



EDUCATION CORRUPTION AND TEACHER ABSENTEEISM IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Education corruption displays ample evidence that warrants inefficiencies and absenteeism among teachers. Teachers are the transmitters of knowledge who help to ensure that children learn, they are role models and in most rural communities they are the most educated and respected personages. High teacher absenteeism can exist when teachers have very low levels of motivation to work and little commitment to the profession, and when there is lack of accountability in the education sector. Because of the importance of education to society, international bodies emphasize the need for attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers. It is necessary to state that reducing official corruption in the education sector, promoting teacher welfare, designing better systems for monitoring and reducing invalid absences are among the critical measures of combating teacher absenteeism. The survey research design was used for the study and the result supports that education corruption has significant positive relationship with teacher absenteeism.

Keywords: *Education corruption, Teacher Absenteeism, Primary School, Secondary School, Universal basic education programme.*



1. INTRODUCTION

Education is essential for economic growth and social development and for reducing the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Education also interacts with other resources to increase productivity. For example, education helps to make health and nutrition investments more effective.

According to Patrinos and Kagia (2007) female education yields some of the highest returns, as it is inversely related to infant and child mortality and is associated with lower fertility rates. Every additional year of schooling increases a person's productivity and increases earnings. Therefore it is suggested that investments in education are a critical part of partial development.

In Nigeria for example, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme on 29th September, 1999 in Sokoto, Sokoto State, as part of its foundational national development agenda. The UBE Act was passed in April 2004, to support an educational programme of the Nigerian Government that provides free, compulsory, and continuous 9-year education in two levels: 6 years of primary and 3 years of junior secondary education for all school-aged children.

But this idea of the government has not been realized because of endemic corruption in the education sector and weak political governance from the federal through the local government levels in Nigeria for the last many years. In Nigeria the twin issues of absenteeism and tardiness among teachers are common because teachers often seek other avenues of livelihood since their salaries and allowances are grossly in arrears of payment.

In some states in Nigeria, gratuity for teachers who retired for up to ten years is yet to be paid, talkless of pensions, despite annual budgetary allocations. Corrupt education practices around the world continue to manifest in inefficient use of resources, and ultimately prohibit the achievement of a quality education for all children.

Many education scholars argue that the Millennium Development Goals for education (Universal Completion of Primary School, and gender parity) may not be achieved without strengthening and building the instruments needed to control corruption in education. After the launching of the UBE programme in Nigeria, the



FGN provided matching grants totaling N48.98 billion between 2005 and 2006, and has continued to do so on annual basis.

Again, this has not translated to any improvement in the quality of basic education in the country largely due to corruption in the sector resulting to the fact that some communities in Nigeria saw primary school blocks only in 2015. While inaugurating the Enugu – Abakaliki Road, Oji (2015) reports that the FGN through the Minister of Works unveiled over 80 social infrastructure projects built in 50 communities along the road corridor.

Such projects include 8 new classroom blocks and 2 new primary schools built in two communities thus, availing the communities the opportunity to see Primary School blocks for the first time. Corruption has different meanings to different people. Most broadly, it can be defined as the “misuse of office for unofficial ends”. Corrupt acts include but not-limited to bribery, extortion, influence peddling, nepotism, fraud, use of money to bribe government officials to take some specific actions, and embezzlement.

Heyneman (2004) argues that education corruption includes the abuse of authority for personal and material gains. Hallak and Poisson (2001) define corruption in education as “the systematic use of public office for private benefit whose impact is significant on access to quality or equity in education”. They posit that in a surprisingly large number of countries in all regions of the world, corruption is pervasive at all levels of education, from primary schools through tertiary institutions.

They claim that corruption seems to affect education in some key ways capable of leading to absenteeism by teachers. Reducing corruption and strengthening general education at primary and secondary levels is an important priority for public policies to improve the productivity and flexibility of a country’s workforce.

The importance of basic education as the foundation for further education and training has long been recognized. It leads to the acquisition of scientific knowledge which is fundamental to understanding both the natural environment and the artificial world of technology (MIDDLETON, et al, 1993).



1.1. The Phenomenon of Teacher Absenteeism

Campos and Pradhan (2007) suggest that education corruption in many parts of the world is responsible for inefficiencies and absenteeism among teachers. They insist that teachers as transmitters of knowledge and role models to students, and in some communities, the most educated and respected personages, should be encouraged to ensure that children set good training at schools and colleges. Teachers may not do better where their salaries are hardly paid.

According to the World Bank (2006a), in some developing countries, teachers salaries often reach up to 80 percent of the total education budget, and in the average teachers salaries and benefits account for 74 percent of recurrent public expenditure on education.

While this makes payment salaries precarious, the situation is compounded by education corruption, which then negatively affects the processes of teaching and learning, as well as simultaneously encouraging teacher absenteeism and tardiness (BRAY, 2003) Banerjee and Duflo (2006) found that teacher absenteeism in India was responsible for poor performance of school children.

Das, Devcon, Habyarimana, and Krishnan (2005) state that increase in teacher absenteeism in Zambia is responsible for reduction in teaching and learning effectiveness by about 36 percent. Chandburry, Hammer, Krenner, Muralidharan, and Rogers, (2006) found a significant negative relationship between teacher absenteeism and poor performance in English Language by pupils in Bangladesh.

Teacher absenteeism phenomenon in Nigeria is most among teachers within the 20-39 years age bracket. Because of education corruption that contributes in delayed or nonpayment of salaries and benefits, these teachers often look elsewhere to satisfy their personal needs (SASPSFORD; TZANNATOS, 1993).

In Nigeria, there is no open and transparent procedure for the recruitment of teachers and even, their training, retraining and promotion. This brings about corruption and frustrates most young teachers out of the noble profession. According to Alugbuo (2005) age is inversely related to absenteeism, in which case, absenteeism rate reduces as age increases.

1.2. Statement of the Problem



Teacher absenteeism results from a combination of individual and systematic issues. While some causes of teacher absenteeism are easily categorized as individual decisions to accept pay without providing a service, on other cases systemic problems make it difficult to blame only the teacher. In systems that are corrupt and do not promote efficiency and honesty, teachers can be just as much the victims as are the students.

In a low-income state like Nigeria where the rate of public corruption is high and teacher's salaries almost always in gross arrears, absenteeism seems to be the order of the day; to the extent that some state government had to dismiss teachers on the account of absenteeism.

According to Ogbonnaya (2012) Ebonyi state government had to suspend a school principal and 26 teacher for incompetence and absenteeism. It was found that of all the 37 teachers on payroll, only 19 signed the attendance register. Four of the 19 were present as at 1.30pm when the school was visited, the remaining 15 teachers were not on duty.

Besides the 15 who absconded after signing the attendance register, 18 teachers were absent without permission from neither the principal nor the management of the school. The government noted that teacher's incompetence, misconduct and frequent absenteeism were acts capable of undermining its determination to give to the student's qualitative education.

The National Union of Teachers (NUT) laments teacher's neglect which has positive correlation with teacher absenteeism. The NUT regrets the exclusion of teachers from the minimum wage of some state governments. The Union states that the exclusion of teachers is "totally unacceptable".

According to the Union, teachers are "Unusual workers" and should not be excluded from any decision taken about other workers. The situation of teachers is even made worse as some states have excluded them from the minimum wage in spite of the compelling force of the law. A situation like this only prevails because of too much corruption in governance (ORINTUNSIN, 2011). Added to this, is the low quality of teaching.

Most teachers in Nigerian basic education institutions of primary and secondary schools are not qualified and therefore use school hours in pursuit of



higher education. For example, out of 564, 569 teachers in primary schools in Nigeria in 2010, only about 60 percent were qualified. Also, only 17 percent of 133,338 teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in 2010 were computer literate (UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION COMMISSION (UBEC) 2008, 2010).

Teachers suffer serious neglect across Africa. For example, in the early 1990s in Uganda, only 13 percent of nonsalary spending on primary education actually reached the Primary Schools. For education outcomes to improve, teachers must show up at work and perform effectively.

But education is often mired in a system where the incentives for effective service delivery are weak, corruption is rife, and political patronage is the way of life. This said situation increases the rate of absenteeism among teachers. (DEVARA JAN; REINIKKA, 2003).

Despite the global recognition of the importance of education to development, teachers in Nigeria still labour under poor environmental conditions and with poor and irregular pay. This is contrary to the popular held view that teachers are nation builders, and their contributions can never be over estimated.

To this extent, the United Nations observes October 5, of every year as Teachers' Day all over the world, as a unique day to celebrate a set of people that have invested their time, resources and skills into moulding and shaping lives all over the world. Teaching is hard work and it is poignant if it is further made tougher when teachers are forced to work in environments that are not conducive to learning.

In some cases teachers are expected to reach unattainable goals with inadequate tools, at times they perform a miracle by accomplishing the impossible task. (ADEBANIBO, 2015). Because of the deplorable condition of education and teachers in Nigeria the Kaduna state government has declared a state of emergency in the education sector.

The Kaduna state government believes that one legacy for the rebirth of Nigeria is the restoration of education as a tool to free the people from the traps of poverty and ignorance. It believes that the provision of free basic education in decent schools and with skilled teachers is a priority of government as a route to freedom from want and disease (AKHAINE, 2015).



1.3. Objective of the Study

The study was designed to explain the relationship between education – corruption and teacher absenteeism in Nigeria.

1.4. Delimitation of the study

The study was delimited to South East geopolitical area that includes, Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States, out of the 36 states in Nigeria, and it was assumed that the opinion of the people in area would be a fair representation of the opinion of the people in Nigeria.

1.5. Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by lack of research grant and current literature in the area of investigation. The distance between states in Nigeria limited the coverage to more states. But these constraints did not dilute the academic content of the study, because the typical examples of the fate of teachers in Abia, Borno, Ebonyi and Kaduna states reflect the situations in other states.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The study will help education planners, teachers, students, researchers, and the general public to reflect on the phenomenon of education corruption and teacher absenteeism.

1.7. Hypotheses

To achieve the objective of the study two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.01 level of significance.

- H0: There is no relationship between education corruption and teacher absenteeism
- H1: There is a relationship between education corruption and teacher absenteeism

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Harmonizing the pay of teachers with those in the other ministries and agencies has been under severe agitation since 1947. Even the implementation and



payment of Teachers Salary Scale (TSS) approved by government remain on the drawing board for many years.

The inequality in teachers pay and benefits and not professionalizing the teaching vocation are among the causes of teacher absenteeism. Also, good working relationships and conditions are essential to give teachers the psychological, physical and behavioural appetite to avoid absenteeism and feel competent enough to perform their duties (UGOANI, 2013).

The negative impact of education corruption in Nigeria is obvious. It is endemic and pervasive from the primary school level through the tertiary levels. It almost always occurs at any stage and among any group of actors from policy makers at the ministerial level to providers at the school level as teachers and service providers such as contractors to beneficiaries of education such as students and parents.

The negative consequences of corruption in education environment increase the cost of education and lead to a fall in the level of governmental output, and consequently reducing necessary investment in education. (PATRINOS; KAGIA, 2007; INYANGA, 2014) opines that students who are educated in corrupt systems may not learn the skills needed to take advantage of available opportunities and contribute to economic and social development.

He asserts that corruption also impacts negatively on core values and ethics during the formative years of young people's lives as it may undermine an entire generation's core values regarding accountability, personal responsibility and integrity.

Education corruption transmits into poorly constructed classrooms, leaking roof tops, dysfunctional toilet facilities, poor and shabby furniture items, as well as the ever present lack of learning and teaching materials such as textbooks and other materials in schools.

Endemic education corruption can cause a much less than optimal composition of government expenditure and affects the general overall access, quality and equity of education because the poor and less privileged may be confronted with the payment of illegal fees and bribes to enroll their children on free public schools.



Education corruption is closely linked to offering children fewer learning opportunities and learning outcomes as countries with higher levels of such status tend to have higher school dropout rates. Education corruption is a major cause of non payment of teacher salaries which is positively correlated with teacher absenteeism.

2.1. Teacher Absenteeism in Nigeria

Absenteeism can be defined as “the failure of workers to report on the job when they are scheduled to work, that is, when they are actually on the payroll”. In all parts of the world, absence from work has, generally, been on the increase even though many organizations have put in place positive changes in their bold attempts to reduce the twin incidence of absenteeism and tardiness.

Among the changes sweeping across the world today in the world of work is the introduction of flexible working hours to enable workers balance work and family roles. In human resource context, the human person is the individual with specific skills to carry out specific duties for the achievement of desired organizational or institutional goals.

It is therefore no exaggeration to say that no matter how elegant a school and its programmes may be, the implementation of such programmes will not be possible without competent and effective teachers being readily available to handle them. Obviously, the ultimate realization of the aims and aspirations of education policies and by implication the realization of a nation’s needs for quality manpower depends to a large extent on the quality and quantity of teachers in the schools who are ready to teach.

The problems of absenteeism are much more serious than that of tardiness even though both are intricately related because the tardiness-prone persons are frequently the same as the absence-prone persons. Again, many cases of tardiness usually lapse into absence by chronic absentees.

For these reasons therefore, while concentrating on the problems of absenteeism, it is possible and important to simultaneously capture the essential aspects of tardiness. The problem of absenteeism increases in the situation where the physical working conditions are poor.



Lack of moral and material recognition, equitable pay and benefits, right to participate in decision making processes, training, rewards such as good pension, societal respect, poor supervision, career path and self-esteem can significantly affect attendance to a very high degree.

Absenteeism and tardiness also increase where employees have unhealthy or poor interpersonal relationships with their immediate supervisors. For example, a teacher who feels that the education secretary is unfair or unfriendly, in some cases tends to have poor attendance records. (ALIYU; AKODU, 2003; AYODELE, 2003; UWAZURIKE, 1991; TORRINGTON; HALL; TAYLOR, 2005).

Absenteeism is usually high among young female workers who are nursing mothers as they struggle to cope with work and home roles. Teachers still lack the professional and academic freedoms to develop and find the best classroom methods to approach the processes of teaching and learning.

This lack of basic autonomy dates back to the colonial period. At first it was felt that a teacher from the primary school was not a university material and as such the training gave him/her an academic background of the secondary school student. He/she also received only professional training.

The implication of this was that the amount of training and education received by a primary school teacher was just for teaching at that level. Secondly, in the economic order a primary school teacher does not belong to the senior public servant cadre. This colonial mentality has been carried over to the present day.

The situation is that if a primary school teacher wishes to remain in primary school teaching, there is no room for advancement. The effect on a brilliant young teacher is his/her readiness either to leave the profession entirely or to move academically in such a manner as to opt out of primary school teaching and at best to teach at a secondary school level or join the Local Government Education Authority (LGEA).

Therefore, the policy that determines the salary and thus the educational level of the primary school teachers discriminates against retaining young brilliant teachers interested in primary education at the primary school level. The secondary school teacher struggles to have some training on part time either in the University or in a College of Education for self-improvement and obviously these are some factors of



absenteeism and tardiness among school teachers in Local Government Areas in Nigeria which impede their performance.

2.2. Teachers' Role

Teachers play important roles in society and as such should be regular and seen to be regular at work. The teachers' role is determined by 4 major variables:

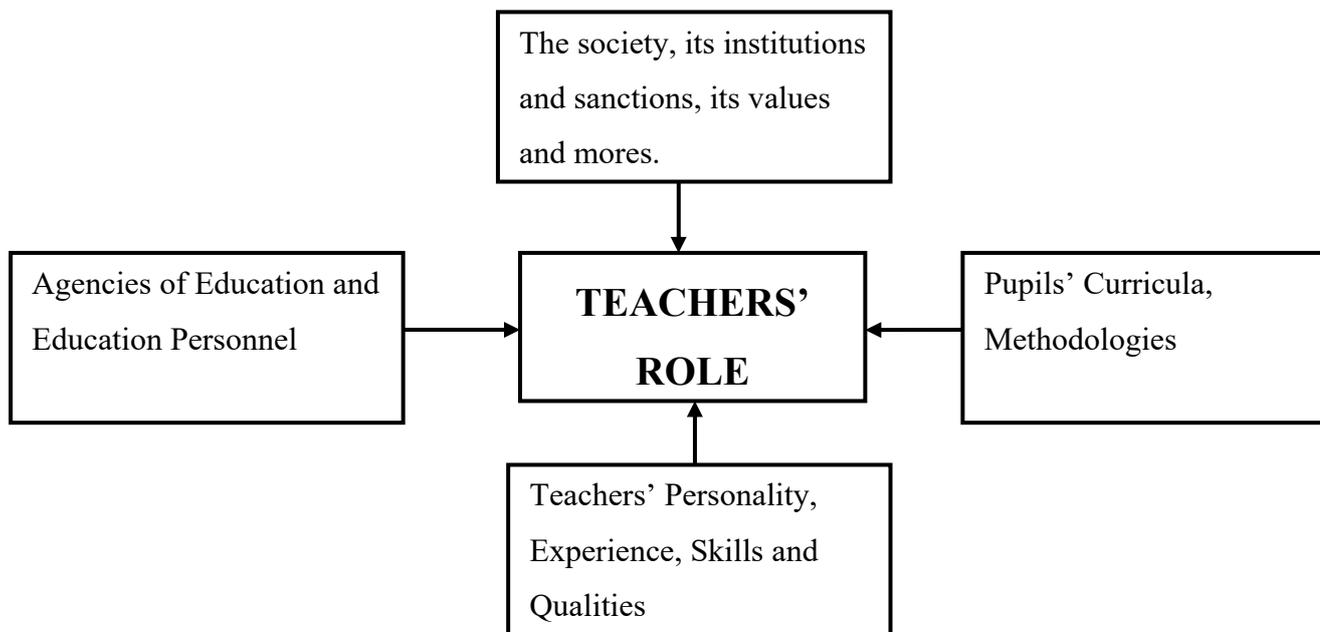


Figure 1: Determinants of the Teacher's Role.

Source: Durojaiye (2008): A New Introduction to Educational Psychology.

In Figure 1, four determinants of the teachers' role were identified. First, the society, its institutions and sanctions, its values and mores, determine what role the teacher sees himself called upon to play and what role the society expects him to play. Secondly, the agencies of education and educational personnel determine the teacher's role.

Thirdly, the pupils, their needs, their abilities, their personalities, their performance and their level of achievement determine the teachers' role. Teachers need better training to perform well. The statement by Wike (2012) that about 80% of teachers in basic education were not qualified is unfortunate.

The curricula to be covered and the methodologies used also contribute to determine the teachers' role. In the final situation, the teachers' personality, his experience, his skills, and qualities, his membership group, and his reference group, his aspirations and ambitions, will influence the way he sees his roles as a teacher.



Work overload can be very stressful and can lead to absenteeism and tardiness among teachers (OJO, 1984; ONABAMIRO, 1984).

These issues need remedy in order to improve the performance of teachers in the various Local Government Areas in Nigeria. The teacher role is crucial because it is almost generally accepted that the most important legacy a responsible government can bequeath to its citizenry is qualitative education.

Education eliminates ignorance, poverty and disease in society. Experts suggest that it is through education that fundamental human rights of individuals may be promoted. Eliminating education corruption and teacher absenteeism are central issues for a nation because education is the catalyst for production, good health development, rural transformation among other things.

Education corruption affects the training of teachers and their performance. For example, a recent study showed that about 80 percent of primary school teachers in North West, Nigeria, Sokoto State, in particular were unqualified, resulting to massive failure of Pupils in the West African Examination Council and National Examination Council conducted examinations. (UGOANI, 2014).

International organizations like the Organization for Economic Co-operation and development (2005) emphasizes the importance of attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers for socio-economic progress. It is also necessary to state that reducing official corruption in the education sector, promoting teacher welfare, designing better systems for monitoring and reducing unexcused and invalid absences are among the critical measures of combating teacher absenteeism.

(OLA, 2012; BRUNS, et al. 2003; ALLEN, 1981; ANNAMALAI 2001; KLITGAARD, 1998) The matter of teachers in Nigeria has reached a crescendo that political parties make it a campaign issue. For example, Otti (2015) campaigning for Abia State governorship states among others: "Dear teachers of Abia State, it is only a hypocrite that will claim ignorance of the great suffering you all are currently passing through in your own father land for opting to teach, train and educate Abia children, I am aware of all your predicaments in trying to earn a living as teachers.

You are hardly promoted and when eventually promoted you are hardly paid salaries. You supposedly go on annual leave while your leave allowances are hardly paid, you work and you are not paid as at when due. Hunger and starvation have



pervaded your homes. Your teaching environment is nothing to write home about. Headmasters and principals oftentimes, run their schools from their pockets". This type of situation is a manifestation of education corruption and the root of teacher absenteeism in Nigeria.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The survey research design was used for the study. Surveys refer to an investigation into certain things or events that exist or occur at the time of the research and connected with some problem situation that is felt over a wide area by a large population.

It is a type of research carried out over a wide area with a view to ascertaining what exists at the time of the research in their natural settings. Surveys are oriented towards ascertaining and establishing the status quo, facts, or pieces of information at the time of the research and presenting such facts, as they are or going further to analyze. Surveys therefore, could either be descriptive or analytical. Obodoeze (1996)

3.2. Population and Size

The target population comprised teachers in Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States, of Nigeria. The sample for the study was selected through the simple random sampling technique, while the size was determined using the Yamane's technique.

3.3. Instrument

The data for the study were collected through questionnaire administration. Additional data were also collected through books, reports, newspapers, among others. The mixed method approach was deemed necessary so as to complement, supplement and validate data through each other.

3.4. Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire was built into 30 items along a 5-point Likert type scale with numeric values ranging from 5 – 1. Validity and reliability of the Likert scale have



been found to be internally consistent by previous investigations, with reliability through the Cronbach's technique put at about .82.

3.5. Data Analysis

Data generated were analyzed through descriptive and Chi-Square statistical methods, using the statistical package for the social sciences. The results were presented in tables capable of easy understanding and further analyses.

4. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic variables of the sample

S/N	Dimension	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	20 – 29	151	42.90
		30 – 39	102	28.98
		40 – above	99	28.12
		Total	352	100
2	Sex	Female	262	74.43
		Male	90	25.52
		Total	352	100
3.	Education	Doctorate	3	0.85
		Master	25	7.10
		High Diploma	40	11.36
		Bachelor	80	22.73
		NCE	85	24.15
		TC II	119	33.81
		Total	352	100
4	Specialization	Social Studies	75	21.31
		Sciences	42	11.93
		Humanities	65	18.46
		Other	170	48.30
		Total	352	100
5	Year of Experience	Below 5	160	45.45
		6 – 10	106	30.11
		11 – 20	55	15.63
		21 and above	31	8.81
		Total	352	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

- (Data Set O) Chi-Square Test Frequencies

Table 2: Test Frequencies

Measures	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
8.00	8	70.4	- 62.4
23.00	23	70.4	- 47.4
40.00	40	70.4	- 30.4
93.00	93	70.4	22.6
188.00	188	70.4	117.6
Total	352		

Table 3: Test Statistics



	VAR00003
Chi-Square ^a	304.051
Df	4
Asymp.Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 70.4.

4.1. Interpretation of Results

From table 1, it was observed that the teaching profession is now populated by younger people and women who see it as a stepping stone. A country may not reach its development targets where the noble profession of teaching is more populated by temporary employees.

The issue of low teacher qualification continues to be a reason for absenteeism as they often claim to be away for lectures. Out of the study sample of 352 about 33.81 percent is yet to obtain the minimum teaching qualification of National Certificate in Education (NCE). The experienced teachers are also leaving making quality teaching and learning almost elusive.

According to Ladipo (2012) most people use teaching as a stepping stone, pending the time there is something better to do. This type of attitude contributes to absenteeism because of lack of commitment to motivate teachers and reduce the rate of absenteeism governments continue review policies from time to time.

Alabelewe (2013) reports that the Kaduna State Government approved a backlog of promotions of 13, 667 teaching and non teaching staff as against the 15,758 earlier short listed for the 2010 and 2011 promotion exercise to motivate them. From the test statistics, the calculated Chi-Square value of approximately 304 was significantly greater than the table value of approximately 13 at 0.01 level of significance with 4 degrees of freedom.

This empirical result showed that education corruption has significant position relationship with teacher absenteeism. Therefore, Ho1 which stated that education corruption has no relationship with teacher absenteeism was rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This is the interest of the study.

4.2. Discussion



For decades teachers have lamented poor treatment that most often encourage the incidence of absenteeism. Despite huge budgetary allocations teachers are still underpaid and in some states in Nigeria like Abia State teacher salaries have not been paid since April 2015 to date.

During field work it was observed that teachers still work under stressful manual and poor conditions. Poor working conditions characterized by poor ventilation, illumination, and dilapidated buildings can significantly affect attendance to a greater degree than the work itself. This situation has resulted mainly due to education corruption.

People who get money to provide such services convert such money to their private use at the detriment of teachers' welfare and performance. Agencies of Education and their personnel do not show any sense of co-operation. This can lead to apathy and absenteeism. Teachers despite the important roles they play in bringing up children are given less respect and recognition in Nigeria.

In the economic order, a primary school teacher does not belong to the Senior Civil Servant Cadre, males no longer wish to join the "noble" profession because of lack of prospects. It is now a sort of dumping ground for females and others who are unable to look above their shoulders. From field work, it was noted that the service conditions of teachers are not the same with the other civil servants in the ministries and agencies.

For example, other civil servants are promoted as and when due, but teachers stagnant for a longer time. Also, when other civil servants retire, they are paid their gratuity and placed on monthly pension but the reverse is the case in respect of teachers. When teachers retire, their pension starts to run after 6-12 months. And no arrears are paid to them. The payment for the period of retirement and the start of pension payment is usually consumed by "Mr. and Mrs. Education Corruption".

Across Nigeria, teacher's promotions are always in arrears. For example, Alabelewa (2013) reports the executive chairman of Kaduna State Universal Basic Education Board as saying that a total of 8,360 teachers were shortlisted for 2010 and 7,398 for the 2011 promotion exercise. Another sad aspect is the problem of notional promotion for teachers.



Fieldwork exercise proved that in Abia State for example, teachers who were promoted about 4 – 5 years ago were yet to enjoy the financial effects of such notional promotions, and teachers are placed in precarious situations of not having to contribute to policies that affect them.

The cumulative result is the declining interest reflected in the fact that the experienced teachers and the males are retreating massively from teaching because of education corruption and its consequences. Education corruption also manifests in Nigeria where state governors refuse to pay teachers salaries and still go ahead to win re-election into public office.

4.3. Scope for further studies

Further study should examine the relationship between teacher absenteeism and failure rate among pupils. This will help in finding a lasting solution for development purposes.

4.4. Recommendations:

- a) Governments and Educational Planners should ensure that teachers pay is comparable with those of their counterparts in the other establishments. This will help in checking the incidence of teachers looking elsewhere for money to meet their basic needs and which leads to absence proneness.
- b) Teachers physical working conditions should be improved upon, a situation whereby classes are held under mango trees is deplorable, and can dampen the spirit of teachers.
- c) Teachers conditions of service should be reviewed. They need to receive reasonable pension and gratuity to live a responsible life in retirement. If this is done, it would wedge the tide of the exodus of men from the noble profession.
- d) Agencies of education and education supervisors should cultivate the habit of taking the needs of teachers into view during field supervision exercises. Merely checking “lesson notes” and “attendance registers” does not explain reasons for absenteeism. There is need to appreciate their physiological, psychological and behavioural aspects.
- e) Teachers need recognition as professionals. Even though some teachers are very qualified, the society and its institutions do not often respect the



responsibility of the teacher. In Igbo land the teacher is frequently referred to as “nwa teacher” meaning small teacher. This notion should be inverted to enhance the teacher dignity.

- f) The colonial mentality that the teacher is not a university material should be discarded. They should receive proper teacher education at the University level to prepare them for their work as professional teachers.
- g) The promotion of teachers should be regular. The present practice of notional promotion that will only have financial cover after 5 years is unfortunate. You can hardly avoid absenteeism and tardiness in a situation of this nature.
- h) The teaching situation itself should be improved upon. The issue of overcrowded classrooms, lack of basic items such as text books, writing materials, desks, tables, among others, can be frustrating enough to cause absenteeism and tardiness.
- i) Most teachers in Nigeria today are females. Due to pregnancies and its related issues, the rate of absenteeism remains high among this category. Educational planners should formulate policies to cushion the need for female teachers to balance work with other family needs, like childrearing.
- j) The Old Teachers (OTs) are on their way to retirement. The higher number of present teachers is within the “jet-age” who no longer value job security but prefer to be on the “move”. Teaching and learning periods should be re-arranged to meet current realities.
- k) Training of teachers should be intensified. The government statement that about 80% of teachers in basic education were not qualified is alarming.

5. CONCLUSION

The primary or the secondary school is the right place for laying solid foundation for the education of future leaders in society. To achieve the aim teachers need to be regular at work. This study revealed that absenteeism and tardiness may be correlated with a number of factors such as supervisory style, interpersonal relationships, physical working conditions, salary and benefits, poor motivation, among others.



School supervisors must become familiar with the frequent reasons for chronic absenteeism and tardiness among teachers. Up to a point, it is not unreasonable to expect that time off the classroom should be spent searching for better work opportunities. This is so because people come to work so as to satisfy needs that they could not satisfy on their own. What do we expect if the individual is dissatisfied with the job?

There are many reasons for dissatisfaction, and most of them relate to poor motivation. For example, where anticipated opportunities for achievement or meaningful progress either slows down or is entirely eliminated, the individual becomes nervous and sensitive and starts to find fault with the job, but on the other hand, if the individual is given a challenging job with the possibility of responsibility, growth, achievement, and advancement to the peak of his ability motivation is enhanced and absenteeism reduced.

The best way of checking absenteeism and tardiness is by preventing them from occurring. This can be done in many ways including the adoption of the above recommendations based on the findings of this study. This study found strong positive relationship between education corruption and teacher absenteeism in Nigeria.

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