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EDITORIAL DESK

The Centre for General Nigerian Studies has continued to be a frontier for knowledge dissemination through her series of publications, among other activities being performed by the directorate.

This volume 5 journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy of March 2025 housed a total of 18 well researched articles from scholars across the geographical boundaries of the Africa sub region. The team of experienced editors subjected the articles to peer review, and their plagiarism checks have satisfied the guild of editors.

The journal is recommended to researchers, scholars, lecturers, and students to read, and the planners can leverage on recommendations as panacea to the doldrums confronting the socio-economic and educational spheres of the Sub Sahara Africa nations

I wish all the contributors and readers Barka Eid Fitri and Easter in advance

Prof. M.O.B Mohammed FNAEAP
Lead Editor

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TRCN ETHICAL CODES, TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study was carried out to investigate the effect of TRCN ethical codes on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. The design for this study is qualitative survey while the population comprised the principals, vice principal, and teachers in secondary school in Lagos State. The sample size for the study was 304 public secondary school teachers in Lagos State Education District V while a researchers' self-developed questionnaire formed the instrument for data collection. One research question was raised and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics of regression analysis. Based on the data collected and analysed, the result of the findings showed that TRCN ethical codes significantly influence teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in public secondary schools Lagos State [$F = 211.302, p < 0.05$]. The study recommended, among others, that education authorities should implement mechanisms to regularly assess and ensure teachers' adherence to TRCN standards, and TRCN should organise educational programmes in form of seminars, workshops and conferences to improve teachers' competencies.

Keywords: Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, ethical codes, professional conduct and teaching effectiveness

Introduction

Teachers are one of the most important workforces in schools. This is because, they play major role in instructing learners in a bid to equipping them become manpower for the nation's economic, educational, industrial and technological sectors. Teachers' roles are so vital to the extent that without them, learners would not get educated. There is therefore need to thoroughly examine teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness as they could help in the fulfillment of the general aim of secondary school education (Adamu, 2020).

Within the context of this study, teachers' professional conduct refers to the ethical and moral behaviour expected of them within their professional roles in public secondary schools, Lagos state. In teaching, professional conduct is guided by standards such as integrity, accountability,

and respect (Akinbode, 2018). Teachers' professional conduct is thus their ability to maintain honesty in grading, and communicating with students, or collaborating with colleagues. It is their ability to take responsibility for their actions and decisions, respect students and colleagues, avoid favouritism or discrimination, and treat everyone equally regardless of their background (Aliyu & Hassan, 2021; Adamu 2020).

Teachers' effectiveness is their ability to facilitate students' learning and achievement through the implementation of effective instructional practices in public secondary schools in Lagos state. Effective teachers are those who can adapt instructional strategies to meet diverse student needs, manage classrooms efficiently, and create a positive learning environment. They also continuously assess student progress and provide meaningful feedback to promote improvement (Nwani, 2020). Thus, indices of teaching effectiveness include - instructional expertise, classroom management, assessment and feedback, professional development and reflection, content knowledge, student engagement, emotional intelligence and relationship building, cultural competence and inclusivity (Darling-Hammond, 2018; Marzano, 2018).

Reports have shown that some teachers have poor professional conduct and effectiveness in teaching in public secondary schools in Lagos state (Adu et al., 2015; Arogundade et al., 2021; Atanda & Wambugu, 2022; Inegbedion, 2016). Some of the teachers leave the school before the closing time, engage various forms of trading and indiscipline (Atanda & Wambugu, 2022). The findings of the above reports have serious consequences for teachers' teaching performance and students' learning outcomes in the state. Although, previous studies have examined factors such as - School Input Factors and Inspectorate services (Adu et al., 2015; Arogundade et al., 2021), there are paucity of studies on factors such as TRCN ethical codes.

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) Ethical Code of Conduct serves as a framework guiding professional behavior among educators in Nigeria. Established to promote integrity, professionalism, and accountability, the code outlines expectations for teachers regarding their interactions with students, colleagues, and society. It emphasizes the importance of fairness, respect for diversity, and adherence to pedagogical best practices. Teachers are expected to maintain confidentiality, ensure student welfare, and foster a conducive learning environment (TRCN, 2017). Teachers are urged to engage in continuous professional development (CPD) to stay updated with emerging educational trends and methodologies. This commitment to growth ensures that they can meet the dynamic needs of students and the society at large (Aliyu & Hassan, 2021).

Teachers were found to exhibit fairness, impartiality, and empathy in their interactions with students, which, in turn, led to a more conducive learning environment in secondary schools in Southeastern, Nigeria (Nwankwo & Ibe, 2020). Ukporkor et al. (2021) showed a strong and positive relationship between professionalism in teaching and teaching effectiveness in Cross River State, Nigeria. However, studies were lacking on TRCN ethical codes and teachers' professional conduct and effectiveness in Lagos state. This study was carried out to close this gap in literature.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this research is the unclear influence of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) ethical codes on professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in

secondary schools in Lagos State. Despite the existence of TRCN guidelines aimed at enhancing professionalism, there are observations that some teachers still engage in unethical practices such as absenteeism, poor classroom management, and inadequate lesson delivery, which negatively affect teaching quality and student learning outcomes. This issue is significant because the effectiveness of teachers is directly tied to students' academic success, and ethical behavior plays a crucial role in creating a conducive learning environment. There is a gap in understanding how well teachers adhere to TRCN's ethical standards and whether these standards influence their teaching effectiveness. Additionally, Lagos State, being Nigeria's most populous urban area, faces unique educational challenges, making it a critical case for examining the role of professional ethics.

Research Question

Are teachers aware of TRCN's ethical codes in Lagos State public secondary schools?

Hypotheses

- H01:** TRCN ethical codes do not have any significant effect on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in Lagos State public secondary schools.
- H02:** Level of education of teachers does not significantly moderate the effect of TRCN ethical codes on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in Lagos State public secondary schools.

Theoretical Framework

This study was hinged on the "Immanuel Kant professional ethics theory 1785". Kantian ethics are a set of universal moral principles that apply to all human beings, regardless of context or situation. Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, calls the principles Categorical Imperatives, which are defined by their morality and level of freedom. The TRCN ethical codes, shaped by Kant's principles, provide a framework for ethical decision-making in the teaching profession. Teachers in Lagos are expected to adhere to these codes, which align with Kant's principles of respect for autonomy, non-consequentialism, universality, moral absolutism, fidelity, non-maleficence, beneficence, and justice.

The TRCN ethical codes, shaped by Kant's principles, provide a framework for ethical decision-making in the teaching profession. The influence of Kant's theory on TRCN ethical codes and teachers' professional conduct is evident. Teachers are expected to respect their students' autonomy and dignity, prioritize ethical principles over personal benefits, and uphold ethical principles consistently. They must also avoid harm, keep promises, and actively promote the well-being of their students and colleagues.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model showed the relationship between the independent variable (TRCN ethical codes), moderating variable (teachers' educational level) and the dependent variables (teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness).

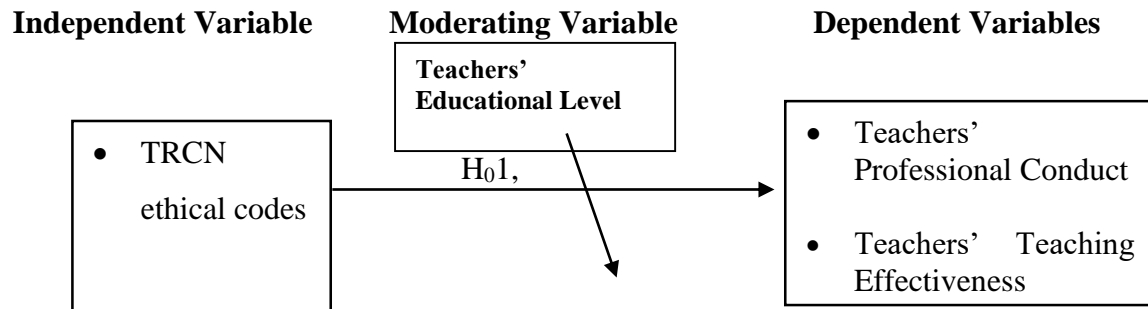


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model (Source: Researcher, 2024)

Methodology

This research employed a descriptive survey research design. A sample size of 304 public secondary school teachers in Lagos State Education District V were selected using simple random sampling and convenient sampling techniques. A self-designed questionnaire titled: “TRCN Ethical Codes, Teachers’ Professional Conduct and Teaching Effectiveness Questionnaire (TECTPCTEQ)” was used to collect data. The questionnaire was validated using content and face validity and subjected to Cronbach’s alpha for estimation of its internal consistency (stability). Value of .804 was obtained which meant that the questionnaire is stable (that is, reliable). The questionnaire was administered directly and collected by the researchers and their four trained research assistants. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation through statistical package for social science (SPSS) while the two hypotheses formulated were tested with inferential statistics of regression analysis to determine the strength of association between the variables

Findings

Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Teachers’ Gender (n= 304)

Demographic Variables	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	66	21.7
Female	238	78.3
Educational Qualifications		
Diploma	51	16.7
Bachelor’s degree	175	57.7
Master’s degree	21	6.9
Others	57	18.7
Years of Teaching Experience		
1-5	118	38.8
6-10	156	51.3
11 and above	30	9.9

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 1 showed that 66 teachers are male with a percentage of 21.7% and 238 teachers are female which amounts to 78.7%. This indicates that majority of the public secondary school teachers are female. On the highest educational qualification, most of the teachers (57.7%) have Bachelors' degree. Lastly, majority (51.3%) of the teachers have 6-10 years of teaching experience.

Answer to Research Question

Are teachers aware of TRCN's ethical codes in Lagos State public secondary schools?

Table 2: Awareness of Lagos State Public Secondary Schools Teachers on the TRCN's Ethical Codes

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D.
1	As a teacher, I am familiar with the importance of adhering to TRCN's ethical codes in my professional practice	143 (47.04%)	101 (33.22%)	39 (12.83%)	21 (6.91%)	3.204	0.91
2	Teacher training institutions contribute to the promotion of awareness regarding the TRCN Ethical Codes of Conduct	195 (64.14%)	87 (28.62%)	17 (5.59%)	5 (1.64%)	3.55	0.67
3	Access to TRCN's ethical codes and regular consultation of it helps to maintain teaching effectiveness.	203 (66.78%)	31 (10.20%)	43 (14.14%)	27 (8.88%)	3.349	1.02
4	TRCN Ethical Codes of Conduct moderate teachers' behaviour in their interactions with students and colleagues	197 (64.80%)	55 (18.09%)	15 (4.93)	37 (12.17%)	3.36	1.02
5	Initiatives like workshops, seminars, and professional development programmes improve teachers' awareness of the TRCN Ethical Codes of Conduct in Nigeria	99 (32.57%)	151 (49.67%)	9 (2.96%)	45 (14.80%)	3.000	0.97

Average Mean (Standard Deviation) = 3.292 (.949); Overall Decision = Agree (High)

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

KEY: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1; S.D. = Standard Deviation.

*****Threshold:** Mean value of 1.000-1.750 = Strongly Disagree (Very Low); 1.751-2.500 = Disagree (Low); 2.501-3.250 = Agree (High); 3.251-4.000 = Strongly Agree (Very High).

The findings from table 2 confirmed that teachers in Lagos State public secondary schools are generally aware of the TRCN ethical codes, as indicated by the overall mean score of 3.292. Teacher training institutions play a crucial role in promoting this awareness, with the highest mean score of 3.553. Workshops, seminars, and professional development initiatives had the lowest

mean score of 3.000. Additionally, the relatively high standard deviations of 1.021 and 1.029 in some responses indicate differences in engagement levels among teachers.

Teachers' perceptions further reinforce the importance of TRCN ethical codes, with 66.78%, while 64.8% believe that TRCN ethical codes help regulate teacher behaviour. This suggests that most teachers acknowledge the relevance of ethical standards in their profession. Lagos State public secondary school teachers demonstrate a strong awareness of TRCN ethical codes, largely facilitated by teacher training institutions.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: TRCN ethical codes do not have any significant effect on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in Lagos State public secondary schools.

Table 3: Effect of TRCN ethical codes on teaching professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in secondary schools in Lagos State

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
TRCN Ethical Codes	12.510	1	14.631	211.302	0.001	0.923
Teachers' Professional Conduct	112.339	1	254.329	0.850	0.001	0.215
Teaching Effectiveness	680.811	1	1.6778	0.734	0.001	0.445
Total	812.091	303				
Corrected Total	18.941	304				

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 3 results showed a significant effect of TRCN ethical codes on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness. The high F-statistic (211.30, $p < 0.05$) and Partial Eta Squared (0.923) indicate that ethical codes strongly influence professional conduct, which represents a large portion of the variance. Teaching effectiveness has a lower F-statistic (0.734) and Partial Eta Squared (0.445). This suggests a moderate effect. Since $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis which says TRCN ethical codes do not have any significant effect on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in Lagos State public secondary schools is rejected.

H₀₂: Level of education of teachers does not significantly moderate the effect of TRCN ethical codes on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in Lagos State public secondary schools.

Table 4: Moderate Effect of Level of Education of Teachers on the Effect of TRCN Ethical Codes on Teachers' Professional Conduct and Teaching Effectiveness in Secondary Schools in Lagos State

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Educational Level	2.923	1	7.316	0.712	0.001	0.132
TRCN Ethical Codes	12.510	1	14.631	211.302	0.001	0.923
Teaching Professional Conduct	112.339	1	254.329	0.850	0.001	0.215
Teaching Effectiveness	680.811	1	1.6778	0.734	0.001	0.445
Total	812.091	303				
Corrected Total	18.941	304				

Source: Fieldwork 2024

Table 4 examines whether education level moderates the effect of level of education of teachers on the effect of TRCN ethical codes on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in secondary schools in Lagos State. The F-statistic (0.712, $p < 0.05$) and Partial Eta Squared (0.132) suggest a weak moderating influence. The effect of TRCN ethical codes remains dominant (Partial Eta Squared = 0.923), meaning education level does not significantly alter the impact. Since the effect is minimal, the hypothesis which states that level of education of teachers does not significantly moderate the effect of TRCN ethical codes on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in Lagos State public secondary schools is not rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Result obtained from data analysis showed that 66 teachers are male with a percentage of 21.7% and 238 teachers are female which amounts to 78.7%. This indicates that majority of the public secondary school teachers are female. On the highest educational qualification, most of the teachers (57.7%) have Bachelors' degree. Lastly, majority (51.3%) of the teachers have 6-10 years of teaching experience. The findings indicate that teachers in Lagos State public secondary schools are largely aware of the TRCN ethical codes, as reflected in the overall mean score of 3.292. Teacher training institutions play a key role in fostering this awareness, achieving the highest mean score of 3.553. In contrast, workshops, seminars, and professional development initiatives recorded the lowest mean score of 3.000. Furthermore, the relatively high standard deviations of 1.021 and 1.029 in certain responses suggest varying levels of engagement among teachers.

Results on hypothesis one indicates that TRCN ethical codes have significant effect on teachers' professional conduct and teaching effectiveness in secondary schools in Lagos State [$F = 211.30$, $p < 0.05$]. This result agrees with the study by Nwankwo and Ibe (2020) who showed that teachers who strictly followed the TRCN ethical code were more likely to build positive, respectful relationships with their students. These teachers were found to exhibit fairness, impartiality, and empathy in their interactions with students, which, in turn, led to a more conducive learning environment. However, the study also identified that some teachers neglected aspects of the ethical code, particularly in relation to fairness in discipline and grading, which negatively impacted teacher-student rapport across three states in Southeastern Nigeria. Abdullahi and Suleiman (2022) also revealed in their study on the role of ethical training in enhancing teachers' understanding and compliance with the TRCN code of conduct that teachers who participated in

the ethics training had a clearer understanding of the TRCN guidelines and were more likely to implement them in their daily practices. This group also demonstrated a higher level of professionalism in areas such as maintaining student confidentiality, upholding academic integrity, and avoiding conflicts of interest. Ukporkor et al. (2021) in their study professionalism in teaching and teaching effectiveness at the secondary education level in Cross River State, Nigeria revealed that a strong and positive relationship between professionalism in teaching and teaching effectiveness in the study area.

Results from hypothesis two showed that educational level contributes to the model but is not a major factor, meaning hypothesis two is not rejected – educational level moderates the relationship, but its effect is minimal. This finding is corroborated by Woldeab and Solomon (2020), who assert that teachers' perceptions of professional ethics significantly influence their professionalism, but this perception does not vary significantly with educational level. In line with this, the results of hypothesis two show that while TRCN ethical codes strongly influence teaching professional conduct and effectiveness, the educational level of teachers has a statistically significant but minimal effect on moderating this relationship. Thus, the perception and application of professional ethics remain consistent across different educational levels, further supporting the minimal role of education in this context.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that teachers in Lagos State public secondary schools are highly aware of TRCN ethical codes, and this awareness significantly influences their professional conduct and teaching effectiveness. The findings show that TRCN ethical codes play a crucial role in shaping teachers' professionalism, explaining a substantial portion of the variation in their conduct and effectiveness in the classroom.

Additionally, while the educational level of teachers does have a statistically significant moderating effect on the relationship between TRCN ethical codes and teaching outcomes, its influence is relatively minor compared to the dominant impact of the ethical codes. This indicates that teachers' adherence to professional ethical standards remains a key determinant of their conduct and effectiveness, regardless of their educational qualifications.

In all, the results highlight the pivotal role of TRCN ethical standards in promoting professionalism and teaching quality, while suggesting that educational level plays a smaller, yet still relevant, role in this dynamic.

Recommendations

1. Regular professional development by the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria should focus on reinforcing TRCN ethical codes to strengthen teachers' conduct and effectiveness;
2. Education authorities should implement mechanisms to regularly assess and ensure teachers' adherence to TRCN standards; and
3. TRCN ethical codes should be consistently applied across all educational levels through targeted training, that ultimately ensure professionalism regardless of qualifications.

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