

Adoption of African Traditional Religious Practices in combating Corruption in Nigerian Education System

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Abstract

The paper examined the Adoption of African Religious Traditional Practices in Combating Corruption in Nigerian Education System. Education is the bedrock of development. Through education, future thinkers and Leaders are produced. But, it is regrettable that education system has deteriorated to the extent that instead of being an agent of transformation, empowerment and an instrument of purifying the minds of the young ones to become useful members of the society, has today become an agent of imparting corruption in the minds of the young ones. This aberration in the goal and aim of education is caused by endemic and legendary corruption in Education in Nigeria. Corruption in Nigerian education system manifests itself in all levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary institutions). There exist different forms of corruption existing in our institution for example, examination malpractice, financial scams, embezzlement, exploitation of students, taking advantage students, etc. The existence of different forms of corruption in our institution has led to dearth and decay of infrastructure in the schools. Corruption has enormity of negative effects on the output from the system (graduates) in the area of productivity and their degree of acceptance in the labour market. Many methods have been adopted to stop this malaise, but they proved inadequate. Based on this, this research suggests the adoption of African Traditional religious methods in curbing the evil effects of corruption in Nigerian education system. Some of the suggested practices are: Putting the school property, money, etc in the custodian of a powerful deity, workers and students in education sector swearing oath in the shrine of a powerful and dreadful deity that they will not be involved in any form of malpractice. These and other methods suggested are hoped to be final panacea to combat corruption in education in Nigeria.

Keywords: Corruption, Education, African Traditional Religious Practice (ATR), West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO)

Introduction

Education is the bedrock of development. It is identified as one of the fundamental factors determining sustainable economic development. It increases the human capital and production of labour as it leads to high output in the economy. Education equips people with necessary skills and competences and enhances them with innovative capacity of labour. It facilitates the adoption and implementation of foreign technology and helps to reduce knowledge gap between the technological advanced nations and developing nations. It helps the nations to compete in global markets.

The knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes to achieve these benefits of education are got from education institutions. This made the educational institutions to be an industry where future leaders, workers, doctors, lawyers, politicians, teachers, thinkers, etc are produced. These all important roles of educational institutions make it imperative that the institutions should be sacrosanct. Any taint on these institutions endangers the future and development of individuals and the nation at large.

Corruption in education is thwarting these noble roles of educational institutions. The effect of corruption on education is too alarming, that instead of education being an agent of purifying the minds of children to become useful members of the society, it is rather diverting the mind of children away from what education is intended for. Educational system is now playing negative roles because of corruption. Instead of training our children to be good citizens of the country, the training is rather towards inculcating bad behaviors.

Because of corruption in education in Nigeria, the graduates of our schools do not measure up to the standards of both internal and external evaluators. Nigerian education system has been marked with the weakness of producing unemployable graduates- graduates who need to attend the training of the National Orientation Agency (NOA) before they could be fit for a job.

The most disheartening of all these is that education corruption is being perpetrated by all cadre of people involved in education sector, viz: the government, lecturers, parents, teachers, students etc. in fact it is frustrating that all the stakeholders in education are involved in promoting education corruption.

Corruption in education manifests in different forms, like, examination malpractice, academic fraud, exploitation of students, certificate forgery, parents engagement of their children to get certificates or grades that do not belong to them, forcing female students to pay for grades as well as arranging for hotel accommodations so that unscrupulous lecturers can have sex with them, printing fake receipts by lecturers and students, which they use in collecting school fees, outright embezzlement of education funds, etc.

All the measures devised to fight education corruption in the past had not yielded any positive result. This, therefore, makes it necessary to devise new means to fight education corruption in Nigeria. Many Nigerians are externally Christians and Moslems but internally African traditional religionists. Again, most of the perpetrators of education corruption adopt traditional religion practices to achieve their heinous corrupt activities. Based on these, this paper is suggesting that African Traditional religious practices should also be adopted to prevent the stakeholders in education from involving in corrupt practices. Some of the practices to adopt are: putting the money and property approved for education under the custodian of a powerful and fearful deity in the locality; swearing of oath of office using a wand of (of) powerful deity in any locality that educational institution is situated; tying of deities insignias in the offices so that anybody who tamper with the property of the school, money, female students (without consent) should be punished with death by the deity in charge of the offices. The investigation as regards the acceptance and effectiveness of these practices should be the priority of this paper.

The Meaning of Corruption in General

There is no widespread or comprehensive definition of what constitutes corrupt behavior, the most prominent definitions share a common emphasis on the abuse of public power or position for personal advantage, (Ogbeidi, 2012). Lewis (2006) sees it as an impairment of virtue and moral principles. For Amuno (2005) and Obayelu (2007), it is the exploitation of public position, resources and power for private gain. World Bank and Transparency International (2006) conceive corruption as the abuse of office for private gains, for the benefit of the holder of the office or some third party. Fjelstad and Isakan (2008) and Ogundiya (2009) see corruption as the betrayal of public trust for individual or public gain. It is further identified as efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private gain at public expenses, or a misuse of power through illegal means for private gain at public expenses, or misuse of power for private benefit (Obayelu, 2007) Ebegbulem (2009) described corruption to cover a broad spectrum of activities ranging from:

- fraud (theft through misrepresentation);
- embezzlement (misappropriation of corporate or public funds)
- bribery (payment made in order to gain an advantage or to avoid disadvantage).

Following from this, Ruzindan (1999) identified the types of corruption as bribery, private gain, and other benefits to non-existent workers and pensioners (called ghost workers). The dishonest and illegal behavior exhibited especially by people in authority for their personal gain is therefore corruption. ICPC Act (Section 2) includes vices like bribery, fraud and other related offences as corruption.

Defining Corruption, Atlas (1968) described it as a symptom of dysfunctionality of relationship between the state and the people, characterized by bribery, extortion and nepotism. For him, areas corruption manifests include: award of contracts, promotion of staff, dispensation of justice, misuse of public offices, position and privileges, embezzlement of public funds, public books, publications, documents valuable security and accounts.

These definitions show that corruption can be systematic in nature and affect the whole life of society.

Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption, though a global phenomenon, seems to be endemic and legendary in Nigeria. For Ogbeidi (2012), if corruption in the 1960 was endemic, corruption since the return of democracy in 1999 has been legendary. Amundeson (2000) categorized the main form of corruption into five, viz: embezzlement, bribery, fraud, extortion and favoritism.

Assessing the rate of the existence of these forms of corruption in Nigeria, the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) released annually by Transparency international consistently listed Nigeria among the most corrupt nation in the world (Ogbeidi, 2012). The 1996 study of corruption by Transparency international and Goettingen University ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation, among 54 nations listed in the study (More, 1997). The 1998 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranked Nigeria as the fifth most corrupt nation out of 85 countries listed in the rating (The Transparency International Corruption Index, 1998). The 2001 corruption perception index ranked Nigeria third most corrupt nation among 91 countries listed (The T. I. Corruption Index, 2002). The 2003 corruption perception index also rated the country as the second most corrupt nation out of 133 countries listed (The Transparency Corruption Index, 2003). The trend however improved a little from 2005 corruption perception index ratings, yet Nigeria still languishes within the first most corrupt nations of the world (Ogbeidi, 2012). These ratings show that Nigeria is one of the most corrupt nations in the world.

Effect of Corruption in Nigeria

Well-meaning individuals and foreign nations will believe that corruption has inevitably become a major clog in the quest for sustainable growth and development (Ogbeidi, 2012). Corruption is the most critical impediment to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and like a deadly virus, it attacks the vital structures and

systems that engender progressive functioning of society. Corruption in Nigeria has largely retarded social development, undermined economic growth, discouraged foreign investment and reduced resources available for infrastructural development, public service and poverty reduction programmes, (Findings, 1999). Further, corruption poses a serious development challenge. In the political realm, it undermines democracy and good governance by flouting or even subverting formal process. Corruption in election and in legislative bodies reduces accountability and distorts representations in policy making. Corruption in the judiciary compromises the rule of law; and corruption in the public administration result in the unfair and inefficient provision of services. (Aiyede, 2006). More generally, corruption erodes the institutional capacity of government as procedures are disregarded, resources are siphoned off, and public offices are bought and sold. Thus corruption undermines the legitimacy of government democratic values of trust and tolerance.

Corruption exacerbates poverty and disproportionately affects those of lower income, because it pulls resources from the national treasures, placing the money into the bank accounts of few individuals who are politically powerful (Ebegbulem, 2009). The scourge of corruption leaves the poor perpetually and disproportionately under privileged, even as it renders the development of democracy and the buildings of a society more problematic. (Riadu, 2002). By diverting assets away from their intended use, corruption can be said to be the single most important factor responsible for the failure of governance and lack of sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria.

Corruption encourages the distortion of government expenditure. This often results in diversion of public investment on large scale projects, rather than on the provision of necessary public services such as health, roads, housing and education (Ogbeidi, 2012). This situation makes it inevitable for the limited but valuable fund earmarked for development to disappear into private pockets. Corruption also undermines efficiency as time and money are wasted through corrupt activities at the expense of productive activities and which altogether discourages prospective investors.

Public sector efficiency becomes compromised because corruption superimposes informal practices over the proper rules and procedures of government adding direct and indirect costs to the execution of programs. Corruption undermines human and capital development in any society or nation. Perhaps the most tragic effect of corruption on Nigeria has been the failure of the country to attain its economic potentials. Corruption generates economic distortion in the public sector by devastating public investment into capital projects where bribes and kickbacks are more painful. It also lowers compliance with construction, environmental, or other regulations, reduces the quality of government services and infrastructure and increases budgetary pressure on government. It slows down the pace of economic development through manipulation of funds for projects; it destroys or weakens efficiency and effectiveness of public service, it detracts government from giving priority to the areas of income and social inequality, poverty, malnutrition and other areas of need. The net impact of corruption on society is negative (Ebegbulem, 2009). Corruption has adversely affected Nigeria's economy. Financial resources which would have been used to facilitate the country's economic development have been diverted into private bank accounts abroad.

As result of unparallel and unrivalled corruption in Nigeria, the healthcare delivery system and the education sector have become comatose and are nearing total collapse. Government spending has been considerably reduced on these vital social sectors of the economy and others of equal importance, which suppose to be priority to government. To this end the resultant effects have been catastrophic as different forms of malpractices and corrupt practices have rubbished the Nigerian educational system, which is perceived from the outside as inadequate and its products substandard.

There is a symbiotic relationship between the educational culture and psycho-social and political culture of the society at large. What happens to society at large affects the educational sector which in turn affects the society at large. Those in the educational sector learn and adopt predominant values generated by society at large and the society at large learns and adopts predominant values generated by the educational sector (Torulagha, 2012). This situation implies that if the society is corrupt the educational sector will also be corrupt.

Education Corrupt in Nigeria.

As education institutions in Nigeria are not in vacuum but in the same corrupt society, the sector is as corrupt as the public and private sector. On this Onuoha (2012) asserts that the Nigerian educational sector is not only adversely affected by neglect in terms of infrastructure, funding and standard, it is also affected by malpractice and corruption which have eaten deep into the fabric of the society in general. The glaring fact of the existence of corruption makes Yushua (2012) regrets that when people talk about corruption usually they refer to public fund siphoned or misappropriate by civil servants, contractors, politicians, etc. hardly do they think of the type of corruption that destroys the minds of our children and siphons the moral values of our society – the monumental corruption that is taking place in our educational system. These types of corruption are more dangerous and more serious threat to the future of Nigeria. Education institution has deteriorated to the extent that in place of being an agent of purifying the minds of our children to become useful members of our society, it is now diverting the

mind of the children away from what education is all about.

Education corruption is thus the systematic use of public office for private benefit, whose impact is insignificant on the availability and quality of educational goals and services, and as a consequence on access, quality or equity in education (Ojo and Ofojebe, 2008). In consonance with the above definition, World Bank reports (2002) assert that corruption in education entails a misallocation of talents and propagation of a culture of corruption; it further describe corruption as:

- waste and unequal use of education resources
- illegal fees for admission; different categories of bribes paid in order to be promoted, obtain a certificate or diploma, etc.
- misallocation of talents,
- unfairness and partiality in education.

Based on the above, Chapman (2000) identified five forms of malpractice that can be regarded as corruption in education. These include:

- blatant illegal acts of bribery or fraud (fraud in procurement of materials, as example);
- action to secure a modest income by people paid too little or too late (illegal fees, collected at school level);
- taking too much load beyond ones capacity in order to get more money at the expense of the learners;
- actions taken to get work done in difficult circumstance (demanding sexual gratification, demanding bribes to get certificate on time from administration);
- differences in cultural perspective (gift given to teachers, close ones and lecturers) and
- behaviours resulting from incompetence (e.g. Misallocation of funds) (Ojo and Ofojebe, 2008)

Area of Corruption in Education in Nigeria.

Uzoigwe (2013), Odia and Omofonman (2007), Ayobami (2011), Rummyantseva Torulagha (2012), Hanaka (2001), Hyman (2002) and Ojo and Ofojebe (2008) identified Examination Malpractice, Favoritism, Academic fraud, Certificate forgery, financial scam, Extortion, Embezzlement, sorting, absenteeism of lecturers in the class as some of the factors that constitute corruption in education. These factors are discussed in piecemeal below:

Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractice is an improper and dishonest act associated with examination with a view to obtaining unmerited advantage (Salami, 1994). It is also any act of Omission or Commission that contravenes the rules and regulations of the test and ultimately, the integrity of certificate issued (Shonekan, 1996). Oyekan (1998) further defined it as a deliberate act of indiscipline adopted by students or their privileged accomplice to secure facile success and advantage before, during and after the examination of test or examination.

Examination malpractice can manifest as teacher aided or inter-student or intra student's malpractice, it can also be done while students are trying to write a qualifying examination, for example at the general examination or in the university (Ojo and Ofojebe, 2008).

History of examination Malpractice

Corruption in education is not a recent discovery. Several decades ago, there has been a variety of instances of distortions in the uses of resources, appointment, development and distribution of textbooks and so on. Fraud in the use of aid targeted at education is new phenomenon (Ojo and Ofojebe, 2008)

Uzoigwe (2013) pointed out that corrupt practices in examination in Nigeria date back to the pre-independence years. Adeyegbe and Oke (1994), Ogbuke (1995) and Maduemezie (1998) clarified that examination malpractice was first reported in Nigeria in 1914, when the question papers of Senior Cambridge Local Examination were reportedly seen by candidates before the scheduled date of the examination. Maduemezie (1998) pointed out that examination malpractice which had existed at a very low ebb with simplistic methods, became more pervasive from the 1970 with the involvement of the persons other than the candidates and its spread has been wild and fast since then with constant perfection of people as perpetrators of the method adopted. Twenty two categories of people are identified by her as the perpetrators of this act in Nigeria. Students constitute only about fourteen percent (14%) of the group. Various writers on this topic have identified many types and trends of Examination Malpractice in Nigeria.

Some Trends of Examination Malpractice in Nigeria

Uzoigwe identified the following types of malpractice in secondary level as recorded by WAEC Annual Report. They include:

- Bringing foreign materials into the examination hall, e.g textbooks, cribs, currency notes with copious notes on them, past question papers either containing copious notes or used as disguise for current ones that have been smuggled out, photocopies of prepared answers, etc.

- Irregular activities inside or outside the examination hall, e.g. sending information by agents and touts to candidates inside the examination hall, smuggling of question papers out of the examination hall, etc.
- Collusion e.g passing notes, receiving or giving assistance to other candidates in the examination hall.
- Impersonation i.e, hiring of touts to write examination, male candidates sitting for girls, vice versa in some sensitive papers, twins writing examination for each other.
- Fore knowledge of examination question, e.g. cutting security bags or question paper packets by supervisors to gain fore knowledge of questions few hours before the scheduled commencement of examination.
- Leakage of questions paper traceable to the printing press or other persons associated with the custody of the papers.
- Mass cheating i.e, large scale organized cheating involving school authorities, candidates and examination officials.
- Insult/assault on supervisors/ invigilators/inspectors by candidates e.g. beating up examination officials, destruction of examination officials' cars and manhandling of examination officials and using indecent language on supervisors and invigilators who fail to co-operate with the examination cheat.
- Miscellaneous cases such as folding of answer scripts, having two types of handwriting on a candidate's script, scripts not signed by the supervisor, etc.

Analyses done by Uzoigwe 2013 on this table indicates that in 2000, 6.4% of the 636,064 candidates for the examination were involved in examination malpractice. In 2001, 5.07% of the 1,025, 185 candidate were involved in examination malpractice. In 2002, 10.47% of the 909,888 candidates for the examination malpractice. While in 2003 the percentage increase to 10.88% of 1,066,831 candidates for the examination. While 2004, there was a further increase to 11.17% of the 1,035,280 candidates for the examination.

Supporting the view above Torulagha (2012) asserts that many students pay professional examination takers to take standardized examination for them. This seems to be very prevalent in the secondary schools. It is sometimes, principals and teachers that participate in the business of paying professional examination takers so that the record of academic performance in the standardized examination is improved. Students who are about to graduate from senior secondary school are expected to contribute funds for the purpose of hiring examination takers. The process of taking standardized examination involves also paying invigilators at the exam centre's to enable them look the other way and allow the professional examination takers to do their jobs for the clients. Also, the students who are financially well do sometimes go to the headquarters of various examination council or board to pay staff members to award them high grades for various subjects in the standardized examinations (Torulagha, 2012). All these show that examination malpractice is ravaging the education system in Nigeria.

Academic Fraud

According to Ojo and Ofojebe (2008), academic fraud includes watered down policies in order to enable all comers or anybody in the academic set up to get promotion without actually meriting it. This practice promotes the cultures of laziness and complacency which undermines any incentives that would motivate young people to work hard. For them academic fraud include.

- Plagiarism in research, teaching materials popularly called modules and hand outs;
- Low standard or poor quality control;
- Incompetence of the teacher to impart knowledge well;
- Pride of achievement, inability to accept suggestions because it is not coming from a native

Affirming these points, Torulagha (2013) writes that in the universities some instructors/ lecturers/professors sell makeshift copies of textbook extracts. Students are expected to buy the copies and are forced to fail the class for failure to buy. Selling copies of book extracts is considered to be a very lucrative business for unscrupulous faculty members. In many universities and campuses, some lecturers, registrars, and record keepers sometimes intentionally withhold student's grade until they pay certain amount of money.

Yushua (2012) included as academic fraud, the practice of lecturers missing classes with impunity. He explains that in a semester not many lecturers are attending more than 50% of their classes. Quite a number attend far less than that. He further asserts that there seems to be no check and balances from either school administrators or from ASUU to control this practice. There are also lecturers teaching in three to five universities as full time staff and the distance between the schools is hundreds of kilometers with effect that some are attending class only once in the whole semester, and they are given their full salary.

Corruption in Professional Certificate/Forgery of Certificates

Torulagha (2012) pointed out that students are occasionally compelled to pay for grades in many secondary schools and universities by some professors/lecturers/instructors/teachers. Students who have money do not have to even attend classes to get passing grades. They pay according to grades they want, while the poor students who cannot afford to pay are sometimes penalized by teachers/instructors/professors and school officials.

Some lecturers/ professors, especially at the higher educational level, make their business intention clearly known to the students by telling them what they need to do in order to pass their course. Those students who are not willing to play by the prescribed rules of the game are advised to drop the course before it is too late. (Torulagha, 2012).

Female students seem to suffer the most because some lecturers/professors/instructors expect female students to sleep with them, in addition to paying for grades. Some lecturers expect the female students to pay for grades as well as arrange for hotel accommodation so that the unscrupulous lecturers can have sex with them. This is regarded as a package of activities that female students are expected to comply with in order to pass a course. (Torulagha, 2012).

Counting on these, Omotonmwan (2007) asserts that the process of acquiring this well desired knowledge has gradually turned to money spinning venture for many of those in dire need of the knowledge and skill. It is now source of exploitation from the services rendered and facilities on ground, and made an offer for the highest bidder. Hence, certification which supposed to be obtained through merit and proper assessment is today based on the amount of money a candidate paid. Regretting this, Ayobami (2011) writes that within the university system, some students resort to “sorting” – finding ways of purchasing of high and unmerited mark from lecturer in order to enhance the grade in their examination.

Financial Corruption

Financial corruption in education started with the scramble to loot as much as possible by those in position of authority. This development – the looting of educational funds has become acceptable and being practiced by the stakeholders in education. For Torulagha (2013), it has become fashionable to loot funds allocated for academic enhancement, capacity building, infrastructural development, modernization, and rehabilitation of educational institutions. The looting involved educational policy makers, bureaucrats in various educational ministries, and school officials responsible for administering the schools. For these people, education is being viewed as a big business. Consequently, for them, the primary purpose of being in education is to accumulate wealth. This accumulating of wealth involves forcing students to cough out money in various ways and to embezzle allocated funds out rightly. The following development attests to the increasing de-professionalization and capitalization of education (Torulagha, 2013).

Hallak and Poison (2002) outlined ten areas in which frequent malpractices are seen. These include:

- Financial transgressing rules and procedures, by pass of criteria, inflation of costs and activities and outright embezzlement.
- Allocation of specific allowance (fellowship, subsidies).
- Favoritism/Nepotism, bribes, by pass of criteria and discrimination (political, social or ethnic).
- Construction, maintenance and school repairs, fraud in public tendering (pay offs, gifts, favoritism, collusion among supplies, embezzlement, manipulating data, by pass of school mapping, ghost deliveries, etc.)
- Distribution of equipment, furniture and materials (including transport, boarding textbooks, canteens and school meals).
- Fraud in public tendering (payoffs favoritism), collusion;
 - i. among suppliers, siphoning of school supplies, purchase of unnecessary equipment;
 - ii. manipulating data by pass of collection;
 - iii. criteria, ghost deliveries;
 - iv. writing of textbooks – fraud in the selection of authors;
 - v. by pass of copyright law, student forced to purchase materials copyright by instructors.
- Teachers appointment, management (transfer, promotion), payment and training – fraud in the appointment and development of teachers, discrimination, falsification of credential or fake diplomas, pay delay, sometimes with unauthorized deductions. Teacher behavior (professional misconduct)
 - Ghost teacher
 - Absenteeism
 - Illegal fees
 - Favoritism, nepotism, acceptance of gifts, etc.
 - Discrimination – ethnic, political, social or religion.
 - Private tutoring
 - Sexual harassment or exploitation
 - Bribes or favors during inspection visits.
- Information system manipulating data, selecting/suppressing information payment for information that should have been provided free.
- Examination and access to universities. Selling information, examination fraud (impersonation, cheating, favoritism), bribers (for light marks, grades, selection to specialized programmes, etc)

diploma mills and false credentials, fraudulent research plagiarism, etc.

- Institution accreditation – fraud in the accreditation process (favoritism, bribes, gifts, etc) (Ojo and Ofojebe, 2008)

Considering all these, Yushua (2013) opines that stakeholders in education are now money hunters. Who seem not to have any good agenda for the money except for self aggrandizement. Their attention and mindset now is not promoting education progress, rather they are interested in how to make themselves great in simplest way possible. This trend of looking for quick way of making it financially, undermines education achievement in Nigeria.

Favoritism (as corruption) in Education Sector

Favoritism as corruption occurs in education when contracts are awarded, appointment are given, courses to lecturers are assigned, promotions are given, people's papers for publication in an institution's journals, research opportunities and grants in aid to teachers are given, etc, along religious, political and tribal lines. This includes also cases of nepotism, where a public officers gives the priority to his or her family members (Ojo and Ofojebe, 2013).

Factors Responsible for education Vulnerability to Corruption

Odia and Omofonmwan (2007) and other experts in education have been able to point out some factors as responsible for education corruption. These include:

- i. Examination practice is associated with poor preparation of students for an examination and lack of self confidence.
- ii. Rising costs of education (school fees, enrolment fees, costs of books and other materials). Students and even their parents will not ordinarily want to be held back by any form of deficit or failure in any of the required subjects; hence they will go to any length to ensure success.
- iii. Poor payment of teachers (motivation) makes some teacher at the secondary level to encourage students to contribute money (Cooperation fees) in order to assist then during examinations.

Other authors give the factors as:

- The high rate of returns of the education sector i.e through education, people hope to get better paid jobs as a consequence, many people are ready to give whatever it takes to get education good or bad.
- The opacity of educational rules coupled with complexity and poor governance plus lack of real supervision, lack of accountability open real opportunities for corruption.
- Low salaries of teachers and public officials (poverty) pave good ways for corruption.
- Weakening of ethical values (Ojo and Ofojebe, Hallack and Poission 2011, Chapman, 2002)

Affect of Corruption in Education

Due to corruption and unethical practices, many female students in the universities have turned to prostitution as a means of supporting their education. They walk the streets and visit customers in order to accumulate money needed to pay the unscrupulous lecturer and school administrators who invent financial schemes to extort money one way or another from students. (Torulagha, 2012)

Many male students are forced to join cults in order to increase their ability to influence the educational process. In other words, those who are not financially endowed to pay for grades or just refuse to play along with the financial schemes of the professors and some administrators are forced to join cults and use the cults to threaten professors for extorting money or trying to sleep with their girl friends. (Torulagha, 2012).

Following from the above facts, Torulagha (2012) asserts that the education system is turning many young men into hooligans and young female into prostitutes. Both groups graduate from the university with no sense of academic discipline and moral responsibility. Education proficiency is sacrificed for quick money making schemes.

Corruption in education makes the public perception of our universities to be a place of cultism, raping, kidnapping, and no longer a place of education. The corruption in education definitely leads to producing of half-baked graduates.

Ojo and Ofojebe (2008) pointed out that corruption in education increases transaction costs, reduces the efficiency and quality of service, distort the decision making process and undermines social values. Corruption accounts to high rates of budgeting allocation to education with almost nothing to show for it.

Corruption in education has enormity of effect on the output from the system in the area of productivity and the degree of acceptance in the labour market and educational institution, especially outside the country.

Combating Corruption in Education using African Traditional Practice

Many measures have been adopted in the fight against corruption in Education in Nigeria. Yet all the measures have proved to be inadequate. The perpetrators will always device a mean to beat any measure employed. The invincibility of corruption in Education and inadequacy of method to conquer it make the author to recommend

the use of alternative measures, to overcome corruption in education. The measure is the use of Traditional Religious Practices.

Rationale behind recommendation of Traditional Religious Practices

It is testament of history that people's problems must be addressed from the purview of their cosmology. A critical study of the evangelization of our people will show that largely they have accepted Christianity but not converted to it. The acceptance was significantly out of baits (education, white collar jobs, decent wears, gun, white man's drink, etc). The real problem is that Christianity was left at this prima facie acceptance and was not nurtured in the light of its everydayness. Christian theology though deepened, but it is lifeless in the sense that it never touched the core of Africa, his (African) reality (Anusi, 1994). It has always been a transfer of developed theology from a background having often underrated frame of mind and cosmology to the African. No matter how infallible and ineluctable, how sublime and elaborate a religion is, if it is alien to the people's everyday life, then it is at best used as a very fine suit, for formal celebrities. But, it is discarded at much deeper and intimate level where the people stand before and encounter themselves, their real world, their events and life (Anusi, 1994). That is why one would be scared that our people have two faiths in the same church or two religions: Official and intimate. The former (Christianity) they resort to when they "have no problems or have "official" needs (like: Wedding, dedication of a child, warming of a house, etc). they opt for the latter (African Traditional Religion) when they have "intimate" problems (Like: Witchcrafts, sickness, diabolic disturbances – claimed and assumed, mysterious and constant death, backwards in business, debt recovery, land dispute, insecurity, etc). This is because the theology (Christian religion) that guides them is developed in the context alien to these phenomena as they happen in and to the African. What we have today among Christians are rather a people confronted and accosted by the reality of their indispensable worldview. The reality caught them unawares, unprepared as the theology that is at the background of faith is still singing in an incomprehensive language.

The above facts show syncretism of our people who play double allegiance in their faith – allegiance to Christ and allegiance to deities. Our people practice Christian religion, yet they are more intimate and more acquainted with the practices of African Traditional religion. Majority of them fear deities, gods, idols and respect them more than they do to Christ. This is the reason why God's commandments and Christ teachings cannot influence or control the character and behavior of many. They often see Christ and God as too merciful and cannot give them what they need immediately. This makes them to turn to the local deities where they believe that they can receive prompt answers. Deities are seen as being merciless and can never forgive you when you offend them. They believe that they inflict immediate punishment which is commonly death. This is the reason why political godfathers in Nigeria will always take their political sons to shrine of a power deity to swear an oath of allegiance to the political godfathers. Again when land dispute occurs in a community, most people use the deities to settle the dispute through oath taking in the name of a popular deity. Some people keep the insignia, wand or object of a deity in their houses, farmlands, economic trees, car, farm animals, etc in order to protect them from thieves and vandals. If the people can use these traditional practices privately, it is incumbent on the government to adopt these practices to checkmate corruption in Education.

Again for many Africans, religion is perceived primarily in terms of interaction with a spirit world. This aspect of religion is hardly considered by the western world. Yet ideas concerning a spirit world play a major role in both legitimizing and discouraging violence (Haar and Elis, 2008). In many African's war, fighters seek traditional medicine or other objects or substances that are believed to be channels of spiritual power. These are presumed to make the people who possess them effective in battle or to protect them from injury (Elis, 2001). Example is the "Kamajors" – a militia which was formed during the civil wars of the 1990 in Sierra Leone. Think also of Bakassi security outfit in Nigeria. If our Christians can adopt these traditional practices to solve their problems and to fortify themselves against enemies, the government needs to consider such practices as effective means of debarring stakeholders in education from perpetrating corrupt practices.

The African Traditional Religion needed to be adopted.

The following traditional practices should be effective in combating education corruption, viz:

- Putting the money and property meant for education under the custodian of a powerful and fearful deity (arusi)
- Swearing of oath of office using a wand (ofò) or any object of a powerful deity
- Tying of deities insignias or objects in the offices so that anybody who tampers with the property of the school, money, female student (without their consent) should be punished with death.
- Students swearing in the shrine of a powerful deity that they will not participate in any type of examination malpractice.
- Workers in education sector after employment should take an oath in the shrine of a powerful deity that they should not involve themselves in any malpractice.

- Parents after admission of their children should swear an oath before a powerful and dreadful deity that they should not aid their children to participate in any form of examination malpractice.
- Security personnel involved in standardized examination swearing an oath before employment, in shrine of a deity that they will not aid and abate the students, teachers and schools in any form of illegality.
- Examination officers, supervisors and invigilators in any examination should swear a traditional religion oath that they will not aid students in their examination.
- Lecturers in the universities should be made to swear an oath in a shrine of a powerful deity in their locality that they will not exploit the student in any form.
- Dedicating a school/ education offices/ properties/ equipment/ land to a powerful and dreaded deity in their locality to guide them and punish with death anybody who tempers with them.

These practices, according to Ajala (2013) are practiced secretly by Christians and other adherents of foreign religion and he believes that when they are made official and used in education sector or nay government, establishments will be more effective than the intervention of Economic Finance Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC), as well as any other corruption fighting agency in Nigeria.

The problems of these practices according to Attama (2013), are that the practices will infringe into the religious rights of the people. The Leaders in education sector may oppose these practices. Again, some Christian will like to remain jobless instead of adopting these practices. But the problem of corruption is glaring and everybody is seeing and suffering the effects today. In the offices, you see graduates who cannot write even a letter or speak correctly, yet they have first class in their degree examination. Again, we witness infrastructure decay in education sector and maltreatment of students, exploitation and raping. All these must be stopped.

Based on the issues raised above people's opinion need to be sought to determine the effectiveness of these practices in checkmating corruption in education. To do this the following research questions are raised to guide the study.

1. What African Tradition Religion (ATR) practices are relevant in stopping corruption in education in Nigeria?
2. How effective are these Traditional Religious practices in stopping corruption in education sector in Nigeria?
3. What are the perceived problems of using these practices in combating corruption in Education in Nigeria?

Methodology

The survey design was used in carrying out this study. The population of the study comprises all the people that work in Education Sector. The sample of the study was made up of 631 subjects. The subjects are made up of Education Administrators, lecturers, professors, principals, school proprietors, WAEC and NECO officials, parents, students and security personnels. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample size of the study. The instrument for data was a questionnaire composed by the author and was validated by the experts. The questionnaire was proved by the experts to have face and content validity. The questionnaire was termed "Traditional Religion Practices Questionnaire (TRPQ). The questionnaire is a comprehensive questionnaire suitable for all categories of people and takes approximately 45 minutes to be completed and focus on the methods or practices in curbing corruption and their effectiveness and problems.

The reliability co-efficient of the instrument was done by administering TRPQ to 50 people who were not respondents to the study. The reliability analysis yielded Cronbach's alpha 0.78. The researcher used direct contact approach with the help of research assistant to facilitate the work. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the questions. A mean score of 2.50 and above were regarded as indicating the respondents agreement with the item while items with mean scores less than 2.50 were regarded as indicating the respondent disagreement with the terms.

Results

The findings of the study are presented according to the research question.

Research Question 1

What African Tradition Religion practices are relevant in stopping corruption in education in Nigeria?

Table I

The Traditional Religion practices relevant in stopping corruption in Education.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Workers taking oath of office using wand (of) or object of a powerful deity	3.84	1.92	Agree
2	Dedicating a school money, property, land, equipment and vehicle to a powerful deity to guide and punish with death all those who will steal or misuse these things.	3.81	1.91	Agree
3	Workers swearing in the shrine of a powerful and dreadful deity to be honest and sincere in all their dealings in the school and educational offices.	3.50	1.92	Agree
4	Student taking oath in the shrine of powerful deity that they will not involve themselves in any type of examination malpractice in their internal and external examination.	3.35	1.66	Agree
5	Lecturer should swear before a powerful and popular deity that they will not exploit student financially and sexually.	3.66	1.86	Agree
6	Keeping the insignia or objects of a deity in the schools and offices to guide and watch and punish any unscrupulous teacher/lecturer/worker.	2.50	1.86	Agree
7	Parent should take an oath with a powerful deity that they will not aid their children in any form of examination malpractice.	2.75	1.18	Agree
8	Security personnel involved in examination and school security men should take an oath in the shrine of a popular and powerful deity that they will not aid and abate the students, teachers and school proprietors in any form of illegality in the school.	2.98	1.53	Agree
9	Examination officers, invigilators, supervisors should take an oath with the object of a powerful deity in the school that they will not aid and abate the student in any form of examination malpractice.	3.27	1.65	Agree
10	All the people in education sector to take an oath in the shrine of a powerful and dreaded deity in their various localities that they will not embezzle education funds or involved in any fraud.	3.54	1.95	Agree
	Total Grand Mean	3.32		

The result in the table II reveals grand mean scores 3.37. all the mean scores in the table above the decision level of 2.50 indicating that the respondents agreed and accepted all the methods or practices as adequate in checkmating corruption in Education.

Research Question 2

How effective are these Traditional Religious practices in stopping corruption in education sector in Nigeria?

Table II: Mean scores and standard deviations of respondents responses on the effectiveness of Traditional Religion practices in stopping corruption in Education.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The practices will be more effective than the intervention of Economic and Finance Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independence Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC).	3.40	1.92	Agree
2	The practices will be more effective than sanctions of officers and students e.g cancellation of results or handing over the culprit to police, etc.	3.49	1.93	Agree
3	They will be more effective than mounting of Anti-Malpractice billboards in vantage positions.	3.14	1.77	Agree
4	Sensitization of government/stakeholders will serve better than these traditional religion practices.	2.13	1.46	Agree
5	Use of security bags for the collection of security materials will be more effective than the traditional religion practices.	2.01	1.41	Agree
6	The Traditional Religion Practices stop corruption more than threat of dismissing from work or expulsion.	2.84	1.69	Agree
	Total Grand Mean	2.91		

In table III above the mean scores items 1, 2, 3 and 6 are 3.40, 3.49, 3.14 and 2.84 respectively. These are above the cut-off line of 2.50 and this indicates that the respondents accepted the items. Items 4 and 5 have mean scores of 2.13 and 2.01 respectively. These are below the cut-off line of 2.50. This shows that the respondents rejected that sensitization of government/stakeholders and use of security bags for the collection of

security materials will be more effective than the use of traditional religion practices.

Research Question 3

What are the perceived problems of using this practice in combating corruption in Education in Nigeria?

Table III: Mean scores on the perceived problems of the use

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The implication will lead to many deaths in education sector.	3.10	1.72	Agree
2	The corrupt leaders will not allow the implementation of the Traditional practices. Because as Africans they know the efficacy of oath swearing before a deity.	3.65	1.91	Agree
3	It will encroach into the religious rights of the people who will in bid to retain the job become unfaithful to their belief.	2.84	1.69	Agree
4	It will lead to mass failure because it will prevent students engaging in examination malpractice.	2.59	1.61	Agree
5	The practice will give glory to the devil whom we Christian believe that is operating under the guise of the deities.	3.74	1.86	Agree
6	It will lead to brain drain in education sector as many people who are corrupt will quit their job than swearing in the name of a deity.	2.72	1.64	Agree
	Total Grand Mean	3.11		

The table IV above shows that item 1-6 have the mean scores of 3.10, 3.65, 2.84, 2.59, 3.74 and 2.72 respectively. This implies that the respondents accepted the whole items in table as perceived problems that will militate against traditional religious practices.

Discussion of the Findings.

The results of the findings in Table II showed that the respondents agreed that the items in the table are the traditional religion practices that would curb the legendary corruption in Education. These traditional religion practices include using the object(s) of a local deity in taking oath of office, dedicating schools to a powerful and fearful deity to guide them and punish all the corrupt persons; workers swearing in the shrine of a popular and fearful deity to be honest and sincere in all dealings in school and education offices; students taking oath in the shrine of a powerful and dreadful deity that they will not participate in any form of examination malpractice in their internal and external examinations, lecturer/instructors and teachers swearing before fearful and powerful deity that they will not exploit students financially and sexually; keeping an insignia or objects of a powerful and wicked deity in the schools and offices in education; parents swearing an oath in a shrine of powerful and popular deity that they will not aid and abate their children in any form of malpractice in the school; security personnel involved in examination and security of schools swearing before a powerful and wicked deity that they will not aid and abate students, teachers and school in any form of illegality. Examination officer, invigilators, supervisors, examination body (WAEC and NECO) swearing an oath in the name of a powerful and fearful deity that they will not aid or abate student, school proprietors and parents in any form of malpractice in examination and all the people involved in education to take an oath with a wand (ofo) or any object of a powerful and dreadful deity that they will not embezzle money meant for education or involve in any form of education fraud.

The result of findings in table III showed that the adoption of Tradition Religion Practices in combating Education corruption will be more effective than the intervention of Economic and Finance Crime Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). The practice also be more effective than sanction on students, education officers, like cancelation of results, handing over the culprits to police, etc. they are more effective also than mounting of Anti-malpractice Billboards; Sensitization of governments stakeholders; use of security bags for collection of security materials and threat of expulsion of students and dismissal of the workers.

The result of finding in table IV showed the adoption of traditional religion practices may have the following problems, like: defaulters being killed by the deities, the corrupt and unscrupulous leaders who know the power of local deities will not allow the traditional religion practices to be adopted; the use of these practice may encroach into the religious rights of some people; the practice will give glory to devil who operates through these local deities and it will lead to brain drain as many people who are corrupt may not be willing to swear in the name of deities.

Conclusion

It has been established that corruption in education has become legendary and endemic and has defiled all the orthodox solutions. There is every need to devise new solutions to stop these menace. Any African man, especially the Igbos, know that local deities have potency to harm, cause problem or even to kill any individual

who offend them. Syncreticism is also normal practice among the Nigerians. Mixing Christianity and African Traditional Religion, there is every need to use any good means the people fear to control their excesses. That is, the adoption of African Traditional Religious Practices to checkmate corruption in education in Nigeria. African Traditional Religious Practices will not only help to curb education corruption, but will also re-direct the minds of stakeholders in education to pursue excellence in education. There is every need therefore to adopt these practices of traditional religion.

Recommendation

- All stakeholders in education should support the adoption of Tradition Religious Practices in curbing the menace of corruption in education.
- Government should employ only God-fearing and qualified teachers at all levels of education.
- NUC (Nigerian universities commission) should not only constantly be going on strike, the commission should curtail the excesses of the professors and lecturers in the university.
- Government and Churches should engage in societal re-engineering and re-orientation to revamp moral values.
- School should create learning-friendly environment in their schools.
- There should be training and retraining of teachers to equip them for the challenges posed by a technology driven world.
- Government should try and make the salary of teachers/lecturers reasonable i.e there should be appropriate recognition and remuneration of teachers.
- The teachers training institutions should produce teachers who have knowledge of both content and pedagogy, teachers with good morals and with good level of pedagogy in teaching business.
- A concerted effort is needed to change students' attitude toward learning in place of malpractice.
- People should internalize the teaching of their religion and act them out in their dealings.
- Qualitative and affordable education should be made available for all.

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WAEC Annual Reports presented these various malpractices in the table below

Table IV: Examination Malpractice in School Candidates Examination in Nigeria.

S/n	Types of Malpractice	Percentage of Candidates Involved					
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
		Number of Candidates					
		636,064	1,025,186	909,888	1,066,831	1,035,280	1,080,162
1	Bringing in of foreign materials	1.23	1.27	1.43	1.34	1.60	1.17
2	Irregular activities inside and outside the examination hall.	1.61	1.45	1.81	2.80	2.35	1.46
3	Collusion	3.71	2.21	7.05	6.00	6.45	4.06
4	Impersonation	0.07	0.06	0.09	0.11	0.11	0.06
5	Leakage	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
6	Mass cheating	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.61	0.40	0.01
7	Insult/assault on supervisors/invigilators	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.07	0.07
8	Miscellaneous/new cases	0.25	0.04	0.07	Nil	0.19	0.03
	Total	6.46	5.07	10.47	10.88	11.17	6.86

Culled from WAEC Annual Reports by Uzoigwe 2013