

Corruption and Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper discussed the impact of corruption on education in Nigeria. Secondary data were used in the paper. The data were collected from print and online publications. The paper concluded that corruption has affected educational development in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper identified shortage of infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, shortage of instructional materials, shortage of funds, poor quality of education and reduction in level of capacity training programmes for teachers as some of the impact of corruption on education in Nigeria. The paper recommended the use of artificial intelligence to curtail corrupt practices in the administration of education in Nigeria as well as regular auditing of ministry of education, commissions and agencies should be done to check financial corruption within the system. There should be a special court for corruption and there is the need to overhaul the judicial system in Nigeria in such a way that there will be quick dispensation of justice in corruption cases and corrupt individuals should be made to face the law. There should be enactment and enforcement of corruption laws. Anti-corruption agencies should regularly monitor the activities of the commissions, agencies and ministry of education.

Keywords

corruption and education

Introduction

In 2020, Transparency International maintained in their annual report that 66 percent of the money Nigerian government's allocate to education is stolen by corrupt officials. According to the report, corruption

is common place in education systems across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, (Premium Times 2020).

UNESCO (2014) report on *Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All* shows that Nigeria is among the 37 countries that are losing money spent on education because, children are not learning. UNESCO disclosed that the menace is already costing governments USD 129 billion a year. It stressed further that despite the money being spent, rejuvenation of primary education is not so soon because of poor-quality education that cannot ensure that children learn (NEEDS, 2014).

At the 2013 media launch of the Global Corruption Report on Education, Transparency International SERAP stressed that, corrupt practices have been identified in Nigeria's education sector. The report revealed that corruption has a devastating impact on national development, particularly in Africa, hindering progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) now SDGs, and jeopardizing socio-economic development. With particular reference to Nigeria, it is disheartening to note that this cancerworm was noticed at all levels of education, where massive embezzlement and misappropriation of funds running into millions of dollar and billions of Naira are taking place (SERAP, 2013). It is imperative to examine the impact of corruption on Nigerian educational system.

Concept of Education

Education has been defined by different scholars. For instance, Parankimaillil (2012) viewed education as a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires skill, knowledge, attitude, experience and value from one generation to another. According to Froebel cited in Peerzada (2016), education is the unfolding of what is already enfolded in the man. This implies that education is a process through which a person is trained to develop his innate potentials so that it can be fully expressed externally. This means that education is the gradual or progressive development of a person's innate powers or potentials. It is development from within the individual until the person becomes conscious of his unique existence and begins to seek his own place in the society (Peerzada, 2016). Kanibin, (2019) defined education as the total process of training, gaining of special competencies, knowledge, behaviours and morals required by an individual to be responsible while contributing to societal development.

Education deals with the development of the total man or the whole man. This means that education is an act that trains man in the cognitive (knowledge), affective (feelings, attitude, behavior) and psychomotor domains. Education deals with the all-round development of the person. It therefore, develops an individual into a well-educated, cultured, disciplined, employable and productive person. Education leads, guides and directs the learner to the acquisition of desirable knowledge, attitude, and healthy behavior (Akpan, 2000). Education eliminates poverty, diseases and ignorance in the society. Eliminating corruption in education is a vital way of achieving an efficient and effective management of education because education is the catalyst for production, good health, development and transformation. According to Suleman (2005); Nwaokugha, Nyewusira, &Nyewusira,(2013); Nwankwo&Nweke, (2016); Ogunode &Ahaotu(2020); Ogunode, Jegede, Adah, Audu, &Ajape (2021); Ogunode, Adegboyega, &Olatunde-Aiyedun (2022); Ogunode, Onyekachi&Ayoko (2023) and Ogunode, Attah & Ebute (2023). Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. It involves various methods, such as teaching, training, storytelling, discussion, and directed research. Education can take place in formal settings, such as schools or universities, as well as informal settings, such as at home or through self-study.

The goals of education often include the development of cognitive abilities, critical thinking skills, creativity, socialization, and the transmission of cultural values. It can occur through various stages of life and can be tailored to different needs and interests, from early childhood education to adult education and lifelong learning. Education plays a crucial role in individual de-

velopment and societal progress, empowering individuals to contribute meaningfully to their communities and the world at large. Education in Nigeria is plagued by corruption which has hampered its development.

Concept of Corruption

The term corruption has no general acceptable definition as authors viewed it in different perspectives. Corruption like any other social issues does not give way to one sized definition because it evades a parochial prescription. Corruption is defined in a variety of ways. The variety in existence (without alluding to any exhaustive discussion includes) political, bureaucratic, economic, social and moral. According to Nuhu (2014) perhaps, the dense scope of the phenomenon could be appreciated by starting with and stating the following taxonomy of synonyms and phrases: Breach of trust, bribery, crookedness, demoralization, dishonesty, extortion, fraud, graft, jobbery, profiteering, shadiness, unscrupulousness, veracity, baseness, decadence, degeneration, degradation, depravity, evil, immorality, impurity, iniquity, perversion, profligacy, sinfulness, debasement, decay, defilement, distortion, doctoring, falsification, foulness, infection, pollution, putrefaction, rot etc.

Synonyms are not actually clear-cut definitions. Therefore, working definitions of the concept of corruption have to be provided and the definitions provided by two Scholars among others are as follows: Corruption, according to Rose Ackerman as cited in Nuhu (2018) is a system that something has gone wrong in the management of a State (and/or) society. It would be wrong to such an extent that institutions designed to govern the interrelationships between citizens and the State are used instead for personal enrichment and the provision of benefits to the Corrupt. For Otile, still cited in Nuhu (2018), Corruption is the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour or moral depravity. This implies an original state of expectation of individual and societal purity. When at least, two parties have interacted to change the structure on the processes of Society or the behavior of functionalities in order to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situations. We can say that corruption has taken place. Corruption in short, involves the injection of additional but improper transactions aimed at changing the normal course of events and altering judgments and positions of trust. Corruption is a complex Social, Political and Economic phenomenon that affects all countries. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability.

Akindele in Chinnah (2020) averred that corruption is a socio-political, economic and moral malaise that usually holistically permeates all nerves of the society; he stated that corruption has ideological, moral cultural and intellectual discourse. Corruption is any act perpetrated in public, private and corporate organization involving exchange of money, gift items, or any other valuable, including kind and cash, like signing of signature and carnal knowledge of somebody, which negates what is worthwhile, with negative, effect on the society for personal or group gain. This definition sees corruption as a concept that cut across all field of human endeavour, the government, private, corporate and Non Governmental Organization and individuals. Corruption is multifaceted and multidimensional construct, a cog in the wheel of growth and development of Nigeria. Corruption has led to delay in service delivery in both private and public sector. It has resulted to bureaucratic bottleneck in service delivery, leading to delay and denial of essential services. It has quagmire true worship of God in the religious sector and place the nation in endemic quarantined underdevelopment. This definition is more elaborate as it shifts from public office to other areas of operation. From the foregoing definitions, it is now clear that for corruption to take place; at least two parties have to be in a transactional relationship. Another condition that would make it possible for the phenomenon to be actualized is the unequal relationship that should also subsist between the giver and the receiver.

Corruption in this study refers to the inadequate provision of educational funds, facilities and infrastructures as well as political favouritism in appointing educational managers. Corruption in education has also

threatened Nigeria's citizens' equal access to education which has a negative effect on the poor and less privileged people in the country.

Corruption is conceptualized by Ojiade (2000) as any systematic vice perpetuated by individuals, society or State in forms of favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, undue wealth, power, position among other thing at the detriment of the public while United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2008) viewed corruption as a misuse of entrusted power for private gain through bribery, extortion, nepotism, or embezzlement. "Economic and Financial Crimes Commission" EFCC classified corruption based on the view point of the economy as the non aggressive illegal and illegitimate activities by organizations and individuals that stimulate or brings about illegal wealth (Iyanda, 2012, Oladele, 2019).

Corruption according to Transparency International (2010) is simply defined as abuse of entrusted power for private benefit. Both of these definitions are significantly related to what is happening in public primary schools. According to Lawal & Tobi (2006) it is any act that is deliberate in nature aimed at diverting public resources for personal use. Heyheman (2004) noted that education corruption includes the abuse of authority for personal and material gains.

Corruption in the educational sector is basically the inappropriate behaviour of individuals' holding authority position in this sector that bring about personal gain and is detrimental to the standard of education and national advancement. This has seen the Nigerian educational sector referred to as money exchange department where funds are exchange for admission and examinations (Egbefo & Ibbu, 2012; Nwaoku-gha&Ezeugwu, 2017; Kanibin, 2019).

Ogunode,Ohunene,&Olatunde-Aiyedun, (2022) and Priye (undated) concluded that factors responsible for high rate of financial corruption in the Nigerian public educational institutions (universities) includes; corrupt school administrators, weak monitoring and evaluation system, weak trade unions, poor participation of university stakeholders, weak preventive system and poor accountability system.

The implication of corruption on education is dangerous and inimical to the development of education (Ajie & Wokekoro, 2012; Akinola, 2014; Ogunode 2021; Ogunode, & Richard, 2021; Ogunode, Johnson &Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022; Ogunode,Chijindu&Jegede, 2022 and Ogunode &Akimki, 2023).

Impact of Corruption on Education

There are many effects of corruption on education in Nigeria. Some of the impact includes; shortage of infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, shortage of instructional materials, shortage of funds, poor quality of education and reduction in level of capacity training programme.

Shortage of Infrastructure Facilities

Infrastructural facilities have been conceptualized by Ogunode (2020a) as those facilities aiding delivery of services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities according to Ogunode (2020) include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, roads facilities, water, electricity, internet etc. The availability of the infrastructural facilities in adequate quantities will support effective administration of educational institutions and the inadequacies will prevent effective administration of educational institutions The importance of infrastructural facilities in educational institutions according to Ogunode &Agwor (2021) includes; aiding effective delivery of administrative functions in schools; making the delivery of services fast and reliable; enabling teachers to deliver lessons fast; infrastructural facilities provide a conducive working environment for both teachers and students; infrastructural facilities enable learners to learn at ease and learn well; infrastructural facilities enable the teachers to teach well, prepare their lessons, and deliver them online (ICT). The importance of school infrastructural facilities in the realization of educational goals cannot be underestimated. School facilities aid the delivery of the teaching and learning process in the schools. The school offices provide a conducive working environment for teachers, the classrooms help the learners to learn while the school fence protects students, the teachers, and school administrators from criminals. The school plant protects the entire human resources

from the sun, rain, heat cold, and snow (Ogunode & Agwor 2021).

It is unfortunate that as important as these facilities are to the attainment of educational objectives, it appear that most educational institutions are faced with shortage. This shortage problem have been linked to corruption in educational administration in Nigeria according to (Ogunode, & Johnson, 2021). Nwaoku-gha & Ezeugwu, (2017) and Ahmodu&Sofoluwe, (2018) attested that corruption in educational system in Nigeria itself has created a vicious circle of deficit culture so intensive, that virtually all good plans, moves and budgetary provisions for improved facilities in the education system ended up being misappropriated without corresponding provisions of the infrastructure being budgeted for Ishaya& Ogunode (2021); Ogunode & Ajape (2021); Ogunode & Josiah, Ajape (2021); Oladele (2019) and Ebehikhalu and Dawam (2016) concluded that inadequate infrastructural facilities in public schools in Nigeria can also be linked to corruption. Funds released for capital projects in public schools are looted or diverted by the contractors and educational officers.

Inadequate Professional Teachers

Inadequate professional teachers in the educational institutions across Nigeria can also be linked to corrupt practices in the system. Ogunode & Paul (2021) conclude that corruption is another big reason for the shortage of professional teachers in the Nigerian educational institutions. The funds budgeted and released for employment of teachers are looted or diverted by some administrators in the educational institutions. The school administrators institutionalized what is called ghost workers in their various schools and are collecting their salaries instead of employing the teachers in the schools. Ghost workers corruption is one of the most common form of corruption in the educational institutions in Nigeria. For example, in Kwara State, the state government has suspended a permanent secretary and four other senior officials over their alleged involvement in the recruitment of ‘fake’ teachers and suspicious deductions of workers’ salary at the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB). The minister of finance and budget in Nigeria revealed that over 70,000 ghost workers that have been identified through the approved Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) (Ogunode & Paul 2020; Naiarennews 2020). Also, in Imo state, the Governor of Imo state Governor Hope Uzodimm observed that the state has uncovered over 100 ghost workers, including more than 60 “dead or non-existent persons” in its schools. It is a sad revelation that over sixty (60) persons on the payroll of the board were found to be dead and non-existent, while another forty (40) persons who are no longer in the service of the State are still on the payroll of the State Government.

Shortage of Instructional Materials

Shortage of instructional materials in most educational institutions across the country is associated with the high level of corruption among various school administrators that reduces allocation meant for the procurement of instructional materials. Ogunode and Josiah (2023) defined instructional materials as educational resources assembled by the teachers to implement teaching programmes in the classroom. Instructional materials are special educational resources that aid the teachers to deliver the lesson. Instructional materials are used in all forms of educational institutions. The resources are influencing the implementation of teaching, research and community service in the various tertiary institutions. In educational institutions, instructional materials are supporting teaching and learning. Teachers in educational institutions teach well with the deployment of instructional materials. Instructional materials serve as a channel between the teacher and the students in delivering instructions. They may also serve as the motivation for the teaching-learning process. It is used to get the attention of the students and eliminate boredom. The effects of corruption in the administration of schools in Nigeria has led to inadequacy of instructional resources according to (Ojo, 2018; Ogunode and Josiah 2023).

Shortage of Funds

Shortage of funds in the management of educational institutions is also linked to the problem of corruption. Okeyim, Ejue, & Ekenem, (2013); Ololube, (2016); Ogunode & Stephen (2021); submitted that one major effect of corruption in schools administration is that it reduced the funds provided for the administration of public schools education in Nigeria. Corruption in the administration of public schools education reduces the quantity and volume of money that are supposed to be available for the administration of the institutions. Ogunode (2020b) and Osunyikanmi, (2018) opined that Nigeria has been experiencing underwhelming development amidst overwhelming corruption. Education is not insulated from this malaise. Corruption allows a high percentage of the funds allocated to the sector to get diverted into the private accounts of public officials. Hence, the amount being spent on education is much lower than the figure in the budget. Nwafor, Uchendu&Akani, (2015) and Ogunode & Ajape (2021) believed that corruption can therefore limit the goals of an institution thereby resulting to wastages. Some of the funds made available for the provision of quality education are sometimes diverted for selfish use while in other cases, the budget for the educational sector are misappropriated. This has given rise to the inadequacy of funds for managing the secondary level of education while Ogunode, (2020b) and Ike, (2017) concluded that the high rate of corruption in the administration of schools has led to inadequate funding in the sector.

Poor Quality of Education

Corruption in school administration is responsible for low quality of education at all levels of education. Kanibin, (2019) and Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu (2017) asserted that corruption in the educational sector drains the system of quality of education, impacts the moral advancement of the society while impeding the sustainable development of the country. In supporting the point, Asiyai (2020); Hallak & Poisson (2002) and Nwankwo & Nweke, (2016) maintained that corruption can be seen as the systematic use of public office for personal gain thereby impacting significantly on access to education, equity and quality. A study on corruption by Asiyai (2020) revealed that, corruption in education reduces the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of students learning outcomes, resulting in poor global image of the education system, leading to overstaffing and understaffing of some schools, a stall in development, drop outs from school and can result to inequality.

Reduction in Level of Capacity Training Programme

Corruption in education administration and management reduces the rate of capacity training programmes meant for the development of teachers. Training programmes like seminars, workshops and conferences that are intended to rejuvenate, enlighten, update and introduce new approaches for effective delivery of educational programmes as well as improve the skills of teachers in the educational sectors are either squashed at planning stage or aborted at the implementation stage. Allocation for such trainings are diverted. For instance, Okorosaye-Orubite (2008) in one of the workshops organised by the Universal Basic Education Board said, it was discovered that about 800 million naira was outrageously spent on a one day training workshop. This highlights the corruption reality on ground. It can therefore be deduced that rather than the workshop serving as a means to improve the educational sector through innovative brainstorming, it was used as a means to line the pockets of those in charge of organising the seminar. Also, Ogunode, Adah, Audu&Pajo (2021); Ogunode & Jegede (2020) and Osies (2020) concluded that corruption is responsible for ineffectiveness of capacity building programme in most educational institutions in Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper examined the impact of corruption on education in Nigeria. The paper concluded that corruption has affected education development in Nigeria. Specifically, the paper identified shortage of infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, shortage of instructional materials, shortage of funds, poor quality of education and reduction in level of capacity training programmes for teachers as impact of corruption on education in Nigeria.

1. Based on the findings, the paper recommended the use of artificial intelligence to curtail corrupt practices in the administration of education in Nigeria. Regular auditing of ministry of education, commissions and agencies should be done to check financial corruption within the system. There should be a special court for corruption and there is the need to overhaul the judicial system in Nigeria in such a way that there will be quick dispensation of corruption cases and corrupt individuals should be made to face the law. There should be enactment and enforcement of corruption laws. Anti-corruption agencies should regularly monitor the activities of the commissions, agencies and ministries of education.

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