

# CORRUPTION AND ITS VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS IN NIGERIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

DELIVERED

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### INTRODUCTION

With modern civilization, the responsibility of inculcating knowledge, attitude and professional skills acquisition have been shifted from parents and community members of the school. The society now looks unto the school for entrenchment and adoption of its core values generated by the society itself into our children. From ancient civilizations, school has been and still remains centre of enculturation i.e. changing behavior patterns of children. After the family and possibly religion, education follows as the most important agent of socializing children and youths generally (Torulagha, 2013). Whenever these young minds are not properly socialized, they begin to form habits and tendencies that eat deeply into the philosophy and moral foundation of education in Nigeria.

The education sector is grappling with the issue of falling standards from the primary through to tertiary education. The reality today is, we have students/graduates who are insufficiently equipped with knowledge and skills, morally inept, clueless and not resourceful while perpetually looking for shortcuts to anything. This is the by-product of corruption in the academic system at all levels of education. It is worrisome how corruption that was hitherto known within public service officials, military, police, politicians, contractors and business associates has eaten deep into the education system. It is now arguable that, the education system is as corrupt as the public and private sectors (Torulagha, 2013). We could hypothesize that, the education system is learning and adopting the values generated by the larger society. And that Nigerian youths born in the last three decades have seemingly adopted habits and tendencies that are destructive to the nation. It is a truism that, 'no nation can thrive above the quality of its education' and therefore this Hydra headed psychological beast called corruption must be tamed otherwise Nigeria is doomed. It has so far

deranged our economy, industrial fabrics, polity, public service, private entrepreneurs and affected our international ratings.

What is then corruption?

Corruption is a global phenomenon which is not exclusive to any nation, race or section of the world but has transcended national boundaries and frontiers and symbolizes phenomenal universal unwholesomeness (Iyanda, 2012). Corruption has led to slow movement of files in officers, police extortion, port congestion, queues at passport offices and petrol stations, ghost workers syndrome, election irregularities etc. corruption represent any unethical conduct exhibited for the purpose of taking undue advantage or achieving unjustifiable benefits. The economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) which is the agency of government charged with responsibility of fighting corruption in Nigeria gave economic insight to definition of corruption as:

the non-violent criminal and illicit activity committed with objectives of earning wealth illegally either individually or in a group or organized manner thereby violating existing legislation governing the economic activities of government and its administration (Ngwakwe, (2009).

According to Ndokwu (2004), the Igbos call it Igboozu, the Yorubas call it Egunje while the Hausas call it Chuachua. Corruption has almost become normative i.e. an accepted way of life in Nigeria as it is common practice to hear people complaining that 'in my place of work there isn't opportunity for Chuachua only salary'.

Conceptually, corruption is analogous to a wide range of social misconducts, including fraud, bribery extortion, embezzlement, bribery, nepotism, influence peddling, bestowing of favours to friends, rigging of elections, abuse of public property, the leaking of official government secret, sales of expired and defective goods like drugs,

food, electronics and spare parts to the public (El-Rufai, 2003). There would be hardly a consensus opinion as to what corruption personifies as we earlier mentioned. Infact, what appears to be corruption may be share incompetence or inadequacies on the part of an individuals. However, there are indicators used to as certain its manifestations while elements of such conduct is usually seem in moral failing and depravity of actors and victims respectively. In a recent release by

Global Corruption Report on Education, Transparency International showed that, corruption has a devastating impact on developing nations, particularly in Africa, which has hindered progress towards the attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) and jeopardizing social and economic development. Corruption is so endemic in Nigeria that we are ranked 144 of the 177 countries on Transparency International's 2013 Corruption Perceptions Index (Olaniyan, 2012). Of noteworthy here is, corruption is not the problem of African countries and Nigeria I particular, it is globally phenomenon with every country and even the so-called developed ones' having a fair share of the problem that is why it is known to them and they are constantly talking about it.

Theoretically, corruption is the circumvention of ethnical rules that bind the conduct of any official conduct. Every official position either in private or public is guided by ethics and these ethics are there to regulate official conduct. (Iyanda, 2012). One of the theories of corruption is the modernization theory. In the word of Huntington (1968) as cited by Adefulu (2007), he observed that "the process of economic and political development in modernizing societies tend to breed inequality, political instability and corruption which may be defined simply in terms of the use of public powers to achieve private goals. He further suggested that, the incidence of corruption in Africa is the behavior of

public officials which deviates from the practice psychological makes the accepted norms which signifies the teachers to give special attention to absence of effective political that particular pupil to the detriment of institutionalization which have made it other class members. There is a strong link between social corruption and academic corruption. In Universities, people receive degree in order to facilitate their ascension or getting promoted. This has given rise to the orthodox theories of patrimonialism, neo-patrimonialism, prebendalism, and patro-clientelism.

### CAUSES OF CORRUPTION IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

It will be difficult to state all the causes of corruption in the school, however, an attempt would be made to highlight some indicators:

1. Excruciating Economic factor: t h i s has to do with inadequate, irregular and delayed salaries which often compel some teachers to seek supplementary income. So many teachers' today leave their position as teachers if they can lay their hands on any job with better pay-package, because their so-called take home pay cannot take them home. In towns and city centres, teachers resort to visiting their pupils' homes for extra-lesson while in rural areas, teachers accept foodstuff or labour on their farms. Teachers this days, are seen selling all manner of things to either their students colleagues in the name of business. This clearly indicates that, poverty is the main diver of corruption. In Universities, lecturers are not immune from corruption as well as the University authority, for admitting high number of students leading to overcrowded classrooms. Recently, the federal Government announced the cancellation of POSTUTME, which parents and stakeholders have been fingering Universities of students' and parents and alleged that it is also an act of corruption.
2. Social and Cultural Practices: some society's practices can aggravate corruption in the school. It is common thing where you see pupils' coming or sending to teachers' gift items.
3. Lack of School Infrastructure: the dilapidated nature of public schools infrastructure is a very strong indication and source of corruption amongst government officials and school administrators. The establishment of PTA was as a result of failure on the part of government in providing school amenities. Cumulatively, these have brought about teachers' misconduct and corrupt practices going unnoticed and unpunished in our schools.
4. Lack of Transparent Regulations: where regulations guiding standards are not clearly spelt, it breeds corruption. Teachers and students should be guided by principles of acceptable and unacceptable behavior so that no body is blurred as to what the expectations from him are. For instance, staff promotion guidelines are most often seen to be ambiguous with constant amendments sometimes targeted at stopping some individuals from progression. This has sometimes led to teachers get promoted without any merit other than mediocrity. School managements are often structured in such a way that it promotes discrepancies that entrench corrupt practices. Tertiary institutions are not insulated from this type of corruption.
5. Inadequate Organizational Structure and Control Mechanisms: this is a problem of over-centralization and so much bureaucratic structures in schools which affects the smooth running of schools which has hindered innovation and professional growth and generally breeds weak systems.
6. Inadequate Human Resources: schools are faced with the problem of

short supply of qualified professional teachers. The situation is especially alarming in rural schools that is not to say it is better in urban setting where majority are not trained teachers. We also have teachers who are 'untrainable' by virtue of lack of capacity and content knowledge of what they claim to teach.

7. Lack of community participation: this has prompted the government to partner with the community to established School Based Management Committee's (SBMC's). This has helped reduce corruption in execution of school projects and on effective running of school administration and monitoring of teachers performance in relation to content delivery thereby minimizing corruption tendencies.

8. Influence of International Donor Agencies such as UNESCO, USAID etc: The monies sent for training and purchase instructional materials are often not utilized appropriately by leaders of ministry of education. The funds are wasted by this so-called low level officials who cut-corners and submit inaccurate figures and vouchers to satisfy the expenditure that was never incurred. This is corruption perpetrated by government officials in conjunction with school heads.

9. Dearth of quality infrastructure dotted Schools: facilities in our schools are untidy and in a state of disrepair looking like war zone with broken glasses, chairs and desk, Public schools are like archeological buildings for lack of maintenance. These schools cannot not breed people of sound minds and that is why most parent would prefer to send the wards to private schools locally or abroad with seemingly clean and safe environment. (source: CMI:CHR Michelsen Institute, 2006)

### MANIFESTATIONS OF CORRUPTION IN SCHOOL SETTINGS

Corruption is generic which makes it difficult to be identify by those who initiate it and those in the receiving

end. This has therefore necessitated the contextualization of corruption in the school setting in order to clearly demarcate conducts that constitute corruption practices by practitioners of schools which includes; administrators, teachers and pupils/students.

1. School Administration: They include principals/Head Teacher and Proprietors of private schools. These are some of their conduct that constitute corruption:

i. Illegal charges/levies on parents such as admission fee, processing fee, acceptances fee and all sort of fees with intent of making more money for the school.

ii. Admitting students at any in time of school calendar without restriction which has seen students skip class levels in order to complete their education at early age or re-admitting students who have failed under another false for name.

iii. Embezzling funds meant for school books, furniture, instructional materials, session buildings, etc.

iv. Conniving with contractors to supply sub-standard educational materials by receiving bribes etc.

v. Schools monopolizing feeding and uniforms to provide low quality materials are exorbitant prices

vi. Teachers' recruitment and posting influenced by bribe, sexual gratification, religion, ethnicity and other sentiments etc.

vii. Ghost teachers' and even schools syndrome in order to draw more salaries on the part of ministry officials which prevent employment of teachers to occupy vacant positions

viii. Inflation of student figure to secure more funding

ix. Bribing of auditors to prevent disclosure of misused funds

x. Embezzlement of funds raised by PTA and NGO's

xi. Encourage examination malpractice by tasking students to pay for bribing supervisors in

NECO/WAEC/NABTEB examinations.

Teachers: corrupt practices perpetrated by teachers or their agents. Receiving payments up-front or gratification for good grades which is now known as 'sorting'. This is common in higher institutions which takes other forms at primary and secondary school levels of education.

Students result deliberately misplaced and released only upon payment.

Private tutoring either in the school or outside the school payment. This has taken an ugly dimension where

reserve important lesson for private detriment of students who do not pay.

iv. School properties stolen and used for commercial purpose. Teachers exploiting students for grades such as labour and sex.

v. Selling of examination questions in advance by teachers.

vi. Teachers hired to solve NECO, WAEC questions in miracle centres.

vii. Teachers absenteeism which affect subject or content coverage with severe consequence on students' performance.

viii. Pupils/Students: they are the recipient of havoc caused by corruptive tendencies of administrators and teachers.

They have their own share of the blame by aiding corruption in order to cut-corners.

- i. Pupils/students willingly carry-out unpaid labour and girls offer free-sex for grades.
- ii. Students offering money and gratification to teachers in return for grades.
- iii. Students offering teachers connections in government and political circle for a pay back in good grades.
- iv. Students attacking or even beating up teachers who insist on doing the right or refuse to accept bribe.
- v. Politicians allocating huge resources to students to gain their support during election.
- vi. Students with debased morals stealing their associations' money to satisfy personal greed has become a common phenomenon in campuses.
- vii. Students paying to write examination in miracle centres.
- viii. Giraffing or copying from another student
- ix. Writing assignment or examination for another student

#### CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION IN OUR SCHOOLS SYSTEM

It is obvious that corruption has degraded the core-values for establishing the school and ultimately that of the society. These are some of the attendant consequences of corruption to the society and lives of students:

- i. Students no longer show serious commitment to study because of: miracle centres, buying of NECO/WAEC papers, impersonation etc
- ii. It has deepened the level of inequality along the stratification ladder of the society, such that there is a wide gap between the rich and poor which is capable of

triggering social unrest (revolution) as Karl Marx postulated in his conflict theory.

The whole society becomes highly susceptible to political, religious and even ethnic influence. This is the major issues that have bred dangerous gangs in Nigeria like, Boko Haram, NDA, IPOB, MENDS, BAKASSI BOYS, YANKALARE, OPC, etc.

Mass failure of students at all levels of examinations in Nigeria which is the aftermath of poor teaching by teachers encouraged by corruption in government, amongst its officials, parents and students themselves.

High level of school drop-outs, in primary and secondary leading to street hawking and at tertiary level to armed gangs, thuggery, terrorism, prostitution, kidnapping, cultism, serial rapist, oil bunkering, hooligans etc.

#### HOW TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF CORRUPTION IN OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

It is a common saying among people that "the only thing that is constant is change" and therefore, whenever measure are instituted to help stop corruption in our schools, the perpetrators and beneficiaries of such continue to deploy and discover newer ways of beating it so that they can continue unnoticed. Nevertheless, the following measures can help reduce the cases of corruption identified in this paper:-

1. Teacher Quality:- the Ministry of Education at State and Federal must recognize that; NCE is minimum teaching qualification at primary school level and B.A, B.Sc. with postgraduate diploma in education for secondary practitioners are paid adequately. If strictly adhere to, Teachers would perform optimally it will help reduce the problem when they are afraid of losing their job
2. Regardless of Teachers' academic qualification, there is need for constant in-service training and continuous professional teacher development (CPTD) for content knowledge pedagogical skills, ICT, and to date effective management skills in the classroom. This will forestall corrupt tendencies.
3. Reward and Sanction: teacher upgrade should be based on teachers' abilities to earn professional development (PD) points which sees him move from one levels to another. This is anchored on his qualification, registration with TRCN, conferences or workshop attendances, evidence of community service acknowledgement, pupils/students approval rating etc. furthermore, teachers who have underperformed or is adjudged to be corrupt by committee investigation is sanctioned, either by outright dismissal, demotion in rank or steps, stoppage of certain privileges etc.
4. Quality Control:- Whatever quality assurance mechanism the government may have in place, schools must institute internal quality assurance measures. The best option is for an external quality control mechanism (EQCM) that would not be compromised and submits its report periodically to ministry or school board for consideration.
5. Improved Take Home Pay and Allowances:- Teaching will only attract the best hands when its

of quality which will reduce corruption and its attendant effects.

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on accounts of corruption. This will restore the lost glory of teaching as a profession because of poor salaries, societal rejection as a result of low recognition, poverty attributed to teaching, occupation of last-resort etc.

**COUNSEL TO STUDENT OF MODEL SCHOOL, FUTMINNA**

I sincerely want to salute you all for coming this far. I also congratulate you for being students of this prestigious school located within a great university. You have all heard all that was said about corruption in the school. Do not join in the conduct of corrupt practices and quickly alert the school principal or teacher when you notice it or see it. I advise you to be focus in your studies and do your family, school and nation proud by being God fearing and morally upright by eschewing corruption, for it is root of all evil in our society.

**CONCLUSION**

I wish to thank particularly the Chairman of FUTMINNA MODEL SCHOOL Management Board, Professor S. B. Oyeleke for availing me this opportunity to present a paper on this special occasion. As he would say "these are my boys" and I strongly belief it is a reference to the effect that, we have the capacity to deliver whenever we are called upon as academics. I would not forget my mentor, professor (Mrs.) V. I. Ezenwa who had given me so much in terms of

training, and also has mustered trust and confidence into me. The teachers and parents who have gathered here to listen to me, I am humbled by your patience and the 'chance' given to bear

my opinion on a topical issue of 'corruption' in the education system. Definition, Theories and Concepts. And finally, I appreciate the Arabian Journal of Business and management of this citadel of learning, Management Review (OMAN Chapter), led by Professor M.A. Akanji for 2(4),37-45 providing the enabling environment for this 'leaders of tomorrow' to have their tutelage in a University environment. I am sure, he has already prepared their placements in the University even long after he would have gone.

Thank you and God bless you all. Amen

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**STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING EFFECT OF DRUG ADDICTION**