

**RAISING STUDENT TEACHERS' AWARENESS AROUND  
ISSUES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:  
AN ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The teaching profession, like many other professions, has rules and regulations that guide the conduct of its members. Teachers and those who aspire to take up teaching are expected to conduct themselves and discharge their duties in an impeccably professional manner. However, there is concern especially among education authorities regarding unprofessional conduct of some of those employed in schools and colleges. This action research study is a response to this concern. Its goal was to explore issues of professional conduct as part of the induction process of new members entering the teaching profession, and to thereby develop a better understanding of how best to raise student teachers' awareness around professional conduct issues.

The study used a qualitative research framework located in the interpretive paradigm. Three theoretical frameworks informed the design and subsequent analysis of the findings, namely, Burn's transformational leadership, Mezirow's transformative learning and Kolb's theory of experiential learning.

Two cycles of workshops around issues of professional conduct were conducted over a period of four weeks with a sample of 40 pre-service student teachers: final year students enrolled in the college's three year Diploma in Education programme, all members of a science education class. Data collection strategies used were semi-structured interviews, observation and the use of reflective journals, among others.

Analysis of the data involved identification of emerging themes and patterns. Initial findings indicate that prior to the commencement of the cycles of action research, participants appeared to have a limited understanding around issues of professional conduct, but that this changed as they participated in the workshops. The data of the study suggest that further steps need to be taken to establish optimal ways of incorporating professional conduct issues into the college's teaching curriculum.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, the late Poster Mulenga Chau, who inspired me by his love for knowledge. His encouragement and belief in my efforts to succeed has continued to motivate me and has partly made me go this far in my education.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study reports on a piece of action research (AR) which I conducted with a group of third-year student teachers at Mufulira College of Education in Zambia. The purpose of the study was to explore ways of raising student teachers' awareness around issues of teachers' professional conduct, and in so doing to develop my own professional capacities with regard to my ongoing teaching of this topic. The idea of embarking on this piece of AR came about because of my experiences as a college lecturer. Student teachers are often reminded by college authorities that by virtue of the profession they have chosen, society expects them to behave in certain (appropriate) ways because they are on their way to becoming influential figures in the lives of the literally hundreds of young pupils in the schools they would in due course be teaching.

#### **1.2 THE ISSUE OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The idea of teachers' professional conduct has received growing attention in educational discourse. Stakeholders in education (especially school authorities) expect that teachers will execute their duties efficiently and uphold their professional conduct both on and off duty (Tirri, 1999; Fallona, 2000; Code of Ethics for Public Workers, 2008). Teachers have been challenged to view their professional obligations with renewed ethical determination. This is because the type of society created will largely be determined by individuals coming out of these schools (Sidhu, 1996). Children spend a great part of their lives in a school and it is here that positive behaviour is inculcated. Teachers have a responsibility to model the kinds of skills, attitudes and behaviour hoped for of young people (Van't Westende, 1998; Van Niekerk, 2000).

*Zambia's Terms and conditions of service for public service* (Zambia, Cabinet Office, 2003) has a clear message regarding teachers' ethical conduct. It states that "[the] public service must be beyond reproach. It is therefore the duty of every officer to maintain the highest standard of conduct, efficiency and personal behaviour. Any departure from these standards shall constitute

misconduct” (p. 22). This state of affairs therefore calls upon teachers to be professional in respect of behaviour so that they transmit acceptable values and norms to their pupils.

There is concern not only in Zambia but worldwide that this code of ethics is not always adhered to. Often, what is expressed above does not happen in schools; not every teacher is a model of professional conduct. Some teachers abuse their positions. Their professional conduct falls short of these ideals: they are anti-role models who behave so badly they constitute models of what not to be or do, and some of their behaviour may be imitated by learners, not mature enough to differentiate between good and bad behaviour (Mangwato, 2007; Silverman, 2008; Kalonde, 2010). It is this realization that partly led me to take up the challenge as a teacher educator to explore ways of building awareness of professional ethics into my own students’ pre- service education.

### **1.3 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS**

The English short story writer and Nobel Prize-winning author Rudyard Kipling once noted that, “No printed word, nor spoken plea can teach young minds what they should be. Not all the books on all the shelves-but what the teachers are themselves” (cited in Rose, 2004, unpagged). A similar observation was made by Carr (2007), who claimed that teaching is an occupation in which professional competence is enhanced by the possession and exercise of personal qualities and practical dispositions that cannot solely be reduced to academic knowledge. Carr further commented that “indeed it is often observed that we remember teachers more for the kinds of persons that they were than for anything they may have taught us” (p. 369). Adding his voice to this, Osguthorpe (2009, p. 5) argued that there is a “close connection between the moral character of the teacher and the moral development of a student. [What is] engraved on or possessed by the teacher is directly connected to what is acquired by the student such that the teachers’ character traits “rub off” on -or are “picked up” - by the student”.

These authors’ views resonate with my own belief that a teacher is a leader whose actions and professional conduct leave permanent marks on the lives of pupils. Because educators are such important transmitters of values, I believe that student teachers’ understanding of what the

concept 'professional conduct' entails needs to be a central and explicit part of their professional development. As Cowley (1999) observed, teachers need to take care not to contradict themselves. Their words and actions should not show contradictions. While it is true to say that in some schools (Copperbelt Province schools in Zambia, for instance) there are programmes tailored to the promotion of professionalism amongst teachers (Zambia, CHANGES 2, 2007), I perceive a need for continuous sensitization amongst providers of education. I designed the present AR as a platform for reflecting on how I could most effectively get student teachers in their final year of study to engage deeply with the issue of teacher professionalism and its implications for their own practice once they leave college and are posted to schools across the country and beyond.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH GOALS AND QUESTIONS**

This study has two key goals: To explore ways of enhancing student teachers' awareness of the importance of professional conduct in their dealing with pupils and to provide myself with opportunities to develop my own professional insights in relation to my role as a teacher educator.

I knew before embarking on this research that there are various education courses offered to the student teachers at our college, such as Theory and Practice of Education, where issues of professional conduct are discussed. The students therefore already had some initial ideas and awareness of the expectations society has of its teachers, but I thought it important to enhance this awareness so that students began living the life of a teacher more actively on campus even before graduating.

Regarding the second of my goals, I saw this AR as research to promote and enhance professional conduct, just as much for myself as for my student teachers. To me, learning is an ongoing or continuous process (Mwamwenda, 1989). Through the cycles of AR done through and with my student teachers, I had the opportunity to increase my own understanding around

issues relating to teachers' professional conduct. A "teacher educator is always also a teacher" (Timmerman, 2009, p. 230), and always a learner also.

Two research questions guided this action research:

- What are my student teachers' current perceptions around the idea of professional conduct?
- In what ways might these initial perceptions be influenced by subsequent participation in workshops specifically focusing on issues of teachers' professional conduct?

### **1.5 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE ACTION RESEARCH STUDY**

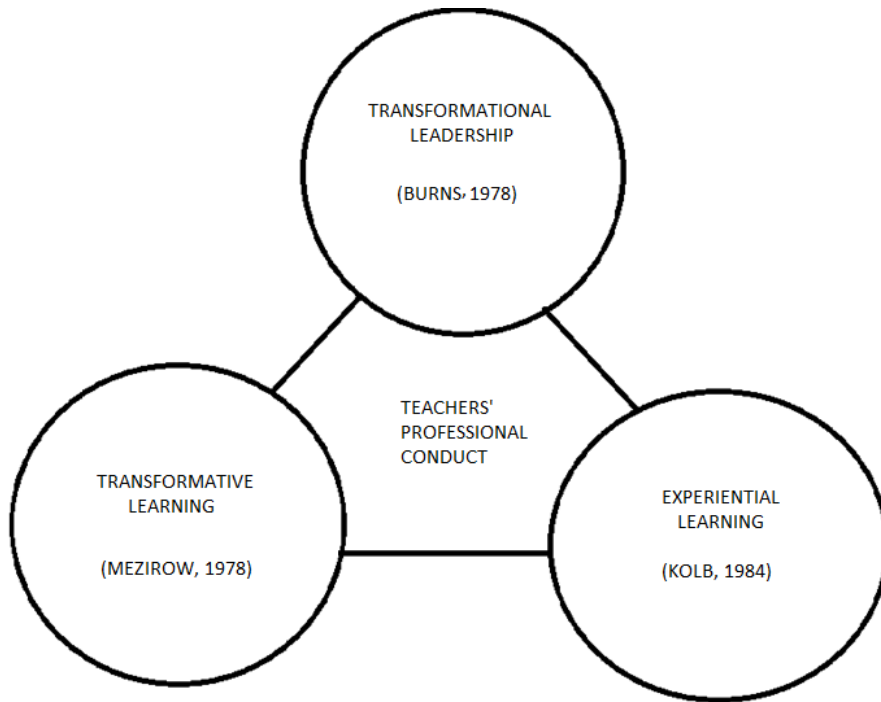
I designed and conducted a series of workshops involving my student teachers in which we explored issues related to teachers' professional conduct. My objective was that through the workshops my student teachers would achieve a deepened understanding of the importance of teachers' professional conduct, and that this in turn would influence their own potential to become positive role models for their own pupils. I also expected that, from the research, I myself would have learned how I might contribute towards raising awareness of the importance of professional conduct issues among student teachers in the college.

### **1.6 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK INFORMING THIS ACTION RESEARCH STUDY**

In Chapter Two I expand on the theoretical underpinnings used in my study. For the purposes, however, of this introductory chapter, I want briefly to introduce the three key theoretical models that informed the design of the intervention.

Firstly, I have taken on board some ideas from transformational leadership theory and used these as a lens through which to see, understand, and explain the importance of teachers' professional conduct. Wickers et al. (1994, p. 102) defined leadership as "the process by which the behaviour of an individual or group is influenced with a view to achieving a goal in a particular situation." This study is based on the view that teachers are leaders; leaders who are expected to be role models to their pupils through their conduct.

Secondly, I have incorporated two other theories, again as lenses through which to explore views on influencing aspects of the professional development of pre-service teachers. Both are linked to the notion of *learning* through AR: firstly, Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning, and secondly, Kolb’s theory of experiential learning. I try to illustrate my use of these three “lenses” in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1: Theories informing teachers’ professional conduct workshops.**

When I embarked on this AR, I understood that changing behaviour and attitudes among my student teachers might not be easy. Indeed, during the course of this research some of the participating students commented that the research we had engaged in, though important, might not yield the desired results. (I report on this in Chapter 4.) My intention, however, was to operate my workshops in the spirit of transformational leadership. I was aware of the possibility that in trying to achieve certain goals a transformational leader needed to accept that there might be setbacks along the way. However, “it is their unswerving commitment as much as anything

else that keeps people going particularly through the darker times when some may question whether the vision can ever be achieved” (Changing Minds, 2002, unpagged).

## **1.7 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS**

The thesis is divided into five chapters. In this first chapter I have discussed the focus for this piece of AR and identified the three theories (transformational leadership, transformative learning and experiential learning) used in an attempt to ground my study. I have also explained why the issue of teachers’ professional conduct ought to be regarded as worth researching.

In Chapter Two, the literature review chapter I enter into the academic conversation surrounding the issue of teachers’ professional conduct. I engage directly with original sources (where possible) in trying to see how these sources would give direction to my research into issues relating to teachers’ professional conduct. The review of literature is an ongoing process: in later chapters I revisit what other scholars have written.

In the third chapter I explain the methodology used in the research and identify the research techniques employed to collect data for the study. These include workshops, interviews, questionnaires, and journal writing (by both myself and my student teachers). Justification for the selection of procedures is provided, as is a discussion of some of the limitations of the chosen methods.

In the fourth chapter I present the data collected from the cycles of AR, and start on my analysis of the findings, and in the fifth and final chapter I highlight and discuss key findings from the research and link this back to some of the literature discussed in Chapter Two. I follow this with a reflection on some possibilities for future research, and on what I see as some of the strengths and weaknesses of my conduct of this particular piece of research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a review of literature relevant to issues of teachers' professional conduct. Its purpose is to highlight what other researchers have written on the subject as a prelude to my own investigations.

#### **2.2 THE ISSUE OF TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

The literature abounds with references to the importance that teachers behave in professionally acceptable ways, not only because this is intrinsically important, but also because teachers are role models whose examples may be emulated by their pupils (David, 1990; Lockwood, 1993; Thomas, 2008; Hussain, et. al., 2011; Olatunbosun & Omoregie, 2012). In this section, I refer to just a small cross-section of the literature around the issue of teachers' professional conduct.

Early in the last century, the eminent educational philosopher John Dewey observed that the business of a "teacher...is to see to it that the greatest possible number of ideas acquired by children and youth are acquired in such a vital way that they become... motive-forces in the guidance of conduct (Dewey, 1909, p.7). Dewey believed that all teachers should be role models to their pupils. Almost ninety years later, Banner and Cannon (1997) observed that "students are always inclined to emulate the behaviour and attitudes of those who they see as models" (p. 39). This is especially so if those people are the ones they spend the most time with, for teaching is not simply about explaining subject matter to pupils. A teacher's professional conduct is also an important part of any teaching act.

Banner and Cannon (1997) emphasized that in some cases teachers are the only models of good behaviour and thought for their pupils. Because of this, they "must therefore exemplify mature

behaviour – actions, as always, speak louder than words – and thus avoid the moral arrogance and self-righteousness that often seems to come from teaching good behaviour directly” (1997, p. 40). For Banner and Cannon, ethical teaching involves “setting high standards and expectations and inspiring students to meet them” (1997, p. 39). These views have attracted considerable attention in contemporary professional literature.

Niece (2010) noted that teachers are public ambassadors for society. As such they are constantly under the microscope and therefore must represent themselves and the teaching profession responsibly wherever they are. His views were that teachers’ work does not only represent them in their individual capacities: they are also public figures whose actions affect the lives of other people, especially their own pupils. Chiou and Yang (2006) and Zeucher (1995, in Russell & Korthagen, 1995) expressed similar sentiments, pointing out that since a teacher’s work involves contact with pupils coming from communities who may have values that they cherish, teachers have a moral obligation to try and teach their pupils in a way that contributes to a situation where those pupils could potentially live more fully the values of their communities. Along similar lines, Fenstermacher (cited in Fallona, 2000) noted that “what makes teaching a moral endeavor (is) that it is quite centrally human action undertaken in regard to other human beings, thus the matters of what is fair, right, just and virtuous are always present. The teachers’ conduct at all times and in all ways is a moral matter” (p. 68). Luckowski et al. (cited by Sileo et al., 2008) observed that teachers transmit values not only through formal instruction but also through modeling ethical behaviour and, as such, ought to be agents of social change and examples of good behaviour. Teachers have the power in all they say and do to significantly affect their students’ moral development.

Canadian-born social psychologist, Professor Albert Bandura, performed various experiments in social learning from which he deduced that in everyday life people learn by observing what other people are doing. In an educational context, pupils learn from their teachers who are important models to them (cited by Chiou & Yang, 2006). According to Bandura, if teachers become good role models in their behaviour, moral standards, professional knowledge, values and beliefs,

these would not only be imitated by their pupils but internalized as well (cited by Chiou & Yang, 2006).

Thornberg (2008) noted that value education happens, in most cases, without teachers thinking a lot about it. Small things such as teaching pupils to be kind to others and following school rules are what make teachers professional, more especially if they live by what they say. Another writer who added his voice to the view that teachers should uphold professional conduct was Osguthorpe (2009). He argued that everything teachers are involved in in the classroom carries with it a moral element, and profoundly impacts on the moral development of their students. Osguthorpe highlights some examples of expression of moral character such as “conveying respect by dressing appropriately and professionally showing kindness by greeting students at the door, exhibiting justice by grading with fairness and equality, displaying care by spending personal time with students” (2009, p. 5). Teaching is not necessarily about what the teacher tells the pupils that has impact; it is also about how they carry themselves in their day-to-day lives (Cowley, 1999). So, for example, teachers should avoid saying one thing and doing the opposite (Cowley, 1999). Toch and Rothman (2008) argued that teachers should know that pupils will respect or not respect them depending on how they carry themselves ‘in front of’ their pupils. These writers even go so far as to imply that the teacher’s professional conduct is more important, and goes beyond the academic results that a teacher produces in a school. Along similar lines, Beijaard et al. (2004, p.107) argued that “being a teacher... is a matter of redefining an identity that is socially legitimated”. They further claimed that being a teacher is not simply a matter of how teachers see themselves as teachers, but also how others see them.

Garbarino and Quart (in Narvaez & Lapsley, 2006) observed that, in the present cultural milieu where the young are reared in what they termed a “toxic environment” (which poses special challenges for their moral, cultural and social development); teachers need to offer a counterweight to such environments. Teachers, they claimed, should build a caring classroom community modeling respectful behaviour, in warm, accepting and supportive environments. Teachers are expected to be prepared to carry out their mission responsibly in every task they

have to accomplish. In cases where they might not have acted responsibly, teachers should think about their actions and omissions, and the impact these might have on their pupils (Fritz & Wolfgang, 1993). Sidhu (1996) identified such things as “drinking, smoking, gambling, using abusive language or indecent language, wearing dirty or shabby clothes, making unauthorized collection from students, extracting gifts from them, fighting colleagues...” (p. 154) as examples of inappropriate behaviours by teachers.

More recently, Attawel and Elder (2006), writing on behalf of UNESCO, commented on teachers’ professional conduct in relation to the scourge of HIV & AIDS. They observed that the way teachers behave in their relationships with pupils can have either a positive or a negative impact on pupils. Teachers can be role models, mentors and protectors of learners but their behaviour will undermine HIV & AIDS education if they do not set a proper example. Attawel and Elder (2006) noted that teachers who engage in improper professional conduct by, for example, having sexual relationships with pupils, have no credibility when teaching about HIV & AIDS: their actions send a different message. A similar view came from Knoll (2010). Commenting on teachers who abuse pupils’ trust through their sexual misconduct, he noted that violation of professional boundaries has serious and long terms effects on the students. Such observations are in line with Skinner and Belmont’s study investigating the relation between teacher behaviour and children’s level of active engagement in the classroom (1993), the findings of which showed that teachers’ involvement with individual pupils had the most powerful impact on children’s perception of the teacher. One thing that came out strongly was that children’s engagement in learning activities is influenced by the way pupils perceive their teacher and also by the teacher’s actual behaviour. In other words the behaviour of a teacher cannot be separated from pupils’ learning. Timperley et al. (2008) similarly identified a clear link between teaching and learning, observing that the nature of teacher-student relationships is strongly influenced by what teachers do in their classrooms, and has significant effects upon the quality of students’ learning.

The literature in this section supports Carr's (2007) notion that pupils are more likely to remember teachers for the kind of persons they were, than for anything they may have taught them. Given this, it becomes clear that the issue of teachers' professional conduct needs to be an explicit part of teacher education programmes.

### **2.3 INCORPORATING PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT ISSUES IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

Zhonggong (2006), writing for the General Office of the Chinese Communist Party and the General Office of the State Council, echoed what many educationists and academicians already referred to in this chapter have alluded to. He cited the conversation of Comrade Jian Zemin (2000), on issues of education, and his speech at the party's Central Committee, where he emphasized strengthening and improving primary and secondary schools' moral education in China. While acknowledging that most Chinese teachers love their work and have made great efforts to teach and cultivate good conduct in their pupils, primary and secondary school education has still not adapted itself fully to moral and professional education. Zhonggong (2006), contended that "there is a substantial gap between some teachers' ideological and morality quality and the requirements of teaching, nurturing and setting good examples for students, and teachers' occupational morality needs to be strengthened" (p. 46). Teachers, according to him, need to be guided towards a greater awareness of the importance of professional conduct.

Sileo et al. (2008), commenting on education in relation to general ethical issues, raised important issues on teacher education vis-à-vis professional conduct. These writers claimed that teacher education should be looked at in terms of preparing individuals who would understand the moral intricacies associated with their roles as well as individuals who would appreciate the significance of their actions and reflect upon ethical practices and decisions in their professional behaviour. Sileo et al. (2008) further observed that, in preparing students for the teaching profession, there should be promotion of moral sensitivity, and teachers should be encouraged to recognize that their actions may be powerful forces in the lives of learners. They emphasized that

such awareness and comprehension of moral and professional issues and standards of practice helps teachers avoid unethical temptations and work to develop the necessary fortitude to act in all of their pupils' best interests.

For Timmerman (2009) the best teachers are those who combine the knowledge of content with a human knowledge of the students under their care. Timmerman studied the impact of school teacher role models as part of the socialization process of becoming a teacher. Her study revealed that the process of teaching is a long-term socialization process and that "transmission of knowledge should be combined with personal touch" (p. 235) which would provide role modeling to students. Similar views were advanced by Bin Chiou and Pat Shein (2011). For them role modeling is an important factor in learning to teach. They observed that professional conduct could not be separated from classroom learning.

Other views on teachers' professional conduct came from Al-Dajeh (2012). Writing about education in Jordan, he observed that a teacher's quality is the most influential element in students' learning. In a study intended to estimate the level of acquisition of Jordanian national professional standards by vocational and secondary teachers, Al-Dajeh saw professional acquisition by teachers as important. The recommendation in his study urged the Ministry of Education to adopt national professional standards as a base for planning and developing pre-service programmes. Al-Dajeh (2012) therefore sees teacher's professional conduct as something that should be encouraged in education.

Koster et al. (2008), writing about professional development of teacher educators, noted the importance of maintaining professional standards in teaching. He observed that in teaching, teachers are expected to observe professional rules laid out for them. Related to this, McCormack et al. (2006) observed that "becoming a teacher requires not only the development of a professional identity but the construction of professional knowledge and practice through continued professional learning" (p. 95). The above ideas were shared by Tschannen-Moran (2009), who observed that teachers go through some kind of socialization into norms of the

teaching profession. As this happens, their beliefs, attitudes and actions are expected to change so that they have a strong sense of being accountable to their teaching mission, which requires dedicated service to their students. Tschannen-Moran saw professional conduct as having great impact on students.

Other scholars who commented on the need for teachers to conduct themselves professionally were Fraser et.al (1993). Citing Duminy and Sohng (1987) they described the school as an autonomous institution designed to supply what they termed “systematic educative teaching and learning under the guidance of academically and professionally trained teachers” (p.13). Fraser et al. (1993) believed that the teacher’s role is to instil norms and ideals in the students, and that this is done so that the students grow to be responsible members of the community in the future. They felt that to carry out these tasks teachers must give positive examples to their students.

It is clear from the literature discussed in this section that raising awareness of professional conduct needs to be part of teacher educational programmes. I now turn to a discussion of the three theories I used to shape this action research study which, as noted in Chapter 1, aimed at experimenting with how best to incorporate exploration of the issue of teachers’ professional conduct into the design of my own teacher education offerings.

## **2.4 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP THEORY**

Transformational leadership is a theory which is value based and driven. Its main purpose is to try to transform people to higher levels of commitment and to bring about fundamental change (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Van der Mescht, 2011). This being the case, therefore, transformational leadership occurs when leaders and their followers raise one another towards achieving higher aims. Transformation leaders stimulate and inspire their followers into doing more than they originally intended, and even more than they thought possible (Bass & Riggio, 2008). They accomplish this by raising people’s level of awareness and consciousness about the importance of designated outcomes and ways of reacting to those outcomes (Miner, 2005).

Transformational leadership theory was developed in the 1970s when behavioural theories of leadership effectiveness were dominant (Yukl, 1999). Yukl identified a number of versions of transformational leadership. He noted that the original idea of 'transformational leadership' came, however, via the work of the historian and political scientist, Professor James MacGregor Burns.

Though Burns is often credited with developing this theory, according to Miner (2005), most of the work was actually done by Bernard Bass. Bass's early ideas were apparently prompted by the work of Maximilian Karl Emil Weber. Weber was a German sociologist and philosopher who had a lot of influence on social research which inspired many people in his time and in later years. Bass was then subsequently inspired by Burns' book, *Leadership* (published in 1978). Bass advanced an extended theory of transformational leadership (Miner, 2005). He began the development of this theory by trying to apply the ideas he had gained through studying transformation leadership at mass level to the small group situation. He did this by piloting a study where - unlike many studies conducted either in America or in European countries - he used African experience, inviting South African executives to describe transformational leaders they had known (Miner, 2005).

Transformational leaders recognize individual needs and help followers, on an individual basis, providing support and intellectual challenge. Followers are also challenged to pay attention to their individual needs and personal development so that they develop their own leadership potential (Bass & Riggio, 2008). Transformational leaders are confidence builders who do not discourage their followers even when they see that a task is not progressing well. Their goal is to try to elevate their followers' goals and provide them with confidence to perform better. They set goals that they expect the group to achieve, as well as providing incentives for accomplished tasks. They also give feedback to their followers on how the group is performing (Dvir et al., 2002). By doing all these, transformational leaders boost the level of followers' satisfaction and commitment to the group, its goals and aspirations.

Bass and Riggio (2008) identified four components of transformational leadership theory, (also known as the Four “I”s) as follows:

- (i) **Idealized influence (II)**: This is when transformational leaders behave like role models for the group. Their followers respect, trust and admire them and are eager to emulate them. Followers look up to their leaders as people who are capable of leading them towards fulfilling their aspirations. Bass and Riggio argued that there are two aspects to idealized influence: the leaders’ behavior, and elements attributed to the leader by followers.
- (ii) **Inspirational motivation (IM)**: This component of transformational leadership theory focuses mainly on the leader’s behaviour towards the group. The leader behaves in a way that motivates and inspires the followers. There is emphasis on team spirit and on displaying enthusiasm and optimism. Leaders are also committed to group goals and urge followers to the shared vision as well<sup>1</sup>.
- (iii) **Intellectual stimulation (IS)**: influencing thinking and imagination of subordinates.
- (iv) **Individualized consideration (IC)**: communication and building of emotional commitment to vision.

To summarize, transformational leadership theory invites leaders to live the life of a role model, instilling values such as fairness, justice and honesty in their followers (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass, 1996), appealing to their followers’ higher needs, and inspiring and motivating them to move toward a particular purpose (Bensimon, et. al, as cited in *A world anew*, 1996).

#### **2.4.1 Transformational leadership theory ‘meets’ teachers’ professional conduct**

In relating this theory to teachers’ professional conduct, as Avolio and Bass (2004) highlight, teachers as transformational leaders influence pupils for better or worse (ideally the former) through their professional conduct, and through engaging their pupils (followers) in a mutual process of raising each other to higher levels. Through articulating a vision and goals they wish

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1. The first two components of transformational leadership alluded to above - idealized influence and inspirational motivation - usually form a combined single factor of **charismatic-inspirational leadership** (Avolio & Bass, 2004, cited by Bass & Riggio, 2008).

their followers to pursue, transformational leaders create trust, integrity and commitment characterized by high moral and ethical standards (Bass & Steidlmeier, 2006). This was a core ideal informing this AR study.

The extent to which teachers have a positive and long-lasting influence on their pupils largely depends on the trust, respect and loyalty the pupils accord them (Bass, 1985, cited by Purvanova, et al., 2006). This trust and admiration often comes when teachers' words and actions are not in conflict. Professional conduct requires that a teacher not only upholds moral and academic issues through words, but also through actions (Purvanova, et al. 2006). What these ideas meant for this study was that my personal integrity was a critical part of the package 'on sale' to the participating student teachers, a package which - depending on the effectiveness of the intervention I designed - the student teachers would, upon graduating from college, 'sell on' to their own pupils.

In my view, transformational leadership theory vis-à-vis teachers' professional conduct, fits well with the central tenets of the present study in so far as transformational leadership is most often associated with the four 'I's articulated by Bass: idealized influence (II), inspirational motivation (IM) intellectual stimulation (IS) and individualized consideration (IC) (Avolio & Bass, 2004), all of which should apply to the lives of teachers as professionals in executing their multiple teaching roles. So, for instance, inspirational motivation could involve a teacher in articulating to his/her pupils shared goals, as well as providing a vision of what is possible, how to attain such vision, as well as the necessary motivation and leadership (Avolio & Bass, 2004). As Hartsfield (2003) notes, however, a leader's personal efficacy (in this context, a teacher's personal efficacy) impacts on the way followers (in this context, pupils) perceive him or her. This links well to the idea that a teacher's professional conduct ought to involve leading by example.

### **2.4.2 Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership Theory**

In concluding my brief discussion on transformational leadership theory, I wish to state that this theory, like many others, has been subjected to critique by some scholars from a variety of positions (Gunter, 2001). Previously, leadership was viewed in terms of individual leadership capabilities. Modern views however favour collective leadership when it comes to making decisions, rather than all the powers being vested in an individual (Somech, 2005). There has been this shift mainly because in the contemporary world autocratic government leaderships are slowly being phased out in preference to more humane democratic governments. Gronn (1996, cited by Gunter 2001, p. 74) is one of the critics of transformational leadership theory, arguing that this theory was a “barren model of followership” because there was too much emphasis on the role of a leader where “leadership is seen as something performed by superior, better individuals rather than by groups, located in top positions and as something done to or for other inferior, lesser people” (p. 74). Gronn emphasized that leadership needs to be distributed to the group because, in a workplace, people’s roles interlock. This view was shared by Foster (1989, cited by Gunter, 2001, p. 74) who noted that “leadership is and must be socially critical, it does not reside in an individual but in the relationship between individuals and it is oriented toward social vision and change, not simply, or only, organizational change”.

There has also been argument that transformational leadership has not really been transformational in the real sense of the word (Gunter, 2001). This is so because the current shaping of transformational leadership supports existing power structures enabling these structures to be maintained and developed. According to Gunter, the “authentic transformational aspect has been stripped away and so it is less about social change and more about serving bureaucracy” (2001, p. 73).

These views may have some substance, but in this research I considered mainly the positive aspects of transformational leadership theory. I now move to the second theory I used to shape this AR study.

## **2.5 MEZIROW'S THEORY OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING**

Professor Jack Mezirow of Columbia University is credited with developing the theory of transformative learning. His theory emerged from a large qualitative study conducted on women returning to their college after an extended period of absence from a formal educational setting (Fleischer, 2006). Mezirow's research focused mainly on the changes in roles and self concepts that these women experienced as a result of participating in the college programmes and the processes that led to those changes (Fleischer, 2006). At the conclusion of the study, it was discovered that, as women became critically and emotionally aware of their personal, historical and environmental contexts, "their assumptions and frames of reference changed, resulting in what Mezirow called 'perspective transformations' " (Fleischer, 2006, p.148). According to Mezirow, such transformation of meaning empowered the women to respond to their life circumstances with a wider repertoire of possible actions (Mezirow, cited by Fleischer, 2006). Mezirow, therefore proposed a theory of transformative learning to explain how adult learners make sense or meaning of their experiences (Brookfield, cited in Tuinjmman, 1995).

In his theory, Mezirow defines "learning" as the process of using a prior interpretation to construct a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to future action and "reflection" as the process of turning our attention to the justification for what we know, feel, believe and act upon (Mezirow (1995 & 2000), cited by Erickson, 2007). He described transformative learning as the process of effecting some kind of change in a frame of reference. 'Frame of reference' means those "structures of assumptions and expectations that frame an individual's tacit points of view and influence their thinking, beliefs and actions" (Taylor, 2000, p. 5). These frames of reference are mainly a result of cultural assimilation and could be a result of influences from primary care givers (Mezirow, 2000). Mezirow argued that these frames of reference can be transformed through "critical reflections on the assumptions upon which our interpretations, beliefs and habits of mind or points of view are based" (Mezirow, 2000, p. 7). Mezirow argued that people become critically reflective of the assumptions they make when they learn to solve problems instrumentally or when they are

involved in communicative learning (Mezirow, 2000). For Mezirow, the driving force for critical reflection is what he considers the unquestionable human search for meaning. He, in fact, states that no need is more fundamentally human than our need to understand our experience (Mezirow, cited by Fleischer, 2006). His theory proposes that deep transformations of perspective occur only when learners are able to reflect critically on the underlying premises of their understandings (Fleischer, 2006). Mezirow (1997, cited in Sharan, 2004) differentiated among three types of reflection on experience:

- *content reflection*, the thinking about actual experience itself;
- *process reflection*, thinking about how to handle the experience; and
- *premise reflection* which involves examining “the long-held socially constructed assumptions or a problem” (p. 62).

According to Mezirow (1997) transformative learning is about effective change in a frame of reference. The emphasis is on creating an environment in which learners become accustomed to helping and learning from each other. The teacher is simply the facilitator of such learning.

Mezirow’s theory also claims that “even though all learning creates change, all change does not necessarily result in transformation. It is only when students engage directly with educational material, an engagement that is possible in practical application, that goals of transformative learning can be achieved” (Dass-Brailsford & Serrano, 2010, p. 269). In the next section I relate what I have done to Mezirow’s ideas in this piece of AR.

### **2.5.1 Mezirow’s theory ‘meets’ teachers’ professional conduct**

I regard Mezirow’s ideas as important to the goals of this research. They have helped me see that, for transformative learning to occur in the lives of my student teachers (most especially in terms of their own future role model status for their own pupils), they need opportunities to critically reflect and engage in discussions with their peers and others around the issue of teachers’ professional conduct, for, as Mezirow emphasized, if learners are to change their specific beliefs and attitudes, they need, first, to engage in critical reflections of their experiences (Mezirow, 1997, as cited by Imel, 1998).

My role as a researcher throughout this process was to foster transformative learning by assisting my student teachers become aware and critical of their own assumptions. The idea was to create a community of learners who would be united in the shared experience of trying to make meaning of their own experiences. Also, as Dass-Brailsford and Serrano (2010) observe, “educators who practice transformative learning encourage students to criticize assumptions, beliefs and values and consider multiple viewpoints” (pp. 269-285). They go on to state that “teachers who use transformative learning principles create a structural shift in students’ thoughts, feelings and actions that dramatically and irreversibly alters their interactions with others since social constructivism is the theoretical underpinning of transformative learning” (p. 272). In this process, I saw my role as a promoter of discovery learning through discussions which centered on students’ beliefs and feelings about teachers’ professional conduct. I am aware that one of the principles of AR is that it is not only about student teachers embracing issues of professional conduct but is also about a lecturer’s own reflection on his/her professional role. And, as Richert (1995, in Russell & Korthagen, 1995) observed, “What is true and also what is important about learning for teachers is also true for teachers who teach them” (p. 2). If teacher educators see themselves as learners, and model for their students a reflective disposition towards their practice, it is more likely that students themselves will endeavor to do the same. Important here is that, to facilitate transformative learning, educators need to help learners become critically aware of their own and others’ assumptions

### **2.5.2 Weaknesses of Mezirow’s theory**

Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning has not been received favourably by all who have reflected on it. Some aspects have been criticized. One aspect that has been subjected to criticism is when Mezirow claimed that transformative learning should focus on an individual and that adult learning should make learners increasingly capable of self scrutiny in thinking. Some scholars feel that the theory overemphasizes self development while paying lip service to social change (Servage, 2008, p. 67). The theory is seen as self-indulgent, offering little social improvement. Scholars who hold this view emphasize social and more effective dynamics of

transformative learning which would include the role of transformative educators and the impact of broader social considerations (Clark & Wilson, 1991, cited in Servage, 2008).

Although I respect these divergent views, my emphasis in this research is more on the positive aspects of Mezirow's theory. In the following section I discuss the third, and final, theory shaping this AR study: Kolb's theory of experiential learning.

## **2.6 KOLB'S THEORY OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING**

Kolb's theory of experiential learning defines learning as a "process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Kolb (1984) built his theory on the ideas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century scholars Dewey (1909), Lewin, and Piaget. This theory is called experiential first of all, to tie it to its intellectual origins of the ideas of these three scholars: "Dewey's philosophical pragmatism, Lewin's social psychology and Piaget's cognitive developmental genetic epistemology form a unique perspective on learning and development" (Kolb, Boyatzis & Mainemelis, 1999, p. 41). The theory is also called experiential to emphasize the central role of experience in the learning process. Kolb's view was that people learn and create knowledge by critically reflecting upon their own actions and experiences, encouraging them to form concepts and to test the implications of these concepts in new situations (Riding, Fowell & Levy, 1995). This implies that practitioners (student teachers in my situation) can create their own knowledge through understanding and acting in a situation, and that this might lead to improvements in their own practice as well as advances knowledge (Riding, Fowell & Levy, 1995; Kolb, 1984, cited by Healey & Jenkins, 2000; Baumann & Duffy-Hester cited in Grabe & Stoller, 2002). According to Knutson (2003, citing Rodgers, 1969), experiential learning "has a quality of personal involvement-the whole person in both his feeling and cognitive aspects being in the learning event. It is self initiated. Even when the impetus or stimulus comes from the outside, the sense of discovery, of reaching out, of grasping and comprehending, comes from within. It is pervasive. It makes a difference in the behavior, the attitudes, perhaps even the personality of the learner" (p. 54). Knutson also claimed that in

practice, experience, project- and task-based learning processes become experiential when “some elements of reflection, support and transfer are added to the basic experience, transforming a simple activity into an opportunity for learning” (p. 54).

### **2.6.1 Six propositions of experiential learning**

According to Kolb and Kolb (2005), the theory of experiential learning is built on six propositions. These are:

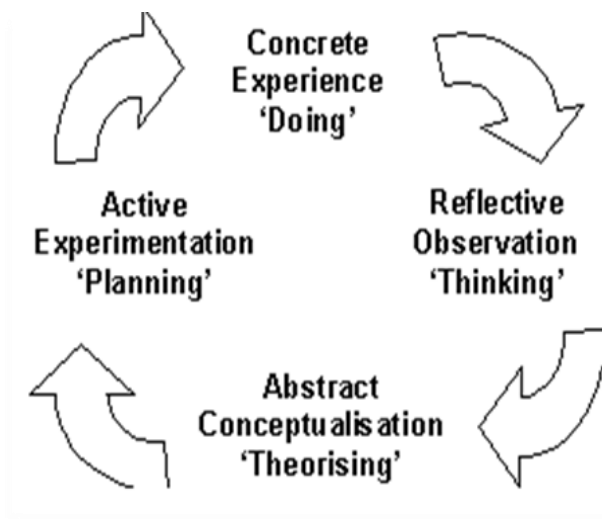
1. Learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes. This means that the primary focus in improving learning should be in engaging students in the process that best enhances their learning. This process should also include feedback on the effectiveness of their learning efforts.
2. All learning is re-learning. This means that learning is best facilitated by a process that draws out a learner’s ideas and beliefs so that these can be examined and tested and, if need be, integrated with new, refined ideas. The fact that learning is a continuous process grounded in experience has an important educational implication.
3. Learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world, meaning that conflicts, disagreements and differences are what drive the learning process. Learners are called upon to move back and forth in the learning process between modes of reflection, action, feeling and thinking.
4. Learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world. This means that, in the learning process, there should be holistic integration of a person in terms of thinking, feeling and behaviour.
5. Learning results from synergetic transactions between the person and the environment. The environment in which we live and work shapes not only our lives but learning as well.
6. Learning is the process of creating knowledge. This means that social knowledge is created and also recreated in the personal knowledge of a learner (p. 194).

### 2.6.2 Kolb's four stage model

Kolb's four stage model is a description of a learning cycle which shows how experience is translated through a learner's reflection into concepts which, in turn, are used as guides for active experimentation and the choice of new experiences (Kohonen, 1992; Healey & Jenkins, 2000; Kolb, 1984). The four stages are:

- **Concrete Experience** (CE) where learners are expected to involve themselves fully and openly in their new personal experiences. There is an emphasis on feeling over thinking.
- **Reflective Observation** (RO) which is concerned with understanding the meanings of ideas by careful observation and being concerned with how things happen. In other words, it involves the ability to observe experiences from many perspectives and relying on one's thoughts, feelings and judgments.
- **Abstract Conceptualization** (AC) which involves "using logic and a systematic approach to problem solving with emphasis on thinking, manipulation of abstract symbols and a tendency to neat and precise conceptual systems" (Kohonen,1992, unpagged). Here, the learner is being presented with, or trying to conceptualize, a theory or model of what is to be observed.
- **Active Experimentation** (AE), the stage where there is emphasis on practical applications and making sure that things are done. It involves influencing people, changing situations and taking risks in order to accomplish things (Kolb, 1984). Here, the learner is trying to plan how to test a model or theory or plan.

These four stages of learning follow each other in a cycle. The cycle can be entered at any point, but the stages must be followed in sequence.



**Figure 2: Kolb's four stage model of experiential learning** (Retrieved April 16, 2011, from [www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/idc/resources/evaluation/tools/action](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/idc/resources/evaluation/tools/action))

A further important idea seen in Kolb's learning cycle worth noting here is his suggestion that students develop a preference for learning in a particular way. He claims that the preferred style reflects a tendency rather than an absolute. Students may adopt different learning styles in different situations, but they tend to favour some learning behaviours in preference to others. Based on this, Kolb (1984) identified four learning styles, each of which he claimed is associated with a different way of solving problems: divergers, assimilators, convergers and accommodators (Healey & Jenkins, 2000).

Divergers rely heavily on brainstorming and general ideas. Situations in this style are seen from many perspectives. Assimilators use inductive reasoning and are able to create theoretical models. Convergers rely on hypothetical reasoning, while accommodators carry out plans and experiments and adapt to immediate circumstances (Healey & Jenkins, 2000).

Kolb (1984) claimed that learners would learn better when the subject matter is presented in a style associated with their preferred learning style. Later, in 1976, Kolb produced what he termed

a learning style inventory (LSI) that enabled the identification of the student's preferred learning style.

Kolb's ideas informed my own research, most especially his AR cycles.

### **2.6.3 Weaknesses of Kolb's theory**

Kolb's theory too has attracted some criticism. One critic was Rogers (1996, cited in Kelly, 1997), who was concerned with Kolb's learning cycle. His concern was about goals, purposes, intentions and decision-making, which are all part of the learning process. Rogers did not see how these could fit into Kolb's learning cycle.

Interestingly, Kolb himself also saw some limitations in his theory. He pointed out that his inventory did not rate learning style preferences through standards or behaviour, but only gave relative strengths within the individual learner not in relation to others (Kelly, 1997). The theory is also limited in that the experiential learning model does not apply to all situations, in that people differ in their learning type over time and in different situations. Different approaches maybe needed even by the same person in different situations.

## **2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The authors and scholars who have written on the issue of teachers' professional conduct cannot be exhaustively covered in this research considering the limited time I have to complete it. However, it is clear from the literature alluded to in this chapter that teaching is not only about explaining the subject matter to the pupils but also about the behaviour of a teacher. In the next chapter I discuss the methodology used to carry out this AR study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of methods used in carrying out the research, as well as a description of the research site and of the overall design of the study. I briefly discuss how I approached the analysis of the data, and reflect also on ethical issues, issues of validity and some of the limitations of my study.

#### 3.2 RESEARCH SITE

The research was conducted at Mufulira College of Education, my place of work in Zambia<sup>2</sup>. It involved running a series of workshops with a selected group of third-year pre-service student teachers. In order, however, to gather some authentic materials for use in one of these workshops, I also collected questionnaire data from a class of Grade 12 pupils attending a local school regarding their perceptions on aspects of their teachers' professional conduct. I have withheld the name of the high school for ethical reasons. I had permission from relevant authorities of both the college and the local school to carry out this study. I also had the consent of student teachers to participate in the study (See Appendix 5). I discuss the ethical protocol in more detail in Section 3.10.

#### 3.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

As noted in the introductory chapter, this AR study sought to explore ways of enhancing student teachers' awareness of the importance of professional conduct in their dealing with pupils, as well as provide me with opportunities to develop my own professional insights in relation to my role as a teacher educator. To help me focus on these research objectives, I developed the following pair of research questions:

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2. I understand that researching one's site comes with a lot of ethical issues but this was a convenience sample. AR is usually carried out in a practitioner's work place (McNiff, 2002) The college was aware, indeed interested in this research and expressed no objection to my directly naming it here in my thesis write-up.

- (a) What are my student teachers' current perceptions around the idea of professional conduct?
- (b) In what ways might these initial perceptions be influenced by subsequent participation in workshops focusing on issues of teachers' professional conduct?

### **3.4 METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION**

This research is aligned with an interpretive (qualitative) paradigm. Qualitative research can involve a variety of methods, and data are most often presented in non-numerical ways, concentrating on a study of human behaviour and social life in natural settings (Punch, 2000; Punch, 2009; Best & Kahn, 2008). Although many qualitative researchers use statistical measures, as a way of locating a group of subjects within a larger population, their findings are not reported in complex statistical terms as is often the case with quantitative researchers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In qualitative research, "the central endeavor ... of the interpretive qualitative paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 36). Interpretive qualitative research focuses on how people interpret their experiences and the meanings they attach to these experiences. Interpretive qualitative researchers believe action can be understood best when observed in the setting in which it occurs. Qualitative researchers want to know where, when, how and under what circumstances certain behaviours arise. In addition, qualitative researchers seek to provide detailed descriptions of people's activities, actions and as full a range of interpersonal interactions and organizational processes as possible (Patton, 1990, cited by Best & Khan, 2008). Qualitative (interpretive) research is guided by the researcher's beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied. This influences the questions researchers ask and the interpretations they bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

In interpretive research the researcher seeks to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the views of participants (Creswell, 2003). The participants in this case were myself (as a teacher educator, a participant and a researcher) and my student teachers (as students and as research participants). The student teachers' observations as well as my own contributed to the data for the investigation. My intention in this study was to try to get better insight into my student

teachers' experiences and interpretation of the teaching/learning opportunities I organized for them around the issue of teachers' professional conduct. By doing this, I hoped to use my student teachers' experiences as well as mine for the improvement of my teaching for the future cohorts of student teachers.

Flexibility is a valued aspect of interpretive research. The need often arises for a researcher to reconsider or modify or even change completely his/her decisions in response to new developments. A researcher therefore needs to create an "emergent design" (Best & Kahn, 2008, p. 247). In this study I was concerned with the process that the research would take as much as its outcome, for, as Bogdan and Bilken (1982) argue, for qualitative researchers in education, the process is beneficial to clarifying issues.

### **3.5 USE OF ACTION RESEARCH**

As noted in Chapter 2, the design of this study was influenced by Kolb's theory of experiential learning and his idea of using an AR cycle as a learning process (Healey & Jenkins, 2000). The meaning of AR lies in the combination of two words 'action' and 'research', which complement each other when this kind of study is undertaken.

The term 'Action Research' was coined by Kurt Lewin in the 1940s. Lewin's research work on social issues is often credited as a "major landmark in the development of action research as a methodology" (Koshy, 2005, p. 3, citing Zeichner (2001) and Hopkins (2002)). Lewin described AR as a "step of steps in a spiral, each containing planning, action and assessment of the achieved results" (Vogrinc & Zuljan, 2009, pp. 53-63). Other American researchers, for example, Stephen Corey, followed Lewin's work and applied it to educational issues in their research. This movement later spread to England, where Lawrence Stenhouse's work on curriculum and research contributed to the appeal of action research "for shaping the theory and practice of teaching and curriculum" (Koshy, 2005, p. 3).

AR brings together action and reflection in the search for practical solutions (McNiff, 2002; Zuber-Skerrit, 1996); ways of making a particular action (or practice) more effective. AR is thus often referred to as practitioner-based research because it is done by practitioners whose main

aim is the improvement of professional practice. According to McNiff (2002), AR was mainly developed by academics working in professional education, particularly teacher education. It provides practitioners with a practical way of investigating problems or issues of concern in their work and trying to solve them. So, for instance, if a practitioner is concerned that things are not going as well as expected, and wants to try something new or improve on what is there, or perhaps just wants to implement a new initiative but is unsure of how to do it effectively, he or she could carry out some AR (Waters-Adams, 2006; McNiff, 2002). Because AR involves a practitioner's thinking about their work so as to bring about development in their own practice by analyzing existing practice and identifying elements that need change, McNiff describes it as *self-reflective practice* (2002) [my emphasis]. Perhaps the most important aspect of an AR project is that it is a process which seeks to enhance teachers' professional development "through their fostering of their capability as professional knowledge makers rather than simply as professional knowledge users" (Waters-Adams, 2006, unpagged).

According to Hayman (1999), the use of AR empowers teachers to enhance the quality of the educational experience not only for themselves, but also for their pupils, for, as Koshy notes, "the quality of educational experiences provided to children will depend on the ability of the teacher to stand back, question and reflect on his or her practice and continually strive to make the necessary changes" (2005, p. 2). Cain and Milovic (2010) also observed that the experience of conducting AR assists teachers to move in the direction of more learner-centered instruction. It helps them become confident in their ability to promote students' learning which might then lead to improvements in students' attitudes and their behaviour and learning in general. Teachers might then become agents of change who influence their colleagues to think positively on how to tackle challenges encountered in their classrooms so that they avoid being "victims who feel unable to do anything but moan about difficult classroom events" (Hayman, 1999, unpagged).

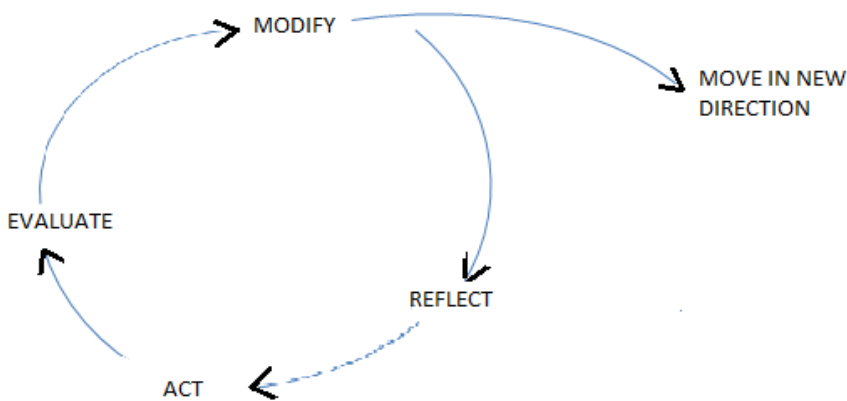
There are certain characteristics that AR projects seem to share. They are "situational because they are related to problems occurring in a specific setting" ... "experiential since AR projects are grounded in the reality of everyday practice" ... "process oriented since the practitioner

usually follows some predetermined research procedure or method” and ... “heuristic because the practitioner is interested in finding a solution to a problem”; and finally, they are “self-evaluated, assessed and implemented” (Arias, 1995, p. 64).

Waters-Adams (2006) sees all AR projects as constituting an action plan in the process of which analysis and knowledge formation belong to the practitioner. The common elements are:

- practitioners striving to understand and to improve their practice;
- using a process of planning, action and reflection;
- gathering of evidence about their practice;
- seeing the effects of planned change in their practice;
- striving to be systematic and rigorous.

Kemmis and McTaggart (cited in Koshy, 2005) observed that Action Research involves “a spiral of self-reflective spirals of planning a change, acting and observing the process and consequences of the change, reflecting on these processes and consequences and replanning, reflecting ...” (p. 4). Kemmis and McTaggart suggested that the processes are not always “as neat as the spiral of self-contained cycles of planning, acting and observing, and reflecting suggests”; rather, the stages “overlap and initial plans quickly become obsolete in the light of a learning experience” (Koshy, 2005, p. 5).



**Figure 3: An Action-reflection Cycle.**  
(Adapted from McNiff & Whitehead, 2006, p. 9)

AR, as with other research approaches, has received some criticism. This includes the claim that it is overly eclectic; that it means different things to different people; that it lacks one neat, widely accepted definition; that it is lacking in academic rigour and that it is unscientific because of its tendency towards subjectivity (Zuber-Skerritt, 1992). These criticisms cannot be brushed aside. A researcher needs to try addressing them in the course of the research. The two criticisms that I particularly kept in mind during my research were the claims firstly about lack of academic rigour, and secondly of the risk of subjectivity.. My approach had the general understanding that my goal was to improve professional practice, my own especially. I tried at all times to be rigorously self-reflective to try to maintain the integrity of my research procedures and to ensure that my own participation in these did not overly intrude upon my status as ‘researcher’. One mechanism I used for self reflection was keeping a reflective journal throughout the process (see section 3.7).

What I have written so far on what action research is, and how I used it in this study, can be summarized in the words of Koshy (2005, p. 10) as follows. It:

- involves researching your own practice - it is about people out there;
- is emergent;
- is participatory;
- constructs theory from practice;
- is situational based;
- can be useful in real problem solving;
- deals with individuals or groups with a common purpose of improving practice;
- involves analysis, reflection and evaluation
- facilitates changes through enquiry.

In the next section I discuss some practical considerations.

### **3.6 SAMPLING**

A ‘sample’ is a small proportion of a population selected by a researcher for observation and analysis, while ‘sampling’ is the procedure a researcher uses to gather people or things to study

(Best & Kahn, 2008; Kombo & Tromp, 2006). In line with Gay and Airasian's assertion that qualitative researchers generally rely on purposive sampling to select their participants to ensure they target groups of people believed to be most useful to the kind of study being done (2000), both my sample and my sampling procedures were purposive. This conscious selection of subjects based on the participants' membership of the group under investigation is sometimes referred to as judgmental sampling (Crooks & Davies, cited by Higgsbottom, 2004). The power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth analysis (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

As already noted, the purposive sample in my research comprised some of my own third year student teachers: forty members of the college's science class. Because I used to teach this class, I anticipated that it would be relatively easy for me to organize the students in terms of hours to meet for research activities and for arranging follow-ups. When the research eventually started it was indeed easy to organize the student teachers for workshops as they constantly informed me during my lectures with them about their other commitments and when they were likely to be free for research purposes.

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES**

In planning for this AR I resolved to engage multiple data collection strategies as I recognized that this would facilitate comparison of data across different sources (Gilham, 2000) and thereby increase the trustworthiness of my data.

My main sources of data were workshops, classroom observation, interviews (both spontaneous and formal), the questionnaires I used to gather perceptions of high school pupils on their teachers' professional conduct, my student teachers' journals and my own reflective journal in which were recorded all my experiences during the cycles of AR. I discuss each of these in more detail in the following sub-sections.

### **3.7.1 Classroom observation**

Observation gives a researcher direct access to the social interactions that are the focus of the research (Simpson & Tuson, 2003, Taylor, et. al., 2011). Gillham (2000) identified three main purposes of using observation in research: it involves watching what people do; listening to what they say; and sometimes, asking them clarifying questions on things that seem not clear. In this research, I used participant observation. I was myself an active member of the phenomenon I was investigating. It has been argued that participant observation has an advantage over non-participant observation as it affords better insight into the lives of participants, being close to what they are doing and asking them clarifying questions in cases of doubt (Sidhu, 2006). In my participant observation role, I used a variety of strategies to collect data, prominent amongst them being the detailed field notes I included in my reflective journal during the observations, I did this by initially briefly jotting down important points as student teachers discussed. Immediately after the workshop, as the information was still fresh in my mind, I expanded on these points and also included my own reflections relating to these. I also collected data through video and audio recordings of the proceedings.

Two main weaknesses of this research tool are, firstly, the high demand placed on time, effort and resources and, secondly, its susceptibility to observer bias, either because of an observer's lack of attention, or because the observer records what s/he wants to see, rather than what actually takes place (Simpson & Tuson, 2003). I tried to remain constantly alert to participants' reactions to my presence and what was happening. I tried at all times to conduct my observation in an open-minded, non-judgmental way.

### **3.7.2 Semi-structured interviews**

An interview involves the collection of information through direct conversation between an interviewer and the interviewee (Sidhu, 2006). I used semi structured interviews. A semi-structured interview is based on the use of interview guides and is flexible in the sense that it includes both open- and closed- ended questions (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). I interviewed four participating student teachers as a follow up to what was discussed in the workshops.

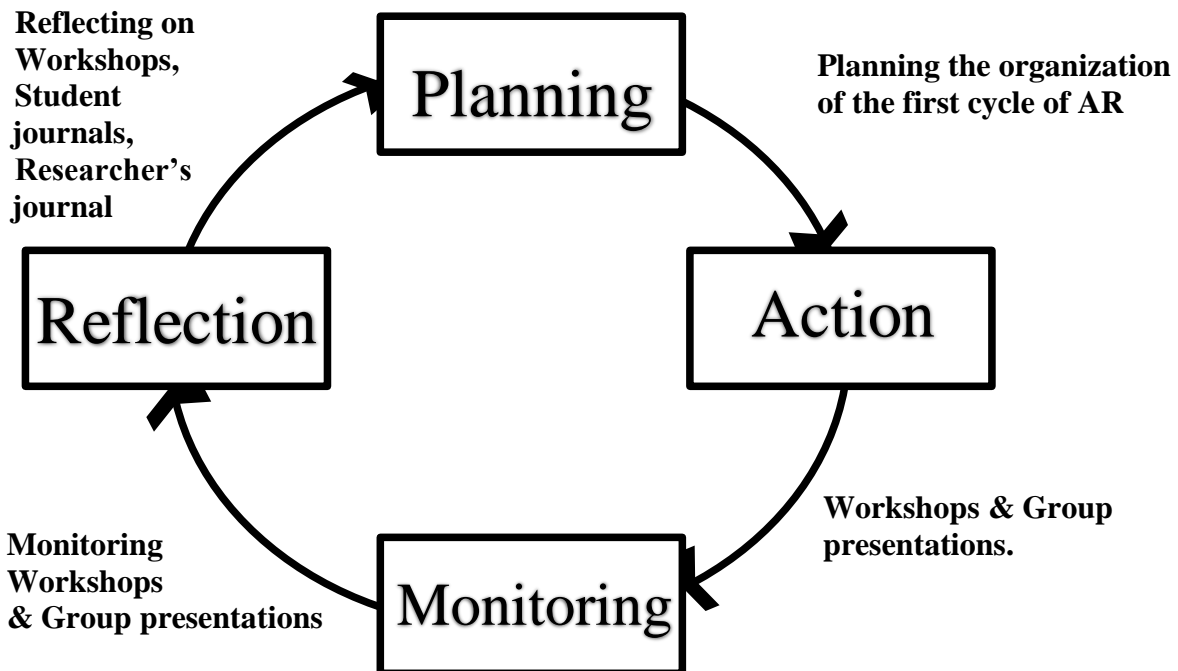
Sidhu (2006) observed that this kind of follow up is important, because “the interviewer can probe into causal factors, determine attitudes, discover the origin of the problem, involve the interviewee in an analysis of his own problems and secure his cooperation in this analysis”(p.145). Before the interviews, I conducted a pre-interview with two non-participating student teachers in order to test the appropriateness of the questions. The actual interviews were conducted during the second cycle of AR. During these interviews some of my students shared some very personal experiences with me on the issue of teachers’ professional conduct. I report on aspects of their feedback in Chapter Four.

### 3.8 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

Two AR cycles were employed in this study, as briefly outlined below.

#### 3.8.1 Action research Cycle One

In this cycle I carried out four workshops. The details of what transpired in the workshops are summarized in the following diagram and explored in the discussion that follows.



*Figure 4: Activities of Action Research Cycle One.*

The day before commencing the research, I invited the research participants (student teachers) to attend a briefing. They had already signed consent forms acknowledging their willingness to participate in the research (see appendix 5). The briefing took place in the science tutorial class. I reminded them again of the purpose of the research and what I hoped to achieve with their help and participation.

On the day the first cycle of AR was scheduled to start, I met the research participants for the first workshop. Proceedings were video and audio taped. I began by asking the participants to write down what they understood by the term ‘teachers’ professional conduct.’ I then called on volunteers to explain what they had written to the whole group. This exercise was concluded by the whole group of participants coming up with a meaning based on their different views.

I then divided students into groups of five, and gave each group sets of stimulus materials. These were a section from Sidhu’s book, *School Organisation and Administration* (1996, pp. 125-135) and extracts from a policy document on education, *The Focus on Learning* (Zambia. Ministry of Education, 1992), where they were required to read the part dealing with professional conduct and ethics of teachers.

In the second workshop, I asked the participants for feedback on what they had read in the previous workshop. Chairpersons presented their findings. I also invited volunteers to share with the group any personal experiences from when they were at the secondary school regarding issues of teachers’ professional conduct. Excerpts from *Terms and conditions of service for public workers* (Zambia. Cabinet Office, 2003) were distributed.

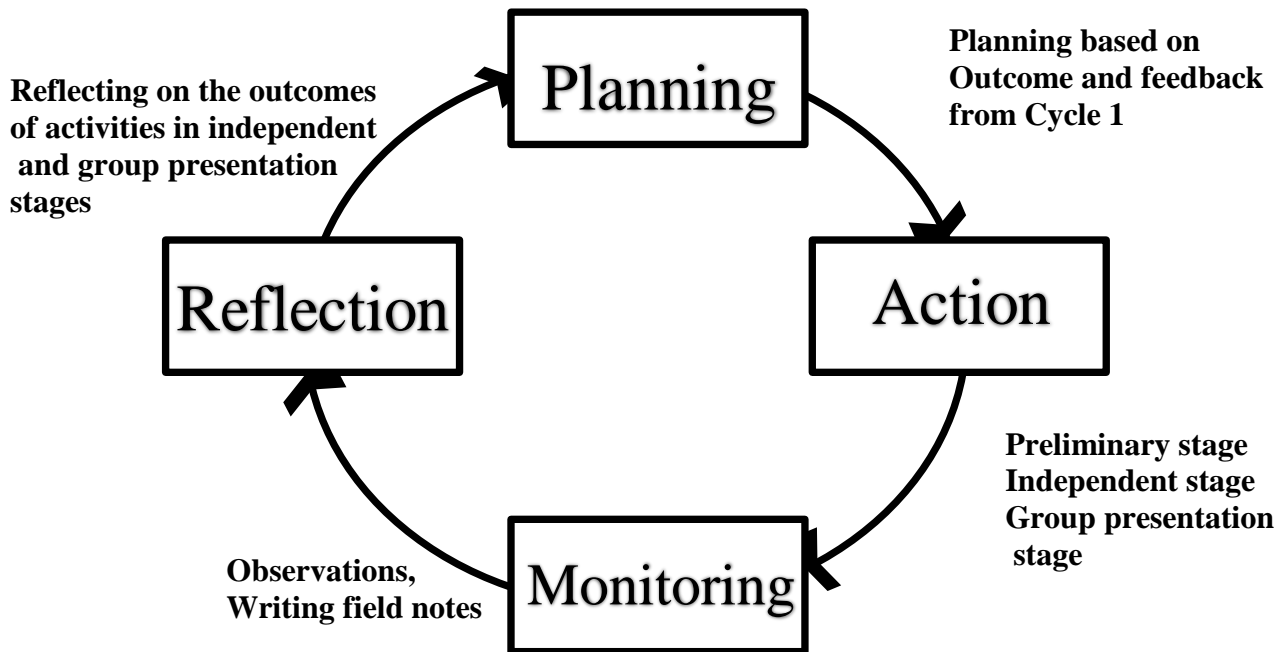
In the third workshop, I shared with the participating student teachers the synthesised questionnaire responses (see Appendix 2) that I had collected from high school pupils. The student teachers discussed the pupils’ responses at length, and considered the implications of these for their own conduct as professionals once they became fully-fledged teachers. The pupils’ responses were sorted into positive and negative categories. I asked my student teachers

to each write their own reflections on pupils' views in their journals, and to incorporate in their reflection their thoughts on how they might address the concerns expressed by the pupils (including any challenges they might have anticipated in fulfilling this). I explained that I would be asking them to share some of their reflections with group members at our next workshop. They also used the views to start developing a code of conduct for themselves (see Appendix 3).

Workshop 4 was the final workshop in the first cycle of AR and was mainly meant for the students to report back on their independent readings. Details of this are given in Chapter Four. Workshops 5 and 6 were conducted in the second cycle of AR. Below is a brief explanation of what happened in the second cycle of my AR.

### 3.8.2 Action Research Cycle Two

Two workshops were conducted in this cycle. The diagram below summarizes the activities during this cycle. A detailed explanation follows thereafter.



*Figure 5: Activities of Action Research Cycle Two.*

Before embarking on the second cycle of my AR, I needed to reflect on how the proceedings of the first set of workshop sessions had gone, and on the feedback I had received from the participating student teachers. In light of the feedback, I decided to organize the second cycle along similar lines except that, this time, I included interviews with four students to follow up on some of the issues they had raised in the first cycle. I decided not to make any major adjustments to the proceedings in the second cycle. The first one seemed to have gone well. The second cycle was arranged in four stages:

(a) **Independent enquiry stage:** I gave student teachers the opportunity to conduct a personal enquiry amongst themselves about their feelings on what had happened in the first cycle. I did this by asking each student to pick a partner from amongst themselves whom they would share their views with after which I sat with all the participants to hear their views on the matter.

(b) **Additional reading stage:** Additional materials were provided on the issue of teachers' professional conduct. I asked the students to spend more time in the library and computer laboratory seeing what they themselves could discover on the issue of teachers' professional conduct. This was done because they requested more time in the library to find more information on teachers' professional conduct.

(c) **Group presentation stage:** Students were asked to do group presentations based on what they had found out on the issue of teacher's professional conduct.

(d) **Interview stage:** I invited some student teachers for interviews, especially those whom I thought needed to clarify some issues raised during the group presentation, and those who had raised controversial issues in the workshops.

### **3.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

In qualitative research, intensive data collection takes place over an extended period (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Qualitative data analysis involves “studying the tabulated material in order to determine inherent facts or meanings” and also “involves breaking down existing complex factors into simpler parts and putting parts together in new arrangements for purposes of interpretation” (Kombo & Tromp, 2006, p. 276). Unless data are arranged properly and are complete, research results cannot give total insight into what is being studied or give solutions to problems (Le Compte, 2000). As noted earlier, data for this research came from pupils’ questionnaires, my observation notes of student teachers’ activities, my transcriptions of video tapings of the activities of the two cycles of AR, the literature that the student teachers and I consulted, as well as from the reflective journals – the students’ and my own. The audio and video recorded activities were transcribed immediately after each workshop. Seidman (1991) noted that transforming words from tape into text helps a researcher gain access to the participants’ consciousness as each of the words they say reflects this.

The data were analysed thematically (Kombo & Tromp, 2006, p. 119), allowing me to identify the information I saw as being relevant to my research questions. I colour coded the data to assist in identifying the emerging themes and patterns. The data highlighted some valuable insights generated by students themselves as they explored the issue of teachers’ professional conduct.

### **3.10 ETHICAL PROTOCOLS**

In qualitative research, researchers enter into the private worlds of research participants and many issues of a sensitive nature can come up (Research in Education, 2003). Waters-Adams (2006) makes the important point that almost every piece of research has ethical implications. This is perhaps especially pertinent in relation to AR, where a researcher is also a practitioner engaged in trying to improve his (or her) practice, and, in so doing, is involving others who, by virtue of their student status, occupy a less powerful position relative to the researcher (their tutor). As previously noted, not only was this study conducted in the college where I work, but

the participants were my own students.

As noted, one of the first things I did was to obtain permission from the college principal to conduct the research. Similarly, I requested permission from the Head Teacher of the school, before distributing questionnaires to his Grade 12 pupils. Further, I ensured that all the student teachers participated in the study voluntarily, and were aware that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time. I did not use my position as their lecturer to coerce them to participate in the research, neither did I give them money or other material incentive to induce them to participate. Their choice in this research was supreme (O’Leary, 2005). I undertook to honor participants’ privacy and confidentiality, and assured them that any revelation of sensitive information would be done only if I had their consent (see Appendix 5 for copies of the relevant documentation). O’Leary (2005) notes that “protection of confidentiality may involve secure storage data; obtaining permission for subsequent use of data; publication of research findings in a manner that does not allow for ready identification of subjects; and eventual destruction of raw data” (p. 54). Throughout the time I associated with the research participants, I did my best to treat them with respect, and to ensure that I did not embarrass or harm them in any way (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982).

### **3.11 VALIDITY**

Davies (2007) defined validity as a concept which “relates to the question of whether the end results of your analysis are accurate representations of the psycho-social or textual reality that you claim them to be” (p. 243). Validity according to this observation has to do with the credibility and legitimacy of the data a researcher has presented: the question of whether the data presented are true or false. I have used validity here to mean trustworthiness. I should however state that it is rare in interpretive research such as this one to use the term validity to allow for generalization of findings but rather should be meant for learning something from a particular study. Maxwell (1992) observed that “validity has long been a key issue in debates over the legitimacy of qualitative research”, noting that “if qualitative studies cannot consistently produce valid results, then policies, programs, or predictions based on these studies cannot be relied on”

(p. 279). In this research, I was very much aware of the importance of presenting results that could be looked upon by other researchers as being valid. I therefore took the following steps to strengthen the validity of my study and to ensure its trustworthiness. Firstly, Maxwell (1992) has observed that researcher bias and reactivity could be threats to validity, and so, to minimize this, I employed triangulation, that is I used more than one data source (Cohen, et. al. 2000). I also used member checking (Cohen, et.al. 2000) by getting some of my participating student teachers to review aspects of my data-presentation chapter. The outcome of member checking was that the participants overwhelmingly indorsed what I had written as a true reflection of what had happened.

### **3.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter I have described and discussed the methods I used for carrying out this research. In designing the research, I followed the examples of investigators who have previously conducted AR, while at the same time bearing in mind the uniqueness of my own study. I found the ideas of Kolb (1984) particularly helpful to my conceptualization of the research design. In my next chapter I present and analyze my findings.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The first three chapters serve as background to the findings presented here. I now present and discuss my findings, bearing in mind my research goals and the research questions already alluded to. I have referred to the three theories discussed in Chapter Two to help explain how these informed my findings.

The data come from a variety of approaches, but all fall within the cycles of AR. The discussions in this chapter are based primarily on the workshops I conducted with student teachers. I have also discussed and analyzed student teachers' independent readings and what they wrote in their individual reflective journals. In addition, as noted in the preceding chapter, I invited some of the student teachers to clarify issues raised during workshops. I interviewed four of them. In some cases I have reproduced sections of interviews while in others I have simply lifted quotations from the interviewees' responses. In either instance I have used pseudonyms to respect participants' anonymity.

#### **4.2 THE AR CYCLES**

As noted in Chapter Two, Kolb's theory of experiential learning, on which this research was based, consists of four stages: planning, action, observation and reflection (Zuber-Skerrit, 1992). As noted in Chapter Three, this AR study involved holding six workshops, conducting semi-structured interviews, and getting the views of my student teachers from their reflective journals. The semi-structured interviews were conducted on Day 5 of Week 3 with four student teachers, three male and one female. These students were purposively selected based on what I had observed during workshops. The following is what I had observed that prompted me to select these student teachers for the interviews.

I picked the first interviewee because he continued being skeptical about the research, saying that even though the research seemed useful, it would not change individuals' inherent dispositions. In the first two workshops I conducted he stuck to his position, so I saw it as desirable that I interview him.

The second male student's views were similar to the first one. The difference was that this student saw taking the issue of teachers' professional conduct to schools as the big challenge. He claimed that in many schools, some experienced teachers have been content with the way they have been operating. In some cases certain unprofessional behaviours have become part of their operation. He felt that as a newly appointed teacher, going against the grain where the prevailing ethos ran counter to his views might be difficult to handle.

The third and only female student among the interviewees was picked because she was very quiet and did not participate in most of the discussions. I wanted to find out what was going on and her thoughts about the workshop.

The fourth student routinely dominated discussions, and seemed to have more opinions on the issue than his classmates. I was interested therefore to find out if there was anything more he could reveal about teachers' professional conduct.

In addition to workshops and interviews, as already noted, I asked the students to keep reflective journals for the four weeks of the AR cycles, urging them to write their reflections on whatever struck them as especially salient from their experiences and participation in the intervention process (see appendix for extracts from student journals). Students wrote up their reflections in their spare time after each workshop. As also noted earlier, I too kept a journal in which I reflected on what I believed was going on during the course of the AR process. (I include sample extracts from my journal in Appendix 9.)

#### **4.2.1 Outline of workshop activities**

As indicated earlier my sample comprised 40 third-year Diploma in Education student teachers. They, together with myself, were the participants in workshop activities. In the following subsections I describe in a little more detail what happened in each workshop session.

##### **4.2.1.1 Workshop 1: Setting the scene**

Workshop 1 was conducted in the first week of September, 2011. I asked student teachers to define individually and in their own words their understanding of professional conduct and to write this on the paper I had provided. As they read out what they had written, I wrote down the feedback on the chalkboard. We then discussed the definitions and came up with one consolidated version which all of us supported.

I then divided the students into six groups of five, and asked them to select a chairperson who would be representing their views to the main group. I distributed copies of Sidhu's book, '*School organisation and Administration*' (1996) and asked the students to read the section dealing with professional conduct of teachers. They did this within their groups. I told them to report their findings in the next workshop.

##### **4.2.1.2 Workshop 2: Sidhu's activity**

This workshop was conducted in the second week of September, 2011. When we met, I reminded them about our activity in the first workshop and asked the group chairpersons to present their findings from Sidhu's book. I wrote down the key points as they emerged from the Groups' chairperson presentations. Positive key points were separated from negative ones. I also called on volunteers to share with the group their personal experiences of teachers' professional conduct.

After the first activity, I distributed excerpts from the '*Terms and conditions of service for the public service*' (Zambia. Cabinet Office, 2003). This is a statute book containing guidelines on how public workers should conduct themselves and the sanctions that should apply to those who

break the rules. I got the students to summarize key points from this document. Afterwards, the chairpersons of the groups presented their findings.

#### **4.2.1.3 Workshop 3: Working with high school pupils' feedback**

Workshop 3 was also conducted in the second week (on Day 5). In this workshop I brought to the student teachers' attention high school pupils' views on the conduct of their teachers. These views were derived from feedback I had collected earlier using a questionnaire I had distributed to Grade 12 pupils at a local high school (see Appendix 1 for a copy of this questionnaire). Forty pupils completed the questionnaire. I summarized their responses into a single document which I distributed to my student teachers. I asked my students to react to the pupils' views. We classified the views into positive and negative categories, and, as my students identified various points, I wrote these on the chalk board, coming up with two consolidated lists.

I then asked the students to work in groups and use the views of pupils as a basis for starting to develop a code of conduct. As we were concluding the activities of this workshop, I asked the student teachers to take some time to visit the library and to go on-line in their spare time to see what additional information they could find on teachers' professional conduct. I told them we would discuss their findings in the next workshop.

#### **4.2.1.4 Workshop 4: Reporting on independent reading**

The fourth workshop took place on the second day of Week Three. Its main purpose was for the student teachers to report back on their independent readings. During this workshop we identified some further negative aspects of teachers' conduct, as well as some positives, and added the latter aspects to the code of conduct we had begun developing.

#### **4.2.1.5 Workshop 5: Independent enquiry and additional reading**

This took place on the first day of week four. This was also the commencement of the second cycle of AR. (As with the first cycle, this second cycle was arranged in three stages: independent inquiry; additional reading, and group presentation.) In this fifth workshop my

student teachers commented on their experiences in the first cycle of AR. There was a suggestion that they needed more time to do additional reading. We therefore agreed that they could go back to the library and computer laboratory. I also provided them with two additional policy documents to read: the *Zambian Ministry of Education’s Education Act (2011)* as well as its *Educating our future* document (Zambia. Ministry of Education, 1996). We arranged for students to report their findings in the next workshop.

#### **4.2.1.6 Workshop 6: Reporting on additional reading and drawing up of final code of conduct**

At this final workshop, conducted on the last day of Week Four, the student teachers presented their findings from their independent reading, and we drew up a final summary of the most important features of professional conduct for teachers. (See Appendix 3 for the copy of this final document.) We concluded with an exploration of practical ways whereby these principles might be incorporated into a teacher’s daily conduct. Tabulated below is a summary of the workshop activities.

**TABLE 1      WORKSHOP SCHEDULE**

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>DURATION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>WORKSHOP 1: SETTING THE SCENE</b>	<b>1hr 30min</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>WORKSHOP 2: SIDHU’S ACTIVITY</b> <b>WORKSHOP 3: WORKING WITH PUPILS’ FEEDBACK</b>	<b>1hr</b> <b>2hrs 30min</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>WORKSHOP 4: REPORTING ON INDEPENDENT READING</b>	<b>45 min</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>WORKSHOP 5: INDEPENDENT ENQUIRY AND ADDITIONAL READING</b> <b>WORKSHOP 6: REPORTING ON ADDITIONAL READING AND DRAWING UP A FINAL CODE OF CONDUCT</b>	<b>1hr</b> <b>1hr 30min</b>

In the following sub-sections I present the findings that emerged from these workshops.

### 4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS FROM WORKSHOPS 1, 2, AND 3

#### 4.3.1 Student teachers' understanding of professional conduct

I asked my student teachers to write down their understanding of teachers' professional conduct. Prominent ideas that emerged from this are outlined in the following paragraphs.

One of the participants told the workshop that his understanding of professional conduct was that "*[it] is a code of conduct which governs and regulates the teacher's behaviour in relation to pupils and society*". He noted that, for any society to function properly there should be rules and regulations that members should follow.

Another participant explained that professional conduct is "*professional ethics which give guidance and regulation to teachers on how they should conduct themselves*". He went on to explain that teaching has ethics and that these ethics act as a yardstick to guide the behaviour of teachers. He explained that, without these ethics, teachers could not conduct themselves properly. He likened professional conduct to norms of a society. He noted that there is order in society because there are laid down rules and norms that every person is compelled to follow. He argued that norms are followed to bring about efficacy in the society.

Another participant explained that professional conduct is "*the necessary component to the teaching profession to maintain standards*". She explained that her definition of professional conducted as being "necessary" arises from the fact that, without teachers conducting themselves in a manner deemed acceptable by society, "*there would be chaos in schools*".

Other student teachers also gave their definitions, most of which echoed those described above.

The student teachers' understanding of what professional conduct means seems to be in agreement with what Carr (2006) alluded to when he observed that professional conduct of

teachers is properly implicated in their observance of moral principles, their observance of teaching ethics and all the things that are considered valuable to the teaching profession.

The views of student teachers, that professional conduct could be linked with observation of rules and regulations of the teaching profession, has also been observed by Sidhu (1996), who argued that teachers should not confine themselves to mere talking and dishing out information in the classroom but should link teaching with the ultimate values of life. A teacher should “not run after things below his status and dignity. The pupils should be able to draw inspiration from his philosophy of life, values and ideals, aims and objectives, rules and principles and above all a conduct of a higher level” (p. 129).

A closer look at the student teachers’ views of what professional conduct entails seems to show a general pattern of understanding that people who aspire to be teachers need to be ready to follow professional guidelines which include among other things high integrity and good standing in society. This is because “teaching is a mission ...the teacher has to work with a missionary zeal...the profession demands sacrifice and more and more of sacrifice” (Sidhu, 2006, p. 132).

What was clearly emerging from the student teachers’ definition of professional conduct is that most of the examples they were giving were borne of their experiences - either when they were at secondary schools as pupils, or in the college phase of their development. This agrees significantly with Kolb’s theory of experiential learning, where he emphasized the central role that experience plays in the learning process (Riding, Fowell & Levy, 1995).

Concluding my discussion on students’ understanding of what professional conduct means, I want to note that there was some kind of general belief in them which came out strongly in their discussion that professional conduct was a classroom or school issue. Anything that teachers did after they left school was a private matter, but that the concern should be their behaviour in the school.

### **4.3.2 Student teachers' findings from Sidhu's book**

In the first workshop the students had been divided into six groups, each with a chairperson, and assigned a letter of the alphabet as their group name: A, B, C, D, E and F, and asked to spend time reading and discussing Sidhu's book on teachers' professional conduct. They were asked to comb through the whole book, but I emphasized that pages 125-135, especially, should be read by everybody. Here are the key things identified by group chairpersons.

#### **Chairperson A:**

"In our group we have established the following points on how a teacher should conduct herself as a professional." The author of this book has written the following:

- A teacher is the educational parent of the child. He supplements the role of the parents; therefore, it is necessary for teachers to understand life. Pupils imitate them in many ways; therefore, they should be mindful of their behaviour.
- Teachers should possess an impressive personality. Teachers should teach mainly through their actions. No amount of sermons from teachers make much headway but what they are.
- Teachers should be intelligent.
- The teacher should be sociable.

#### **Chairperson B:**

- A teacher's character should be that there is no difference between what they say and do.
- Teachers should love their students. Sidhu wrote that a teacher who loves his students will win their confidence.
- Teachers must be masters of their subjects. Any academic weakness of teachers would make them inferior in the eyes of pupils. Chairperson B concluded his presentation by saying that the rest of the points they discovered had been mentioned by the first group.

#### **Chairperson C:**

- A teacher should have a thirst for knowledge.

- A teacher must possess higher qualifications as compared to the level of students she teaches.
- A teacher should love her job. Sidhu uses the phrase ‘love for the profession’.
- The teacher should be fluent and should have power of expression in order to teach properly.
- The teacher must possess good human relations with his pupils, fellow teachers, his superiors, and community at large.

Chairperson C concluded that other points had been alluded to by other groups. The remaining groups mentioned that all their points had been covered by the earlier presenters.

The findings from Sidhu’s book by the student teachers seem to have raised the following four main issues about teachers’ professional conduct.

- Teachers are educational parents for pupils in schools.
- Teachers should possess higher qualifications and should have a thirst for knowledge.
- Teachers should teach through action.
- Teachers should possess good human relations with pupils, superiors and fellow workers.

I elaborate on each of these issues in the following paragraphs, basing my discussion on the available literature.

**Teachers are educational parents:** The students’ idea that a teacher is the educational parent of the child and that they are *in loco parentis* in schools is in line with the thinking of Fraser et al. (1993), who noted that “as a teaching institution, the school system is second in importance to the family...it reflects the values of a society and, therefore, teaches and reinforces values” (p. 31). These authors feel that teachers should present themselves in a manner befitting the society that they represent. They feel that the goal of both the school and the teacher is to organize and manipulate the social environment so that pupils benefit from it by acquiring what is worthwhile to them and the society. This simply implies that pupils ought to be guided for life at school, as

much as parents do this at home. The manipulation of the environment for the benefit of pupils should be almost the same, both at home and school. For the schools it means that such institutions act in the best interest of their learners as much as they could. This understanding is also in line with Mezirow's thinking in his transformative learning theory, where he emphasized the need for the teacher to create an environment in which learners not only learn from each other but also from their teacher (Mezirow, 1997, cited by Imel, 1998). In this study the learning would have to do with the teacher's professional conduct.

**Teachers should possess higher education and be thirsty for knowledge:** Various authors have, hardly surprisingly, also alluded to this. Prominent among those I came across was Richert in Russell and Korthagen, (1995), who claimed that teachers need to be learners so that they can respond to the changing circumstances of their work and constantly learn to do it more effectively. These views from the author clearly point to the fact that being professionally competent within the area of one's subject is also part of professional conduct, without which the teacher may fail to perform to the expectation of the teaching profession.

**Teachers should teach through actions:** Again it is not to be wondered at that quite a number of scholars have mentioned this point (Chiou & Yang, 2006; Carr, 2007; Sileo et al., 2008). Chiou and Yang especially emphasized this aspect when they wrote that teachers are important role models for their pupils. They observed that, if teachers become role models, their behaviours would be imitated and internalized by their pupils.

In the same vein, Banner and Cannon (1997, p. 40) observed that "all teachers should teach by example as well as by instruction" because this is how students will emulate them. Most of the participants also supported this view. According to one of them, "teachers who do not live what they teach are a danger to the teaching profession itself". When I asked him to elaborate, he noted that teachers who do not live by the dictates of the teaching profession would "contaminate the teaching profession because their bad behaviour would be imitated by pupils". The general

feeling in both the literature consulted and the students themselves points to the fact that teachers should at all times live what they preach if they are to uphold professionalism.

**Teachers should practice good human relations with pupils, superiors and fellow workers:**

While most students supported this view, some had reservations. One female student claimed that “I have strong reservations on this. Some male teachers take advantage of female pupils by first pretending to be good to them in the process then they start proposing love to them”. Literature that I came across in this research supports the view of cordial relations between the players in the teaching profession. Mikami et al. (2011), for instance, suggested that having mutually respectful relationships with students would set a model for students. Students would do the same with their peers because, by treating them fairly, the teacher has demonstrated that all pupils have value. A lesson learnt from both Sidhu (1996) and Mikami et al. (2011) here is that sincerity, truthfulness and integrity should be the central points in professional and personal ethics.

**4.3.3 Student teachers’ findings on terms and conditions of service for public workers**

I asked the chairperson from Group D to begin the presentation. Here is what he reported: “*What we have discovered from the terms and conditions of service is mainly from Chapter IV of the book. It is this chapter that mainly discusses the professional conduct of workers.*”

The main points he then raised in his presentation were:

- The terms and conditions of service state that public service must be beyond reproach and that it is the duty of all public service workers to maintain the highest standards of conduct and personal behaviour.
- Except in situations where workers are prevented by the nature of their work, while on duty they should dress in a clean, decent and tidy manner. This is important to reflect credit on the public service.
- It is the duty of all public workers to be courteous, helpful and attentive in all dealings with the general public. Provocation by members of the public is not an excuse for misconduct.
- The terms state that workers should serve at any station within Zambia or abroad.

When participants asked him to explain this statement, the presenter told them that government officers should work in any part of the country where they are posted, both rural and urban. He explained that teachers in Zambia are made to understand, at the time of their engagement in the teaching profession, that one of the conditions of employment is that they are expected to serve in any part of the country where their services are needed. One participant asked whether this was also the case with private schools in the country. It was observed that private schools' conditions of service for their teachers are different from what it is required in government service.

The other condition the presenter mentioned was that public workers shall be present on duty during working hours. They are also required to work outside normal working hours. This is done when there are pressing issues to attend to and normally workers are paid an out of pocket allowance for this.

This condition of service raised several questions from the students. One participant asked the presenter whether overtime allowance is paid to teachers who work overtime. The presenter referred the question to me. I told the participants that, in most cases, teachers do not receive overtime allowances, but if they are working outside their stations they are paid a subsistence allowance. The chairperson of Group D concluded his presentation by saying that his group did not finish looking at the document due to lack of time.

The chairperson of Group E then presented her group's findings, starting by saying: "*My colleague from group 'D' has touched on most of our points. I will only present those things that he did not talk about*". The group's findings included:

- A worker who is absent from duty without permission for a continuous period of ten or more working days shall be liable to dismissal and shall not be paid salary for the period she is absent from duty.
- A worker who is absent from duty on account of ill health should report to the supervising officer and submit a medical certificate.

- Public workers must not report for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- No worker, whether on duty or on leave, shall grant interviews or discuss matters affecting the defense or security of Zambia. Doing so shall constitute misconduct.
- A worker shall not write on subjects which may be interpreted as political or relating to the organization and administration of the public service.

This article elicited several reactions from the class. One participant claimed, while looking at me, that “..... *being a teacher is slavery..... the freedom of expression is taken away from a teacher if you cannot write about your work then it is slavery*”. This view was supported by other participants. The chairperson continued her presentation with the following point:

- Public workers are forbidden from engaging in any acts that may be construed as corruption.

Summarizing the participants’ findings from their reading of the *Terms and conditions of service for public workers* document *vis à vis* teachers’ professional conduct, the following were the main issues the students raised:

- Teachers are expected to be present on duty at all times and should be punctual and be good time keepers.
- Teachers should not report for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Teachers should dress appropriately.
- Teacher should not engage in corrupt practices.

In summarizing the points above, I have omitted other issues raised in Sidhu’s book. This is to avoid repetition. However, what can be concluded from the Terms and conditions of service that participants presented is that the Zambian public worker is required to exhibit exemplary behaviour. I now elaborate on each of the four bullet points listed above.

**Teachers should be present on duty and should be punctual and be good time keepers:** This issue brought sharp reactions from participants. As the presenters raised it one participant

claimed that what is written in the *Terms and conditions of service* document is the ideal situation, but what occurs on the ground is different. She explained that, when she was a pupil at a named secondary school, she used to see a good number of teachers going to class late or missing lessons altogether. She explained that teachers “*were seen sitting in the staffroom chatting and some of them basking in the sun even when they were aware that they were supposed to be in class teaching*”. Some participants observed that these things do not only happen in secondary schools but in colleges as well. One student noted that pupils in schools and students in colleges are affected by the behaviour of their teachers because a lot of learning hours are lost. He went on to say that “*it is very frustrating to see some of the teachers who report late for teaching scolding students who report late for classes. This is purely uncalled for, because the teacher is the originator of the problem*”.

Students also observed that some teachers have a habit of reporting late for work but leaving early, thereby reducing considerably the learning period of their pupils.

An in-depth analysis of these views of participating student teachers on what they discovered in the *Terms and conditions of service for public workers* suggest that they believe, too, that it is part of teachers’ professional conduct to be present at work and to keep time always. These observations also agree with Michael (1988), who noted that teachers must not only be punctual and conscientious in the performance of duty, but must be generally ethical in dealing with all job responsibilities.

The issue of absenteeism and reporting late for work is a real problem in Zambian education. While many professional documents, such as the one my students were looking at, state that teachers need to uphold professional conduct through punctuality and being at work every day, the situation on the ground shows that some teachers behave differently. Scott (1998) alluded to this when he noted that absenteeism is a growing dilemma in education. According to him, late-coming or absenteeism has been found to be the highest in elementary schools, as well as those schools with lower student achievement and those composed of economically disadvantaged and

minority students. While his argument might be true for such groups in the western world, the problem cuts across all sections of the school community in the Zambian situation. Having observed this, however, it is important that I emphasize that the participants agreed and established that *not* all teachers fall into this habit.

**Teachers should not report for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs:** The student teachers' findings from their examination of the *Terms and conditions of service for public workers* document (Zambia. Cabinet Office, 2003) also generated a lengthy discussion. There was general affirmation from the majority of students that, indeed, it was wrong for teachers to drink or abuse drugs on duty. One student observed that "*the abuse of alcohol and to a lesser extent drugs by some teachers in the country is getting out of hand. From my own experiences at the secondary school and even here in the college though not as much as at secondary school, some teachers report to school drunk or sneak out of school to go and drink*". Such teachers, he claimed, are among the lazy ones who spend their time discussing irrelevancies during teaching and often insult pupils or abuse them in many other ways. During their discussion, many student teachers observed that drinking was among the most serious forms of misconduct affecting a wide range of teachers in Zambia.

The observation by students on alcohol abuse by teachers is a problem which seems to affect a wide range of Zambian society and agrees with reports in the local press seen during this research. The post newspaper editorial comment, for instance, reported that, "The problem of drinking in Zambia today appears to be more than it was at the time comrade K.K. threatened to resign. The situation seems to be terribly getting out of control. There is 24 hours drinking every day of the week, of the month, of the year ... Alcoholic drinks are being sold and consumed everywhere including on the streets, in tuntembas side by side with talk time for cell phones" (*A nation of drunkards*, 2012, p. 18).

From what I established during discussions with students in this research the problem with teachers abusing alcohol or drugs means that young people under the care of such teachers may

lead to their pupils start drinking as well. One participant, for example, told the workshop that “*I was brought up in a family of devout Catholics; I was never allowed to mingle with friends who were known to drink beer. However, when I went to a boarding school, our teacher used to take me with my friend to a bar. That was the beginning of my drinking.*” This observation is supported by a study which was conducted in Denmark to determine whether adolescent smoking behaviour was associated with their perceived exposure to teachers or other pupils smoking at school (Poulsen et al., 2002). At the conclusion of this study, it was established that smoking during working hours was associated with adolescents starting to smoke. Michael (1998) also made a similar observation when he noted that teachers who are “under the influence of drugs such as alcohol while on duty is thus *prima facie* evidence of serious misconduct since it will affect capacity to perform the primary tasks and probably affect respect for the individual and staff in general with consequent long term costs in student learning” (p .32). This simply implies that teachers under the influence of drugs might not perform their duties fully. Their relationship with pupils and fellow teachers might also be affected. This in the long run might have serious consequences especially on the academic performance of learners under such a teacher.

It should be mentioned here that, from all the discussions on this topic, it was established that some teachers resort to beer drinking because of frustrations arising from poor working conditions or lack of recognition at work through promotions. Sidhu (1996), recognizing that this is a problem sometimes in affecting teachers’ effectiveness in teaching, noted that “the conditions of work in the schools should be such as to enable teachers to function at their highest level” (p. 146). He went on to say that “qualified trained teachers...should get chance for promotion as head teachers or block education officers” (p. 148). However, the conclusion on this subject by the participants was that drinking at work is unprofessional conduct and drinking is not appropriate because the judgment of teachers is reduced, making it more likely that criminal conduct would be perpetuated by teachers under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**Teachers should dress appropriately:** My student teachers spent considerable time discussing this issue. Sidhu (1996) argued that teachers should not wear shabby clothes or any type of attire that may not support the tenets of the teaching profession. Most of the students observed that while it is important that teachers dress decently, it was not right for authorities in education to be too rigid on this matter. This observation arose when one of the participants claimed that, in a school where she did her teaching practice, *“[the] head teacher asked me to go back home and dress properly because I was dressed in a pair of trousers that was not allowed in his school”*. Reacting to this, participants observed that in most Zambian schools the issue of the type of attire a teacher wears remains entirely up to the teacher, but whatever the teacher chooses to wear should be seen to be decent in the ‘eyes’ of the administration of the school. For example, in some Zambian schools female teachers are allowed to wear trousers as long as they are not too tight to the body while in other schools they would rather their female teachers only wear dresses. The bottom line in all this is that whatever the teacher chooses to wear should be that which authorities think is compatible with the requirements of the teaching profession and that which would not corrupt the minds of young people.

**Teachers should not engage in corrupt practices:** In their discussion on this issue, my student teachers observed that, in schools, corruption is manifested mainly through teachers favouring some pupils, especially those who come from well-to-do families who give them money in return for different kinds of favours. In their discussion, they mentioned that some teachers tend to be corrupt in their dealing with pupils. One student teacher observed that corruption among Zambian teachers could be attributed to, among other things, low salaries which force some teachers to do wrong things in order to raise extra income for their families. The student claimed that *“one day I was writing Grade Twelve final examinations when I saw a teacher who was invigilating our paper gave (sic) the pre written script to a pupil who sat a few metres away from me. I came to learn after that paper that a good number of pupils in that class had given money to invigilator so that he could write answers for them”*.

This research has identified not only from participants' discussions but also from literature that, indeed, there is corruption among teachers. Meir and Griffin (2005), for example, acknowledged the issue of corruption in education when they observed that "corruption in education can have devastating effect on a country's well-being ... perhaps the highest cost of corruption in education is loss of trust. If people (especially the young) come to believe that school or university admission and marks can be bought, a country's economic and political future is in jeopardy" (p. 7).

The data presented here on corruption and what students discussed on the issue demonstrate that teachers should endeavor to rise above conduct that promotes corruption. This is because, if "teachers do their work well, then their work is of great value to others not simply in a particular time but also in future" (Cho-ye To, 1982, unpagged). For teachers to avoid vices such as corruption, they should operate in the spirit of transformational leadership theory whose aim is to transform people to higher levels in order to achieve what they believe in, so as to bring about fundamental change (Avolio & Bass, 2004). In the case of corruption by the teachers, the fundamental change would be for the teachers to stand up against it and raise each other professionally. In so doing they would be role models not only to their pupils but to society as a whole.

#### **4.3.4 Student teachers' drafting of a code of conduct**

This activity started in the third workshop after students discussed views from pupils' questionnaire and continued through to the final workshop. The following were some of the ideas included into their first draft of the code of conduct.

- We the Science group of graduating student teachers, having attended a series of workshops on teachers' professional conduct do hereby agree that: upon our engagement in the Ministry of Education, we shall always report for work and on time unless limited by unforeseen circumstances such as illness.

- We are alive to the fact that many rural schools in Zambia do not have qualified teachers. We therefore commit ourselves to serve Zambian children everywhere where we shall be posted especially in rural areas. We feel that this is part of professionalism.
- Drug and alcohol abuse in our country has been a source of concern to education authorities. There are reports that teachers are culprits to this vice. We therefore resolve and commit ourselves to being role models for our pupils we shall teach. We shall explain to our pupils the evils of drug abuse.
- We promise that we shall avoid corruption of any form in our new schools.

After this activity, I requested students to report back their independent readings in the library. They first spent some time in their groups merging their findings, which were then presented to the main group by chairpersons.

#### **4.3.5 Student teachers' findings from library and on-line sources**

Below are some of the key things identified by three of the groups. The chairperson of Group C was the first to present his group's findings from their merged individual readings. They were as follows:

- A teacher is a role model who should show responsible behaviour both at school and in the community.
- Teachers should avoid abusing pupils through developing intimate sexual relationships.
- Teachers should be punctual for work and should be good time keepers.
- Teachers should strive to improve academic qualifications in order to keep in tune with current trends in education.

The chairperson of Group D then added the following points:

- There should be transparency between teachers and pupils to minimize conflict.
- Teachers should avoid being seen by pupils as favouring some pupils but should be fair in dealing with all the pupils.
- Dressing should be modest and behaviour exemplary.

- Teachers should create good relationships with their fellow teachers and be friendly with pupils.

The chairperson of Group E added and presented her findings as follows:

- Teachers should avoid misappropriation of public funds.
- Teachers should not be corrupt.
- Teachers should avoid abusive language.
- Teachers should be hardworking.
- Teachers should be sober minded.
- There should be fairness in the execution of punishment given to pupils.

The participants' findings from their own readings in the library and computer laboratory seem to have raised some important issues, summarized as follows, below:

- A teacher is a role model who should show responsible behaviour.
- Teachers should not develop intimate sexual relations with pupils.
- Teachers should avoid misappropriation of public funds.
- Teachers' language should be professional and they should avoid abusive language.
- Teachers should be hard working.

In the following sub-sections I elaborate on each of these bullet points in turn.

**A teacher is a role model who should show responsible behaviour:** Most of the student teachers, when discussing this issue, emphasized that they felt it was important that teachers act as role models, especially when they were with pupils. One participant, for example, explained that when he was at a secondary school there was a teacher *“who made us happy by the way he used to treat us. We all loved not only him but the mathematics subject he used to teach. He created an environment full of love and laughter”*. The observations of the students agree with what Pelletier, et al. (2002) observed when they wrote that, “when we consider the education in the classroom to a large extent the environment is created by the teacher” (p. 193). It emerged

during the discussion in this research that the environment created by the teacher should be a good one where pupils will look to their teacher for morally acceptable behavior, that is, behavior acceptable in the community. This should be an environment where a teacher's behavior does not fluctuate but is consistent with the ideals of the school and community one operates from.

Most participants acknowledged that role modeling by teachers in many Zambian schools has serious challenges. They felt that many teachers try hard to uphold their professional conduct and be good role models, but many fail because of unsupportive working environments in which they find themselves. For example, a teacher would be tempted to sell an examination paper to put food on his family's table. This view by participants is in line with what Lunenberg, Korthagen and Swennen (2007) noted when they too wrote that role modelling can indeed have challenges. In the study they carried out, which focused on the exemplary role of teacher educators in Netherlands, they showed that although an idea of modelling may be fruitful, the competence of some teacher educators to serve as role models in promoting new visioning learning can be questioned. This is because of unsupportive environments that teachers face. During this research, however, participants agreed that in spite of the challenges that go with being good role models, it was important that teachers strive to be so.

**Teachers should not develop sexual intimacy with pupils:** The student teachers discussed this issue at length and, in some cases, some pupils tended to be emotional while narrating to the workshop how teachers sexually abused them. From what was established during this research, all the participants affirmed that it was true that some teachers do not observe professionalism in their association with pupils. Some teachers take advantage of their positions and engage in sexual relations with unsuspecting pupils.

One female student reported during the discussion that she was sitting at a backbench in the classroom writing a class exercise that the teacher had given them. The teacher came and sat next

to her pretending to be marking what she was writing. *“Then without realizing it, I felt his hand touching my thighs, I nearly screamed but instead stood up and walked out of the classroom”*.

Joslyn (2011) has researched this issue which, in most cases, supports what my own student teachers said during their group discussions. Citing a survey conducted by the American Association of University Women foundation, Joslyn (2011) stated that, “twenty five percent of girls and ten percent of boys stated being harassed or abused by a school employee” (p. 4). And, citing the National Centre for Educational Statistics, Joslyn noted that out of all secondary school students who claimed being sexually harassed, close to 27% of these were linked to sexual harassment by their teachers. “ Sexually harassing behaviours have included making sexually suggestive comments, jokes, gestures or looks; touching, grabbing or pinching in a sexual manner; having someone brushing up against you in a sexual way; and someone showing a student sexually suggestive pictures, photographs, illustrations, messages or notes” (Joslyn, 2011, cited in AAUW, p. 5).

Knoll (2010) has also written on this issue. He used the word ‘grooming’ to show the tactics abusers use to gain sexual encounters with young people and, in the process, keep the relationship secret. In the case of teachers, they would provide pupils with all the favors that other pupils would not have which makes pupils happy and in most cases fail to communicate the abuse to elders.

In their discussion my students observed that sexual abuse involving young people is a serious problem in Zambia. It is especially difficult to control because it is not done in the open. They agreed that their role as teachers would be to sensitize their pupils on the need to open up wherever they encounter this evil. They said they would avoid abusing pupils, through refusing to enter into sexual intimacy with them.

**Teachers should avoid misappropriation of public funds:** The participants observed that it is rarely the duty of ordinary teachers in Zambia to handle money for the school. It was observed

during the discussions that the account officers who are appointed by the Ministry of Finance take care of the financial needs of a school. It was, however, noted that in certain situations some teachers, especially those who have Accounting qualifications, are seconded to carry out the duties of account officers. Head teachers, by virtue of their office, also sign cheques and authorise the use of money. It was observed that, sometimes, some of the teachers and head teachers either misappropriate or misapply these monies or divert funds for personal use.

Participants observed that using public funds for its intended purpose, by both teachers and head teachers, is part of good professional conduct. Misappropriation of public money sends a very negative message to would-be financiers of a school as well as the community at large and reflects poorly on the personality of teachers and a school as a whole. Carr (2007) alluded to this when he wrote that teaching can be seen to be more professionally commendable if it is carried out by teachers who are trustworthy.

**Teachers' language should be professional and they should avoid abusive language:** When Fallona (2000) wrote that a teacher's conduct is a moral character, the understanding of morality in this case meant that the teacher's work involves dealing with human beings and, therefore, the teacher's actions should take into consideration issues of what is fair and just. Teachers should also be considerate by selecting proper language to use in the presence of pupils, among other things.

My students noted in their discussions that their experience of their teachers' language usage, in most cases, was good, both at secondary school and college. Many participants agreed that teachers strive to use professionally acceptable language in discharging their duties. However, they also noted that sometimes some teachers' language tends to be unprofessional. Especially when they are stressed by the demands of their work, they tend to vent their stress and frustrations on the pupils.

Sidhu (1996) alluded to this when he wrote that, in the teaching profession, teachers may encounter frustrations in the discharge of their duties arising from such things as poor conditions of service, but he went on to ask how pupils would “benefit in their character formation from a teacher who is hypocrite, inconsistent in conduct, quarrelsome, mischievous, trouble maker, jealous, greedy, partial, vulgar ...” (p. 131). He noted that the best thing to do is for the teacher to have self-control and self-discipline. Whatever happens, the language of a teacher, according to him, should be modest and not vulgar. This is also the finding of the present study.

**Teachers should be hardworking:** Scholars such as Beijaard et al. (2004) have argued that being a teacher is a matter of the teacher not only being seen by themselves but it is a matter of being seen by others as well. Being a teacher, according to these commentators, is redefining one’s identity. A person cannot claim to be a teacher if their actions are contrary to professional conduct. Being hardworking and committed to duty is, among many other things, what defines a teacher.

Commitment to work and working hard is another area the students spent time discussing. They generally acknowledged that the majority of teachers are committed to their duties and are hardworking, but some show a careless attitude towards their work. One of the participants remarked that “*the general standard of education in Zambia has gone down due to a lack of seriousness by some teachers. Many people complain that standards have been compromised by some teachers.*” The observation of this participant is in line with what other Zambians have observed since the 1970s (Zambia Education Reforms, 1977).

The student teachers emphasized and agreed that their role, when they are employed, would be to ensure education standards are improved in their schools. For them, this is one way in which professionalism could be upheld.

From the above discussion, it can be inferred that the teaching profession demands that teachers lead exemplary life, life that can be imitated by others - especially their pupils. In the next

section of my discussion of the research data, I present and discuss the findings from what student teachers wrote in their journals.

### **Findings from the student teachers' reflective journals**

On the last day of the first cycle of AR, I asked the students to allow me read through their journals. The following were some of the main ideas that were expressed in these journals.

One participant wrote, *“The College activities have left me exhausted today. I do not think my presence in this workshop helped in any way, I dozed myself throughout the sessions”*. The comment came about because when I was arranging workshops for this research, I had looked at the college programmes for each day and saw afternoons as being suitable for these activities. However, in their journals, the majority of students wrote that they would have loved the workshops to be done in the morning because, in the afternoons, they were required to write laboratory reports in science and felt pressured for time. Another participant wrote, *“I am surprised how time is flying when I am in these workshops. When I was signing the consent form I anticipated that the workshops would be boring. Just like many other workshops I have attended in the college before, but the activities in this one have turned out to be very educative. I wish a thing like this could be organized for the second year students as well”*.

Another student wrote that *“My thoughts were on the kind of teachers and pupils I would find in the school where I would be posted. Would they be those who live by the dictates of the teaching profession or not?”* The thought of how to handle the situation if he found out that teachers do not uphold professional conduct threatened him. He claimed that people tend to join wrong things if the majority of the people they work with are involved in those activities.

Two participants wrote that the observance or non-observance of professional conduct by some teachers could be attributed to the administration of the schools concerned. They observed that, in schools where head teachers enforce good behaviour among teachers, issues of teachers not upholding professional conduct are not common. However, in schools where administrators take

an 'I don't care' attitude to these issues, problems of non- observation of professional conduct norms emerge.

The majority of participating students wrote that hearing the views of pupils on teachers' professional conduct was the climax of everything they encountered during this research. One student wrote "*[the] feeling that pupils are observing my actions whenever I enter school premises is something I do not want to think about. It is scary*". Most of them wrote that the revelations of the feelings of pupils on teachers' professional conduct somehow prepared them for life after college because, even before they went to teach in the schools, they would have been aware of how pupils felt about their teachers' behaviour.

On less positive participant wrote that "*this research is a waste of time because some teachers are allergic to change. They stick to their behaviours even though they know that such behaviours hurt other people. As long as they get personal benefit from such behaviours they would endeavour to continue*"; while another - along similar lines - wrote that, while he enjoyed the proceedings of the research, he detested the idea of writing in a journal, claiming that it is time consuming and often he used to forget to write in it.

The observation that struck me most is the one (cited above), in which the student wrote that the research was a waste of time because some people, no matter what one says, would stick to their bad behaviour. While I agree to some extent that, indeed, some teachers would find it difficult to turn away from their unprofessional conduct, I consoled myself that actually the purpose of AR that I had embarked on is to try and solve an issue of concern or try something new (McNiff, 2002; Waters-Adams, 2006). It is true that there may be some failures on the way because some people would want to hold on to their old ways of doing things, but the idea is not to give up. Another consolation comes in the work of Mezirow, in his theory which I have discussed in the second chapter, where he emphasized the need for educators to create an environment in which learners get used to learning from each other (Mezirow, 1997, cited in Imel, 1997). In this case

learners like the one referred to here might be influenced through the ideas and interaction with others that it is possible for people to change.

#### **4.4 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS FROM WORKSHOPS 4 AND 5**

The commencement of the second cycle of AR started after careful reflection and feedback from participants and my own observations of the first cycle. I organized the second cycle in a similar way as the first one, except that in this one I included semi-structured interviews. The second cycle comprised two workshops: 4 and 5.

##### **4.4.1 Independent enquiry**

The second cycle began by asking participants to comment on their experiences of the first cycle of the AR. Below are some of their comments.

*“A worthwhile endeavour,”* said one participant, *“I could not expect anything better than this”*.

*“These workshops should be extended to our friends in the first and second years,”* suggested another student.

*“The first term would have been more appropriate for these activities because we are not very busy compared with the third term,”* suggested another participant.

*“Next time you carry out the research of this nature please invite your fellow lecturers to participate in some of the workshops because some of the things we were talking about affects them as well,”* another student observed.

The feeling I got as participants were commenting on the activities of the first cycle is one of satisfaction. I wanted to build on it in the second cycle.

#### **4.4.2 Additional reading stage**

In the first AR cycle, I had given some stimulus materials from where I expected participants to read about teachers' professional conduct. I had also asked them to spend time in the library and computer laboratory to read more on this topic. However, most of them told me that there was insufficient time to do the reading. In the second cycle, most of them suggested that they needed more time to do this, to which I agreed. I facilitated this exercise by giving them more time for this exercise. There were also persistent complaints from students that the library did not have many books that specifically addressed the issue of professional conduct. They pointed out that most of the information they were able to gather came from internet sources. This was why in addition to the information they would discover on their own I gave them the *Education Act* (Zambia, Ministry of Education, 2011) and *Educating our future* (Zambia. Ministry of Education, 1996), both of which have some information on professional conduct.

After this reading stage, I discovered that the majority of students were able to come with a lot more information on teachers' professional conduct, especially that which they obtained from internet sources. They sat in small groups discussing their information and putting their ideas together. This information they later shared with the main group in the workshop.

#### **4.4.3 Group presentations**

In this section I present the chairpersons of the groups' findings. To avoid repetition I have included here only those findings that the students did not talk about in the first cycle of the AR.

The chairperson of Group A reported the following:

- The majority of teachers strive to work as professionals. Most teachers conduct themselves well when they are at school.
- Teachers' professionalism cannot be taught but learned. "Therefore, we discovered that the teachers who have problems in upholding professional conduct should not be considered as outcasts but helped".

- The high unemployment levels in Zambia have forced some people to become teachers who otherwise could have joined other careers if they had the opportunity. Such teachers, because of lack of interest, have ended up behaving contrary to the dictates of the teaching profession.

Chairperson of Group B added the group's findings as follows:

- Some school managers do not provide teachers with space where teachers could sit and advise each other about the challenges they encounter in their work. As such, some teachers, especially the new entrants to the teaching profession, tend to live a lonely professional life, making them vulnerable to misconduct.
- Some schools in remote parts of Zambia tend to be forgotten by education authorities in terms of staffing. Some schools would have only two teachers and, because those schools are rarely visited by education standards officers, teachers end up doing anything they want. Their conduct is mostly unprofessional.

The chairperson of Group C presented the group's findings, saying that, *“Through our readings we discovered that a number of teachers fail to uphold professional conduct because of vices such as favoritism, encouraging examination malpractices and laziness”*.

The presentations from chairpersons of the remaining groups did not add new ideas but were similar to what had been presented by the three groups alluded to above.

A critical look at the groups' findings brings out the following summary of main issues on teachers' professional conduct during the additional reading stage.

- Many teachers strive to work as professionals.
- Professional conduct among teachers cannot be taught but learned.
- Some teachers have entered the teaching profession for survival.
- There is a lack of proper supervision by school managers to effectively enforce professional conduct among teachers.

- Many teachers have fallen victim to vices such as favouritism, involvement in malpractice and laziness
- Public perception of the teaching profession is not favourable.

In the following sub-sections I discuss each one of the above issues in more detail.

**Many teachers strive to work as professionals:** The observation by students that, in spite of challenges teachers face, most of them strive to work as professionals and, indeed, most of them live as professionals, agrees with Varnham (2001) and Zhonggong (2006), both of whom alluded to the fact that the majority of teachers carry out their duties in a professional manner and often under great pressure. These authors noted that teachers face a lot of challenges as they execute their duties but they always try to work in the interest of their pupils. In this AR I have also heard students in their discussions in workshops appreciating the sacrifices and commitment of teachers in their work. Some of them felt that teachers who strive to be good role models should be given more opportunities to share their knowledge with their pupils.

**Professional conduct among teachers cannot be taught but learned:** The issue raised by participants that professional conduct among teachers cannot be taught but rather is *learned* is supported by Beijaard et al. (2004), who noted that professionalism implies a growth process which is often characterized by a person's learning from experiences and also by engaging in dialogue with colleagues. Experience would teach them the preferred ways are for doing things. This idea is supported by experiential learning theory alluded to earlier. In other words, while a teacher can be advised and, in some cases, even be taught how to behave in life, in the final analysis the onus would be on that teacher to grow in professional stature drawing mainly on his or her own professional experience.

**Some teachers have entered the teaching profession for survival:** The view that some teachers have entered the teaching profession for survival cannot be ruled out completely, especially in Zambia, where unemployment levels are extremely high. The country has most of

the unemployed youths roaming the streets of major cities looking for jobs which in most cases are not there. *The Post*, for example, reported on how the president was “mobbed by a large crowd of Lusaka youths who were begging for jobs during a tour of stands at the 86<sup>th</sup> Agricultural and Commercial show” (Chulu & Chanda, 2012, p. 1). Such youths are ready to take up any job that comes their way regardless of whether or not they like it. When such youths enter a profession such as teaching, they may find it difficult to uphold the dictates of the profession because they only entered the profession for survival. This situation has also caused the teaching profession to be viewed negatively. Robards (2008) acknowledged this when he noted that “The image of the schools and the teaching profession...is usually negative. The negative picture is one reflecting the social problems of society” (p. 17).

**There is a lack of proper supervision by school managers to effectively enforce professional conduct among teachers:** Kochhar (2008) described the purpose of supervision as bringing about “continuing improvement in the instructional programme” (p. 7). He went on to say that supervision represents a practical part of the overall direction of an institution’s organization. Bearing this in mind, therefore, the view by participants that school managers have contributed to some teachers’ non observance of professional conduct has some relevance and can be supported. If Kochhar’s view is anything to go by, it means that schools where head teachers (head master) do not take time to support, supervise and counsel their teachers who show weaknesses in upholding professional conduct, indirectly contribute to a lack of professionalism in the teaching profession. The theory of transformational leadership also supports the view that leaders are confidence builders who should instill good values in their followers (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Leaders (school managers in this case) who do the opposite are accomplices to unprofessional behaviour.

**Many teachers have fallen victim to vices such as favouritism, involvement in malpractice and laziness:** The students’ observation that some teachers are involved in vices such as examination malpractices and favoritism agrees with the observations of several scholars. Chiou et al. (2006), for example, observed that in everyday life people often learn by observing what

others are doing. This can be attributed also to a teacher and pupils in a classroom situation. Pupils are able to tell whether teachers are being fair in the way they handle the affairs of all the pupils. They are able to tell that the teacher is favoring some. Favoritism is a non ideal form of conduct which many scholars have thus written about as a form of professional misconduct among teachers (Kochhar, 2008; Sidhu, 2006).

Examination malpractice is another vice that student teachers identified in their reading. They claimed that some teachers leak examination question papers in return for financial gain. This claim also agrees with what Kochhar (2008) observed when she wrote that “[quite] often teachers have been found to be a party to malpractices in the examinations. How can the students be expected to respect such teachers?” (p. 342). Indeed, in this research, students observed that the challenge to them and all the teachers who wish to uphold professional conduct was to avoid vices that may be contrary to teachers’ professional conduct.

**Public perception of the teaching profession is not favourable:** The observation by students in this research that many people view the teaching profession in a negative sense has some legitimacy. This is because of some teachers failing to adhere to the dictates of the teaching profession. This view is also supported by Lawal (2012), who investigated the perception of the teaching profession in South-West Nigeria. Lawal claimed that in the past “the teacher was seen as a custodian of knowledge and an influential and inspiring personality in society. He was rated and respected over and above other professionals such that some parents would want their children to become teachers” (p. 120). Lawal went on to say that this is not the situation nowadays, events over the years have shown that the respect that teachers commanded has nosedived (Lawal, 2012).

#### **4.4.4 Interviews**

Four participants were invited to interviews. These interviews were semi-structured (Best & Khan, 2008) and were intended to clarify certain issues that were brought to light during group discussions. I picked those participants who, during their discussions, raised issues that I felt

needed to be clarified. I also interviewed each one of them to establish more about their behaviour during the workshops. The interview questions were of the question and answer type. I first piloted interview questions to establish their suitability. This I did by putting interview questions to two students who were not participating in the research. I decided not to change the questions. My final interview schedule was based on four main areas, namely:

- Whether students' understanding of teachers' professional conduct was the same after workshop discussions.
- Whether research workshops were helping them see the need to uphold professional conduct.
- What their views were on the permanent teachers' perceived negative influence on the behaviour of newly recruited teachers.
- Whether they felt a need for a similar AR to be conducted for other graduating students at the college.

I allocated codes to the student teachers I interviewed as follows: The first male student was MSA. Second male student was MSB. The female student was FSC and the last male student was MSD. Below are some excerpts from the main issues I discussed with students during the interviews.

Interviewer: We have been meeting in workshops on teachers' professional conduct for quite some time now. Would you comment on how you feel about these workshops?

MSA: *A lot to talk about sir.*

Interviewer: Please elaborate.

MSA: *You know my position sir. I have always thought that changing a personality of a person is very difficult.*

Interviewer: Is it the personality or way of life that we have been talking about?

MSA: *We are talking about the same thing sir. A teacher who is used to drinking everyday cannot change just because someone has talked to him about the evil of the act. Change of this type is very difficult to achieve.*

Interviewer: Fine, I do understand your point but the purpose of these workshops is to raise awareness about these issues so that when you are in your school, possibly your conduct could influence for good and may even change their behaviour.

MSA: *I understand sir.*

### **Understanding of professional conduct after workshop discussions**

All four students I interviewed explained that their understanding of teachers' professional conduct was not the same after the workshops. For example, when I asked MSB for his understanding he replied:

*Before I participated in this research, I knew what professional conduct for teachers meant. But I want to state that this understanding was narrow. My understanding of professionalism then only meant what the teacher does in a classroom. For example my understanding of professional conduct meant that teachers had to be in class on time, teach pupils and mark their books and make sure that they passed their examinations. My view now is that professional conduct goes beyond a classroom confinement.*

There were similar sentiments from MSD. He mentioned that before participating in the research, *I thought that the people who were supposed to be concerned with professional conduct in a school were the school administrators such as the Head teachers, and the Ministry officials. Now after those workshop discussions I believe that the onus is on all of us in the teaching profession, teachers and administrators alike.*

What was coming out strongly was that they now understood what professional conduct means and that the workshops had cleared their misunderstanding through views from other participants.

### **Workshop contribution to upholding professional conduct**

The other area explored in the interviews was whether research workshops had helped them see the need to uphold professional conduct. Here is how FSC responded to the question.

Interviewer: You have been very quiet in most of the workshops. What could be the reason?

FSC: *Silent means consent (laughs). No major reason sir. I have just been concentrating in order to follow what has been happening*

Interviewer: I am happy to hear that.

FSC: *Thank you.*

Interviewer: Would you say that the research workshops have helped you in any way to see the need for a teacher to uphold professional conduct? Please elaborate.

FSC: *Yes, think so (pauses). It is a difficult question sir, (laughs). To be honest sir, I have learnt a lot, but what has made me feel that as teachers we should be seen to live as professionals is those things from pupils.*

Interviewer: Are you talking about the stimulus materials from pupils on teachers' professional conduct?

FSC: *Exactly sir, for me what those pupils wrote was the turning point on how I look at teachers and how they should behave. Sir, teacher is under microscope (laughs).*

Interviewer: Is the need to uphold professional conduct based on the idea that teacher is under microscope?

FSC: *Partly Sir, but I believe that where a teacher follows professional demands, a conducive environment for learning is created as well.*

All the participants said that they were vested with knowledge and believed that there was a need for teachers to uphold professional conduct.

### **Permanent teachers and professional conduct**

The other issue discussed during interviews was the perceived negative influence of permanent teachers on newly recruited teachers. This issue was raised by student teachers during workshops, prompting me to make a follow up in interviews.

Three of the four interviewees expressed their concern on the behaviour of permanent teachers. They noted that, while newly recruited teachers join the schools fresh with knowledge on how to be professional in their work, most of them are discouraged by the teachers they find in schools who fail to provide leadership to new teachers on how to uphold professional conduct.

MSA observed, *I was surprised when I was on school teaching practice when one of the permanent teachers told me that there was no need for me to remain in school and give extra lesson to my pupils because salaries for teachers do not support overtime activities.*

MSB told this researcher that, at a secondary school where he did his teaching practice, he heard one teacher telling pupils to organize themselves and riot against the school administration for feeding them on beans at dinner every Friday.

All three participants affirmed in the interviews that very few permanent teachers help newly recruited teachers uphold professional conduct.

MSD told me that one of his concerns about the influence of permanent teachers on freshly graduated teachers is bickering and pulling down their colleagues in front of pupils.

Interviewer: What do you mean when you say that some teachers pull down their colleagues in front of pupils? Kindly elaborate.

MSD: *I will be very frank with you sir. Just here in the college, I heard one lecturer telling students that he felt sorry for them because the person appointed to teach one of the subjects has no experience to teach at that level. Is that how it should be sir?*

Interviewer: Certainly not, but do you have any other incident you can refer to?

MSD: *Yes, Sir (pauses). Similar sentiments were expressed when I was at secondary school. Our physics teacher, a holder of the (sic) first degree used to tell us that he was the only one qualified to teach in a senior secondary school. The other teachers who held diplomas were only seconded to teach at that level because of shortages of qualified teachers (pauses). This is what I mean by pulling others down. Sir, this does not build confidence in newly appointed teachers neither does it to the pupils.*

Interviewer: That is all?

MSD: *No sir, There is something I have remembered. Just the last teaching practice we had, one teacher was brought to the school, accused of having stolen a bicycle. Imagine, Sir, how embarrassing it was. These are things that bring negative influence to the newly appointed teachers.*

Interviewer: Certainly it was embarrassing. What do you think should be done to help such teachers to uphold professionalism?

MSD: *Sensitization, counseling and taking them for tours. Interact with other teachers where issues of professional conduct should be discussed.*

### **Action research for graduating students**

All four interviewees explained that there was a need for similar workshops to be conducted in future for graduating students. *“I feel that the way I have benefited in this research should also be extended to the others,”* noted one interviewee. There was a general view from all four students that there is a problem amongst many teachers to uphold professional conduct because of lack of preparation to face such challenges. Many newly engaged teachers rely heavily on

guidance from permanent teachers, some of whom may have difficulty in upholding professional conduct themselves.

#### **4.4.5 Planning to live as professionals**

As we went through cycles 1 and 2 of AR, I asked the students to think about how they intended to uphold professional conduct in their schools. The following were the views from individual students which they presented in the workshops. These views were also reflected in their final code of conduct which was drawn up at the conclusion of the workshops.

One issue, which was discussed extensively in the workshops, was examination malpractice - a major challenge in the Zambian education system. Leaking examination papers is in some cases attributed to teachers who take advantage of their positions to help pupils in return for money. Many participants in their presentations pledged to stand against this vice by reporting such activities to school authorities. One female participant observed that leaking papers is as good as grading oneself, *“If I leak an examination question paper to a pupil and also give her the answers. Afterwards, I mark the same pupil’s script; it is as good as asking questions and answering them myself. It is foolishness of the highest kind”*, she claimed.

The other participant noted that *“teachers who leak examination papers are those who are not confident about their teaching. If you are sure that you prepared your pupils well for examinations, why should you leak the paper?”* he asked.

While pledging to stand against examination malpractices, student teachers observed that this would be a big challenge to them because the temptation of a lot of money from pupils, especially those from wealthy families, may be too much for lowly paid teachers.

The issue of drunkenness by teachers on duty was also cited as a major challenge. Many participants observed that they would avoid this and promote the same to their fellow teachers through group meetings (these are meetings where teachers meet weekly to share their teaching experiences).

Reporting for work on time was cited by many students as another important aspect of professional conduct they would observe. Participants who commented on this issue observed that reporting for work on time would send a positive signal to those teachers who report to school late. One participant told the workshop that, at a school where she taught during her teaching practice, *“a teacher who reported late for work told a staff meeting that he always felt embarrassed when he arrived at school and found that most teachers had already arrived for work. He pledged to change”*. Most participants observed that their commitment to reporting for work on time would, hopefully, force teachers who report late to emulate them.

One participant explained that, for him, he would ensure that professional conduct is adhered to in his work through creating good personal relationships with fellow teachers and pupils. He mentioned that, if his relationship was good with teachers, he could easily advise them in any area he saw that their behaviour was un-professional. He mentioned that, *“I will try by all means to stick to the code of conduct and lead by example to my fellow teachers.”*

Many participants also talked about the issue of teacher- pupil intimate relationships. They observed that, while it is difficult to remain steadfast in this area, they would try to keep a social distance and also try to counsel pupils in class so that pupils who may harbour such intentions abandon them. One participant observed that *“intimate relationships between teachers and pupils, especially female pupils, could be avoided if teachers do not spend too much time with pupils, especially pupils of the opposite sex, especially during lunch hours. This brings temptations because teachers become too familiar with pupils and vice versa”*. The workshop participants were eager to face challenges of living as professionals in their schools.

#### **4.5 Researcher’s Reflective journal**

When I embarked on this research, I underestimated the interest it would generate among my participating student teachers. I got the impression that some students took this as a forum to speak about issues that had troubled them for a long time. Some of the students, especially female participants, were emotionally involved and sometimes shed tears as they narrated how

some teachers tried to force themselves on them. Below are some extracts from my own reflective journal entries.

- “Today the workshop discussions were done in a joyful atmosphere as participants laughed as others were sharing their experiences on the conduct of teachers”.
- “I was emotionally affected by the revelation of a female student on how she was forced to accept sex from a teacher who threatened her that he would make her life in school difficult”.
- Today as the students were discussing their experiences on teachers’ professional conduct when they were at secondary school, most of them continuously referred to the situation in the college among lecturers. They claimed that lecturers too have to improve their standing among the students.
- This afternoon’s group discussions were so negative that I decided to ask students to also talk about some of the things that they saw in their teachers and lecturers alike that inspired them.
- As a researcher and participant, I too have enjoyed every moment of these activities. I have also learnt a lot from these activities which I feel will shape my own professional life. I believe these extracts ‘speak’ for themselves. Other reflections from my journal entries are included in Appendix 9

#### **4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter, I have presented, discussed and analyzed the results of my action research study. The activities of this action research were designed to enable the participants and me to better understand our practice in relation to issues of professional conduct, and also to explore solutions to some of the things that tend to make some teachers behave unprofessionally. McNiff, cited by Waters-Adams (2006), once noted that AR encourages practitioners to become knowledge-makers rather than merely knowledge-users. This was the idea also in this study. Together with my student teachers, we explored options on how to improve our standing in society in our own conduct as teachers. My impression is that as a result of their participation in this research this group of student teachers are now better-equipped to be knowledge seekers and makers around

the important issue of professional conduct. I now move to the final chapter where I summarize the main findings of my research.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present a summary of the main findings of the research and discuss their broader possible implications for teacher educators such as myself who are working towards enhancing student teachers' awareness of issues relating to professional conduct. I also discuss the limitations of this research in terms of the methods I used as well as the research process itself. In the final sections of the chapter, I provide some recommendations based on the findings, and identify some knowledge gaps and possibilities for future research in relation to the challenge of raising student teachers' awareness of the significance of teachers' professional conduct.

#### 5.2 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

In the following sub-sections, I present my key findings. In the first two sub-sections I discuss findings on students' perceptions of what professional conduct means to them; in subsequent sections I anchor my discussion around the findings during the entire research process, and around how best I might use these findings to improve my own professional competence in the college as well as strengthening my students' understandings of issues of professional conduct.

##### **5.2.1 Student teachers initially identified professional conduct as a 'school or classroom' issue only**

The data collected on student teachers' initial perceptions of the issue of professional conduct revealed students' narrow view of the subject. This only began to change after our first workshop discussions. While it was clear that most of the participating students understood the definitional meaning of professional conduct, their views did not encompass all that teachers' professional conduct entails. For most of them professional conduct was something confined to a classroom, where the teacher operated from or the confines of the school premises. How teachers behaved after they had left school was perceived as being their own business. For example one participant noted that "*there should be a distinction between a teacher in a school and a teacher at home.*"

*When I am at home I want my privacy to be respected. The jacket of my teaching profession is hanged on the gate of the school only to be worn when I report back the next day*". There was also a consistent view from a number of participants that the people who ought to be most concerned with issues of professional conduct are head teachers and other educational authorities; not teachers more generally. Another participant claimed that *"since head teachers' role is general supervision of their teachers they are the ones who should be more concerned with issues of professional conduct not ordinary teachers"* (see first AR cycle for detailed explanation of participants' views on the meaning of professional conduct).

From what I gathered during the research workshops, these misconceptions arose because the college has not put in place policy to explicitly teach students about issues of professional conduct. Students are only seriously talked to on these issues when they are being prepared to go for teaching practice. The Teaching Practice Committee arranges an hour's meeting to talk about these issues. The time, in most cases, is not sufficient to touch on all issues to do with this vast subject. Another forum for this issue is when the College Principal meets students during assemblies. Here again the time is limited.

### **5.2.2 Student teachers recognize that professional conduct issues extend beyond school and classroom**

After the first workshop, it was clear that there was a significant shift from the participating students' earlier understanding of teachers' professional conduct. After this first work shop most of the participants agreed that their earlier understanding of professional conduct was not what it had been. For example when discussing teachers' behavior, students looked at a teacher as a mirror of society not only of the school. As such good behavior portrayed by teachers was supposed to be the same irrespective of where a teacher was. This shift of position for most of them came about after reading from Sidhu's book.

This research was about raising my students' awareness on issues of professional conduct. The research was also meant to help me grow professionally as a teacher educator. This is so because as a participant in the research process I learnt how best I could improve my professional

standing in the college as well as how I could teach the same to my students. My main findings in this research are therefore anchored in what I have explained above. In the following paragraphs I discuss the main findings of this research.

### **5.2.3 More reading materials on professional conduct are required**

This research revealed that students at our college lack enough books and other hard copy reading materials which specifically talk about professional conduct for teachers. During the first and second cycles of this AR, I had asked student teachers to go to the library to do their own reading and see what they could discover on their own on this subject. They reported that most of the information they collected came from on-line sources. They reported that there was scanty information in the books in the library on professional conduct. I verified that indeed the college did not have sufficient reading materials on this subject. Since my intention in this study is my capacity to develop in my students a stronger understanding of the issue of professional conduct, I wish to make summarized notes and put them in the college library so that when I teach them on these issues I can refer them to this information more quickly than having them sitting at the computer searching for this information on line. This is consistent with Sidhu's thinking when he claims that pupils need the guidance of a teacher in a number of matters and situations (p. 142).

### **5.2.4 College lecturers too need to be role models when it comes to professional conduct**

This research revealed that students need lecturers to inspire them in areas of professional conduct, which sometimes they do not get. This came out strongly; especially when students were reporting on their personal search from the library and online sources, where most of them claimed that what they are asked to do in the area of professional conduct sometimes contradicts what they see in the lives of their lecturers like myself. This was echoed by student MSD during my interview with him. Student teachers were yearning to be inspired by me and my colleagues in areas of professional conduct. This finding agrees with what Stufft (1990) wrote when he claimed that students "need a teacher who is a mature and professional role model someone they can trust to do the right thing" (p. 40). Arising from this finding and in order to improve my professional growth in this area and teach the same to my student teachers I plan to have self-

evaluation in classes that I teach at the end of every college term. I would invite student teachers to make evaluation about how they think I have inspired them in areas of professional conduct, and where they feel I should improve. This they would write on their own without putting their names on their papers. I would also urge them to evaluate themselves on how they have improved in the area of professional conduct as a class and how best they could improve in areas where they have shortcomings. This action would improve my practice as well as that of students. This would also address students' concerns expressed in this AR.

### **5.2.5 Summative assessment items are required to be incorporated in college curriculum**

This research has established that there is a need for assessment items on professional conduct to be incorporated in the main curriculum. While efforts have been made, especially by the college administration and lecturers like myself, to talk to the students on the issue of professional conduct, some students do not take what is discussed seriously. For example student MSB told this researcher that “*subjects that are not examined are the last thing we look at in our daily studies*”. These sentiments were also expressed by other participants in this study. This finding has necessitated that in order for me to effectively and practically sensitize and raise my students' awareness on professional conduct, there is a need to formulate assessment items during summative assessment. These items would be assessed like any other subjects I teach. This will respond to the concerns of my participants. Kochhar (2008) echoed this approach when he noted that a teacher needs to be skilful to respond to situations that need change.

### **5.2.6 Resistance to change is a problem in reaching out to some students**

This AR has established that students' responses to professional conduct issues would face some challenges. During this research I saw some kind of partial resistance to change by some student teachers. For example during this research student teacher MSA held the view that people cannot transform if they are comfortable with the life they lead, and that no amount of sensitization would change their status. This was also the view of some other participants in this research. I want to approach this issue in my effort to raise my students' awareness of professional conduct by organizing occasional workshops in my classes where students would share their experiences

on issues of professional conduct and where they would talk about why it is necessary to uphold professional conduct. This is in line with the thinking of Scott (2006), who observed that in addition to mentors, monthly professional development workshops are important to address what he termed “timely issues” (p. 69).

### **5.2.7 Cultural background negatively affects free discussion on professional conduct**

This research revealed a strong cultural inclination by students to the issues discussed. This research comprised of forty students from different ethnic groups in Zambia. Upon reaching puberty, different Zambian tribes have different methods of initiating their young people into adulthood (Snelson, 1974). Some of these methods include lessons in sexual issues, general behaviour when associating with children and adults and many more. During this research I had the opportunity to read through some of the students’ entries in their journals. Some wrote that they felt uncomfortable discussing issues of sex in public and with elders (See Appendix 8, Journal C). They were referring to the time when during the workshops issues of teacher pupil sex relations were discussed. Other related issues were also raised by students in their journals. Since this research is about me and my practice, I want to address this issue in my teaching by approaching professional bodies, especially from the Society for Occupational Health to come once in a while to my classes to give professional talks to the students. In the process of doing all this I hope also to respect my students’ cultural identity. Posner (2005) once noted that “diversity and respect for the student’s background and abilities are important not only for a student’s mental health but also for leveling the playing field for all students as they push forward to achieve their dreams” (p. 100).

## **5.3 SOME FINAL REFLECTIONS ON RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND ON ITS POTENTIAL VALUE**

In the following sections I look at my experiences during the research process, and then explore the potential value this experience has had on me as a teacher educator.

### 5.3.1 Research experience

I entered the research field with no prior experience of having conducted AR. I thus entered the field as a researcher and as a learner at the same time. Because of this I was both nervous and anxious about how the research would turn out. The feeling that I might get stuck on the way unsettled me. However I was surprised at how all these changed when I met the participants in the first workshop. The enthusiasm they displayed to the issues raised, especially to the pupils' comments in the questionnaires was a morale booster for me. The anxiety I had before the first workshop gave way to optimism. I looked forward to future workshops with confidence.

While it is true to mention that I learnt a lot during the course of this research project, there are some areas that stood out that I wish to highlight.

- **Formulating research topic in AR:** This research has taught me that formulating a research topic requires serious reflection on what the researcher intends to do. I have learned that the topic being considered should be the one where the researcher has personal interest. The interest for me was a topic in AR that would improve my professional standing amongst my student teachers. My own experience in this study has shown me that because of the interest I had in the area of professional conduct, the interest acted as a driving force to learn more on the topic. I have also learnt that a good research topic should be one that is researchable. It should be a subject where research instruments are easily formulated, study population sampled and objectives formulated on the topic are measurable (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). I have also learned that the topic should be clearly focused and shouldn't be alien to the researcher. Professional conduct was indeed a topic that was not alien to me; I chose it because it was about my life as well as the dictates of my career. It was a provocative topic in the sense that it was open to variety of views and interpretations (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Bak (2003) has summarized how a good research topic should be as follows: It should be "succinctly formulated, captures the main focus, contains no ambiguities and grabs the reader's interest" (unpaged). These are things I took into account when formulating my own research topic. I now believe that whichever research topic a researcher finally settles on, it should be one whose results will contribute

to the expansion of knowledge in that field. The expansion of knowledge for me is in my own handling of students in the area of professional conduct. This being an action research, the other lesson I have learnt in formulating a topic is that a topic needs to be located “within a researcher’s experience and context. It needs to be grounded in the realities of the work place” (Koshy, 2005, p. 38). This AR indeed was about what I experience daily in my work. Should I embark on a similar research project in future, these would continue to be my guiding principles.

- **Constructing research questions:** Many researchers have identified the central focus of a research project in terms of the set of questions formulated (Taylor, et.al. 2011). Research questions are “issues that the researcher needs to answer... (they) guide the research process by addressing the variables of the study” (Kombo & Tromp, 2006, p. 48). My experience during this study was that properly formulated questions made the research easier. This is because from its inception, I observed that I continued referring to them to keep focus on my research problem. I learned that without constant reference to the research questions, the possibility of losing focus was high. I also learned during this research that it takes time to arrive at permanent research questions, as more often than not these are revised as need arises. Research questions also should describe the context within which the research is situated (Kombo & Tromp, 2006)
- **Choosing appropriate literature:** During the course of the study I was exposed to a bulk of literature both from books and internet sources. My challenge was to choose literature suitable for the kind of research I was conducting in AR. This challenge was mainly experienced in relation to Chapter Two, especially when it came to locating original sources. Bozalek & Bak (in Bak, 2003) observed that “ A literature review is seen in various ways by different disciplines and individuals, but it generally involves a search and documentation of primary (original) sources of scholarship rather than secondary sources, which are reports of other people’s work” (unpaged). I noted during this research that some original books that were being referred to by secondary sources were out of print. It was not always easy to locate the few that were still in print. A positive aspect, however,

was that by searching for appropriate books I tended to meet new ideas. So there was a lot of learning in the process. The interaction with literature also gave me some experience in choosing which literature I needed and where to locate it, especially on internet. Wide reading also exposed me to a variety of approaches dealing with professional conduct. In this study I also had an opportunity to learn theories in which my research was situated (see 2.4, 2.5 & 2.6). Through the three theories engaged - transformative, transformational and experiential, I was able to gain a better understanding of the theoretical foundations of my subject matter (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). I have also learnt that an effective literature search identifies gaps for future researchers (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

- **Choosing an appropriate methodology:** My research was action oriented, therefore how to collect data using methods such as observations, interviews and others were things I had to learn as the research progressed (see 3.7). I had to learn a variety of strategies, techniques and terminologies to put across what I wanted to explain so that readers would be able to understand the direction of my study. I learnt that while it is important to stress the methodology I used in gathering the data, it was equally important not to “overlook the methodology of turning ...data into information, through which insights may be gained” (Taylor et.al. 2006, p. 9). I have also learnt that “(the) whole purpose of research methodology is to generate that information” (Taylor, et.al., 2006, p. 9).
- **Improving my writing skills:** Before I embarked on this research I used to take a number of things for granted which I now realize are of great value in research of this sort. Writing skills is one of them. In writing the report of this research I have learned the following as being important. When writing a research report I now realise that the language should be clear and straight-forward so that readers have no difficulty in following the train of argument. Paragraphs should reflect similar ideas. I have also learnt that sentences that I construct in the write up of my thesis should be written in such a way that readers would find sense in what I have written. In other words the flow of the arguments in the thesis should be logical (Bak, 2003).

- **Improving my interviewing skills for AR:** I learned that doing a pre- interview with someone knowledgeable about the topic is very important. This is so because the interviewer is then able to test the relevance and depth of the questions (Bak, 2003).
- **Understanding the need for collaboration with other stakeholders in the college:** Koshy (2005) noted that collaboration and co- operation with other stakeholders is one of the important features of AR. This is one of the major lessons I learnt during the study. As it was carried out in the college where I had to use college facilities and in some cases personnel to effectively carry out my research, there was a lot of collaboration with fellow lecturers, workers and students. I also discovered that in some cases I had to consult people who were not part of the research to fulfill certain roles.
- **Working within a qualitative research framework:** I also learnt that an action research can effectively be carried out when a researcher is working within a qualitative paradigm. I saw that most of my data were of a descriptive nature. Koshy (2005) noted that a qualitative paradigm may be preferred because “the data may be more in form of transcripts, descriptions and documents for analysis” (p. 86).
- **Missing data gathering opportunities:** I found that most of the data collection strategies worked as I had planned. However after workshops and interviews, I realized that I could have used questionnaires to collect more data from the students.

During the workshops I had seen that some participants were reluctant to disclose their most personal encounters in the area of professional conduct. I realized that my presence as their lecturer had an effect on them.

Throughout the research, especially during workshops, participants continued referring to some of the unprofessional conduct they encounter with their lecturers in classes, though not mentioning names. I saw this as a cardinal issue I should approach whenever I am sensitizing student teachers on these issues.

I saw as every day passed during this study that I was learning something new. Before the project started, I thought I was an authority on professional conduct issues, but as the research progressed I realized that I was no more than a novice in the field.

The other major thing I have learned is that a teacher educator should cultivate personal humility. Sometimes I have the feeling that I know a lot when I stand in front of student teachers. This research has taught me that in many instances learners have a useful amount of knowledge on the issues raised. The workshops I conducted attested to this.

### **5.3.2 Potential value of the research.**

The findings in this AR have demonstrated that the study was a valuable undertaking in that it helped expand awareness of the participants (including myself) about the need to uphold professional conduct. The formulation of a code of conduct by students attests to this (see Appendix 3). For me as the teacher educator and the initiator of this piece of AR, much has changed in the way I look at student teachers. I used to take a lot for granted as far as teachers' professional conduct was concerned. I used to think that everything was fine as long as no student teacher pointed out weaknesses in the way their lecturers conducted themselves professionally. I have realized that this was so because the student teachers were not given an opportunity to air their views. This AR gave them this opportunity (See Chapter 4). Participants were categorical in pointing out that not all was well with lecturers in relation to how they conducted themselves professionally. My response to this was to plan on how I was going to bring these issues to my fellow lecturers so that we might work at improving the quality of our interactions with our students. Without this research I would not be doing what I do now.

Every day at break time, lecturers meet in the staffroom to talk about various issues in the College. This normally lasts about half an hour. I take advantage of this gathering to bring to the lecturers issues of professional conduct. There is also a staff meeting conducted termly. This is usually a very long meeting which sometimes lasts close to three hours. Here too I avail myself of the opportunity to talk about issues of professional conduct.

Every year student teachers in the second and third years are sent to schools throughout the country for teaching practice (commonly known in Zambia as ‘school experience’). A School Experience committee is in charge of organizing the issues relating to teaching practice. I will take advantage of this to lobby the committee to put in place measures to assist student teachers in being aware of and upholding professional conduct in the schools to which they are assigned. For instance, by preparing hand-outs with do’s and don’ts which students would refer to when they are on their own teaching in schools.

This research has revealed my own shortcomings as a teacher educator; I am now able to look at myself as a teacher and ask whether my behaviour is in line with the dictates of the teaching profession. This research is like a mirror reflecting my professional image back to me. In this way too I would say that the project has been a valuable undertaking.

What I have written above is how I gauge the value of the research to me, but I feel that other than my own efforts the research itself has the potential to create awareness among teachers who read this thesis. It would act as a reminder to them of some issues on professional conduct that they might have forgotten or simply ignored. By reading what the pupils said, they may be sensitised to some of their behaviour that may not be in line with their profession.

I see this study as being valuable also to lecturers in colleges and universities who are entrusted with responsibilities to train teachers. I feel that by reading this thesis some of the views of students might touch them constructively.

This study is a contribution to what other researchers have written on the need for teachers to conduct themselves professionally. I feel it has the potential to add to the literature on this topic.

#### **5.4 SOME RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS’ UNDERSTANDING OF ISSUES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Zuber-Skerrit (1996), commenting on AR, noted that it is a research where teachers should own the problem and feel responsible for solving it. It is partly from this realization and my belief in

my own professional development, as well as my capacity to develop in my students a stronger understanding of the issue of professional conduct, that I make the following recommendations:

- **Sensitization workshops for student teachers.** Student teachers need to be given sensitization workshops from time to time on issues of professional conduct. This recommendation arises mainly from the participants themselves. Some wrote in their journals that there was a need to continue refreshing their minds in workshops on this issue so that they did not backslide. (See appendix 8, Journal E). As their lecturer, who “owns the problem” (Zuber-Skerrit, 1996, p. 83) I share this view.
- **Incentives for student teachers.** What emerged from interviews as well as the discussions in the first cycle conducted during this research was an observation that programmes that are not ‘incentive-driven’ are rarely taken seriously by their intended beneficiaries. My recommendation therefore is that the college initiates ways in which student teachers who excel in areas of professional conduct are motivated. To improve my practice in this regard, I plan to introduce in all my classes some incentives such as giving them books and exempting them from some class chores for a period of time and having their names read at college assemblies as outstanding students in areas of professional conduct.
- **Suggestion boxes for student teachers.** This research revealed that there is need to develop a proper link between students and lecturers (see cycle 2 of AR,). Very often during this research students claimed that they do not have appropriate communication mechanisms. Most of them claimed that they feared victimization from their colleagues if their names were mentioned as having revealed sensitive issues to lecturers. It is from this background that I make this recommendation of confidentiality.
- **Learning tours for student teachers.** To develop in students a strong understanding of the issues of professional conduct, I recommend study tours. Such tours should be to schools where student teachers would mingle with experienced teachers and have an opportunity to ask teachers about their experiences in the area of professional conduct. The lecturer in charge would also stand to benefit from these tours. This is an issue the

participants also raised during workshops and interviews (see interview with student MSD). The issue of learning from others is also supported by Beijaard et.al. (2004), who wrote that if we have to be professional and observe professional conduct it means a growth process which would be characterized by not only learning from our own experiences but also engaging in dialogue with other people and colleagues. Mezirow's theory which I alluded to in Chapter Two also has similar view.

- **Motion pictures and film strips.** To vary the methods of teaching issues of professional conduct to student teachers. My recommendation is that lecturers in the college need to be innovative in our teaching. My recommendation is that student teachers be shown video clips on professional ethics for teachers. During this research video clips were used in which students were filmed during the workshops. After these workshops I showed one of the videos to the students. They were very attentive watching themselves deliberating issues of professional conduct. I concluded that one way in which professional conduct issues could be taught to student teachers is by showing them films on how other teachers have succeeded in upholding professional conduct. In this way promotion of professional growth would be enhanced. Sidhu (1996) also referred to this when he noted that motion pictures and film strips are important ingredients for teachers and inspectors in promoting learning.
- **Professional conduct clubs for student teachers.** The other recommendation I make is the introduction of professional conduct clubs in colleges of education. This research has established that ideas that are borne from students themselves are likely to be sustained. There was a lot of enthusiasm by students when drawing up a code of conduct for themselves (see appendix 3). This interest assured me that what the students wrote for themselves would most probably be respected. Kochhar (2008) and Sidhu (1996) express similar views. For this reason I feel that for students to feel part and parcel of this growth process there is need to introduce professional conduct club in the college This is a club where students should meet in the company of their patron, a lecturer, to discuss issues of professional conduct. Fallona (2000) claimed that teachers by virtue of their profession

should be responsible for creating a moral community that they want to advance. For the college, this could be a club to advance professional conduct issues.

## **5.5 SOME LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY**

When I embarked on this AR, I had targets that I assumed would be met by the time I could conclude it. However some of these targets could not be realized because of circumstances beyond my control. I devote this section to discussing limitations to the study.

The study was limited by time. While in my planning I had anticipated more than two AR cycles, I found that this was not feasible because my participants were increasingly distracted by preparation for their end-of-year examinations at the same time they were attending my workshop sessions. I therefore decided to limit my AR to two cycles.

The use of audio and visual materials helped capture as much information as possible. This method however had some limitations. Some participants, in spite of my assurance that recording them on video and audio instruments was for the purpose only of my research, still exhibited some uneasiness, especially when the video camera was focused on them when they were talking. I sensed that had it not been for the presence of these recording devices, the students might have participated even more actively and uninhibitedly in the workshops.

Another limitation of the study arises from the fact that whenever a new idea is introduced, there are some who prefer to maintain the status quo and who are thus not open to change (Doug, 1991). As noted in chapter 4 and 5, a few of the students participating in the workshops expressed the view that research like this could not change the way people are. They saw the study as a waste of time. I was afraid that such sentiments might have negatively affected other students who recognized the value of the research and who were willingly and fully participating in it.

A further limitation was that because I was carrying out the research at my work place, I was time and again interrupted by students from other groups and even by my colleagues. I

sometimes had to leave the room to attend to these interruptions. In the same line there was a potential limitation on my part as a lecturer teaching full time while also trying to carry out research. Sometimes this reduced my own effectiveness as I tended to be overwhelmed by commitments. My being a member of the college staff could also have inhibited the openness of the participants, who were my own students. For example, I sensed that because of this power differential, some participants were holding back on some issues to do with their friends' professional conduct.

In many cultures, Zambia's included, young people are not encouraged to express negative views about elders (Snelson, 1974) From my experience with pupils' questionnaires, there was a high possibility that student teachers also could have written a lot about their experiences on teachers' professional conduct, but some views were withheld because of their cultural background.

Davies (2007) claimed that "research is a process of engaging in planned or unplanned interactions with or interventions in parts of the real world, and reporting on what happens and what they seem to mean" (p. 17). In this research most of the activities were planned by the researcher. My feeling was that I could have added value to my research had I gone out on college campus just to see and record in my journal if what we were discussing was making any impact in their lives in terms of how their behaviour in the college was as future teachers .My findings could then have been used to gauge whether what we were discussing was making any impact on professional growth. This I feel could have been the unplanned intervention that could have been included in the study.

## 5.6 SOME POSSIBILITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This AR has demonstrated that there is potential for further research in the issues of professional conduct, not only in Zambia, where this research was conducted, but in many other countries. Matters pertaining to professional conduct are universal.

The following are some of the issues that future researchers may want to examine:

- This research specifically addressed the issue of raising students' awareness of issues of professional conduct. I suggest that future researchers on this issue consider turning to the teachers in schools and carry out research on what leads some of them to consistently fail to observe professional conduct, even though they know that this is necessary to their profession.
- Research involving head teachers, to explore their views on teachers' adherence to professional conduct, would be another interesting research possibility.
- Future researchers may want to target non-academic staff on issues of professional conduct because professional conduct in an institution of learning cannot be left to the teaching staff alone. It cuts across all the members of staff in that institution, both academic and non-academic. In this AR participants mentioned that certain members of ancillary staff conducted themselves professionally, but that there were also instances of disturbing non-adherence to professional conduct by this group.
- This AR was about teachers' professional conduct. However it was carried out among participants who were not yet teachers. At the completion of this research. I realized that my data could have been boosted if I had involved qualified teachers either through an interview or a questionnaire. This I felt was important because their views could have added value to what challenges, if any, they encounter in upholding professionalism. Side-lining them as the case was in this research meant missing vital information from this group which I feel is a major stakeholder in issues of professional conduct. Research involving qualified teachers would be another possibility.

- In Chapter Three of this AR, I indicated that I used purposive sampling, using a sample comprising 40 students from the third-year science class. As the participants and I went through the circles of AR, I felt that I should have extended the sample to another class as the purpose of this research was to raise students' awareness around issues of professional conduct. Having more participants means that more teachers of the future would have been exposed to these issues. Conducting a research targeting a large sample could be another possibility for carrying out a similar research.
- From the way the research was going, I concluded that had I gone through another cycle, the research might have revealed more issues than it in fact did. Limited time prevented this. Therefore I feel that in future a similar research could be carried out but involving more action research cycles.
- The other possibility would be a research targeting teacher educators' professional development. This group is responsible for training future teachers. If this group is well versed in the issue of professional conduct there could be assurance that their product would also be the same.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

This research focused on raising selected pre-service student teachers' awareness around issues of professional conduct. Using an AR approach, my student teachers and I participated in workshop and interview sessions, and also spent time in the library and online, exploring this important issue. My conclusion is that sensitization of pre-service teachers about the importance of upholding professional conduct mores needs to be an ongoing exercise. On my part as a teacher educator and participant in this research, I have learned a great deal from my experiences in developing and implementing the workshops. I feel I am now in a much stronger, more knowledgeable position to continue enhancing my capacity to implement similar workshops for subsequent cohorts of pre-service student teachers enrolling at my college.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE

RHODES UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

30<sup>th</sup> May, 2011

Dear Grade 12 Pupil

I am a student of education at Rhodes University, and I am conducting research towards my Masters degree.

In order to carry out my research, I need to ask for your assistance by requesting that you complete this questionnaire.

The information I've asked for in this questionnaire is needed for research purposes only. I have not asked you to give your name, and I want to assure you that all of your answers will be treated with utmost respect and confidentiality.

Please try to answer each question as truthfully and honestly as you possibly can. I need to know what you *really* believe!

I have provided spaces for you to write your answers. If you want to write more than the space allows, you are welcome to continue on the blank back page of this questionnaire.

Thank you very much.

FELIX NKALAMO CHISHIMBA







11. If you were asked to name ONE thing that you especially admire in a teacher, what would this be? Briefly explain why you chose this particular thing.

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Thank you very much for your time.

If you would like to contact me to discuss further anything from this questionnaire, you are welcome to phone me on my cell (+260 0966236351)

## APPENDIX 2: PUPILS' CONSOLIDATED RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### Pupils' responses to a question about things they like about how teachers treat them

Area of admiration	Frequency	Percentage
Knowledge of subject	04	10
Taking teaching duties seriously	04	10
Understanding	03	07
Kindness / Friendliness	12	29
Encouraged to work hard	06	15
Being treated fairly	02	05
Being guided for the future	06	14
Being respected	04	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data: 2011.

The table above shows that a large number of respondents (29%) preferred teachers who are kind and friendly. These were followed by those who said they liked teachers who encouraged them to work hard and those who offer them guidance for future life. Knowledge of the subject, taking teaching seriously and respect for pupils followed at 10%. The least area of admiration was pupils being treated with fairness (at 5%).

### Pupils' responses to the question about things they do not like about the way teachers treat them.

Things they do not like	Frequency	%
Sexual harassment	10	18
Missing lessons / late coming	01	02
Coming for work drunk	03	05
Corporal punishment	05	09
Favoritism	05	09
Being harsh	04	07
Improper dressing	02	04
Abusive language / rudeness	12	21
Examination malpractices	01	02
Careless attitude	06	11
Wasting time joking or telling stories during the lesson	04	07
Discouraging talk	03	05
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data: 2011

The table above shows that majority of respondents in tune of 21% do not like teachers who are rude and who use abusive language. Sexual harassment by teachers is second most unfavorable

behaviour from teachers that pupils detest. It stands at 18%. Careless attitude by teachers in their execution of duties follows at 11%. Corporal punishment and favoritism, wasting pupils' time through story telling instead of engaging them in learning as well as being harsh to them follow in that order.

The least hated behaviours are discouraging talk, missing lessons or late coming and examination malpractices (these stood at 5 and 2%).

**Pupils' responses to differences in the way female teachers carry out their formal duties at school as compared to male teachers**

Teachers' behavior	Frequency (Female)	%	Frequency (Male)	%
Delivers content to the satisfaction of pupils.	01	5	12	44.4
Lazy and not serious in the execution of duty.	11	58	01	3.7
Sexual misconduct	00	00	03	11.1
Abusive language	00	00	02	7.4
Favoritism	01	5	02	7.4
Improper dressing	02	11	00	00
Drunken behaviour	00	00	04	14.9
Role model to the pupils	04	21	03	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field data: 2011**

Responding to the question on comparison in the way male and female teachers carry out their duties, majority of respondents claimed that male teachers stand tall in this regard (44.4%). This was against only (5%) of those who thought otherwise. The majority believed that female teachers were lazy and not serious in executing their duties.

On sexual misconduct involving pupils, all the respondents who answered this question believed that the culprits were male teachers (11.1%). Male teachers were also cited for abusive language and drunken behaviour on duty at 7.4 and 14.9% respectively. Female teachers were cited by the majority of respondents for improper dressing (11%) while many respondents believed that male teachers were prone to favoritism especially if it involved female pupils (7.4%). Of the seven

pupils who commented on the teachers being role models, they thought that female teachers were superior in this regard.

**Pupils’ responses to the question on how their teachers’ behaviour affects their learning.**

<b>Negative Effects</b>	<b>Positive Effects</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of concentration in class		10	23.8
Failure to complete syllabus		07	16.6
Backwardness		05	11.9
Fear to ask questions in class		04	9.5
Abandoning subject taught by uncommitted teachers		02	4.8
	Good role model for pupils	02	4.8
	Motivation to learn	01	2.4
Hate for uncommitted teachers		04	9.5
	Hope for the future	01	2.4
Feel uncomfortable in class		05	11.9
Influenced by bad role models		01	2.4
Total		42	100.0

**Source: Field data: 2011**

A small number of respondents commented on the positive effects of teachers’ behaviour on their learning, of these 4.5% claimed that teachers were good role models to them. The others indicated that when teachers motivate them they are encouraged to put more effort in their studies but they claimed that this is rarely done. The majority of respondents commented on this issue in terms of the negative effects the teachers’ behaviour has on their learning.

For instance the majority (23.8%) cited lack of concentration in class. One respondent for example wrote that “my teachers’ behaviour affects my learning in the sense that if the teacher insults me, I feel ashamed and throughout the lesson I will simply be thinking about the insult and the embarrassment it has caused to me among my classmates”.

Another respondent noted that, “if a teacher offends me in class it disturbs me so much that throughout the lesson the only thing that I will be thinking about is what the teacher did to me.”

The other respondents cited failure to complete their syllabus in time for their examination. They claimed that teachers who are fond of missing class or coming late to teach derail their learning. This affects their performance in national examinations.

The other group of pupils said that some teachers’ behaviour make them feel uncomfortable in class. This mainly came from girls who claimed that whenever they turned down a teacher’s

sexual advances, learning becomes very difficult for them. On lack of commitment to duty, many respondents claimed that this has serious academic implications to them. Some pupils wrote that pupils who previously used to perform better in assignments, tests and examinations become backward as they lack consistent guidance from their teachers.

A good number of respondents indicated that they hate teachers whose behaviour they do not approve (bad role models). Others said that they are afraid to ask questions to such teachers. One respondent, a female pupil wrote that “I personally fail to ask my mathematics teacher questions even if I am not clear because he normally becomes rude and instead of answering a question he starts shouting and threatening to spit saliva on a pupil who has asked the question.”

A few respondents (4.8%) said they stopped attending classes taught by teachers they do not like and in the long run drop the subjects that they teach altogether.

The least number of respondents (2.4%) claimed that they tend to be influenced by bad behaviour of some teachers. In some cases, they also start drinking beer and insulting people.

**Pupils’ responses to the question on the kind of teacher they would recruit in teaching if they were officials of Zambia Ministry of Education.**

<b>The Teacher</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Committed to work	18	41.8
Knowledgeable	07	16.3
Good manners / behaviour	12	27.9
Understanding	02	4.7
God fearing	01	2.3
Female	01	2.3
Male	02	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data: 2011

The majority of respondents said that they would recruit teachers who would be committed to work. This was closely followed by those who preferred teachers who portrayed good behavior/manners and who were knowledgeable in their subject specialties.

The least number of respondents said they would recruit male teachers and those who understand. Those who preferred God fearing and female teachers stood at 2.3% each.

**Pupils' responses to whether they would take up teaching as their career.**

<b>Pupils' Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
In favour	17	42.5
Against	23	57.5
Total	40	100.0

**Source: Field data: 2011**

The table above shows that the majority of respondents (57.5%) would not like to be teachers. Only 42.5 percent were willing to take up teaching as their career. The majority of those who wrote that they would like to be teachers were female.

## APPENDIX 3: STUDENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT

### *MUFULIRA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION GRADUATING STUDENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT*

#### ***PREAMBLE***

We the third year Diploma student teachers, having participated in Mr.Chishimba's research project and having agreed on the proper conduct of teachers, have given ourselves this code of conduct. We promise to remain faithful to the ideals contained in this code of conduct wherever we are *going to serve as teachers*.

- 1. Dedication to duty:*** We have chosen teaching as our career therefore we shall always be dedicated to our duty reporting for work always and on time unless prevented by illness or any other unforeseen circumstances.
- 2. Drug and alcohol abuse:*** We have observed through our discussions and personal readings that alcohol abuse is a problem among some of the teachers in the country. We have therefore resolved that we shall endeavor to avoid this scourge in our schools by talking about it to our fellow teachers and pupils.
- 3. Loyalty to education authorities:*** We have observed with dismay that in many schools in our country some teachers take their frustrations to education authorities by criticizing them in public which brings friction in schools. We shall endeavor to respect and work hand in hand with schools authorities for the betterment of our education provision.
- 4. Strike and unnecessary work stoppages:*** We have agreed that we shall not resort to strikes to solve our problems in schools. We shall instead promote round table negotiation strategies to solve problems in our schools.
- 5. Quality education provision:*** We shall always strive to offer quality education through participation in all in-house workshops in our schools.

6. ***Service to rural areas:*** We are alive to the fact that many rural schools in Zambia do not have adequate qualified teachers. This is because the majority of trained teachers prefer to work in Lusaka, Copper belt province and provincial centers. We therefore commit ourselves to serve Zambian children anywhere we shall be posted especially rural areas. We feel that this is part of our professionalism.
7. ***Corruption:*** We have discussed during workshops that corruption is rampant in some of the schools in the country. We pledge to avoid corruption of any form in our schools.
8. ***Experienced teachers:*** In our discussions it was observed that sometimes experienced teachers do not show leadership and act as role models to new teachers in their schools. We pledge to always assist new teachers in upholding professional conduct.
9. ***Protecting girl children:*** In our deliberations, it was established that girls in some schools are taken advantage of mainly by male teachers. We have resolved to protect girls in our schools from sexual and other abuses.
10. ***Holistic teaching:*** We promise that we shall attend to all the needs of our pupils.

***Diploma in Education Science Students.***

**20<sup>th</sup> November, 2011**

#### **APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

- (A). After attending several workshops during this research what would you say professional conduct means to you?
- (B). How do you feel about the workshops that you attended?
- (C). Would you say there were any benefits for you in this research, if so elaborate?
- (D). What do you see as some of the challenges you are likely to encounter in the schools in relation with teachers' professional conduct?
- (E). How do you intend to address these challenges?
- (F). From the discussions in workshops it was observed that some permanent teachers discourage newly appointed teachers in matters of professional conduct, how do you intend to Counteract this?
- (G). Would you support the view that similar research workshops be organized for the Next cohort of students?

**APPENDIX 5: STUDENTS' CONSENT FORM**

**RHODES UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
1<sup>st</sup> JUNE, 2011.**

Dear .....

I am currently registered for a Masters degree with Rhodes University, and I would like to invite you to contribute towards my research endeavours.

- Please understand that you are not under any obligation to take part in this research and that you may withdraw at any time for any reason.
- For your own information, please note that all interviews and questionnaires will be confidential. Real names will not be used to respect anonymity.
- If requested interview scripts, questionnaires etc will be returned for you to confirm accuracy.

If you are willing to participate in my research please indicate this, by completing and returning to me the consent form below.

I thank you.

Sincerely

**FELIX CHISHIMBA**  
Cell: +260 0966236351  
Email: fnchishimba@yahoo.co.uk



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**STUDENT TEACHER CONSENT FORM  
PARTICIPATION IN MR CHISHIMBA'S MASTER'S DEGREE RESEARCH STUDY**

I agree to participate in

- Interviews
- Questionnaires
- Workshops
- Focus groups

**Name (please print)** .....

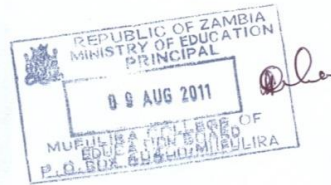
**Signature**.....

**Date:**.....

## APPENDIX 6: LETTER OF REQUEST FOR PERMISSION

MUFULIRA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
P. O BOX 40400  
MUFULIRA  
ZAMBIA  
30TH JUNE, 2011

THE PRINCIPAL  
MUFULIRA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
P.O BOX 40400  
MUFULIRA  
ZAMBIA



Dear Madam,

### **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE COLLEGE.**

I am a registered student of Rhodes University in South Africa reading for master's degree in education. I would like your permission, please, to conduct my research in the college. The focus of my research is the development and trialing (through action research) of a series of workshops designed to raise student teachers' awareness of issues relating to professional conduct.

I want to involve the third year science students. My intention is to involve them in approximately two hours a week of workshops, interviews, focus groups and discussion activities. All these activities will be done outside my teaching hours. I will design my research schedule in such a way that it does not disrupt students learning hours. I believe my research has the potential to contribute to our college in positive ways.

I am of course, most willing to discuss my research further with you should there be any aspect of it which you feel concern.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Felix Nkalamo Chishimba'.

Felix Nkalamo Chishimba

## APPENDIX 7: PRINCIPAL'S PERMISSION LETTER

All correspondence should be  
addressed to the Principal

Telephone: 412340, 412157

In reply please quote

No.....



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA  
**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

MUFULIRA TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE  
P.O.Box 40400  
MUFULIRA - ZAMBIA

8<sup>TH</sup> August, 2011

Mr. F.N. Chishimba  
Mufulira College of Education  
P. O. Box 40400  
MUFULIRA

Dear Mr. Chishimba,

**RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE COLLEGE**

The above matter refers.

It is with great pleasure that I write to you to inform you that permission has been granted to you to conduct research in the College as per your request in order for you to meet the requirements for your Masters degree at Rhodes University. You are free to conduct your research using third year students as you requested.

I hope and trust that you will succeed in your research and that the respondents will co-operate with you fully. I also hope that the College will benefit from your research. Be free to seek further assistance should the need for that arise.

I wish you all the best in your studies.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S. MULENDEMA'.

S. MULENDEMA  
Vice Principal

C. C. The Head of Department - Science

## **APPENDIX 8: EXTRACTS FROM STUDENT TEACHERS' JOURNALS**

There were forty journals from the the forty student teachers who participated in this action research. Here I only present six extracts. These were randomly sampled. I have allocated letters of alphabet to the sampled journals thus A-F. The following is what the students wrote in their journals

### **JOURNAL 'A'.**

“I am anxious and a bit scared. These workshops are taking too much of my time for study, but I should confess the proceedings are interesting”.

“I look forward to the following in my teaching career: punctuality, good dressing and good relationship with pupils and fellow teachers”.

“I will take up a leading role in becoming a role model”.

“I feel tired today; I may not attend the workshop tomorrow”.

“There is need to arrange workshops of this kind for the third years who are coming after us next year. I have benefited very much from these gatherings and I am sure if this is conducted next year, other students will benefit too”.

### **JOURNAL 'B'.**

“I am very happy with these workshops. Today I felt touched to hear pupils complaining about how teachers behave”.

“I feel pressurized in my thinking when I heard how the pupils responded to the questionnaire Mr. Chishimba gave them. I am not sure how my first year in school will be considering that some pupils have preconceived idea that some teachers do not behave well”.

“I intend to lead an acceptable moral life so as to become a role model in the school where I will be posted”.

“I am thinking whether it would not be a good idea for Mr. Chishimba to write letters of introduction to our schools upon being posted that we went through these workshops and that we

are in good position to assist our colleagues through sensitization on matters of professional conduct”.

### **JOURNAL ‘C’.**

“I am so happy to be part of these workshops, they are very interesting”.

“I was looking at the lecturer, he was fully involved in the workshop. It was very encouraging to hear how passionate he was when discussing the issue of teachers taking advantage of female pupils”.

“Today I feel like telling Mr. Chishimba that the workshops be conducted in the morning. We are being pressurized to do a lot of things at the same time. Some of our science lecturers want us to be in the laboratories at the same time we are in the workshops”.

“I have mixed feelings about these ideas of professional conduct that we have discussed today. I do not see myself changing neither do I see many teachers adhering to the ideas being advanced here”.

“Today I dozed through this workshop. Was it worth it?”

“It is difficult to talk about issues of sex with big people”

### **JOURNAL ‘D’**

“I feel I am Learning a lot of new things in these workshops”.

“I am confident every day that passes. Today especially was the best for me when the lecturer shared with us the views from pupils on the professional conduct of their teachers. When I read what pupils wrote I felt sad”.

“Dress code, punctuality and moral behavior should be the guiding principles for teachers. Guidance should be given to permanent teachers they are the worst culprits in breaking rules of the teaching profession”.

“As we conclude these workshops I have promised myself that I will try by all means to stick to the code of conduct and lead by example to fellow teachers”.

“The interview I attended today was a turning point in the way I look at the issues of professional conduct. I made sure I told the lecturer all the questions I had on professional conduct”.

## **JOURNAL ‘E’**

“I was not happy to read about what pupils wrote about their teachers at the secondary school. I suspect that the pupils who answered the questionnaire are not disciplined”.

“The pupils view even if I strongly feel that they are undisciplined, scared me and made me believe that teachers are under surveillance from their pupils”.

“Today was my best day since we started these gatherings. There was a lot of information about teachers’ professional conduct which was shared especially in my group”.

“Some ladies in my group do not contribute much to the discussions”.

“I am not happy with workshops in the afternoons, mornings could have been better. In the afternoons we have a lot of work”.

The fact is that some frustrated old teachers shall always stand in the way of progressive young teachers who may want to be professionally competent”.

“As we gave ourselves a code of conduct today, I have made a pledge that I want to be professional in my school by being a good time keeper, avoid absenteeism and avoid intimate sexual relations with pupils and advising pupils to focus on school work”.

“If these workshops were conducted again I would most certainly attend. I have learnt a lot. I also want to say that from time to time workshops of this nature should be conducted”.

## **JOURNAL ‘F’**

“Before the exercise began I was uncertain about how the whole thing would work out, I felt that time may not be found to squeeze in these activities. Things have worked out differently”.

“The exercise was interesting because it bordered on changing attitude. This exercise opened my mind about professional issues that I am likely to encounter in schools”.

“Because of the importance of this exercise I want to suggest today that enough time should be allocated to workshops for example one of the periods of History and Philosophy of education should be left for our meetings”.

As we conclude the workshops the workshops, the following is what I plan to do; report early for work, dress appropriately and advise pupils about the dangers of immoral behavior”.

## **APPENDIX 9: EXTRACTS FROM THE RESEARCHER'S REFLECTIVE JOURNAL**

“I met student teachers today in the first workshop. As the Camera was being mounted, I saw nervousness in the faces of some student teachers and anxiety in the others. I was happy the time for my research had finally come.”

“In the first workshop I have had a lot of participation from male students. Female participants were very shy and their contributions were minimal. I know that as the research progresses things will change”.

“In the second workshop today, student teachers discussed at length personal experience regarding issues of professional conduct. Almost everyone had some experiences to share. It looked like I had opened a Pandora box. I enjoyed listening to their conversations. Female students showed a lot of emotions when discussing issues relating to male sexual relations with girls”.

“Terms and conditions of service is too voluminous, I have decided that towards the end of this research, I will lend out the documents to students so that they read on their own time”.

“I teach this class, but I have never seen the concentration on their faces as they portrayed today when we were discussing, pupils’ views from the questionnaire. Students were really touched by what the pupils had written”.

“The two and half hours we have spent in workshop number three were not enough. Students had a lot of discussion on pupils’ views on teachers’ professional conduct. I feel today that in future it would be a good idea to invite the pupils and talk to the students in the college about how they felt about their teachers”.

“Developing a code of conduct was a very slow process today. I felt like asking students to write individually what they wanted to appear in the code and later merge the ideas, but I let them determine their pace”.

“In the fourth workshop, student teachers reported back on their independent reading. The camera we were using had to be taken for other urgent shooting. I decided to reduce the time of our workshop to 45 minutes”.

“Today I have commenced the second cycle of action research. Looking back I am overjoyed with the way my research has gone”.

“I have a feeling that this research has touched the lives of many student teachers as well as myself. I am happy to have chosen this research topic”.

“My presence in today’s workshop as a lecturer is hindering some discussions especially on issues of sexual relations between teachers and pupils. I feel that if this AR was conducted by someone who was not a member of staff in the college, student teachers would be more free to discuss this issue”.

## APPENDIX 10: COVERING LETTER, PLUS TWO EXAMPLES OF PUPILS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

RHODES UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

30<sup>th</sup> June, 2011

Dear Grade 12 Pupil

I am a student of education at Rhodes University, and I am conducting research towards my Masters degree.

In order to carry out my research, I need to ask for your assistance by requesting that you complete this questionnaire.

The information I've asked for in this questionnaire is needed for research purposes only. I have not asked you to give your name, and I want to assure you that all of your answers will be treated with utmost respect and confidentiality.

Please try to answer each question as truthfully and honestly as you possibly can. I need to know what you *really* believe!

I have provided spaces for you to write your answers. If you want to write more than the space allows, you are welcome to continue on the blank back page of this questionnaire.

Thank you very much.



FELIX CHISHIMBA

1. How old are you?

2. Are you male or female?

3. How many teachers in this school directly teach you?

(a) How many of your teachers are male?

(b) How many of your teachers are female?

4. What are some of the things you like about the way your teachers treat you and your classmates? (Can you please explain why you enjoy these sorts of things?)

I like the way male teacher's treat me because they are proud of what I perform in class. I also like female teacher's but for some reasons. The female teacher's teach fast and I don't understand some of the things they talk about. But I like them because they encourage us about girl child. My classmates don't in my class treat me well and nice, but I don't like the way males treat me in class.

5. What are some of the things you do not like about the way your teachers treat you and your classmates? (Can you please explain why you do not enjoy these sorts of things?)

I don't like the way my teacher's treat me shouting at me beating me and also abuse not marking my works. My classmates in class the things that I don't like there are not united. They like shouting each other. And also they like making noise in class.

when others are studying.

6. Have you experienced any differences in the way you relate to a male teacher as compared with the way you relate to a female teacher? Why do you say this?

I have experienced differences in the way I am relate to a male teacher as compared with the way I relate to a female teacher. Male teacher can say every thing about education, life some problems people go through in their education. But female ~~are~~ teachers are people who likes don't like to tell the truth and they don't encourage someone to put effort in studying.

7. Do you notice any differences in the ways female teachers as compared to male teachers carry out their formal duties at school. Why do you say this? If possible it would help me if you would please give one or two concrete examples to support what you say?

Female teachers don't carry out their duties at school well, they don't care about us, they don't even think about us in future. But the male teachers carry out their duties at school well, they do want they're trained to be and also to teach want they have to do to teach us.

8. Can you think of any ways in which your teachers' behavior affects your learning? Please explain why you have answered in this way, and, if

possible, give one or two concrete examples to help me understand your answer.

Male teacher's behaviour good in classes and teach us well and we talk to them openly. Female teacher's behavior bad and I don't want them to <sup>teach</sup> me because sometimes they come to teach when they are sad, so when they come to when they are sad we can not cooperate with them properly. Sometime they come to school with lazyness, sometime they come to school when they were gurreling with they husbands at home. so that's why I don't like female teachers

9. Imagine that you were an official of the Zambian Ministry of Education entrusted with the role of recruiting new teachers. What kinds of teachers would you recruit?

- I would want a teacher who comes early to school.
- I would like a teacher who comes to school everyday.
- I would want a teacher who looks clean and dresses nice.
- I would want a teacher who is well trained and a teacher who have good manners.

10. Would you like to become a teacher when you've finished school? Why do you say this?

yes I would like to become a teacher. Because I like the way teacher's looks and the way teachers lead us. And also I like the way they encourage us as pupils. I can also want to encourage someone in future, when I finish school. And also teaching someone.

I just want to be someone in future, so that my parents can be proud of me someday.

11. If you were asked to name ONE thing that you especially admire in a teacher, what would this be? Briefly explain why you chose this particular thing.

Talking to pupils and also teaching pupils in classes. Because I like talking to people and also want to talk to pupils when I finish school.

Thank you very much for your time.

If you would like to contact me to discuss further anything from this questionnaire, you are welcome to phone me on my cell (+260 0966236351).

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4. What are some of the things you like about the way your teachers treat you and your classmates? (Can you please explain why you enjoy these sorts of things?)

Some teachers are understanding, even if some one is a slow learner, they make sure we understand what we are taught and ask questions where necessary. They act as our guardians, parents, in case of a problem some teacher lay a helping hand. My friends or classmates behave well towards me though people are different. Some of my classmates help me out in certain subjects and I do the same we help each other in case of a problem we support each other and love each other.

5. What are some of the things you do not like about the way your teachers treat you and your classmates? (Can you please explain why you do not enjoy these sorts of things?)

Some teachers have bad language, they want to call pupils names, they make fun of those who fail, they make us insecure by backbiting about those who fail instead of helping them. Some of my classmates are jealous they don't like it when I do well in certain

Subjects, some just have naturally, they would want to pick on me, been a leader they hate you for doing the right things. Some classmates are boys, some think they are more superior because they are nothing.

6. Have you experienced any differences in the way you relate to a male teacher as compared with the way you relate to a female teacher? Why do you say this?

Some male teachers will act like your father, while others will try to take advantage of you, but I don't let them. As for females they will try to correct you, be like your mothers, if they notice a problem with you, they easily intervene as compared to male teachers. But people are different some female teachers do feel jealous of the pupils they have you for nothing, sometimes because they think you want to compare your self to them.

7. Do you notice any differences in the ways female teachers as compared to male teachers carry out their formal duties at school. Why do you say this? If possible it would help me if you would please give one or two concrete examples to support what you say?

As for me some of my best teachers are male, I really understand what they teach compared to female teachers, for an example is my biology teacher when teaching about reproduction she never went in details, some teachers leave important stuff when tell you to do it for self.

8. Can you think of any ways in which your teachers' behavior affects your learning? Please explain why you have answered in this way, and, if

possible, give one or two concrete examples to help me understand your answer.

Some teachers like calling us names, some make fun of us, some are temperamental, some do not like being asked about a question they consider certain questions to be useless. I personally fail to ask my maths teacher questions if I do not understand what he is teaching me normally the answers saying "De kwaxula amate" here I get afraid, how can a parent spite Salwa on you? Some teachers skip topics.

9. Imagine that you were an official of the Zambian Ministry of Education entrusted with the role of recruiting new teachers. What kinds of teachers would you recruit?

I would choose some one with a good conduct towards others. I wouldn't choose some one with a bad conduct just because they have good results. I would choose some who respect others, I would know them, or to know a person is, by how they talk and conduct them selves, I would choose some one who is social, of course that person must have good grades. With some abilities to teach.

10. Would you like to become a teacher when you've finished school? Why do you say this?

I wouldn't like to be a teacher, I have a passion for charity work, I have a heart to save lives, a heart to treat people well and love them despite there response, so I would love

to be a medical doctor, if not a lawyer  
or journalist despite all my dreams teaching is  
the best ambition in the whole wide world.  
These presidents, doctors, engineers, all from  
a teacher.

11. If you were asked to name ONE thing that you especially admire in a teacher, what would this be? Briefly explain why you chose this particular thing.

Their heart, it's not easy to be a teacher  
they have the courage to teach us,  
they want us to be the best, they  
know what's good for us, they love us  
they are our friends, our parents, they  
are our inspirations, no more when I  
would not have answered all these  
questions bravely, because I would have  
known nothing. answered by miss Courageous 12A

Thank you very much for your time.

If you would like to contact me to discuss further anything from this questionnaire, you are welcome to phone me on my cell (+260 0966236351).

Teaching is the best ambition in the whole wide world, I thank all teachers and appreciate them, Teachers have given me an education and I'm on my journey to success it would not have been possible for me to come this far if not for God and my teachers. Teachers are supposed to get the best of things. If I were to be very rich I would donate my money to the poor, teachers and schools in particular, Teachers are a contributing factor to national development. I want to identify my name is EUSTACE NYAMBE from 12A. The world is what it is today because of teachers.