

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION IN ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the causes and effects of corruption in academic institutions in Nigeria. As a descriptive research design of a survey type, it was made use of 630 lecturers across the tertiary institutions in Nigeria through proportionate stratified random sampling techniques'. Two research questions were raised and one hypothesis was tested in the study. Data were collected through the use of developed instrument styled, Causes and Effects of corruption in academic institutions in Nigeria (CEOCAIN). The instrument was validated and used for the study. The data collected were analyzed using percentage and t-test. The findings revealed that laziness on the part of students and the influenced students' attitude negatively and by extension led to poor academic performance. Some staff see it golden opportunities for them to enrich themselves; some even see it as a national cake. Lack of qualified personnel and motivation were the causes of corruption in academic to mention few. It was also revealed effects of corruption in academic such as poor standard of living, poor standard of education etc. Six recommendations were made, some of them recommendations were dichotomy between HND holder and university graduate needs to be addressed, there is need to review the curriculum from the primary to tertiary institutions, also, 6-3-3-4 educational system is suitable for this country and it deserve second taught.

Keywords: Corruption, Academic, Perception, Institution, Causes and Effects

Introduction

Corruption has been a major treat in Nigerian educational institutions from primary school to tertiary level both private and public sectors. It has been affecting Nigerian institutions for over two decades. Examples of academic corruption in Nigeria are embezzlement and misappropriation of budget allocated for education, bribery for admission into favourable schools, buying and selling of scores known as sorting, immoral attitude between academic staff and students, dishonesty that enhances grade on assignment or a course grade are becoming common in the teaching learning processes. New forms of dishonesty, plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty are challenges of the requirement of academic honesty and integrity in higher education institutions. Students' access to modern technologies, such as mobile phones, iPods, internets, scientific calculator has broadened the ways by which students can achieve the goal of dishonesty (Feday, 2017). Some parents and guardians often manipulate and tolerate corruption as they wince to provide educational opportunities for their children. These constitute various forms of fraud. They have influenced students' attitude negatively and by extension led to poor academic performance and poor Nigerian economy. Government, the society and educational institutions frown at it. Kasozi (2014) sees academic corruption as unmasking an underlying monster of dishonesty in the academy that could destroy the very fabric of society. Though part of our social fabric, academic corruption is more dangerous than many other forms of corruption, it should not be tolerated. From the perspective of social development, systemic education corruption (that which is beyond a few individuals "behaving badly") must be of concern because, more so than corruption in the police, customs service, or other areas, it contains both immoral and illegal elements, involves minors or young people, and damages the ability of education to serve a public good, most notably the selection of future leaders on a fair and

impartial basis (Anderson & Heyneman 2005; Heyneman 2005; Noah & Eckstein, 2001). Much of education corruption might be classified under the term "professional misconduct" (Braxton & Bayer, 1999), but corruption may contain implications beyond other professional misbehavior. It may include corruption on the part of universities who bribe officials to become accredited, whose quality of public service may then be compromised and may produce graduates whose skills and professional levels could be a danger to the public (Heyneman, 2003, 2004) in (Heyneman, 2007). Some corrupt education officials and institutions see fraud as a norm and golden opportunities for them to enrich themselves; some even see it as a national cake. The increased demand for higher education increases the struggle to get admissions. In most of Africa, the demand has been increasing steadily to fill an education vacuum created by earlier neglect of access at all levels of education (Kasozi 2017).

One of the major causes of educational system in Nigeria can be attributed to academic corruption. The standard of education in 1960s cannot be compared with standard of education in 1970s, while standard of education in 1970s was different from 1980s. The present standard of education in 21 century has been drastically diminished as a result academic corruption in Nigeria institutions. The reading culture on part of students is no more there they look out for short cut during the examination periods which leads to academic fraud. Due to experience demonstrating that certain students are incapable of communicating in plain English, such as filling out a personal data form, academic corruption in postsecondary institutions has become necessary. The devaluation of Nigerian university degrees, underemployment, unemployment, and a lack of skills to adapt to the rapidly changing economic and technological landscape are just a few of the issues caused by graduates with inadequate training (Dimkpa, 2011). According to Okebukola (2005), Nigerian universities were not ranked in the top 20 in Africa due to low quality performance, adequate funding of educational sector, among others were the variable ratings that were reported to be below average in Nigeria. The public's outcry over declining educational standards in the mass media has made academic corruption a problem. For example, the declining standard of education in Nigeria is a result of teachers' demands for satisfaction, among other things.

Regretfully, the present study aimed to fill the vacuum left by the other studies' lack of investigation into the causes and consequences of academic corruption in tertiary institutions, specifically with regard to university education. Education aimed at a desired level of performance is fundamental to the quality of education as it pertains to teaching and learning. A sufficient amount of well-trained teaching staff, appropriate teaching methodologies, appropriate curriculum content, adequate and conducive physical facilities, classroom operations, and expected levels of interaction are just a few of these quality requirements.

Literature Review

Corruption is not a new occurrence in Nigeria; it has been existing before colonial era. Many scholars have defined corruption in many ways, the commonly definition is abusing of public fund or properties. Academic dishonesty is the worst form of corruption which is more severe than many other forms of corruption. Higher institutions might end up producing corrupt, less competent and unethical man-power (Feday, 2017). Corruption in Nigeria is a kind social virus which is hybrid of traits of fraudulent anti-social behaviour derived from British colonial rule and those derived from, and nurtured in the indigenous Nigerian context (Babayanju, 2014). Many Nigerians see it an opportunity to enrich them, some as a way of compensating the family members, friends, colleagues and relatives. Wikipedia (2016) sees corruption as a form of dishonest or unethical conduct by a person entrusted with a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit. Corruption may include many activities including bribery and embezzlement, though it may also involve practices that are legal in many countries. Government, or 'political', corruption occurs when an office-holder or other governmental employee acts in an official capacity for personal gain. It is the unlawful ways of use of power to gain personal interest. Otoghile and UyiEdigi (2001) refer corruption as all forms of improper or selfish

exercise of power and influence attached to a public as well as private office. Corruption is the giving of a bribe to an official so that the truth will not be told. It involves the embezzlement of public fund for personal use and any act which is considered to be criminal act according to the law of a particular society (Mike, 2017). It shows that many Nigerians love short cut to final destination. The causes of corruption in Nigeria Institutions are so many; one of them is poverty, Majority of the academic and non-academic staffs live with poverty, they lack basic needs and find things difficult to provide basic things and this give room to lazy students from affluent home to buy their way out. Some lazy students without silver spoon look for alternative to sort themselves out. Some students help their friends to sit for examination or test, some to do assignment which money will be paid in returns as a result of poverty; some pressurized their peers because of the unethical pressure group they belong to.

Dearth of qualified staff: majority of corrupts staff are the people with low competence in their area of specializations, because they are neither trained nor qualified, they find it very difficult to follow the standards or the rules and regulations laid down in their profession or Institutions, the code of conduct have been neglected. As a result not to follow and obey the standards, codes of conduct usually results in academic corruption. The academic curriculum needs to be reviewed because the perception of Nigerian citizens is without attending tertiary institution one cannot make it in life, which gives rooms to some students to use all negative ways to be admitted and graduated at the tertiary institution. Also, the 6-3-3-4 education system needs to be reviewed as well and must be fully implemented; the technical and vocational schools have turned to white elephant institutions. One of the national educational goals, which derive from the philosophy of education, is the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society (National Policy on Education, 2004) which gives room to technical schools to acquire practical skill for those who cannot cope with their studies. More so, the dichotomy between HND holder and university graduate needs to be addressed, because majority of students want to go to university, they use various means to seek for admission. Based on vacancies on dailies or social medians, higher education is vital for accessing good jobs. Most sought for jobs demand university education qualifications with professional qualifications. With this, students lobby for admission (Mike, 2017).

Certificate mentality; this is another causes of academic dishonesty in Nigeria, Nigerians appreciate the colourful certificate, which they prefer it to what the holder can offer, colourful such as first class, distinction, grade one etc, the orientation of the students is to have the mention grades without having in depth knowledge. Those with the in depth knowledge with lower grades find it very difficult to seek for employment or further their educations and this led to academic corruption. Another reason for causes of academic corruption is poor quality assurance and lack of ethical standards; when the tertiary institution does not have quality assurance section or toothless quality assurance is existence, it will give room to academic corruption. Ethics is concerned with right and wrong and how conduct should be judged to be good or bad. It is about how we should live our lives and, in particular, how we should behave towards other people. Standards are acceptable or expected minimum level of performance. Ethical standards therefore are levels of conducts and behaviours that are socially and culturally accepted to be good or right. Nigerians no longer feel concerned about the consequences (good or bad) of their actions or inactions (Babayanju, 2014). Education is the bedrock of development of any nation, there are so many effects on academic corruption in Nigerian tertiary institutions; one of it is, it leads to poor standard of education. The quality of standard of education will be inferior to other countries. Also, ability to produce competent and qualify personnel will be difficult to produce and this will affect economy of the country. Corruption in education sector has culminated in falling quality of graduates, who are supposed to pilot the engine of economic development in the country (Babayanju, 2014). Poor standard of living, as a result of poor standard of education automatically, the standard of living will be below average. The future leaders

who are supposed to pilot the engine of economic development in the country are half done, the output will be zero. Low productivity will occur, with this, it will lead to declining in purchasing power of currency (Feday, 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the causes and effects of academic corruption in Nigeria institutions. Specifically, the study determined to the causes of academic corruption and their effects on Nigeria institutions.

Research Questions

- (i) What are causes of academics corruption in Nigeria institution?
- (ii) What are effects of academic corruption in Nigeria institution?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between causes and effects of corruption academic institutions in Nigeria

Methodology

The research design in of this work was a descriptive survey. Population was made up of this study was made up of 678 lecturers of tertiary institutions. The sample comprised of 200 respondents in all. Simple random sampling technique was used. Two self designed questionnaires were used in order to elicit information from the selected tertiary institutions for the research work which was tagged causes and effects of corruption in academic institutions in Nigeria (CEOCAIN). The validity of the instrument was critically looked at by three experts. Some these items of the questionnaire were removed and those considered irrelevant were discarded, based on the amendment, the final instrument was developed. The reliability of the instrument was assured through a test re-test method which yielded, frequency counts, percentage scores and t-test was used to analyze the hypothesis.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Information

Institution	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
College	25	22.73
Polytechnic	35	31.82
University	50	45.45
Total	110	100

Table 1 showed that 22.73% of academic staff of college of education staff returned their questionnaires, 31.82% from polytechnic while 45.45% from university.

Table 2:

T-test analysis of significant relationship between causes and effects of corruption academic institutions in Nigeria.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-tab
Causes	110	28.6364	9.95654	109	-7.966	0.960
Effects	110	30.2182	11.20320			

The results presented in table 2 shows that causes of academic corruption have a mean score of 28.6364 and effects mean have 30.2182. The table further revealed that t-cal (-7.966) which is less than the t-table (0.960) at significant level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis hereby accepted. The causes of academic corruption institutions in Nigeria have effect not only on institution alone but also, the entire country.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study was carried out to investigate the causes and effects of corruption academic in institutions in Nigeria. It was discovered that laziness on the part of students, lack of motivation of staff, poor quality assurance, strike etc lead to corruption in academic. Also, some parents and guardians often manipulate and tolerate corruption as they wince to provide educational opportunities for their children as a result of Nigerians mental toward certificate. Based on the findings of the study, the following were recommended:

1. There is need to review the curriculum from the primary to tertiary institutions, also, 6-3-3-4 educational system is suitable for this country and it deserve second taught.
2. Adequate funding is needed in Nigerian educational system
3. Both academic and non-academic staff need adequate motivation
4. More awareness on Technical educational sector and deserve more funding.
5. Adequate provision of school counselor for every primary and secondary school through the country.
6. The dichotomy between HND holder and university graduate needs to be addressed

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