

## MATHEMATICS TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: KEY TO SUSTAINABLE CHANGE IN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

by

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### **Abstract**

*Mathematics teachers' practice of the professional standards has been attributed to the sustenance of change in growth and development in Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was employed to evaluate mathematics teachers' knowledge and practice of professional standards in Oyo state using 440 teachers and 5830 pupils randomly and purposefully selected from primary and secondary schools in Oyo state. Two validated instruments: Mathematics Teachers' Professional Standards Knowledge Questionnaire (MTPSKQ,  $r = 0.83$ ) and Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers Checklist (PSNTC,  $r = 0.92$ ) were used in the study. Two research questions were answered using descriptive statistics and the results showed that Mathematics teachers in Oyo state had poor knowledge ( $\pi = 1.44, S.D. = 0.64$ ) and practice ( $\pi = 1.33, S.D. = 0.61$ ) of the professional standards. The implications to mathematics teaching were discussed. Periodic series of workshops and seminars to sensitize on the job teachers on the needs to be well acquainted with their professional standards and the infusion of a course on professional standards into the curriculum of the would-be-teachers at all levels were recommended.*

**Keywords:** Professional Standards, Professional Teachers, Teaching, Pupils.

**Word count:** 166.

### **Introduction**

Sustaining change in national growth and development is a theme worth of investigation at a time like this when Nigeria is in the milieu of teachers who lack the knowledge of their professional standards not to talk of its practices as one could not give what one does not have. The emphasis on initial teacher education at the detriment of on-the-job professional learning and development has made teachers across all levels of education to become stagnant, not learning new things and not being able to conform to the global best practices in teaching.

Durosaro (2017) affirms that Education is widely accepted as a master key to rapid social, economic and political development of a nation and a sure process of developing the citizenry cognitively, affectively and psychomotively. Durosaro (2017) later established that teacher is the pivot on which the educational process rests and asserted that no educational system can rise beyond the quality of its teachers.

Akanbi (2016) avowed that since teachers are agents of change, and in the light of sustaining change in growth and development as the change mantra of the present government, there is the need for professional teacher education in Nigeria to sustain teacher education that would give on-the-job professional practices a priority as it has been observed that many Nigerian teachers refuse to progress because of their past beliefs or experiences and that some teachers who are not updating their knowledge regularly are not changing and improving their methods, mindset, mentality neither are they innovative nor sharpening their talents to sustain modern trends in education, whereas, sustenance is the prize of survival. Akanbi later declared that knowledge not updated is a current failure and if a teacher is not

learning then he/she is losing and urged that it is high time teachers were trained to develop the ability for providing rich and meaningful experiences for the students by shifting focus from teaching the subject matter alone to helping students to learn through robust professional teaching standards for national growth and development (Akanbi, 2016).

Despite the invaluable contributions of Mathematics to sustain change in the overall growth and development of a nation, Taiseer (2010) reported that large-scale comparative international and national surveys continue to show poor performance of students in Mathematics and given such consistently poor productivity, much research has sought to identify students in school and out-of-school experiences that influence achievement and related outcomes especially those that are alterable or partly alterable by educators and could be manipulated by policy makers. One of these experiences connecting the teacher and the students is teachers' knowledge and practice of the professional standards.

Adefabi (2016) sees teaching as a procedure designed to equip students with knowledge, attitude behaviour and skills required for optimum performance both within and outside the school and lamented that in spite of the general aim and objective of teaching as a tool to sustain change in growth and development, it has been observed that teachers are being prepared in competencies and skills which may not necessarily equip the students with focus above as majority of teachers are ill aware of their professional standards.

Taiseer (2010) described teaching as a universal activity designed to help students to learn, the process that brings the curriculum into contact with students and through which educational goals are to be contacted with students and achieved, and in doing this, some set of standards are inevitable. Setting standards for content and performance is an important step, a number of studies in classroom activities provide the critical link between students' achievement data and teacher practices at classroom level, and this link is unfortunately lacking in most national education surveys (Nuland and Poisson, 2009).

Durosaro (2017) sees these standards (Ethics) as a branch of philosophy that deals with the theory of value. The ethics of the teaching profession as the moral beliefs and rules about right and wrongs that influence teachers' behaviour, attitude and ideals. In most communities in Nigeria, there are some known, acceptable (social) norms that appear taken for granted as ethics in teaching. These acceptable (social) norms are of two categories. First, moral ethics such as honesty, loyalty, discipline, not smoking in presence of students and in public places, not drinking alcohol in the presence of students and in public places, dressing neatly and decently to school, sexual comportment and punctuality. Secondly work ethics such as continuous learning, regular preparation of lesson plans, serving in loco Parents of students, regular assessment of learners, reporting on learners, being cooperative with other teachers at work and obedience to authority. These are social norms that must be transmitted from generation to generation and the teacher being a facilitator of learning must not send a wrong signal. It is in realization of this critical attributes of the teacher that the Federal Government of Nigeria had taken steps towards professionalization of teaching and teacher registration to sift the "weeds from the tars". In the same vein, the Teachers Registration Council Nigeria (TRCN) prepared a code of conduct for teacher (TRCN, 2010) for wide circulation. In the appreciation of the critical role the teachers play in social, economic and political growth of the nation, the Nigerian Government devised some strategies to reposition teaching as a noble profession and to sanitize the profession in Nigeria. The establishment of the Teachers Registration Council with a mandate to ensure only professionally qualified teachers are employed in our schools and the production of a teacher code of conduct are

milestones in the bid to ensure the teaching profession attains a lofty height of operation (Durosaro, 2017).

Youze, Fanta, Balyage and Makewa (2014) argued that companies and institutions operate on principles that help them achieve their objectives and without these codes of ethical principles, one can be quick to react to unethical behaviour in the making of choices and this would prevent someone from making good choices in life. It leads to people acting without understanding the values they are supposed to sustain. Ethics are the principles, beliefs, assumptions and values that characterize a moral life. Ethical teaching and leadership as major duties of teachers require that the educator action be based on the principles, beliefs, assumptions and values that are espoused in the individual's profession.

According to the American Sociological Association (1997), a professional Code of Ethics is a public statement prescribing ethical principle of specific profession. It prescribes the way the principles should be applied in order to promote the highest standards of professional service. Ethical principles are intended to guide, educate, motivate and inspire members of the profession in the process of carrying out their duties. At the same time, the Teachers' Code of Ethics is also a statement to learners, parents, and the wider public about what may be expected of teachers as they carry out their professional roles. Ethics norms are important because they give people a baseline of the concept of right and wrong. They also require people to prepare themselves to react to a situation long before it takes place (Starratt and Berger, 2004).

Klecka and Milner (2010) explains that ethical principles guide the behaviour of teachers as reflected in standards of the conduct described in the documents of professional associations for teachers and codes of ethics published by disciplinary association. This document embodies shared beliefs that are intended to guide both the activities and the behaviour of people engaged in the academic enterprise. The American Psychological Association (1997) points out that, schools are guided by ethical principles that address their professional responsibilities as teachers, scholars, and more generally, members of the larger society. While some aspects of documents concerning ethical standards describe the behaviour to be embraced, other aspects make clear what actions must be avoided. Lashaway and Frenstermacher (1996) observed that educators facilitate students' access to knowledge; they have significant influence on the quality of life in local communities and beyond. Therefore, they have a responsibility to serve both their students and the public good. Teachers must be particularly cognizant of ethical obligations to their clients (students) who are subject to the authority of the school and have little power of their own.

Youze, et.al. (2014) likened secondary school community to any other community which is made up of a diversity of populations with different relationships. Some may be between academic and non-academic staff; some may share in both, as in the relation between teacher and student, to avoid conflicts, such improper relationship, indiscipline, partiality in assessing students and teachers, there is need for a guideline that determines what is right and what is wrong.

Dalio (2011) postulated that the ethical theories align with common sense ethical principles and people accept such principles as 'treat one another with respect' and 'treat others as you would like to be treated'. In the view of Kritsonis (2007), ethical conduct inspires a quality of behaviour that exemplifies honour and dignity for oneself. In a school situation, teachers, administrators, staff and school board members need to understand the importance of ethical conduct in the educational arena. Kritsonis (2007) adds that ethical

norms supply rules which serve as guidelines to be used as a basis for making decisions in a particular situation. According to the American Sociological Association (1997), teachers are ethically bound to perform better at job than other employees. They should strive to learn new techniques of behaviour in everyday life, ideas and ideals to guide their conduct as they serve as role models to learners. Nigerian children look to the culture at large for ethical guidance, and many adults are not setting good example. The importance of a parents' influence on a child is recognized by the impact it has on society. Much responsibility lies in the hands of the parents to help the child become a more responsible adult in society. Unfortunately, parents in modern society do not have enough time with their children; the role of a parent is played either by a house boy or a maid, whose ethical understanding in rearing children is very much limited. The only remaining alternative is the teacher who spends most of the time in school with students. Unfortunately, some teachers do not adhere to the professional codes of conduct (Youze, et. al., 2014).

Klecka and Milner (2010) argued that the role of teacher in a school is not only limited to the teaching and instructing students, but also involves training out high-quality student who can work effectively with the community and serve as a pillar of good moral conduct so as to sustain national growth and development.

The purposes of the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession according to Klecka and Milner (2010) are:

- to inspire members to reflect and uphold the honour and dignity of the teaching profession
- to identify the ethical responsibilities and commitments in the teaching profession
- to guide ethical decisions and actions in the teaching profession
- to promote public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

Australian Capital Territory (ACT)(2008) elucidates that as public servants, teachers hold special positions of trust, especially regarding children and young adults in the community, and must be accountable for their actions at all times. Teachers who are both public servants and members of a profession should place the responsibility for the education, welfare, health and safety of their students before their responsibility to sectional or private interests or to other members of the profession. In the light of this every Nigerian teacher is expected to abide by the Teachers' Professional Standards (TPS) which provides both a core set of standards covering the behaviour of staff in dealing with the public and a minimum set of behaviours expected of the employer and its employees.

According to ACT (2008), teachers serve the public interest by:

- acting in a manner which promotes confidence in the integrity of the public service and the profession
  - exercising reasonable care and skill
  - treating students, parents and colleagues with courtesy and sensitivity to their rights, duties and aspirations • protecting students from harm
  - being committed to students and their learning
  - organising learning to take account of the diverse social, cultural and special learning needs of their students
  - working in partnership with parents and carers
  - acting against any form of harassment or unlawful discrimination
- and each teacher has an obligation to:

- Respect the dignity, rights and opinions of others
- Demonstrate high standards of professional practice
- Protect students from harm
- Develop and maintain constructive professional relationships with parents and carers
- Exercise leadership in their role as supervisors
- Discourage any form of discrimination or harassment in the workplace
- Advance student learning and the public interest
- Accept responsibility for high quality teaching
- Act with probity in their daily work activities and decision-making
- Exercise efficient and effective resource management

In the pursuit of sustaining change in growth and development in Nigeria, this Code of Professional Practice is important for all teachers, and as public service employees, teachers hold a special position of trust. In their respective roles, teachers exercise powers that have a significant impact on the lives of children and young people and consequently there is a community expectation that these powers will be properly and prudently used. What teachers know and do has a profound effect on the nature and quality of students' learning. Good teachers are even more important in a society that is continually changing and developing, and in which there is increasing emphasis on the creation of knowledge and sharing of information (ACT, 2008).

The Teachers' Professional Standards (TPS) as published by the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) (2010) is a statement of the standards of professional conduct and integrity expected of teachers in Nigerian Public schools for the purpose of upholding the values and principles. The Code also aims to guide teachers in identifying and resolving ethical conduct issues which may arise in the course of their work and, in so doing, maintain public trust and confidence in their integrity and professionalism. The Code sets out the principles of public service ethics that should guide the work of all teachers in meeting the educational needs of their students. These principles are:

- service to the public
- responsiveness to the government and the needs of the public
- accountability
- fairness and integrity
- efficiency and effectiveness

These ethical principles help each teacher to decide whether his/her actions are right or wrong. They inform Nigerian teachers on what is expected of them, and help them think through difficult situations and reach proper conclusions (ACT, 2008).

Teachers' Professional Standards (TPS) is a document that clearly and precisely defines what a professional teacher must know and put into practice and the core values, ideals and conduct that a professional teacher must exhibit. It refers to a minimum set of knowledge, skills, values, attitude, conduct, rights, privileges and obligations expected of a professional teacher. Professional standards is an embodiment of teachers' practices both within and outside the classroom and this includes Lubrication of teachers' talents; On-the-job education of teachers; Teachers' participation in school decision-making; Partnership and team work; Induction programme for new teachers and Professional learning board, all these have unique effects on students learning independent of factors operating at school. It is an

established fact that the inability of a teacher to meet the professional standards will injure the pride, integrity and quality of the teaching profession in Nigeria, by implication, it is an instrument to assist the regulatory authority and teacher education supervisory agencies, employers of teachers, teachers unions, non-governmental organizations, international development partners, parents-teachers associations, school based management committees and other critical stakeholders to constantly gauge, monitor and sustain the performance of teachers on the job and to constantly improve teacher education (TRCN, 2010).

The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) published the current version of the Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers in 2010. The standards set out basic codes and ethics on professional knowledge; skill; values, attitude and conduct; membership obligations; induction and continuous professional development which are expected of registered teachers in Nigeria. The standards are underpinned by core values of respect, care, integrity and trust, and reflect the complexity of teaching. It is expected of every teacher to be familiar with these standards.

Teachers certificated to practice in Nigeria are expected to be committed to the attainment of the highest standards of professional service in the promotion of learning by those they teach, mindful of the learner's ability, cultural background, gender, age or stage of development. This complex professional task is undertaken in collaboration with colleagues, learners, parents/guardians and family, as well as with members of the wider community.

Teacher's good knowledge and practice of the professional standards is believed to reflect and improve the ways in which beliefs and attitudes are displayed by teachers' actions in and out of classroom and these invariably improve students' academic performance, as teachers with positive professional dispositions tend to act in ways that elevate the profession of teaching in the eyes of others (Akinsola, 2016). The question that readily comes to mind is what is the level of mathematics teachers' knowledge and practice of the professional standards?

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite Mathematics being a core and compulsory subject at the primary and secondary school levels of education and also a prerequisite for gaining admission to virtually all disciplines in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, studies have shown that students have poor performance in the subject. Many researchers have reported that students' low performance in Mathematics is traceable to the teachers' knowledge and practice of the professional standards. Researchers have confirmed that improvement of students' achievement in Mathematics is not only limited to the improvement of the Instructional Strategy but also the importance of teacher's knowledge and practice of the professional standards in the teaching and learning of Mathematics. It later advocated that teacher's knowledge and practice of the professional standards be strictly adhere to during teaching. This study is therefore set to examine the level of mathematics teachers' knowledge and practices of the professional standards in Oyo State.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of Mathematics teachers' knowledge of the professional standards?
2. What is the level of Mathematics teachers' practice of the professional standards?

### **Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. All Mathematics teachers and pupils in public primary and secondary schools in Oyo State of Nigeria formed the

population of this study, however, two hundred and twenty primary and secondary schools were purposively and randomly selected for the study. Four hundred and forty Mathematics teachers and five thousand eight hundred and thirty pupils with the average of 2 Mathematics teachers, twenty five primary school pupils and twenty eight secondary school pupils in each school. Five primary and five secondary schools were purposively and randomly selected in each local government with four local government areas in Oyo, five in Ogbomoso, eleven in Ibadan, one in Iseyin and one in Igboora. Public primary and secondary schools in Oyo State which meet the under listed criteria were involved in the study.

- i. The Mathematics teachers in the schools were willing to participate in the study.
- ii. The Mathematics teachers were the ones who taught the class throughout the previous session.
- iii. Such Mathematics teachers had been teaching Mathematics concurrently for the past six years.
- iv. The teacher had been presenting candidates for Common Entrance and WAEC Examinations respectively for the past six years.

### **Instrumentation**

The two instruments used for the study were adapted from the Instrument for Assessment of Teachers Professional Standards developed by TRCN (TRCN, 2010). The first instrument tagged Mathematics Teachers' Professional Standards Knowledge Questionnaire (MTPSKQ) was designed to elicit response from the Mathematics teachers on their level of knowledge of the content of the professional standards and the second instrument tagged Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers Checklist (PSNTC) was designed to elicit response from the pupils, it is a 13-item instrument designed to collect information on mathematics teachers level of compliance with the professional values, attitude and conduct in relationship with students, it consisted of positive statements concerning teachers' level of compliance with the professional values, attitude and conduct. Each instrument was made up of two sections. Sections A of the instruments dealt with background information about the respondents while sections B consisted the items in relation to teachers' level of knowledge and compliance with the professional values, attitude and conduct respectively. The statements are to be rated on a four point scale of Excellent (4), Good (3), Fair (2), and Poor (1).

The drafted instruments were given to some experts in Mathematics education in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo for review. Some comment about wordings and arrangement of items made were incorporated into the final edition of the instruments. The final drafts of the instruments were pilot tested at four schools in Osun state. The reliability coefficient of the instruments were calculated using Cronbach Alpha's measure, the instrument yielded a reliability indices of 0.83 and 0.92 respectively.

The researchers with some research assistants directly administered the questionnaire to the teachers while the checklist was administered on the pupils. The schools were visited and discussions held with the sampled teachers and pupils to seek their cooperation before they were served with the instruments, the items of the checklist for the pupils were explained one after the other to the best understanding of the pupils before they were allowed to respond to it.

### **Method of data Analysis**

The research questions were analysed using simple percentage, mean and standard deviation.

### **Analysis and Results**

Data collected with the instruments were pooled and analysed using descriptive statistics which included frequency count, simple percentage, mean and standard deviation. The use of these simple methods was implored to make the result more accessible to a broad spectrum of educational practitioners. The tables below show the summary of findings of data collected and have been used to answer the research questions.

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of Mathematics teachers’ knowledge of the professional standards?

Table 1: Oyo State Mathematics Teachers’ Level of Knowledge of their Professional Standards

I have the full knowledge of the content of the Professional Standards for Nigerian Teachers as related to professional:	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE										
	4		3		2		1		Sum	Mean ( $\frac{\sum}{440}$ )	SD
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%			
Knowledge	1	0.2	31	7.0	85	19.3	323	73.4	590	1.34	0.62
Skills	0	0	22	5.0	161	36.6	257	58.4	645	1.47	0.59
Values, Attitude and Conduct	0	0	33	7.5	127	28.9	280	63.6	633	1.44	0.63
Membership Obligations	4	0.9	40	9.1	124	28.2	272	61.8	656	1.50	0.70

Table 1 shows that only 1 (0.2%); 31 (7.0%); 85 (19.3%) and 323 (73.4%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor awareness respectively of the professional knowledge; 0 (0.0%); 22 (5.0%); 161 (36.6%) and 257 (58.4%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor awareness respectively of the professional skills; 0 (0.0%); 33 (7.5%); 127 (28.9%) and 280 (63.6%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor awareness respectively of the professional values, attitudes and conduct and 4 (0.9%); 40 (9.1%); 124 (28.2%) and 272 (61.8%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor awareness respectively of the professional membership obligations. The implication of this is that majority of the practicing teachers in Oyo state are not aware of their professional standards.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of Mathematics teachers’ practice of the professional standards that relate with the students?

Table 2: Oyo State Mathematics Teachers’ Level of Practice of their Professional Standards

My Mathematics Teacher:	LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE										
	4		3		2		1		Sum	Mean ( $\frac{\sum}{5830}$ )	SD
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%			
Honours students’ rights and dignity	1	0.0	445	7.6	1052	18.0	4332	74.3	7775	1.33	0.61
Have responsibility for educational programmes	1	0.0	444	7.6	1050	18.0	4335	74.4	7771	1.33	0.61
Have empathy for students	6	0.1	425	7.3	1067	18.3	4330	74.3	7767	1.33	0.61
Maintains confidentiality of students’ personal information	4	0.1	434	7.4	1069	18.3	4323	74.2	7779	1.33	0.61
Seeks fair remuneration	3	0.1	439	7.5	1062	18.2	4326	74.2	7779	1.33	0.61



Shuns sexual and related abuse of office	9	0.2	420	7.2	1081	18.5	4320	74.1	7778	1.33	0.61
Is against examination misconduct	0	0	448	7.7	1047	18.0	4335	74.4	7773	1.33	0.61
Abhors illegal students group	0	0	448	7.7	1043	17.9	4339	74.4	7769	1.33	0.61
Serves as my role model	6	0.1	427	7.3	1064	18.3	4333	74.3	7766	1.33	0.61
Is corruption free	3	0.1	436	7.5	1057	18.1	4334	74.3	7768	1.33	0.61
Do not administer corporal punishment on students	3	0.1	439	7.5	1067	18.3	4321	74.1	7784	1.33	0.61
Inspires discipline among students	6	0.1	427	7.3	1065	18.3	4332	74.3	7767	1.33	0.61
Puts his/her ideological beliefs and influences under guard when dealing with students	5	0.1	429	7.4	1079	18.5	4317	74.0	7782	1.33	0.61

Pupils opinion as shown on Table 2 explains that only 1 (0.0%); 445 (7.6%); 1052 (18.0%) and 4332 (73.3%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for according honour to students' right and dignity as stipulated by the professional standard.

1 (0.0%); 444 (7.6%); 1050 (18.0%) and 4335 (74.4%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for taking responsibility for educational programmes as stipulated by the professional standard.

6 (0.1%); 425 (7.3%); 1067 (18.3%) and 4330 (74.3%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for having empathy for students as stipulated by the professional standard.

4 (0.1%); 434 (7.4%); 1069 (18.3%) and 4323 (74.2%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for maintaining confidentiality of students' personal information as stipulated by the professional standard.

3 (0.1%); 439 (7.5%); 1062 (18.2%) and 4326 (74.2%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for seeking fair remuneration as stipulated by the professional standard.

9 (0.2%); 420 (7.2%); 1081 (18.5%) and 4320 (74.1%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for shunning sexual and related abuse of office as stipulated by the professional standard.

0 (0.0%); 448 (7.7%); 1047 (18.0%) and 4335 (74.4%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for acting against examination misconduct as stipulated by the professional standard.

0 (0.0%); 448 (7.7%); 1043 (17.9%) and 4339 (74.4%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for Abhorring illegal students group as stipulated by the professional standard.

6 (0.1%); 427 (7.3%); 1064 (18.3%) and 4333 (74.3%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for serving as pupils' role model as stipulated by the professional standard.

3 (0.1%); 436 (7.5%); 1057 (18.1%) and 4334 (74.3%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for being corrupt free as stipulated by the professional standard.

3 (0.1%); 439 (7.5%); 1067 (18.3%) and 4321 (74.1%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for not administering corporal punishment on students as stipulated by the professional standard.

6 (0.1%); 427 (7.3%); 1065 (18.3%) and 4332 (74.3%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for inspiring discipline among students as stipulated by the professional standard.

5 (0.1%); 429 (7.4%); 1079 (18.5%) and 4317 (74.0%) of the teachers in Oyo state have excellent, good, fair and poor rates respectively for putting his/her ideological beliefs and influences under guard when dealing with students as stipulated by the professional standard.

Facts and figures show that the level of practices of the professional standards by teachers in Oyo state is at the poor side, this shows the product of their ill knowledge of the standards, as they cannot practice what they do not know. Though an insignificant numbers of teachers have good and excellent practices of the contents of the standards, this may not be adduced to their excellent knowledge of the standards but rather the influence of the cultural belief or societal values and if this is the case, professional standards will suffer negligence in a society where the beliefs or value of that society is against the global practices, as a teacher may also want to partake in giving young girls in his or her custody to a guest as the custom of some tribes in Nigeria which is totally at variance with the professional standards.

### **Discussions and Conclusion**

Professional standards cannot work by itself, teachers who are the implementer of the standards are not well involved in the planning stage neither are they well carried along in the practices. These ill knowledge and poor practices of teacher's professional standards is a serious lapse in the teaching industry especially at the foundation level where it is expected to lay the foundation of qualitative teaching. If the teachers are ill aware of their professional standards it then becomes apparently impossible to practice it. The teachers' level of practice of these professional standard indicated that Mathematics teachers are not consciously practicing these professional standards in their respective schools and this pose a serious implication on the quality of teaching being delivered in their various schools.

The results obtained from this study clearly indicated that, mathematics teachers in primary and secondary schools in Oyo state are not aware of their professional standards. Though, students' responses indicated that, insignificant number of their Mathematics teachers are practicing some of these standards one way or the other, this may not be attributed to their knowledge of the professional standards, rather, it may be linked to what Durosaro (2017) termed as moral ethics inbuilt in these teachers it vividly shows that Mathematics teachers in Oyo state lack both the knowledge and practice of their professional practices in totality. This is in conformity to the assertion of Akanbi (2016) that the emphasis on initial teacher education at the detriment of on –the-job professional learning and development has made some teachers across all levels of education to become stagnant, not learning new things and not being able to conform to the global best practices in teaching. This is also in consonance with the declaration of Akanbi (2016) that there are teachers who refuse to progress because of their past beliefs or experiences, and that some teachers who are

not updating their knowledge regularly are not changing and improving their methods, mindset, mentality neither are they innovative nor sharpening their talents to conform with modern trends in education generally nor updating and upgrading their knowledge as change is the prize of survival and knowledge not updated is a current failure, and if a teacher is not learning then he/she is losing.

If mathematics teachers then lack the knowledge of their professional standards the issue becomes critical as the establishment of the Teachers Registration Council with a mandate to ensure only professionally qualified teachers and the production of a teacher code of conduct so as to ensure that teaching profession attains a lofty height of operation as Durosaro (2017) as affirmed is being fruitless since these teachers would not be able to operate on principles that will help them achieve the educational objectives since without the knowledge of the codes of ethical principles, teachers can be quick to react to unethical behaviour in the making of choices and this would lead to acting without understanding the values they are supposed to sustain, and thereby hampered the promotion of the highest standards of professional service and the pursuit of sustaining change in growth and development in Nigeria.

If mathematics teachers lack this knowledge that could enhance students achievement, the issue becomes critical in sustaining change in growth and development in Nigeria.

### **Recommendation**

It is high time Mathematics teachers were trained to develop the ability for providing rich and meaningful experiences for the students by shifting focus from teaching the subject matter alone to helping students to learn through robust professional teaching standards.

It is therefore recommended that serious efforts are made to enlighten Nigerian teachers on their professional standards through periodic series of workshops and seminars that should be organized to sensitize teachers on the needs to be well acquainted with their professional standards.

A course should be infused in to the curriculum of the would-be-teachers at all levels that would sensitize them on the professional standards and TRCN and other education agencies should organize a periodic workshops and seminars for on the job teachers.

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