause-effect linkage | More informed and sophisticated reconstructions; vicarious experience |

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Goodness or quality criteria | Conventional benchmark of 'rigour'; internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity | Trustworthiness and authenticity including catalyst for action |
| Enquirer positive | 'Disinterested scientist' as informer of decision makers, policy makers, and change agents | 'Passionate participant' as facilitator of multi-voice reconstruction |

Figure 4. A comparison of positivism and constructivism. Adapted from Guba and Lincoln (2005, p. 196).

The key aspects of the above comparison are the concepts of what is accepted as the nature of knowledge, how the knowledge is gathered, its authenticity, and the researcher's position in the research gathering. This study fits well with the constructivist approach, as the knowledge created was constructed or co-created through conversations, dialogue and collective or individual reflection. It also aimed to produce an accurate account of teachers' views.

Research studies are interpretative in nature, and they are guided by the researcher's set of beliefs and feelings about the immediate environment and the world at large and how these beliefs should be understood and studied (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Furthermore, some beliefs may be taken for granted, invisible or only assumed, whereas others could be highly problematic or controversial.

Reflexivity is an important element in a study such as this one – where I, as a researcher, am a part of the world in which the study is based. Morrison (2007) sees the acknowledgement of the researcher's presence in the process as a positive element which:

allows researchers to reflect upon, and even celebrate, their key roles as contributors to, and participants in, the principles of their educational research projects. (Morrison, 2007, p. 32)

Mason (2002), in arguing for the value of subjective research, draws together what she sees as the common features of qualitative research. She points to an interpretivist's philosophical position, as the research seeks to interpret some experience, phenomenon or view. The method of data collection must be embedded in and sensitive to the context in which it is gathered. The data analysis must involve an understanding of the context and detail involved in the gathering of the data. This research study complies with these features of qualitative research.

3.4 Data Collection Strategies/Analysis

The method of data collection for this study was in-depth interviews, which offered the advantage of face-to-face interaction in order to learn from the interviewee's experience. Brener, Brown and Canter (cited in Darlington and Scott, 2002) suggest an implicit or explicit sharing and negotiation of understanding in the interview situation. This method allows the researcher and the respondent to jointly explore the meaning of the questions and answers involved. Interviews involve talking with people, either through formal or casual conversations, to tap the depths of the reality of a situation in order to gain meanings and understandings from interviewees. Research interviews involve the interviewer eliciting information from the interviewee, and the operation of rules of varying degrees of formality or explicitness concerning the conduct of the interview (Bryman, 2008). An important purpose of the research interview is its use as the principal tool for gathering information, which has a bearing on the research objectives (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

A semi-structured interview was used to gather information from the teachers. The semi-structured aspect allows for flexibility during an interview and such flexibility enables the investigator to explore deeper into any area of interest that may surface during the conversation (Smith and Eatough, 2007). Additionally, such flexibility regarding the questions asked during the interview process makes the participant an 'active agent' or 'experiential expert' (Eatough and Smith, 2007, p. 40), and therefore offers the interviewee an opportunity to share their unique personal experiences. This allows the researcher to gather rich data. Prior to conducting interviews with the selected participants, I carried out pilot interviews to ensure the clarity of questions in relation to my overall research questions (Barbour, 2008; Saldana, 2011). Thabane, et al (2010) posit that a pilot study is the first step of the entire research protocol and is often a smaller sized study assisting

in planning and modification of the main study. In this case, the initial interview schedule was important for improvement of the quality and efficiency of the main study. This was carried out with three teachers in my own school who voluntarily participated. Whilst using the initial draft of the instrument during the pilot study, I discovered there were questions I had to modify for prompt understanding, seeing I was asked to repeat and explain what I meant. The pilot study was very useful as I was able to come up with questions that were easily comprehensible during the main interview process.

I held each interview at a time and place convenient for participants, and ensured that the place was free from distractions. Each interviewee received a consent form (Appendix 1) before participating in this study. The consent form consisted of a summary of the purpose of the study, the detailed nature of their voluntary participation, the approximate length of interview (not to exceed 30 minutes), the confidentiality of the entire process, the recording of the interview, and the risks and benefits from participation in this research project. It also stressed that there was no penalty for interrupting/stopping participation. Prior to the interview, each participant was assigned a pseudonym and this name was used to code any hard and electronic copies of the data. Field notes, interview notes and audio materials, as possible forms of gathered data, were securely stored at my home in a locked cabinet and on a computer protected by a password.

To ensure positive interviewing experiences for my participants, I established a welcoming atmosphere by being positive, briefly describing the steps and procedures of our meeting, and allowing each participant to ask questions. I allowed pauses during interviews that permitted participants to think through their responses as well, and promoted a sense of ease and comfort to avoid them feeling hurried (Smith and Eatough, 2007).

According to Silverman (2011), one of the strengths of qualitative research is its ability to access directly what happens in the world – that is, to examine what people actually do in real life rather than asking them to comment upon it. UNICEF (2014) mentioned that good data management includes developing effective processes for: consistently collecting and recording data, storing data securely, cleaning data, transferring data effectively, presenting data, and making data accessible for verification and use by others. Furthermore, qualities of data are based on the following factors:

- **Validity:** Data measure what they are intended to measure.
- **Reliability:** Data are measured and collected consistently, according to standard definitions and methodologies.
- **Completeness:** All data elements are included (definitions and methodologies specified).
- **Precision:** Data have sufficient detail.
- **Integrity:** Data are protected from deliberate bias or manipulation for political or personal reasons.
- **Timeliness:** Data are up to date (current) and information is available on time.

Morse (1994) describes the continuous and investigative aspect of data analysis as a creative and on-going process:

Data analysis is a process that requires astute questioning, a relentless search for answers, active observation, and acute recall. It is a process of piecing together data, of making the invisible obvious, of recognising the significant from the insignificant, of linking seemingly unrelated facts logically, of fitting categories one with another, and of attributing consequences to antecedents. It is a process of conjecture and verification, of correction and modification, of suggestion and defence. It is a creative process of organising data so that the analytic scheme will appear obvious. (Morse, 1994, p. 25)

This description of the process of data analysis provides a good summary of how the interviews conducted for this research study were analysed. It was necessary to put together the data, to recognise what was significant, and to fit categories one with another. The process was slow but informative, as the data were organised and knowledge emerged. In conducting the interviews, I was conscious that, as the researcher, I needed to have respect for and curiosity about what people had to say and also to make an effort to really hear and understand. My role in analysing the data generated was to interpret the knowledge that had been constructed during the interview.

The interviews conducted for this research covered broad themes which were explored in depth during the interview sessions. In order to analyse these, I chose to use an inductive analysis strategy (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), in which findings emerge as themes, derived from the continued study of the raw data (i.e. the interview transcripts). This method of analysis aligned more closely with the general inductive approach. The general inductive approach provides an easily used and systematic set of procedures for analysing qualitative data that can produce reliable and valid findings. Although the generic inductive approach is not as strong as some other analytic strategies for theory or model development, it does provide a simple, straightforward approach to deriving findings in the context of focused evaluation questions. Furthermore, not using a predetermined theoretical framework in an inductive approach is related to the desire to avoid being sensitised by existing theoretical constructs. Rather, researchers using an inductive approach aim to search for and recognise meanings in the data and to understand the social context and perceptions of research participants and then compare and use conceptual/theoretical insights.

There are three key stages to analysing qualitative data. According to Creswell (1997), these stages are (1) familiarisation and organisation, (2) coding and recoding and (3) summarising and interpreting. Before qualitative data can be analysed, it is important that the researcher be comfortable with the process of developing categories and making comparisons and contrasts (Creswell, 1997). I was aware that the qualitative nature of this research had the strength to enable enormous amounts of data to be collected. Hence, the research questions were used to guide the data collection process for the purpose of achieving data deduction, which is essential for data analysis. (ibid)

In analysing the data for this research study, my aim was to explore the themes that emerged from the interviews, to compare these from one interview to another, and to interpret the rich data generated; I felt that the choice of a general inductive approach was appropriate. Thomas (2006) maintains that when using a generic inductive approach, the evaluation objectives will guide the data analysis by identifying the themes and topics to be investigated. The findings, however, are not predetermined; they emerge from the analysis itself. Regarding this study, that would mean that the research question, which sought to explore secondary school teachers' understanding of

themselves as professionals, would lead to the raw data from the interviews being analysed to identify themes for further analysis and interpretation; from this, the finding would emerge. Ezzy (2002) distinguished thematic analysis from content analysis; he explained that content analysis sets out predefined categories, while thematic analysis allows categorisation into an implicit topic that organises a group of repeating ideas (Auerback and Silverstain, 2003, p. 38). A theme can be described as:

An abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent (patterned) experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole. (De Santis and Ugarriza, 2000, p. 362)

According to Saldana (2009), a thematic approach to data analysis is appropriate for almost all qualitative studies. I believe it was a suitable choice for this study as it facilitated an in-depth analysis of the data gathered. Before I started the thematic analysis, I used a basic descriptive coding method to allow me to record the particular attributes or characteristics of each interviewee in an easily identifiable way. This coding was carried out to ensure that any patterns that might emerge from the data in relation to the themes being analysed could be checked for significance in terms of particular interviewee attributes such as gender, length of teaching experience, type of school, etc. These attributes were not, in fact, of particular significance in much of the final data analysis and interpretation. It was, however, useful to have the demographics of the interviewees available for comparison purposes on particular points; for instance, there were no differences of opinion or experience based purely on the gender of the interviewees. I have used thematic analysis in this interpretivist study to explore different interpretations of the phenomenon.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

Discussions on sampling revolve around the notion of purposive sampling for qualitative research and probability sampling for quantitative research (Bryman, 2008). Purposive sampling seeks to include people for whom the research questions are most relevant. Twenty (20) participants were included in the overall sample. While, for large-scale quantitative research, adequate representation of the society in question is pertinent, for small-scale qualitative research, numbers

are small and selected based on context-specific criteria (Bold, 2012). For this study, the selection of participants was limited by factors such as the sensitivity of the issues relating to their experiences and the balance of the teachers' perception of potential harm against the benefits of research outcomes. I envisaged this could cause participants reluctance, resulting in a smaller sample.

A purposive sampling (Mason, 2002) of secondary school teachers selected from two public secondary schools in Lagos State was conducted. Lagos State was chosen as the location of this research for reasons of accessibility and convenience. It is located in the south-west of Nigeria, and is regarded as the centre of excellence regarding teacher professionalism. Arguably the most economically important of all Nigerian states, the largest proportion of public and private schools is concentrated there. Correspondingly, many educational challenges faced in Nigerian schools have manifested within the schools in Lagos State. I chose one school each from the federal- and state-funded schools. These schools were selected because of their distinct and peculiar features, such as social conditions, infrastructure, in-service training and remunerations, and their location in middle-income areas of the state. Ten teachers from each school, each of whom had at least five years' teaching experience in Nigerian schools were selected. These, I believed, were teachers of understanding, who had experienced the changing political whims that insisted change was in the interests of developing a more flexible education system. To ensure the recruitment of appropriate teachers for whom the research questions were significant, letters were written to the schools' head teachers, who helped to identify these categories of teachers in their respective schools.

3.6 Transcription of Data

It was important to record all interviews using a digital voice recorder, to enable me to listen for meaning as I transcribed the interviews afterwards, and also to reflect upon what had been said. Relying solely on written notes from the interviews would not have provided an accurate enough record for subsequent analysis and would have impeded the natural flow of the interviews as conversations. I did make some notes during the interviews, but these were mainly aide-memoirs for me to return to a particular point or to note when a question had not been asked.

The transcription of the interviews conducted was both time-consuming and informative. The interviews themselves lasted approximately 30 to 50 minutes each; transcribing each one took considerably longer. Ribbins (2007) acknowledges that interviews vary in quality and that not all interviews are 'good'; nevertheless, he stresses the importance of retaining the voice recordings of the interview so that, even if not everything is transcribed initially, the researcher can return to the recordings for later transcription to generate data that may not have appeared of interest or particular relevance in the first analysis. I did transcribe all of the interviews conducted, as I felt an ethical responsibility to afford each of the participants the courtesy and respect of not disregarding something that had been said merely because I thought at the time that it was not 'good'. Ribbins (2007) suggests that, where possible, researchers should transcribe their own interviews as it creates familiarity with and immersion in the material. This leads to the generation of a level of knowledge of their content unmatched by any other method. Such knowledge comes into its own when analysing and writing up the study. For this research study, all interviews were transcribed as quickly as possible after they took place, and any notes that I made during the interview sessions were added.

3.7 Data Theming

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes a data set in detail. However, it also often goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

Braun and Clarke (2006) identified six phases of conducting thematic analysis:

- (i) Becoming familiar with the data
- (ii) Generating initial codes
- (iii) Searching for themes
- (iv) Reviewing themes
- (v) Defining and naming themes
- (vi) Producing the report

Thematic analysis is the first qualitative method of analysis that researchers should learn, as it provides core skills that will be useful for conducting many other forms of qualitative analysis. Through its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

As a type of qualitative analysis, thematic analysis is used to analyse classifications and present themes (patterns) that relate to the data. It illustrates the data in great detail and deals with diverse subjects via interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998). Thematic analysis is considered the most appropriate for any study that seeks to discover using interpretations. It provides a systematic element to data analysis, allowing the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of a theme with one of the whole content. This confers accuracy and intricacy, and enhances the research's whole meaning. Qualitative research requires understanding and the collection of diverse aspects and data; thematic analysis gives the researcher an opportunity to more widely understand the potential of any issue (Marks and Yardley, 2004).

Namey, Guest, Thairu and Johnson (2008) noted that:

Thematic moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas. Codes developed for ideas or themes are then applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for later analysis, which may include comparing the relative frequencies of themes or topics within a data set, looking for code concurrence, or graphically displaying code relationships. (p. 138)

Thematic analysis allows the researcher to determine precisely the relationships between concepts and compare them with the replicated data. This presents the possibility of linking the various concepts and opinions of the learners and comparing these with the data gathered in different situations at different times during the project. All possibilities for interpretation are possible. The themes that emerged in the study will be discussed fully in chapter 4.

3.8 Initial Coding

Coding is an analytical process in which data in either the quantitative form (such as questionnaire results) or the qualitative (such as interview transcripts) are categorised to facilitate analysis and transformation into a form understandable by computer software. Coding is the process of organising and sorting data, and codes serve as a way to label and compile it. Codes can also be used to summarise and synthesise what is happening in the data. In linking data collection and interpreting the data, coding becomes the basis for developing the analysis.

Initial coding of the interviews was carried out solely to identify the descriptive information pertaining to each interviewee. Such information included references to actions, behaviours, beliefs, ideas, relationships and strategies. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) refer to this type of coding as ‘context’ or ‘setting’ codes, and it is used as part of the management and organisation of the data and provides a means of recording the demographic characteristics of interviewees. I believed it was important to note the teaching experience of the teachers, as it might have proven to be significant in their personal accounts and opinions. Other factors or attributes that could have been significant included the gender of the interviewees, as well as the qualifications they had obtained and the type of schools they taught in.

As I completed each interview, I used attribute coding (Saldana, 2009) to describe the relevant characteristics of the person who had been interviewed. Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to this as descriptive coding. Its purpose was firstly to ensure the anonymity of the interviewees and their schools as outlined in the informed consent document provided to each participant before the interview. Each interviewee was assigned a pseudonym (as well as each school) for identification purposes, and designated as male (M) or female (F). Each interviewee’s qualification was noted. Most had a minimum of a Bachelor of Education (BEd) and were coded (A); those who had a Bachelor of Arts (BA) plus a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) were coded (B), while those with a master’s degree were coded (C). The teaching experience of the interviewees was categorised in relation to the number of years of teaching (5–34), the type of school involved (urban), the size of school (medium and large), the gender of students (mixed) and the category of school (ordinary mainstream). All the interviewees were teaching in recognised secondary schools

in Lagos. This attribute coding was done manually (see Appendix 2 for full attribute coding details).

3.9 Thematic Statements

After transcribing the recorded interviews, I read through them several times to refresh my memory and get a sense of how the interview sessions had progressed. Constantly re-reading the transcripts has an important element of preparation for extracting thematic statements. According to Saldana (2009), extracting thematic statements involves searching the raw data (which, in this study, would be the interview transcripts) for statements that represent the main points or observations of the research. It also involves searching for patterns and relationships in the long list of codes to create a short list of themes that relate to the research questions (Samders et al., 2016). I conducted this thematic extraction manually by highlighting statements on the printed transcripts. These were then given a broad label in the margin to facilitate comparison and later reduction. Refining the themes and the relationship between them was an important part of the analytical process. The themes needed to be part of a coherent set so as to provide a well-structured analytical framework to pursue the analysis.

This constant ‘handling’ of the data is recommended as it ‘gets additional data out of memory and into the record, it turns abstract information into concrete data’ (Grave and Walsh, 1998). The initial stage of analysis of the interviews elicited 32 thematic statements which were then compared, combined and reduced to 12, by combining some into headings that encompassed more than one thematic statement, and eliminating others that did not appear to feature significantly in other interview transcripts. The next stage of analysis was to reduce the categories to what appeared to be the key themes emerging from the data; this produced 4 major themes and 2 others, which are analysed in this chapter. The process of extraction and reduction involves a combination of data coding and theming. Thorne et al. (2004) describe it as:

Not a method designed to produce oversimplification, rather it is one in which differences are retained and complexity enlightened. The goal is to achieve more, not less. The outcome will be something like a common understanding of the nature of a phenomenon, not a consensual worldview. (ibid, p. 1346)

The explanation fits well with the aim of this study, which was to explore secondary school teachers' understandings of themselves as professionals. Scrutinising the interview data for emergent themes was central to gaining an understanding of what was said. These themes are examined in detail below and are considered in the context of Locke's (2004) classical triangle of professionalism. Locke (2004) noted that there are three key elements – knowledge, autonomy and altruism – which form what he describes as the classical triangle of professionalism. Hoyle and John (1995) had earlier used similar headings in their analysis of the professions: knowledge, autonomy and service. I felt it was beneficial to use these three concepts in the analysis of the data from this study as they provide a framework for interpretation and comparison. The methodology used in this research clearly fits into the idealist paradigm as the teachers shared from their own perspectives of what things should be and they were also concerned about their personal and professional development.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethics is concerned with ensuring that the interests and the well-being of people are not harmed as a result of the research being done (Lankshear and Knobel, 2004). Bogdam and Biklen (2003) suggest several guidelines for conducting a qualitative research study: avoid research sites where informants may feel coerced to participate in your research; honour your informants' privacy; provide information when necessary; unless otherwise agreed, protect the identities of the research subjects; treat subjects with respect and seek their cooperation in the research; in negotiating permission to do the research, make clear the terms of the agreement and abide to that contract; and tell the truth when writing and reporting the findings.

As a researcher, my interest is to explore teachers' understandings of being a professional, whether this has any relationship to how they carry out their duties, and which professional issues are of concern to them. The relationship I have with the schools is long-term, yet professionally based. As an educational consultant, I have been involved in paper presentations at organised seminars and workshops in these schools and in collaboration with the schools' head teachers. The schools were assured of my intention to use the data collected solely for the purpose of the research project. This was stated in the consent form as well as in my initial meeting with the teachers (see Appendix

1). All participants in the research were aware of their right to withdraw at any stage (BERA, 2004). I ensured maximum transparency and confidentiality by informing participants about the research process and asking them to sign an informed consent form. The consent form included the rationale for the research, its usefulness and its result dissemination plans.

The qualitative approach addresses methodological rigour through a number of quality standards known as validity, credibility rigour, or trustworthiness (Morrow, 2005). Numerous strategies for quality criteria on trustworthiness are identified and described using qualitative language (Cresswell, 2007). To ensure the fulfilment of each criterion, a researcher has a number of strategies to utilise at each phase of the research performance.

Credibility requires accuracy and the validity of information. It will be addressed by the triangulation of data collection (Creswell, 2007). I compared and analysed my field notes, journal and interviews. Another well-established and frequently used strategy to ensure credibility is member checking (McLeod, 2001). I provided each participant with the transcribed interview to check for accuracy and feedback regarding the analysed data.

Transferability can be achieved when a particular context can transfer to another similar context (McLeod, 2001). I used rich, thick descriptions of participants' experiences, emotions and feelings in particular contexts. Detailed descriptions allowed me to present a holistic picture of the studied phenomenon and use the work of other researchers to compare findings from this study to others in similar contexts. Geertz (1973) defines 'thick description' as description which specifies many details, conceptual structures and meaning. Thick description therefore presents a detailed account of the researcher's field experiences, in which patterns of cultural and social relationships are made explicit and put within their context (Holloway, 1997).

Dependability refers to consistency (McLeod, 2001). Thus, dependability or consistency can be demonstrated by using an audit trail, which is a clear and detailed recording of all planned and unexpected steps and decisions in the process of completing a research project. Such strategies provided 'transparency' of the research procedure (Tracy, 2010) as well as ensuring the

consistency of data analysis and interpretation. Additionally, triangulation was a continuously implemented strategy throughout the research process.

Confirmability equals objectivity in quantitative research, and refers to keeping findings unbiased (Creswell, 2007; McLeod, 2001). Achieving confirmability is crucial in qualitative research and not an easy task. In order to address this issue, I employed reflexivity and triangulation techniques (Anfara et al., 2002), as well as an audit trail (Morrow, 2005). The interviewer and the respondents are jointly involved in knowledge production, which provides opportunity for revising questions and even reframing. The pilot interview helped to identify the areas of greatest conceptual complexity. I became aware that questions were rebuffed because concepts were not understood. This helped me to revise and reframe questions for the actual interviews.

3.11 Role of the Researcher

I am an educational consultant and, as the proprietor of a thriving educational institution in Lagos State, Nigeria, I also occupy a leadership role. Over the years of my practice as a consultant and administrator, I have encountered diverse kinds of teachers and have provided seminars and workshops. I have my concerns about the nature of teacher professionalism in Nigeria against the background of rapidly changing educational policies, and am further concerned that the revisions and reforms in Nigeria do not position the teacher as the locus of change in the school system. This current practice brings a feeling of confusion and sense of professional inadequacy. I began reading professional literature, and the dearth of scholarly literature regarding these phenomena in Nigeria led me to this research study. Familiarity with this topic puts me in a unique position as a researcher. My personal knowledge and deep curiosity allows me to better understand participants' experiences and shared nuances; yet, throughout the study period, I will take certain procedural steps to ensure the clarity of results.

I believe the research has privileged local concerns, local practices and local participation as researcher and researched. Despite the local people's colonised past, long history of being ruled by the British and the present-day dominating influence of the West, I did not find the process of positioning myself as a researcher problematic. I related to the teachers in a manner that helped to remove any feeling of being intimidated by me.

3.12 The School Settings

From the secondary schools in Ojo Local Education District (LED), I purposively selected two – namely, Oluwaseyi High School (pseudonym) and Temitope High School (pseudonym). Before the dates set for the interviews, I had the permission of the head teachers to visit informally to observe what a typical day looked like in each of the two schools used for this study. I thought I needed this so as to familiarise myself with both environments and be able to relate to whatever issues might come up during the interviews in relation to how things worked on a daily basis. I observed a typical day at each school on different days.

Oluwaseyi High School and Temitope High School (pseudonyms) are both public- or government-funded schools in Lagos, Nigeria. These are co-educational schools providing education for students between the ages of 11–18 years. Demographically, the schools are located in urban areas. Both schools are briefly profiled below.

(i) Oluwaseyi High School

This school is attractively set within a vast space of land with three massive blocks of two-storey buildings where some 1100 students attend daily. The landscape and buildings reflect the organisation of the school; walking further into the school, quite a number of classroom windows are broken, and chairs and desks lay scattered throughout the classrooms.

Oluwaseyi is a large high school with lots of open space. Facilities include a fine art room, biology, physics and chemistry laboratories, a computer room, a home economics room, an agricultural science laboratory and a technology workshop. All of these were inadequately furnished. When I first visited, the deputy head of the school showed me around the facilities. He showed me the library from the outside since there was a large padlock on the door, prohibiting entry. He said there were hardly any books, and that when students were sent to the library to do research, the books that were there were nearly 40 or 50 years old.

A typical school day starts at 7.45 a.m. At the ring of the bell, students gather at an open assembly. I observed that not all students attended the assembly in the morning, as some were sweeping the

classrooms (something which is done on a roster basis). Latecomers were strolling into the school to join the assembly without any sign of urgency. A prefect opened the assembly with a prayer and hymn was sung, after which an invited preacher shared some words from the Bible. At the end of this preaching, the head teacher took the stand to make announcements and, to my consternation, pulled out three girls and two boys who were apparently dirty and unkempt. They were made to stand in front of all present and were admonished. The assembly ended at 8.20 a.m., and students dispersed to their classes for registration, after which classes commenced.

At a combined language class I observed, some students stood at the back of the class to receive the lecture since there was an insufficient number of seats. At the far end of the classroom were broken pieces of furniture. The locks on the doors had fallen off, and the fans were apparently faulty. In the biology laboratory, students were seated on stools, dotted around two long tables. This time, all were seated as there were enough seats for the class. The laboratory seemed almost bare, with hardly any laboratory equipment in place. I found the teacher writing on the board and talking – though apparently not loudly enough, as the students in the last row seemed not to hear her; they were chatting among themselves. However, the teacher seemed not to be bothered about that, as she continued with her writing and talking.

In the corridor, I found some students on their knees with their hands raised up. I was informed they were being punished for not doing homework and for leaving their workbooks at home. Further on, I found a sick bay, equipped with four single beds, a nurse's table and chair, a first-aid box hanging on the wall, a scale, a dusty cupboard and a dusty ceiling fan. Two girls were squashed up in one bed while the other three beds were empty, and I wondered: why? In the agricultural science laboratory, two classes were going on simultaneously. There were a lot of disturbances going on. The effectiveness of such lessons can be left to one's imagination. One of the teachers stepped out of the laboratory to receive a phone call during this class; he came back to continue from where he had stopped after six minutes of phone conversation. Furthermore, whilst the lesson was going on, a fruit seller came in with a basket of fruit to sell to the teachers. Again, lessons stopped; they bought the fruit and the vendor left. This also lasted for about seven minutes.

At the end of the lesson, while other students walked out of the laboratory, two students were seen working together at the far end of the class. One student was copying from the other student's notebook things she had missed during the teacher's dictation. At lunch time, it was observed that some students brought their lunch along with them from home. Others bought their lunch from food vendors inside the school's food stalls. Students were seen walking to the food stalls in groups of twos, threes and fours.

I noticed a new girl in a group with two other girls, hand in hand with one of the older students as they walked towards the food stalls (this was obvious because she was not wearing the school uniform as she had yet to be supplied with one). Lunch was eaten in the classrooms and the time allowed was forty-five minutes. Before the end of the school day, on stepping out of the gate, I noticed students sitting on large stones outside the school walls. On enquiry, I was told they had not paid their school fees, so they had been sent home by the head teacher. They were only waiting for the end of the school day to go home. The school has a total of forty teachers. There were four toilets for the staff, while the students were allocated twelve toilets (six for girls and six for boys).

(ii) Temitope High School

Founded in 1985, Temitope High School seeks to provide quality education and low-cost schooling for impoverished students in Lagos, Nigeria. The school offers the nationally mandated syllabus for schools. The school has a total population of 1600 students and 49 teachers. Facilities include: biology, physics and chemistry laboratories, a library, and a home economics room. The school has a two-storey building block and two bungalow classroom blocks. On arrival, I was directed to the deputy head teacher's office. Looking round her office, I saw on the floor students' bags that had been seized for various reasons. A girl walked in to pick up her bag (having complied with instructions, I was told later) and she was screamed at by the deputy head teacher who called her a 'crazy girl' (in her words: 'look at this crazy girl; can't you get permission before picking up your bag?'). The girl apologised and ran out of the office. The deputy head then turned to me and said, 'these students are very stubborn'.

A typical school day starts at 7.50 a.m. and ends at 2.00 p.m. It started with the open-air assembly at 7.50 a.m., where the students stood in rows according to their classes in front of one of the

bungalow buildings, while the teachers stood behind them. A hymn was sung, and an invited preacher delivered a sermon, after which the head teacher made some announcements and dismissed the gathering at 8.10 a.m. In the English language class of 72 students, the fans were not working and there were pieces of dirt on the floor (in a classroom supposedly swept by the students). Students in this school contributed money to purchase the whiteboard markers for the teachers' use. Benches and desks made to seat two students now seated three or four, depending on how many were available. The class timetable was written on the wall in white chalk.

As the class commenced, five students came in late and were asked to stand outside the classroom for ten minutes, at the end of which they were called in to join the class. Stepping out of this class, I observed students strolling along the corridors and hanging on rails when they should be in class. Though it was not lunch time, at 10.00 a.m., food vendors in the food stalls were attending to students and there was much noise at the spot. Teachers teaching classes within the area seemed unperturbed by the noise.

The mathematics class I observed had 102 students in attendance. The classroom was very hot and there were no fans in this class. The students were fanning themselves with papers in one hand and writing with the other hand (I was also sweating profusely). I could spot some students sleeping while the lesson was going on, but the teacher continued anyway. In the library, there was one long desk, a long bench and one dusty bookshelf. Only the first shelf had books on it, while the second and third shelves were empty. The home economics room had one stove, one sewing machine and the teacher's desk and chair. There was no sick bay in the school, but there was a movable first-aid box in the deputy head teacher's office. There were only four functional toilets in the school – one for female teachers and one for male teachers, and two which were available for the students.

These observations were carried to see if there is a link between the observations and the actual interview outcome. They provided an essential context to help inform the interviews and consider whether there were points of agreement and disjunction between professional practice and what was said in an interview. It was also done to have an idea of the effectiveness or presence of affective domain of learning in the schools. Furthermore, they were carried out to have an

understanding of the whole school ethos to further help shape my conversations about teaching and learning during the interviews. Overall, the observations led me to understand that the teachers have great influence on their students with huge potential to develop student outcomes. Inadequate facilities had its impact on both teachers and students. The situation externally imposed frames that structure the interaction of the participants e.g. physical frames such as buildings and class size, and behavioural frames such as rules and expectations.

3.13 Summary

This chapter has outlined the research method and design of the study and has explained how methodology, influenced by epistemology, guided the method used in research. It placed this research study in the qualitative field and explained its constructivist approach to creating knowledge, which fits well with the study's aim to gain an insight into secondary school teachers' understandings of themselves as professionals. It explained how using a qualitative methodology enabled a rich, deep and analytical approach to be adopted. The ethical considerations associated with educational research were discussed, and the study was deemed to be low-risk and unlikely to cause harm. Of major importance to me as the researcher conducting the interviews was to ensure the integrity of the interviews themselves and the transcripts. Reliability and validity were considered in relation to qualitative studies. The relevance of the concept of trustworthiness was acknowledged, along with its focus on authenticity and credibility. The purposive sampling used to generate as much diversity and symbolic representation in what was a small sample was explained, and the conducting of the interviews themselves was described in detail. Chapter 4 will analyse the findings of this study and describe themes that emerged as a result.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the fieldwork data following a thematic analysis. It describes how the data was gathered during semi-structured interviews conducted with 20 secondary school teachers who had agreed to participate in this research. Data from the interviews are treated as the primary data source, supported and supplemented by my observations at relevant points. According to Silverman (2011), qualitative data analysis seeks to find out about participants' lives through what they say and to ground interpretation in the peculiarities of the situation under study. Therefore, participants' perspectives are here presented as accounts of social phenomena or social practices by social actors, using verbatim quotations from the interview discussions.

This study was designed in response to the research questions. By answering qualitative research questions, we are advancing the knowledge of social phenomena and our understandings are embedded in our data presentation and analysis of such data. Once I had selected my data collection method, it was important to map these back to my original research questions to ensure that I had framed my interview questions in a way that would enable me to answer my research questions.

Consequently, this research was conducted with a view to drawing conclusions as to the present nature of teacher professionalism in Nigeria, its significance in education and how it affects the role of the teacher and his or her pedagogy. It aimed to explore and articulate how constant changes in educational policies affect their performances. The broad question interrogated in this research was:

What are secondary school teachers' understandings of being a professional?

Further questions interrogated included:

How do secondary school teachers perceive their identity within the Nigerian context?

How is teacher autonomy understood in Nigerian secondary schools today?

How does the proliferation of policy initiatives affect teachers' professional and personal lives?

4.2 Theme 1: Becoming a Professional

The first theme to emerge from the data was designated 'becoming a professional'. It can be treated as comparable to the knowledge attribute of Locke's classical triangle of professionalism, as it affects some of the same areas. In exploring this theme, four main areas emerged. These were: basic teacher education, training on the job, teamwork/partnership and continuing professional development. These areas are dealt with individually below.

4.2.1 Basic teacher education

Teacher education is a programme of education, research and training of persons to teach from pre-primary to higher educational levels. The programme is related to the development of teacher proficiency and competence that would enable and empower the teacher to meet the requirements of the profession and face the challenges therein.

Teacher education refers to the professional education of teachers towards the attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable so as to make them efficient and effective in their work, in accordance with the need of a given society at any point in time. It includes training and/or education occurring before commencement of service and during service (Ogunyinka, Okeke and Adedoyin, 2015). Every society requires adequate human and material resources to improve its social organization, preserve the culture, enhance economic development and reform the political structures. Education is often seen as a prerequisite for quality manpower development and the creation of wealth, a sure path to success in life, and service to humanity. Thus, teachers have an important role to play in adequately preparing the young for their roles in society in order to achieve the set national objectives.

The concern of teacher education the world over is the training and preparation of would-be teachers for effective functioning in the school. Okafor (1988) has defined teacher education to mean the form of education which is planned and systematically tailored and applied for the cultivation of those who teach or will teach – particularly, but not exclusively, in primary and post-primary levels of schooling. Teacher education is the professional training that teachers receive

which classifies them as professionals. As the training arm of the teaching profession, teacher education is, according to Ipaye (1996), charged with the task of developing knowledge and skills as a basis for practice, with preparing personnel entry into the teaching profession (pre-service) and with contributing to the ongoing development of practicing professionals (in-service). The function of teacher education is therefore to equip teachers with the wherewithal –ethical, intellectual, dispositional, emotional and so forth – to develop and imbue in their students the requisite educational and societal dispositions.

Adewuyi and Ogunwuyi (2002) opined that teacher education is the provision of professional education and specialised training, within a specified period, for the preparation of individuals who intend to develop and nurture young ones into responsible and productive citizens. It is informed by the fact that teaching is an all-purpose profession, which stimulates the development of students' mental, physical and emotional powers. Such educated citizens would be sensitive and equipped with the skills for peaceful co-existence, environmental management and democratic process, which will infuse the learning process with environmental values of the society. I would argue, that the Nigerian society needs a teacher education that sees the students not as passive recipients of knowledge, but rather as active co-creators of their own learning.

The secondary school teachers interviewed for this research had all completed a basic teacher education programme and had graduated with a degree qualification. All had a minimum of a B.Ed or BA, plus a postgraduate qualification which qualified them as secondary school teachers. The interviewees acknowledged, however, that the acquisition of a B.Ed. or BA did not mark the end of the learning required to be a teacher. Acquiring this gateway qualification can be seen as part of the process of acquiring a body of knowledge – one of the recognised prerequisites of a profession. In reaction to my question, 'In what way do you see yourself as a professional?' I found that some interviewees mentioned their qualification first. Responses included:

First, I have my qualification. I know my worth. I am specialised in my field.

(Grace)

I have the necessary qualifications. Being able to do the job as expected. (Folake)

Like I said, I have been certified. (Faosat)

I have professional training... professional training makes you a professional.
(Ngozi)

I am well-trained. I have my degree in education. (Happiness)

These conversations emphasised the centrality of certification in being able to judge and show evidence of teacher competency and quality. Qualifications were the single most important factor in teachers defining their professional status which immediately challenges some of the richer and nuanced assessment of teacher education which have looked at a range of factors e.g. disposition, skills and knowledge. Instead, the emphasis was on certification.

Interview participants reported close accounts of being a professional. They gave an indication that they were aware that having a recognised qualification was one element of professionalism. To be regarded as a professional teacher in Nigeria, one must possess the minimum basic teaching qualification, which is the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE).

Even when the inspectors come here, they will always ask to see the teacher's qualification to ascertain that only qualified people are employed here. (Gabriel)

This recognition that having a qualification was an essential part of being a professional came as a surprise to me. I had not anticipated it, and I thought this was significant. Certification status or licensing is a measure of teacher qualifications that combines aspects of knowledge about subject matter and about teaching and learning. According to Darling-Hammond (2000), its meaning varies across the spaces because of differences in licensing requirements, but a standard certificate generally means a teacher has been prepared in an approved teacher education programme at the undergraduate or graduate level.

In addition, the interview participants believed that there was still a significant amount of learning to be done, despite having successfully completed their first degrees. This points to a clear sense of having to 'learn on the job'. Some participants had this to say:

I am a professional because I am not stagnant. I do not limit myself. I learn more every day. (Segun)

I desire additional knowledge to improve upon what I already know. (Abiodun)

Their opinions seem to reflect similar views of lack of preparedness among fresh university graduates. Both respondents quoted above have B.Ed. qualifications. One had graduated 7 years ago, while the other had graduated 17 years ago, yet they seemed to hold the same view. Despite the difference in age and years of service, these respondents recognised the fact that initial training in university was insufficient in preparing them for teaching. They believed that learning to teach starts when the teacher enters the classroom for the first time. This points to the fact that training on the job is essential in the journey to becoming a teacher. Training and retraining helps to keep teachers updated about new methodology that can be used in delivering effective teaching and learning; they would be abreast of the latest instructional technologies and how to make use of them. This would upgrade the knowledge of the teachers, which would help to boost their content knowledge and capacity building. It is worth pointing out that these views accord with much of the writing on professionalism.

The need for training was closely linked to a discourse of national development and a recognition that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Having the qualification was seen as the first step towards being a professional teacher, but a further need for the teacher to keep updating himself/herself was identified in order to maintain the relevance of the teaching profession. The widely shared view that teachers are very important in nation-building highlighted the need for vigorous efforts to produce qualified persons to take the teaching of Nigeria's citizens. Rapid social, economic, political and cultural changes make it imperative that teachers be an embodiment of the constant search for updated knowledge, the latest information, and the skills and breakthroughs in various fields of life (Adeosun, Oni, Oladipo, Onuoha and Yakassai, 2009).

The implication for teacher professionalism and teacher identity were that teachers wanted to claim the identity and used the qualification to do so but were actually nervous about claiming too much and felt they needed ongoing training.

4.2.2 Training on the job

Consistent in the participants' responses was the notion that having a degree did not mean teachers knew how to teach when freshly graduated from university. It appeared that 'training on the job' was the acknowledged method for freshly qualified teachers to acquire and develop both skills and confidence. Some aspects of this mentioned by participants included non-teaching areas such as developing schemes of work and lesson plans in line with curriculum objectives. Establishing relationships with students, organisation of learning resources and the classroom learning environment, how to mark the attendance register, and dealing with parents and time management were all important. The given examples of training on the job were often administrative functions, and were not actually related to a teaching situation which, for some teachers, was perceived as a problem.

I am yet to attend a training that will really touch on teaching; we do organise workshops on record-keeping and writing of lesson notes. In the school here, sometimes they organise seminars and workshops on schemes of work. I really don't know how these can help me in actual teaching in class. (Justina)

In-service training is defined as a workshop for employed professionals, paraprofessionals and other practitioners to acquire new knowledge and better methods in order to improve their skills and become more effective, efficient and competent in rendering of service in various fields and to diverse groups of people. In-service training provides teachers with opportunities to learn specific skills, techniques and new instructional approaches that they can use in their own teaching in their various classes. Participants noted however that in-service training programmes for teachers have a great impact on the outcome of the development of teacher skills and the purposes of learning, including the writing and preparation of lesson plans and the keeping of records, thus affecting how they define learning and understand the nature of their students.

The discussions about becoming a professional, learning to teach and how prepared or unprepared teachers thought they were after their first degree programme focused mainly on what Sockett (1993) calls pedagogical knowledge. This refers to a teacher's grasp of how to teach rather than subject knowledge. Initial teacher training in Nigeria focuses on subject knowledge rather than teaching skills. The participants made points about learning from more experienced teachers, focusing on skills rather than subject knowledge. Participants spoke of their first few months of appointment as 'very challenging times' or 'very difficult times', all focused on not feeling able to teach:

I was always going to the other teachers with experience for help. When you face reality it is a different ball game. (Hajeet)

I felt inadequate in my early years of teaching. I used to think that I am not up to the task. I would go to colleagues for information and then I would listen to the older teachers teach. I remember being corrected on the use of inappropriate language. My class control was not good enough. Then I was really concerned about my teaching skills than anything else. (Gabriel)

Another participant could not organise and manage her workload as expected in her first few months:

For me, I had difficulty organising myself. I always had to take my work home to complete them. I always have to confer with the teacher opposite my classroom before every lesson I had to take. Managing the workload was a challenge. I often spent my free periods observing older colleagues. (Temitope)

The comments of the participants portray the fact that there is a difference between theory and practice in teaching. The theory is taught in class when undergoing training as a student-teacher, while the practical aspect is displayed in the field of practice as a professional teacher. A fresh graduate from university needs to understand how to prepare a lesson note/plan and use such to

teach effectively in class; the professional teacher must understand the language of instruction and also use appropriate language when teaching, depending on the situation and particularly when teaching students from different cultural backgrounds (multi-ethnic backgrounds). Furthermore, one participant talked about observing her older colleagues, which involves a sort of informal mentoring and learning from others. This can be viewed as a learning process and construction of knowledge for new teachers. This system of learning can be seen to complement formal learning and foster improvement in professional practice.

Another participant expressed issues with class control and handwriting:

In my early days as a teacher, I had class control issues. This took a while to combat. I also had handwriting issues. I couldn't write legibly on the board (laughing). But all that changed after my colleagues put me through on how things are done in this school. The way lesson notes are written here is quite different from what we were taught in the university. I owe it all to my colleagues and I'm glad I was able to open up to them. (Olabode)

It is rather surprising that this participant had not sorted the issue of handwriting during the training period, which also involves a practical teaching aspect. Practical knowledge is acquired by experiences and doing things and it plays a positive role in strengthening content knowledge. During teaching practice, a supervisor is attached to the teacher in training for the duration of the programme. The supervisor's responsibility is to see that trainee teachers strive to meet the principles of good practice in an effort to provide the best learning experience for their students. This practice also forms a requirement for the award of a certificate or degree in education. Even though the participant in the case above had been awarded the certificate, she still had the deficiency of illegible writing on the board which was corrected through mentoring.

Teacher knowledge is certainly a component of teacher professionalism, and professional competence involves more than just knowledge but also skills and the ability to deliver contents using appropriate methods and instructional materials. Robson (2006) posits that the knowledge involved in teaching may be perceived more as common sense or everyday knowledge and, thus,

may not be as highly regarded as the more scientific knowledge of other 'higher' professions. The participants in this study specified an awareness of knowledge exclusivity, but they appeared to be aware that there was a particular type of knowledge or skill needed to teach. That awareness was the fact that teaching requires particular skills that can be learnt following basic knowledge in the university, through experience and from observing the teaching of others.

Teacher training programmes in Nigeria are not focused on objectives such as promoting self-awareness, empathy, leadership and collaborative skills i.e. taking into account not only the cognitive but also the social and emotional aspects of human development. This fact underscores the necessity for teacher education to be perceived as an important responsibility that must fulfil its professional mandate of cultivating generations of responsible citizens.

4.2.3 Teamwork

Teamwork in schools is often seen as a way to support the learning processes. The ideal is that the constructive experiences teachers acquire during teamwork should improve classroom practice. In discussing areas such as classroom management, curriculum planning and behaviour, there was recognition of the need for experience to develop the aforementioned areas in teaching and learning. Learning from others was presented as a key element of this development. According to some teachers interviewed, learning from more experienced teachers was their understanding of teamwork. One participant noted that:

I was learning from others when I first came to this school. If you don't team up, you cannot achieve much in class. As a subject teacher, I collaborate with the class teacher. The class teacher complements the subject teacher by following up on the students. (Onwuka)

According to this participant, she is a subject teacher but, she needed to collaborate with class teachers so that when she leaves the classroom at the end of her lesson, the class teacher will assist with following up to make sure that activities given are completed. In Nigeria, a teacher is assigned to a class as the class teacher. She is responsible for the administration and wellbeing of the students in her classroom, while the subject teacher comes in to deliver her lessons and is solely responsible for the cognitive activities in her subject area.

Another noted that:

I really learnt from their experience... they supported me. I remember in my early days as a teacher, the head teacher made me sit in a class and observe a teacher for two days before I was allocated to a class. I tried to do all that I had observed in the previous class, but I was still supported. (Happiness)

The head teacher here was supportive by leading and encouraging support, and was involved in facilitating the participant's journey from their start to being confident. The head teacher made her feel supported, enabling her to do her very best. This is an example of leadership providing support and leading to improvement.

I asked Olabode what helped her to settle into teaching in her early days. She said:

I didn't settle into teaching; it took me quite a while, like it took me about a year to kind of get used to it. I must say though that I had the support of other staff members whenever I needed one. It really was not easy... I realised that, hmm, it is not the same with when you are in the university. Sincerely, I was almost giving up on teaching but... the other staff members were really helpful.

Segun succinctly illustrated the cycle of the settling-in period of teaching when he said:

When I first started teaching, it was pretty hard, trying to get used to everything in my new environment and how things are done. I found myself going from one older staff member to the other... asking questions. Sometimes you get conflicting ideas which were rather confusing, but in that scenario, I just go straight to the head teacher for clarification. I notice that, it is the same thing for every new teacher. You must go through this phase... because you want to succeed in what you are doing.

The head teacher is the sole administrator of the school. His role is to plan and equip the teachers with facilities, materials and equipment to make teaching and learning meaningful. In other words, he has the responsibility of effective planning, coordinating and control of human and material

resources. It is also his responsibility to update the teachers' knowledge on recent changes in the field of teaching and learning. This is why teachers revert to him for clarifications when in doubt. The teachers are comfortable with the head teacher's decisions because, he stands to defend such actions when visited by the inspectors of schools. This is an example of co-construction mentioned earlier in the thesis.

The teachers expressed their perception of teamwork. Essentially, this is probably not teamwork in the true sense; it can be considered more as a form of mentoring, informal support and mutual appreciation. Invariably, teamwork is organized around the expertise of the head teacher. According to Driskell et al (2018), at a broad level, teamwork is the process through which team members collaborate to achieve task goals. It refers to the activities through which team inputs translate into team outputs such as team effectiveness and satisfaction. This is quite different from what the teachers refer to as teamwork.

The teachers acknowledged that they learnt a great deal in their early years from their more experienced colleagues. They called upon their attention whenever they faced challenges. I found it interesting that the new teachers only went to those teachers who taught the same class level as themselves. By implication, therefore, the way a teacher sees and responds to the profession, especially in the classroom or in his/her attitude, could have great influence on the effectiveness of her/his teaching. Newly qualified teachers need to learn about their professional roles and acquire relevant skills by working alongside other teachers in partnership. The teachers evidently have greater awareness and more practical experiences through this competency tool of mentoring and informal support, and it has helped a good number of them to fit into the teaching profession and stay on.

The quality of teamwork within my case study schools directly impacted upon their effectiveness. The well-functioning leadership and teaching teams in these schools were essential to the continuous improvement of their teaching and learning. That is particularly true because these schools have clearly articulated aspirations for the learning of all their students. Effective teams strengthen leadership, improve teaching and learning, nurture relationships, increase job satisfaction, and provide a means for mentoring and supporting new teachers and administrators (Sparks, 2013). Schools will improve for the benefit of every student only when every leader and every teacher is a member of one or more strong teams that create synergy in problem-solving,

provide emotional and practical support, distribute leadership to better tap the talents of members of the school community, and promote the interpersonal accountability that is necessary for continuous improvement. Such teamwork not only benefits students, it also creates the supportive leadership and the process and time for meaningful collaboration that enable teachers to thrive and become better able to address the challenges of their work.

Within the school, teachers' teamwork is crucial. Although the teachers interviewed saw themselves as teams and partners, there was no evidence of sharing mutual goals and working together to achieve such goals. An underlying problem is the fact that once the new teacher feels they can cope with their work, they become a master of their classroom and continue in isolation. Teamwork in the schools was limited and they are yet to develop a robust culture of teamwork. I would argue that being a professional does not mean having the opportunity to work alone. Ideally, professionals would be required to work together to improve performance. Building this kind of culture requires school administrators to support and emphasise the importance of teamwork instead of simply suggesting that it occurs on its own.

It is essential for all team members to practise open, honest communication in order to increase awareness and build cooperation. Effective communication expresses a team member's beliefs, ideas, needs or feelings. Communication must facilitate the free flow or exchange of ideas, information, and instruction that contribute to common understanding. When ideas are shared, there is opportunity for evaluation and input that can build even better ideas. From each new experience, more ideas can be developed and tried. All team members also need to develop listening skills so that they can obtain sufficient and accurate information necessary for an effective working relationship. Successful communication results in a mutual understanding of what was sent and what was heard. This component of trust promotes loyalty and commitment to achieving the goals of the team. Team effectiveness can be achieved by sharing expectations with one another, by allowing the team members to participate in the planning process, by appreciating one another's unique personality traits, by respecting diversity, and by demonstrating a positive attitude toward teamwork. Once a team works well together, the job is less stressful, more enjoyable, and more rewarding for all team members, and results in greater benefit to students.

Creating a school environment that will allow teachers to work together more would have a major impact on improving students' performance, as corroborated earlier by Olabode, Segun and Onwuka in their comments. The school environments were cordial and congenial. Teamwork creates an avenue for skills development and the cross-fertilisation of ideas among teachers and, in particular, the acquisition of experience from the older and more experienced teachers by the fresh graduates from the universities. Of course, there are potential drawbacks to these support systems with regard to possible frustrations from mentors – if a mentee is not progressing quickly enough, for example. There could also be frustrations on the part of the mentee, if they felt that they were not getting the guidance they thought they needed – in which case, it would be necessary to find a new mentor, if practical. By and large, mentoring provides strong support and it is important in retaining good teachers and invigorating the teaching force. There is a need for practical strategies and processes for developing and managing mentoring programmes. The significance of teamwork is that it brings the organisation together and motivates the workforce to rely on each other. This collaboration also helps mentors to demonstrate their professionalism to fellow teachers and professionalism is further enhanced in mentee teachers.

4.2.4 Continuous Professional Development

Teachers in this study share a common concern and passion which involves making sure that the students learn. This is evident in the way they interact and reflect on their performances. Knowledge creation takes place in communities of practice through complementary processes of participation, interaction and the shared experiences of members working together towards established objectives (Wenger, 1998). In essence, for stated objectives to be achieved, partners must work together by exploring and modelling possible solutions. Continuous professional development (CPD) is generally understood to mean courses, workshops and seminars which teachers attend in order to further develop their knowledge, skills and competence. In Nigeria, CPD of teachers takes place randomly, haphazardly and oft-time accidentally. I asked the participants in this research study what in-service training or CPD they had done.

Surprisingly, none. The organisation has not sent me on any. But, personally, I have attended a couple of seminars that I was topically interested in. But you

know, I think it is needed. Teachers need to be learning constantly. If teachers are equipped, it makes teaching very easy. (Habeeb)

It comes once in a while. I had had 2 trainings in the last 3 years. Since then, nothing. And you can see that they don't seem to care about this. How else can you explain a situation where a teacher lacks adequate further training? (Happiness)

There are organised seminars and trainings. Although it has not been regular; I have only had one training in my subject area so far (in 7 years). Is that not a shame? You see... I would love to attend more training to be updated. But it seems to me that even the Ministry of Education don't even see the need for it, and that is why it is very disappointing. (Onwuka)

It's not regular. Just a few occasions. 3 times in 10 years. How can anyone be as effective as one would wish in such a situation? I feel really really sad because it is the students that are suffering for it... they are at the receiving end. (Abiodun)

They organised seminars that may not even benefit you because they bring everyone together. It is not specialised most times. And it is once in a year. I must tell you... we need more training to be able to meet up with modern-day trends in this profession. We are not getting enough. (Segun)

Segun went further, explaining that he had opted out of a set workshop upon seeing that it was not related to his area of teaching:

Let me even tell you something. I opted out of a particular workshop training organised sometime ago. It was completely irrelevant to me. I thought it would be mere wasting of my precious time. I also see it as a waste of resources. They should give something that is useful.

He further stressed:

How will such unhelpful training be of benefit to me or my students?

What is evident in this exploration of CPD is that there is no structured pattern for secondary school teachers. It further reveals that teachers are interested in upgrading their skills but are hindered by the shortfall of the government and the Ministry of Education. It would be expected that this be one of the top priorities for these policy makers. Continuous, regular and relevant professional on-the-job training is necessary for teachers to be kept abreast of the current issues relating to teaching and learning, and this would build their confidence and develop in them a spirit of autonomy, as well as keeping them abreast of new policy initiatives affecting their professionalism and personal lives, as mentioned in the research questions (3 & 4) for this study. CPD has to be relevant to the discipline of the teacher in order for them to develop the skills needed for teaching in class; it is of little wonder that participant Segun opted out of the workshop which he was selected to attend but which was not relevant to his discipline and subject area.

There are very few seminars and workshops that are supposedly aimed at enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills, and those that exist are organised irregularly. Most teachers were concerned that they did not have the opportunity to improve their knowledge base in the subject matter they taught and, most importantly, to improve their practical skills for the effective implementation of the curriculum. However, there appears to be a strong level of interest among the participants in updating their knowledge and skills so that they can be effective in their particular roles. The inconsistency in the attitude of the government in relation to CPD makes this a very challenging task to accomplish. The quality of a teacher is dependent on the preparation for a professional role as a distinct practitioner.

The two most commonly used models of CPD are the workshop model and the school-based teacher professional model (Muhammed, 2006). The workshop model involves inviting participants to a venue where they are exposed to a core of information and skills by experts. It also implies teachers discussing examples and adapting them to their own experiences. This is the most common model of CPD in Nigeria. The school-based teacher professional support and

mentoring model is an alternative strategy for the in-service training of teachers. Here, students, teachers, supervisors and facilitators are involved in collaborating and carrying out a series of classroom/school-based activities that will help the teacher to improve.

Although the complexities of the teaching profession require a lifelong learning perspective to adapt to fast changes and evolving constraints or needs, international studies on teachers and their professional development have shown that, while in-service training is considered a professional duty in about a half of all European states, it is, in practice, optional in many of them (European Commission, 2007; OECD, 2005; Eurydice, 2009). Existing literature gives some indications of key professional learning activities that enable teachers to tackle rapid changes: keeping updated; experimentation; reflective practice; knowledge sharing; and innovation (Geijsel et al., 2009; Janssen and van Yperen, 2004; Kwakman, 2003; Runhaar, 2008).

To improve classroom practice, it is commonly asserted that CPD should be collaborative and extended over time; include time for practice, coaching, and follow-up; be grounded in students' curriculum and aligned with local policies; and be job-embedded and connected to several elements of instruction (Cohen and Hill, 2000; Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009). The importance of research into various ways of providing qualitative CPD for teachers and issues related to the provision of relevant CPD programmes in Nigeria cannot be overemphasised. Exploring and identifying the issues in teacher training and CPD in both public and private schools in Nigeria is yet to be researched. Exploring ways of enhancing professional development to raise the standard of teaching in Nigeria has considerable scope to make an impact on enhancing teacher competencies, attitudes, knowledge and skills. Currently, this is not the situation in Nigeria where teachers are certified but not adequately supported through on-going training. As a result, the teaching profession in Nigeria can be characterized as embryonic in terms of CPD and teamwork.

4.3 Theme 2: Autonomy and Accountability

The second theme to emerge from the data was labelled as autonomy and accountability. These words seem separate but they are closely related as discussed by the participants. The participants appeared to link them together in their responses. How teachers exercise their autonomy raises the issue of accountability. Since teachers are responsible for the implementation of policies and

managing affairs and resources, they have a duty to be accountable for their actions. Autonomy, as the second element of Locke's (2004) classical triangle, refers to a person's freedom to determine his/her own actions and behaviours. It is recognised in the literature as an important aspect of being a professional.

Personal autonomy for secondary school teachers is being able to make decisions, taking control over areas of planning and teaching, selecting textbooks and other classroom materials, content, topics and skills to be taught, deciding on teaching techniques, evaluating and grading students, and disciplining of students. The participants in this study described autonomy based on the context of the classroom, which can be considered as personal autonomy within a school setting.

The majority of the teachers believed they had autonomy – though such autonomy was restricted to their classroom settings, which involved learning administrative tasks rather than autonomy in the real sense:

...as a classroom teacher, I have control of my class. I make sure my students behave themselves and obey the rules of the school. Students in my class know that they cannot misbehave. (Temitope)

Of course, I have good control of my classroom. I tell them what to do and they obey. Any defaulter gets my punishment... and, you know, nobody likes to be punished, so you really have to behave. (Olabode)

'I'm supposed to be the 'God' of my class, to some extent. I know what is beneficial to my students and I lead them in that direction. (Faosiyat)

Following the participants above, there seems to be a tension between autonomy and control in the responses. The participants attributed their control of students' behaviour during instruction to autonomy. They also attributed the interpersonal relationship that teachers provide to nurture and develop students to autonomy. The participants here have adopted the application of pressure until

students change their behaviour. Here, again, autonomy is articulated in terms of control over students rather than autonomy over curriculum or pedagogy.

The majority of the participants, when asked if they had autonomy, responded that they did and were able to give examples that could illustrate this:

I take charge of my classroom. In curriculum areas, I am not in charge. But I can use methods that suit me to achieve my objectives. (Grace)

Temitope viewed autonomy as a disciplinary regime:

If you don't have it, then you are not a teacher. You must take charge of your classroom. But we have rules and regulations. But to a large extent I have autonomy. I control the behaviour of my students. (Temitope)

Habeeb, on the other hand, felt autonomy had to do with being able to control his lesson periods. He gave a reflection of personal effectiveness and an awareness of the need to justify altering the timescale:

I have flexibility. I am not rigid. Over the years, I have learnt to be autonomous and flexible. I have always met with my set objectives. Some topics are for 2 weeks, but sometimes, I stretch it for 3 weeks to achieve my objectives. And as long as I can defend what I have done, then there will be no problem. (Habeeb)

Latifat felt that autonomy was doing something and being able to defend it:

Autonomy is compulsory for a teacher to have. You can take a decision based on what is happening, based on the situation at hand. It is very compulsory to have it. Even if you do something contrary to what is expected and you can give reasons for doing it, then I think it is okay. (Latifat)

Although participants said they have autonomy, they agreed it was not absolute:

Not so much though. Because I cannot change the textbooks, for example, even if I have a better textbook than the recommended one. (Faosiyat)

...but sometimes you have to seek permission to do certain things. (Helen)

The participants felt that getting their lessons ready for each week took a prodigious amount of valuable time. However, their 'autonomy' yielded more frustration and dissatisfaction, because they would have preferred to have the lessons prepared termly rather than weekly, although this aspect is controlled by the Ministry of Education. Teachers still said they had a moderate level of control over their classrooms, even when they could not take full responsibility for them. The question is where to strike the balance of accountability and autonomy so as to minimise teacher satisfaction and student outcomes.

A review of the transcripts of the interviews showed that many of the participants had affirmed that they had autonomy, but with some restrictions. It was interesting to see that it revealed an awareness that secondary school teachers have autonomy, but that it is restricted or limited by the school system or policy and curriculum/textbooks. The teachers, however, seemed to want to retain control of major aspects of their profession.

One of the teachers believed he had the autonomy to make decisions in his classroom in terms of lesson delivery and duration, even if this was different from what was stated in the curriculum. This indicated that he was ready and willing to accept responsibility for his actions which, I would argue, goes along the line of exercising autonomy. According to Macpherson et al. (1999), teacher professionalism is greatly dependent on factors such as teacher discretion and control over works, as well as their ability to access resources and their inclusion in the decision-making process.

From the analysis and interpretation of data, the participants' description of autonomy was limited. It was described mainly in the context of how it affected their classrooms and its influence on choices made in relation to work to be covered, which appeared to limit individual teacher

discretion or control. The participants did not mention finance or resources as part of having autonomy; they did not appear to consider these factors a part of being autonomous. The participants believed that they have autonomy, but that it was limited and restricted. They had perceived control of their classrooms and used teaching methods that suited their classroom, yet were accountable to the school system or organisation. I believe that teacher autonomy is closely linked to teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention. From the participants' responses, it can be deduced that they want control of their classrooms – which, I would argue, might provide greater job satisfaction. Much of the job satisfaction in teaching comes from exercising professional judgement in order to meet the diverse needs of the students. When it comes to organisational decisions regarding their work, professional employees usually have control and autonomy. They have influence over the ongoing content and character of their profession. In contrast, however, compared with people in traditional professions, teachers have limited power or control over key decisions that influence their work, and this tendency may be increasing. This provides further evidence in my argument that the teacher professionalism is currently in its embryonic stage in Nigeria. This will be discussed further in the analysis in relation to the challenges faced by teachers in the education system.

4.4 Theme 3: Moral Dimensions of Teaching

This is the third theme that emerged from the interviews conducted in this study. The participants displayed an awareness of the different roles they played as part of being a teacher. As discussed in chapter 2, responsibility and ethics raise the issue of a code of practice and professional conduct. This is an issue that touches on the teaching profession as it helps to form and shape what people become, both morally and academically. The teachers interviewed in this study saw themselves always playing 'a role' in their capacity as secondary school teachers. This is evidenced in their statements:

Teaching is a good profession, because it allows you to mould lives, impart knowledge... you see, these students come into school with various characters. You can't blame them cos they are from different homes and backgrounds. I observe their entry behaviours and try as much as I can to impart good and acceptable behaviour. (Onwuka)

It reshapes the community... moulding lives. The students don't leave the school the same way they came in, their lives have been touched and shaped to be better citizens. (Patience)

...we are building up lives as teachers. We are helping to build the society, to make it a better place for us all. This can be achieved through education and that is what we are doing as teachers. (Folake)

There is the assumption that home backgrounds are lacking which do not support successful school trajectory and that there is the need to change behaviour. The teachers felt that it is their responsibility to produce students who will become active citizens and professionals in the future.

It is articulated here that the teachers identified the differences between the homes and backgrounds of students and brought that into play in the coordination of their classrooms. It can be deduced that significant power is accorded to the teachers in this instance. These teachers have displayed in their responses the fact that acquisition of knowledge and skills and the assimilation of sound values and good moral sense originate in the formative years of the lives of the students. Consequently, teachers are involved in providing learners with intellectual guidance for exploring the world of knowledge and for imbibing the moral values of their society. Teachers have recognised themselves as nation builders by virtue of their profession. It is a widely shared assumption that contributing to nation-building by performing their specific functions for the benefit of the people, places teachers in the position of helping learners develop their sense of national identity and making them realise the importance of the rule of law at a very young age.

Aside from the academic performance of the students, the teachers are clearly interested in their students' welfare. This is linked to the issue of trust, which leads to students confiding in their teachers:

I am concerned about the welfare of my students; if you don't show that concern towards them, I doubt if they will listen to you or even confide in you. (Latifat)

Another interesting twist in the moral dimension of teaching is that of teachers putting themselves in the place of parents in the school. Making the students feel like family was a means to get through to them. These interactions play a crucial role in students' developmental processes:

I see them (students) as my children, I treat them as such. I want them to become better citizens. I am playing a fatherly role in their lives. When I notice a strange behaviour, I try to find out what the problem is. I believe my success stems from what I produce; therefore, I reach out to every student in my class and deal fairly to all. I try to give equal chance and attention to all. (Adeolu).

I extend my concern even beyond the school. There are times when I had to visit some of my students in their homes. I find it necessary sometimes. Such visits help to find out certain things when I notice a change in the students' behaviour. Sometimes, parents don't believe you and that can be very painful. But only time will tell and these parents will come to a realisation. I do all these for the betterment of my students. (Latifat)

The participant here observed that certain behavioural traits that students display in school are not known to their parents. Such behaviours seem very strange to parents when they are reported because the children do not display them at home. Visits to homes sometimes explain why students behave in certain ways. One example is when parents are too busy to keep an eye on their children and expect the school to fully take charge of all aspects of their development.

The teachers identified that there were practices and procedures that influenced their practices in their schools and that these had enabled emotional and behavioural support structures catering to individual needs. Children are taught moral qualities which develop as they grow up; parents and other close relatives are responsible for this early moral education. Such moral education calls for appropriate nurturing and exemplary conduct in terms of moral awareness on the part of parents and others (Herrick, 2003). In principle, parents are the first engineers of children's moral education and development. This obligation, however, is not only limited to the family setting,

since the teaching of moral or ethical values also extends to school and college settings. So far, there is little doubt that moral education is an integral part of school or college.

One might be tempted to say that the manner in which the moral dimension of teaching is to be achieved is a matter for empirical rather than philosophical enquiry, or is simply one of personal or professional experience. Children come to school with different personal and social circumstances that need to be dealt with differently, and only individual experiences and individual insight can enable educators to sum up individual learners and the situation or context in which they find themselves.

Teacher education at its very best, prepares and produces not only academically and pedagogically competent teachers, but also professional teachers who are able to live up to the highest moral standards of their teaching profession. This is generally desirable according to the readings. Teacher education is a framework through which trainee teachers are orientated to, amongst other things, an understanding of what is 'good' and what is 'bad', or what is 'wrong' and what is 'right', with reference to day-to-day teaching commitments.

As Herrick (2003, p. 21) indicates: 'The social nature of humans creates the need for morality, not from a god but from the nature of human self-responsibility and social inter-relations'. Beyond the family, upon graduating, teachers are expected, on a regular basis, to relate to and associate with pupils – their immediate clients – and with other interested parties in their respective societies. In light of the power that teachers have, especially to 'make or ruin our society' (Nyerere, 1968, p. 228), ethics education is an integral part of the teaching profession. As acknowledged in the available literature, the ethical nature and character inherent in teaching and education necessitate the process of orientating or initiating student teachers into teacher ethics (Tom, 1984). Thus, by virtue of joining the teaching profession or education sector, secondary school teachers are obliged to be worthy examples. Ngozi elaborates that:

The teaching profession encompasses virtually every aspect of human endeavour. In fact morality is one of them. We discourage vices and encourage virtues. We teach more on what we want them to do. Nothing is overlooked. That is why,

when there are family issues at home, we intervene so as not to affect the student's well-being and performance.

Sirotnik (1990, p. 316), while emphasising that teacher education is benchmarked on moral and good conduct, maintains that: 'teacher education is more a process of building moral character than a process of building knowledge-based skills, and expertise'. The concern over moral character is indeed a mission of every teacher education facility, irrespective of its geographical location. Also, such a duty extends beyond the socio-economic status of the geographical contexts in which teacher educational programmes are executed. The centrality of moral education in teacher training is connected with the ethical character and the very nature of the teaching undertaken. Whereas many studies widely documented the teaching enterprise in general, scholars, researchers, practitioners, and policy makers specialising in the philosophy of education have normatively raised and addressed the ethical dimension of teaching and education in much more specific terms. Folake commented:

Teaching deals with lives and it must be done with care. If you are not trained as a teacher, you cannot achieve this. Teachers are equipped with these skills to teach students how to be good citizens of this country.

Participants in this study have displayed their position as 'in loco parentis' (in place of parents). They displayed in their responses that they go far beyond academic matters and are interested in nurturing the whole child by showing them that they care for their well-being and teaching them to be good citizens of their country. The participants in this study acknowledged that moral values were interwoven in all aspects of teaching, and that, therefore, working with values was an essential part of teaching. Campbell (2003, p. 2) explicitly acknowledges the inherent ethical character of the teaching profession as she mentions that teachers' moral commitment has a dual character; the first relates to the exacting ethical standards the teacher as a moral person and a moral professional holds himself or herself to, and the second concerns the teacher as a moral educator, model, and exemplar whose aim is to guide students towards a moral life. The dual nature is possible because teaching is, by nature, moral (Chang, 1994). In the same vein, Pring (2001, p. 106) asserts that:

It is an activity in which the teacher is sharing in a moral enterprise, namely, the initiation of learners into a worthwhile way of seeing the world, of experiencing it, of relating to others in a more human and understanding way.

A teacher has to set a high standard of moral behaviour before the child. The school plays a very important role in the moral values of the child. Through the organisation of various curricular and co-curricular activities, teachers can foster among children various moral qualities. In the teaching of different subjects, particularly languages and social studies in secondary schools, teacher may stress moral qualities such as love, sacrifice, self-control, truthfulness and uprightness.

When considering the goal of teacher education, Lasley and Siedentop (2006) state that it is the preparation of teachers who make a difference in the classroom. Sherman (2006) argues that it is the vision to nurture in candidates a commitment to make a difference in the lives of the students. Hansen (1998) claims that teaching compels teachers to serve students' growth and development, not because some external authority has declared this to be so, but because of the very nature of the work. The feeling of responsibility for students' moral, intellectual and social development should be the essential motivational force pushing teacher educators towards a deeper awareness of their potential for shaping the character of a person.

The school demonstrates the highest possible level of integrity in its approach to preparing young teachers-to-be for their responsibility and service to the three clearly defined categories of clients; the learner, society and the immediate community; their profession; and their employer -be it the State or another private employer (Ishumi, 2009, pp. 6-7). Schools are likely to be more powerful as agents of moral education if they are experienced by their students as communities of which they themselves are members. Moral dimensions of teaching were frequently grounded in the classroom interactions of the schools. The influence that a teacher's moral beliefs and values have on the quality of education students receive cannot be overemphasised . it is evident that moral considerations pervade teaching in participants' schools. To this end, it is expected that schools intensify efforts towards the moral upbringing of children, such as we would wish be provided at home.

4.5 Theme 4: Being a Professional

This is the fourth theme to emerge from the interviews conducted in this research study. It embraces many of the areas covered in the three themes discussed above and also elaborates on some of the other issues that were raised in relation to being a professional secondary school teacher. As discussed earlier in the literature, teachers' identities are closely bound up with their professional and personal values and aspirations. Participants' views of what makes them professionals are discussed below.

4.5.1 Knowledge of subject matter

There is a real emphasis on the subject matter knowledge of the teacher. Subject knowledge is the actual knowledge teachers are expected to teach. Therefore, quality teaching rests on teachers' understanding of the subjects they are teaching, knowing the structure and sequencing of the concepts and contents are essential to guiding their students through learning.

I know I am a professional because of the way I deliver my lessons. My students must understand what I'm teaching them, otherwise, it would be an exercise in futility. (Gabriel)

Oladimeji saw being a professional in light of his:

Uniqueness! My students are happy in my class because I come down to their level when I'm teaching. I know my subject very well.

This reflects an assumption about hierarchy in teaching and learning. The teacher here has assumed a position of authority and felt that for the students to have a good understanding of lessons taught, he has to break it down reasonably.

Hajeet had this to say:

I plan my work, my teaching. I prepare very well for my classes. I know my subject very well.

Adeolu's view was:

My interest in the job makes me a professional. When I can teach my subject very well. I have good grasp of my subject content.

Pedagogical knowledge concerns the manner in which teachers relate their subject matter knowledge in the school context for teaching students with a specific level of understanding (Shulman, 1986). This informs the definite needs of the group of students, as well as of individual students, which can be addressed to make the learning simple to understand. It is important that teachers have mastery of the subjects they teach. Teachers in this study showed a strong sense of efficacy and seemed to take a proactive approach by seeking ways to help their students achieve. Teachers' knowledge of the content they teach is a consistently strong predictor of student performance.

The participants had a good understanding of the peculiarities of their students; they set the tone and got to know their students. They decided on how the students could learn and determined how they measured students' learning. They also planned activities and materials that supported this.

4.5.2 Versatility

Some of the teachers believed that one of their greatest strengths was their versatility, which exposed them to new ideas. This was accompanied by an optimistic attitude, which they believed helped them to succeed.

I am versatile in my field and I take my job seriously. (Folake)

I believe someone who is multiskilled and is able to put them in good use, such person is a professional and that is happening for me. (Habeeb)

Now, there are so many students in the class from various backgrounds. The fact that I am able to treat each one as an individual and trying to understand them, as well as getting desired result, for me, that makes me a professional. (Segun)

The participants here were reflective about their own teaching beliefs and methods and were continuously looking for more ways to express creativity in the classroom. They obviously have an agenda to shape their students' attitudes to work and enhance their inter- and intrapersonal skills.

4.5.3 Commitment and passion

Teachers who are passionate about their jobs are distinguished by their commitment to their students' achievement. Commitment and passion are significant needs for quality teaching and learning.

I am committed to my job. I have passion for my job. It motivates me to give my best in my class. (Onwuka)

The passion for this job drives me to give my best at all times. You can't succeed in this profession without passion for it. I believe so. (Oladimeji)

The teachers saw commitment as an essential element of successful teaching. They recognised and endeavoured to fulfil their responsibilities to their students, while passion motivated and inspired them to give their best in class. A teacher's passion inspires students, making them do more; here, passion makes these teachers more interested in what they are teaching and inspires them to make things more interesting for their students. Commitment and passion draw an implicit link to being a professional.

4.5.4 Relationship with students, love and caring

Positive relationship with students is important as it has long lasting implications for both teachers and students.

I have good rapport with my students. They are very free to come to me and discuss their problems. Because of this, they listen to me and they know when to play and when to be serious. And I am happy because a good percentage of them do very well. (Temitope)

Caring for your students is very important. I listen to them and I am very close to them. They can tell me things they cannot tell their parents. That is the kind of relationship I have cultivated with them. (Latifat)

The participants believed that, to perform the roles that their job required effectively, there was a need to establish a good teacher-student relationship in accordance with the professional values. They also believed that this approach facilitated student learning and development. They felt they had been able to achieve this because they had made their classrooms supportive spaces in which the students could engage academically and socially. These teachers understood the value of students' sense of belonging, which can be of great value and can build self-worth in students when they see that someone cares.

Often, in the Nigerian culture, ethical and moral categories seem to refer to conformity to set principles and precepts; stealing is wrong, do not lie, etc. Ethics and morality evoke big questions, impossible dilemmas or conformity to predetermined codes of behaviour. Some of these assumptions underpinned the evidence in this study. This perception requires not only a broader interpretation of the nature of ethics, but a more complete account of the nature of care. In making daily and thoughtful judgements about caring, people engage in high moral calling. Our moral sensibilities will be greatly enhanced if we learn to think more thoughtfully about the morality of everyday life embodied in an ethics of care. Teachers in Nigeria are trained to process dignity and reputation with high moral values as well as technical and professional competence. They observe and practice this set of ethical and moral principles. It is often the teacher's responsibility to assist in developing the desirable characteristics or moral values of students. However, in Nigeria, there is no structured caring tradition with a focus on the potential for improving teacher – student relationships in the interest of developing more effective classrooms. Teachers have basically been exploring the use of their sense of collective responsibility in creating significant relationships of caring in these schools.

Fisher and Tronto (1990) propose conceptualising the caring process in terms of four phases or dimensions of care, each of which, they say, corresponds to a specific value. *Caring about* consists

of paying attention to the factors that determine survival and well-being and establishing the needs of care; the corresponding value is that of attentiveness. *Caring for* means taking the initiative for concrete caring activities to take place, responsibility being the value that counts here. *Taking care of* is the concrete work of ‘maintaining and repairing the world’, carrying out the daily routines of caring work and developing a thorough understanding of these. Values of competence are crucial here. The fourth sphere of care consists of *care receiving*. Here, open forms of interaction between caregivers and care receivers are important as a check on the quality of care, and responsiveness is the overriding value of this phase. Fisher and Tronto state that these four values, attentiveness, responsibility, competence and responsiveness, form the core values of an ethic of care.

Noddings (1992) opined that *caring for* involves the day to day interpersonal interactions that attend to a person’s need at a specific time. In contrast, she argued that *caring about* denotes an action or interaction that attends to a more general principle, concept, or policy. In other words, the act of ‘caring about’ has implications that are greater than any one interpersonal relationship, and is sometimes associated with social or hierarchical positions of power. For example, some researchers who investigate *caring about* have documented the ways people in power and school bureaucracies tend to focus on things and ideas - caring about standardised test scores, curricula, or financial balance sheets (Danin, 1994; Valenzuela, 1999). These studies argue that caring about is often removed from care-giving situations and, at times, the process is in tension with teachers or administrators caring for students. Caring can, however, be accordingly conceptualised as a social process and as a daily human activity. It should be seen as a human practice that entails a moral disposition or a set of moral orientations that are orientated at the question of how needs should be interpreted and if and how they can be fulfilled.

We value other people’s care for us not only because it leads them to help us when we are in need, but also for its own sake, even when the other is not able to do anything for us in the way of action. Just knowing that the other cares is important to us. Part of why caring relationships are of human value is that we want to be cared for by others, to be the objects of their sentiment of care. The teachers in this study demonstrated that they care about their students’ happiness, well-being and life beyond the classroom. These actions suggest that caring relationships help students do better in school.

4.5.5 Being prepared and proactive

The ability of teachers to organise and manage their classrooms is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes. The participants in this study have learnt to be proactive over time. Rather than complain about certain unpleasant situations, they have learnt how to be proactive and develop plans to successfully handle them.

I am always prepared. That is my motto. I hold dearly to that. I am never caught unawares. You see, that is what differentiates you from a mediocre. The experience is there. I have to be able to proffer solutions to problems in my field. Nothing should come as a surprise, you must be able to handle it. (Abiodun)

We don't have all the instructional materials that we need, but I prepare myself before I get into my class. I don't want to look stupid in front of my students. I have to improvise. First days of school are usually very overwhelming, but a professional teacher would have prepared for that day or else, you will just be very confused. (Segun)

These participants believe that, as a professional, a teacher anticipates what will happen and when, rather than waiting for something to occur and then reacting, oftentimes inappropriately. It requires tremendous preparation and vigilance to head problems off before they escalate. These teachers see themselves as responsible for creating a positive learning environment for the students. For students to learn, they must feel safe, engaged, connected and supported in their classrooms and schools. Teachers are an essential part of fostering the type of learning environment in the classroom that supports student success. Creating a positive learning environment that can be maintained can be a positive and supportive factor in helping students meet their full potential.

4.5.6 Humility and tolerance

Just as teachers bring and develop a variety of professional and personal value to classroom relationship, the students also bring a variety of values from the home. So, relationship as a dynamic process is informed by the values of both teachers and students. The participants in this study found the need for teachers to create warm and supportive classroom environments in which

students feel free to express their thoughts and feelings and be tolerant of different students' opinion.

I believe that a teacher needs to be humble or else your students will run away from you. As for me, I come down to their (students') level because I feel that is the only way I can connect with them. I hate to see them run away from me on the corridors. (Ngozi)

I have about thirty-five students in my class and that is thirty-five different characters. As a professional, I have to be able to tolerate them and deal with each one as an individual. I don't expect them to behave the same way. I must tell you, it is quite difficult but I have to learn to cope especially with the large number but then I don't compromise discipline. (Olabode)

These teachers recognised that humility and tolerance were required to protect from internal over-reactions to externally distasteful situations. They were of the opinion that use of these strategies had proven successful in creating culturally responsive classroom practices. The participants identified expectations of appropriate behaviour, even when students came from different cultural backgrounds. Nigeria is an extremely ethnically diverse nation with over two hundred and fifty ethnic groups, and each group with its distinct culture. The participants felt knowledge of students' cultural background, their own ability and willingness to use culturally appropriate strategies, and their commitment had helped to build congenial classrooms.

4.5.7 High student achievement

The quality and adequacy of physical and instructional facilities have a direct bearing on quality of education. This implies that teaching will be ineffective in the absence of instructional facilities, but the participants in this study go the extra mile to make sure that their students perform well despite the lack or inadequacy of such facilities.

I work hard, despite the limitations that exist in this school, to make sure that my students perform very well. At least a good percentage of them do pass. That is

how you can tell a professional teacher. It means he knows what he is doing.
(Segun)

Oladimeji comments:

When your students' performance is low, people (staff and parents) will start wondering what is going on in your class. Your professionalism will be questioned. Some parents will even want to move their children to another class they think is high-performing because of the teacher. But no teacher will want that. It will kill your self-esteem. So what do you do? You have to display your professionalism by making sure your students achieve high performance.

The participants displayed compelling evidence of the belief that a professional teacher possesses high pedagogical skills which culminate in students' high performance. In considering these typical secondary school teacher 'functions' as part of being a professional, the participants recognised and acknowledged what is accepted in the literature as an integral part of teacher professionalism. There is also an understanding of the need for self-awareness and self-evaluation. One teacher spoke of '(always trying) to upgrade myself personally... update my knowledge so that my students can compete anywhere and excel in both content and methodology', which appeared to merge both the knowledge attribute of having to constantly develop skills with the altruistic attribute of wanting to 'better the students'. This was echoed in other comments such as:

I desire additional knowledge to improve upon what I already know. We learn every day, nobody knows it all. (Abiodun)

I always evaluate what I do and also make sure my students are up-to-date by improvising in most cases... you can see our laboratory is ill-equipped. (Adeolu)

This mirrors the disposition of people who are not simply doing their job; this comes to bear with the view in the literature that commitment, discretionary judgement, care for students and professional judgement (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1998) are actively developed by secondary school teachers as part of being a professional. The participants in this study felt that they were capable

of making judgements, applying their skills and reaching informed decisions in situations in which an ordinary citizen could not, because they have not attained the necessary knowledge and skills. The significance of this theme in the argument is that, teachers play a critical role in helping students achieve success in the classroom. Demonstrating professionalism in all aspects of teaching makes a major contribution to improving education.

4.6 Theme 5: Challenges and Concerns

This was the fifth theme to emerge from the data. The participants talked about the challenges and concerns with regards to their job. The teacher is faced with the challenges of educating, socialising, empowering and certifying students, but this cannot be achieved without an enabling environment. By implication, I would argue, the task of a teacher, which includes sustaining the educational system, does not rest on his or her professional competence alone but on the features of the entire school climate. The data collected in this study certainly indicated how critical it is for administrations to create a positive school climate in order to promote healthy, effective professional development for teachers. Participants were asked what had been their greatest challenges and concerns so far in the profession.

Helen argued that the large class size and parents' nonchalant attitudes, as well as inadequate infrastructure, were her greatest challenges and concerns:

The population is too large per class and, then, the marking of voluminous scripts. It will be great if the class sizes can be reduced. I believe I can be more effective than I'm doing now. Besides that, it will be much easier to reach all the students and give them the desired attention. There is also the issue of the nonchalant attitude on the part of the parents, as well as inadequate infrastructure. It is like, they have... ehm... left everything for the government to do for their children. Sometimes, they are invited to the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meeting, a large population of them will not attend such meeting, ehm. A meeting where various issues concerning their children and the school will be discussed, you will never see them. Can you imagine that? Yet this same parents will turn around to blame the teachers and the school when anything goes wrong.

I can deduce from this response that most parents display an action of indifference to the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, which are supposed to be meetings of mutual benefit. A meeting of both parents and teachers set up to discuss issues relevant and beneficial to both parties. The respondent could not give the reason or reasons for this. The school has encouraged parents' attendance at these meetings to no avail. They have been made to understand the importance of their presence at these meetings, yet most parents still sit back, thereby reducing the role of the PTA, which includes building strong working relationships among parents, teachers and school, to one of little effect.

Faasiyat re-echoed what Helen said:

So far... the class size is too large. You have diverse kinds of characters in the classroom. There is no way you can reach everyone within the stipulated time. So you always have to find a way around these things.

The participants believed that reducing the number of students in a classroom would alter the entire classroom environment and would create a more positive learning environment in which students would be better able to forge relationships with classmates and teachers. Although there is no clear consensus in the educational research literature on whether increasing average class size has an effect on student achievement, some researchers have suggested that changing class size could have an impact on student standardised achievement scores. For instance, Atta et al. (2011) found that keeping secondary class sizes under 20 students had a significant impact on student achievement. What is also evident in the participant's response, however, is that they changed their pedagogy to suit their class size by 'finding a way around these things'.

Olayinka elaborated that her greatest challenge was the lack of resources and facilities:

Hmm... the greatest challenge... let me say, it is the lack of resources and facilities. I said this because, you see... the facilities are not just there. Not only that, the school does not have enough resources to procure them. I feel that, if we

have the facilities, our work will be much more easier and the students will learn easily too. But in this case, nothing is easy. Some students manage to do well though. We need resources, we need more funding. The number of labs and the quality of labs has dramatically declined. I'm telling you, if we can add half of what we have now to our facilities, just half, we will do better. The government should do more in this regard. As far as I'm concerned, this is where the building of the nation should start – the school!

In reality, the teachers are struggling to support their students in the prevailing circumstances, and are having to take on more responsibilities than they bargained for. They recognised that some students were doing well, despite the shortfall in facilities, but that there were also students who needed extra help. The lack of facilities limits the ability of students to achieve and has a negative impact on a teacher's job satisfaction.

Segun, on the other hand, said his greatest challenge and concern stemmed from the newly introduced curriculum:

The challenge I have is the way the new curriculum is structured. This time, things have been muddled up, at least in my view. So much has been compressed together such that the time frame is not enough to finish it. Now, we have not had any workshop on this new curriculum, yet we are expected to perform magic. You can see how they keep changing things. The students are expected to pass at the end of the day. That is why I always say that teachers should be involved in all these processes, but they will never involve teachers. This is really sad.

This reveals just how deeply concerned these participants are with the state of their profession. Arguably, this is one of the most significant challenges that teachers are currently facing in Nigeria today. The teachers perceive that their opinions should be factored into the decision-making process that would lead into any changes that would affect their jobs. I believe that these teachers would be comfortable expressing their opinions and concerns, were they involved in the process of change.

Also of interest was the way Gabriel talked about parents' behaviour as part of his challenges:

The way some parents address me, or teachers, like 'nobody' kills your self-esteem. Can you imagine a situation where a parent will come into the school to fight with you because you disciplined her child? There's no regard for this profession at all. I think we deserve much respect because we are the moulders of lives. I remember in time past, teachers were seen as the light in the community. Parents used to depend on teachers for the development of their children. Sincerely, I don't know where we got it all wrong. The teachers' remuneration is also very poor.

The purported lack of respect for teachers and their autonomy, I would argue, tends to destabilise and deprofessionalise a career once held in high regard. Some of the participants believed that it was necessary to build the relationships and trust that would allow them to feel safe in voicing opinions and ideas. They also believed that, as agents of change, they played an important role in the lives of the students by imparting knowledge and inculcating good morals. In spite of the meaningful roles teachers play, some parents throw tantrums, insult or even attack teachers when students are punished for wrongdoing. These happen because, some of the punishments are physical as I observed during my visits to the schools. Studies have shown that physical punishment can lead to increased aggression and further antisocial behaviour such as harassment and verbal abuse. This relates to the increasing challenges to the professional status of teachers and the quality of parent-teacher relationship.

I would argue that a good working relationship between teachers and parents is an extremely important part of students' academic success, as both parents and teachers have expectations. If these expectations are similar and they are communicated, a synergy can occur and the parent-teacher relationship can have a very strong effect on students' learning outcomes.

However, the challenges faced by these teachers are detrimental to the students, as these encounters are major factors affecting the school climate of productivity and efficiency. The provision of a positive school climate for teachers and students is obviously a challenge here.

The participants believed strongly that the challenges they faced affected the performances of the students; the best cannot be achieved in these given circumstances. The teachers also felt that class size was an important factor in school design and in determining the number of teachers needed as well as the number of classes. The class sizes in the schools used in this study were relatively high; most classes ranged from 70 to 100 in population. According to Ajayi et al (2017) class size significantly influence classroom discipline, engagement and communication. By implication, this implies that large class size is one of the major causes of ineffective classroom discipline, engagement and communication. The participants had these to say:

The school is overpopulated and, obviously, the situation will not permit you to give adequate attention to all the students. I believe I can do better with a smaller class population. (Temitope)

The population in public schools deprive one from giving enough time to all the students. (Olabode)

The population is huge. You can't get around everyone. You can't be as effective as you want to. (Helen)

The participants expressed concern that large class sizes have a negative effect on students' learning. There is a consensus among the participants that the more the class size increases, the more the academic achievements of students decrease, due to the teacher's inability to attend to the individual needs of the students as well as teaching effectively in class. Classroom congestion is a common feature in secondary schools in Nigeria. It has a negative impact on teachers' productivity, student learning input and academic achievement (Fabinu, Abu and Adeniyi, 2007).

4.7 Theme 6: Policy Changes

Another theme that emerged from the data collection for this study was the constant changes in education policies. Various policies in the interest of education have been formulated over time in Nigeria, some of which have been presented in this study. Unfortunately, these efforts have not

produced the desired results and effects. The fundamental problem, as identified by this study, is the lack of teachers' voices in policy formulations. The participants in this study spoke about this problem in various ways:

A large and wide range of consultation with teachers is needful. The teachers are the ones who know the effects of these policies on the students. (Gabriel)

Ah, that's one area I think our educational system have gotten it wrong. The planners of curriculum don't work closely with teachers. Even if they do, I don't know the kinds of teachers they choose or what mandate they are given. They don't put teachers into consideration and they should. We are the ones in class. (Habeeb)

Ehm... normally, they don't invite teachers, and even if they do, I think those teachers are timid. But I don't think they invite teachers. Inspectors also come with contradictory instructions. And all this is because of change in policy. (Abiodun)

There are a lot of roles teachers can play. They should carry teachers along. We are the ones in the classroom. We can bring our experiences to play in the policy. We can help them to plan it properly. (Hajeet)

They don't know what is happening in the classrooms yet they make those policies. They should identify capable teachers and involve them in the policy-making process. (Folake)

I think teachers know their environment. They should be involved in any change process, so that the change can truly suit the need of the school and students. (Patience)

There is apparently a huge distance between policy makers and teachers who are ultimately the policy implementers. There seems to be no pathways for teachers to have direct conversations with those tasked with reforming the system. The participants in this study felt strongly that they should be invited to play a role in improving the educational system that they are part of. They believed that the restructuring of the policy-making bodies should include teachers, so education policy might be shaped by those who practise it daily. They wanted to be included in the policy discussions that affect their students and their profession by advocating to bridge the gap between teachers and policy makers.

What is evident in the participants' responses is that, without the participation of teachers, changes in education policies cannot be effective. These teachers want to be committed and they believe that their commitment will continue to be important for effective education. The participants here are advocating for good practice in the process of education policy-making and management.

Poor policy implementation is a challenge to quality delivery of teachers' education. Anyakoha (1994) argued that policies are written by knowledgeable writers who have foresight and believe strongly in what they write for the future – but the problem arises when the time comes for implementers to translate theory into practice. However, several factors could be adduced as inhibitors to smooth implementation of educational policies which thereby result in poor quality delivery. These include government underfunding of education and injudicious utilisation of available funds by implementation agencies: vice chancellors, rectors, provosts, deans of faculties, heads of department, etc. When funds meant to deliver quality education are misappropriated or embezzled, the education which learners receive is adversely affected. Teachers who are going to implement educational policies are left out during their formulation, thus creating a great vacuum within the system, as mentioned during the interviews.

The attendant ambiguities and inconsistencies, as well as a lack of sufficient information are most likely to impede the implementation process. I asked further on how the constant changes in educational policies had affected the teachers professionally and personally.

The curriculum was changed without our knowledge. We had to learn everything all over again. It is giving us much workload. We cannot be effective. It is affecting us. (Justina)

Hmm... I must be frank with you. There are changes that we should not accept. It is not every change that we need even though change is good. The current curriculum is problematic. It is muddled up. Personally, these changes sometimes make me feel that I don't know what I am doing. It is telling on the learners. (Happiness)

It has affected seriously. They change the scheme of work without your knowledge and drop it on your laps. There is initial confusion. It takes time to adapt and it tells on your time in class. (Folake)

The participants in this study found themselves in an unpleasant situation. They seemed not to understand the direction of the new curriculum they had to work with. I was told that some subjects were merged together and some others were replaced, thus causing great confusion when the school resumed for the new academic session. Unfortunately, these changes were not communicated to the teachers before they were made public. Not only that, teachers' concerns also included the fact that there was no prior training or workshop on the new curriculum. What was of further worry to the participants was that the resultant effect of this indiscriminate introduction of new subjects would be scanty coverage of them in the bid to ensure that all subjects in the curriculum were touched upon. There was a genuine workload issue here, which was affecting the morale of the teachers and the ability of many to do their best and be effective in their classroom.

4.8 Regulatory Authority in Teaching

There is evidently cause for concern about the way the regulatory body, the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) has regulated and controlled the teaching profession so far in Nigeria. Issues relating to curriculum, school effectiveness and individual teacher performance have arguably impacted on teaching and learning. Tucker (2004) cites several factors, including prevailing discourses, expectations and experiences, as impacting on professional identity, while

Moloney (2010) sees ‘the development, understanding, sharing and implementation of core principles at the heart of professional identity’. In this context, the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) could be expected to feature as it is the professional body established to regulate the teaching profession and to promote professional standards in teaching.

Teaching as a profession requires all the features of professionalism associated with other noble professions. Part of these features are coded and standardised instruments or documents called ‘professional standards’ that clearly and precisely define what the professional must know and put into practice, and the core values, ideals and conduct that the professional must exhibit. Professional standards therefore refer to a minimum set of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, rights, privileges and obligations and the conduct expected of a professional.

During the interviews, I asked each participant how the Teaching Council had impacted on their lives as teachers and what they believed the Teaching Council’s role was. Only six of the participants thought they had any idea of what this role entailed:

Taking care of teachers’ welfare. (Anthony)

They are to regulate teachers who are professionally trained to be able to practise.

To regulate and sanction any erring teacher. (Onwuka)

Registration of teachers. That is what they do. (Temitope)

I have not seen them performing. I know they are supposed to regulate the teaching profession. (Olayinka)

I am yet to feel them. It is a professional body that all teachers should belong to.

I really don’t know what they are doing. (Faosiyat)

I think they are to ensure that teachers are qualified and competent. I think there should be proper screening of teachers. (Helen)

From these participants' responses, it is evident that they were aware of a regulatory body, but that the impact of this has not been felt so far. They had only a peripheral idea of what the TRCN did, but no understanding with depth. They felt that teachers should belong to this council and that the council was responsible for ensuring teachers were qualified and competent. The evidence of this had yet to be experienced. On the other hand, a good number of teachers did not know the teaching council existed. On how the TRCN had impacted on their job, the participants responded negatively:

They just exist. I have not seen their impact. (Folake)

I have really not seen their impact. I think all that they are interested in is collecting money or dues. I think it is baseless. (Olayinka)

Thus, even though the participants knew that the TRCN existed, they felt that it had not impacted on their job or on them as professionals. At certain times, these teachers had been asked to pay the annual dues; I was told they did not pay such dues as they neither understood the basis for them, nor knew to whom they were paying them. The TRCN had yet to communicate its vision, purpose and its values to the secondary school teachers, as there was clearly a gap between what the council claims to do and what the teachers perceived it was doing. For an organisation that purports to be the heart of teaching and learning, the TRCN has a problem to address; teachers do not support its continued existence. This has serious repercussions for the creation of an effective teaching profession. Teachers professionalism is co-constructed elsewhere but these limitations prevent this.

4.9 Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the interviews that were conducted with 20 secondary school teachers as part of this research study. The interviews generated a considerable amount of data as participants discussed their understandings of what it means to be a professional teacher. Six themes were presented. The first theme, 'fitting into teaching', acknowledged the importance of having a qualification as part of being a professional but recognised the need for further learning,

with secondary school teachers continuing to develop their skills with guidance from more experienced colleagues. The second theme, 'autonomy and accountability', looked at examples of secondary school teachers being autonomous and found that, for the majority, autonomy appeared to be determined by school planning and organisational policies. Accountability was viewed as an external concept. The third theme was considered to be 'moral dimensions of teaching', and this identified the many roles routinely adopted by secondary school teachers as part of their job. The altruistic aim of wanting to better the lives of their students was found to be a factor in their willingness to do this. The fourth theme, 'being a professional', identified examples of being a professional secondary school teacher and considered how the TRCN, the professional representative body of teaching, impacted on secondary school teachers. The general perception of the teaching council was found to be a negative one. The fifth theme was challenges and concerns faced by the teachers with regards to their job while the sixth theme was policy changes which identified the constant changes in policy initiatives and its effect on the teaching profession.

These themes define the understandings of the participants of their professionalism. The themes have included a variety of personal qualities and behaviours that demonstrate their commitment to effective and efficient performance in their given responsibilities. The teaching profession has been plagued with problems and challenges that had attended its conception in Nigeria. These are significant challenges for the teaching profession in Nigeria. The extent to which the challenges are surmounted will determine the prospects of teaching as a profession in Nigeria.

The next chapter discusses the findings and their implications, and makes recommendations for the future.

Chapter Five

Discussions of Findings, Recommendations and Implications of the Study

5.1 Introduction

This chapter brings together the research by reviewing the key findings and noting the implications and limitations of the study. It also looks at the contributions the study can make to current knowledge and concludes with recommendations for further study.

This research primarily explores teachers' understandings of themselves as professionals. It also aims to draw conclusions as to the present nature of teacher professionalism, its relevant significance in education and how it affects the role of the teacher and pedagogy. It further aims to gauge the impact of constant changes in educational policies on teachers' performance of their duties.

As an educational consultant with the schools used for conducting this research, I can be viewed as having an insider position as I have 'situational' knowledge of teachers and teaching. I viewed this as a positive aspect to conducting this research, as I had a tacit understanding of the situations and context described by the participants, as I attempted 'to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). This research is constructionist, from an ontological point of view, in that the participants were part of the social construction of ideas developed and explored. This type of naturalist study, as described by Rubin and Rubin (2005), is a data-gathering instrument where the researcher's own listening skills and understanding of what is being said are central to the process, and transactional knowledge is valued. This transmits an accurate picture of how I gathered the data from in-depth interviews with the participants. This type of approach to interviewing means that both the interviewer and the interviewee are active and that 'meaning is not merely elicited by apt questioning, nor simply transported through respondent replies; it is actively and communicatively assembled into the interview encounter' (Holstein and Gubrium, 2004, p. 141). The cooperative and constructive aspect of creating knowledge in this way reflects my own epistemological view of knowledge as subjective rather than objective, which was appropriate for conducting this research study. The key questions I wanted to answer were:

What are secondary school teachers' understandings of being a professional?

Subsequent research questions are:

- How do secondary school teachers perceive their identity within the Nigerian context?
- How is teacher autonomy understood in Nigerian secondary schools today?
- How have the constant changes of policy initiatives affected teachers' professional and personal lives?

The interviews conducted with 20 secondary school teachers provided the data for this study. Following the interviews, thematic statements were extracted from the raw data and grouped together as four overarching themes: fitting into teaching – overall, all participants thought the acquisition of a teaching qualification part of the process of acquiring a body of knowledge; autonomy and accountability – teachers strongly felt they had autonomy in their classrooms, although there seemed to be an issue with accountability and, of course, the autonomy they claimed to have was not absolute; moral dimensions of teaching – the participants in this study saw themselves as playing a role in their capacity as teachers who focus not only on subject matter but also on the teaching of values and caring for their students; being a professional – there appeared to be consensus among participants that there was need for constant self-awareness, self-evaluation, regular access to continuous professional development programmes and a call for action on the part of the Teachers Representative Council of Nigeria.

5.2 The Context for Teachers in Nigeria

According to Osokoya (2010), teacher education (pre-service training) is seen as a necessity for quality and relevance in education. Also teachers training is translated in the classroom. Akindutire and Ekundayo (2012) argued that the success of every educational system depends largely on the quality and adequacy in the supply of teachers. Since teachers are seen as agents of pedagogy who champion the cause of social change, it is imperative to improve quality of training which is expected to translate into action on the educational policies intended to develop Nigeria.

Although teacher education, both pre- and in-service programmes are offered in Nigeria by different education institutions, and varying degrees and certifications of success are recorded, various problems still confront the programmes with far reaching consequences for the Nigeria educational system. This thesis adopts a holistic approach to teacher education in Nigeria. According to reports from studies carried out by Unterhalter et al (2013) through the British Council in Nigeria, there is a huge gap in the literature of teacher education. The report argued that there is the need for large research programme on teacher education and further stressed that CPD is an absolute imperative. This thesis however, through the opinions of teachers interviewed in Lagos state found that teachers need improved structured CPD in various aspects of teaching profession for quality and improved curriculum implementation.

5.3 Themes and Literature Review

Six themes emerged from the data analysis of this study, viz; fitting into teaching, autonomy and accountability, moral dimensions of teaching, being a professional, challenges and concerns and policy changes. It is important to point out that in reality the themes are closely intertwined and the distinctions made are analytical only. The concepts have nevertheless helped to provide a better lens for the interpretation of evidence relating to teacher professionalism.

(i) Theme 1: Fitting into Teaching

In this study, the teachers agreed that, to be a competent teacher, one must have undergone professional training. This is supported by Adeosun et al.'s (2009) view that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers, and this clearly demonstrates the role of teachers and teacher education programmes in national development. This realisation obliges every country to make rigorous efforts to produce qualified persons to take up the teaching of its citizens, as teaching is a versatile field that requires, at all time, the correct identification of indices of development in a society. Its versatility, however, means it is imperative that teaching profession as a whole constantly search for updated knowledge and the latest information, skills and breakthroughs in its various fields.

The participants expressed their support and readiness for regular training and re-training in order to keep abreast of current happenings in the education sector. In-service training is seen as a veritable means of keeping teachers in Nigeria up-to-date in their specialised areas, and as a

lifelong education process for the improvement of the teachers and the educational system. Teachers' attendance of in-service programmes should be seen as a necessity, while governments should see it as their responsibility to support teachers financially and morally.

Participants in this study agreed that teamwork enhances effective teaching and learning in schools and allows for proper mentoring among them. Teamwork affects both the input and output of an institution. The idea and quality of teamwork in these schools are not established and structured. Due to its importance in the provision of quality education, it is necessary to study the factors affecting the establishment, structure and practice of teamwork in Nigerian schools. This research is specific to Nigeria but has parallels in different contexts, further evidence for this position is provided by Sparks' (2013) position that effective teams strengthen leadership, improve teaching and learning, nurture relationships, increase job satisfaction, and provide a means for mentoring and supporting new teachers and administrators. Wenger (1998) posited that knowledge creation takes place in communities of practice through complementary processes of participation, interaction and shared experiences of members working together towards established objectives. In essence, for stated objectives to be achieved, partners must work together by exploring and modelling possible solutions. This is more urgent given the shortage of resources and where individuals working alone are isolated.

In the study, the teachers believed that continuous professional development was a necessary tool to equip them for effective teaching and capacity development. Continuous professional development is generally understood to mean courses, workshops and seminars which teachers attend in order to further develop their knowledge, skills and competences. However, in Nigeria, CPD of teachers, as agreed by participants, happens randomly, haphazardly and is oftentimes accidental.

(ii) Theme 2: Autonomy and Accountability

The majority of participants in this study believed that they had autonomy – but such autonomy was restricted to their classroom and was not absolute. This contradicts Locke's (2004) position, which refers to autonomy as a person's freedom to determine his/her own actions and behaviours. Teacher autonomy to act is restricted and limited in these schools, yet it is recognised in the

literature as an important aspect of being a professional. Teacher autonomy, in respect to decisions relating to curricula and assessment, tends to be associated with better student performance, particularly when schools operate within a culture of accountability.

(iii) Theme 3: Moral Dimensions of Teaching

Participants in this study displayed an awareness of the different roles they played in their schools. Ethics, codes of practice and professional conduct are germane to the teaching and learning environment. The moral dimension of teaching is often conceived in relation to life moulding, caring and discipline.. Sirotnik (1990), while emphasising that it is benchmarked on moral and good conduct, maintains that teacher education is more a process of building moral character than a process of building knowledge-based skills and expertise. Concern over moral character is indeed a mission of every teacher education facility, irrespective of its geographical location; such a duty extends beyond the socio-economic status of the geographical contexts in which teacher educational programmes are executed. The centrality of moral education in teacher training is connected to the ethical character and nature of teaching.

(iv) Theme 4: Being a Professional

The participants in this study generally agreed that they faced the challenges of educating, socialising, empowering and certifying students. However, they needed an enabling environment to be able to surmount these challenges. The task of the teacher, which includes sustaining the educational system, does not rest on his/her professional competence alone but on the features of the entire school climate.

(v) Theme 5: Challenges and Concerns

Scholars mention poor policy implementation, poor conditions of service, quality assurance and internal inefficiency, insufficient knowledge and poor use of information technology, as well as the non-professionalisation of teaching as challenges facing the teaching profession in Nigeria (Ogunyinka, Okeke and Adedoyin, 2015). The participants also maintained that, due to the large population of students in classes, proper attention and monitoring needed for optimal academic performance could not be achieved.

(vi) Theme 6: Policy Changes

The teachers in this study also agreed that they knew their environment better and, hence, should be involved in any change and policy process, so that the change could truly suit the needs of the school and students. Teachers' participation in policy formulation is largely unsolicited. The extent to which teachers within civil society can influence the outcomes of policy making remains a contested question. Anyakoha (1994) posited that policies are written by knowledgeable writers who have foresight and believe strongly in what they write for the future, but the challenge emerges when such are translated into practice by implementers who were not part of the policy planning process.

5.4 Key Findings

In this thesis, it is clear that there is an awareness among secondary school teachers of what is meant, in the traditional sense, by being a professional – having a qualification was recognised as central to secondary school teachers' concept of what it meant but, in terms of actual practice, there was clear frustration that the qualifications did not matter when it came to policy formations that concerned them. When teachers are engaged in school decisions and collaborate with administrators and policy makers, the school tone will improve. This will promote a better learning environment for students, which will also raise student achievement and create a better working environment for teachers. There are indications from the interviews that teachers are caught in the middle. They are torn between the contradictory demands and needs of the school administrators / policy makers and their students. When teachers have control, they will be able to do their job successfully, earning respect from administrators, parents and students. This point has implications for the TRCN in its capacity as guardian of teaching standards; secondary school teachers would want to see procedures in place and acted upon in relation to regulatory standards.

Many issues which need to be addressed are long-standing and complex. I question why those with the responsibility to transform teacher education and the quality of teaching have not met the challenges of the present time. Teacher education plays a central role in the improvement of educational systems and, as such, needs to incorporate the cultural and historical context and offer practical answers in the form of an original agenda for the transformation of current conditions. The need to construct appropriate teacher education programmes for the twenty-first century in

Nigeria cannot be overemphasised. Such programmes need to be formed in partnership with school districts to redesign teacher preparation to better serve prospective teachers and the students they teach.

There is a need to consider the changing role of teachers and the increased demands and expectations placed upon them. Teachers in secondary schools should not look solely to the TRCN or the Ministry of Education for a definition of teacher professionalism, and should instead opt to embrace creating environments where a collaborative and complex professionalism can flourish. Professionalism resulting from this kind of collaboration may even result in a movement out of the margins of the TRCN, and would help to develop a true and fair view of teacher professionalism at all levels of the educational system, promoting working together, and sharing knowledge, skills and experience to improve student achievement and the well-being of both teachers and students.

Whether consciously or not, there is an acceptance that maintaining standards in teaching is part of being a professional secondary school teacher. I found this interesting, as it placed participants' conception of teaching in the technocratic-reductionist field – as described by Codd (1997) – where the criterion of good practice is competence, rather than in the professional-contextualist field where the altruism and integrity of wanting to make a difference, which was strong theme in the interviews, would be considered central. For me, this presented a contradiction in their perspective on what being a professional meant. Taking a technocratic-reductionist stance towards teaching places competence at the core of good practice, and the associated accountability would be based on contractual compliance rather than professional commitment. From a pedagogical point of view, the aim for teachers in this technocratic-reductionist approach would be to produce and attain specific learning outcomes. This approach is described by Brennan (1996) as a corporate management model, emphasising:

A professional who clearly meets the corporate goals, set elsewhere, manages a range of students well and documents their achievements and problems for public accountability purposes. The criteria of the successful professional in this corporate model is of one who works efficiently and effectively in meeting the

standardised criteria set for the accomplishment of both students and teachers, as well as contributing to the school's formal accountability processes. (Brennan, 1996, p. 22)

This is a blunt contrast to participants' descriptions of the moral dimensions of the teaching roles they assume as part of being a secondary school teacher. Much of what emerged in these descriptions linked closely with what Sockett (1993) described as 'professional virtue'; participants talked about 'building up lives' (Patience), 'extend(ing) my concern even beyond the school' (Latifat), being 'concerned about the welfare of my students' (Latifat), 'moulding lives' (Temitope), and being allowed 'to mould lives, impart knowledge' (Adeolu).

These descriptions conform to Osborn et al.'s (2000) view that wanting to help to 'better' children is the core motivation of teaching. It reflects a professional-contextualist concept of teaching where the criterion of good practice is integrity and the pedagogical aim is to enable the development of diverse human capabilities. It was difficult to understand how the secondary school teachers interviewed could reconcile two apparently contradictory concepts of teachers as professionals. The evidence of the altruistic desire to 'better' children was clear, and this was acknowledged and accepted by participants as part of their job; alongside this was an emphasis on the importance of competence and being measured 'externally', and on the frustration expressed by participants of not being involved in policy formulation processes. The general acceptance of external measures of accountability is worth noting. Participants appeared to have no difficulty with the expectation that they should reach agreed standards in their teaching; the issue of contention was the lack of accountability in ensuring that these standards were adhered to. Autonomy, another attribute associated with professions, was exercised in a somewhat controlled sense; participants had the freedom to make decisions in relation to their teaching, but this was done within the system set in place in each individual school and could be seen as limited in scope. This contradicts Brennan's (1996) view, which holds that, as a democratic professional:

A teacher has a wider responsibility than the single classroom.... It includes contributing to the school, the system, other students, the wider community, and

collective responsibilities of teachers themselves as a group and the broader profession. (Brennan, 1996, p. 4)

The participants in this study did not appear to have a sense of their autonomy in this way. This is due to the limited views of the teachers in terms of autonomy in the profession. In relation to the knowledge base associated with teaching, the basic teacher education programme was seen as providing this, but the pedagogical or craft knowledge, as described by Sockett (1993), was perceived as being acquired through learning in the classroom situation and through observation of, and support from, more experienced teaching colleagues. In this sense, there was an awareness that being a professional teacher involved ongoing learning; the examples given in particular by teachers who had chosen to upgrade themselves through further training, going the extra mile to do so privately and on their own accord, were evidence of secondary school teachers' willingness to continue to learn. I felt that the key point to note in this situation was the lack of a structural approach to continued learning. The teachers involved saw the need for more expertise and clearly chose to enrol on particular programmes. I respected the honesty of the participants in admitting that, even though they had teaching qualifications, there was a need to continuously upgrade their knowledge so as to become better teachers and for their students to compete favourably with others.

The deficiency of a structured system or framework for secondary school teachers to continue to learn and immerse themselves in new approaches to learning could be viewed as allowing teachers to fall behind in their own learning. There was no doubt among the participants regarding the need for continuous learning. Some of them acquired formal postgraduate qualifications simply because they wanted to, while others, upon identifying gaps in expertise in their schools, acquired the further qualifications associated with the course they had undertaken. This finding is supported by a much wider body of literature. I would advocate that the whole area of secondary school teachers' continued learning and professional development requires careful consideration, as it is clearly lacking in both approach and direction. An overall system that would facilitate ongoing learning and development for all secondary school teachers would provide an opportunity for professional development for all rather than the current haphazard situation.

The enthusiasm and readiness of secondary school teachers to engage in courses to further knowledge in specific and needs-based areas could be viewed as evidence of the spirit of altruism associated with being a professional. However, the more obvious examples of altruism were in the extended roles adopted by the teachers. For teachers in a school setting, there is always a need for altruistic behaviour; altruism and its motives seem to permeate the teaching profession itself. According to Mateer (1993), in everyday teaching there are countless records, reports and stories about teachers working after school hours, tutoring struggling students, providing advice or even comfort to students in challenging situations, and being willing to do these things despite a low standard wage. Teachers are overwhelmingly concerned with the needs of their students, and are willing to address these needs even without external rewards. This connects with Osborn et al. (2000) argument that the core motivation for teachers was their desire to help to ‘better’ children; this was evident from the participants’ responses, which mentioned wanting, for example, to give students the best that they possibly could and to make a difference in students’ lives. This was something that they believed they could do through their roles as teachers.

This placed participants’ concept of teaching in the professional-contextualist field, where integrity would be considered the criterion of good practice – in contrast to the earlier emphasis on competence, which showed a technocratic-reductionist view. There was no sense of awareness of this apparent contradiction in beliefs. The teachers experienced increasing constraints on their autonomy as they became subject to ‘extrinsic’ accountability demands. These demands are perceived as enhancing teacher professionalism, as they are filtered through the profession’s defining quality – namely, the teachers’ altruistic concerns for the welfare of the students in their care. The altruistic aspect of secondary school teachers was most evident in their almost nonchalant acceptance that they filled many roles in students’ lives. Participants spoke of being ‘in loco-parentis’, being healthcare workers, being social workers, building self-worth in the students, and of showing good moral leadership. This reflected Sockett’s (1993) concept of ‘professional virtue’ as embedded in the social practice of teaching. Participants did not mention these roles as being ‘extra work’; they mentioned them as merely another part of the job that secondary school teachers do. This is pragmatic wisdom in practice; teachers responding to situations by doing what needs to be done. While it is clearly of value for helping students, it may be adding to the perception that the knowledge involved in teaching is everyday knowledge or common sense. Continuing to

develop this pragmatic wisdom, through what Biesta (2009) described as ‘the lens of educational values and ideals’, is something secondary school teachers appear to do unconsciously, and without realising that it equates to their own professionalism.

In demonstrating their knowledge of some of the concepts associated with being a professional, and by giving examples that demonstrated these, the secondary school teachers interviewed showed they were well-informed on the issues being discussed. What they did not demonstrate however, was what part the TRCN had in their professional lives. The TRCN produces various publications and aims to be ‘an authoritative, respected voice for the teaching profession and a guardian of teaching standards’. Based on the interviews conducted for this research study, this is an aspiration that has yet to be achieved. There was no recognition of perceived authority in relation to the TRCN, and there was no sense that the TRCN was a respected voice. What was consistent throughout the interviews was a lack of any awareness of what the TRCN was actually doing, and a frustration that all teachers were required to pay an annual fee to an organisation that appeared to serve no purpose in their professional lives. This indicates a gap between what the TRCN believes it is doing, and the perception of the people it was set up to represent. I would argue that this is a concern that will need to be addressed by the TRCN which, despite its aim to be ‘at the heart of teaching and professionalising the profession’, is not seen as playing any part in the professional lives of secondary school teachers. The TRCN, I am sure, would be unhappy with this portrayal.

During the interviews conducted for this research, secondary school teachers spoke of their role in serving and helping to ‘better’ students. Professional commitment, as conceptualised in section 2.3, was evident in the examples given of the many ‘extra’ roles that were willingly assumed by secondary school teachers in order to meet the needs of their students. This fits well into the framing of teacher identity with the recognition of other factors such as self-consciousness and education. In terms of professional affiliation, there is a shortfall; secondary school teachers interviewed in this research had no affiliation whatsoever to any educational or relevant organisation outside their school system. It was, however, evident that they were eager to learn and wanted to improve and work hard at their craft. New teachers need time and assistance to develop the skills that will make them outstanding teachers. I would argue that secondary teachers

require support from multiple areas in order to effectively grow, teach and perform their responsibilities to the best of their abilities, and one of the best ways of obtaining the support they need is by joining a professional teaching organisation. Furthermore, this would help them to interact with fellow teachers and stay up-to-date on new topics in their various fields. Teachers can also empower themselves by joining professional networks of interest that will engage their skills and help them connect to others who can support their professional growth. Membership of professional teaching organisations would give access to conferences and professional development workshops, which would also provide opportunities for teachers to hone their teaching techniques and learn about new breakthroughs in their various fields.

Teacher identity as understood in relation to the conceptual framework in this study, has evolved and has been constructed overtime in interaction with their students, colleagues, in addition to experience and environment, rather than reflecting stable and resilient personality traits. An element of the situation they find themselves in is also involved in sharpening their identities. The emotional attachment to the students and the positive response they receive in return are significant elements of their professional experiences. It is evident that relationships are transformed as they increasingly engage in institutionalized and non-institutionalized ways of addressing students' problems and to lesser extent take responsibility for solving them. This has helped teachers develop their professional experiences overtime.

Teachers' identity was also questioned in relation to environmental factors. The participants in this research identified the lack of adequate facilities and the constant changes in educational policies as impediments preventing the formation of professional identity. The professional identity of teachers embody how they view themselves in their instructional responsibilities and how they present themselves to their students and other stakeholders. Teachers' personal and professional identity are important to their success in teaching as this enhances their self-esteem for effective teaching and learning. These will equip teachers to deal with cultural and personal differences in their students, knowing that they have come from different backgrounds. These will also enhance interpersonal communication skills and professional pedagogic attitudes of teachers. The teachers in this study see themselves as intimately intertwined with emotions towards their students. Individual teachers were able to make connections between who they are and what they do in their

classrooms and beyond. The need for a focus on building a professional for teachers alongside emerging technologies in teaching cannot be overemphasised.

School facilities can have a profound impact on teachers and on students' outcomes. With regard to teachers, school facilities affect their commitment and efforts; with regard to students, they affect health, behaviour, learning and growth in achievement. During my visits to the schools where the participants were interviewed, I observed that there was need for extensive repair or replacement of most features, such as substandard plumbing, roofing, electrical systems, laboratories and libraries. There was also an issue with unsatisfactory environmental conditions, such as inadequate ventilation, acoustics and physical security. The teachers also talked about overcrowded classrooms and the effect this had on teaching and learning. For effective learning to take place, the classroom environment must be right. What is right varies throughout the school day, but students need to be motivated and confident that their efforts are worthwhile. Making the learning experience unique to match each student's needs means more work for the teacher. Each one of the inadequacies I observed definitely impacts on teaching and learning outcomes in profound ways. Nonetheless, the government and policy makers often overlook the impact adequate facilities can play in improving outcomes for both teachers and students.

The classroom is the place where theory meets practice. Therefore, teachers must be part of conversations which could metamorphose into policies. If the achievement gap is to close up, and if children are to be fully prepared to take on the challenges ahead of them, then teachers must be a part of such discussions. As detailed by the participants in this study, teachers are the ones in the classrooms and, as such, they are the ones who know and understand the complex needs of the students. Policy makers and administrators, I would argue, need to engage teachers in the policy-making process. The mechanism for this would be to debate policy issues at a state and local level where consultation with teachers is more practical and to ensure an understanding is reached before implementation takes place.

5.5 Implications of the Study

This research study has provided an insight into secondary school teachers' understandings of what it means to be a professional and it has raised issues that are of concern to teachers themselves.

The two main issues that emerged as needing attention are the apparent non-inclusion of teachers in the policy-making process and the absence of any regard among teachers for the TRCN and its role as the regulatory body for the teaching profession. In view of the prevailing circumstances, teachers are constrained to carry out classroom research and explore the tensions between theory and practice. Such periodic research if carried out, could inform educational policies. Both issues need to be explored further, with a wider group, to address the concerns raised.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

This study involved in-depth interviews with 20 secondary school teachers. It can be viewed, therefore, as a small sample study. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for this study, and this is recognised as a sampling method for use when the research seeks not to produce results that are representative of the whole population but rather to provide diversity and symbolic representation. Qualitative interviewing is recognised as ‘the gold standard of qualitative research’ (Silverman, 2000), and I am happy that it was suitable for this research study. I acknowledge, however, that this has limitations as to what Fontana and Frey (2005) refer to as ‘the tremendous, if unspoken, influence of the researcher as author’. My position as an insider researcher was discussed in chapter 3 and I was conscious to ensure that, in analysing the data, I was not merely writing my ‘version’ of the interviews. Triangulation is generally accepted as a method of cross-checking data to establish its validity; it was not used in this study due to the single method of data collection. Instead, the trustworthiness (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1998) of the data was established by providing transcripts of the interviews to the participants so that they could reflect on whether their words had been accurately portrayed. This method of respondent validation is recognised as providing internal validity for research studies (Cohen and Manion, 1994).

5.7 Contributions of the Study: Rethinking Teacher Professionalism

The study has highlighted a variety of issues that can be considered of value. The first is that secondary school teachers present themselves as having a sense of what it means to be a professional. They demonstrate a knowledge base that can be further developed with experience and learning. The study shows clearly how the altruism of wanting to help students better themselves is at the core of teaching and, while the teachers do not necessarily exercise autonomy in a wide sense, there is a recognition of autonomy in teaching. The study identifies several

interesting contradictions in secondary school teachers' understandings of themselves as professionals, particularly in their acceptance of a technocratic-reductionist view of competence, which contrasts starkly with the professional-contextualist concept evident in their altruistic approach to the extended roles they assume in students' lives. According to Codd (1997),

In the technocratic view, good practice can be reduced to a set of pre-defined skills or competences, with little or no acknowledgement given to the moral dimensions of teaching. In the professional view, on the other hand, the good practitioner is a well-rounded person who can integrate all aspects of their prior knowledge and act in a teaching situation with moral integrity. (Codd, 1997, p. 140)

I would argue that these secondary school teachers' views of what it means to be a professional fit well into the technocratic-reductionist view. The participants attributed the criterion of good practice to their competence and their quest for good results. Their pedagogical aim is to produce the attainment of specific learning outcomes, viewed in terms of raising standards (measured by the test results of all students) and consciously trying hard to close the gap between high and low achievers. The assessment goals are determined by policy-mandated regimes – for example, national standards and tests. In addition, their professional development is externally determined and designed to make teachers effectively implement government reforms.

In relation to CPD, there is a clear need to examine the current, almost non-existent, teaching on-the-job training. In relation to policy-making, the need to involve teachers who are policy implementers cannot be overemphasised. Policy makers should also focus great attention on the impacts of adequate facilities and adopt long-term cost-benefit perspectives on efforts to improve school facilities. In relation to the TRCN, this study has identified a clear gap that the council must address if it is to be at the heart of teaching and learning. Secondary school teachers do not perceive the TRCN as having a role in their understanding of what it means to be a professional.

5.8 Recommendations for Further Study

This study has shown that secondary school teachers continue their learning and professional development on an ad hoc basis. There is currently no system in place that provides a structured

path for their CPD. A critical issue in CPD is development of the curriculum for initial teacher education. Newly qualified teachers require structured induction training programmes in the first few years to enable them to develop a professional identity and to further develop basic competences not acquired during the teacher education at university. I would recommend that this issue be explored to establish what is needed to identify ways in which secondary school teachers can be involved in their own continuing professional development. Interestingly, this study revealed a great eagerness for learning among secondary school teachers. Harnessing this openness towards learning in a more organised and structured way would lead to different pathways to recognise the professional needs of secondary school teachers.

Teachers are expected to fulfil too many roles at the same time and are being made accountable for more than they should. They feel compelled to adapt these roles themselves without proper training in such directions. Application of a fixed curriculum for students with vastly different needs creates a series of issues and challenges for teacher professionalism. I make a case for institutions and teachers to be more research oriented so that teachers' practices can be supported, validated and developed through it.

The study identified that policy makers need to include teachers in policy debates as they, ultimately, are the implementers of said policies. The study also identified the fact that the TRCN is viewed as a negative presence for secondary school teachers. I would recommend that this strongly held belief be explored, to determine whether the issue is simply one of public relations or whether there is a real need to reconsider the role and function of the TRCN and its aspiration to be the respected voice for the profession.

5.9 Summary

The teaching profession in Nigeria is much weaker in terms of resources and support but also distinctive in other ways such as morality and in teachers' dependence upon colleagues and head teachers who seem to play vital roles in schools' support system. In western countries there seems to be a range of other forms of support. Strategies towards full teacher professionalism in Nigeria is still in its embryonic stage. Teachers are not fully represented and actively involved in developing and safeguarding the autonomy inherent in the status of the teaching profession.

Development programmes such as on-the-job training schemes, workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers are yet to be fully developed for the structured update of teachers' knowledge base. Opportunities for professional growth of teachers are not adequately provided for and conditions for service are not attractive. Further challenges faced by teachers in Nigeria include poor salary structure and remuneration, deteriorating conditions of resources allocation for enhanced teaching and learning process and discriminative political interference to mention a few.

This study set out to explore secondary school teachers' understandings of what it means to be a professional. The key question asked was: what are secondary school teachers' understandings of being a professional? Three further questions were added: how do secondary school teachers perceive their identity within the Nigerian context?; how is teacher autonomy understood in Nigerian secondary schools today?; and how does the proliferation of policy initiatives affect teachers' professional and personal lives? This study has been a valuable learning experience for me both as a researcher and as an educational consultant. I have spent time exploring the issues that arose during the interviews conducted for this study and found that secondary school teachers have a very sound knowledge of the key concepts associated with professionalism. The data brought together the three key areas of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility. For me, the most interesting part of the study was the emergence of contradictions in secondary school teachers' own concepts, as mentioned earlier in this research.

Secondary school teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is an area that needs attention, as participants highlighted a lack of any structured approach to CPD. While this was disappointing, it indicated a deficiency in the overall system in the tradition of poor practice, rather than an obvious unwillingness on the part of secondary school teachers to engage in CPD. Constant changes in policy initiatives and the non-involvement of teachers in policy development was an issue close to the hearts of the secondary school teachers. It would be interesting to see how they could be recognised and involved in policy development that involves them.

The TRCN was the focus of a considerable amount of negativity, and is clearly not yet 'at the heart of teaching and learning' where it aspires to be. The gap between what the TRCN believes it is doing and how secondary school teachers perceive it is wide. It will be interesting to monitor

changes that occur in the future, either in secondary school teachers' perception of the TRCN, or in the TRCN's presentation of itself as the professional body representing teachers.

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Appendix 1

Informed Consent Form

1. Research Study Title

This research is entitled “Rethinking Teacher Professionalism and Policy reforms in the Nigerian Educational Context”. This research will be conducted by me, Comfort Otegbeye, under the supervision of Dr. Tom Woodin and Dr. Bryan Cunningham.

This study is part of the requirements for the completion of the professional Doctorate programme.

II. Purpose of Research

The purpose of the research is to explore secondary school teachers’ understandings of what it means to be a professional and how the constant changes in educational policies affect their programme.

III. Confirmation of Particular Requirement

Participation in this study will involve being interviewed by me, for approximately 45 minutes; the interview will focus on relevant theories, ideas and opinions in the context of you as teacher. With your permissions, I will audiotape the interview.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING (Circle Yes or No for each question)

- A. *Have you read the requirements above?*
Yes/No
- B. *Do you understand the information provided?*
Yes/No
- C. *Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study?*
Yes/No
- D. *Have you received satisfactory answers to your questions?* *Yes/No*
- E. *Are you aware your interview will be taped?* *Yes/No*

IV. Voluntary Involvement

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw your participation at anytime. There will be no penalty for withdrawing before all stages of the research study have been completed.

V. Confidentiality Data

Data and information gathered will be stored securely. There will be no public access to the audio tapes; these tapes will be destroyed by me on completion of the final projects. The sample size for this project will be relatively small; every effort will be taken to ensure the privacy and anonymity of participants. Teachers and schools will not be named or identified. Teachers and schools will be given fictitious names.

VI. Signature

I have read and understood the information in this form. My questions and concerns have been answered by the researcher. I consent to take part in this research project.

Participant's Signature:

Name in Block Capital:

Date:

Appendix 2
Attribute Coding

| Interview Number | M/F | A/B/C | Years of Experience | School Size | School Type | School Categories |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | M | B | 5 | M | M | OM |
| 2 | F | A | 5 | M | M | OM |
| 3 | M | B | 15 | M | M | OM |
| 4 | F | B | 7 | M | M | OM |
| 5 | M | B | 17 | M | M | OM |
| 6 | F | B | 8 | M | M | OM |
| 7 | M | A | 7 | M | M | OM |
| 8 | F | A | 15 | M | M | OM |
| 9 | F | B | 5 | M | M | OM |
| 10 | F | A | 14 | M | M | OM |
| 11 | M | C | 34 | L | M | OM |
| 12 | F | A | 7 | L | M | OM |
| 13 | M | A | 5 | L | M | OM |
| 14 | F | A | 9 | L | M | OM |
| 15 | F | A | 9 | L | M | OM |
| 16 | M | B | 6 | L | M | OM |
| 17 | F | B | 5 | L | M | OM |
| 18 | F | B | 5 | L | M | OM |
| 19 | F | A | 5 | L | M | OM |
| 20 | M | A | 7 | L | M | OM |

Legend:

| | |
|---|---|
| Interview Number | 1 – 20 |
| Gender | Male or Female |
| Qualification | A = B.ed, B = B. A., B.Sc, C = Masters |
| Number of years of teaching experience | 5 – 34 |
| School Setting | U = Urban |
| School Size | M = Medium; L = Large |
| School Type | M = Mixed |

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| School Category | OM = Ordinary Mainstream |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|

Appendix 3

Interview Schedule

- Q1: How long have you been teaching?
- Q2. How and when did you decide to become a teacher?
- Q3. How would you describe yourself as a teacher?
- Q4. How do you see teaching as a profession?
- Q5. What are your expectations from this job?
- Q6. What are the characteristics and abilities that make you think you are a good teacher?
- Q7. What are your goals as a teacher?
- Q8. In what ways do you see yourself as a professional?
- Q9. What has been your greatest challenge in teaching so far?
- Q10. What has motivated you to stay in teaching?
- Q11. What in-service training or CPD have you done?
- Q12. Do you have autonomy in your classroom as a teacher?
- Q13. How much autonomy does a teacher have? Give examples.
- Q14. How has the constant changes in educational policies affected you professionally and personally?
- Q15. What roles do you think teachers can play in policy formulations?
- Q16. What do you think is the role of the teaching council?
- Q17. Has the teacher council impacted in your life as a teacher?
- Q18. Anything else you want to add?