

Perceived Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligent on Career Counselling Practices and Self-Efficacy of Counsellors in Tertiary Institutions in North-Central, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates the perceived impact of generative artificial intelligence on career counselling practices and self-efficacy of counsellors in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This study explores how counsellors perceive the benefits of using generative AI in their practices and its impacts on their self-efficacy. The study adopted descriptive survey research design involving the use of questionnaire titled 'Generative AI Impact Questionnaire' to collect data. Two research questions, two objectives and two research hypotheses tested at 0.05 levels of significance guided the conduct of the study. The population consisted of approximately 520 counsellors in the 14 public universities and 13 public colleges of education in the North-Central, Nigeria. A sample of 212 counsellors was randomly selected from 18 selected public institutions (7 universities and 7 colleges of Education) in Nigeria. The data collected were analysed using means, standard deviation and t-test. The findings of the study revealed that many counsellors do not utilise artificial intelligence in their career counselling practices and counsellors who utilizes generative AI in their counselling engagements reported high perceived impact compared to those who do not use it. It is recommended that professional counsellor in tertiary institution should be exposed to training through workshops and conferences on the utilisation of generative artificial intelligence in career counselling engagements with students.

Keywords: Generative-AI, Career Counselling Practices, Self-Efficacy, Counsellors.

Introduction

Career selection is an essential decision for students at both secondary and tertiary institutions. In the present technological dispensation, individuals are required to develop themselves in a variety of ways that

support and suit their potentials. According to Jibril (2019), career is the series of both remunerated and non-remunerated roles and positions one has assumed in a chosen field or work pursuit in a lifetime. Career decision making is a process that involves selecting a career path that corresponds with one's skills

and interests (Kaur, 2018 in Saxena & Murugesan, 2025).

During their final years, especially in the last semester at university, college or polytechnic, students actively seek information on potential career paths. They then evaluate this information based on their job prospects and personal career aspirations. In apparent ignorance of many graduates, especially in identifying where and how to search for this career information, a sizeable number of them languish in the unemployment market. Career counselling in tertiary institutions underscores the need to guide students in the areas of career selection, job search, employability skills, job sustainability and self-employment. These enable students to make well informed decisions concerning their career paths. Career counselling is a process that involves provision of guidance and support to individuals in exploring, planning and managing their career paths. Through assessments and unique approaches, career counselling helps individuals identify suitable career options aligned with their interests, skills, values and personality traits. This is vital for both personal growth and more productive society.

A strong predictor of a career counsellor's performance is self-efficacy. This influences counsellor's ability to carry out numerous tasks and deliver effective career counselling services. Self-efficacy is a psychological construct that denotes an individual's belief in his/her ability to perform a specific task or achieve a particular goal (Lippke, 2020).

Self-efficacy can provide the basis for motivation, well-being and achievement of an individual (McLeod, 2025). Bandura (1997) proposed four sources of self-efficacy which are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. Counsellor self-efficacy enhances effective career counselling by improving a counsellor's ability to manage sessions, overcome challenges, and provide higher-quality services. This is because counsellors with high self-efficacy are more confident in their skills, which translates to better client outcomes, including improved client satisfaction and goal attainment. In the study of Basileo et al, (2024), self-efficacy had the largest relationship with achievement.

Duan and Wu (2024) find out that generative AI tools such as, Chat GPT has a significant influence on career counselling practices, through personalized guidance, job matching, skill development, and ethical challenges in professional workflows. The study of Oluwatosin and Afolabi (2024) on counsellors' perceptions of AI in practices like career guidance, discover a statistically significant differences in perceived AI impact and acceptance based on professional experience levels in counselling contexts. They also find out that AI is impactful in career guidance and holds strong prospects for the discharge of professional responsibilities. They observed that AI technologies have been increasingly utilized in counselling settings to enhance accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness.

The integration of AI powered tools such as Chat bot, Chat GPT, Virtual Assistant and AI Powered cognitive training programme, mood tracking and note taking tools in career counselling has transformed the way counsellors support students in their career development. Virtual reality (VR) simulation has been used to provide a counselling setting for clients and counsellors (Cho et al. 2024; Im et al. 2024). Several generative AI tools have been used in counselling engagement with clients for assessing client symptoms, behaviour, and cognitive functioning, analysing client's language patterns and sentiment, generate clinical note and treatment plans and monitor progress in counselling and make adjustment accordingly. These tools leverage machine learning algorithms and natural language processing to provide tailored career recommendations, resume building, and interview preparation. Generative AI, in particular, has shown potential in enhancing career counselling practices by generating personalized career paths, identifying skill gaps, and predicting job market trends. Jeong and Kim (2025) examine the effectiveness of artificial intelligence-AI assisted counselling training using ChatGPT in enhancing self-efficacy of Counsellor in Training. The result shows strong positive impacts on self-efficacy for counsellors-in-training, including those in career guidance, by simulating client interactions and providing feedback. According to Jeong and Kim (2025) American Counselling Association highlight strong potential of generative AI to impact counsellors' self-efficacy by

enhancing efficiency in career counselling, while addressing risks like bias that could undermine confidence. It is based on this background that the researcher conducted this study on the perceived impact of generative artificial intelligent on career counselling practices and self-efficacy of counsellors in tertiary institutions in Nigeria

Generative AI tools like ChatGPT, Gemini and AI career bots are changing how counselling is done. They can help to generate personalized career reports, develop resumes, provide interview guides, analyse labour market data and provide support for basic career questions. Monreal and Palaoag (2024) in their study hold that, AI possess the substantial potential in enhancing the career guidance process for counsellors. Therefore, Gen.AI adoption directly affects how counsellors deliver services. Counsellors who use GenAI may offer faster, data-driven, and personalized interventions compared to those who use only traditional methods.

One of the basic qualities of a counsellor is the passion to help students effectively. Counsellor efficacy grows when he or she has mastery experiences and tools/resources to handle more complex counselling cases. The adoption of Gen.AI improves counselling practices and help counsellors achieve better student outcomes which increases their self-efficacy. The result of the study by Monreal and Palaoag (2024) highlighted the benefits of AI to include increased work efficiency, effective ability to guide students and students making informed

career decisions. The study underscores the need for intelligent tools and software systems to support career guidance. Conversely, non-adoption of Gen.AI in counselling may make counsellors feel “outdated” or overwhelmed which could bring about low self-efficacy. The effective integration of Gen.AI into counselling practices build counsellors self-efficacy.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing interest in and benefit of Gen.AI to career counselling, most counsellors in Nigeria still rely on manual interviews, paper tests and personal knowledge. Significant numbers of counsellors have no formal training on Gen.AI tools. Students are helped to make career decisions based on anecdotal experiences with limited access to real-time job market data. Also, counselling units in tertiary institutions are understaffed with a ratio of one counsellor to over a thousand students and maximum of eight hours daily attendance. This is in contrary to the developed world where counsellors use Gen.AI for CV tailoring, mock interviews, labour market prediction, personalized career roadmaps and track graduate employment rates and skills gaps. With gen.AI a counsellor can serve over five thousand students. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria are pushing students toward 21st-century skills especially to address the issue of unemployment and wrong course choices, but many career counsellors still use manual methods. Gen.AI is already in students’ hands, but difficult to know if counsellors

are using it and if using it makes them feel more competent. Without this empirical data, training workshops for counsellors will keep missing the mark. Most studies on Gen.AI in tertiary institutions concentrate on lecturers, very few specifically examine counsellors. However, lecturers in higher education may be aware of the availability of these tools for enhancing various academic tasks such as academic research writing, assessment and administration among others. Therefore, there is a need to explore the professional confidence of counsellors in the use of Gen.AI in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Hence, this study investigated the impact of generative artificial intelligent on career counselling practices and self-efficacy of counsellors in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What are the generative AI tools used by tertiary institution counsellors in their career counselling practices?
2. What is the perceived impact of Gen AI on the career counselling practices of counsellors in tertiary institutions?
3. What is the perceived impact of Gen AI on self-efficacy of career counsellors in tertiary institutions?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of Gen AI on the career

- counselling practices of counsellors based on the years of experience
2. There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of Gen AI on self-efficacy of male and female career counsellors
 3. There is no significant difference between the self-efficacy of career counsellors who use generative AI and those who do not use generative AI

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design involving questionnaire was adopted for this study. Descriptive survey design is adopted because the study seeks to describe the perceived impact of Gen.AI and the current level of self-efficacy of counsellors without manipulating variables, and it allows for data collection from a large, geographically dispersed population using standardized instruments. A sample size of 212 career counsellors was drawn from 520 counsellors in the 14 public universities and 13 public colleges of education in the North-Central, Nigeria using simple random sampling method. Survey structured questionnaire titled 'Generative AI and Counsellor's Self-efficacy Questionnaire' adapted from O'Brain (1997) was used to obtain data from the sampled counsellors. The questionnaire consists of 28 items designed to elicit information concerning types of Gen.AI

tools use by counsellors (8 items), Gen.AI impact on counselling practices (10 items) and counsellor's self-efficacy (10 items). The questionnaire was structured on four point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire was validated by two experts and using test-retest method of reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of .83 was obtained. Data collection was conducted online using Google Form to allow wider coverage. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used for demographic analysis while inferential statistics of t-tests and ANOVA were used to analyse survey data.

Result Presentation

This section presents a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the empirical data gathered for this study on the perceived impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) in career counselling practices among professional counsellors in Nigeria tertiary institutions. The analysis encompasses data collected from 212 counsellors who completed the structured questionnaire administered.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents were analyzed using frequency and simple percentage. Table 1 presents a consolidated summary of the demographic profile.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 212)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	92	43.4
	Male	120	56.6
	Total	212	100.0
Institution	COE	95	44.8
	University	117	55.2
	Total	212	100.0
Years of Exp.	1 – 5 Years	70	33.0
	6 – 10 Years	20	9.4
	11 – 15 Years	60	28.3
	16 Years and above	62	29.2
	Total	212	100.0
Generative AI Users	Yes	102	48.1
	No	110	51.9
	Total	212	100.0

The results presented in Table 1 reveals several important characteristics of the study sample that have implications for the interpretation of subsequent findings. In terms of gender distribution, the sample comprises 56.6% male and 43.4% female respondents, indicating a slightly male-dominated but reasonably balanced representation. Regarding institutional affiliation, 55.2% of respondents were employed in universities, while 44.8% were affiliated with Colleges of Education. This near-even institutional distribution is particularly valuable for the study as it ensures strong representation from both major categories of tertiary institutions involved in counsellor training and professional practice in Nigeria. Universities typically emphasize research-oriented counselling practice and may have greater access to technological resources, while Colleges of Education focus more directly on teacher education and school counselling contexts. The balanced representation from both institutional types enhances the ecological validity and generalizability of the

study findings across diverse educational settings, and allows for potential institutional comparisons should future analyses explore this dimension.

The distribution of professional experience reveals early-career counsellors with 1–5 years of experience (33.0%), 9.4% of respondents fall within the 6–10 year experience range, 28.3% of respondents have 11–15 years of experience, while 29.2% possess 16 years or more of experience. This indicates cumulatively, 57.5% of the sample consists of highly experienced counsellors with over a decade of professional practice.

Table 1 also reveal that 48.1% of counsellors reported using generative AI tools in their career counselling practice, while 51.9% indicate non-use. This near-even split is highly significant as it demonstrates that generative AI has already achieved mainstream adoption among approximately half of the professional counselling community in the study area. The fact that nearly one in two counsellors has integrated AI tools into their practice validates the timeliness and relevance of this research,

confirming that AI integration is not merely a theoretical possibility but a present reality in Nigerian career counselling. The high adoption rate among experienced practitioners suggests that these tools offer practical utility and value beyond mere technological novelty. Simultaneously, the presence of a substantial non-user group (51.9%) provides an essential comparison

baseline for examining differences in self-efficacy, perceived impact, and other outcome variables between AI adopters and non-adopters. This distribution creates a natural experimental condition that strengthens the inferential power of comparative analyses, particularly in testing Hypothesis 1 regarding self-efficacy differences between users and non-users.

Research Question 1

What are the generative AI tools used by counsellors in their career counselling practices?

Table 2: Generative AI Tools Used by Counsellors in Career Counselling Practice (N = 212)

Generative AI Tool	n (Users)	% Among 102 Users	% Among Total N = 212	Mean	SD
1. Chat GPT	79	77.5%	37.3%	0.373	0.485
2. Virtual Assistant	21	20.6%	9.9%	0.099	0.299
3. AI Powered Note Taking Tool	17	16.7%	8.0%	0.080	0.272
4. Chat Bot	11	10.8%	5.2%	0.052	0.222
5. AI Powered Client Matching Tool	9	8.8%	4.2%	0.042	0.201
6. AI Powered Cognitive Training Programme Tool	4	3.9%	1.9%	0.019	0.136
7. AI Powered Mood Tracking Tool	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.000	0.000
8. AI Powered Progress Monitoring Tool	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.000	0.000

The results presented in Table 2 reveal a clear hierarchy of generative AI tools adoption among career counsellors, with substantial concentration in general-purpose conversational AI platforms and minimal uptake of specialized clinical applications. Chat GPT ranked first as the overwhelmingly dominant tool, utilized by 77.5% of AI adopters (representing 37.3% of the total sample of 212 counsellors). This remarkable dominance can be attributed to several factors that make Chat GPT particularly suitable for career counselling applications. This includes the tool's

versatility, accessibility, minimal technical expertise, natural language processing capability and widespread public awareness.

The second tier of adoption comprises virtual assistants (20.6% of users, 9.9% of total sample) and AI-powered note-taking tools (16.7% of users, 8.0% of total sample). Lower-frequency tools include Chatbots (10.8% of users), which may be employed for initial client screening, frequently asked questions, or after-hours support; AI-powered client matching tools (8.8% of users), which might assist in pairing clients with appropriate counselling

resources, counsellor or career pathways based on profile data; and AI-powered cognitive training programme tools (3.9% of users), which represent more specialized applications for enhancing cognitive skills relevant to career development. Most strikingly, AI-powered mood tracking tools

and AI-powered progress monitoring tools showed zero usage across the entire sample. This complete non-use of these tools is particularly significant given that such tools are applicable in mental health counselling contexts.

Research Question 2

What is the perceived impact of Generative AI on the career counselling practices of counsellors?

Table 3: Perceived Impact of Generative AI on Career Counselling Practices (N = 212)

Counselling Practice Domain	Mean	SD
Develop treatment plan	3.27	.580
Take note during counselling session	3.26	.664
Schedule counselling appointment/session	3.19	.672
Offer resources to client	3.14	.559
Adjust treatment accordingly	3.13	.601
Assess or diagnose client difficulty/problem	3.08	.621
Assess client cognitive functioning	3.08	.642
Monitor client progress in counseling	3.07	.614
Analyse client language pattern and sentiment	3.00	.611
Track client's mood to enhance diagnosis	2.92	.815

The results presented in Table 3 reveal that counsellors perceive generative AI as having moderate to strong positive impact across all examined practice domains, with mean scores ranging from 2.92 to 3.27 on the 4-point scale. This uniformly positive evaluation suggests that AI is perceived as a valuable addition to career counselling practice, though the specific magnitude of perceived impact varies meaningfully across different functions.

The three highest-rated impact areas are developing treatment plans ($M = 3.27$, $SD = .580$), taking notes during counselling sessions ($M = 3.26$, $SD = .664$), and scheduling counselling appointments/sessions ($M = 3.19$, $SD = .672$). The middle tier of perceived impact includes offering

resources to clients ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .559$), adjusting treatment accordingly ($M = 3.13$, $SD = .601$), assessing or diagnosing client difficulties ($M = 3.08$, $SD = .621$), assessing client cognitive functioning ($M = 3.08$, $SD = .642$), and monitoring client progress ($M = 3.07$, $SD = .614$). These domains share means clustering around 3.08–3.14, suggesting consistent recognition of AI's supportive role in both resource provision and clinical assessment functions, notwithstanding with slightly more caution than for administrative tasks.

Analyzing client language patterns and sentiment ($M = 3.00$, $SD = .611$) occupies a transitional position at the threshold between moderate and high impact. This function represents a more sophisticated application

of AI involving natural language processing to detect emotional tone, linguistic markers of distress or optimism, communication patterns, and subtle indicators of client mental states. Tracking client's mood to enhance diagnosis ($M = 2.92$, $SD = .815$) fall

below 3.0 and exhibits the highest variability in responses ($SD = .815$). This finding is particularly noteworthy given its consistency with the zero adoption of mood tracking tools identified in Research Question 1.

Research Question 3

What is the impact of Generative AI on self-efficacy of career counsellors?

Table 4: Perceived Impact of Generative AI on Self-Efficacy (N = 212)

Self-Efficacy Domain	Mean	SD
Choosing assessment inventories appropriate for client uniqueness	3.33	.625
Using current research findings to intervene effectively	3.30	.458
Explaining assessment results to a client	3.29	.596
Developing a therapeutic relationship	3.26	.614
Understanding role requirements	3.23	.506
Evaluating client needs	3.23	.486
Adjusting treatment dynamically	3.23	.553
Providing job market knowledge	3.21	.536
Offering appropriate resources	3.20	.538

The results presented in Table 4 reveal that counsellors perceive generative AI as having strong and consistent positive impact on their professional self-efficacy across all measured competency domains, with mean scores ranging from 3.20 to 3.33 on the 4-point scale. All means fall comfortably within the upper range between "moderate extent" and "great extent," indicating that AI is perceived

as a confidence booster that increases counsellors' belief in their ability to effectively perform fundamental professional functions. The relatively low variability across domains (standard deviations ranging from .458 to .625) suggests general consensus among respondents regarding AI's self-efficacy enhancing effects, with limited polarization of opinion.

Hypothesis Testing

This section presents the statistical testing of the four hypotheses formulated for the study, using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

H_01 : There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of Generative AI on career counselling practice based on counsellors' years of experience.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA – Perceived Impact by Years of Experience

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.385	3	2.128	12.770	.000
Within Groups	32.997	198	0.167		
Total	39.381	201			

The ANOVA results reveal a statistically significant difference in perceived impact of generative AI across the four experience groups, $F(3, 198) = 12.770$, $p < .001$. The F-ratio of 12.770 indicates that the between-group variance (reflecting differences among experience categories) is nearly 13 times larger than the within-group variance (reflecting individual differences within each category), far exceeding the threshold for statistical significance. The p-value less than .001 indicates that the probability of obtaining such differences by chance alone is less than 0.1%, providing strong evidence that professional experience meaningfully

shapes how counsellors perceive AI's impact on their practice.

However, the significant F-statistic only indicates that at least one group differs significantly from at least one other group; it does not specify which particular pairwise comparisons are significant. Given the violation of homogeneity of variance and the unequal group sizes (ranging from $n = 20$ to $n = 70$), the Games-Howell post hoc test was employed to conduct pairwise comparisons. Games-Howell is specifically designed for situations with unequal variances and unequal sample sizes, providing more accurate Type I error control than traditional post hoc tests such as Tukey's HSD.

Table 6: Games-Howell Post Hoc Test – Pairwise Comparisons of Perceived Impact

(I) Years of Experience	(J) Years of Experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1-5 years	6-10 years	.26765*	.09444	.037	.0120	.5233
	11-15 years	-.24842*	.08650	.025	-.4746	-.0223
	16 and above	.16075*	.05883	.036	.0075	.3140
6-10 years	1-5 years	-.26765*	.09444	.037	-.5233	-.0120
	11-15 years	-.51607*	.10948	.000	-.8070	-.2251
	16 and above	-.10690	.08924	.634	-.3514	.1376
11-15 years	1-5 years	.24842*	.08650	.025	.0223	.4746
	6-10 years	.51607*	.10948	.000	.2251	.8070
	16 and above	.40917*	.08079	.000	.1972	.6212
16 and above years	1-5 years	-.16075*	.05883	.036	-.3140	-.0075
	6-10 years	.10690	.08924	.634	-.1376	.3514
	11-15 years	-.40917*	.08079	.000	-.6212	-.1972

Note: The asterisk (*) indicates that the mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The Games-Howell post hoc analysis reveals a complex, non-linear pattern of perceived impact across experience levels, with five out of six possible pairwise comparisons yielding statistically significant differences. Only the comparison between 6-10 years and

16+ years failed to reach significance, suggesting these two groups perceive AI's impact similarly despite being at opposite ends of the career spectrum.

Based on the ANOVA results ($F = 12.770$, $p < .001$) and the multiple significant pairwise

comparisons identified in the Games-Howell post hoc test, the null hypothesis is rejected. There are statistically significant differences in perceived impact of generative AI on career counselling practice based on counsellors' years of professional experience. H_02 : There is no significant difference in the perceived impact of Generative AI on self-efficacy between male and female career counsellors.

Table 7: Independent Samples t-test – Self-Efficacy by Sex (N = 208)

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	p-value	Decision
Male	120	3.42	.546	3.846	210	<.001	Significant
Female	92	3.16	.427				

The results presented in Table 7 reveal a statistically significant gender difference in perceived self-efficacy enhancement from generative AI, with male counsellors reporting substantially higher self-efficacy ($M = 3.42$, $SD = .546$) compared to female counsellors ($M = 3.16$, $SD = .427$). The independent samples t-test yielded $t(205.959) = 3.846$, $p < .001$, indicating that this difference is highly statistically significant with less than 0.1% probability of occurring by chance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in self-efficacy enhancement between male and female counsellors, with males reporting higher benefits.

H_03 : There is no significant difference between the self-efficacy career counsellors who use generative AI and those who do not use generative AI.

Table 8: Independent Samples t-test – Self-Efficacy by Generative AI Use (N = 208)

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	p-value	Decision
AI Users	102	3.43	.552	-3.754	210	<.001	Significant
Non-Users	110	3.18	.432				

The results presented in Table 8 reveal a statistically significant difference in self-efficacy between AI users and non-users, with AI users reporting substantially higher self-efficacy ($M = 3.43$, $SD = .552$) compared to non-users ($M = 3.18$, $SD = .432$). The independent samples t-test yielded $t(197.767) = -3.754$, $p < .001$, indicating that this difference is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance (probability $< 0.1\%$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that there is a statistically significant and practically meaningful difference in self-efficacy of AI users compared to non-users.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study revealed a clear hierarchy of generative AI tools use among career counsellors in Nigerian tertiary institutions. These tools are Chat GPT, Virtual Assistant, AI Powered Note Taking Tool, Chat Bot, AI Powered Client Matching Tool and AI Powered Cognitive Training Programme Tool. The versatility of tools such as Chat GPT and Virtual Assistant enables counsellors to employ it across

multiple functions including generating personalized career development plans, drafting professional correspondence, simulating client dialogues for training purposes, synthesizing current labour market information, creating educational resources, and providing instant access to career-related information.

The relatively low adoption rates of tools such as chatbots, AI-powered client matching tools and AI-powered cognitive training programme tools may reflect limited awareness of their existence, uncertainty about their effectiveness, lack of integration with existing counselling workflows, or perceived irrelevance to counsellors' primary professional functions. This agrees with the findings of Kruse, Betancourt, and Bielecki (2023) and Kersting, Knaevelsrud and Ebert (2025) which states that low adoption of AI tools in counselling stems from limited awareness, uncertainty about effectiveness, lack of integration with workflows and perceived irrelevance to core professional duties. For Lee et al (2021), the low adoption reflects uncertainty about effectiveness, lack of integration with workflows and perceived irrelevance as mental health relies on interpersonal skills rather than algorithmic tools. Most strikingly, specialized clinical assessment tools like AI-powered mood tracking tools and AI-powered progress monitoring tools showed zero usage across the entire sample. This complete non-use of these tools is particularly significant may be as a result of what Ly, Ly and Andersson (2023) and Torous (2024) stated that, AI-powered mood tracking and progress monitoring tools such as Woebot are commercially available and applicable in

mental health counselling contexts as they are used alongside professional therapy to track mood/emotions and suggest CBT interventions.

The finding of the study also reveal that counsellors perceive generative AI as having moderate to strong positive impact on career counselling practices, with mean scores ranging from 2.92 to 3.27 on the 4-point scale. The three highest-rated impact areas are developing treatment plans, taking notes during counselling sessions and scheduling counselling appointments/sessions. This is supported with the study of Monreal and Palaoag (2024), which holds AI as having substantial potential in enhancing the career guidance process for counsellors. The result of their study highlighted the benefits of AI to include increased work efficiency, effective ability to guide students and students making informed career decisions. According to Duan and Wu (2024), generative AI tools such as, ChatGPT has a significant influence on career counselling practices, through personalized guidance, job matching, skill development, and ethical challenges in professional workflows. Oluwatosin and Afolabi (2024) found that AI is impactful in career guidance and holds strong prospects for the discharge of professional responsibilities. They observed that AI technologies have been increasingly utilized in counselling to enhance accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that counsellors perceive generative AI as having strong and consistent positive impact on their professional self-efficacy across all measured competency domains. All means

fall comfortably within the upper range between "moderate extent" and "great extent," indicating that AI is experienced as a confidence booster that increases counsellors' belief in their ability to effectively perform fundamental professional functions. This is supported by the study of Jeong and Kim (2025), the study examines the effectiveness of artificial intelligence-AI assisted counselling training using ChatGPT in enhancing self-efficacy of Counsellor in Training. The result shows strong positive impacts on self-efficacy for counsellors-in-training, including those in career guidance, by simulating client interactions and providing feedback.

The self-efficacy perceived to be improved domain include choosing assessment inventories appropriate for client uniqueness, explaining assessment results to clients (Translating technical assessment data into clear, actionable feedback that clients can understand), providing job market knowledge and offering appropriate resources. The confidence enhancement in these domains likely reflects AI's capacity to overcome counsellors' natural knowledge limitations regarding constantly shifting labour market trends, emerging career pathways, educational opportunities, credentialing requirements, and available support services. By leveraging AI, counsellors can provide clients with current, comprehensive, and contextually relevant information concerning their career path. This moves in line with why American Counselling Association highlights the strong potential of generative AI to impact counsellors' self-efficacy by enhancing efficiency in career counselling, while

addressing risks like bias that could undermine confidence (Jeong and Kim, 2025).

Counsellors statistically show significant differences in perceived impact of GenAI on career counselling practice on the basis of their years of professional experience. Oluwatosin and Afolabi (2024) multi-group analysis carried out on counsellors' perceptions of AI in practices like career guidance demonstrates statistically significant differences in perceived AI impact and acceptance based on professional rank/experience levels in counselling contexts which support the finding of this study. This finding contradicts Aafjes-van Doorn et al. (2024) who reported that perception of AI in counselling was consistent across subgroups regardless of prior technology exposure, with professional values being a stronger influence than experience. Similarly, UTAUT suggests that when technology adoption is institutionally mandated, the moderating effect of experience diminishes. Given that GenAI only became widely accessible in 2023, counsellors remain relatively inexperienced with the tool, making years of counselling practice a less relevant predictor of perceived impact (Venkatesh et al., 2016).

On self-efficacy, the result of this study reveals that there is statistically significant difference in the perceived impact of AI on self-efficacy enhancement between male and female counsellors, with males reporting higher benefits. This finding aligns with Bandura (1997) who noted that mastery experiences build self-efficacy, and if male counsellors experiment more with GenAI,

they accumulate more mastery experiences, hence higher perceived benefits. Bandura emphasized as well that self-efficacy is domain-specific, not gendered. With Gen.AI's natural language interface, Huang and Chuang (2024) found no gender gap in ChatGPT self-efficacy among educators. This suggests that in the Nigerian context, once training is standardized, gender differences in self-efficacy may disappear. The significant difference found here may also reflect social desirability bias rather than actual competence.

More so, the finding reveal a statistically significant difference in self-efficacy of counsellors who are Gen.AI users and non-users, with Gen.AI users reporting substantially higher self-efficacy compared to non-users. This supports Aafjes-van Doorn et al (2024) who found AI-experienced therapists reported greater efficiency and more time for core therapeutic work. For Nigerian tertiary institution counsellors facing high student-to-counsellor ratios, GenAI use likely provides mastery experiences through faster documentation and resource creation. Eruaga and Omumu (2025) argued that Gen.AI tools reduce administrative burden for university counsellors, allowing them to focus on core counselling roles. Reduced burden was linked to increased professional confidence/self-efficacy among users.

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Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained from this study, it is concluded that the Gen.AI tools utilise by counsellors are Chat GPT, Virtual Assistant, AI Powered Note Taking Tool, Chat Bot, AI Powered Client Matching Tool and AI Powered Cognitive Training Programme Tool. Counsellors who use Generative AI report significantly higher self-efficacy than non-users. The higher self-efficacy likely stems from mastery experiences gained through AI-assisted documentation and resource generation.

The study recommends that;

1. Professional counsellor in tertiary institution should be exposed to training through workshops and conferences on the utilisation of generative artificial intelligence in career counselling engagements with students. Since the impact of Gen.AI appears task-specific, hence counsellors need structured training to ensure AI-induced self-efficacy translates to real professional competence.
2. AI should be embedded in the curriculum of counselling programmes in tertiary institutions to enhance counsellor skill in AI and prepare them to be relevant and adaptive to the changing needs of clients.
3. Government should support tertiary institutions in Nigeria with necessary AI facilities to enhance effective career guidance and counselling.

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