

## **COUNSELLING FOR VALUE RE-ORIENTATION IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN RIVERS STATE**

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated counselling for value re-orientation in political leadership in Rivers State. The study was guided by a set of three carefully developed research questions, which served as the foundation for the subsequent formulation of three carefully constructed hypotheses. The study utilised a descriptive survey approach in order to examine a current phenomenon. The population of the study included party members in the two major political parties in Rivers State (PDP and APC) as well as all registered counsellors in the State while convenience sampling technique was used to select 36 respondents (24 party members and 12 counsellors) as sampled respondents for the study. The instrument that was adopted for data collection was a 15 item questionnaire tagged "Counselling Political Leaders for Value Re-Orientation Questionnaire" (CPLVROQ) which was face and content validated by three Counsellors at the Department of Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, University of Port Harcourt. The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach alpha statistics, yielding an average value of 0.80. The research issues were addressed by calculating the mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were evaluated using a t-test with a significance level of 0.05. The findings of the study indicated that illiteracy and materialisms were among the drivers of unethical values among politicians. It was shown that lack of productivity and insecurity are among the effects of these unethical values. Counselling on ethnic integration and peaceful co-existence were identified as necessary for value reorientation among political leaders. The study recommended that the government of Rivers State takes proactive measures to enhance the efficacy of anti-corruption measures and accountability mechanisms within the political institutions of the state for political leaders as a way out for national development.*

**Keywords:** Counselling, Values, Re-Orientation, Political Leadership.

## **Introduction**

Politics is one of the key pillars of nation building as it is through it that political office holders are elected to drive national ideologies for growth and development. However, just as the politics is essential for the sustainability of democracy and democratic dividend, the nation today faces diverse challenges that hinder growth and development and according to Denwigwe (2015), part of these challenges is fueled by political differences as a result of poor political leadership.

The need for good and value based political leadership in any country cannot be overemphasized. Most of the developed countries of the world have been able to make reasonable progress through sustainable democracy which is borne out of quality political leadership.

Egwu (2017) alluded to this fact as he asserted that good leadership is essential because it establishes a clearly defined focus on development for all, which brings about the necessary changes that enable the nation to advance. However, good political leadership cannot be dissociated from good value systems which is gradually eroding the Nigerian political space. The fact that violence now characterizes the process of building political leadership after Nigerian elections across all levels is globally recognized. Citizens and aspirants now look forward to political violence after each election because aspiring leaders and their followers now show evidence of lack of good value system required from political leaders for national advancement.

Within the context of Rivers State, located in Nigeria, the political terrain is afflicted by a multitude of obstacles encompassing corruption, ethno-political tensions, and a dearth of efficacious governance. The aforementioned challenges have indeed posed considerable obstacles to the advancement of socio-economic development and have also served to undermine the confidence that the general public places in their political leaders. Notwithstanding the implementation of various interventions targeted at mitigating these issues, the underlying problem remains unresolved, thereby underscoring the imperative for novel and inventive methodologies (Okwelle, and Ayonmike, 2014).

One crucial aspect that necessitates careful consideration is the underlying value system that serves as the foundation for political leadership in Rivers State. The cultivation of values such as integrity, accountability, transparency, and inclusivity is of utmost importance in the facilitation of good governance and the promotion of sustainable development. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the dominant political culture frequently places a higher emphasis on self-interest, patronage, and immediate benefits rather than the collective welfare, thereby intensifying pre-existing difficulties (Denwigwe, 2015).

This study endeavours to examine the effectiveness of counselling interventions that concentrate on value re-orientation for political leaders in the region of Rivers State.

The focal issue under examination in this particular research endeavour pertains to the disjunction that exists between the principles espoused by political leaders and the exigencies for progress and advancement of the general populace within the state. The manifestation of this

disconnect can be observed in a multitude of ways, including but not limited to moral and ethical lapses, ethno-political divisions, challenges in policy implementation, and a dearth of visionary leadership.

The fundamental issue at hand pertains to the insufficiency in the ethical and moral underpinnings of political leadership within the confines of Rivers State. This inadequacy serves as a hindrance to the advancement of the state and undermines the welfare of its inhabitants. The conventional methods employed in tackling these concerns have demonstrated restricted efficacy, thereby demanding a fundamental alteration in perspective towards the realignment of values via the utilisation of counselling techniques.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The objective of the investigation was to examine counselling for value re-orientation in political leadership in Rivers State while the specific objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State
2. examine the effects of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State
3. ascertain the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State

### **Research Questions**

In the present study, the aforementioned research inquiries were duly addressed:

1. What are the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State?
2. What are the effects of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State?
3. What are the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

At a significance level of 0.05, the following hypotheses were subjected to testing:

1. There is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings between party members and counsellors on the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State.
2. There is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings between party members and counsellors on the effects of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State.
3. There is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings between party members and counsellors on the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State.

**Literature Review****Counselling**

The definition of counselling has no generally accepted description. However, Geshinde (2011) asserted that counseling can be described as a variety of techniques geared towards assisting a person solve his or her problems. This definition explains the fact that counselling is required in the process of assisting an individual overcome a particular problem. Counselling entails assisting an individual to see possibilities rather than obstacles in their most horrific moments. Counseling as a process of learning is aimed at boosting adaptive behavior and reducing maladaptive behavior (Gorge & Dusing, 2013). This means that counselling is required to assist a person develop the best behaviour required to make the most reasonable and sensible decisions even in the most difficult moments. This is essential for all category of individuals whether leaders or followers.

**Value Re-Orientation**

Value is commonly discussed as something which has worth, relevance or is considered important by an individual or group of individual. Njoku (2015) mentioned that value entails upholding moral principles, following the best practices, and leading moral lives in society. Value are moral practices that are considered essential by members of the society for living productive lives.

However, there are cases where society may begin to shift from the good values that it previously prides itself of either as a result of cultural, technological, social or economic changes. When society observes that there is a change or shift from the good moral principles it once held to what the society considered as offensive, then there is need for value re-engineering which is also known as value re-orientation. Explaining further Okwelle and Ayonmike (2014:187) defined value re-orientation as “the process of transforming a concept's negative value held by an individual, a group of individuals, or society into a positive value”. Value re-orientation is the transformation of individuals from holding and practicing bad behaviours to good ones that the society considers important for progress and development.

**Political Leadership**

Alamu (2022) noted that a political leader is a person who is actively involved in politics and has influence over decisions and can also be addressed as a politician, or political figure. It encompasses those who hold positions of power in government and actively pursue such positions. The process by which political leaders carry out their basic functions or roles is known as political leadership. Egwu (2017) noted that despite being an elusive concept, political leadership underpins what is essential to comprehending political processes and their outcomes. Political leadership is therefore the process of using political power to influence people towards attaining individual or group developmental goals and objectives.

### **Values Re-Orientation and Political Leadership**

The need for political office holders to develop good values as proper examples for the society cannot be ignored. Unfortunately, there are several political leaders that are known for exhibiting unethical values which may be occasioned by different individual and societal factors. It has been established that the Nigerian crisis of values suggests that the society's development and progress are being slowed down in many ways due to the emergence of youth's materialistic tendencies. (Njoku, 2015). The Nigerian political space has come to be known for materialism. There are several politicians who go into politics as a result of the material gains that are targeted. The quest for material benefits has forced several people to go into politics and exhibit behaviours that will not contribute to national development. Similarly, High levels of mistrust characterize the society. Everyone is now a suspect of misplaced value due to suspicion. The loss of good values in the society has contributed to increased poor value system. The problem of illiteracy especially among adults also account for poor values among politicians.

The effects of unethical values among politicians cannot be overemphasized. Poor values have been affecting different aspects of our national development. Nweneaziri (2012) noted that the most cherished values in Nigerian society, including those related to culture, society, economy, politics, religion, education, and families, have been eroded over time. This implies that there is no sector of the national development that is not affected when political leaders show unethical value systems. Important values for which the Nigerian nation was previously known included respect for effort, productivity, and self-sufficiency in terms of providing for one's needs and those of dependents, but all of these are gradually losing relevance as political leaders have not shown the right value system in leadership.

The need for counselling in changing this narrative among Nigerian political leaders cannot be overemphasized. Margolis (2010) noted that political stability includes lack of violence, state functionality, patterns of political behaviors among others but this cannot be achieved without the right guidance. Ogbodoadoga (2022) indicated that the counselling provided for political leaders should be preventive, educative, as well as curative programmes both for immediate and future needs. This means that counselling is needed for political leaders before, during and after leadership and all of this is to ensure that they exhibit the right values that will promote nation building. Additionally, Ogbodoadoga (2022) noted that fostering cooperation and understanding between different ethnic groups, instilling values like tolerance, cooperation, patriotism, selflessness, honesty etc. are part of the counselling initiatives that counsellors should expose political leaders to so that they can form good values as political leaders. Similarly, counsellors should assist political leaders in the area of development of their potentialities as well as mentoring as all of these will help political leaders to be more responsible and development oriented through such value reorientation.

## **Empirical Reviews**

Educational scholars have conducted comprehensive studies in order to shed light on the rationales and strategies employed by political leaders when undertaking the process of value transformation. In his study, Jimoh (2022) conducted research on the perceived impact of values re-orientation counselling on national security and political stability among young individuals residing in the Kontagora Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria. The chosen methodology employed for this study was a descriptive survey approach. A sample size of 207 participants, encompassing various occupational domains including education, finance, judicial security, and others, was chosen through the utilisation of a random sampling technique within the Kontagora Local Government Area. The scholar employed a 22-item survey known as the Values Re-Orientation for National Security and Political Stability Scale (VRNSPS), which exhibited a reliability coefficient of 0.86. The acquired data has been meticulously analysed in order to effectively address the two research questions and critically evaluate the two hypotheses that were formulated for the purpose of this study. The mean was employed as a descriptive statistical tool in order to address the research objectives of the study.

Additionally, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), an inferential statistical technique, was utilised to examine the generated null hypotheses. The findings of the study suggest that the implementation of values re-orientation counselling has yielded a noteworthy impact on the domains of political stability and national security. Moreover, it is worth noting that there was an absence of discernible fluctuation in the perceived influence of values re-orientation counselling on both political stability and national security across various sectors. This observation is supported by the statistical analysis, where the F-value was found to be .98, and the associated p-value was .42, which is greater than the predetermined significance level of .05. One proposal has been put forth to implement values reorientation counselling in both formal and informal contexts in order to serve as a reminder to the youth of Nigeria regarding the national values.

Nevertheless, Aja, Eze, Igba, and Ukaigwe (2017) conducted an independent investigation that centred on augmenting leadership, value re-orientation, and sustainable development by means of efficacious secondary school education. The study was conducted under the guidance of three research inquiries. The study utilised a descriptive survey research approach. The population under investigation in this particular study comprised a total of 308 educators hailing from the 18 publicly funded secondary educational institutions situated within the Izzi Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. A straightforward and unbiased method known as the simple random sample procedure was utilised in order to select a total of 100 respondents for the study. This involved selecting 10 participants from each of the 10 secondary schools, resulting in a diverse and representative sample. The researchers gathered empirical data by means of administering a meticulously designed questionnaire that they themselves devised. The employed data analysis strategy was predicated upon the computation of the arithmetic mean scores. The findings of the study have unequivocally showcased the pivotal role that a highly efficient secondary educational

institution assumes in nurturing the essential attributes, erudition, and competencies that are imperative for effective leadership, a paradigm shift in societal values, and the promotion of sustainable progress at the national level. The findings suggest that in order to fulfil its obligation of fostering future leaders who will play a role in reshaping societal values and advancing sustainable development, the government ought to augment the efficacy of secondary school education.

In a scholarly investigation carried out by Steele (2010), the primary objective was to scrutinise the association between political ideology and the perspectives held by individuals regarding social justice advocacy within the esteemed American Counselling Association (ACA). A comprehensive sample of 214 individuals who are affiliated with the American Counselling Association (ACA) actively engaged in the research endeavour. The research protocol encompassed the utilisation of the Advocacy Characteristics Scales (Paylo, 2007), the Conservatism Scale (Sidanius, 1991), and a self-reported assessment of political ideology. The data was subjected to rigorous analysis employing multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and step-wise multiple regression, which are widely recognised statistical techniques in the field of data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the participants, as a whole, exhibited a general inclination towards endorsing the utilisation of ACA resources for the purpose of promoting social causes. Furthermore, the participants displayed predominantly favourable attitudes towards engaging in advocacy efforts aimed at achieving social justice.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that conservative counsellors, although they may hold similar viewpoints to their liberal and moderate counterparts, do display noticeably less favourable attitudes when it comes to advocating for social justice. Contrary to those individuals who hold less liberal, moderate, or conservative viewpoints, it was observed that participants who espouse highly liberal ideologies exhibited significantly higher evaluations of attitudes, behaviours, and capabilities related to social justice advocacy. These findings indicate that any suppositions concerning a potential conflict between the counsellors' perceived advocacy for social justice and their conservative political beliefs may lack a solid foundation. Upon closer scrutiny, it is evident that a more thorough analysis of the findings from studies such as the one mentioned could prove to be beneficial for the field at large. Moreover, it has the potential to foster consensus among leaders within the ACA (American Counselling Association), particularly as they continue to strive towards enhancing and solidifying the profession's overall identity. The aforementioned studies collectively illustrate the imperative nature of offering counselling services to political leaders with regards to ethical dilemmas, as a means to cultivate and facilitate the progress and advancement of the nation.

Within the realm of reviewed literature, valuable insights are provided regarding the influence of counselling on national security and political stability among youths within the region of Niger state. Additionally, attention is given to the significance of secondary education in cultivating leadership attributes and fostering values that align with sustainable development. Furthermore, an examination of American counsellors and their perspectives on social justice

advocacy is undertaken, although it may not comprehensively encompass the intricate nature of political leadership in Rivers State. However, it is worth noting that these sources do not adequately address the unique context of unethical value practices exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State. Hence, it is evident that the deficiency in the aforementioned literature resides in the dearth of scholarly investigations pertaining to the underlying factors and consequences of unscrupulous principles demonstrated by political figures in the region of Rivers State. Furthermore, the potential impact of counselling in ameliorating these concerns remains unexplored. The present investigation, which delves into the subject matter of "counselling for value re-orientation in political leadership in Rivers State," endeavours to rectify this void by comprehensively examining and tackling the aforementioned domains.

### **Methodology**

The study utilised a descriptive survey methodology. Population of the study included party members in the two major political parties in Rivers State (PDP and APC) as well as all registered counsellors in the State. The estimate of registered political party members and counsellors in the state is 1046. Convenience sampling technique was used to select three respondents (two party members (PDP and APC) who were randomly selected from the list of executives and one counsellor) in 12 Local Government Areas (50%) of the 23 LGAs to make a sample size of 36 respondents (24 party members and 12 counsellors) that formed the sample size of the study. The instrument that was adopted for data collection was a 15 item questionnaire titled "Counselling Political Leaders for Value Re-Orientation Questionnaire" (CPLVROQ). The questionnaire was administered utilising a modified Likert scale encompassing four distinct points of response: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The assigned weighted values for each response were as follows: SA=4, A=3, D=2, and SD=1. The aforementioned values were aggregated and subsequently divided by four in order to compute a mean score of 2.50 for the given criteria. This mean score was then employed in the process of making decisions. The instrument underwent both face and content validation by three esteemed Counsellors hailing from the esteemed Department of Psychology, Guidance and Counselling at the prestigious University of Port Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was evaluated through the utilisation of Cronbach alpha statistics, resulting in an average value of 0.80. All of the surveys that were distributed were completely gathered. The research inquiries were addressed through the utilisation of statistical measures such as the mean and standard deviation. Furthermore, the hypotheses were examined using a t-test, with a significance level set at 0.05.



## Results

**Research Question One:** What are the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State?

**Table 1:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Drivers of Unethical Value Practices Among Political Leaders in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Party Members n=24		Counsellors n=12		Mean Set	
		Mean $\bar{X}_1$	SD	Mean $\bar{X}_2$	SD	$\bar{X}\bar{X}$	Decision
1	Materialism makes most political leaders to be ill behaved	2.70	0.90	2.94	0.85	2.82	Agreed
2	Illiteracy is a driver of unethical values among politicians	2.79	0.87	2.66	0.92	2.73	Agreed
3	Societal imbalance make some politicians to misbehave	2.84	0.83	2.81	0.89	2.83	Agreed
4	Poor parenting contribute to why some politicians have poor value system	2.46	1.03	2.49	0.99	2.40	Disagreed
5	Globalization contributes to the loss of values among politicians	2.41	1.05	2.40	1.03	2.41	Disagreed
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.64</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>2.66</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 1 showed that the responses of the party members to items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 produced mean responses of 2.70, 2.79, 2.84, 2.46 and 2.41 while the responses of the counsellors to the same set of items produced mean values of 2.94, 2.66, 2.81, 2.49 and 2.40. Using the criterion mean score of 2.50 as basis for decision making, all the items above the criterion mean score such as items 1, 2 and 3 from both respondents were agreed while items 4 and 5 from both respondents were disagreed indicating that the political party members and counsellors disagreed that poor parenting and globalization was responsible for unethical values among political leaders. However, the grand mean scores of 2.64 and 2.66 from the party members and counsellors aligned with the average mean set score of 2.65 to suggest that the respondents averagely agreed to the items listed as the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State.

**Research Question Two:** What are the consequences of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State?

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Effects of Unethical Values Exhibited by Political Leaders in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Party Members n=24		Counsellors n=12		Mean Set	
		Mean $\bar{X}_1$	SD	Mean $\bar{X}_2$	SD	$\bar{X}\bar{X}$	Decision
6	Lack of productivity is a product of unethical values from politicians	2.89	0.81	2.96	0.84	2.93	Agreed
7	Insecurity breeds when politicians are unethical	2.81	0.86	2.97	0.84	2.89	Agreed
8	Corruption thrives due to politicians poor values	2.40	1.05	2.70	0.90	2.55	Agreed
9	Bad political image is a product of unethical values of our politicians	2.50	0.97	2.64	0.95	2.57	Agreed
10	Social disintegration exists due to the wrong values of politicians	2.69	0.94	2.92	0.85	2.81	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.66</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 2 indicated that items 6, 7, 8,9 and 10 were responded to by the party members with mean values of 2.89, 2.81, 2.40, 2.50 and 2.69 while the counsellors responded to the same set of items with mean values of 2.96, 2.97, 2.70, 2.64 and 2.92. All the items were agreed following the decision rule except for item 8 from the responses of the politicians with a mean value of 2.40 which suggested that the politicians disagreed that their unethical values were responsible for corruption. Summarily, the grand mean scores of 2.66 and 2.84 from both respondents as well as the average mean set score of 2.75 all indicated that the respondents averagely agreed to the items listed as the effects of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State.

**Research Question Three:** What are the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State?

**Table 3:** Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Ways Counselling Can Assist in the Value Re-Orientation of Political Leadership in Rivers State

S/No	Items	Party Members n=24		Counsellors n=12		Mean Set	
		Mean $\bar{X}_1$	SD	Mean $\bar{X}_2$	SD	$\bar{X}\bar{X}$	Decision
11	Counselling on the need for ethnic collaboration can help in value re-orientation	2.86	0.83	2.91	0.86	2.89	Agreed
12	Mentorship counselling can be provided to change the mindset of politicians	2.90	0.80	2.93	0.85	2.92	Agreed
13	Counsellors should educate politicians on the development and utilization of their potentials	2.80	0.85	2.88	0.87	2.84	Agreed
14	Counsellors should expose politicians on how to exhibit Self-control	2.79	0.87	2.76	0.94	2.78	Agreed
15	Politicians need to be counselled on the need for peaceful co-existence	2.80	0.87	2.96	0.83	2.88	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>2.83</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 3 presents the average values of the responses provided by members of political parties and counsellors to items 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. The mean values observed for the political party members were 2.86, 2.90, 2.80, 2.79, and 2.80, whereas the mean values recorded for the counsellors were 2.91, 2.93, 2.88, 2.76, and 2.96. All of the items acquired exhibit mean scores that surpass the threshold mean score of 2.50, thus signifying a state of agreement. This align with the grand mean scores of 2.83 and 2.89 from both respondents as well as the average mean set score of 2.86 which established that the respondents averagely agreed on the items listed as the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State.

### Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** There is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings between party members and counsellors on the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State.

**Table 4:** Summary of z-test Analysis on the difference in the mean ratings between Party Members and Counsellors on the Drivers of Unethical Value Practices Among Political Leaders in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Party Members	24	2.64	0.94	34	0.06	1.96	0.05	Not Rejected
Counsellors	12	2.66	0.94					

Table 4 showed that with a t-cal. value of 0.06 which was less than the t-crit. value of 1.96, the null hypothesis was not rejected and this implied that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of party members and counsellors on the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings between party members and counsellors on the effects of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State.

**Table 5:** Summary of z-test Analysis on the difference in the mean ratings between Party Members and Counsellors on the Effects of Unethical Values Exhibited by Political Leaders in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Level of Significance	Decision
Party Members	24	2.66	0.93	34	0.57	1.96	0.05	Not Rejected
Counsellors	12	2.84	0.88					

Table 5 revealed that with a t-cal. value of 0.57 which was less than the t-crit. value of 1.96, the null hypothesis was not rejected and this implied that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of party members and counsellors on the effects of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings between party members and counsellors on the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State.

**Table 6:** Summary of z-test Analysis on the difference in the mean ratings between Party Members and Counsellors on the Ways Counselling Can Assist in the Value Re-Orientation of Political Leadership in Rivers State

Variable	n	Mean	SD	df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Level of Decision Significance
Party Members	24	2.83	0.84	34	0.20	1.96	0.05
Counsellors	12	2.89	0.87				Not Rejected

Table 6 indicated that with a t-cal. value of 0.20 which was less than the t-crit. value of 1.96, the null hypothesis was not rejected and this implied that there was no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of party members and counsellors on the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State.

### Discussion

The findings of the study established that the respondents averagely agreed to three items out of the five listed items as the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State. It was equally shown that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of party members and counsellors on the drivers of unethical value practices among political leaders in Rivers State. In the study, the respondents both agreed that the issues of materialism, illiteracy and societal imbalance were major drivers of unethical values among political leaders. This suggests that the quest for material possession, illiteracy and the imbalance in the society are some of the factors that are fueling wrong values among politicians. This study agrees with the outcome of a related one by Aja, Eze, Igba and Ukaigwe (2017) secondary education helps students develop the qualities, knowledge, and abilities needed for effective leadership and value reorientation but unfortunately, some of these politicians do not possess this minimum educational requirement for good leadership. The political party members and politicians however disagreed that poor parenting and globalization contributes to the unethical values of political leaders and this suggests that some of these wrong practices are self-developed.

The political party members and counsellors sampled for the study agreed with some of the items raised as the effects of unethical values exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State and there was no statistically significant difference observed in the mean ratings between party members and counsellors regarding the effect of unethical values displayed by political leaders in Rivers State. It was shown from their responses that the unethical values of politicians is

responsible for lack of productivity, insecurity, bad political image and social disintegration and all of these are inimical to national growth and development. These findings are in tandem with the outcome of the study by Steele (2010) which suggests that unethical values is responsible for injustice in the society which limits development. However, while the counsellors agreed, the party members disagreed that the poor values of politicians is responsible for corruption in the society. This suggests that there could be other drivers of corruption in the society other than the unethical values of political leaders.

The respondents averagely agreed on the items listed as the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State and there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of party members and counsellors on the ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of political leadership in Rivers State. In the study, the respondents agreed that counselling on ethnic integration, mentoring, harnessing of one's potentials and self-control among others can contribute to politicians' re-orientation. A related study by Jimoh (2022) showed that values re-orientation counseling would have an impact on political stability and national security, and that there was no discernible sector-based difference in the perceived influence of values re-orientation counseling on political stability and national security. All of these simply suggests that with the right values re-orientation counselling for political leaders, the nation will be heading for sustainable development.

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that there are factors such as materialism and illiteracy which drives unethical values among political leaders and this has great implication on the economy such as reduced productivity and social disintegration among others. The need for counselling for value re-orientation was established by the respondents as there was no difference between the opinion of the sampled political party members and counsellors on ways counselling can assist in the value re-orientation of these political leaders which is essential for national growth and development.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. It is imperative that the government of Rivers State undertakes the task of formulating and executing all-encompassing ethical training initiatives with the specific objective of tackling the underlying causes of unethical conduct exhibited by political leaders in Rivers State. The aforementioned programmes ought to prioritise the mitigation of materialism, the amelioration of illiteracy via educational initiatives, and the rectification of societal imbalances. Through the implementation of focused instructional programmes, political leaders have the opportunity to cultivate a more profound comprehension of the process of ethical decision-making and the significance of maintaining moral principles within the context of their leadership responsibilities.
2. It is imperative that the government of Rivers State takes proactive measures to enhance the efficacy of anti-corruption measures and accountability mechanisms within the political institutions of the state. The aforementioned measures encompass the implementation of

transparent procedures for financial transactions, the establishment of autonomous oversight entities to scrutinise political endeavours, and the enforcement of stringent sanctions for acts of corruption. Through the establishment of a culture centred around accountability, it can be posited that political leaders will experience heightened motivation to uphold ethical principles and exhibit resistance towards participating in acts of corruption.

3. The imperative for the government of Rivers State lies in the prudent allocation of resources towards the noble pursuit of education and literacy programmes. By doing so, the government can effectively tackle the underlying factors that contribute to the prevailing issue of illiteracy among political leaders. Through the enhancement of accessibility to education of high quality and the facilitation of opportunities for lifelong learning, individuals are able to attain the requisite knowledge and competencies essential for making well-informed decisions and upholding ethical principles. Furthermore, the promotion of education serves as a crucial tool in addressing societal disparities, as it facilitates the provision of equitable opportunities for all individuals within a given community to engage in political leadership positions.
4. It is imperative that the government of Rivers State takes proactive measures to effectively implement initiatives aimed at promoting social cohesion and inclusivity within the state. This would require a comprehensive approach that addresses various aspects of society, such as cultural, economic, and political dimensions. By fostering an environment that encourages unity and equal participation of all individuals, the government can contribute to the overall development and well-being of Rivers State. The aforementioned statement encompasses the imperative of fostering discourse and cooperation among heterogeneous ethnic collectives, tackling the fundamental socioeconomic inequalities, and cultivating a sentiment of inclusivity and cohesion among the entirety of the populace. Through the establishment of a society that fosters inclusivity, it is plausible to argue that political leaders will exhibit a decreased propensity to partake in actions that promote division, while simultaneously demonstrating a heightened inclination to prioritise the collective welfare of the populace.
5. It is recommended that the government of Rivers State consider the integration of counselling and mentorship programmes into the leadership development process for political leaders in Rivers State. This would serve to enhance the overall effectiveness and well-being of these leaders, as they would have access to guidance and support from experienced individuals in their respective fields. By incorporating counselling and mentorship, the government can foster a more nurturing and growth-oriented environment for political leaders, ultimately leading to improved decision-making and leadership capabilities. The programmes ought to prioritise the promotion of values such as integrity, self-control, and peaceful co-existence. Through the provision of individualised guidance and assistance, counsellors and mentors possess the capacity to assist political leaders in effectively navigating complex ethical dilemmas, fostering the development of proficient leadership abilities, and nurturing a robust sense of personal and societal obligation.

6. The government of Rivers State ought to enhance public awareness campaigns and civic engagement initiatives in order to empower citizens to effectively hold political leaders accountable for their actions. The aforementioned objectives encompass the promotion of transparency and accountability within the governmental sphere, the establishment of channels through which citizens may report instances of unethical conduct, and the fostering of robust engagement in the democratic process. Through the cultivation of a societal environment that prioritises civic responsibility, individuals have the capacity to assume a pivotal position in the advancement of ethical leadership and the mitigation of corruption within the confines of Rivers State.

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