

## **ACCOUNTING ETHICS AND ACCOUNTING EDUCATION IN SELECTED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examined the effect of accounting ethics on the accounting education in selected Nigerian tertiary institutions. The responses from one hundred students in selected three Nigerian tertiary institutions were analyzed using descriptive statistics, simple regression analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The research findings indicate that an accounting ethics have not received the type of attention needed in the curriculum of the accounting departments in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Based on these research findings, the inclusion of ethics as a separate course in the accounting programme and integration of ethics in other courses offered in the accounting departments in Nigerian tertiary institutions were recommended.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Ethics, Education, Accounting Curriculum, Scandal, Nigerian Tertiary Institutions*

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### **Article History**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Education has been known globally to be the foundation of the socio-economic development of any nation. No country can develop socially, economically, and politically without putting the right education in place. This also applies to Nigeria as the country cannot develop beyond the type of education that exists in the nation. While it is true that education in all disciplines is required for the development of a nation, it is also well established that accounting education occupies a very special and crucially important position in the economic, social, and political development of a nation. The level of development of a nation depends on the business activities that are taking place in that nation. For the business activities to function effectively and efficiently there must be some well-trained accounting professionals that will help this process to flourish (Samuel, Mamman, & Mustapha, 2017; Herbert, Anyahara, Okoroafor, & Onyilo, 2016; Olarewaju, 2015).

The accounting professionals play an important role in the confidence building of the public who are the stakeholders in the business activities of a nation. The loan providers, the suppliers, the investors, the shareholders, the employees, the customers, and other users of financial statements are interested in the quality accounting information that will help them in making informed investment and economic decisions. The type of financial statements prepared and audited by accounting professionals will determine the level of confidence of the stakeholders in the business activities of the nation (Herbert, Anyahara, Okoroafor, & Onyilo, 2016; Olarewaju, 2015; Usang, Agbor, & Dandago, 2013, 2013; Idialu & Oghuma, 2007).

The recent accounting scandals, from Enron in the United States of America (USA) to Cadbury Nigeria Plc and others, have called for stakeholders' reevaluation of their confidence in the accounting information prepared and audited by the accounting professionals. With the accounting standards that provide guidelines for the accounting professional in preparing the financial reporting and the codes of ethics that provide standard of behaviors to the accounting professionals, and responses to the accounting scandals by global accounting bodies such as International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and US Financial Accounting Standards Boards (FASB) as indicated by Herbert, Anyahara, Okoroafor, and Onyilo (2016); the ethical behavior of the accounting professionals is still calling into question now than ever before. Then the question that comes to mind is: What are the reasons for the unethical behaviors of the accounting professionals despite the established accounting standards and codes of conducts by the accounting professional organizations?

The tertiary institutions that play a major role in training future accounting professionals did not provide ethics as a separate course while they are in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. The ethics topic the accounting students know while they are in the tertiary institutions is included in the auditing course. The accounting curriculum of the Nigerian tertiary institutions does not make provision for the ethics as a separate course. The characters of the accounting students, while they are in tertiary institutions, will have an effect on their behaviors when they eventually become accounting professionals after graduation. The character modeling that the ethics as a separate course for the accounting students in the Nigerian tertiary institutions supposed to perform is missing in their life. In addition, there is a disconnection between what the potential accounting professionals are being taught in the school and what the accounting profession, are actually practicing (Ekwe, & Abuka, 2014; Idialu & Oghuma, 2007). Karakoc's (2016) study presented the importance of ethics for accounting students as the finding of the study indicated that ethical sensitivity significantly and positively impacts the academic performance of the accounting students. Adeyemi and Fagbemi (2011) in their own bid to improve and enhance the image of the accounting professionals who would later become auditors believed that strong ethical training is needed to improve the audit profession in Nigeria. Given the importance of the accounting professionals' vital role in the development of the Nigerian nation, both economically, socially, and politically; this study examines the role of accounting ethics in accounting education in the tertiary university in Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The public trust in the accounting profession, accounting professionals, and the financial statements prepared, presented and audited by accounting professionals has been eroded due to the recent accounting scandals in Nigeria and around the world. Several measures have been put in place by different nations to restore the public confidence in the financial markets, but the problem of distrust of the accounting information still persists. The absence of the ethics courses for the accounting students in the Nigerian tertiary institutions has not been helpful to the development of the potential accountants. The degree awarded to the accounting students in the Nigerian tertiary institutions supposed to be based on both academic performance and character performance. But the character performance is missing in the accounting students' life.

Lack of the character modeling resulted in unethical behaviors when they become accounting professionals. This has been and it is still a major problem in Nigeria. Building a successful nation requires people of good and unquestionable characters. But when these types of people are in short supply or sometimes are not even available, it poses a serious threat to the development of such nation. This is the type of situation that is happening in Nigeria now. Research findings have also indicated other areas that hinder accounting education in Nigeria. Despite the increase in the

enrollments of the accounting students in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, there is a decline in the government recurrent and capital allocation for education. Irregular payment of the lecturers' salaries or sometimes nonpayment of the salaries, dilapidated physical facilities, abandonment of capital projects, lack of the long-term plan for a physical project, and lecturers' strike have been identified as impediments to accounting education in Nigerian tertiary institutions. But a close look at these other reasons revealed that all these impediments are caused by unethical behaviors of those who are in control of the resources allocated for the education (Romanus & Arowoshegbe, 2014; Akhidime & Eriabie, 2013).

### Objectives of the Research

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of the accounting ethics on the accounting education. The specific objectives are to:

- Investigate the effect of separate ethics course in the accounting education in Nigeria
- Examine the effect of integration of ethics in other accounting courses on accounting education in Nigeria
- iii. Evaluate the effect of combined separate ethics course and integration of ethics in other accounting courses on the accounting education in Nigeria

### The Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

- What is the effect of separate ethics course in the accounting education in Nigeria?
- In what way does the integration of ethics in other accounting courses affect accounting education in Nigeria?
- How do combined separate ethics course and integration of ethics in other accounting courses affect accounting education in Nigeria?

### Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses for this study are:

- H<sub>01</sub>:** Separate ethics course does not have a significant effect on accounting education in Nigeria.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** Integration of ethics in other accounting courses does not have a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** The combined separate ethics course and integration of ethics in other accounting courses do not have a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria.

### Operationalization of Variables

X = Accounting Ethics, the independent variable

Y = Accounting Education, the dependent variable

The X sub-variables:

x<sub>1</sub> = Separate ethics course

x<sub>2</sub> = Integration of ethics in other accounting courses

### Model Specification

$$Y = f(X)$$

- $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + e$
- $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 x_2 + e$
- $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + e$

### Scope of the Study

This study covers the accounting students in selected three tertiary institutions in Ogun State. The tertiary institutions chosen are Babcock University, Ilishan Remo; Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago Iwoye; and Covenant University, Sango with one hundred and twenty student sample size and 100 students finally participated in the study. The three hundred and four hundred level accounting students were selected as sample size. The rationale for choosing the three hundred and four hundred level accounting students is due to their number of years on the campus. The time spent in the department of accounting is going to be helpful in responding to the questionnaire. The students who have spent a minimum of two years in the department of accounting in their respective universities were qualified to participate in the study.

### Significant of the Study

Given the importance of the accounting professionals in the development of the Nigerian nation both economically, socially, and politically; this study is important to the federal government in terms of accounting education as it will help the government to know where it should direct its attention to. It is also important to the accounting students as the research findings would help the students in preparing for their future accounting job. The society will also benefit from this study as competent and ethically behave accounting professionals benefit all stakeholders.

### Ethical Theory and Related Literature Review

This section reviews the theory of ethics and other related literature.

#### Theories of Ethics

Ethics theory is the theoretical foundation for this study. Some of the theories of ethics are: a) Normative ethic theory - This theory proposed and prescribed the behaviors that are good and behaviors that are bad; b) Deontological ethic theory – This theory is similar to moral theory of philosopher and divine command theory of morality in the sense that it believes that the issues of good behaviors or bad behaviors should be seen and interpreted from the scripture point of view and not from the human being point of view; c) Teleological ethic theory – This theory proposed that making decision about what is regarded as good behaviors and bad behaviors should not be based on what people did but the outcomes of their behaviors. That is, the decisions about what is regarded as good behaviors or bad behaviors should be based on the results of the people's action and not what they did; d) Utilitarian ethic theory of value – This theory proposed that the enjoyment and happiness derived from certain activities are more important than the action taken; e) Rational self- interest/social contract interest ethic theory –This theory believes that people should not sacrifice themselves for anybody and they should do what they believe that will benefit them; f) Ethical egoism theory – This theory proposed that people will do anything to get what they want without any remorse. It further explained that people are ready to sacrifice

others for their own gain; g) Cultural relativism ethic theory – This theory stated that people use their culture to cover up for their unethical behaviors, and h) situational/contingent ethic theory – This theory proposed that people used situation they believed they cannot control as justification for their bad behaviors (Granitz & Loewy, 2007; Kannaian & Kumar, 2009). These theories of ethics are relevant to this study as the accounting profession and accounting professionals are in charge of preparing, presenting, and auditing the financial statements. The quality of the information in the financial statements would reflect the quality of the ethical, moral possessed by the accounting professionals.

## **RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW**

Romanus and Arowoshegbe (2014) study found a strong link between the ethical standard and conduct and accounting education in Nigerian tertiary institutions. They call for the enforcement of the accounting professional ethics among the members. They call for closer collaboration between the accounting professionals and accounting academia. They argue that the accounting professionals' education should not be based solely on the accounting courses only. Their courses should go beyond the accounting courses in order to have needed skills that will help them to make decisions that will help their clients when they become accounting professionals. They emphasized the importance of continuing education for the accounting professionals even after they might have graduated. Akhidime and Eriabie (2013) research findings attributed the problem in accounting education to the lateness in the establishment of the accounting education and inherited difficulties in Nigerian tertiary institutions as well as improper treatment of the accounting professionals. They argue that the contents of the academic and professional accounting curriculum must be increased as well as replaced the four years accounting programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions with five year programme. They also indicate that the minimum qualification to register for the professional accounting examination should be first degree in accounting.

Idialu and Oghuma (2007) research findings found a shortcoming in training accountants that were attributed to the absence of ethics courses in the curriculum of the accounting students in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Their research findings also indicated that potential accounting professionals are not exposed to the ethical training while they were in the school and ethics is not part of the accounting professional examination they will later take. The implication of this is that they are not trained in the area of ethics that could have prepared them to handle ethical issues they may come across when they get an accounting job. Consequently, the lack of an ethical knowledge and skill will not allow them to make an ethical decision when they are faced with situations where they have to make ethical judgments. This is so because their place of work is their first contact with ethical issues. They argue that accounting ethics courses and value system should be included in the curriculum of the accounting courses in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. They also indicated that students should be encouraged to participate in the industrial training. This, according to them; will give the future accounting professionals the opportunity of interacting with an accounting professional while they are still in school. The issue of introduction of ethics course as a separate course in the accounting programme is not limited to Nigeria alone. Uyar and Gungormus (2013) found that there is no separate ethics course in the accounting programme in Turkey. The finding of their study further indicated that most accounting professionals did not take any ethical courses when they were in school. The finding supports separate ethics course for the accounting students as well as integrating ethics course in different accounting courses.

Usang, Agbor, and Dandago (2013) research findings indicated that while some of the students surveyed recognized ethics as part of their auditing course, others knew about ethics from outside the class. Their research findings also indicated that including ethics as a separate course in the undergraduate accounting programme had the tendency of

developing morally, ethically and responsible accounting professionals. They argue that including ethics as a separate course in accounting programme will help them in preparing for their workplace after graduation.

Okafor (2012) study calls for courses in accounting programme in the Nigerian tertiary institutions that will enhance quality, ethical and appropriate behavioral attitudes in the accounting students. This will help them to discharge their professional services after graduation. Uwuigbe and Ovia (2011) study found accounting and ethics as inseparable twins as ethics serves as the foundation for the accounting. Their study findings also indicated that lack of separate ethics courses in accounting programme is related to the current situation in the accounting profession. They argue that offering the ethics course as a separate course in the accounting programme rather than ethics as part of auditing courses will produce ethical accounting professionals because of their acquired ethical value. Ekwe and Abuka (2014) study indicate that modern technique needed in accounting practice is excluded from the accounting curriculum in the Nigerian tertiary institutions they studied. Their research findings also indicated that the paper qualification of the lecturers is highly placed and not the ability of the lecturers to impart knowledge of the students. They proposed collaboration between parents, lecturers, and the student as a way of improving accounting education.

Adeyemi and Adelaja (2011) examined the cheating behavior of the accounting undergraduate students in tertiary institutions in Lagos state, Nigeria. Their research findings revealed that accounting students are under pressure to get good grades. They also blamed the lecturers for giving them many course materials to read. The students who are on academic probation due to low grade are afraid to lose their studentship. The research finding also indicated that the accounting students are more likely to cheat if the invigilator is not paying attention. Atarere, Osemwegie-Ero, and Eneh (2016) study calls for inclusion of proactive contents rather than reactive contents in the accounting curriculum in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. They call for moral and valuable education that will improve accounting curriculum in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Aside from ethical factor, Akadakpo and Enofe (2013) research findings indicated policies and rules where accounting professional work, legal systems and societal value system as other factors that influence the practice of accounting professionals in Nigeria. Though, it is most likely that the ethical factor may be the root cause of these identified factors.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employs survey research design and the data were collected through questionnaires. The questionnaire collected students' opinion on the introduction of separate ethics course, integration of ethics in other accounting courses, and accounting education. The population of the study is the accounting students in the selected three Nigerian tertiary institutions and the sample size is one hundred and twenty (120) accounting students of these tertiary institutions. One hundred and twenty (120) copies of the questionnaire were administered to these students and one hundred (100) completed copies of the questionnaire were returned.

## **DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS**

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23.0) was used to process the collected data. Descriptive statistics were analyzed to answer research questions as well as taken care of the research objectives and simple and multiple regression analyses were employed in testing the hypotheses.

## Descriptive Statistics

**Table 1: Respondents' Responses on Separate Ethics Course**

Moral Course					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	6	6.0	6.0	6.0
	L	10	10.0	10.0	16.0
	LL	4	4.0	4.0	20.0
	LH	11	11.0	11.0	31.0
	H	32	32.0	32.0	63.0
	VH	37	37.0	37.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Value Course					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
	L	12	12.0	12.0	17.0
	LL	8	8.0	8.0	25.0
	LH	18	18.0	18.0	43.0
	H	27	27.0	27.0	70.0
	VH	30	30.0	30.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Character Course					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	L	9	9.0	9.0	16.0
	LL	11	11.0	11.0	27.0
	LH	23	23.0	23.0	50.0
	H	15	15.0	15.0	65.0
	VH	35	35.0	35.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Behavioral Course					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
	L	11	11.0	11.0	16.0
	LL	5	5.0	5.0	21.0
	LH	24	24.0	24.0	45.0
	H	26	26.0	26.0	71.0
	VH	29	29.0	29.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Four questions were used to collect data on separate ethics course. In the first question, the students were asked to give their own opinion on the introducing of course, that will be based on moral, that is a moral based course in the accounting department. Table 1 presented the respondents' responses to the separate ethics course. From the respondents' responses, 37 (37%) students rated it very high, 32 (32%) students rated it higher, 11 (11%) students rated it low high, 4(4%) rated it low , 10 (10%) students rated it low, and 6 (6%) students rated it very low. Overall, 80 (80%) students rated it high while 20 (20%) student rated it low. The second question is about the value based course. On the second question, 30 (30%) students rated it very high, 27 (27%) students rated it high, 18 (18%) students rated it low, high, 8 (8%) students rated it low low, 12 (12%) students rated it low while 5 (5%) students rated it very low. Overall 75 (75%) students rated it high while 25 (25%) rated it low. The third question asked the students, their opinion on the introduction of character based

course in the accounting department. On the third question, 35 (35%) students rated it very high, 15 (15%) students rated it high, 23 (23%) students rated it low, high, 11 (11%) students rated it low low, 9 (9%) students rated it low, and 7 (7%) rated it very low. The fourth question is on behavioral base course and 29 (29%) students rated it very high, 26 (26%) students rated it high, 24 (24%) rated it low, high, 5 (5%) students rated it low low, 11 (11%) students rated it low, while 5 (5%) students rated it very low. Overall 79 (79%) students rated it high and 21 (21%) students rated it low. Based on the accounting students' responses to the four questions used to collect information about introducing separate ethics course, the accounting students indicated that separate ethics course is a positive contribution.

**Table 2: Respondents' Responses on Accounting Education**

Student Enrolment					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	13	13.0	13.0	13.0
	L	16	16.0	16.0	29.0
	LL	6	6.0	6.0	35.0
	LH	29	29.0	29.0	64.0
	H	25	25.0	25.0	89.0
	VH	11	11.0	11.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Student Retention					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	19	19.0	19.0	19.0
	L	13	13.0	13.0	32.0
	LL	8	8.0	8.0	40.0
	LH	15	15.0	15.0	55.0
	H	30	30.0	30.0	85.0
	VH	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Student-Lecturer Relationship					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	10	10.0	10.0	10.0
	L	20	20.0	20.0	30.0
	LL	12	12.0	12.0	42.0
	LH	20	20.0	20.0	62.0
	H	28	28.0	28.0	90.0
	VH	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Grade Point Average (GPA)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
	L	12	12.0	12.0	21.0
	LL	9	9.0	9.0	30.0
	LH	12	12.0	12.0	42.0
	H	33	33.0	33.0	75.0
	VH	25	25.0	25.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Four questions were used to collect data on the accounting education in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Table 2 indicates the respondents' responses on the accounting education. The first question asked the students to rate the students' enrollment in the accounting departments in their respective tertiary institutions. On the first question, 11 (11%)

students rated it very high, 25 (25%) students rated it high, 29 (29) students rated it low, high, 6 (6%) students rated it low low, 16 (16%) students rated it low, and 13(13%) students rated it very low. For question one, 65 (65%% students rated it high and 35 (35%) students rated it low. The second question focused on the student retention and 15 (15%) rated it very high, 30 (30%) rated it high, 15 (15%) students rated it low, high, 8 (8%) students rated it low low, 13 (13%) students rated it low, and 19 (19%) students rated it very low. For question two 60 (60%) students rated it high while 40 (40%) students rated it low. The third question asked information about student-lecturer relationship and 10 (10%) students rated it very high, 28 (28%) students rated it high, 20 (20%) students rated it low, high, 12 (12%) students rated it low low, 20 (20%) students rated it low, and 10 (10%) students rated it very low.

Overall, 58 (58%) students rated question three high and 42 (42%) rated it low. The fourth question focused on the students' grade point average and 25 (25%) students rated it very high, 33 33 (33%) students rated it high, 12 (12%) students rated it low, high, 9 (9%) students rated it low, 12 (12%) students rated it low, and 9 (9%) students rated it very low. For question four, 70 (70%) students rated it higher while 30% students rated it low. The four questions used to collect data on accounting education believe that accounting education is in the right direction. To answer research question, one that asks for the effect of separate ethics course on accounting education, the majority of the accounting students believes that separate ethics course is beneficiary. The students' responses to accounting education also follow the same pattern. Comparing these two responses, the indication is that separate ethics course affects accounting education in Nigeria as shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

**Table 3: Respondents' Responses on Integration of Ethics in Other Accounting Courses**

Moral and Management					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	18	18.0	18.0	18.0
	L	12	12.0	12.0	30.0
	LL	5	5.0	5.0	35.0
	LH	25	25.0	25.0	60.0
	H	30	30.0	30.0	90.0
	VH	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
Value and Taxation					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VL	9	9.0	9.0	9.0
	L	15	15.0	15.0	24.0
	LL	7	7.0	7.0	31.0
	LH	26	26.0	26.0	57.0
	H	35	35.0	35.0	92.0
	VH	8	8.0	8.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

<b>Table 3 – Cond.,</b>					
<b>Character and Financial Management</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	VL	12	12.0	12.0	12.0
	L	8	8.0	8.0	20.0
	LL	10	10.0	10.0	30.0
	LH	38	38.0	38.0	68.0
	H	20	20.0	20.0	88.0
	VH	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Behavioral and Auditing</b>					
		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Valid	VL	10	10.0	10.0	10.0
	L	13	13.0	13.0	23.0
	LL	12	12.0	12.0	35.0
	LH	30	30.0	30.0	65.0
	H	20	20.0	20.0	85.0
	VH	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Four questions were used to collect data on the integration of ethics in other accounting courses. The first question is based on combination of moral and management together as a course and 10 (10%) rated it very high, 30 (30%) students rated it high, 25 (25%) students rated it low, high, 5 (5%) students rated it low low, 12 (12%) students rated it low, and 18 (18%) students rated it very low. Overall, 65 (65%) students rated question one high and 35 (35%) rated it low. The second question is about value and taxation, 8 (8%) students rated it very high, 35 (35%) students rated it high, 26 (26%) students rated it low, high, 7 (7%) students rated it low low, 15 (15%) students rated it low, and 9 (9%) students rated it very low. For question two, 69 (69%) students rated it high and 31 (31%) students rated it low. The third question focused on the character and financial management and 12 (12%) students rated it very high, 20 (20%) students rated it high, 38 (38%) students rated it low, high, 10 (10 %) students rated it low low, 8 (8%%) students rated it low, and 12 (12%) students rated it very low. For question three, 70 (70%) rated it high while 30 (30%) rated it low. The fourth question is based on behavioral and auditing and 15 (15%) students rated it very high, 20 (20%) students rated it high, 30 (30%) students rated it low, high, 12 (12%) students rated it low low, 13 (13%) students rated it low, and 10 (10%) students rated it very low. For question four, 65 (65%) students rated it high and 35 (35%) rated it low. The respondents' responses on the four questions used to collect information on the integration of ethics in other accounting courses indicated that integrating ethics in all accounting courses are the right thing to do. To answer research question two that asks for the effect of integration of ethics in other accounting courses on accounting education. The respondents' responses on the integration of ethics in other accounting courses and the accounting education follow the same pattern. Therefore the implication is that the integration of ethics in other accounting courses affects accounting education positively as demonstrated in Table 2 and Table 3. For the third research question that asks for the effects of the combined effects of separate ethics course and integration of the ethics in other accounting courses, the students' responses follow the same high rate pattern. That means the combination of the separate ethics course and the integration of ethics in other accounting courses affects accounting education positively in Nigeria as shown in Table1, Table 2, and Table 3.

### Hypotheses Testing

Simple regression and multiple regression analyses were used to test the hypotheses.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Separate ethics course does not have a significant effect on accounting education in Nigeria.

**Table 4: Simple Regression of Separate Ethics Course and Accounting Education**

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.970 <sup>a</sup>	.942	.941	1.54455		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Separate Ethics Course						
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3769.516	1	3769.516	1580.080	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	233.794	98	2.386		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4003.310</b>	<b>99</b>			
a. Dependent Variable: Accounting Education						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Separate Ethics Course						

For hypothesis, one that states that the ethics course does not have a significant effect on accounting education in Nigeria. The  $R = 0.97$  indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between separate ethics courses and accounting education. The  $R^2 = 0.942$  means that 94.2% variation in accounting education can be explained by the variation in separate ethics course. The model specification is significant with the F-p value = 0.000 as shown in Table 4. This finding is in line with previous research findings of Idialu and oghuma (2007), Usang, Agbor, and Dandago (2013), Okafor (2012), Uwuigbe and Ovia (2011), and others who believe that lack of separate ethics course in the curriculum of the accounting students is the major cause of the problem facing the accounting professionals. This finding also is in line with the previous research findings that connected a lack of separate ethics course to the accounting scandals in Nigeria and around the world. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Rejection of null hypothesis indicates that separate ethics course has a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Integration of ethics in other accounting courses does not have a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria.

**Table 5: Simple Regression of Integration of Ethics in Other Accounting Courses and Accounting Education**

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.990 <sup>a</sup>	.980	.980	.89446		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Integration of Ethics						
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3924.904	1	3924.904	4905.753	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	78.406	98	.800		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4003.310</b>	<b>99</b>			
a. Dependent Variable: Accounting Education						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Integration of Ethics						

The second hypothesis states that the integration of ethics in other accounting courses does not have a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria. The  $R = .99$  indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between integration of ethics in other accounting courses and accounting education. The  $R^2 = 0.98$  indicates that 98% of the variation in accounting education can be explained by the integration of ethics in other accounting courses. The model specification is significant with F-p value of 0.000 as shown in Table 5. The finding of hypothesis two is in line with the finding of Romanus and Arowoshegbe's (2014) study that found linkage between the ethical standard and conduct and accounting education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The finding is also in line with Idialu and Oghuma (2007) research findings that traced the problems encountered by the accounting professionals in Nigeria tertiary institutions to the lack of ethical courses in the accounting programme. According to the result of this hypothesis, integration of ethics in other accounting courses will be more powerful in instilling ethical culture in the future accounting professionals. As a result, the null hypothesis that states that integration of ethics in other accounting courses does not have a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria is rejected indicating that integration of ethics in other accounting courses has a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** The combined separate ethics course and integration of ethics in other accounting courses do not have a significant effect on the accounting education in Nigeria.

**Table 6: Multiple Regression of Separate Ethics Course, Integration of Ethics in other Accounting Courses and Accounting Education**

		Model Summary				
		Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
		1	.991 <sup>a</sup>	.982	.982	.85315
a. Predictors: (Constant), Separate Ethics Course, Integration of Ethics						
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3932.707	2	1966.353	2701.517	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	70.603	97	.728		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4003.310</b>	<b>99</b>			
a. Dependent Variable: Accounting Education						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Separate Ethics Course, Integration of Ethics						

For the third hypothesis that states that the combined separate ethics course and integration of ethics in other accounting courses do not have a significant effect on accounting education in Nigeria. The  $R = 0.99$  indicates a strong positive relationship between combined separate ethics course and integrated ethics in other accounting courses and accounting education. The  $R^2$  adjusted = 0.982 indicates that 98.2% of the variation in the accounting education can be explained by separate ethics course and combined ethics in other accounting courses. The specification model is significant with the F-p value of 0.0000 as shown in Table 6. The finding of this study corroborates the finding of the Okafor (2012) study which called for quality ethical training in Nigerian tertiary institutions. It is also in line with the findings of Idialu and Oghuma (2007) research findings, Usang, Agbor, and Dandago (2013), Uwuigbe and Ovia (2011) who believed that

ethics courses should be introduced in the accounting programme in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Uwuigbe and Ovia (2011) even indicated that ethics cannot be separated from accounting in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Therefore the null hypothesis that states that the combined separate ethics course and integration of ethics in other accounting courses do not have a significant effect on accounting education in Nigeria is rejected. This indicates that combined separate ethics course and integration of ethics in other accounting courses have a significant effect on accounting education in Nigeria.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of the accounting professionals cannot be overemphasized because of their role in nation building. The accounting ethics that supposed to prepare the future accounting professionals in the Nigerian tertiary institutions is not getting the type of attention it needs. Accounting ethics are taught as an integral part of auditing courses and not as a separate course in the accounting programme in Nigerian tertiary institutions. This type of situation has resulted in producing accounting professionals who are not ethically and morally prepared for the ethical challenges they will face at their respective working places after graduation. This has led to accounting scandals in some Nigerian corporations. This study concluded that ethics courses are needed in the accounting curriculum in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria in order to develop and produce the needed accounting professionals in Nigeria.

This study recommends that the accounting departments in Nigerian tertiary institutions should include ethics as a separate course in their curriculum. In addition, ethics should also be integrated into all courses being offered in the accounting programme. Doing this will ensure that the future accounting professionals have the type of ethical culture needed to carry out their respective disciplines. This will also enhance the development of Nigeria, economically, socially, and politically as no nation can develop without effective and efficient financial capital markets. The effective and efficient financial capital market can be possible with the quality financial statements that will give all the stakeholders in the financial capital markets the needed information to make informed investment and economic decisions. And since the accounting professionals are the ones that will prepare and audit these financial statements, they need to be ethically and morally trained when they are in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This would enable them to have ethical skill and knowledge needed to make ethical decisions in their various organizations after graduation from the tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

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