

Role of Ethics and Professional Counsellors in the Development of Counselling Education in Nigeria as Expressed by Professional Counsellors in Ondo Metropolis, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study investigated the role of ethics and professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select one hundred (100) respondents. Variables of gender, age, educational qualification and religious affiliation were considered. To collect relevant information for the study, the researchers made use of a questionnaire tagged "Role of Ethics and Professional Counsellors in the Development of Counselling Education in Nigeria Questionnaire" (REPCDCENQ). Eight null hypotheses were generated and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The major results showed that item 3 on the roles of ethics which states "it regulates life and makes somebody act responsibly". With a mean score of 2.89 ranked 1st while item 6 which states "Ethics in counselling education helps to regulate the counselling education system and ensures that this practice positively contributes towards human life", with a mean score of 2.73 rank 10th. And on the role of professional counsellors, item 3 which states "curriculum development" with a mean score of 3.00 ranked 1st e.t.c. Four hypotheses were retained while four were rejected. For analysing the data, simple percentage, t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) statistics were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. It was recommended that ethics should strictly be adhered to by all professional counsellors, especially confidentiality irrespective of their age and educational qualification.*

Keywords: ethics, counselling, development, education and professional counsellors.

INTRODUCTION

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with the morality of human actions. Every professional body is governed by ethics and the counselling profession is not exclusive. Ethics is a branch of study that deals with what is the cure of course of action for man which is moral principles that governs a person's behaviour. Ethics are moral values that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity. Professional counsellors are expected to always adhere to the ethics of counselling as a profession. Ethics provide the guidelines for counsellors to make decisions in particular situation ((West, Osborn & Bubenser, 2003). The code of ethics serves to protect the public from misconduct ethically, while also protecting professional counsellors (Stuart, 2003; Sibongile & Tswane, 2016). One of the roles and importance of ethics in counselling is crucial because it sets order and guarantees a total and healthy human development, and one of the ethics in the counselling professions is confidentiality.

According to Izu (2017), Obi (2017), Adegoke (2019), Akomolafe (2019) and Eze (2019), some of the role of ethics in counseling education are: regulates life and makes someone to get responsibly guides counselling to show patience to every student despite their learning abilities, every student should be treated equally and do justice while taking an action helps to run the system smoothly, does not allow counsellors to hold grudges and to intentionally treat students unfair, ethics in education helps to regulate the education system and ensures that this positively contributes towards human life and so on. As regards the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria, professional counsellors play a significant role as affirmed by the researches carried out by Ipaye (2015), Obi (2017), and Akomolafe (2019). According to aforementioned authors, the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria includes: curriculum development, research and publication, advocacy and policy development, supervision and consultation, teaching and mentorship and the like.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing need for counselling services in Nigeria, the development of counselling education in the country is hindered by insufficient attention to ethics (Ipaye, 2015; Obi, 2017). The absence of a unified code of ethics (Adegoke, 2019), limited training in ethics (Olayinka, 2018), and cultural social factors that can conflict with ethical principles (Akomolafe, 2019) pose significant challenges to the development of counselling education in Nigeria, consequently, counselling students and professionals may lack the necessary ethical knowledge, skills, and attitudes to provide effective and responsible counselling services, comprising the well-being and trust of clients (Izu, 2017). Absence of rules, guidelines or instructions in any setting will lead to chaos and in order to avoid such a thing in any organization, ethics are written to guide and direct the professionals irrespective of the profession (Susan, 2015).

The objective of this study is to examine the roles of ethics and professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria, as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo Metropolis. Specifically, the study seeks to explore how ethical standards and professional practices contribute to the advancement of counselling education, while also assessing how variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, and religion influence counsellors' perceptions of these roles. By investigating these dimensions, the study aims to provide insight into the critical factors shaping counselling education in Nigeria and to highlight the importance of ethical and professional considerations in fostering a robust and effective counselling system.

Research Questions

1. What are the roles of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria?
2. What are the roles of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were raised to guide the study:

- Ho1: What are the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on gender?
- Ho2: What are the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on gender?
- Ho3: What are the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age?
- Ho4: What are the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age?
- Ho5: What are the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification?
- Ho6: What are the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification.
- Ho7: What are the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion.
- Ho8: What are the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this research. This research design provides a quickly efficient and accurate means of assessing information about a population of interest. It intends to investigate the role of ethics and professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The target population for this study consisted of all professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria. One hundred (100) respondents were randomly selected from the metropolis. Multi-stage sampling technique was used for selecting the respondents. At stage one, purposive sampling technique was adopted for selecting organisations that is, tertiary institutions, primary, secondary schools on the basis of numbers of professional counsellors, date of establishment and location. At stage two, researchers stratified respondents into different strata of gender, age, educational qualification and religion. At stage three, researchers employed simple random sampling technique to select one hundred (100) professional counsellors consisting of 40 males and 60 females.

Instrumentation

The major instrument that was used in collecting data for this research was developed by the researchers which was tagged "Role of Ethics and Professional Counsellors in the Development of

Counselling Education in Nigeria Questionnaire” (REPCDCENQ). The instrument has three sections, that is, sections ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’. Section ‘A’ contains personal information of the respondents, Section ‘B’ consist of items on role of ethics and section ‘C’ role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education respectively. The 4-point Likert type response format was adopted for use in sections B and C thus:

SA = Strongly Agree (4 points),

A = Agree (3 points),

D – Disagree (2 points),

SD = Strongly Disagree (1 point)

All items were positively structured.

Reliability

The reliability of the instrument used for this research study was established using the test-retest method within an interval of four weeks. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used in computing the correlation co-efficient of the instrument. A reliability co-efficient of 0.80 was obtained, hence, the instrument was statistically adjudged to be reliable and considered suitable for research use.

Method of Data Analysis

The t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics were used to test the null hypotheses. The ANOVA statistic was used for testing null hypotheses three to eight. And where the ANOVA result indicates a significant difference, Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) statistics was used as a post-hoc test to determine the means responsible for the differences noted.

RESULTS

Table 1: The distribution of respondents on variables

Item	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender			
	Female	40	40
	Male	60	60
	Total	100	100
Age			
	20 – 25 years	20	20
	26 – 30 years	20	20
	31 – 35 years	25	25
	36 years above	35	35
	Total	100	100
Educational Qualification			
	First Degree	50	50
	Masters' Degree	35	35
	Ph.D	15	15
	Total	100	100
Religion			
	Islam	45	45
	Christianity	50	50
	African Traditional Rel.	5	5
	Total	100	100

The table above shows the number of respondents in accordance with the variables.

Research Question 1: What are the roles of ethics on the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Rank order analysis on role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria

Item No.	Role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria	Mean	Rank
3	It regulates life and makes someone to act responsibly.	2.89	1 st
7	It guides counsellors to show patience to every student despite their learning abilities, every student should be treated equally and do justice while taking an action.	2.84	2 nd
1	Ethics helps to categorise different values, integrity, discipline and honesty and apply them in daily lives.	2.84	2 nd
10	Helps to develop personality of a student.	2.83	4 th
8	Ethics requires a student to respect the instruction of counsellors and abide by the rules set by them for academic integrity, responsibility as well as practice self-unfairly.	2.83	4 th
2	Influences behaviours and allows an individual to make the right choices.	2.78	6 th
4	Ethics in education helps to run the system smoothly	2.78	6 th
9	Does not allow counsellors to hold grudges and to intentionally treat students unfairly	2.75	8 th
5	It sets the standards of what is acceptable and what is not, hence, protecting the interests of both the educators and learners.	2.74	9 th
6	Ethics in counselling education helps to regulate the counselling education system and ensures that this practice positively contributes towards human life.	2.73	10 th

Table 2 above shows the mean scores and rank order of role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria. The table indicates that item 3 which states “It regulates life and makes someone to act responsibly, especially confidentially” with a mean score of 2.89 ranked 1st while item 6 which states “Ethics in counselling education helps to regulate the counselling education system and ensures that this practice positively contributes towards human life” with a mean score of 2.73 ranked 10th.

Research Question 2: What are the roles of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and Rank order analysis on role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria

Item No.	Role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria	Mean	Rank
3	Curriculum development	3.00	1 st
4	Research and publication	2.98	3 rd
2	Teaching and mentorship	2.86	7 th
1	Advocacy and policy development	2.77	9 th
6	Formation of advisory councils made up of students, parents, teachers, counsellors administrators and community members to review school counselling programme results and to make recommendations.	2.99	2 nd
5	Supervision and consultation	2.90	5 th
7	Use of students' data to affect systemic change within the school system so that every student receives the benefit of the school counselling programme.	2.80	8 th
8	Action plans for prevention and intervention service defining the desired student competencies and achievement results	2.90	5 th
9	Allotment of 80 percent (80%) of the professional school counsellor's time in direct service to the students.		9 th
10	Use of master and weekly calenders to keep students, parents, teachers	2.71	12 th
	Accountability		
12	Professional school counsellor use care of data to show the impact of the school counselling programme on school improvement and students' achievement.	2.97	4 th
11	Professional school counsellor report on immediate, intermediates and long-range results of school counselling programme.	2.72	11 th
13	Professional school counsellor conducting school counselling programme audits to guide future action and improve future results for all students, evaluating the performance of the professional school counsellors on basic standards of practice expected of professional school counsellors in implementing the school counselling programme.	2.70	13 th

Table 3 above indicates the mean score and rank order of the role of professional counsellors, item 3 under delivery which states "Responsive services" with a mean score of 3.00 ranked 1st, while item 13 which states "Professional school counsellor conducting school counselling programme audits to

guide future action and improve future results for all students, evaluating the performance of the professional school counsellors on basic standards of practice expected of professional school counsellors in implementing the school counselling programme” with a mean score of 2.70 ranked 13th.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the role of ethics on the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria basis of gender.

Table 4: Mean, Standard deviation and t-value of respondents’ view on the basis of gender

Gender	No.	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-val.	Crit. t-val	p-value	Decision
Female	40	52.99	8.54	98	1.55	1.96	0.011	retained
Male	60	54.66	4.09					

* Significant; $p < 0.05$

Table 4 above shows the mean, standard deviation and t-value of respondents on the basis of gender. The result on the table revealed that the calculated t-value of 1.55 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 with 98 degree of freedom at 0.05 alpha level of significance, thus, the null hypothesis is retained. Thus, there is no significant difference in the role of ethics on the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on gender.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on gender.

Table 5: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of respondents’ view on the basis of gender

Gender	No	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-val.	Crit. t-val.	p-value	Decision
Female	60	27.453.18		98	1.03	1.96	0.011	retained
Male	40	27.443.10						

* = Significant; $p < 0.05$

Table 5 above shows the mean, standard deviation and t-value of respondents on the basis of gender. The result on the above table revealed that the calculated t-value of 1.03 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 with 98 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, thus, null hypothesis is retained. Thus, there is no significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on gender.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age

Sources	SS	df	MS	Cal. F-val.	Crit. F-val	Decision
Between Group	4171.337	3	1390.45	46.47*	2.60	Rejected
Within Group	11400.289	96	29.92			
Total	15571.626	99				

* Significant; $p < 0.05$

Table 6 above presents the calculated f-value of 46.47 which is greater than the critical f-value of 2.60 at 0.05 alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age. In order to determine the mean value(s) that led to the significant difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 6, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of the DMRT procedure is displayed in Table 7.

Table 7: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing differences in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria on the basis of age

Sources	Group	Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N
36 years and above	4	A	54.88	35
31 – 35 years	3	A	54.35	25
26 – 30 years	2	B	52.87	30
20 – 25 years	1	C	22.50	20

Table 7 presents Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) results to show group means that led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA result of table 6. The DMRT results indicates that group 4 with a mean score of 54.88 differed from group 3 with a mean score of 54.35 but differed significantly from groups 2 and 1.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age.

Table 8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age

Sources	df	SS	MS	Cal. F-val.	Crit. F-val.	Decision
Between Group	2	3.511	1.170	4.12*	3.00	Rejected
Within Group	97	2926.526	9.887			
Total	99	2930.037				

* Significant; $p < 0.05$

Table 8 above presents the calculated F-value of 4.12 which is greater than the critical F-value of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference. Thus, there is a significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age. In order to determine the mean value(s) that led to the significant

difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 8, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of the DMRT procedure are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing differences in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age

Age	Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Rank
20-25 years	A	27.56	20	1
26-30 years	B	27.53	20	2
31-35 years	C	27.39	25	3
36 years and above	D	24.29	35	4

Table 9 above present Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) result to show group means that led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA result of table 8. The DMRT results indicates that group 1 with a mean score of 27.56 differed from group 2, with a mean score of 27.53 and group 3 with a mean score of 27.39 but differed significantly from group 4 with a mean 24.29 respectively. Hence, the significant difference noted in the DMRT result was due to the fact that groups 1, 2 and 3 differed from each other but differed significantly from group 4.

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification.

Table 10: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification

Sources	SS	df	MS	Cal. F-val.	Crit. F-val	p-value	Decision
Between Group	467.207	2	233.60	15.91*	3.00	0.003	Rejected
Within Group	15104.422	97	39.54				
Total	15571.626	99					

* Significant; $p < 0.05$

Table 10 above presents the calculated F-value of 15.91 which is greater than the critical F-value of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational

qualification. In order to determine the mean value(s) that led to the significant difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 10, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of DMRT procedure is as displayed in Table 11.

Table 11: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing differences in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria basis of educational qualification

Educational Qualification	Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Group
First Degree	A	54.63	35	1
Masters' Degree	A	54.47	15	2
Ph.D	B	52.11	50	3

Table 11 above presents Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) results to show group means that led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA result of table 10. The DMRT results indicates that group 1 with a mean score of 54.64 differed from group 2, with a mean score of 54.47 and greatly differed from group 3 with a mean score of 52.11 respectively. Hence, all groups are different from each other especially group 3.

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification.

Table 12: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification

Sources	df	SS	MS	Cal. F-val.	Crit. F-val.	Decision
Between Group	2	3.5111.170		5.13	3.00	Rejected
Within Group	97	2927.526	9.887			
Total	99	2930.037				

* Significant; $p < 0.05$

Table 12 above presents the calculated F-value of 5.13 which is greater than the critical F-value of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a

significant difference. Thus, there is a significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification. . In order to determine the mean value(s) that led to the significant difference observed in the ANOVA results of Table 12, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test. The results of DMRT procedure is as displayed in Table 13.

Table 13: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) showing differences in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria basis on educational qualification

Educational Qualification	Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Group
First Degree	A	28.56	50	1
Masters' Degree	B	27.53	35	2
Ph.D	C	23.39	10	3

Table 13 above presents Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) results to show group means that led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA result of table12. The DMRT results indicates that group 1 with a mean score of 28.56 differed from group 2, with a mean score of 27.53 and differed significantly from group 3 with a mean score of 23.29 respectively. Hence, the significant difference noted in the DMRT result was due to the fact that group 1 and 2 differed from each other but differed significantly from group 3.

Hypothesis 7: There is no significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion.

Table 14: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion

Sources	SS	df	MS	Cal. F-val.	Crit. F-val	Decision
Between Group	0.554	2	0.277	2.03	3.00	retained
Within Group	2929.483	97	9.864			
Total	2930.037	99				

* Significant; $p < 0.05$

Table 14 above presents the calculated F-value of 2.03 which is less than the critical F-value of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is retained. This implies that there is no significant difference. Thus, there is no significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion.

Hypothesis 8: There is no significant difference in the role professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion.

Table 15: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing respondents on significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion

Source s	df	SS	MS	Cal. F-val.	Crit. F-val.	p-value	Decision
Between Group 2	25.261	12.631		0.31	3.00	0.693	retained
Within Group	97	15104.422	39.54				
Total	99	14193.273					

* Significant;<0.05 alpha level

Table 15 above presents the calculated F-value of 0.31 which is less than the critical F-value of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is retained. This implies that there is no significant difference. Thus, there is no significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the study showed that professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria had similar expression on the role of ethics and professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria. The major results showed that item 3 on the roles of ethics which states “it regulates life and makes somebody act responsibly”. With a mean score of 2.89 ranked 1st while item 6 which states “Ethics in counselling education helps to regulate the counselling education system and ensures that this practice positively contributes towards human life”, with a mean score of 2.73 rank 10th. And on the role of professional counsellors, item 3 which states “curriculum development” with a mean score of 3.00 ranked 1st, while item 13 which states “Professional school counsellor conducting school counselling programme audits to guide future action and improve future results for all students, evaluating the performance of the professional school counsellors on basic standards of practice expected of professional school counsellors in implementing the school counselling programme” with a mean score of 2.70 ranked 13th.

The first null hypothesis showed that there is no significant difference in the expression of professional counsellors on the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria based on gender. This finding corroborates the finding of Susan (2015) and Adegoke (2019) which showed that the respondents had similar responses on the role of ethics in counselling education. While, the result negates the finding of Sibongile and Tswane (2016) and Eze (2019) in which the respondents had differences in their responses. The second null hypothesis indicates that there is no significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on gender. This results is in line with the finding of Kottler (2001) and Obi (2017) but differed from the finding of Littre and Peterson (2005).

The third null hypothesis showed that there is a significant difference in the expression of the respondents on the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age. This result supports the finding of Cees (2014) and Akomolafe (2019) while it does not support the study of Chinami and Jeonghy (2012). The plausible reason for the difference in the respondents' expression might be due to the fact that they belong to different age groups, and consequently, they might view the roles from different perspectives. The fourth null hypothesis indicates that there is a significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on age. This study corroborates the study of Stephen (2004) while it negates the study of West, Osborn and Bubenser (2003).

The fifth null hypothesis showed that there is a significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification. The outcome of this result is in line with the study of Stuart (2003), but not in line with the study of Cees (2014). The rationale behind the difference in the expression of the respondents might be because they belong to different educational qualification groups, they might have seen the roles from different perspectives. The sixth null hypothesis shows that there is a significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on educational qualification. This result supports the study of Sibongile and Tswane (2016) and Eze (2019) but does not support the study of West, Osborn and Bubenser (2003).

The seventh null hypothesis indicates that there is no significant difference in the role of ethics in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion. This results is in line with the study of Stephen (2004) and Adegoke (2019). The eighth null hypothesis shows that there is no significant difference in the role of professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria based on religion. The outcome of this result corroborates the study of Littre and Peterson (2005) and Obi (2017).

CONCLUSION

Role of ethics and professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria as expressed by professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria. The role of ethics and professional counsellors in the development of counselling education in Nigeria cannot be overstated, professional counsellors in Ondo metropolis, Nigeria have emphasized the significance of ethical standards and professional guidance in shaping the country's counselling education landscape. The findings highlight the need for strengthened ethical frameworks, continuous professional development, and collaborative efforts among stakeholders to promote high-quality counselling education. Furthermore,

by prioritizing ethics and professionalism, Nigeria can establish a robust counselling education system that effectively prepares counsellors to address the country's unique challenges.

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