

DILEMMA OF PROFESSIONALISM AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Lucky Osaretin Odi¹, Joseph Osayande Akhimien² & Lucky Ikahokhuele³

^{1,2&3}Department of Sociology,

Faculty of Social Sciences, Ambrose Alli University,

P.M.B.14, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria

odialucko@yahoo.com¹, odialucko@gmail.com², lucky.odia@aauekpoma.edu.ng³

Abstract

This paper examined the consequential dilemma of professionalism and stunted developmental trends in Nigeria. Related empirical literature on the subject matter was copiously reviewed. The study observed that Nigeria, just like most third world societies has less preference for identification, recognition and utilization of services by indigenous professionals. It further observed that government and corporate entities operating in our domain recognized, reward and remunerate foreign expatriates more at the expense of home based professionals. It also observed that these scenarios induce in-feelings, poor productivity and forced migration among growing number of professionals to locales where their services are sought for and favourably remunerated. This paper is the view that professionalism is intricately tied to development in any development deserving society. Therefore, leaders at all levels and corporate organizations must step up efforts in the recognition, reward and remuneration of home based professionals in order for Nigeria to fully unleash its developmental potentials.

Key Words: Profession, Dilemma, Development, Orientation, Brain Drain

Introduction

Attaining the height of a profession entails undergoing rigorous training, assessment/grading of performance, and certification. Upon the acquisition of the basic training and certification, the new entrants into the professional group are inducted to adhere and conform to the ethics. Ethics of professionalism entail affiliation and membership of a professional regulatory body that sets and enforces rules governing the practice of members of the professional body. The body also enforces sanctions on erring members and in some cases authorizes suspension or withdrawal of practicing certificates from members who are found in an act(s) of misconduct or to have undermined their professional ethics. With this in mind, members are compelled to work with a high sense of determination and strive for excellence so that they can contribute their quota professionally, to the progress and development of society as well as being able to stand out among equals, in being found worthy to represent their professional body in the general leadership of their society.

As an organizational form, a profession includes some central regulatory body to ensure the standard of performance of individual members; a code of conduct; careful management of knowledge concerning the expertise which constitutes the basis of the profession's activities; and, lastly, control of members, selection, and training of entrants. Max Weber contrasted professions with bureaucracy, and regarded them as the paradigm form of collegiate authority, in which rational-legal power is based on representative democracy and leaders in principle are first among equals. Recent sociological work has tended to view professionalization as the establishment of effective interest-group control over clients with socially constructed problems as a method of exercising power in society. This approach treats professional ethic as an ideology, rather than an orientation necessarily adhered to, or meaningful in practice. Entry and knowledge controls function as a form of status exclusion from privileged and remunerative employment (Oxford Sociology Dictionary, 2005; Odi, 2022).

One propelling force towards the realization of professionalism objectives and benefits in society is when there are functional institutions in place. The lack of functional institutions with a defined framework encourages the placement of just anybody in any position, acting based on self-intuition without recourse to lay-down rules and regulations. A society whose leadership system is subjected to forceful manipulation by the strong and powerful without knowledge and wisdom is more

or less a people whose destiny and progress are captured and arrested. Shreds of evidence abound of situations in which these categories of persons who have hold sway to both the political and economic spheres of society, become richer and stronger in alliance with some professionals who by reason of being a pauper and deprived, make an effort in hobnobbing with the uninformed opportunists in singing their praises/supporting policies and programmes no matter how damaging they might be. 'One should not underestimate the lack of psychological satisfaction that many professionals encounter in their working environment in the developing world, including Ethiopia. If they conclude that they cannot accomplish what they were trained for, they become frustrated' (Shinn, 2002). This paper thus, examines what constitutes professionalism, expectations/roles of professionals, professionals' constraints/abuses as it affects development in Nigeria, and possible remedies.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the strength and growth of professionalism among Nigerians and the giant strides attained in the global scene, its impact is yet to be reasonably manifested in the nation's development. Despite the emerging discussions about the growing role of professionals in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there appears to disconnection between the active participation/appropriate placement of professional and mitigation of national development challenges. The trend if continued, possess a threat to the realization of the immediate development goals and assurances of capacity and competences to resolving future sustainability challenges (Harding, Carpenter, Finelli, & Passow, 2004; Beagon, Kövesi, Tabas, Nørgaard, Lehtinen & Bowe, 2023). Thus, the need to properly examine this phenomenon in order to ascertain the perennial cause and effects with the view of proffering possible mitigations. These are some of the reasons advanced by Chete, Adeoti, Adeyinka & Ogundele (2016) as to why the structure of Nigerian economy is not positioned to put its industrialization strategy such that can achieve greater global competitiveness in the production of processed and manufactured goods by linking industrial activity with primary sector activity, domestic and foreign trade, and service activity. Key in this disequilibrium saga is wrongful acquisition/placement of persons in leadership positions. This has created a major setback to the functioning of institutions and productivity goal attainment capacity (Adeoti, 2010; NBS, various years).

The Objective of the Study

The study aimed at assessing the attributes of professionalism, roles/expectations, constraints and, consequences of non-recognition of professionals in a social system, as explanations for the nations' present socio-economic woes. The study employs the role theory as a theoretical framework to reveal how the passive or non-recognition of professionals in the quest for national development has hampered progress. Lastly, it makes recommendations on the way forward with regard to the role of effective professionalism/dismantling of all forms of professional constraints in achieving the desired development.

Methodology

The study relies majorly on both primary and secondary sources of data for its findings and analysis.

Literature Review

Professionalism

A professional is someone who has completed formal education and training in one or more professions. The term also describes the standards of education and training that prepare members of the profession with the particular knowledge and skills necessary to perform the role of that profession. In addition, most professionals are subject to strict codes of conduct enshrining rigorous ethical and moral obligations. Professional standards of practice and ethics for a particular field are typically agreed upon

and maintained through widely recognized professional associations. Some definitions of professional limit this term to those professions that serve some important aspect of public interest (Harvey, Mason, and Ward, 1995) and the general good of society (Sullivan, 2005, Gardner, and Shulman, 2005). In some cultures, the term is used as shorthand to describe a particular social stratum of well-educated workers who enjoy considerable work autonomy and who are commonly engaged in creative and intellectually challenging work (Gilbert, 1998, Beeghley 2004, Eichar, 1989 and Ehrenreich, 1989; Dauda, 2011; Zhang, Admiraal & Saab, 2021).

Theoretical Review

The four theories in understanding what a professional is and professionalism are: the term “professional” comes ultimately from the Latin word, *profiteor*, which means “to declare what you as a craftsman stand for” There is a long history dating to medieval Europe of guilds of specialists, e.g. masons, tailors, manuscript copyists, who identified collectively as people who had special skills; The idea of the “professional” in its modern form begins in the 19th century as the practice of law and medicine are given an organized form, a consistent education, and means of giving public recognition through credentials offered by bodies that license and regulate;

The idea of the “professional” over the 20th century rendered ever more elastic as various occupational groups seek the status and salary that follow on being a professional (Douglas College Oct, 2008).

Parts of professional identity and professional identity have two parts:

- a. the tasks associated with a given line of work that define it as distinct and indispensable and
- b. the norms, values, behaviours, etiquette, codes of conduct, education credentials, and associations, associated with that line of work.

Until the 1970's theorists of professions held often a strong interest in comparing the traits of occupational groups in order to distinguish professions from other occupational groups (MacDonald, 1995). This direction has been characterized as *essentialistic* as it presupposes a certain essence within these professions. Some of the distinguishing traits are that professional practice should be conducted with a starting point in systematic theory, that the intended occupational group is recognized as an authority within its domain, that society sanctions the enterprise in question, that the practitioners work under ethical codes and that the professional body controls its training program. The essentialistic approach has been criticized, among other things, for its view of society as rationalistic and free from conflict, where professionals work altruistically without group interests, solely for the benefit of their clients and thereby for the best interest of society (MacDonald, 1995; Evans, 2008).

Since the 1970s, research on professions has taken a new focus, namely to study the professional aspirations among occupational groups, or in other words, their *professional project* (e.g. Larson, 1977). Defining professions in order to distinguish them from other occupational groups thereby becomes less significant. Instead, great interest has been directed toward studying the strategies used by different groups to achieve a certain social status as a “profession”. The essentialistic traits have come to be regarded as ambitions held by less established professions, such as nurses, social workers and librarians, rather than manifestations of a professional core. Within such projects, considerable symbolic significance is attributed to the theoretical knowledge of the occupational groups in question (Collins, 1979; Boyt, Lusch & Naylor, 2001; Begun, 1986; Evetts, 2003; Silverman, 2020).

The Seven Characteristics of a Professional

Do you consider yourself a regular employee or professional? Have you ever considered the differences between the two? The term “professional” has been bantered about quite a bit in the workplace. It's important to take a moment and consider the defining factors of what makes someone leap from being a regular employee to being a professional.

1. **Specialized Knowledge Based on Extensive Preparation.** Being a professional does not happen overnight. It requires many hours of study and preparation. Professionals are expected to

- maintain a high knowledge level and expertise. Organizations compensate professionals for their knowledge.
2. **Participates in Ongoing Training and Development.** A professional firmly believes in staying current in their field. This means that a professional is committed to continued training and development.
 3. **Accepts Responsibility.** Professionals seek and accept responsibility. They can be trusted and given high levels of responsibility within the organization. A professional is handed tasks at such a high level, that poor performance can reflect poorly on the entire organization not just the individual.
 4. **Have a Sense of Ownership of Their Work.** Professionals feel a sense of ownership and pride in everything they do. Professionals work, not just to meet organization standards, but most importantly meet the standards of their own pride in their work. Professionals work for the organization as if they were working in their business.
 5. **Maintain a Collective Networking Spirit Outside of the Organization.** Professionals understand that their work is not limited to their organization. They understand the importance of professional relationships outside of work with others in the same field.
 6. **Maintains High Standards of Ethics and Integrity.** Professionals are driven by a code of ethics. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. Their integrity ensures that they adhere strongly to a set of values about how they do their work. Integrity leads management and others to trust the professional. They say what they will do and do what they say.
 7. **Maintains High Standards of Performance.** Professionals have high levels of expectations both of themselves and others. They are determined to always do the right thing and do it well. Doing a job well is more important to a professional than the number of hours that they log on the clock. A true professional is unsatisfied with poor performance. While money may be important, it is not the driving force behind the professional's desire to put forth exemplary work.

A professional is defined differently than an average worker. While not every professional will possess every quality of a perfect professional, they do possess most of the traits as defined by (Gillies & Alvarado, 2012; Walker, 2013; Nguyen, Poleacovschi, Faust, et al., 2023).

Nexus between Trades and Profession

In narrow usage, not all expertise is considered a profession. Although sometimes referred to as professions, occupations such as skilled construction and maintenance work are more generally thought of as trades or crafts. The completion of an apprenticeship is generally associated with skilled labor or trades such as carpenter, electrician, mason, painter, plumber, and other similar occupations. A related distinction would be that a professional does mainly mental or administrative work, as opposed to engaging in physical work.

Professionalism and Leadership in Nigeria

Leadership has been the focus of discussion in many disciplines over the last 20 years. Most current conceptions of the term emphasize that interactive processes, such as vision setting, goal setting, collaboration, team building, and communication, are critical to effective leadership. All these processes have human relationships that are neither role dependent nor hierarchically structured. Terms like distributed leadership and collaborative leadership convey the sense that leadership is not a magical quality limited to a few, but a process of human growth and development involving an entire community working together in an important endeavor (Lopopolo, 2004). Because optimal distributed leadership depends on a high degree of competence throughout the ranks, professionalism has emerged as an integral component of discussions about leadership (Lopopolo, 2004; Fournier, 1999; Hindin, 2007; Babalola, Ergbe, Ogunlusi & Laosebikan, 2018).

Professionals are most constrained in societies where indiscipline and corruption are the order of the day. Available pieces of evidence and observations attest to the fact that, to occupy positions of

authority in most cases is more a function of strength/arrogance, connection/influence, or ethnic affiliations. The lack of professional touch/input in most of the society's affairs has resulted in a halt in the socio-political progress of the society, strangulation of the economic system and exhibition of acts with impunity. The absence of professionalism in societal affairs is no less different from that in which there is absence of law and order (Odia, 2013; Berg, Lee, & Buchanan, 2016; Barabino, 2021).

Professionals interviewed linked their sources of frustration to include, a situation where a highly skilled professional is compelled to serve under the headship of someone that could be best referred to as a nincompoop – having no idea of what is right or wrong – lacking knowledge of the workings of the office/position occupied. Experts are of the view that this trend does not in any way promote professionalism and productivity in any society. Concerned professionals while lamenting the backbreaking task of putting novel proposals together severally that are being ignored by the opportunist bosses due to lack of direction. Five professionals in the course of interaction, painfully responded that at one time or the other, their bosses were compelled to ask them these unpleasant questions. “Are you not tired of these proposals writing – don't you have some other meaningful thing to think about or do – are you not being paid your salaries regularly – why not earn your pay and stop bordering your head – do you think these worries of yours will make any difference” – these resenting utterances from a supposed boss and source of inspiration, according to them got them pondering as to what the future holds for the nation.

They noted with dismay, that besides the reported phenomenon of low wages for professionals, there are more worrisome incidences of underemployment, unemployment, casualization, unsecured contract staffing, hostile and exploitative work relationships and discriminating placement/pay and other entitlements in favour of expatriate staff even with far less qualifications and so on. Coupled with these ugly trends, is the painful predicament of migrant professionals who are held up or stranded on their sojourn to greener pastures, having difficulties getting to their destinations or returning home safely.

Most people in leadership positions are people with little or nothing economically and professionally, though some may lay claim to possessing these attributes, end up selfishly amassing wealth subsequently – becoming sumptuously rich as a result of access to public funds, and turning 'consumanias' & 'squandermanias' – with little or nothing to offer those they claim to serve. These sets of leaders seek through all possible means, self-glorification/adulation for the passive service rendered with public funds upon which they are by obligation/on oath to deliver. A better way of understanding the kind and quality of persons we have as leaders is to view the actions of some governors whose annual budget for security (security vote) is more than three times the annual budget for every activity of the State Ministry of Agriculture and in the same token, the annual budget for governor's office also more than that of the agricultural sector. This is a sector that does not only create mass job opportunities, but also has the potential of turning the economy around for good if properly harnessed (Odia, 2013). The registrar of Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria on Thursday said Nigerian educators constantly face challenges in accessing professional development and opportunities (Punch, 2023).

To stem the tide of poor productivity in the various units of the economic system, performing professionals' rights, privileges and security must be protected, so that the unproductive members of the system who usually formed themselves into a cabal do not continually, systematically, or forcefully edged them out of the system, thus leading to brain drain. Respondents alluded to the fact that the hostile and exploitative work relations created in workplaces by this sets of unproductive cabals have driven a number of their brilliant/egg-headed and creative colleagues into other lands in search of a conducive/ fulfilling and result-oriented work environments. They added that shreds of evidence abound of several local professionals, creative, innovators/inventors who on account of the unfavorable work environment could not breakeven, but suddenly came to the limelight upon their sojourn in foreign lands, and that some of them today are international award winners. Development and sustainable progress evolve where there are unhindered opportunities and expression of purposeful initiatives.

Little wonder why a renowned professor of development studies, Amartya Sen opined that development is freedom, that is to say, what engenders development is where members of a group or society have the free will to participate and contribute their quota to a given societal task maximally, that is when the desired development is expected. His work outlines the need for an integrated analysis of economic, social and political activities, involving a variety of institutions and many interactive agencies. It concentrates particularly on the roles and interconnections between crucial instrumental freedoms, including economic opportunities, political freedom, social facilities, transparency guarantees, and proactive security. Societal arrangements, involving many institutions (The state, the market, the legal system, political parties, the media, public interest groups and public discussion forums, among others) are investigated in terms of their contribution to enhancing and guaranteeing the substantive freedoms of individuals, seen as active agents of change, rather than as passive recipients of dispensed benefits (Sen 1999; New York Times, 1999; McCarthy, 1996; Børsen, Serreau, Reifschneider, Baier, Pinkelman, Smetanina & Zandvoort, 2021; Bielefeldt, Polmear, Knight, Canney & Swan, 2021).

Dilemma of Professionalism in Nigeria

Development is a multifarious concept that has to do with the improvement of people living standards in income and consumption levels of food, medical services, education, etc through relevant economic growth processes. Other indicators of development include the creation of conditions for the growth of people's self-esteem and also increasing people's freedom of choice by enlarging the range of their choice variables (Sen, 1999; Myint & Kruger, 2009; Mizell, 2010).

The financial cost of the brain drain for Africa is huge. The International Office for Migration estimates that about 300,000 professionals from Africa live and work in Europe and North America. Approximately 100,000 expatriates from the West at an annual cost of \$4 billion are employed to help make up for the loss of professionals from sub-Saharan Africa. This expatriate labor force is considerably more expensive than the Africans they have replaced, although many of their salaries and benefits are paid by foreign governments as part of grant aid programs. African countries have, nevertheless, invested scarce capital in training their nationals. The cost of training, for example, for a non-specialized doctor in a developing country is about \$60,000, and for a paramedical specialist about \$12,000. When these individuals emigrate from the continent, wealthier nations usually reap the benefits of training provided by poorer nations. Experts who have studied the brain drain point to a basket of economic reasons for causing or exacerbating the problem. As daily living conditions become more difficult, many professionals will look for opportunities elsewhere. A country with a weak economy, high unemployment, low wages, and considerable poverty is a prime candidate for a major brain drain. Ethiopia certainly fits this description. On the other hand, South Africa also has a serious brain drain but has a much stronger economy than Ethiopia. Abeba Tadesse, a law student at Mekelle University, concluded in a paper on the brain drain earlier this year that Ethiopia's poor economy, together with political instability, are the two principal causes of the problem (Shinn, 2002; Olaoye, 2013; Omoruyi, 2019; Wang, 2017; Breland, 2017).

Low salaries for professionals are often cited as the major culprit. Nigerian Internet whiz, Philip Emeagwali, who now lives in the United States, argued that unreasonably low wages paid to African professionals are the primary cause. The Permanent Secretary of Kenya's Ministry of Health, Julius Meme, commented last year that low salaries for Kenyan doctors are the main reason that they leave the country. He pointed out that Kenyan doctors earned a maximum of \$414 per month compared to their South African counterparts who received up to \$2,600 monthly. Even this salary, of course, pales to that received in the United States. Dr. Seyoum Teferra reported that the average annual salary in 1997 for an Ethiopian professor at AAU was about eight percent of that of his counterpart in South Africa and just over 12 percent of the prevailing professorial salary in Zimbabwe. Although low pay certainly contributes to the problem in Ethiopia, it may not be the principal one. Salaries were also low before the 1974 revolution when the brain drain was not a major issue. A related concern is the matter of professional opportunity, benefits, and development. This includes issues such as training and research

opportunities, morale and job satisfaction, and human resource and management policies. Institutions that do poorly in these areas are more likely to lose staff to the brain drain. Most developing countries do not have particularly friendly working environments, healthy budgets, clear policies, and generous research funds. Dr. Demissie Tadesse of Alert Hospital found all of these factors to be wanting in Ethiopia in a paper he presented to the 38th Annual Medical Conference in Addis Ababa. He also cited the relative lack of involvement of professionals in the decision-making process. I would add in the case of universities that a reluctance to grant autonomy to the university leadership at each campus contributes to low morale and encourages the seeking of employment overseas (Shinn, 2002). Education systems are facing challenges in relation to attracting and retaining excellent teachers. Strengthening teacher professionalism by deriving insights from other sectors is a promising approach in confronting these issues. At the forefront in the promotion of professionalism and innovation is full support by researchers and policymakers (Mezza, 2022).

Influenced Professionalism and Development Dilemma

Influenced professionalism, implies the placement of persons into certain positions in which such placed persons lack outrightly the needed prerequisites in handling the assigned responsibility or persons who have seen some others carrying out certain task and conclude with the belief that they can as well perform the same task if given the opportunity usually through influence/negotiation. Beneficiaries of this system also believe that achievement is not a function of orientation into any professional skills but physical strength possessed and how violent you are, to struggle for/negotiate what they want.

The relegation of professionals to the background especially by inept and corrupt politicians and attitudes towards them and their progress and recognition of services offered placed on the whims and caprices of uninformed opportunists, to say the least, is appalling. The not-encouraging performance of some graduate who are often referred to as unemployable graduates, may have been influenced by society's attitudes towards professionals who are known to be hardworking, drawing from this trend, chose to pursue wealth/prestige and power through other means that may not be legitimate.

The current procedure of placement of persons into technical/administrative and leadership positions which is usually in favour of the most influential/connected or anointed by fellow politicians must change for good as the best brain and performer are not found among those who seek for power/positions but among those power and positions seek for.

Among the causes of developmental dilemma in this regard, is the sensational reportage in the media usually paid for by state governments when there is little or nothing on the ground, as against reporting genuine developmental/visionary strides objectively and exposing societal challenges for mitigation. The media often have been accused of promoting such reports due to the need of meeting survival costs, which is in the increase (Dombrowski, 2017; National Academy of Engineering, 2020; Gunckel, & Tolbert, 2018, Faulkner, 2000).

Philosophers are of the view that “in a society where the tenets of science and technology have not been well consummated illiterates are philosophers”. While in the sociological domain, same is referred to as “in a society where the tenets of science, technology, and professionalism have not been well consummated, uninformed and un-evolving minds are its philosophers or leaders”. Therefore, a society where uninformed and un-evolving minds are allowed to serve as philosophers or leaders, what is imminent in such society is nothing short of a systemic collapse.

Theoretical Framework

Structural functionalist theory was used to explain the dilemma of professionalism and development dilemma in Nigeria. The functionalist approach sees a role as the set of expectations that society places on an individual. By unspoken consensus, certain behaviours are deemed *appropriate* and others *inappropriate*. For example, it is appropriate for a doctor to dress fairly conservatively, ask a series of personal questions about one's health, touch one in ways that would normally be forbidden, write prescriptions, and show more concern for the personal well-being of his clients. Electricians or shopkeepers may also show concern for the well-being of their clients, but if they start touching their

clients, especially where doctors are allowed to touch, they'll get in trouble; they will have stepped outside of the norms associated with their roles.

In the functionalist conception, the role is one of the important ways in which individual activity is socially regulated: roles create regular patterns of behaviour and thus a measure of predictability, which not only allows individuals to function effectively because they know what to expect of others but also makes it possible for the sociologist to make generalizations about society. Collectively, a group of interlocking roles creates a social institution: the institution of law, for example, can be seen as the combination of many roles, including *police officer, judge, criminal, and victim* see (Michener & DeLamater, 1999).

Roles, in the functionalist perspective, are relatively inflexible and are more-or-less universally agreed upon. Although it is recognized that different roles interact (*teacher and student*) and that roles are usually defined concerning other roles (*doctor and patient or mother and child*), the functionalist approach has great difficulty in accounting for variability and flexibility of roles and finds it difficult to account for the vast differences in the way that individuals conceive different roles. Taken to extremes, the functionalist approach results in the *role* becoming a set of static, semi-global expectations laid down by a unified, amorphous society. The distinction between *role* and *norm* (or *culture*) thus becomes sterile. The functionalist approach has been criticized for its static understanding of roles. Even so, it remains a fundamental concept that is still taught in most introductory courses and is still regarded as important.

Interestingly, this conception has crossed over from academic discourse into popular use. It has become commonplace to speak of particular roles as if they were indeed fixed, agreed upon by all, and uncontroversial (e.g., the role of the teacher or a parent's role). This everyday usage nearly always employs role in a normative way, to imply that *this* is the proper behaviour for a teacher or a parent, or even for an entire institution (see Biddle, 1986; Zulfikar, Emawati, Dahliana I, Akmal & Hidayat, 2022). This theory better explains and situates societal needs and recognition for professionalism in developmental goal accomplishment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There must be institutional reforms that value, reward, develop and challenge skilled professionals anywhere. Providing loans or assistance for decent housing, making available more funds for research, ensuring Internet connectivity, and providing more in-country training could make a big difference. Efforts need to be taken to improve the dissemination and utilization of research findings and redirect research to address the development needs of Africans. Expanded use of virtual means for the generation and retention of knowledge rather than a reliance on the physical movement of people would reduce the temptation to remain abroad and reduce costs. Greater use of distance education is another possibility. There should be a focus on creating centers of excellence in critical fields of medicine and science at universities and hospitals. Human resource policies that make a serious effort to accommodate the career aspirations of skilled personnel are also essential (Shinn, 2002).

Productivity incentives for professionals in the course of delivering their services and acquiring needed skills/retraining is what every progressive society must strive for through its government, corporate organizations, CSOs, and individuals. Governments at all levels in Nigeria must ensure these incentives and more including, unhindered opportunities, recognitions, sponsorship of research findings, inventions, mass production of invented products, ambience where professionals operate is such that is warm and cooperative devoid of all forms of hostility/exploitations and so on. When this is done faithfully, alongside improved infrastructure/facilities, the nation will not only be encouraging the growth of professionalism/productivity but will expect more brain gain as against the present trend of brain drain. Also, a trend in which professionals must bow down before or yield to the dictate of uninformed opportunists who have arrogated system ownership to themselves in order that they can have access to the utilization of their skills must be eliminated.

This paper is of the view that Nigeria as a nation stands the chance to choose, either to stick to professionalism or act otherwise, believing that genuine and sustainable development anywhere is professionally driven, and so, the degree of developmental strides in the future will be determined by the amount of recognition and opportunities accorded Nigerian professionals by Nigerian government and its people.

References

- Abbott, A. D. (1988). *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Adeoti, J. O. (2010). 'Investment in Technology and Export Potential of Firms in Southwest Nigeria'. AERC Research Paper 231. Nairobi: African Economic Research Consortium.
- Babalola, O., Ergbe, P., Ogunlusi, F. & Laosebikan, S. J. (2018). The Implications of Employee's Placement on National Development: A Case of Nigeria. , 4 (1): 39-62.
- Barabino, G. A. (2021) Engineering Solutions to COVID-19 and Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities* 8: 277–279. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-020-00953-x>.
- Beeghly, L. (2004). *The Structure of Social Stratification in the United States*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Begun, J. W. (1986). Economic and Sociological Approaches to Professionalism. *Sage Journals* Vol. 13 No.1 113-129. wox.sagepub.com/content/13/1/113.refs.
- Berg, D. R., Lee, T. & Buchanan, E.A. (2016). A Methodology for Exploring, Documenting, and Improving Humanitarian Service Learning in the University. *Journal of Humanitarian Engineering* 4(1).
- Biddle, B. J. (1986). Recent Development in Role Theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*. pp. 1267-1292.
- Bielefeldt, A. R., Polmear, M., Knight, D. W., Canney, N. & Swan, C. (2021). Educating Engineers to Work Ethically with Global Marginalized Communities. *Environmental Engineering Science* 38 (5): 320–330. <https://doi.org/10.1089/ees.2020.0269>.
- Bielefeldt, A., & Canney, N. (2014). Impacts of Service-Learning on the Professional Social Responsibility Attitudes of Engineering Students. *International Journal for Service Learning in Engineering, Humanitarian Engineering and Social Entrepreneurship* 9: 2.
- Børsen, T., Y., Serreau, K., Reifschneider, A., Baier, R., Pinkelman, T., Smetanina & Zandvoort, H. (2021). Initiatives, Experiences and Best Practices for Teaching Social and Ecological Responsibility in Ethics Education for Science and Engineering Students. *European Journal of Engineering Education* 46 (2): 186–209. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03043797.2019.1701632>
- Boyt, T. E., Lusch, R. F., & Naylor, G. (2001). The Role of Professionalism in Determining Job Satisfaction in Professional Services: A Study of Marketing Researchers. *Journal of Service Research*, 3 (4), 321-330.
- Breland, A. (2017). How White Engineers Built Racist Code – And Why It's Dangerous for Black People. Retrieved August 11, 2018, from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/dec/04/racist-facial-recognitionwhite-coders-black-people-police>.
- Chete, L. N., Adeoti, J. O., Adeyinka, F. M. & Ogundele, O. (2016) Industrial Development and Growth in Nigeria: Lessons and Challenges. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/12c_wp8_chete-et-al-1.pdf
- Collins, R. (1979). *The Credential Society: an Historical Sociology of Education and Stratification*. New York: Academic Press.
- Dauda, R. O. S. (2011). Role of Human Capital in Economic Development: an Empirical Study of Nigerian Case. *StudyMode.com*. Retrieved 09, 2011, from <http://www.studymode.com/essays/role-of-human-capital-in-economic-773847.html>
- Dombrowski, L. (2017). Socially Just Design and Engendering Social Change. *Interactions* 24 (4): 63–65. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3085560>

- Douglas College (2008). Professionalism That Matters: Critical Professional ...
www.douglas.bc.ca/_shared/assets/p_
- Ehrenreich, B. (1989). *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class*. New York: Harper Prenal.
- Eichar, D. (1989). *Occupation and Class Consciousness in America*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. ISBN 978-0-313-26111-4.
- Evans, L. (2008). Professionalism, Professionalism and the Development of Education Professionals. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 56 (1). pp. 20-38.
- Evetts, J. (2003). The Sociological Analysis of Professionalism: Occupational Change in the Modern World. *International Sociology*, 18(2), 395-415.
- Faulkner, W. (2000). Dualisms, Hierarchies and Gender in Engineering. *Science and Engineering Ethics* 30 (5): 759–792. <https://doi.org/10.1177/030631200030005005>.
- Fournier, V. (1999). The Appeal to 'Professionalism' as a Disciplinary Mechanism. *The Sociological Review*, 47(2), 280-307.
- Gardner, H. & Shulman, (2005). Lee S., The Professions in America Today: Crucial but Fragile. Daedalus, Summer 2005. (pp. 13-14).
- Gilbert, D. (1998). *The American Class Structure: In an Age of Growing Inequality*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Press.
- Gillies, J. & Alvarado, F. (2012). Country Systems Strengthening: Beyond Human and Organizational Capacity Development Background Paper for the USAID Experience Summit on Strengthening Country Systems. Vitruvian Consulting November 2012 for U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Knowledge-Driven Microenterprise Development.
- Gong Z. & Liu C. (2005). Promoting Human Capacity Building in an Era of Knowledge-based Economy through Tripartite Cooperation. www.apec.org/au/.../svi-ic-paper.pdf.
- Gunckel, K. L., & S. Tolbert. (2018). The Imperative to Move Toward a Dimension of Care in Engineering Education. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 55: 938–961.
- Harding, Trevor S., Carpenter, D. D., Finelli, C. J. & Passow, H. J. (2004). The Influence of Academic Dishonesty on Ethical Decision Making in the Workplace: A Study of Engineering Students. *ASEE 2004*.
- Harvey, L.; Mason, S.; & Ward, R. (1995). *Role of Professional Bodies in Higher Education Quality Monitoring*. Birmingham: Quality in Higher Education Project. ISBN 1-85920-108-3.
- Hindin, M. J. (2007). "Role Theory" in George Ritzer (ed.) *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, Blackwell Publisher, 2007.
- Larson, M. S. (1977). *The Rise of Professionalism*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lopopolo, R. B., Schafer, D. S. & Nosse, L. J. (2004). Leadership, Administration, Management and Professionalism (LAMP) in Physical Therapy: Delphi Study, Feb; 84 (2):137-50.
- MacDonald, K. M. (1995). *The Sociology of the Professions*. London: Sage Publications.
- McCarthy, E. D. (1996). *Knowledge as Culture: The New Sociology of Knowledge*. Rutledge. London:
- Mezza, A. (2022). Reinforcing and Innovating Teacher Professionalism: Learning from Other Professions. OECD Education Working Paper No. 276 Directorate for Education and Skills. [https://one.oecd.org/document/EDU/WKP\(2022\)14/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/EDU/WKP(2022)14/en/pdf)
- Michener, H. A. & John D. D.. (1999). *Social Psychology*. Harcourt Brace College Publishers. ISBN 0534583210.
- Mizell, H. (2010). Why Professional Development Matters. Learning Forward, Oxford. www.learningforward.org.
- Myin, tH. & Kruger A. O (2009). *Economic Development*. Encyclopedia Bratanica.
- National Academy of Engineering. (2020) *Engineering a response to the COVID-19 pandemic*. <https://www.nationalacademies.org/news/2020/09/engineering-a-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic>.

- National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (various years). National Accounts Statistics of Nigeria. Abuja: National Bureau of Statistics.
- Nguyen, L. M., Poleacovschi, C., Faust, K.M. *et al.* (2023) COVID-19 pandemic reveals challenges in engineering ethics education. *International Journal of Ethics Education* 8, 99–127 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40889-022-00156-4>.
- Odia, L. O. (2013) .The Nigerian Educational System and Its Implications for National Development. *Nigerian Journal of Policy and Strategy*. NIPSS, Jos. 18 (2): 80-107.
- Odia, L. O. (2022). Sociology and Entrepreneurship Nexus. *International Journal of Social Sciences (IJSS)* 12 (3): 1-13 2022 DOI: 10.30495/IJSS.2022.20661
- Olaoye, R. A. (2013). Professionalism, Entrepreneurship and National Development. Osun Defender. Wednesday, Oct. 23.
- Omoruyi, I. O. (2019). Advancing the Law as an Instrument of Human Development and Human Protection: Municipal and International Perspective. 215th Inaugural Lecture, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria. 23rd May, 2019.
- Professional – Definition and More from the Free Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Merriam-webster.com (2010-08-13). Retrieved on 2011-01-29.
- Professional/Define Professional at Dictionary.com. Dictionary.reference.com. Retrieved on 2011-01-29.
- Punch (2023). Nigerian Educators Face Challenges in Professional Development – TRCN
10 august 2023 <https://punchng.com/nigerian-educators-face-challenges-in-professional-development-trcn/>
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Shinn, D. H. (2002). Reversing the Brain Drain In Ethiopia. A paper Delivered to the Ethiopian North American Health Professionals Association On November 23, 2002 In Alexandria, Virginia.
- Silverman, D. (2020). *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (6th ed.). Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Sage Publication.
- Sullivan, W. M. (2nd ed. 2005). *Work and Integrity: The Crisis and Promise of Professionalism in America*. Jossey Bass.
- Teuku, Z, Emawati, E, Syarifah, D., Saiful, A. & Didin, N. H. (2022). Prospects and Challenges towards Professional Development of English Lecturers in Islamic Tertiary Education in Indonesia. *World Journal of Education*, 12 (4):21-34.
- Ubels, J, Naa-Aku, A., & Alan, F. (eds) (2010). *Capacity Development in Practice*: Earthscan.
- Wang, Y. (2017). Analysis of the Ethical Responsibility of Engineers. *HSMET Conference 2017*.
- Wilson, P. (1983). *Second-hand knowledge: an inquiry into cognitive authority*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.
- Winter, M. F. (1988). *The culture and Control of Expertise: Towards a Sociological Understanding of Librarianship*. Greenwood, Conn.: Westport.
- Zhang, X., Admiraal, W., & Saab, N. (2021). Teachers' Motivation to Participate in Continuous professional Development: Relationship with Factors at the Personal and School Level. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 47(5), 714-731. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2021.1942804>