



RESEARCH ARTICLE

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE INFLUENCE OF CORRUPTION ON PUBLIC SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the teacher's perception on the influence of corruption on public secondary educational system in Osun State. The study used descriptive survey type. The study was carried out in 9 Local Governments; a sample of 270 teachers in all the 9 local governments was used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 27 public secondary schools in the selected local governments. Questionnaire was designed to collect data from the respondents and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count, mean, standard deviation and simple percentage. The result was tested for significance at 0.05 levels. The study revealed that eradication of corrupt practice in Nigeria Educational System will enhance effective training of students that can contribute to the nation building. It was recommended among others that Parent-Teacher-Association should be revived in secondary schools; functional training for good character formation in adolescents should be a joint responsibility of parents and teachers. Bad behaviour is infectious on their students; teachers proven to be engaged in corrupt practices should be sanctioned appropriately, amongst others

Keywords: Corruption, teachers' perceptions, public school, influence

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Corruption should be severely reduced since it significantly reduces the secondary educational system's ability to use resources effectively. Because it jeopardizes Nigeria's social, economic, and political prospects, corruption in public secondary schools is harming the nation's future. In Nigeria, and Osun State specifically, corruption jeopardizes equal access to both the quantity and quality of education. Since education is crucial to the development of the next generation, especially the impoverished, all parents want the best for their children. It gives young people the information and abilities they need to contribute to society and prosper in their nation's economy. A strong foundation for social and economic advancement, quality education is guaranteed by most nations' constitutions and is a human right under international law.

Over time, corruption has developed into a multifaceted plague that has proliferated globally, becoming an epidemic issue that impacts individuals from all socioeconomic statuses, irrespective of their education, technical skills, or religious beliefs (Ola *et al.*, 2014). A key feature of corruption is its ability to influence, penetrate, and alter the views of the population, particularly those in leadership roles responsible for overseeing the nation's daily social, administrative, and financial matters. It obstructs and hampers the residents' aspirations for integrity, quality, and hard work (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017). This disadvantages foreign direct investments and inhibits sustainable development within the nation.

Scholars investigating the prevalence of corrupt practices in Nigeria assert that "corruption is widespread in Nigeria" (Odo, 2015). Nigeria serves as a notable example of a nation in Africa whose advancement has been hindered and delayed by corruption. The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index from 1997 identified Nigeria as "one of the most corrupt nations in the world," illustrating the extensive acknowledgment of corruption in the country (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017).

Corruption remains endemic in Nigeria's public sector, notably within the education sector, where it affects resource utilization, policy implementation, and overall academic performance. In the Osun State public secondary schools, systemic issues traceable to corruption, including misappropriation of funds, weak infrastructure, and compromised



teacher recruitment processes, are the norm. Such issues have direct effects on the quality of education, precipitating worsening performance by students and reduced motivation from teachers.

Teachers, as key stakeholders in the education sector, are directly affected by corruption. Their own views are good reflections of how unethical conduct impacts school management, curriculum-delivery by teachers, and student performance. Analysis shows that corruption in education takes various forms, such as bribery when employing teachers, embezzlement of school funds, and discrimination when admitting students (Asiyai, 2020). Such acts erode the system, discourage professional loyalty, and create a culture where competency is generally overlooked. Furthermore, corruption erodes teachers' job satisfaction and morale.

When money meant for professional training and school improvement is diverted, teachers struggle with inadequate teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, and delayed remuneration (Kanibin, 2019). This frustrates and demotivates, ultimately affecting teaching quality. The broader consequences of corruption in Osun State's public secondary education cascade out from the classroom. Students in troubled schools frequently lack adequate access to quality learning resources, resulting in poor academic results and lower possibilities for tertiary education.

In another dimension, corruption undercuts the implementation of educational reforms, as policies aimed at improving learning environments are repeatedly undermined by vested interests (Ogunode & Stephen, 2021). This study investigated teacher's perception on the influence of corruption on public secondary educational system in Osun State, as well as proposed the possible measures towards reducing its influence. The knowledge of these perceptions is vital in policy-making that demands transparency, accountability, as well as improved education.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

It was revealed that corruption is the major problem affecting public secondary schools in Nigeria and Osun State particularly. Inadequacy of funding, mismanagement of fund, lack of teaching tools and modern classrooms, non-payment of salary, diverting of fund, poor numerations and acute shortage of qualified teachers, have all contributed to the fall in the



standard of public secondary schools in Osun State. Therefore it is disheartening to note the many funds which were budgeted and allocated for the development of the secondary educational sector have been diverted for selfish personal gains. The problem confronting this research work therefore was to appraise teacher's perception on how corruption has contributed to the fall of the standard of public secondary educational system in Nigeria with the use of Osun State as a case study and to recommend suitable solutions on how it can be eradicated for the better future of our nation.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine teacher's perception on the influence of corruption on public secondary educational system in Osun State. The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To determine teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary educational system in Osun State.
2. To determine the effects of corruption on the falling standard of public secondary schools education in Osun State.
3. To adduce recommendation on strategies to improve public secondary schools education in Osun State.

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

Given that various cultural backgrounds influence people's understanding of corruption, the term itself can be interpreted in multiple ways (Ganahl, 2013). Nonetheless, the impact of corruption on individuals, organizations, and the economy remains consistent across these different perspectives. The takeaway from the diverse interpretations of corruption is that it can be classified from governmental, financial, cultural, and ethical angles, with any definition being valid depending on the viewpoint presented (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017). Scholars trace the origins of corruption to the Latin term "Corruptus," which translates to "to break" (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017). It includes actions that deviate from the standards governing individual behavior, particularly among those in positions of power (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017).



Nwankwo and Nweke (2016) characterize corruption as any purposeful act aimed at misappropriating public resources for personal gain. To provide a broader perspective on corruption, it is important to recognize it as any intentional misconduct pursued by individuals or organizations that can weaken fairness and social harmony, including abuses of authority, wealth concentration, ethnicity, sectionalism, and nepotism (Arop *et al.*, 2018). Furthermore, researchers highlight that the "Economic and Financial Crimes Commission" (EFCC) defines corruption from an economic standpoint as any aggressive, unlawful, and illegitimate actions taken by individuals or entities that facilitate the generation of ill-gotten wealth (Oladele, 2019).

In its most comprehensive form, education is a process that aids individuals in their journey toward human development. It is a systematic procedure that assists a person in acquiring skills and experiences, as stated by Parankimalil (2012). As a result, the main objective of education is to cultivate individuals who are rational, helpful, informed, and aligned with the values of their society (Osunyikanmi, 2018). Thus, it can be inferred that individuals possess varying interpretations of education. Regardless, education encompasses the entire spectrum of training, acquiring specific skills, knowledge, behaviors, and ethics necessary for responsible citizenship while also promoting societal progress.

Throughout history, societies have consistently turned to education for guidance. As noted by Nwafor *et al.* (2015), education has been utilized to enhance individuals' innovative capacities, leading to advancements in moral, social, political, and economic aspects among a nation's populace. Nations have invested in education to stimulate national development. However, unethical conduct has recently posed significant challenges to education within Nigeria. This situation is exacerbated by the embezzlement of foreign funds from multinational corporations by those in authority, which adversely affects the development of the nation's educational system (Ololube, 2016). Research indicates that between 2005 and 2006, approximately 21 billion US dollars were lost due to both illegal and legal financial transactions (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017).

Vouchers are exaggerated in value, exchanges of sex for grades occur, fictitious employees are employed, educational resources are falsified, appointments and promotions are made based on ethnic backgrounds, and the withholding of salary and retirement benefits is



prevalent in Nigeria's education system. To sway decisions regarding their children and dependents, researchers indicate that parents and students frequently and openly manipulate the education sector through financial contributions to schools, unwarranted gifts, and favors (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017). When their objectives are not met, they attempt to create a hostile environment for the person involved.

Furthermore, workshops and seminars aimed at refreshing educators and practitioners within the education sector and proposing innovative methods for effective educational program delivery are exploited as a means for embezzlement. In one instance, the Universal Basic Education Board conducted a workshop where Okorosaye-Orubite (2008) reported that an astonishing 800 million naira was spent on just one training session. This highlights the extent of the corruption problem. Consequently, it can be inferred that the purpose of the workshop was to financially benefit those responsible for organizing it rather than to foster improvement in the education sector through innovative discussions.

One of education's primary roles is to categorize individuals based on their abilities. Due to corruption, unsuitable individuals are often placed into traditional educational roles, which negatively impacts society as a whole. Corruption within the education system leads to limitations for those who can pay for education, undermining social equality, merit, and competence, as noted by Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu (2017). Some experts suggest that the country's increase in militancy, kidnapping, and insurgency is linked to frustration over inadequate funding, job shortages, and lack of educational opportunities. According to Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu (2017), corruption in the educational system diminishes the quality of education, obstructs nation's sustainable progress, and moral development of the society.

Corruption is an on-going issue in Nigeria's public school system, impacting the quality of teaching, utilization of resources, and general school management. In Osun State, teachers in secondary schools see the effects of corruption directly, which take the forms of diversion of funds, nepotism in the recruitment of teachers, and poor infrastructure. These problems lead to deteriorating levels of education, decreased teacher morale, and poor performance by students. It has been established in research that education corruption undermines institution trust and a culture where merit is often ignored for political or monetary motivations (Asiyai, 2020).



Osun State educators gripe that school development funds are usually misappropriated, thereby leading to overcrowding in classrooms, teaching materials unavailability, and delayed salaries (Ogunode et al., 2023). This fiscal mismanagement affects their ability to offer quality education, encouraging frustration and disillusionment among teachers. Corruption also guides recruitment and promotion of teachers with appointments made due to networking rather than merit (Ogunode et al., 2023).

The practice results in a disproportionate allocation of trained teachers, which has an impact on learning outcomes among students. The instructors also gripe against examination malpractice whose character is bribery and favoritism that undermines academic integrity, allowing for the advancement of students without learning important skills. The overall impact of corruption extends beyond the classroom to shape policy fulfilment and education reforms. Enhancing school governance and accountability is often hindered by institutional corruption, and it is difficult to enforce policies guaranteeing transparency and efficiency. Such obstacles should be addressed with more effective regulatory systems, increased involvement of teachers in decision-making, and improved oversight mechanisms to ensure that educational resources are utilized well.

3.0. METHODOLOGY

The researcher used descriptive design of the survey type. The population for this study comprised all public secondary schools in Osun State. The study covered nine (9) local governments in Osun State, three (3) local governments from each senatorial district, Osogbo, Olorunda and Ifelodun in Osun Central, Iwo, Ayedire and Olaoluwa in Osun West, Oriade, Obokun and Ilesha East in Osun East. The simple random sampling technique was used to select teachers in selected public secondary schools in Osun State. A total of twenty seven (27) public Secondary Schools were randomly selected. 5 males and 5 females were selected from each school giving a number of 270 teachers. Data was collected with the use of structured questionnaire. The data collected were statistically analyzed using descriptive tools such as frequency count, tables, mean score, and simple ranking.



4.0. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results obtained in the course of this study are chronologically presented in Tables for easy perusal and comparative evaluations in the subsections that follow.

4.1. Presentation of Results

What is the teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary educational system in Osun State?

Table 1: Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions on the Nature of Corruption in Osun State.

S/N	Nature of Corruption in Secondary Educational System	Mean
1	There is mismanagement of fund in public secondary schools.	2.74
2	There is embezzlement of money in public secondary schools.	2.95
3	Diversion of fund aids falling standard of education.	3.58
4	Government is responsible for the falling of educational standard.	3.58
5	Political instability contributed to educational deficiency of public secondary schools.	2.91
6	Irregular payment of salary contributed to falling of the educational standard.	3.51
7	Economic deficiency of a state affect academic standard of public secondary schools.	3.17
Average Mean Score		3.20

Source: Field Survey (2025).

Table 1 indicates that 270 teachers participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information on teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary educational system in Osun State revealed the teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary educational system in Osun State was negative because the benchmark mean score stood at 2.5 and their average mean score is 3.20 which is above the benchmark mean score.

What is the effect of corruption on the falling standard of public secondary schools education in Osun State?

Table 2: Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions on the Effect of Corruption in Osun State.

S/N	Teachers' Perceptions	Mean
1	There is lack of teaching tools and modern classrooms in my school.	2.93
2	Relevant textbooks are not provided for us in my school.	2.40
3	There is examination malpractice in my school	2.20
4	Persistence failure of student was due to the corrupt practice in educational system.	3.51
Average Mean Score		2.76

Source: Field Survey (2025).



Table 2 indicates that 270 teachers participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information teacher's perception on the effect of corruption on the falling standard of public secondary schools education in Osun State revealed the teacher's perception on the effect of corruption on the falling standard of public secondary schools education in Osun State was negative because the benchmark mean score stood at 2.5 and their average mean score is 2.76 which is above the benchmark mean scores

What are the strategies to improve public secondary schools education in Osun State?

Table 3: Ranking of Strategies to Improve Public Secondary Schools Education.

S/N	Strategies to Improve Public Secondary Schools Education	Mean	Ranking
1	Modern instructional technologies can improve academic performance of students in public secondary school.	3.81	1 st
2	Provision of adequate fund can improve academic performance of students	3.57	2 nd
3	Dedicated teachers are frequently recognize in form of awards in public secondary school	2.83	3 rd
4	Adequate salary of teachers can improve public secondary school performance	2.80	4 th
5	Modern classroom can improve academic performance of students in public secondary school	2.69	5 th

Source: Field Survey (2025).

Table 3 indicates that 270 teachers participated in this study. The main strategies to improve public secondary schools education in Osun State was that modern instructional technologies can improve academic which has a mean score of 3.81 (1st), while Provision of adequate fund can improve academic performance of students with a mean score of 3.57 comes 2nd, Dedicated teachers are frequently recognize in form of awards in public secondary school which has a mean score of 2.83 was (3rd), Adequate salary of teachers can improve public secondary school performance which has a mean score of 2.80 was (4th), while Modern classroom can improve academic performance of students in public secondary school which has a mean score of 2.69 was (5th).

4.2. Discussions of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that the teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary educational system in Osun State was negative. The outcome of this study might



be as a result of change in attitude of people corruption and zero tolerance of government towards corruption in the nation. This finding is congruent with that of Daniel (2015) reported that perception on the nature of corruption among staff and students of secondary schools in Delta State of Nigeria was negative. Also, Nwankwo and Nweke (2016) found that teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary Schools in Nsukka Zone was negative.

The findings further revealed that teacher's perception on the effect of corruption on the falling standard of public secondary schools education in Osun State was negative. This finding is in line with that of Arong and Ogbadu (2010) who reported that teacher's perception on the effect of corruption on the falling standard of public secondary schools education in Dekina Local Government Area was negative.

In addition, the main strategy to improve public secondary schools education in Osun State was that modern instructional technologies can improve academic. This finding is in consonance with that of Balogun (2015) who reported that frequently recognize in form of awards in public secondary school and provision of modern technologies in the public schools would reduce corruption in the education sector in Nigeria.

5.0. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the findings of this study revealed that the teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary educational system in Osun State was negative. Findings further revealed that teacher's perception on the effect of corruption on the falling standard of public secondary schools education in Osun State was negative. In addition, the main strategy to improve public secondary schools education in Osun State was that modern instructional technologies can improve academic. In conclusion, in other completely curb corruption in education section, adequate salary of teachers can improve public secondary school performance, modern instructional technologies can improve academic performance of students in public secondary school and frequently recognize in form of awards in public secondary school.



5.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1. Since teacher's perception on the nature of corruption in secondary educational system in Osun State was negative, the pattern of behaviour should be sustain and should be encourage among teachers, parents and students in Osun State.
2. Corruption in the secondary school system has certainly been introduced by staff, parents and students of the schools. The staff, parents and students must be given a new orientation through training; seminars and workshops to enable them imbibe the philosophy of the transformation agenda of the Federal Government of Nigeria is crucial.
3. Parent-Teacher-Association should be revived in secondary schools and made functional. Training for good character formation in adolescents should be a joint responsibility of parents and teachers.

Competing Interest

The author declares that no conflicting interest exist in this paper.

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