

**Effects of Corruption on Administration of Public Secondary Schools****Ogunode Niyi Jacob**

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**Abstract:** Secondary school education is the education designed to provide post-primary school education for the residents of Nigeria. Secondary school education is a bridge between the primary school education and the higher education. It is an education that is very important to the social, economic and technological development of the country. However, the administration of public secondary schools are plagued with corruption. The paper discussed the effects of corruption on public secondary school administration in Nigeria. Both primary and secondary data were explored and employed in the paper. Effects of corruption on secondary school administration were identified and recommendation were made to address these problems of corruption in the secondary school administration in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Administration, Corruption, Education, Secondary Schools

**1.0. Introduction**

The first secondary school in Nigeria was established in 1858 (Adeyinka, 1971). Since then, Nigeria secondary school has experience rapid growth. In Nigeria, senior secondary school is classified under Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) and it is the education children receive after a successful completion of ten years of Basic Education and passing the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate Examination (JAISCE). It includes: (i) senior secondary education, (ii) higher school; and (iii) continuing education given in Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) to either Basic Education graduates who are not proceeding to Senior Secondary Schools, or Senior Secondary graduates that are not proceeding to the tertiary level, as a means of preparing them for the world of work, wealth creation and entrepreneurship (NPE, 2013). National policy on education (2013) outlines the objectives of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) which include: to provide holders of the Basic Education Certificate and Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate with opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of gender, social status, religious or ethnic background, offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, disposition, opportunities and future roles, provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades, provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job-specific skills for self-reliance, and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development, develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage, inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence, foster patriotism, national unity and security education with emphasis on the common ties in spite of our diversity, and raise morally upright and well-adjusted individuals who can think independently and rationally, respect the views and feelings of others and appreciate the dignity of labour. Asiyai (2020) observes that Secondary education in Nigeria is to help individuals live a useful life in the society as well as prepare them for higher education. The individual who passes through secondary education in the country is expected to be able to make useful contribution to the development of the society. It becomes imperative that the education the individual must receive at the secondary level in Nigeria must be of good quality in all ramifications. Good quality secondary education implies that the facilities, infrastructures, information and communication technology facilities, relevant curriculum are procured, and teachers of the right quality and quantity are recruited.

Secondary school administration is vital to the development of secondary school education. Effective administration is key to the realization of secondary school objectives. Secondary school administration occurs at two dimensions. First, at the external level where policies are formulated, allocation are done and recruitment are done. External administration takes place at the ministries, agencies and commission level. The second level of administration is the internal where the school principals, vice principals senior teachers and head of departments see to the implementation of school programmes. Planning, organization and coordination of both human and material resources are handled at this level of school administration. Public secondary schools administration in Nigeria is faced with many problems out of which corruption is the most pronounced problem facing the administration. Ogunode, & Josiah, Ajape, (2021); Ogunode & Stephen (2021); Asiyai (2020) and Ololube, (2016) laments that a major issue posing a big challenge to

education in Nigeria is corruption. The sting of corruption is hard on the entire Nigerian society and is damaging the education system especially at the secondary level. It is imperative to discuss the effects of corruption in the administration of public secondary schools in Nigeria.

### 1.2 Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on system theory. The school is a system of social interaction; it is an organized whole comprising interacting personalities bound together in an organic relationship (Waller, 1932). As a **social system**, the school is characterized by an interdependence parts, a clearly defined population, differentiation from its environment, a complex network of social relationships. The basic assumptions of system theory according to Jacob, Getzels and Egon, Guba (1957); Jacob, Getzels, James Lipham, and Ronald F. Campbell (1968); Charles E. Bidwell (1965); and W. Richard Scott (1998, 2003).

- Social systems are open systems: Schools are affected by state mandates, by politics, by history, and a host of other environmental forces.
- Social systems consist of interdependent parts, characteristics, and activities that contribute to and receive from the whole: When the primary school is affected by corruption, not only is the primary schools affected directly but also the secondary schools and higher education are affected.
- Social systems are peopled: Teachers act on the basis of their needs, beliefs, and goals (motivations) as well as their roles.
- Social systems are goal oriented: Student learning and control are just two of many school goals, but the central goal of any school system is the preparation of its students for adult roles. The goals of the primary school is to produce students for the secondary schools and the goals of the secondary schools is to prepare students for higher education.
- Social systems are structural: School systems have division of labour (e.g., primary school, secondary school and higher education) within the school are (math and science teachers), specialization (e.g., teachers, guidance counsellors, and administrators), and hierarchy (superintendent, principals, assistant principals, and teachers).
- Social systems are normative: Schools have formal rules and regulations as well as informal norms that prescribe appropriate behaviour. Professional ethics for teachers and school administrators.
- Social systems are sanction bearing: Schools have formal mechanisms such as expulsion, suspension, termination, tenure, and promotion as well as informal sanctions that include the use of sarcasm, ostracism, and ridicule.
- Social systems are political: Schools have power relations that inevitably affect administrator and teacher activities.
- Social systems have distinctive cultures: Schools have a dominant set of shared values that influence behaviour.
- Social systems are conceptual and relative: For one purpose, a classroom can be considered a social system, but for other purposes, the school or school system may be viewed as a social system.
- All formal organizations are social systems: But all social systems are not formal organizations.

These assumptions suggest that a school consists of a number of important elements or subsystems that affect organizational behavior (Wayne& Cecil 2013).

From the above, education is a system which is made up of primary school education, secondary school education and higher education. The output of primary school would affects the secondary school education and the output of secondary school education would affect the higher education because they all depends on each other. For example, the primary school education system is made up of input, process and output. The input in this presentation are teachers, students, money, curriculum, facilities, training and retraining, planning, administration, supervision. The inputs are subjected to various processing activities such as teaching, supervision, administration, implementation of policies, researches, publications, studies, discussion and counselling. The output are expected to be capable of satisfying the systems aspirations and expectations under normal conditions. If paravature the money meant for the supply of input were misused and looted, it will affect the quantities and qualities of input. That is shortage of teachers, facilities, poor supervision, poor planning and poor administration. Poor input will produce poor output, that is students that cannot read, solve simple mathematics and are below average in both internal and external exams. Here, the output are expected to move to the secondary schools. When inputs of a system are subjected to unethical practices such as corruption, then we have products that are unethical or corrupt (unqualified students, half-baked students).

## 2.0 Corruption

Many people have defined corruption in different ways. For UNDP, corruption is the misappropriation of office, public power or authority for personal privileged through bribery, misuse, scam, nepotism to mention but a few. Ojiade (2000) defines corruption as any systematic vice perpetuated by individuals, society or State in forms of favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, undue wealth, power, position among other things at the detriment of public. UNDP also looks at corruption as the process to accommodate corruption practiced in the private educational sector as such, the definition offered corruption as the misappropriation of delegated power in order to get private privileges (UNDP Primer on Corruption and Development, 2008). Heyheman (2004) argues that corruption in education includes the abuse of authority for personal and material gains Dike (2003) views corruption as failing attitude of people towards certain expectations by society that connotes negativity and is evident in all aspects of society, economic, social, religious and educational. Milovanovic, (2001) argues that corruption involves bribes and other dishonest means for achieving particular disgraceful ends which is an indication of an ailing society. Transparency International (2010) sees corruption as the abuse of power by individuals to whom is entrusted for personal gain. Every organization has individuals or persons entrusted with the power to coordinate and direct the affairs of the organization. Some of these individuals misuse the power bestowed on them by doing things contrary to that which is expected of them only to their own advantage. These individuals put their personal interest first and surrogate the interest of the organization (Asiyai 2020).Corruption have penetrated all the aspects of Nigerian institutions (Kanibin, 2019; Odo, 2015; Okeyim, Ejue & Ekanam, 2013). Kanibin, (2019) submits that the popularity of corrupt practice in Nigeria implies that there is barely any section of the Nigerian society that is not impacted. Nwafor, Uchendu & Akani (2015) observe, corruption as a social problem that is affecting most of the sectors in Nigeria. Ayobami (2011) points out that corruption can be systematic in nature but in a long run will affect the whole life of an institution or society. The educational sector has also not been left out of the misappropriation and underutilization of funds set aside for the improvement of the education system (Nwafor, Uchendu & Akani, 2015).

## 2.1 Concept of Secondary School Administration

Secondary school administration is the application of human and material resources of the school for the implementation of the school programme with the aim of realizing the objectives of the school. It is the leadership in the organization and coordination of both human and material resources of the school for the purposes of achieving its objectives. Okeke (2014) sees secondary school administration as involving the provision and maintenance of the necessary manpower to those who teach children with a view to bring about the desired change in the children's behaviour. The success of secondary school education rests on a good administration involving the local communities, adequate and well qualified teachers, adequate funds for infrastructural facilities, together with interested parents supplying children's material needs and bringing home training to supplement the efforts of the teachers at school. For heads of secondary schools to succeed in the administration of secondary schools, they need the collaboration and sustenance of the parents, teachers, the Post Primary Schools Service Commission and the Ministry of Education.

Asiyai (2020) identifies several forms of corruption prevalent in secondary schools to include corruption is examination malpractice, collection of illegal charges by principals, recruitment, extortion of money by teachers and with holding of text books allocated to schools, favouritism, irregular movement of teachers during school hours and admission bribery. According to Whawo (2015) secondary school corruption are examination malpractice, bribery, nepotism during admission and extortion of money from students in order to get undeserved grades are among the forms of corruption. Common examples of corruption in education sector include the embezzlement and diversion of funds, equipments and school supplies; procurement fraud; examination malpractice; sexual exploitation; nepotism; favouritism; and bribery. Taaliu (2017) observes that in Kenya, forms of corruption include recruitment processes, promotion and deployment of teachers is mired by corruption in the forms of ethnicity and nepotism and that during admission, some principals by admitting their relatives, church members and tribesmen practice corruption.

## 3.0 Effects of Corruption on Secondary School Administration

There are many effects of corruption on secondary school education in Nigeria. Some of them include shortage of funds, increase in the cost of administration, shortage of teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, reduction in quality of education, poor quality of learning, poor implementation of education policies, poor capacity development programme, poor implementation of curriculum and ineffective supervision of secondary schools.

## 3.1 Shortage of Funds

One major effect of corruption in secondary schools administration is that it reduces the funds provided for the administration of the public secondary school education in Nigeria. Corruption in the administration of public secondary school education reduces the quantities and volume of money that are supposed to be available for the

administration of the institutions. Nwafor, Uchendu & Akani, (2015) submit that corruption can therefore limit the goals of an institution thereby resulting to wastages. Some of the funds made available for the provision of quality education are sometimes diverted for selfish use while in other cases, the budget for the educational sector are misappropriated. This has given rise to the inadequacy of funds for managing the secondary level of education. Ogunode (2020) and Osunyanmi, (2018) opine that Nigeria has been experiencing underwhelming development amidst overwhelming corruption. Education is not insulated from this malaise. Corruption allows a high percentage of the funds allocated to the sector to get diverted into the private accounts of public officials. Hence, the amount being spent on education is much lower than the figure in the budget. The high rate of corruption in the administration have led to inadequate funding in the sector as identified by (Ogunode, 2020; Ike, 2017;). The inability of school administrators to get the actual money budgeted for the management of public secondary schools across the country is responsible for poor development of secondary school education in Nigeria.

### 3.2 Increase in the Cost of Administration

Corruption in the administration of public secondary schools in Nigeria have led to increase in the administration cost of running secondary schools in Nigeria. Ogbonnaya (2009) observes that ministry officials collected bribe from contractors handling building. Kanibin (2019) observes that in the Nigerian educational context, vouchers are inflated, sex for mark practiced, ghost workers employed, supplies of educational materials faked, ethnic based appointment and promotions practiced, withholding of retirement and salaries made common, projects in schools. Suleiman (2005) notes, that corruption direct resources from the designed projects to white elephant projects are heavily over invoiced, it increases the cost of running the schools, distort public expenditures and defers private-public partnership investments. It also erodes the consistency for grants and funding. In Nigeria institutions of learning, corruption has undermined the normal functioning of their social economic and academic systems. Ogunode & Stephen (2021); Egbefo, (2012) and educator (1996), establish that data available shows that the cost of corruption to the Nigerian educational system represent about 15½% of its GDP. Experiences of other countries reveal that corruption increases the cost of education, materials and training of staff. Transparency International (2020) submits that 66 percent of the money Nigerian government's allocate to education is stolen by corrupt officials. According to the report, corruption is commonplace in education systems across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). UNESCO (2014) reports on *Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All* shows that Nigeria is among the 37 countries that are losing money spent on education, because children are not learning. UNESCO disclosed that the menace is already costing governments USD 129 billion a year. It stressed further that despite the money being spent, rejuvenation of primary education is not so soon because of poor-quality education that cannot ensure that children learn (NEEDS, 2014).

### 3.3 Shortage of Professional Teachers

Ogunode (2020) and Ige (2013) identify that public secondary schools in Nigeria are faced with the problem of professional teachers. The problem of shortage of professional teachers in the public secondary schools in Nigeria is linked to the problems of corruption in the administrative level. There are many corrupt practices in the administration of public secondary school which result to the shortage of professional teachers. For instance, the ghost workers syndrome, job rickettsia, employment of unqualified people, and political slot for politicians. Alaebo (undated) and Mfon, (2013) submit that in Nigeria today it is not what you know but whom you know, that is why recruitment for jobs is tied down to certain criteria such as political favouritism, geographical area or quota system. Many of the secondary schools in Nigeria cannot boast of the best teachers because the best probably do not have godfather who can help them. Alaebo (undated) posits that appointment is no longer based on merit but on whom you know and the amount you can offer for such job. Olagunju (2011) observes that corruption leads to ghost workers in work places, slow movement of files in offices, extortion in highways, election irregularities and many more. Ogunode & Stephen (2021) observes that the ghost workers syndrome is another factor responsible for shortage of teachers in many primary schools in Nigeria. Ghost workers, is a situation where fake names are been used to collect salaries for teachers that are supposed to be employed in the school. This corrupt practices is common in Nigerian educational sector. In Imo state, the Governor of Imo state Hope Uzodimm observed that the state has uncovered over 100 ghost workers, including more than 60 “dead or non-existent persons” in the schools. It is a sad revelation that over sixty (60) persons on the payroll of the board were found to be dead and non-existent, while another forty (40) persons who are no longer in the service of the State are still on the payroll of the State Government.

### 3.4 Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

Inadequate infrastructural facilities in public secondary schools in Nigeria can also be linked to corruption. Funds released for capital projects in public schools are looted or diverted by the contractors and educational officers. Infrastructural facilities in Nigerian public secondary school have been found to be inadequate. (Ogunode, 2020). Alaebo (undated) points out that purchases of science equipment to schools are no longer done transparently since it is

either the chief executive of the school or any of his or her relation who do the supply. In this case they neither supply the required specification nor the required quantity; in most cases they do not even supply anything. Most of the science laboratories are empty building or buildings filled with fake or obsolete science equipment which are useful for nothing but mere demonstration. Suleiman (2005) also notes that corruption coupled with economic and political mismanagement has led to instability and gross abuse of power, led to the decaying infrastructure, inadequate staffing, poor and failing education standards, the disappearance of grants, trust funds, loans and of entire project without a trace. Ogunode & Agow (2020) did a study and identified institutional corruption, inadequate funding of secondary schools, poor infrastructural facilities planning, poor qualities of infrastructural facilities, ineffective monitoring and evaluation of infrastructural facilities, increased in student population, damages of facilities by students of secondary school as causes of inadequate infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Gwagwalada area council of FCT.

### 3.5 Reduction in Quality of Education

Corruption in school administration is responsible for low quality of education at the secondary school level. Asiyai (2020) did a study and established that corruption in secondary education reduces the quality of teaching and learning and the quality of students learning outcomes, result in poor global image of the education system, leads to overstaffing and understaffing of some schools, a stall in development, drop out from school and can result to inequality. Kanibin, (2019) and Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu (2017) submit that corruption in the educational sector drains the system of quality of education, impacts the moral advancement of the society while impeding the sustainable development of the country. Asiyai (2020) Hallak & Poisson (2002) Nwankwo & Nweke, (2016) opines that corruption can be seen as the systematic use of public office for personal gain thereby impacting significantly on access to education, equity and quality. The Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) reports that the sum of N1,016,133.08 billion (N1 billion) misappropriated by six State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) was yet to be returned (Allafrica, 2021). The funds were meant for the provision of human and material resources that will support the delivery of quality education at the primary schools across the country.

### 3.6 Poor Quality of Learning

Poor quality of students learning in public secondary schools in Nigeria can also be traced to the high level of corruption in the school administration. Asiyai (2020) observes that when fund budgeted and allocated to schools for proper management are diverted by ministry of education officials, this can lead to non maintenance of schools and non purchase of instructional materials for effective students' learning. The classrooms will be overcrowded and activities will crumble. Egbefo (2012) posits that corruption in the system has made it easy for some scholars to describe schools as institutions where learning does not take place but as money exchange department to help students pass examination and gain admission into higher institutions. Ike (2017) observes that in some cases, some teachers at the secondary school level are involved by way of encouraging students to contribute money (cooperation fees) in order to secure the needed assistance during such examinations because they, the teachers are left with no other alternative considering the fact that they are aware of the inadequate preparation of their students as well as the lack of facilities to get them properly prepared before examination. Interview with 50 school heads in Benin City, reveals that more than 50% of our secondary school students on annual basis choose to enroll and write their final year external examination in schools in the interior and some private schools where they are very sure of success at the end of the day. Corruption in Nigeria's education plays a role in the steady decline in quality of learning as reviewed by the assessment outcomes as well as the increase in poverty, inequality and underdevelopment.

### 3.7 Poor Implementation of Education Policies

Poor implementation of secondary school policies especially that of secondary school is as a result of the corruption in the administrative level of public secondary schools in Nigeria. Education officers in charge of ensuring that educational policies are implemented as formulated for schools are compromised by school owners, teachers, school administrators and parents not to do their statutory responsibilities. Ogunode (2020) cited Ogbonnaya (2010) who listed some corrupt practices to include where heads of educational institutions receive 10% gratification for the execution of any project in their institution. Some parents even give bribes to secondary school principal to have their children admitted in the school. Teachers also give bribes to officials in the school board, so that they will not be transferred. School proprietors give bribes also to officials of education board for them to approve their private schools. There is even sexual harassment among students and teachers in schools. With this, the implementation of educational policies is jeopardized.

### 3.8 Poor Capacity Development Programme

Poor capacity development programme in the public secondary schools in Nigeria can be linked to the corrupt practices in the administrative level. Funds budgeted for the training and retraining of secondary school teachers are mismanaged and looted by administrative officers. Kanibin (2019) cited Okorosaye-Orubite (2008) submits that one of the workshops organised by the Universal Basic Education Board, about 800 million naira was outrageously spent on a one day training workshop. This highlights the corruption reality on ground. It can therefore be deduced that rather than the workshop to serve as a mean to improve the education sector through innovative brainstorming it was used as means to line the pockets of those in charge of organising the seminar. Gift (2018), also reports that in September 2018, Anum Iho, former chairman of the State Basic Education Board (SUBEB) – an offshoot of the Universal Basic Education Commission in the states, established to address the inequality in educational opportunity at the basic level and improving the quality of its provision – was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment for embezzling funds meant for the training of teachers in Benue State. Iho was found guilty of misappropriating N91,5 million (€220,000), and of taking a bribe of N14,9 million (over €36,000).

### 3.8 Poor Implementation of Curriculum

Poor implementation of curriculum in public secondary schools in Nigeria is caused by corruption. Effective curriculum implementation required availability of adequate professional teachers, adequate infrastructural facilities and proper supervision. Loven (2018) observes that when monies intended for building schools, purchasing supplies, or training and paying staff are diverted into private pockets, the quality and availability of education is negatively affected. An underfunded education sector will underserve pupils and fall short in supporting them to reach their full potential and improve their life chances. World-Bank (2006), concluded that about 25% of procurement cost in Africa and other under developing countries is wasted on corruption, while the figure could be less than 10% in developed countries. Even, the document of the 2010 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Review Summit identified corruption as the major hindrance for achieving the MDGs and called for decisive steps to be taken to combat corruption in all its manifestation.

### 3.9 Ineffective Supervision

Ogunode, & Ajape, (2021) pointed out that corruption is another problem facing the supervision of secondary school education in Nigeria. Corruption has penetrated the Nigerian educational institutions. Funds released for supervision programme in many states, ministries of education and agencies have been mismanaged, looted or misappropriated by some educational officers and school principals. The high level of corruption in the ministries of education across the state government is responsible for ineffective supervision of secondary schools in Nigerian. According to a public survey released Tuesday by the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) reports high levels of corruption in public institutions in Nigeria for the past 5 years. Of the five major public institutions surveyed, the police emerged as the most corrupt, with the power sector identified as the second most corrupt in the country today. Other public institutions identified as corrupt by 70 percent of Nigerians surveyed are the judiciary, education and health ministries. The survey reveals that the level of corruption has not changed in the last five years. The funds made available for the supervision of education sometimes end up in private pocket. Public funds made for the provision of educational services have been diverted and mismanaged.

### 4.0 Recommendation

The following suggestions are recommended for policy implement to help combat corruption in secondary education in Nigeria by Asiyai (2020): Public secondary school principals should encourage the formation of anti-corruption clubs in schools as a way of regularly bringing to the awareness of students and staff the dangers of corruption. Principals should encourage debates and essay writings on corruption related topics in school in order to help sensitize staff and students about corruption and the evils associated with it. Teachers and other stake holders should help in combating corruption in secondary schools by regularly teaching and promoting core values of integrity, hard work, responsibility, honesty and obedience. Government should help schools to properly monitor examination by installing closed circuit television in secondary schools in the state. Seminars and conferences on core values, corruption and ethical issues should regularly be organized in schools and experts be invited to give talks to staff and students. Total and complete value re-orientation of the Nigerian society could help reduce the spread of corruption in secondary education.

Also, Kanibin, (2019) observed that If Nigeria is tackle corruption in the Nigerian educational sector a number of strategies will be embarked on which include: Accountability and transparency should be sensitized and imposed on every aspect of the Nigerian society in such a way those public officer holders, contractors, tutors and stakeholders view transparency and accountability as key aspects of carrying out projects and serving the people. Supervision of programmes and projects embarked in the educational sector. Allocations for development of the educational sector

publicised. Donations for infrastructural development in the educational sector should be publicized. Sensitization on the dangerous impact of corruption on education should be carried out by non-governmental agencies and religious bodies. An effective and reliable financial management system should be established to control and monitor the use of educational resources.

Other measure to put in place to prevent corruption in the administration of secondary school education include;

a. School managers should endeavour to apply appropriate financial management techniques in the management of available funds. Strategies which will assist in the effective utilization of available funds should be considered and implemented.

b. Government and Ministry of education should set up a supervision team to inspect how school managers disburse the funds assigned for different activities in the school. This will help to reduce the issue of misappropriations of school funds by school managers.

### Conclusion

Secondary school education is vital to the development of social, economic and technological advancement of the country. Secondary education is the post-primary school education meant for career development for the entire country. The realization of the secondary school objective hinges on proper administration. Secondary school administration is faced with corruption problems. This paper discussed the effects of corruption on the administration of public secondary schools in Nigeria. The paper identified shortage of funds, increased cost of administrative, shortage of teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, lower quality of education, lower quality of learning, poor implementation of education policies, poor capacity development programme, poor implementation of curriculum and ineffective supervision.

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