

DEMOGRAPHICS AND ETHICAL DILEMMA IN THE ACCOUNTING PROFESSION: THE GENDER PARADIGM

¹Stanley Ogon *PhD* and ² Adigwe, Pretty Dennis

¹Department of Accountancy, Management Sciences, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.

²Department of Accountancy, Management Sciences, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State.

ABSTRACT: *This study examined the influence of the gender demographic variable on ethical behaviour arising from the lack of conclusive evidence on whether gender really counts. The study was premised on the relativity and attribution theories of human behaviour. Modelled after the survey design, primary data was obtained via a structure research data collection instrument administered to both accounting trainees and practitioners. Of one hundred and fifteen questionnaires administered to these two categories of respondents, ninety-five were completed and returned, which were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential operationalized via the e-views 7 platform. The findings of this study revealed that gender has a negative effect on ethics using the accounting student's data, while a positive effect is observed using the practicing accountant's data. This observation amongst practitioners about the influence of gender attribute may not be unconnected with the pressure arising from the need to meet up with growing financial responsibilities for the male gender upon coming of age as stereotyped by our culture. However, both effects were significant at five percent level. This is quite informative as it is reflective of the circumstantial differences in the background of the two respondent groups. What this implies is that if accounting educators and professional bodies build confidence and ethical capacity early enough, in would be accounting practitioners, it might lead to reduced dysfunctional behaviour at work. Therefore, the study recommends early behaviour modification modelling for ethical conduct. The implications of this findings are therefore far reaching, thus the need to interrogate the place of age and marital status in determining ethical dilemma.*

KEYWORDS: ethics, professional behaviour, ethical behaviour, accounting ethics

INTRODUCTION

Ethics especially in the accounting profession has received an extensive attention. Numerous articles on fraudulent behaviour have appeared in the business media and ethics has become a popular research topic, because it is believed that lack of ethical behaviour is the key reason why professionals involve themselves in fraudulent activities. Researchers as a result, seem to have agreed that business ethics, or rather the lack thereof, is really a problem. Historically, accountants have been perceived as more ethical than many other professionals because they have been taught in school how to be ethical even before becoming a certified accountant (Touche, 1988).

Some of the criticizers of the accounting profession have argue that some of the fraudulent cases of the accounting profession are as a result of the accountants gaps in professional

judgment which could be attributable to low professional ethics. For instance, Flanagan and Clarke (2007) asserts that accountants frequently lack the awareness and aids to examine accounting problems effectually, especially when challenged with conflicting ethical issues. This often happens when they cannot find a way that is consistent to move forward with their own values or the profession's code of professional conduct. This has made accounting tutors to react by modifying curricula to include ethical courses and exercise about ethical reasoning in order to address the concerns of governing bodies, academia and the public at large about the accounting profession's ethics and behaviour (Haas, 2005; Bernardi and Bean, 2006).

It is important to know that having a deep understanding of ethics plays a significant role for accountants and accounting students as a foundation to act ethically. The people involved with ethical decision making are not only accountants who are working but also accounting students. Research in other climes has established that female accountants exhibit a higher level of ethical standards in decision making than males (Shaub, 1994; Sweeney, 1995; Ameen et al., 1996; Cohen et al., 1998). Other literatures have also suggested that ethical decision making differs according to demographic factors such as: Age (Dellaportas, 2006; Abdolmohammadi and Reeves, 2000; Rest and Narvaez, 1994) and Gender (Peterson, Rhoads, & Vaught, 2001; Harris, Feder, & Taman-Maitis, 2006; Alleyne, Devonish, Nurse, & Cadogan-McClean, 2006; Devonish, Alleyne, Cadogan-McClean,). However, the research findings as concern demographic factors seems to be very unpredictable and as such there is no clear harmony concerning what demographic variables are essential for persuading ethical behaviour and how those variables stimulate ethical behaviour.

This lack of universality in the conclusions arising from prior studies in other climes or domains and the reality of differences in environmental and socio-cultural variables that shape human behaviour necessitates the need to further interrogation this discuss in the African setting. By nature, African tradition teaches women to be moderate and submissive, but not to be assertive. This upbringing is what allows women to accommodate polygamy in marriage setting as a mark of honour and submissiveness to the man. It is therefore expected that the women would be more conservative and meticulous in their conduct as also depositioned by Betz, O'Connell & Shepard, (1989). However, post Beijing conference and social integration has brought with it a new doctrine of women equality and assertiveness, alien to the African culture. Though, good in its own right, it thus seem to be penetrating our nation psyche, however developments in the political sphere doesn't seem to support it. How this places out at work setting is a different thing altogether. Thus, this study seeks to interrogation the role of gender in the ethical compliance milieu in the Nigerian setting. Furthermore, the relevance of this work is predicated on the idea that a better understanding of the relationship between gender and ethics in the Nigerian setting would provide a better opportunity for business educators and training programmes to be designed to advance ethical responsiveness and sensitivity. Hence, this study is set to examine the influence of demographic variables on ethical behaviour of both accountants and accounting students. The demographic variable for this study is the gender variable.

Hypothesis Development

Fisher (2004) defined the notion Ethics as an individual's personal belief about what is right or wrong, good or bad. It is the mediator of an individual's assessment of the correctness or otherwise of his or her activities. Though, often regarded as subjective, it is traceable to the

foundation of an individual's belief system and judged within context. On the other hand, Logsdon and Yuthas (1997) stated that the ethical position of a firm is built based on the anticipation of society, that is, the legitimate rights made by the constituencies to whom the firm relates. According to Hanekom (1984), the inquiry of ethics is connected with the history of mankind. Ethics deals with the character, behaviour and morals of human existences. It assesses behaviour against some complete principles and puts negative or positive morals on it. It is the thoughtful study of what one should do, or how one should live.

In the background of a working definition with regards to professions, Ethics generally refer to those values and codes of conduct that direct the behaviour of any professional. The concept usually moves along with moral values, normative judgments and moral responsibilities. At any level, every profession holds its own ethics. However, there are some commonalities in professional ethics. A basic theoretical framework for organizational ethics is best explained through the Agency theory (Obasi and Ekatah, 2016). Ethics according to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary is defined as the science of morals, treatise on this, moral principles or rules of conduct. Practically, ethics is a way of studying morality, which allows decisions to be made when individuals are faced with specific cases of moral dilemma.

The need for ethics in the accounting profession cannot be over emphasized. Accountants need to have a high level of ethics because as accountants working in organisations, they are among the key employees who have access to the financial information of entities and individuals. Such power could give an individual the possible opportunities to misuse information, or manipulation numbers to boost company perceptions or enforce earnings management. This is one of the major reasons why accountants should be highly ethical. Just like other professions are in need of ethics accountants are also indeed of it. This is why the various accounting professional bodies have enshrined various ethical codes of conduct designed to guide behaviour amongst members

Theoretical Premise

While, theoretical premise may not be found in every research interest or topic in the accounting domain, ethical construct is one that is actually rooted in the field of behavioural sciences with a strong theoretical basis. Its relevance in the accounting domain represents the universality of the accounting discipline and showcases how accounting, is a discipline well embedded within the framework of human socio-economic interactions. It derives its meaning and relevance on accounting of such interactions or exchanges. It also represents accounting sensitivity to the changes in its operational environment. Thus, recent research in accounting have assumed a more behavioural approach than just reliance on the number game. It is on this premise that two theories were explored to provide a theoretical foundation for this research effort.

Relativism Theory: This theory proposes that ethical action is grounded on whether it is allowed or accepted or authorised by an individual's culture, family or tradition. Forsyth (1992) who is a relativist opines that ethical behaviours are based upon the nature of the situation an individual faces and the individual involved, and when judging others, they weigh the circumstances more than the ethical principle that was violated. People who are high relativists are supposed as sceptics and feel that the situation and ethical principle involved do not influence the moral action (Karande et al. 2002). In contrast, low relativists feel that ethical

conduct is influenced by ethical principles, standards or rules. From the above, it could be deduced that females because of cultural standards will avoid finding themselves in unethical behaviours compared to their male counterpart who often feels that rules or values and principles are not made for them.

Attribution Theory: Attribution theory is a social psychology theory that explores how people interpret events and behaviours and how they ascribe causes to the events and behaviours. According to Schroth and Shah (2010), studies using attribution theory examine the use of information in the social environment to explain events and behaviours. Reffett (2011) asserts that when evaluators believe comparable persons would have acted differently in a given circumstance, they (evaluators) tend to attribute responsibility for an outcome to the person. According to Wilks and Zimbelman (2014), the first case refers to internal or dispositional attributions, while the second one refers to external or situational attributions.

As recognized and applied to the field of auditing (accounting), the auditor's accountability for detecting fraud is extended by Reffett's (2011) study which predicted that auditors are more likely to be held accountable by evaluators when the auditors fail to detect fraud after they had identified the fraud occurrence as a fraud risk. The result of Reffett's study shows an increase in auditors' liability when an audit fails after the auditors had identified the perpetrated fraud as a fraud risk and performed procedures to investigate the identified fraud risk. Attribution theory thus advocates for auditors to report on the effectiveness of firms. Auditors are therefore expected to gain a better understanding of the internal controls in place, assess the design and implementation of the internal controls, and test the operating effectiveness of the firm. This is deemed necessary for the auditors' reliance and possibly scaling back of other substantive audit procedures for the required performance. The attribution theory suggests that when fraud occurs, identified parties should be held accountable and auditors, being the "public watchdogs" are most likely to be held accountable if evaluators determine substandard audit services were provided (Reffett, 2011).

Therefore, this research effort is collocated within the framework of these two theoretical espousals. This is because, the extant literature has documented the relevance and several applications of these two theoretical strands. The concept of uniformity has always been questioned in the behavioural sciences, as a result of the dynamic nature of the human faculty which is amenable to varying situational stimuli with resultant variations in conduct. The likelihood that varying situations will determine behavioural patterns.

Some Prior Studies on Gender and Ethics

Betz, O'Connell & Shepard, (1989) explained two approaches to gender differences in determining willingness to involve in unethical business activities, they are the gender socialization and structural approach. The socialization gender approach maintains that men and women approach their jobs with different standards and behaviours in the workplace. These diverse standards and behaviours are based on gender, which has caused men and women to introduce different work-related decisions, interests and practices. One could therefore say that men and women react differently to the same set of job-related rewards and costs. The structural gender approach argued that the differences that are existing between men and women especially in the workplace are caused by their early socialization and other role

requirements. Nevertheless, the early socialization is sometimes overcome by the payments or compensation and expenditures connected with job-related roles.

The business ethics literature has constantly verified that demographics variables such as gender, age, and race demonstrate a lot in predicting an individuals' ethical behaviour. For instance, several studies have revealed that females display stronger ethical behaviours than their male colleagues (Eynon et al., 1997; Shaub, 1994; Sweeney, 1995; St. Pierre et al., 1990). Moreover, a lot of empirical studies have been done on ethics and gender for example, Wessels and Steenkamp (2009) surveyed students' opinions regarding accountants in South Africa, and discovered that there is no difference between the genders. Callaghan and Papegeorgiou (2015) revealed from their study, that female accounting students take personal responsibility more for their studies than male students and that females beat males. In professional qualification examinations, women also perform better than men in the examinations of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (Roos, 2009).

Halabi et al. (2010) also found no gender difference concerning the tendency of using computer-based learning materials instead of attending face-to-face lectures. Taylor (2013) in his study, revealed that gender does not disturb the ethical sensitivity of accounting students. Similarly, Soni et al. (2015) found that both male and female trainee accountants are likely to whistle-blow when they come across unethical behaviour. However, Sadler and Barac, (2005) found that male accounting students are "four times more likely than females to act illegally. In a non-accounting setting, de Clercq and Venter (2009) found that men are more economically well-educated than women. Even though, the above studies have suggested that men and women behave either the same or that men are more ethical, Ameen et al (1996), testified from their study that women are more ethical than men. The study focused on accounting students, as the students were asked to rate the strictness of 23 different student actions that are morally dubious. Ameen et al. (1996) established that women reliably gave more ethical answers and were less pessimistic about the occurrence of cheating than male students.

Similarly, there are findings from several studies involving non-accountants that have found that females are more ethical than men. For instance, Weeks et al. (1999) administered a number of questionnaires on ethical issues to managers and found that women generally assumed a more ethical standpoint than men. A similar result was also revealed by Mason and Mudrack (1996) using a sample of graduate business students. In the manner, Dawson (1997), using a sample of sales professionals found that women appear to display higher levels of moral reasoning, ethical behaviours and judgments.

One could establish from the above studies that gender as a role to play in ethical issues. However, the conclusions from the various studies are clearly indicative of the lack of universal commonality in their findings. This quite informative, as prior studies in other areas have shown how the male gender outperform the female. It does seem that individual differences may have accounted for the lack of universal conclusion. Hence, not only justifying continued research like the current one but also provides the current study with the basis for hypothesizing that:

H₀₁: *Gender has no bearing with ethical compliance levels amongst accounting practitioners and trainee accountants in the Nigerian setting.*

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The research design for this study is the survey design, the population of the study is made up of 50 final year accounting students of a public university and 80 practicing accountants in Bayelsa state. This study tries to investigate the responses of female and male accountants and accounting students concerning their practices with chances to participate in various unethical activities at school and at the work place. Having the knowledge that female and male accounting students and accountants have different feelings about unethical behaviour can offer vital information, as the findings of Sierles, Hendrickx and Circel (1980) suggest that cheating in the university is a forecaster of unethical behaviour in subsequent professional settings. Since the population is a finite one, use of statistical formula becomes vital in choosing the sample size. Okeke (1995) asserts that a sample size can be determined by using the Taro Yamani's technique, this technique is used because other studies in this area also adopted the same technique to arrive at a definite sample size (Obasi and Ekatah 2016), using this technique a sample of 115 respondents was arrived at. As regards this study, a well-structured questionnaire that is intended to generate data from the respondents was administered to the sampled population. The questionnaire is made up of fifteen (15) questions, using the Likert scale rating type. The questions are structured into a four (4) point Likert scale of strongly agree (SA)1, Agree (A)2, Disagree (DA)3 and Strongly Disagree (SD)4. The data to be collected for this study is primary data basically. The t-test statistical method was employed to test the hypothesis.

Data Analysis and Findings

The data collected from respondents are presented and analysed in this section. Data was sorted from accounting students in the state-owned university and practicing accountants in Yenagoa Bayelsa state. Out of the 115 questionnaires distributed 75 were retrieved from practicing accountants. While 20 were retrieved from students, which gives a total of 95 questionnaires retrieved from the respondents within the time specified. Table I below shows the descriptive statistics of the data collected on demographics. The inclusion of age and marital status in study instrument was to conceal the idea that the study was gender based. This was with a view to obtaining objective individual responses. It was our view that if respondents new that the study was purely gender based it might trigger some form of gender defence, thus undermining the purpose of the research. As research in the field of behavioural sciences have clearly indicated that when a research focal group knows that they are being studied they are likely to disguise their conduct as haven been proven in several undercover operations in work settings. However for the purpose of addressing the research hypothesis, further analysis on the demographic dimensions of age and marital status were discountenanced beyond table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Results of Respondent's Demographics

Variables	Scale	Frequency		Percentage	
		Students	Practicing accountants	students	Practicing accountants
Gender	Male	12	40	60	53
	Female	8	35	40	47
	Total	20	75	100	100
Ethical behaviours	Strongly agree	7	46	35	61
	Agree	10	25	50	34
	Disagree	0	4	0	5
	Strongly disagree	3	0	15	0
	Total	20	75	100	100

Source: Researchers computation (2019).

From the above table, 60% of the respondents are male students while 40% are female, also 53% are male practicing accountants while 47% are female practicing accountants. The table also shows that the students are mainly 20-25 years old because the table shows that about 50% of the students' correspondents are in this age bracket. While the practicing accountants within the age of 26-30 are 37% and the once above 31 are 27% of the respondents. Out of the total student respondents, 80% are single while 20% are married. 67% of the practicing accountants are married, while 20% are single and 13% are widowed. In an attempt to reach the study's objective, the students were asked a question that will help the researchers understand student's perception or students understanding of ethical behaviours and the result shows that, 35% of the students strongly agreed, 50% just agreed. While 15% strongly disagreed to the fact. The practicing accountants were also asked the same ethical behaviour question of which 61% of the practicing accountants strongly agreed to the ethical behaviour, 34 agreed, 5 disagreed and no one strongly disagreed.

	Ethics	Gender
Ethics	1	
Gender {sig}	0.081 {.038}	1 .
Ethics	1	
Gender {sig}	0.213 {.023}	1 .

Source: Research Computation (2019)

From the tale above, the correlation coefficients of the variables are examined. However, the study is particularly concerned with the correlation between ethics and the demographic factor which is gender of students and practicing accountants). The analysis for data from the accounting student's respondents suggests there is a positive correlation existing between gender and ethics ($r=0.081$). The data analysis from the practicing accountant's respondents proved that there is a negative correlation existing between gender and ethics ($r=0.213$). A positive correlation proposes that a change (increase or decrease) in one can be linked with a

change (increase or decrease) in the other. It however does not suggest strict causality or functional dependence.

Table 3: Regression Result

Variable	Ethics (Students)	Ethics (practicing Accountants)
C	46.8822 {0.778} (0.000)	75.683 {27.607} (0.002)
Gender	-2.2171 {3.7310} (0.013)	4.3582 {1.781} (0.0377)
R ²	0.55	0.32
Adjusted R ²	0.46	0.22
D.W	2.017	1.17
Mean of Dep. Variation	291.685	82.506
S.E of Regression	72.561	81.191
F-statistics	6.991 (0.003)	7.785 (0.001)

Source: Researchers computation (2019)

The above table displays the regression result conducted to study the effects of demographics on ethical behaviours of accounting students and practicing accountants. The regression is conducted using the White Heteroscedasticity-Consistent Standard Errors & Covariance to regulate for likely heteroscedasticity in the model. From the above regression statistics, the regression results for both accounting students and those already practicing, the R² determining the explanatory capacity of the model is 0.55 and 0.32 respectively. This proposes that the model describes 55% and 32% of the systematic changes in the dependent variable. It is perceived that the data for the demographic variables has a higher explanatory volume for practicing accountants.

The F-stat value is used to test for the goodness of fit of the model and it helps as a test of the joint statistical significance of the variables studied together and also tests the presence of a significant linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The decision rule is to accept the F-stat as significant if the probability value is less than 0.05 otherwise reject. From the above table, the related p-value of the F-stat for both valuations are less than 0.05 hence the joint statistical significance of the model will be accepted. This means that there is a significant linear relationship existing between the dependent and independent variables (that is ethics and demographics).

Gender has a negative effect on ethics (-2.217) using the accounting student's data while a positive effect (4.358) is observed using the practicing accountant's data. This result has revealed that the more women are in an organisation the lesser the ethical standard while the fewer the women then the higher the ethical standards. This result is consistent with Singhapakdi, Vitell, and Franke, (1999) and Peterson *et al.* (2001) but is not consistent with that of Cruz, (2003) and Gismondi (2006) study's findings. However, both effects are

significant at 5% level. The significance of the variable proposes that gender is crucial in clarifying ethical behaviour.

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

From the result of the analysis there exist a differential conclusion in the direction of relationship between gender and ethics amongst the two classes of respondents. While, accounting students belief that gender does not determine level of ethical compliance, practitioners consider that it is positively related to compliance levels. The conclusion from the foregoing is that by their circumstance students belief that gender does not really count in segregating ethical conduct practitioners hold a different view. This is quite informative as it is reflective of the circumstantial differences in the background of the two respondent groups. Studies have shown that cheating in examinations is not necessarily gender based. It could come from either category. What this implies is that if accounting educators and professional bodies build confidence and ethical capacity early enough in would be accounting practitioners, it might lead to reduced dysfunctional behaviour at work. Therefore, the study recommends early behaviour modification modelling for ethical conduct. By contrast the observation amongst practitioners about the influence of gender attribute may not be unconnected with the pressure arising from the need to meet up with growing financial responsibilities for the male gender upon coming of age. By our socio-cultural setting, the male gender is expected to be the bread winner, so upon taking that responsibility, both before and after marriage, the toll of family expectations puts a lot of pressure on the male gender in tandem with the fraud triangle exposition. This point is validated further by our society's stereotyping of the male gender in instances where the female gender has the upper hand financially in the home. The implications of this findings are therefore far reaching, thus the need to interrogate the place of age and marital status in determining ethical dilemma.

Furthermore, it is clear also that beyond the gender equation, the desired information and environments under which financial reporting is made is both complex and challenging. It is complex to the extent that there is the likelihood that a conflict of interest might occur due to the diversity of end users of accounting information. Consequently, changing societal value systems, and the diverse expectations of interested parties; such as shareholders, creditors, management, employees, in financial statements, often times puts its preparers in a complex ethical dilemma. It is a box of complexities that may never be absolutely understood. Thus, there is a need for a strong ethical foundation for accounting practitioners. The role of ethics in accounting practice is becoming more inevitable. The validation of ethics training for accounting students has become a major concern following reports of rampant cheating at the university level and recent business scandals. Gaining a better understanding of accounting students and practicing accountants' ethical reasoning processes and moral behaviour has practical effects for accounting education and future accounting ethics research. This study recommends that the study of ethics should be incorporated into the accounting curriculum of universities at all levels so that accounting students will be well equipped with accounting standards.

REFERENCES

- Ameen, E., Guffey, D., and McMillan, J. (1996) "Gender Differences in Determining the Ethical Sensitivity of Future Accounting Professionals", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 15, 591-597.
- Betz, M., L. O'Connell and J. M. Shepard, (1989). Gender Differences in Proclivity for Unethical Behaviour, *Journal of Business Ethics* 8, 321-324.
- Callaghan, C. and Papageorgiou, E. (2015), "Gender differences in locus of control and student performance in the South African context of accounting studies", *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 23(3), 348 – 368.
- Cohen, J., Pant, L., and Sharp, D. (1998) "The Effect of Gender and Academic Discipline Diversity on the Ethical Evaluations, Ethical Intentions and Ethical Orientation of Potential Public Accounting Recruits", *Accounting Horizons*, Vol.12(3), pp250-270.
- Dawson, L. (1997) "Ethical Differences Between Men and Women in the Sales Profession", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 16, 1143-1152.
- de Clercq, B. and Venter, J.M.P. (2009), "Factors influencing a prospective chartered accountant's level of financial literacy: an exploratory study", *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 17(2), 47 – 60.
- Fisher, J. (2004). Social responsibility and ethics: Clarifying the concepts. *Journal of business ethics*, 52(4), 391-400.
- Flanagan, J. and Clarke, K (2007) 'Beyond a code of professional ethics: A holistic model of ethical decision-making for accountants'. *Abacus*, 43(4), 488–518.
- Haas, A. (2005). Now is the time for ethics in education. *The CPA Journal*. <<http://www.nysscpa.org/printversions/cpaj/2005/605/p66.htm>>.
- Halabi, A.K., Essop, A., Joosub, T., Padia, N., Vawda, M. and Yasseen, Y., (2010), "A South African study comparing the effectiveness of computer-based learning materials and face-to-face teaching", *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 18(2), 23 – 37.
- Hanekom, S. X. (1984). Ethics in the South African public sector. *Politeia*, 3(2), 10-17.
- Jensen, M. C. (1986). Agency cost of free cash flow, corporate finance, and takeovers. *American Economic Review*, 76(2), 323-329.
- Kallamu, B. S., & N. A. M. Saat. (2015). Audit committee attributes and firm performance: evidence from Malaysian finance companies. *Asian Review of Accounting*, 23(3), 206-231. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ARA-11-2013-0076>
- Krishnan, V. S., & Moyer, R. C. (1997). Performance, capital structure and home country: An analysis of Asian corporations. *Global Finance Journal*, 8(1), 129-143. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1044-0283\(97\)90010-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1044-0283(97)90010-7)
- Kumar, N., & Singh, J. P. (2013). Effect of board size and promoter ownership on firm value: Some empirical findings from India. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 13(1), 88-98. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/14720701311302431>
- Lama, T. B. (2013). Empirical Evidence on the Link between Compliance with Governance of Best Practice and Firms 'Operating Results. *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal*, 6(5), 63-80.
- Obasi, R., O and Ekatah, R., U (2016). Demographic Indicators and Professional Ethical Behaviour of Accounting Students, *Journal of Business and Management*, 8(7), 12-18.
- Okeke, A. O. (1995). *Foundation Statistics for Business Decisions*. Enugu: High mega system limited.

- Rodriguez-Fernandez, M., Fernandez-Alonso, S., & Rodriguez-Rodriguez, J. (2014). Board characteristics and firm performance in Spain. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society*, 14(4), 485-503. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/CG-01-2013-0013>
- Sadler, E. and Barac, K., (2005),"A study of the ethical views of final year South African accounting students, using vignettes as examples", *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 13(2),107 – 128.
- Schmid, M. M., & Zimmermann, H. (2008). Leadership Structure and Corporate Governance in Switzerland. *Journal of Applied Corporate Finance*, 20(1), 109-120. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6622.2008.00173.x>
- Shaub, M. (1994) "An Analysis of the Association of Traditional Demographic Variables with the Moral Reasoning of Auditing Students and Auditors", *Journal of Accounting Education*, 12(1), 1-26.
- Sierles, F, I. Hendrickx and S. Circel: (1980), 'Cheating in Medical School', *Journal of Medical Education* 55, 124-125.
- Soni, F., Maroun, W. and Padia, N. (2015),"Perceptions of justice as a catalyst for whistleblowing by trainee auditors in South Africa", *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 23(1), 118-140
- Sweeney, J. (1995) "The moral expertise of auditors: An exploratory study", *Research on Accounting Ethics*, 1, 213-234.
- Touche, R. (1988), *Ethics in American Business: A Special Report* (Touche Ross, New York, NY).
- Weeks, W., Moore, C., McKinney, J., and Longenecker, J. (1999) "The Effects of Gender and Career Stage on Ethical Judgment", *Journal of Business Ethics*, 20, 301-313.
- Wessels, P.L. and Steenkamp, L.P., (2009), "An investigation into students' perceptions of accountants", *Meditari Accountancy Research*, 17(1), 117 – 132.