

## Analysis of Corruption Practices in Teacher Education in Universities in South-South, Nigeria

Osaretin Osadolor

Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma,  
Edo State, NIGERIA.

[Osadolorosaretin@yahoo.com](mailto:Osadolorosaretin@yahoo.com)

### ABSTRACT

*Corruption has been identified as one of the barriers against Nigeria quest for development. Whereas, the universities were created to source solutions to societal problems, it is obvious that; as things are now, they cannot fulfill such role. This is because they are said to have been infested with corruption. Specifically, the essence of this study was to find out which of the corruption practices if any, are the lecturers in teacher Education in the universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria involved. To give focus to the study, six research questions were raised and answered, while a hypothesis was formulated and tested. The 408 lecturers in the faculties of Education in 10 out of the 12 government owned universities constituted the population of the study. A sample of 204 lecturers (50%) was chosen with stratified random sampling technique. Questionnaire which was made in two parts was used to collect the data, while weighted mean, and t-test statistics were used to analyze the data and test the hypothesis respectively. Arising from the findings of the study, the lecturers were said to be involved in three out of the four areas of corruption practices covered in the study. In conclusion, four strategies were suggested for the elimination of corruption practices among lecturers in the universities.*

**Keywords:** Phrase: corruption practices, South-South

### INTRODUCTION

One of the common features of the Nigerian society in the last few decades is corruption. As a practice, it has become the people's desire and way of life. It is a practice of circumventing the approved due processes of doing things. Corruption is self evident in virtually all the facets of Nigeria National life; public service, private sector, religious and traditional institutions.

In 1966, which was six years into Nigeria nationhood, the military forcefully took over governance from the democratically chosen government. The reason for the action as it were, was to halt corruption and re-direct Nigeria's course towards development. Since that time, there have been five incursions by the military into governance for the same reasons.

It is over twelve year now when the military voluntarily relinquished governance to a democratically elected government. Since then, Nigeria has also witness transition of a civil government to another twice. Yet the story about Nigeria cannot be said without corruption taking the centre stage.

In this connection, the Independence Corruption Practice and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) averred that; that, corruption has done in calculable damage to the Nigeria nation is stating the obvious. It added that; morally, it has debased the time honored

ethical values to uprightness, selflessness, contentment, and industry; and enthroned duplicity, crass selfishness, avarice and indolence. In summary, the commission stated that everyone appears to have become seized by a frenzy to take short cut to achievement; from students to teachers, laborers to employers and congregation to clergy.

It is to be noted that, the reasons for the practice have always been to “cut short” the established norms for accomplishing set goals. Although its original cause has been found to be greed, the other major reason for the practice as it has turned to be especially since the late nineteen seventies, is for financial benefits and gratifications. Corruption in Nigeria has been identified as the main obstacle to national development. It has become a cankerworm, and its effects are obvious everywhere.

All over the world, the universities are regarded as ivory towers; from which solutions to societal problems flow. Essentially, the universities were established and commissioned to teach, undertake researches and community services.

FRN (2004) asserts in its section 64 that; universities in Nigeria shall make optimum contribution to national development by: intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high level man-power within the context of the needs of the nation. In order to ensure that the universities in Nigeria deliver on their mandates, they were expected to engage and keep high quality academic staff personnel.

Similarly, in keeping faith with their goal, the universities have strived to provide for the academics relatively encouraging conditions of services. They are also making efforts in the improvement of facilities provision; financing and supply of material for enhanced academic exercise. In spite of the foregoing, it is being alleged that the universities cannot be separated from corruption practice in Nigeria. In the last few decades, the central and unresolved issue which can be anchored on corruption is that; the observed behavioural outcome on the part of the holders of higher education certificates including degrees are not in tune with the expressed goal of the higher education sub sector. (Osadolor, 2009)

As things are now, it appears that corruption has come to stay with Nigerians, the universities and their academics. This is because the allegations of corruption practices being leveled against the universities are numerous and disturbing. Indeed, it is highly contended that corruption practices in Nigeria universities is largely responsible for the very poor quality products of the system.

## **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Experts, development agencies, government and even the ordinary Nigerians have identified corruption practices as the principal obstacle on Nigerian path to development. As a result, the government has put in place several legal instruments, measures and policies aimed at curbing and eliminating corruption practices in Nigeria.

Since the inception of the civil rule in 1999, two agencies have been set up to combat corruption in the country. They are the independent Corruption Practice and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Many other agencies such as; the Code of Conduct Bureau, Public Complaint Commission, the Police Force, Standing and Adhoc committees of the State and National Assemblies had been set up and put in the field against corruption practices in Nigeria.

Regrettably, rather than curbing corruption, the operations of all the anti-corruption agencies and their measure seems to have generated a new culture of impunity on the part of the offenders; a situation which has made the malaise much more chronic. Even more worrisome is that the universities which ought to be turned to for solutions, are being indicted for being

neck deep in corruption practices. The main question which arose is; what can be done to weaken, curb and eliminate the identified corruption practices in the universities, so that they can rise up to provide solution to the contentious issue of corruption in other sectors of the Nigeria national life?

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

To resolve the problem stated above, the following research questions were raised:

1. What are the identified corruption practices in the supply of spaces for student applicants into academic programmes in the universities?
2. What are the identified corruption practices in the processing of students into finished products of universities?
3. What are the identified corruption practices in the Appointment and Promotion (A&P) of lecturers in the universities?
4. Which categories of the academic staff are involved in corruption practices in the universities?
5. Is there any difference in the rating of corruption practices in the Federal and State universities?
6. How can the identified corruption practices in the universities be eliminated?

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

A number of corruption practices have been identified as characterizing the Nigerian universities life style. Okoro (2004) posited that corruption in the universities is endemic and visible amongst students and lecturers. He added that the practices are largely associated with young lecturers who award frivolous grades to students after examinations.

In the same vein, Umon (2009) stated that examination used to be the means for assessing students competences. He opined that; rather than using examinations to fulfill its basic aims, it has become an exercise for money making by the lecturers, especially in postgraduate programmes.

Also commenting on the corruption practices in the Nigerian universities, Ugwu (2011) noted that; many people who teach in tertiary institutions in Nigeria have no business being there; obviously, they lacked the intellect and integrity required by their positions. He added that many of them earned additional qualifications and promotions in the system through questionable means.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Population and Sample:**

The population of this study is comprised of the 408 academic staff in the faculties of education in ten out of the twelve public universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. They include; the 230 academic staff in the six States government owned universities and 178 academic staff in the four federal government owned universities in Edo, Rivers, AkwaIbom, and Cross River States The federal government owned universities in Bayelsa and Delta States were excluded because they are new and do not offer teacher education. Also, the academic staff in the privately owned universities were excluded from the study because their conditions of services and work environment differ remarkably from those of the public universities.

The sample used for the study was 204 lecturers (50% of the population). It was selected by using the stratified random sampling method. Thus, in the federal government owned universities (stratum) 89 (50%) was chosen while in the states government owned universities, 115 representing 50% was also chosen

### Instrumentation

A self developed questionnaire entitled; Analysis of Corruption Practice in Teacher Education Programme in the Universities (ACPTEPU) was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was developed on four likert scale of strongly Agreed (5A) with 4 points, Agreed (A) 3 points, Disagreed (DA) 2 points and Strongly Disagreed (5D) one point. The instrument was divided into parts. Part one was designed to obtain demographic data about the respondents. In part two, eighteen item statements which sought information on corruption practices in teacher education programme were raised.

The instrument was validated by two lecturers in education management in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. Trial testing method for test reliability was used. In that regard, two universities (federal and the state government owned) in the South East Geopolitical zone were used. Out of the 204 questionnaires sent out, 201 of them were completed and returned

The Cronbach Alpha method was used to compute the reliability co-efficient of the instrument. This gave 0.71 co-efficient of internal consistency which was considered high enough for the study. The instrument was administered by research assistants in each of the ten universities covered by the study.

Weighted mean which indicate the level of agreement of the respondents with the statements were used to answer the research questions, while the t-test statistics was used to test the only hypothesis. Accordingly the weighted mean were rated as follows:

Below	2.0	=	Very low
Between	2.0 – 2.4	=	Low
Between	2.5 – 3.0	=	High
Above	3.0	=	Very high

## PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

### Research question 1

What are the identified corruption practices in the supply of spaces for student applicants into teacher education programmes in the universities?

**Table 1: Mean rating of identified corruption practices in the supply of spaces for student applicants in teacher education in the universities**

S/N	Statement	Responses				
		SA	A	D	SD	x
1.	Post university matriculation examinations administered by faculty academic staff are associated with malpractices.	24	40	62	75	2.1
2.	Direct entry student-applicants placement by the faculty are mainly influenced by applicants relationship with those in charge (Head of Department, Dean, University Admission Board chairman and members	62	71	58	10	2.9
3.	Pre-degree mode of entry into teacher education programme is always influenced by spurious factors	27	60	61	53	2.3
	Grand mean					2.4

Data in table one above indicate that the respondents had low agreement (2.1) with the statement that, post university matriculation examinations (PUME) usually conducted by faculty academic staff are associated with malpractices. Contrarily, the data (2.9) in the table shows that recommendations of direct entry student applicants for placement done by the faculty are mainly influenced by applicants relationship with those in charge. In the same table, the data (2.3) revealed that pre-degree mode of entry into teacher education programme is not influenced by spurious factors. With a weighted grand mean of 2.4, it is clear from the table that the respondents level of agreement with the three statement is low.

## Research Question 2

What are the identified corruption practices in the processing of students into finished products of universities?

**Table 2: Weighted mean rating of identified corruption practices in the processing of students into finished products of universities**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	x
1.	Grading/scoring of students in examination taken in education courses are usually influenced by student's relationship with the lecturers.	38	69	74	20	2.6
2.	Lecturers obtain money and other inducements to boost student's performances in assessment of students; a practice commonly referred to as "Blocking".	64	58	49	30	2.6
3.	Course advisers receive money/other inducements to upgrade scores in courses not taught by them.	41	52	57	51	2.4
4.	Examination officers and even Heads of Departments upgrade scores secretly for students upon monetary benefits or other inducements	59	63	45	34	2.7
5.	Lecturers influence their colleagues on behalf of their favourite students during marking of examination scrips and computation of results.	76	53	32	40	2.8
6.	At the post graduate level, award of unmerited grades to students in course work and thesis defense is high, particularly when spouses, colleagues, money, ethnic and religious relationship are involved	68	65	28	30	2.8
Grand Mean		2.7				

Data in table 2 above shows that; five out of all the identified corruption practices in the processing of students into finished products were agreed to by the respondents. However, their agreement with term 3 with mean of 2.4 was low. On the whole, the statements in the table were agreed to with a grand mean of 2.7

### Research Question 3

What are the identified corruption practices in the appointment and promotion of lecturers in the universities?

**Table 3: Mean Rating of identified corruption practices in the appointment and promotion of lecturers in the universities.**

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>x</i>
1.	Senior or more intelligent colleagues write research papers required for promotion for lecturers who are weak or not hard working	68	59	44	30	2.32
2.	Publication of research work of lecturers are done in substandard journals which are usually over looked by the appointment and promotion committee	38	45	57	61	2.30
3.	Identity of external assessors are sometimes disclosed to the assesses (lecturers) for possible influence by the later during promotion exercise,	43	49	50	59	2.4
4.	Published work of lecturers who have sour relationship with their Bosses could have their work sent to non-existing or “very remote” assessors.	58	53	49	41	2.6
5.	Appointment of lecturers in most cases in not based on merit, rather, it is on the basis of applicant relationship with those incharge of the exercise; H.O.D Dean, VC etc..	32	41	73	55	1.0
Grand mean.						2.1

The data in table 3 above revealed that the respondents disagreed with all the statements listed in the table except item N0. 4 which had a weighted mean of 2.6.

### Research Question 4

Which categories of the academic staff are involved in corruption practices in the universities?

**Table 4: Mean Rating of categories of lecturers involved in corruption practices in the universities.**

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>x</i>
1.	Lecturers who are below the rank of senior lecturers are more involved in the various forms of corruption practices stated earlier.	66	58	47	30	2.8
2.	Male lecturers are more involved in the various forms of corruption practices earlier stated	42	57	55	47	2.5
3.	Corruption practices among lecturers is not gender bound.	59	63	46	33	2.7
4.	Corruption practices among lecturers is more in department/faculties where the Head is lousy or and often time soliciting for unmerited grades from colleagues for their favourites students.	66	71	43	21	2.9
Grand mean						2.7

In table 4 above, the weighted means there-in showed that the respondents agreed with each of the items of statements in the table. It has a grand means of 2.7

### Research Question 5.

Is there any differences between the federal and states owned Universities in the four main areas (1-4) of corruption practices.

**Table 5: Difference between federal and state Government owned Universities in the four Main Areas of corruption practices.**

S/N	Main Areas of corruption practices	Universities Type/ownership	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	Sd.
1.	Corruption practices in supply of spaces for students Applicants	Federal	10	16	30	33	2.0	9.6
		State	41	33	30	11	2.9	18.5
2.	Identified corruption practices in the processing of students into finished products.	Federal	15	26	28	20	2.4	11.9
		State	30	41	23	21	2.7	16.5
3.	Identified corruption practices in the appointment and promotion of lecturers	Federal	14	33	25	17	2.5	13
		State	28	43	29	15	2.7	16.7
4.	Categories of Academic Staff involved in corruption practices in the universities	Federal	39	14	26	10	2.9	17.8
		State	36	47	23	9	3.8	12.9
	Grand $\bar{x}$ (Federal)	2.5						
	Grand $\bar{x}$ (State)	3.0						
	Sd (Federal)	13.1						
	SD (Federal)	15.0						

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers in the federal and State Government Owned Universities on the four main Areas of corruption practices.

**Table 5b: Independent t-test of difference between lecturers perception in Federal and State Government Owned Universities on the four main Areas of corruption practices in the Universities**

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	df	t-cal	t-crit	P	Remark
State Universities	115	3.0	15	202	0.78	1.96	-	Retained
Federal Universities	89	2.5	13.1				.05	

From table 5 above it is revealed that the calculated t – value (0.78) is less than the critical or table value (1.96) at point. 05, hence the hypothesis is retained. That is, there is no significant differences in the perceptions of lecturers in both the federal and State government owned Universities.



**Research Question 6**

How can the identified corruption practices in the universities be eliminated?

**Table 6: Suggested strategies for elimination of corruption practices in the universities.**

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	<i>x</i>
1.	Compulsory involvement of External Examiners in all masters of Education (M.E.d) programmes both in course work and thesis defense	75	61	41	24	2.91
2.	Appointment of External Examiners should be done by the National Universities. Commission (NUC)	68	55	48	30	2.80
3.	Graduate at first Degree level of the faculties of Education should be subjected to external professional programmes involving examinations before certification or licensing as teacher	60	53	46	42	2.75
4.	Prohibition of faculty staff and spouses of very senior faculty Academic staff from undergoing postgraduate programmes in their own universities or those of their spouses	71	66	41	23	2.92
Grand mean						2.87

The weighted means for each of the statements and the grand mean of 2.8 on table 6 above indicate that the respondents are in agreement with all the suggested strategies for elimination of corruption practices in the universities.

**DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS.**

The findings of the study revealed that, no difference exist in the perception of the lecturers in all the identified corruption practices in the universities. The findings of this study indicate that corruption practices are self-evident in all the identified areas covered by the study. This is in support of the assertion of Okoro (2004) when he stated that; corruption in universities was endemic, and clearly visible among students and lecturers alike, and that lecturers in the junior categories were more involved in the practice.

In this study, it was found that lecturers receive money and other forms of inducements when grading students after examinations and during compilation/computation of results. This findings also agrees with Umon (2009), when he stated that examination has become a money making exercise by lecturers.

Ugwu (2011) had noted that many people who teach in the tertiary institutions including the universities lacked the intellect and integrity required by their position. From the result obtained in this study and with particular reference to the universities, Ugwu (2011) assertion seems to have been faulted. This is because, the respondents disagreed with all the items of statements on the identified corruption practices in the appointment and promotion of universities lecturers. Finally, the findings of the study revealed a number of strategies which can be adopted for the elimination of corruption practices in the universities.



## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is obvious that corruption practices are self evident in teachers education programmes in the universities in Nigeria. It is also obvious that corruption practices are in all aspects of the programme except in the appointment and promotion of lecturers where it was observed to be relatively low. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that all the strategies suggested in table 6 for the elimination of corruption practices in the universities should be adopted by the appropriate authorities.

## **REFERENCES.**

- [1] Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) National Policy on Education<sup>4<sup>th</sup></sup> Edition Lagos: NERDC press.
- [2] Independent Corruption Practices Commission (2009) ICPC. gov.ng.
- [3] Okoro, C.F. (2004) Challenges Facing Teacher Education in Nigerian Universities in Udu, A.N., Ocho, L.O and Okeke, B.S. (eds) *Dynamic of Educational Administration and Management. The Nigerian perspective*, Awka: Meks publishers Ltd
- [4] Osadolor, O. (2009): Higher Education Sub-sector and the Nigerian Society: Conflict of Relevance. (ed) Oshodi, O.G. *African Journal of Studies in Education*. Benin City. University of Benin. Volumes 4&5 NOS, 2&1, May, 2
- [5] Umon, B. (2010) Analysis of the Facilities Provision in Private Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. An M.Ed Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka.
- [6] Ugwu, P. (2012) The Decadence in Nigerian Universities. Lagos. Vanguard Newspaper. Vol. 25 No 61013 of Thursday November 14