
CORRUPTION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: BANE OF
YOUTHS RESTIVENESS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The issue of corruption in tertiary institutions has been a great concern in Southwest, Nigeria in recent times. Corruption is expressive of a multitude of deviant behaviours, an act which deviates from the rules of conduct governing the actions of individuals in a position of authority or trust. Hence, this paper examined the roles of corrupt practices on youths restiveness in tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria. The population consisted of all the youths in the four state-owned tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria while the sample consisted of 600 youths selected through simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire titled: "Corruption in Tertiary Institutions and Youths Restiveness" (CTIYR) constructed and validated by the researchers was used to collect data. Three hypotheses were tested for the study. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation statistic was used to test the hypotheses. The results showed that issues such as embezzlement, bribery, academic fraud among other corrupt practices were responsible for the poor infrastructural facilities, student's riots, poor academic

standards as well as the general break down of law and order in the system. The study concluded that corruption and youth restiveness is prevalent in schools because adequate measures to serve as deterrents are not properly implemented in Nigeria.

Keywords: Corruption, Education, Youth, Restiveness, Youth Restiveness.

Introduction

The issue of corruption appears to be one of the serious challenges confronting Nigeria as a country. While it may be true that other nations are also affected by corruption, the case of Nigeria has reached an alarming rate in almost all her economic sectors, education inclusive. Corruption in Nigeria education sector seems to be the most dangerous aspect of corruption in the country. For instance, quality education is said to be the bedrock or channels through which every country produces her future leaders such as politicians, teachers, workers and many others. However, it is observed that corruption in tertiary institutions appears to be worrisome. Noko (2016) reported that tertiary institutions have deteriorated to the extent that the place which ought to be an agent of purifying and sharpening the minds of the next generation to become useful members of the society has now turned to the training ground for corrupt individuals. Youth is defined as individuals who are between the ages of 18 -35, and are often characterized by energy, dynamism, adventurism and passion. These qualities are believed to make the youth susceptible to many social vices, including corruption and all sorts of financial crimes that are plaguing the Nigerian society today. Yet, these same qualities are also vital to the progress of any nation. More importantly, they can also be a potent tool for dealing with the same vices (corruption and financial crimes), if their potentials are fully harnessed and positively utilized.

The degree of corruption that is reported taking place in the educational system of Nigeria is quite disturbing and is speculated to possess the potential to crumble the country's potentials or even collapse it. Enweremadu (2015) observed that the negative

consequences of corruption on the nation have also been enormous. For example, corruption might be responsible for the bad roads, unstable electricity supply and the poor standard of public schools across the country. The issue of contractors and public officials diverting part of the money meant for infrastructural facilities into their private pockets has forced many parents to pay so much of their hard earned resources to see that their children acquire qualitative education in private schools. This is because of the poor quality of education in public schools while the unfortunate masses who cannot afford private schools for their children are condemned to sending their children to public schools only for them to become unemployable. Whereas some corrupt elements in the society, especially among public servants and politicians use stolen public funds to educate their children and wards abroad.

Bribery is the commonest form of corruption in most countries both developing and developed. The term bribery can be explained as the improper use of money, gifts and forms of favours in exchange for personal gain which one is ordinarily not entitled to. The types of favours given are diverse and include money, gifts, sex, company shares, entertainment, employment and political benefits. The personal gain that is given can be anything from actively giving preferential treatment to having an indiscretion or crime overlooked. Bribery can sometimes be part of the systematic use of corruption for other ends, for example to perpetrate further corruption such as in the areas of fraud, examination and electoral malpractices.

Bribery is sometimes used inter-changeably with extortion. The two are however not the same. While bribery is the use of positive inducements from the giver for specific gains which he expects to receive from the receiver of the bribe, extortion on the other hand centres on the use of blackmail and threats by the receiver to extract some benefits. This can be the threat of violence or false imprisonment as well as exposure of an individual's secrets or prior crimes. This act is more common with law enforcement agents. Another form of corruption is embezzlement and this is a form of theft which describes a situation which involves someone in a position of trust or authority with access to funds or assets illegally taking control of such funds or assets for personal use. This type of

corruption is more common in developing countries where there is little or no transparency in government and weak institutional mechanism for checks and balances.

Academic corruption is another corruption occurring in the educational system such as colleges and universities. It can be seen as an act of corruption in itself, as well as an outcome of other forms of corruption such as bribery or sorting as it is known in Nigeria, extortion or fraud. In developing countries, corruption occurs frequently in institutions of higher learning. These include plagiarism, falsification of research results, doctoring of academic records, examination malpractices and bribes offered either to non-teaching staff to bypass bureaucratic procedures and or to faculty for a higher grade. The willingness to engage such corrupt practices decreases if individuals perceive such behaviour as very objectionable, i. e. a violation of sanctions. When one speaks of youth and corruption in the educational sector, what often come to mind is sorting and other forms of examination malpractices. In reality, however, youths in the educational sector are also engaged in several, if not all of the other forms of corruption already identified, including embezzlement, financial fraud, electoral malpractices, just to mention a few, all of which are capable of causing restiveness among the youths

In fact, Nwaokugba and Ezeugwu (2017) captured the cumulative damage corruption has done to Nigeria's education by submitting that the physical environment in Nigerian institutions of learning in the past ten years has deteriorated to the point of striking decay. The buildings are dilapidated; the roads leading to the premises are full of potholes. Classrooms have no windows, doors and desks that are meant to serve thirty pupils are shared by three or four times that number. The issue of the poor physical environment at the various levels and inadequate facilities at all level are some of the things that mark out the present Nigerian education system as deplorable and disastrous.

Corruption in the education industry in Nigeria has done further irreparable damage to Nigeria and Nigerians. Every state looks up to its citizens and its education system as the direction to look up to in fixing whatever threats and challenges it faces and

every individual sees his involvement and participation in education as a route upon which his emancipation is deeply indebted to, meaning that at the end of his graduation, he is sure he has attained a level that can empower him or get some kind of empowerment through critical services he can render to the society. Simple honest reflection on this can lead one to conclude that participation in education without necessary infrastructural facilities cannot produce the needed expertise and empowerment expected of education upon which one can become sustainable or self-fulfilled so as to make his contributions to the development of his fatherland. The case in Nigeria in this direction is somehow critically unfortunate. The reason for this is that officials entrusted with overseeing responsibilities in education simply and ingloriously embezzle or misappropriate funds. For this purpose, decadent behaviour is correspondingly matched with strike actions that make students stay more days in the house than they stay in schools and this can cause restiveness among the youths.

A closer look at the tertiary institutions in Southwest, Nigeria revealed that there are many factors responsible for the deterioration and decadence of educational system that may lead to youths restiveness. For instance, a situation where students are forced to buy textbooks before they could pass an examination has often provoked restiveness. Igbo and Ikpa (2013) opined that youths restiveness is the extreme form of deviant behaviour among youths that is socially unacceptable in any society. Youth restiveness involves the combination of actions, behaviours and attitudes exhibited by youths which are socially unacceptable and unwholesome in a society. To them, youth restiveness has been a device through which youth use to obtain what they want from the relevant authority especially within the educational system, bearing in mind the level of injustice and corruption at the sector.

According to Chika and Onyene (2010), in the last decade, there has been a proliferation of unequalled violence through cultism, kidnapping, internet frauds, drug abuse, thuggery and wanton destruction of valuable infrastructures as well as lives and personal properties. Cultism is a form of restive behavior among youths in Southwest, Nigeria. Ajayi, Hastrup and Osalusi (2010) reported

that the most crucial problem facing tertiary institutions in Nigeria is the problem of cultism. They believed that there is hardly any existing single institution of higher learning that has not experienced the menace of cultism one time or another. Today, the menace and the aggressiveness of cult members and cult-related violent clashes and activities on most tertiary institutions campuses have caused the sudden death of lecturers and students.

Drug abuse is another form of restive behaviour among students. Oliha (2014) submitted that majority of the Nigerian youths ignorantly depend on one form of drug or the other for their daily activities be it social, educational, political or moral. Such drugs include tobacco, Indian hemp, Cocaine, Morphine, Heroine, Alcohol, Ephedrine, Madras, caffeine, Glue, Barbiturates and Amphetamines. Dependence and addiction to drug abuse amongst Nigerian undergraduates are one of the major consequences of drug abuse, characterized by compulsive drug craving seeking behaviour. Abdu-Raheem (2013) asserted that drug abuse has some social, economic, psychological, cultural, physical, moral, and health consequences that may lead to poverty, disability, maladjustment or death of the abusers.

Internet fraud is another restive tendency among youths in tertiary institutions in Southwest, Nigeria. Elgbadon and Adejuwon (2015) observed that the internet has brought an astounding alteration in the behavioural patterns of Nigerian youths. The 'modernization of criminality' through the electronic superhighway has been serving as the platform for the emergence and sustenance of fraudulent sub-culture in Nigeria. They noted that youths anecdotally make up the majority of those individuals engaged in deviant or criminal behaviours. Similarly, the act of thuggery is very prominent among youths. This is a violent behaviour in which people fight and attack others. It is an act of violence or behaviour by ruffians hired or instigated by politicians to intimidate their opponent. Ayoola, Adeyemi and Jabaru (2015) believed that the politicians in their bids to absorb power, used hired- thugs, or paid assassins to perpetrate violence and instil fears in their opponents.

Campus crisis is another area of concern among the youths which could lead to demonstration and destruction of lives and

properties. This in most cases is accompanied unstable situations, a boycott of classes, disturbance, wanton destruction and extreme danger when the students are involved in a confrontation with authorities over certain issues. Enweremadu (2015) submitted that curbing corruption successfully will require the participation of all stakeholders in tertiary institutions, the youths inclusive. Observations show that many students in public tertiary institutions received lectures standing outside the lecture halls as a result of inadequate infrastructural facilities perhaps due to corrupt practices. Also, many forms of professional misconducts such as, accepting material gifts or rewards in exchange for positive grades, sexual gratification for higher grades, extortion, and bribery are examples of corrupt practices in tertiary institutions which more often than not has led to restiveness of students. Therefore, this study examined the role of corruption on youths restiveness with a view to specifically determining the various types of corrupt practices prevalent in tertiary institutions, how corruption has affected the provision of infrastructures and how corrupt practices affected academic standards.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between corruption in tertiary institutions and inadequate infrastructural facilities.
2. There is no significant relationship between corruption in tertiary institutions and academic standards.
3. There is no significant relationship between corrupt practices in tertiary institutions and youths restiveness in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey of a correlation type. Descriptive survey research design was appropriate because the study described respondents' opinion on the role of corruption on youths restiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions. The population consisted of all the youths in the four state-owned tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria. The sample is made up of 600 youths selected through simple random

sampling technique. A questionnaire titled: "Corruption in Tertiary Institutions and Youths Restiveness" (CTIYR) constructed by the researchers was used to collect data. The instrument was validated by experts in Social Studies Education. Their comments and criticisms were used to rectify the instrument. Split-half reliability index of the instrument and the reliability coefficient of 0.86 at 0.05 level of significance showed that the instrument was reliable for use. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation statistic at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between corruption in educational system and lack of infrastructural development in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions

Table 1: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis on the relationship between corruption and lack of infrastructural facilities in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions

Variable	No.	Mean	SD	Df	Cal.t-value	Critical r-value	Decision
CES	600	42.71	36.33	599	.46	.196	HO ₁ rejected
Infra. Devt.	600	26.37	18.36				

Table 1 shows that the calculated r-value of .46 is greater than the critical r-value of .196 at the degree of freedom of 599 and tested at 0.05 significance level. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between corruption in the educational system and lack of infrastructural development in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions rejected. It means that corruption in educational system has greatly affected the provision of infrastructural facilities in the institution.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between corruption in Tertiary institutions and academic standards in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between corruption in educational system and academic standards in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions

Variable	No.	Mean	SD	Df	Cal.t-value	Critical r-value	Decision
CES	600	63.53	48.24	599	.66	.196	HO ₂ rejected
A.S	600	26.37	18.36				

Table 2 above shows that the calculated r-value of .66 is greater than the critical r-value of .196 at 599 degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between corruption in the educational system and academic standards in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between corrupt practices in tertiary institutions and youth restiveness in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions

Table 3: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between corrupt practices and youths restiveness in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions

Variable	No.	Mean	SD	Df	Cal.t-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Corrupt practices	600	38.63	20.41	599	.72	.195	HO ₃ rejected
Youth restiveness	600	26.37	18.36				

Table 3 indicates that the calculated r-value of .72 is greater than the critical r-value of .195 at 0.05 level of significance and at 599 degree of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between corrupt practices in the educational system and Youth Restiveness in Osun state-owned tertiary institutions is hereby rejected.

Discussion

Findings from this study showed that embezzlement and misappropriation of funds meant for education means that infrastructure and facilities for effective teaching and learning must be lacking. The consequences of this are complex. Not many Nigerians will have access to quality education and overcrowded classes will definitely affect the level of understanding and comprehension of learners as well as the quality of instructional and pedagogical delivery by the teachers. Most importantly, corruption terribly creates infrastructural deficits that result in many persons not having access to education and this on its own systematically leaves generations of frustrated, disgruntled and disenchanted individuals who in addition to manifesting terrible immorality also resort to high profile criminality like militancy and insurgency. Lack of access to education by citizens due to infrastructural deficits occasioned by corruption and militancy and insurgency have multiplier effects on the economy and national development of the Nigerian state as potential human beings who naturally can contribute to the development of the Nigerian state is lost and investors who should have invested to create jobs for the citizens and through that way boost the national economy for Nigerian's national development are scared away. Immorality, militancy and insurgency that unfortunately have become acceptable behaviours in Nigeria are not investors and investments friendly and what these singularly and jointly have imposed on Nigeria and Nigerians is economic stagnation which is not favourable to progress and national development. This finding is in line with the submissions of Plessi (2014), Nwankwo and Nweke (2016) and Torulagba (2011) who submitted that in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, the vice chancellors, lecturers, and educational administrators in tertiary institutions were highly motivated and committed to educating the youths. The quality of education was very high, thereby, enabling Nigerian students to compete very favourably with other universities around the world. During the decades mentioned, educators maintained high professional and ethical standards.

In contrast to the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, the 1990s, and 2000s are characterized by poor academic standards, unorganized

extra-curricula activities and wretched infrastructures and facilities. In short, Nigeria's campuses currently are like facilities located in war zones. They are in a serious state of disrepair and most higher institutions' campuses today are like archaeological artefacts due to lack of maintenance. This means that some chancellors, vice chancellors really do not care about what happens to education on their campuses apart from maintaining their jobs and enhancing their financial wherewithal through embezzlement of allocated school funds as well as threats and unexplainable indirect fees imposed on students.

Findings revealed a significant relationship between corruption in the educational system and academic standards. In tandem with this finding is the submission of Plessi (2014) and Enweremedu (2015) who respectively submitted that professional misconduct are part of the corrupt activities affecting the standards of education nowadays. He identified many forms of professional misconduct in education. Among the most common are accepting material gifts or rewards in exchange for positive grades, assessments or selection to specialized programs, biasing a grade or an assessment because of family or other private requests, assigning of grades or assessments biased by a student's race, culture, social class, ethnicity or other ascriptive attributes, i.e. the characteristics with which they were born – race, gender and social status. These are all examples to confirm that corruption in education is a world-wide problem. Enweremedu (2015) on his part attributed the effects on education standards to bribery, extortion, embezzlement, fraud, favouritism and academic corruption.

Over the years some of the corrupt activities of these groups of individuals and their impact on the educational sector have received the attention of both the media and researchers. Some of these malpractices including plagiarism, falsification of research results, doctoring of academic records, examination malpractices and bribes offered either to non-teaching staff to bypass bureaucratic procedures and or to faculty for a higher grade, need no further clarification. What perhaps needs to be emphasized here is first, that these practices have now become the norm in many higher institutions in Nigeria. Secondly, when one speaks of youth and

corruption in the educational sector, what often comes to mind is sorting or blocking and other forms of examination related malpractices. In reality, however, youths in the educational sector are also engaged in several, if not all of the other forms of corruption. From all indications, corrupt practices in educational institutions are found to have caused restiveness among students of the Osun State-owned tertiary institutions. This, of course is in line with the position of Igbo and Ikpa (2013) who submitted that youth restiveness is the extreme form of deviant behaviour among youth which is socially unacceptable in any society. Youth restiveness involves the combination of actions, behaviours and attitudes exhibited by youths which are socially unacceptable and unwholesome in the society. According to them youth restiveness has been a device through which youth use to obtain what they want from the relevant authority especially within the educational system, bearing in mind the level of injustice and corruption at this sector.

Conclusion

It is clear that educational institutions and systems are not free of corruption. As can be seen from the above findings, the Nigerian educational environment, due to corruption, is turning many young men and women into uncaring, unnecessarily aggressive and restive individuals. They have been socialized to believe that morality and ethics are not important virtues and that it is important to win at all cost. They learn these behaviours from the administrators and teachers/instructors/lecturers/professors who supposed to mould them into hard-working honourable citizens. Youths have now become part of the corruption problem, and therefore urgent steps need to be taken to save them, if the future of the country must be anything different from what it is today.

Recommendations

To combat corruption in the educational system, every stakeholder in education must demonstrate that corruption is under control. For some people, education may be the only way to escape a life of poverty, and for the country, it is crucial to development and growth.

The anti-corruption war should be extended to the educational sector. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and other corruption fighting agencies should focus their investigative tentacles on educational institutions and compel those who have questions to answer to explain what happened under their administrative supervision of various educational institutions.

The youths are the future leaders of the country. If the educational sector fails to produce able leaders, then the country is doomed. Hence, students should be encouraged to always be obedient, honest and have respect for law and order by giving awards to the best-behaved students at the end of their studies. This will make them cultivate the right attitude to societal issues so as to contribute meaningfully as a responsible individual.

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