

Interrogating the Significance of Professionalism and Professional Ethics in the Teaching Profession

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ABSTRACT The teaching profession is generally referred to as a noble profession. There are, however, numerous reported cases of professional misconduct by teachers in schools. In this concept paper the researchers explore the concepts professionalism and professional ethics in the teaching profession. The researchers further examine the importance of professionalism and professional ethics in the teaching profession. Teacher accountability as a way of ensuring the upholding of professional ethics is discussed. Teacher indiscipline as a result of lack of professionalism is explored and common forms of misconduct by teachers in schools are unearthed through examination of related studies. The researchers conclude by restating the significance of professionalism and professional ethics in the teaching profession, against the realisation that teachers deal with the moulding of future citizens, which should be done with utmost care and concern. In this paper the researchers recommend that teacher training programmes should place more emphasis on the teaching of professional ethics in the same way content and pedagogical expertise are valued. Continuous professional development programmes for practising teachers should expose teachers to the importance of professionalism and professional ethics. Measures should be put in place to hold teachers accountable for the ways in which they dispense their duties. Performance-related pay increases and licencing of teachers are some of the ways to ensure accountability.