

CORRUPT PRACTICES ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN NASARAWA, NIGER AND PLATEAU STATES OF NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of corrupt practices on management of private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population comprised all the private Colleges of Educations in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states with a total of 1,932 academic and administrative staff as respondents. A simple random sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 318 administrative and academic staff from three private Colleges of Education in each of the states. These include 28 administrative staff (Heads of Department and Deans of the Schools) and 290 academic staff—162 males and 128 females. The instrument for the study was a 10-item questionnaire entitled: “Corrupt Practices and Private Colleges of Education Management Questionnaire (CPPCEMQ).” The instrument was duly validated. The Cronbach’s Alpha statistics was used to compute the internal consistency of the questionnaire items and reliability indices of 0.74 and 0.84 respectively were obtained. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Chi square was used to test the hypotheses of no significant difference. The findings revealed that corrupt practices influenced management of private Colleges of Education in areas like funding and infrastructural

development. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that the proprietors of the private Colleges of Education should ensure that corrupt personnel are flushed out of the system at the same time improving the conditions of service to curtail the desire to engage in corrupt practices by office holders.

Keywords: Corrupt Practices, Management, Private, Colleges of Education.
Background to the Study

The essence of quality of education as it relates to teaching and learning involves education geared towards a desired level of performance. Some of these quality requirements include financial prudence, adequate curricular content, appropriate teaching methodologies, adequate number of well trained teaching staff, adequate and conducive infrastructural facilities, classroom operations and interactions in expected levels among others (Victor, 2016). Furthermore, the quality of education also depends on the characteristics of candidates admitted into the institutions of learning, e.g. entry behaviour of the candidates, their career interests, mental ability, living and health status and socio-economic background as well as the characteristics of the learning environment. To achieve the desired characteristics of the learning environment, it is pertinent to that financial administration should be above board in all dealings. Although Mfokeng (2016) stresses that even though the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria has stipulated that no person shall offer any officer serving the public, money, gift, property or profit to any sort in the cause of the public officer trying to discharge his official duty, persistent reports by Transparency International has repeatedly placed Nigeria among the most corrupt countries the world over.

Corruption has been identified as the number one clog to the development and progress of Nigeria in all ramifications. Uche (2014) avers that corruption is a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of the educational institutions to the extent that it has caused decay and dereliction within the infrastructure of government and society in physical, social and human terms. The private education system in Nigeria seems to have been the worse hit with the existence of corrupt practices. Corrupt practices seem to have bedeviled the Nigerian education system to the extent that it has become a norm in the system. It is no longer news that most of our graduates with outstanding grades have been tagged: “unemployable” by employers of labour. Uche (2014) opines that tertiary institutions are looked upon as the Ivory Towers, the citadels of learning saddled with the onus of producing men and women of integrity by men found worthy in character and in learning. Unfortunately, owing to greed, the quest for material possession and rising to the top through cutting corners plaguing the larger society have crept in slowly and insidiously to these centers of dignity that corrupt practices have become endemic therein. More importantly, corrupt practices are problems in the educational system due to the public outcry of fallen standard of performance in education.

Ubaka, Fajemirokun, Nduka and Ezenwanne (2013) opine that corrupt practices refer to acts of abuse of diverse forms whereby persons take advantage of their positions, to engage in illegal, dishonest, unwholesome acts while rendering services. It refers to those behaviours or actions that work towards breaking certain moral or social codes of conduct or administrative rules. Corruption is any decision, act or conduct that subverts the integrity of people in authority or institutions charged with promoting, defending or sustaining the

democratization process, thereby undermining its effectiveness in performing its assigned roles. According to corruption must involve acts which are intentionally dishonest". It is the "unsanctioned or unscheduled use of public resources for private ends (Ojumah & Egwunyenga, 2015). It might take the form of mal-performance or neglect of a recognized duty, or the unwarranted exercise of power, with the motive of gaining some advantages more or less directly personal (Victor, 2016).

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) has been accused of aiding and abetting corruption in its accreditation exercise, as there are allegations that some staff of the commission sent out on the process of conducting accreditation "receive brown envelopes" from management of Colleges of Education which also undermined the credibility of NCCE accreditation. According to Nwachukwu (2021), corruption in the tertiary institutions is not particular to the lecturers alone but also to the non-teaching staff. Corruption in today's Nigeria is like a contagious disease that is fast spreading from one generation to the other, which has the ability of destroying the dignity of the nationhood. Corruption exists at every level of the educational system. Idris, S. & Ahmed, S. A. (2015) are of the view that the underlying motivation for corruption globally is human nature, fanned, watered and triggered by greed as well as the cherished views or desires of some individuals usually, the influential minority who do not allow the majority access to the good things of life.

Corrupt practices in the educational system may take different forms. Forms of corrupt practices in tertiary institutions in Nigeria according to Ekpoh, and Edet (2017); Ezinwa (2014) and Jacob, Oluwafeyisayomi and Jacob (2018) include certificate forgery, impersonation, plagiarism, gangsterism, rape, embezzlement of funds, unjust delay of payment of salaries and staff promotions, and recycling of the criminal elements, Kickback on construction and supply contracts, favoritism in hiring, appointments, and promotions decisions, diversion of funds from government accounts, diversion of funds from international assistance funds, ghost teachers and employees, requiring payment for services that should be provided free, withholding needed approvals and signatures to extort bribes, (e.g., gifts, favors, outright payments), directing the location of construction and services to locations, that offer opportunities for gain by oneself, family, or friends and requiring the use of materials as a way of creating a market for items on which oneself, family or friends hold an import or production monopoly.

Other forms of corrupt practices in Nigerian educational system according to Ubaka, Fajemirokun, Nduka and Ezenwanne (2013), Ojumah and Egwunyenga (2015), Nwogu and Adieme (2016); Daagu and Iyo (2017) and Kawugama and Woyopwa (2017) include:

- i. Some universities hire external academics for a day or two to improve their staffing position just for accreditation.
- ii. Some departments fraudulently list professors of other universities (without their consent) as their staff.
- iii. Some institutions lend equipment and chemicals from sister universities to satisfy accreditation requirements.
- iv. Some departments show case borrowed books and journals from other institutions.
- v. Some departments hire support staff only for accreditation.
- vi. Some panels see over crowded lecture halls, and look the other ways.

- vii. Some inexperienced academics are recruited to serve as members of accreditation panels.
- viii. Students forming themselves into lecturers' boys, and act as agents to extort money from fellow students for lecturers.
- ix. Awarding unmerited scores by lecturers to students who give them bribe.
- x. Sex harassment from some male lecturers from some female students who want higher scores.
- xi. Non-academic staff also fraudulently demanding money from students before they carry out some of their duties in the school.
- xii. Diversions of funds meant for capital projects by the institution's management,

The researchers speculate that private Colleges of Education in the Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states in Nigeria may not be alienated from corrupt practices as captured in the background above. This aroused the curiosity of the researchers to embark on a research to find out the influence of corrupt practices of management of Private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states.

Statement of the Problem

The emergence of private ventures in the educational system in Nigeria was welcomed with opened arms owing to the anomaly where the government was becoming increasingly incapacitated in the management of educational institutions. Prevalent and unswerving waves of corrupt practices were assumed to be responsible for the decline in quality of education available to recipients as well as the unprecedented decline in standards of performance in education. A cursory analysis of the trend of affairs indicates albeit dismally that the malady of corrupt practices might have crept into the private education system. In spite of the anti-corruption crusades and awareness campaigns in different media, the Nigerian education system seems to have been hit with the existence of corrupt practices. There can be no sustainable development in the educational sector in the face of the malaise of corrupt practices.

The researchers speculates that corrupt practices in private Colleges of Education might breed financial mismanagement through embezzlement of generated funds, compelling admission seekers and students to pay illegal and unbudgeted levies as well as non-conformity to laid down procurement procedures in the purchase of materials. Similarly, corrupt practices in private Colleges of Education may be responsible for poor quality of school plant in most private Colleges of Education, deferred maintenance of infrastructure, poor quality of procured infrastructure, award of contract to unprofessional bidders as well as over-bloated on contracts in the provision of infrastructures. Therefore, the problem of this study in a question form is: what is the influence of corrupt practices on management of private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states in Nigeria with particular focus on funding and infrastructural development?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out if:

1. Corrupt practices have influence on funding in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.
2. Corrupt practices have influence on infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the influence of corrupt practices on funding in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria?
2. In what ways does corrupt practices influence infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria?

Hypothesis

- HO1: Corrupt practices do not significantly influence funding in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.
- HO2: Corrupt practices have no significant influence on infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.

Methodology

This was a perceptual study with adopted a descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states in Nigeria. The states have thirteen accredited private Colleges of Education. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population comprised all the 3,183 academic and administrative staff as respondents. A simple random sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 318 academic and administrative staff from three private Colleges of Education in each of the states. These include 28 administrative staff (Heads of Department and Deans of the Schools) and 290 academic staff—162 males and 128 females. After sampling the desired number of respondents per school, the researchers visited each school where the instrument was administered on the sampled respondents. A structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled 'Corrupt Practices and Private Colleges of Education Management Questionnaire, CPPCEMQ' was used for data collection. The questionnaire consists of two (2) clusters named Section I and II. Each cluster has five (5) items totaling ten (10) items. Section I contains items eliciting information on the influence of corrupt practices on funding while Section II elicits information on the influence of corrupt practices on infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states.

A four point modified rating scale was used to establish the disparity in the respondents' opinions. Thus, Strongly Agree (SA) =4; Agree (A) =3; Disagree (D) =2; Strongly Disagree (SD) =1 were used by respondents to respond to each item in each cluster. A total of 318 copies of the instruments were administered on the respondents by the researchers and all copies were recovered for data analysis. The descriptive statistics of Mean Score was used to answer the research questions. A cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. The Boundary for Decision Making with respect to positive items was 1.00-1.49= SD; 1.50-2.49= D; 2.50-3.49= A; 3.50-4.00= SA while the reverse was the case for negative items. Chi Square statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 17 software was used for analysis of the data collected.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the influence of corrupt practices on funding in Private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria?

Data collected and analyzed with respect to the above research question is presented on Table 1.

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	N	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	Decision
1	There is no financial mismanagement going on among key officers in the College of Education where I work.	318	31	18	9	176	2.01	Disagreed
2	Embezzlement of generated funds is not common in the College of Education where I work.	318	61	26	3	193	2.09	Disagreed
3	Consequent upon corrupt practices in the College of Education where I work, there is frequent printing of fake receipts for school fees.	318	248	41	1	12	3.58	Agreed.
4	As a result of corrupt practices in the College of Education where I work, students are compelled to pay illegal levies under different umbrellas.	318	261	28	9	20	3.61	Agreed.
5	The procurement procedures are often followed in order to promote financial aptness in the College of Education where I work.	318	41	59	8	136	1.16	Disagreed
Cluster							2.50	Agreed

Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Corrupt practices on funding in Private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states in Nigeria

As shown on Table 1 above, respondents agreed with the statements on items 3 and 4 which both had a Mean Score above 2.50. This indicates that respondents indicated that the statements contained in the items were the influence of corrupt practices on funding in private Colleges of Education while items 1, 2 and 5 which were negatively-framed had a Mean Score below 2.50 indicating the presence of influence by the statements contained by the items. The Cluster Mean Score was 2.50. The implication is that corrupt practices have influence on funding in private Colleges of Education.

Ho1 Corrupt practices do not significantly influence funding in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.

Analyzed data in respect to this hypothesis is presented on Table 2.

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	χ^2 -cal	P- value	Decision
SD	19	79.5	-60.5	.05	3	28.14	.00	Ho rejected
D	28	79.5	-51.5					
A	88	79.5	8.5					
SA	183	79.5	103.5					

(P -value=0.00; $P=0.00<0.05$; H_0 rejected).

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of Corrupt Practices on Funding in Private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau States of Nigeria

Table 2 shows Chi-square (χ^2) value of 28.14 at 3df, $P<0.05$ and H_0 rejected. This result reveals that the null hypothesis which states that corrupt practices does not significantly influence funding in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau States in Nigeria was rejected. This implies that corrupt practices influence funding in private Colleges of Education.

Research Question 2: In what ways do corrupt practices influence infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria?

Data collected and analyzed with respect to the above research question is presented on Table 3.

S/ N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	N	SA	A	D	SD	ME AN	Decisio n
6	As a result of corrupt practices, funds meant for the procurement of office equipment for staff in Colleges of Education are sometime embezzled by the officers in charge of procurement.	318	221	83	7	7	3.88	Agreed.
7	Owing to corrupt practices, funds meant for the maintenance of school plant are often mismanaged by management staff in my College of Education.	318	169	85	2	62	2.82	Agreed.
8	The procurement of infrastructure is often fraudulently carried out with poor quality infrastructure procured for use in the College of Education where I work.	318	184	72	10	52	3.09	Agreed.

9	Contracts in College of Education where I work are often awarded to unprofessional bidders who may be willing to give handsome 'kickbacks' to management staff.	318	272	28	4	14	3.25	Agreed.
10	Contracts are often over-bloated in the College of Education where I work with the balances siphoned for personal use.	318	196	72	34	16	3.39	Agreed.
Cluster							3.29	AGREE

Table 3: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Views on Ways Corrupt practices Influence Infrastructural Development in Private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.

As shown on Table 3 above, all items had a Mean Score above 2.50. This indicates that respondents accepted that all the items were influence of corrupt practices on infrastructural development in Private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria. The Cluster Mean Score was 3.29. The implication is that infrastructural development in Private Colleges of Education is influenced by corrupt practices.

Ho2: Corrupt practices have no significant influence on infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	χ^2 -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	22	79.5	-57.5	.05	3	26.09	.00	Ho rejected
D	09	79.5	-70.5					
A	98	79.5	18.5					
SA	189	79.5	109.5					

(P-value=0.00; P=0.00<0.05; Ho rejected).

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of Corrupt practices on Infrastructural development in Private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.

Table 4 shows Chi-square (χ^2) value of 26.09 at 3df, P<0.05 and Ho rejected. This result reveals that the null hypothesis which states that corrupt practices have no significant influence on infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states in Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is a significant influence of corrupt practices on infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria.

Discussion of the findings

This study investigated the influence of corrupt practices on the management of private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states in Nigeria. The first finding of

the study reveals that corrupt practices has influence on funding in the private Colleges of Education. The implication of this finding is that corruption negatively influences the judicious utilization of generated funds for the smooth management of private Colleges of Education. These findings are in agreement with Kawugama and Woyopwa (2017) who maintained that a myriad of corrupt practices have been found to exist in academic institutions such as mismanagement of generated funds for the administration of such institutions. The findings are also in line with Jacob, Oluwafeyisayomi and Jacob (2018) who identified corrupt practices in procurement processes in the educational system in Nigeria.

The second finding of the reveals that corrupt practices influences infrastructural development in private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau states of Nigeria. This finding implies that were corrupt practices are endemic the procurement and development of infrastructure will suffer serious setbacks in the private Colleges of Education. These findings are in line with Idris and Ahmed (2015); Ojumah and Egwunyenga (2015).

Conclusion

This study found that corrupt practices influences management of private Colleges of Education in Nasarawa, Plateau and Niger state of Nigeria. The study therefore concludes that the phenomenon is not a plus for the management of private Colleges of Education as it has been found to influence important aspects of the management of such institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the researchers recommend that:

1. The management Colleges of Education should synergize with the board of Governors of those institutions to ensure that culprits of corruption are brought to book to serve as deterrence to others who may be contemplating indulging in the act.
2. The management of College of Education in conjunction with relevant law enforcement and financial management agencies frequently audit financial transactions to ensure that matters relating to infrastructural development follow laid down procedures.

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