Impact Of Corruption On Nigerian Educational Sector: Implications For Sustainable Socio-Economic Development

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Abstract

Education all over the world has been regarded as a bed rock for socio-economic development in any country especially the developing ones. However, the present level of deterioration of quality of education in Nigeria has continued to raise the fear of losing this position. The objective of this paper is find out if corruption has contributed to the falling quality of education in Nigeria; to determine if the quality of education in Nigeria is responsible for the teaming unemployable graduates, and to ascertain whether the falling quality of education in Nigeria is a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development. The study adopted social learning theory as its framework of data analysis while quantitative research design which made use of survey method was employed to accomplish the purpose of the study. The data for the study were collected through structured questionnaire items. With a population of four thousand, five hundred and fifteen, four hundred were selected as the sample size through the application of Taro Yamani mathematical formula. Data collected were analyzed using frequency and simple percentage. The three formulated hypotheses were tested using Chi-square. The findings show that corruption is responsible for the poor quality of education in Nigeria, it equally reveals that the poor quality of education in Nigeria is responsible for the high rate of unemployment in the country, and shows further that the poor quality of education in Nigeria is a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development in the country. The paper recommends among other things that government should intensify its fight against corruption in Nigeria and as well declare state of emergency in educational sector till the quality of education is improved.

Keywords: Corruption; Educational Sector; Sustainable; Socio-Economic Development; Nigeria.

Introduction

Every responsible society looks up to education for progressive directions and advancements in the lives of her individual citizens and the collective and general development of the state. Education offers or renders this responsibility in many ways. Education develops the creative potentials of citizens and this on its own engineers a general turn around in the economic, political, social, moral outlooks of citizens that targets placing citizens on lanes upon which they can positively explore situations to their advantage. States that are desirous of introducing state of the art innovations across all sectors of their lives have extensively made the right investments in education and provided incentives and opportunities that can attract their citizens to grab such opportunities with two hands, bearing in mind that investments in human beings are the genes that translate or metamorphose into development.

The truth about the powers of education in bringing about rapid changes for man and society and the curiosity for its pursuit has according to Transparency International (2013) singled out education as the largest element in the public sector of many countries in the world. Again the education sector of every society receives the type of attention it receives simply because the sector has always been a focal flash point through which politicians and the political regimes seek and establish legitimacy from the general public.

In recent times, this aura and vision of most responsible states about education faces terrible challenges and threats occasioned by corruption and corrupt practices in the sector. As a sector, education in Nigeria is disastrously and terribly prone to corruption and why this is so and may continue to be so is the realization that globally, members of the larger society generally know and recognize that education is one sector that the Nigerian society must rely on for continuity, change and self-appraisal or criticism in line with realities and subsequent upon this awareness, the sector normally attracts huge release of funds from international donor agencies, multinational corporations as part of their corporate social responsibility, federal, state, local governments, town unions, individuals etc. but regrettably such huge and massive flow of funds are not properly accounted for across all agencies and institutions that are involved in releasing funds to the education sector so much so that the seals and impressions of corruption and corrupt practices are noticed starting from the point of the release of such funds for education to the various ministries, parastatals and educational institutions where the funds are to be finally used.

Graphically, Okorosaye-Orubite (2008) captures, summarizes and confirms all that have been said when he writes that a particular State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) in Nigeria criminally and outrageously spent #800 million (Eight hundred million naira only) in executing a one day training workshop for teachers. This truly points in the direction that opportunities for brain-storming on issues or introducing radical and revolutionary innovations to improve productivity in education in Nigeria easily turn out to become opportunities for fraud and corrupt practices so terrible that strategies for achieving quality occupy no space or priority and welfare packages for teachers who drive the sector receive no attention but those who manage such programmes swim in affluence. It is on this background that this study sort to determine the impact of corruption on Nigeria's educational system.

Statement of the Problem

It is the belief of every society that education is a bed rock of the survival of any nation. This equally includes individuals as educated ones are believed to be easily employed or be able to have reasonable means of survival and contributing to the growth of the society. However, all these believes are no more the case today, as those who graduate from different levels of education, especially the university graduates are seen to be unemployable due to their inability to defend their assured certificates. This has called for series of debate, as some people are of the view that the turning out of half-baked graduates who are unemployable are as a result of the corruption that has taken over the educational sector, which has at the same time affected the socio-economic

development of the country, others are of the opinion that the situation lies on the inability of the government to reform the educational sector and make it entrepreneurship based.

As a result of the controversy, the researcher sought to assess the implication of corruption in Nigerian educational system. In view of the above, this study attempted to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. Has corruption contributed to the falling quality of education in Nigeria?
2. Is corruption in educational sector responsible for the high rate unemployment in Nigeria?
3. Is corruption in Nigerian educational system a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

1. Corruption in Nigerian educational system has not contributed to the low quality of education.
2. Corruption in Nigerian educational system is not responsible for the high rate of unemployment.
3. Corruption in Nigerian educational system is not a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development.

Review of Related Literature

Corruption

Corruption has been defined by various Scholars from different field of study. Bardhan, (2003) sees corruption as the use of public office for private gains. He held a strong view of corruption to involve diverting public fund and resources into private pocket of government officials. These diverted funds are supposedly appropriated to the provision of public goods and services. In a place where this becomes prevalent then the citizens suffers as they lack basic facilities that improve their socio- economic wellbeing.

Another Economist Ian Senior, (2006) sees corruption as an action that involves secretly providing a good or a service to a third party so that he or she can influence certain actions which benefit the corrupt, a third party, or both in which the corrupt agent has authority. This implies illegal and prohibitive efforts of certain individuals employed by the governments to effectively implement government policies and programmes but turned against their employers to advance their own decisive intentions hence subverting government intentions on sustainable development in the society.

Daniel Kaufmann as noted by (Pedro, 2006), extends the concept to include legal corruption in which power is abused within the confines of the law as those with power often have the ability to make laws for their protection .Morris (1991), a professor of politics, states that political corruption is the illegitimate use of public power to benefit a private interest (Morris, 1991). He equally toured the line of thought of Kaufman that access to political position in a country paves to corrupt practices by those who occupy the position.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that corruption refers to the abuse of public resources for private gain, through a hidden transaction that involves the violation of some standards of behavior. It also manifest in the form of favoritism, nepotism and clienteles. As observed by Clara (2017) acts that favor friends, family members or member of an association in job hiring or promoting a family member or staff member to a role they are not qualified for because they belongs to the same group also constitute corruption. Therefore corruption is a well-known phenomenon among scholars from different field.

Sustainable Development

The Diploma of sustainable development online (2012) refers to the term as the type of economic growth pattern where the use of resources meets the needs of the human population while conserving the environment at the same time. Sustainable development means resources are used in such a way that both current and future human needs can be met.

The sustainable development guide online (2012) also describes the term as the development that meet the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. According to Ukaga (2010) noted that a sample of people about the meaning of sustainability would likely give a variety of answers representing diverse perspectives, experiences and circumstances. Blewitt (2015) held that it has been suggested that "the term 'sustainability' should be viewed as humanity's target goal of human-ecosystem equilibrium (homeostasis), while 'sustainable development' refers to the holistic approach and temporal processes that lead us to the end point of sustainability. As noted by Blewitt, (2015) sustainable development entails the holistic approach and temporal processes that lead us to the end point of sustainability. The desirable end result is a state of society where living and conditions and resource use continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural systems. Lynn (2014) also states that sustainability is the practice of maintaining processes of productivity indefinitely natural or human made by replacing resources used with resources of equal or greater value without degrading or endangering natural biotic systems .Sustainable development ties together concern for the carrying capacity of natural systems with the social, political, and economic challenges faced by humanity. Finn (2009) held that there is an additional focus on the present generations' responsibility to regenerate, maintain and improve planetary resources for use by future generations.

Adebayo (2010) also maintains that the concept of sustainable development is the efforts at improving the environment or natural resources for the purpose of improving the quality of human life in such a way that the needs of the future generation are not jeopardized. To this end, sustainable development is the ability to preserve the existing resources of the state for the collective use of the citizens while conscious efforts are made to conserve the resources for the use of future generations.

Education

Education as a concept is seen as the totality of all the processes involved through which young and adults develop their skills which are of importance to both the society and to themselves. It is a design made to bring about learning which develops ones knowledge and competence to influence his way of life positively towards contributing to the national economic development.

Daluba (2015) explains that education generally is aimed at producing intelligent, responsible and well-informed citizens who are capable of making positive contributions to the development and well-being of themselves and their society, stressing that the quest for any development nationally cannot be realized without a solid educational base. This portrays education as the key upon which the developmental base of every nation hinges. It is the educational sector that produces the manpower that manages all aspects of the economy. It equally entails the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and other capabilities needed to contribute favorably to the political, cultural and economic environments.

Quality of Education

Ifedili and Ochuba (2009) describe quality of education as quality of education that is acceptable to her citizens. This shows that quality of education should be able to provide for purpose, direction and criteria for performance evaluation. It is the duty of the government to set up the policy while the masses implement the set policies. The levels to which these policies are implemented are judged by the quality of the graduates. When quality education is delivered high enough to meet set standards, the products of education should be able to perform well in the world of work in real life situation. When quality is low, performance cannot meet the set standards. Hence one can say that the quality of education has declined below set standard. This entails how school leavers contribute to the society in terms of cognitive, affective and psychomotor, shown in terms of skills, knowledge and right attitude acquired by graduates the country's educational sector produces. When the quality is low, half-baked graduates are produced. These graduates go into the market with less knowledge and less skills and often with dubious attitudes.

Quality education is that education that is relevant and adapted to the needs of the society and such needs must meet the standards in health, growth, and physical survival in a complex and globalized world. It implies education that is worthwhile and which empowers the recipients with relevant skills, knowledge, ideas, values and attitudes needed for him /her to informed decisions and live a self-sustaining life. It is value-loaded and should produce disciplined behavior, hard work, improved cultural heritage and mutual respect within and outside the school community. In his contribution, Majasan, (1998) maintained that quality education is expected to address critical issues like the dignity of labor, quality leadership and committed citizenship, industrial harmony, political stability, religious tolerance, self-reliance and security. This shows that quality education as the products of institutions of learning should be able to perform according to expected standard and compete favorably with their peers in other countries of the world. It is the education that produces a complete person. Complete in the sense that the person is intellectually, morally,

physically, emotionally and socially developed. Hence Akinpelu, (2000) argued that education without quality can even be more dangerous than no education, stressing that without quality, education has no value.

The public perception in the country is that the quality of education offered is low and that standards have dropped. These perceptions are based on lack of adherence to acceptable educational practices. Teacher qualifications are low, the learning environment does not promote effective learning, and basic facilities, teaching and learning resources are generally not available. Teacher-pupil ratios are high while general performance in examinations is poor and the graduates have low levels of competencies in the work environment.

When quality education measures up to the set standard, the end product should be able to perform well in the world of activities in real life situations, but if quality is denied, performance cannot meet the set standard. Quality determines how much and how well people learn and the extent to which education translates into a range of personal, social and developmental benefits.
One who has obtained quality education should be able to remain relevant and adapt to the needs of the society.
Quality education entails:
  (a) One that is meaningful by all standard
  (b) One that is capable of responding to individual and social needs
  (c) One that is worth all the resources, expanded to obtain it.
  Generally, when people talk about quality of education, they are comparing what the product of education could do in yesteryears to what it can do today. E.g. it is the belief of people that what a product of elementary school of yester years could do, cannot be effectively done by secondary school graduates of today. Product of primary school of yester years could easily write and read whereas secondary school of today cannot. Though the views of scholars on quality of education varies as a result of no well defined instrument to measure it with utmost reliability and validity, one thing that is crucial is that it is a relative term. The quality of education is measured by how school leavers contribute to the growth of the society in terms of cognitive, effective and psychomotor. This is measured in terms of skills, knowledge and right attitude acquired by products of these schools.

Theoretical Framework
The theory that anchored this study is the social learning theory. This is a theory by Albert Bandura (1977). The theory belongs to a tradition of studying problems in light of the social processes that bring them about. The theory is based on the assumption that behavior is influenced primarily by one's environment, and that corruption and other deviant and criminal behavior are a result of weakened mechanisms of social control (Steenbeek and Hipp, 2011). The theory has been applied to how antisocial attitudes develop in individuals, families, and communities, and how those attitudes conflict with larger social norms (Johnson, 2008). According to social disorganization theory, dysfunctional behavior has cultural, political, and economic causes (Akers

& Sellers, 2009). Established communities experience increases in deviance and crime when their way of life and the established order change. Disorganized communities experience crime because informal social controls break down, resulting in the emergence of deviance and criminal cultures. Such communities lack the collective efficacy to fight crime and disorder (Hochstetler & Copes, 2008; Vito, Maahs, & Homes, 2007). The theory predicts that more crime will occur in neighborhoods with fraying social structures, such as failing schools, vacant or vandalized buildings, changing ethnicity, and high unemployment (Steenbeek and Hipp, 2011).

The sociological perspective out of which social learning theory emerged does not consider specific behavior as a problem of an individual but instead considers individual behavior as reflecting the social order in which an individual lives. This assumption agrees with Durkheim's notion that all behaviour is socially generated. In this view, a particular social problem such as corruption must be addressed by focusing on a society, not a particular individual's behaviour (Steenbeek and Hipp, 2011). Johnson (2008) used social disorganization theory to argue that in many nations corruption is embedded in the overall society.

In these countries, economic and political processes perpetuate corruption rather than resist it. Consistent with the assumptions of social disorganization theory, corruption can be reduced by developing enhanced criminal justice, political, social, and economic institutions, which will bring about social empowerment (Colombatto, 2013; Johnson, 2008).

Methodology
This section adopted research design, the population of study, the sample size and method of data collection for the study The study adopted quantitative research method and applied cross sectional survey design. The study was carried out at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ebonyi State University Abakaliki with a population of 4, 515 for both staff and students with a sample size of 400. Purposive sampling technique was employed, where two departments were purposely selected for the study. These are the departments of Political Science and the department of Economics. This choice is informed by the courses taught in theses departments which have bearing to the study topic. In these two departments, 300 and 400 level students of the both department were used, in addition to the lecturers and non-academic staff in these two departments. The study used primary source of data collection with instrumentality of structured questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed and structured by the researcher in the format of Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Undecided = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree =1 in a closed ended form. The face-to-face method was used in administrating the questionnaire. A total of 400 questionnaires were dispersed to the respondents across the selected departments. A total of 380 copies were properly filled and returned. The questionnaire contained twelve Likert scale questions. The researcher made use of simple percentage with tables in analyzing the data while inferential statistics using Chi-Square and analytical technique were used for testing of hypotheses with the aid of SPSS software. Construct validity and Inter-rater reliability methods were respectively used to guarantee validity and reliability of measurement and findings.

Data Analysis
Hypothesis 1

Corruption in the educational sector in Nigeria is not responsible for the low quality of education in the country.

To test this hypothesis, relevant questionnaire items were used based on the Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD)

Decision: Reject the hypothesis if the chi calculated value is greater than chi tabulated otherwise accept it.

Table 1. Responses of item used in testing hypothesis one

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	170	45%
Agree	**160**	**42%**
Undecide	5	1%
Disagree	**20**	**5%**
Strongly Disagree	**25**	**6%**
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Expected Frequency (E)= 380 = 76   5

Table 2: Chi – Square test of hypothesis one in table 1

Oi	Ei	Oi-ei	$(Oi\text{-}ei)^2$	$\dfrac{(Oi\text{-}ei)^2}{Ei}$
170	76	94	8836	116.2
160	76	84	7056	92.8
5	76	-71	5051	66.3
20	76	-56	3136	41.26
25	76	-51	2601	34.22
Total				**350.78**

Source: SPSS 25.0

To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value (r-1) (c-1) Cell x row
= (C-1) (R-1)
Where R = 5 C = 2
Therefore df= (5-1) (2-1)
= 4 x 1   df = 4
Critical value at 4 df is 9.488

Therefore since the tabulated value of x (350.78) is greater than the critical value 9.488, the H_0 which states that corruption in the educational sector in Nigeria is not responsible for the low quality of education in the country is rejected while the alternative is accepted.

Hypothesis Two

Corruption in the educational sector in Nigeria is not responsible for the high rate of unemployment in the country.

Table 3: Responses of item used in testing hypothesis two

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	100	26%
Agree	220	58%
Undecided	20	6%
Disagree	30	30%
Strongly Disagree	10	10%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey 2019
Expected Frequency (E)= 380 = 765

Table 4: Chi- Square test of hypothesis two in table 3

Oi	Ei	Oi-ei	$(Oi-ei)^2$	$\dfrac{(Oi-ei)^2}{Ei}$
100	76	24	576	7.57
220	76	144	20736	272.8
20	76	-56	3136	41.26
30	76	-46	2116	27.8
10	76	-66	4356	57.31
Total				**406.74**

Source: SPSS 25.0
To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value (r-1) (c-1) Cell x row = (C-1) (R-1)
Where R = 5 C = 2

Therefore df= (5-1) (2-1)
= 4 x 1   df = 4
Critical value at 4 df is 9.488
        Therefore since the tabulated value of x (406.74) is greater than the critical value 9.488, the H_0 which states that corruption in the educational sector in Nigeria is not responsible for the high rate of unemployment is rejected while H_1 which states that corruption in the educational sector in Nigeria is responsible for the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria is accepted.

Hypothesis Three

Corruption in educational sector in Nigeria is not a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development.

Table 5: Responses of item used in testing hypothesis three

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	140	37%

Agree	190	50%
Undecided	5	1%
Disagree	35	9%
Strongly Disagree	10	3%
Total	**380**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey 2019

Expected Frequency (E)= 380 = 76

Table 6: Chi- Square test of hypothesis three in table 5.

Oi	Ei	Oi-ei	$(Oi\text{-}ei)^2$	$\dfrac{(Oi\text{-}ei)^2}{Ei}$
140	76	44	4096	53.8
190	76	114	12996	171
5	76	-71	5041	66.32
35	76	-41	1681	22.11
10	76	-66	4356	57.31
Total				**370.54**

Source: SPSS 25.0

To compute the degree of freedom (df) or critical value (r-1) (c-1) Cell x row = (C-1) (R-1)

Where R = 5 C = 2

Therefore df= (5-1) (2-1)

= 4 x 1   df = 4

Critical value at 4 df is 9.488

Therefore since the tabulated value of x (370.54) is greater than the critical value 9.488, the H_0 which states that corruption in the educational sector is not a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria is rejected while H_1 which states that corruption in educational system in Nigeria is a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development is accepted.

Findings

The researcher in course of this work, made the following findings:

1. Corruption in Nigerian educational sector is responsible for the low quality of education in the country
2. Corruption in Nigerian educational sector is responsible for the high rate of unemployment in the country.
3. Corruption in Nigerian educational sector is a challenge to sustainable socio-economic development in the country.

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Conclusion

This study has provided reliable platform to argue suitably that corruption in educational sector in Nigeria is responsible for the low standard of education in the country, high rate of unemployment and challenge to sustainable socio-economic development. The work took an in-depth look at the low quality of education in Nigeria and the quality of man power which our institutions turn out on yearly basis, and the high rate of unemployment in the country which has serious consequences for the sustainable socio-economic development of the country. The hypotheses tested justified significant relationships with the variables tested as it was discovered that as a result of the half-baked graduates that Nigerian institutions turn out every years, the rate of unemployment has continued to rise. It is a well-known issue that no economy in the world no matter how viable, will be able to completely grow and be sustained without well trained and educated ones, hence the need to adequately take care of our educational sector.

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Recommendations

In view of the the finding of this study, the following recommendations were made for Nigerian government to brace up to its responsibility of improving the quality of education in the country.

1. Nigerian government must display transparency, honesty, probity, accountability, purposefulness and commitment to good ideals of the society.
2. The fight against corruption should not be politicized, where those in the ruling party of the government are exonerated from prosecution even when there are clear evidence of corrupt practices.
3. Ministries of education should judiciously utilize its allocated fund for actualization of the stated objectives and sit up with the responsibilities of monitoring all activities in our educational institutions
4. The moral fabrics of the Nigeria society should be strengthened through explicit examples of commitment, pragmatism, honesty, justice and fairness.
5. Reward system should be equitable enough where hard work should be adequately compensated and recognized in all facets of our national life.
6. A credible and effective system vigilance mechanism should be put in place to monitor the activities of Nigerian educational sectors

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