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STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF PROFESSIONALISM GAPS AMONG LECTURERS OF PUBLIC TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study is on students' perception of professionalism gaps among lecturers of tertiary institutions in Kogi State and it explored the incidence of corrupt practices in the course of carrying out their official responsibilities. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of 58,620 students in public tertiary institutions in Kogi State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 383 students. A questionnaire termed Students' Perception of Professionalism Gaps among Lecturers of Public Tertiary Institutions (SPPGLPTIQ) was used for the study. Reliability Coefficient of 0.84 was found suitable for the study. Simple Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation were used in the Analysis of Research Questions, while, PPMC was used in the Analysis of data at 0.05 Alpha Levels. The study found that some Lecturers are culpable of the incidence of professional gaps; Weak lecturer's welfare by government, accounts for their actions, these practices have negative consequences on both the lecturers and the integrity of the institutions. The work recommended that regular orientation and re-orientations exercise should be organized for all university lecturers on work ethics and best practices through regular workshops and seminars among others.

KEYWORDS: Students Perception, Professionalism, Professionalism Gap, Tertiary Institutions, Perception

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary institutions are referred to all post-secondary education which includes the universities, mono-technics, polytechnics, colleges of education and other professional institutions. Worldwide it is regarded as the citadel of knowledge, the fountain of intellectualism, the most appropriate ground for the incubation of leaders of tomorrow. In a similar direction, Bolarinwa, (2023), adduced that tertiary institutions in Nigeria are regarded as the engine room for economic and national development. They are veritable tools for the realization of national goals, the development of cultured citizens and the

promotion of basic research. Olofin, (2021) posited that tertiary institutions fulfil major functions for the society as a knowledge and value provider. Their roles in this regard explain why the Federal Government of Nigeria acknowledges that University is a fulcrum for national development (FGN, 2013). The main goal of higher education is to support research, community service, and the teaching and learning process (Owan and Angunwa, 2019).

Succinctly, high intellectual standard and merit should be the watchword in the university system – a system a student must first be certified worthy in character and learning before being admitted into the Honours Degree Hall and certification. This goal is aimed at achieving the Nigerian national objectives. Thus, Nigeria's educational system is integrated into its national philosophy or objectives, which are: A free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy, and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (National Policy on Education, 2013). The following, are the aims and objectives of tertiary education in Nigeria:

1. The acquisition, development and inculcation of proper value orientation for the survival of the individual and the society.
2. The development of the intellectual capacities of individual to understand and appreciate their environments.
3. The acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop in to useful members of the society and
4. The acquisition of an objective view of the local and external environment. (National Policy on Education, 2013)

Thus, the end product of this citadel of learning has not justified the above purpose. There is an obvious gap between goal attainment and the desired objectives of education. The society is plagued by a quantum of social ills which have affected the development of individual and the entire society. These social ills plaguing the society have dramatically crept into the schools and it is perpetually eroding the values of education as the moral compass of the society. These challenges have exposed the system seemingly ineffective and unproductive capacity. These practices have become routine and has eaten deep into the fabrics of institutional integrity. The ‘ivory tower concept’ which the university is viewed at, as a tower on the hill looking down on the city and providing directions to change of attitudes towards development and acting as a transformation agent to the society is no longer operational in the case of Nigeria Universities and other tertiary institutions (Ehiamentolor, 2003 and Norah, 2005).

It appears the teaching-learning process and its environment has lost their aura. Lecturers that are supposed to anchor the achievement of these goals seem to have become complicit in this accusation and have created a gap between the desired and the goal attainment; the morality and integrity of

lecturers making decisions has long been called into doubt by educational administrators, judges, and magistrates.

These practices among others include, illegal charges levied on students, school places are auctioned to the highest bidder, and children from certain communities are favoured for admission as against merit. While others are subjected to extra payment, good grades and examination results are obtained through bribes to teachers and public officials and the prices are often known and paid up front, lecturers extort money from students in the guise of selling hand-outs, teachers recruitment and posting are influenced by nepotism, favouritism, bribes and sexual favours, lecturers and administrative staff of universities take advantage of their office to obtain sexual favours in exchange for employment, promotion and good grades, examination questions are sold or leak in advance to students, examination results are altered to reflect higher marks or examiners award marks arbitrarily in exchange for bribe (money or sex), examination candidates pay others to impersonate them and sit for exams (Kirya, 2019).

Osanaye (2007) noted that most of our daily news-papers are awash with news of these professional gaps that have become established norms in some of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Lecturers in different tertiary institutions sell handouts at exorbitant prices to students. Such handouts are hurriedly put together without content adequacy and validity to assuage their financial inadequacies. Academic Staff Union of universities, (2007) noted that some are not even supplied after collecting money from students and as such condemn mandatory sales of handouts to students. Similarly, Sahara reporters (2021) reported that university lecturers sell handouts to students to survive non-payment of salary to staff. In a related situation, sexual harassment has become one of the common social vices in our university campuses today. Daniel (2005) submits that it is one of the gender issues which women are battling with at present. He affirmed that women that have high sexual drives equally harassed the male, their indecent dressing; financial situations, sex education, peer pressure and social orientations put them at vantage positions.

Blocking or sorting; is a name invented by students to describe a situation where money is traded for marks or grades. Norah (2005) is of the opinion that sales of examination marks or grades particularly in states and new tertiary institutions tend to make higher education meaningless. Thus, hard work and scholarship are relegated. Therefore, students' grades depend largely on how much students can offer to those in charge either in cash or in kind or both (Ajibade, 2002). Simon (2017) affirmed that corruption in the tertiary institution is permeated by factors such as nonpayment of lecturer's salaries as at when due, poor payment of salaries and benefits to lecturers, corruption in management, Poor disciplinary policies as well as recruitment policies. Taaliu (2010) affirmed that this endemic is wide spread in almost all the sectors of the economy and it is widespread because of lack of commitment from the government to combat it. Where management of schools are deep necked in corruption scandals, the 'will' to fight the menace will be elusive. Most teachers in the tertiary institutions are poor and unable to meet demands of their responsibilities. Thus, lecturers go extra miles to look for

money to make ends meet and this stray them into legal and illegal exploit (Taaliu, 2011). Similarly, Kirya, (2019), alleged irregular payment of salaries and allowances, recruitment and promotion of staff are basis for professional gaps in tertiary institutions. Thus, corruption in tertiary institutions have its root from management of the schools and management laxity, laissez-faire attitudes to lecturers' plight, high-handedness, management extortion of students as well as government posture on education finance. Thus, making lecturers to exploit students to meet their financial obligations. (The high rate of returns, low salaries of public officials and educators, weak ethical norms and poor rule of laws, the complexity of education and lack of transparent governance. Hallack and Poisson, (2007). Under investment and corruption in Nigerian education has created a context where providers of education services are presented with routine opportunities to demand and expect bribes from parents and other service users for their children to passing grades (Raj, 2021)

Corruption reduces access to education (UNESCO, 2021). It erodes the foundation of quality education for all. It creates low quality learning environments where the poor suffer the most, and undermines our collective welfare. It threatens the legitimacy of universities as knowledge providers and training institutions. Mathew, (2015) conclude that corruption undermines these values and therefore posed an existential threat to higher education and the society in general. When higher institution is infiltrated by corrupt and unethical practices, there threaten the very foundation which societies are based. Shoddy management of academic matters has been responsible for falling standard of education in Nigeria, stressing that if educational matters were given priority attention, the nation stands the chance to churn high quality graduates' despite the kind of libraries and laboratories the school may have. Mathew shared that why we are unconsciously converting our huge beautiful looking libraries, laboratories buildings to mere ornaments, examination to mere formalities, project writing to mere rituals, lecture attendance to a matter of choice, above all certificate we offer, to a mere piece of paper without substance.

These practices have serious implication for higher institutions and society at large. Lecturers who collect money from students and couldn't meet up his/her end of the deal becomes a target of violent attack by the students. Cheating makes exams and degree worthless, reflect the failed internalization of truth and honesty, (Tabi, 2010). Ukeje and Ehiemetalor, (2003), noted that universities are poorly funded and such is responsible for unproductive stance of lecturers. It is part of the reason why some of our university graduates are not at par with their colleagues in Africa and the world over. It ruins the reputation of universities, block access to applicants who do meet the requirement. And waste money spent on students who are not capable. It threatens public health, safety and well-being when unqualified and incompetent graduates in professional fields are entrusted with constructivism, medical practice and other functions. Corrupt and fraudulent practices in higher education break the link between personal efforts and anticipation of records. Corruption reinforces the norms that "the end justifies the means" which can further erode the dignity- and cohesion in the wider society. Employees and the students come to believe that personal success is attained not through merits and hard-work but by cutting corners and gaming the system. Corruption in staff recruitment and

promotion; nepotism and favoritism in the recruitment and promotion of academic staff at institutions of higher learning makes a mockery of meritocracy and may negatively affect the quality of teaching and research.

Lecturers who are cut red-handed in these acts are not left unpunished. Authorities of higher education have always instituted disciplinary actions against those enmeshed in these ugly practices. These measures include warning, querying, suspensions and outright dismissals but this menace seems to thrive more in our institutions even at the face of these punishments. Sadler, (2012), Bassey, Owen, Angunwa, (2019), Dimson (2007) and Ajinoma (2007) held that when universities through their policies, implement innovative quality assurance procedures in the assessment of students' academic performance, the incidence of grade manipulation will be minimized. Compulsory sales of handouts could breed examination malpractice as students could bring such to examination halls. Thus, this study examines student's perception on professionalism gap among lecturers in higher institutions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised for the study:

1. What is the level of professionalism gap among 0 in Kogi state, Nigeria0000
2. What are the socio-economic drivers of professionalism gaps among lecturers of tertiary institutions in Kogi state, Nigeria
3. What are the effects of professional gaps in teaching and learning through lecturers of tertiary institutions?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the levels of professionalism gap among lecturer of public tertiary institutions in Kogi state, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between Socio-economic drivers of professionalism gaps among lecturers of public tertiary institutions in Kogi state, Nigeria.
3. There is no significant difference between the effects of professional gaps and the teaching and learning process.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. A population of 958,000 male and female students in public tertiary institutions in Kogi state was used for the study. A total of 383 students were selected at random using multi-stage sampling technique. Questionnaire termed students perception of Professionalism Gaps among University Teachers of Higher Institutions. A structured questionnaire of 4 Likert scale (SPPGLTIQ) was used for the collection of data for the study. The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Social Studies and Curriculum Department of Kogi State University, Anyigba. The Instrument was pilot – tested through test retest to ascertain the Reliability of the Instrument. Coefficient of 0.84 was found to be suitable for the study. Simple Percentage, Mean

and Standard Deviation were used in the Analysis of Research Questions, while, PPMC was used in the Analysis of data at 0.05.

Table 1: Level of professionalism gap among lecturers of public tertiary institutions in Kogi State

S/n	Item statement	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed	Mean	St/dev
1	Selling of unauthorized text-books and hand-out by teachers is part of the university culture	96 (40.5%)	92 (38.8%)	46 (19.4%)	3 (1.3%)	3.19	.786
2	Selling of grades to students on pay as you want is part of student's development.	70 (29.5%)	112 (47.3%)	47 (19.8%)	8 (3.4%)	3.03	.794
3	Teachers failing students to settle personal scores is part of the school progress	92 (38.8%)	91 (38.4%)	49 (20.7%)	5 (2.1%)	3.14	.814
4	Teachers write projects for students to collect money..	79 (33.3%)	95 (40.1%)	59 (24.9%)	4 (1.7%)	3.05	.806
5	Most lecturers avoid lectures and send in hand-outs for students to read.	101 (42.6%)	89 (37.6%)	41 (17.3%)	6 (2.5%)	3.20	0.814
6	Teacher date most female students because such students are 18 years and above	106 (44.7%)	98 (41.4%)	33 (13.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31	.703
7	Exam officers have the mandate to alter students' scores	88 (37.1%)	135 (57.0%)	14 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31	.578
8	Accepting money and gifts from the students	108 (45.6%)	100 (42.2%)	29 (12.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3.33	.685

	have no relationship with students' academic program						
9	Students help lecturers in marking examination scripts and recording of scores.	119 (50.2%)	45 (19.0%)	53 (22.4%)	20 (8.4%)	3.11	1.027
10	Teachers request food items and home appliances from students in the guise of instructional materials.	76 (32.1%)	128 (54.0%)	27 (11.4%)	6 (2.5%)	3.16	.717
11	Students from wealthy homes tend to influence Teachers luxuriously.	88 (37.1%)	99 (41.8%)	37 (15.6%)	13 (5.5%)	3.11	.860
12	Students who are members of secret organization intimidate teachers into passing them without merit.	106 (44.7%)	98 (41.4%)	33 (13.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31	.703

Response rate as presented on the table shows that selling of unauthorized text-books and hand-out by teachers is part of the university culture in recent times. Respondents totally 188 respondents with 79.3% with mean response of 3.19 agreed that lecturers are involved in the sales of hand-outs to students. Equally respondents agreed that grades are sold to students on pay as you want in the sampled universities, the responses 182 with the mean response of 76.2 respectively. The item which states that teachers write projects for students for money has 174 with 70.2% agreed with the mean of 3.05. Lecturers' date their students, have respondents rate of 204 on the percentage of 86.1% and mean response of 3.31. Another item states that exam officers alter students' scores for higher grade on the demand for money, this item received a response of 208 and 87.8% and the mean response of 3.33. In another dimension the respondents agreed that students help lecturers in marking examination scripts. This item generated 164 agreed responses with the percentage of 69.2% and the mean score of 3.11. While students agreed that members of secret cults intimidate some of their lecturers to pass them when they actually did not pass. The responses from table 1 shows clearly the level of professional decay among lecturers of some tertiary institutions.

Table 2; Socio-economic drivers of professionalism gaps among lecturers of tertiary institutions in Kogi state, Nigeria.

S/n	Item statement	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed	Mean	St/dev
1	Poor remuneration to teachers is the reason for lack of character among them.	119 (50.2%)	45 (19.0%)	53 (22.4%)	20 (8.4%)	3.11	1.027
2	Delay in the payment of salaries and allowance enhances teachers' integrity.	88 (37.1%)	135 (57.0%)	14 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31	.578
3	The school weak disciplinary system is the reason for poor character disposition among lecturers of tertiary institutions.	108 (45.6%)	100 (42.2%)	29 (12.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3.33	.685
4	lecturers-students relationship	89 (37.6%)	79 (33.3%)	61 (25.7%)	8 (3.4%)	3.05	0.877
5	Government position on disciplinary issues	106 (44.7%)	98 (41.4%)	33 (13.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31	.703
6	The status of the school allows everything to go.	88 (37.1%)	135 (57.0%)	14 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31	.578
7	The social and academic relationship between lecturers and students	108 (45.6%)	100 (42.2%)	29 (12.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3.33	.685
8	Recruitment pattern of the school is the reason for the erosion of value and character among staff	119 (50.2%)	45 (19.0%)	53 (22.4%)	20 (8.4%)	3.11	1.027

9	Poor disciplinary attitudes of lecturers	76 (32.1%)	128 (54.0%)	27 (11.4%)	6 (2.5%)	3.16	.717
10	Poor security measures attracts high level of indiscipline	88 (37.1%)	99 (41.8%)	37 (15.6%)	13 (5.5%)	3.11	.860

Response rate as presented on the table shows that Poor remuneration to lecturers is the reason for decay in professional characters among university lecturers, thus, 169 respondents representing 69.2% agreed to this assertion with the mean response of 3.11. The respondents equally agreed that delay in the payment of lecturer's emoluments equally account for their loss of integrity. 232 with 94.1% and the mean response of 3.31. The school weak disciplinary system account for the professionalism among lecturers in tertiary education. 208 respondents representing 87.8% with the mean response of 3.33 agreed to this assertion. This is equally related to the item that states that poor disciplinary attitudes of lecturers account for their character decay. The students-lecturer relationship has equally been identified to be responsible for the problem as 168 respondents representing 70.9% agreed to this assertion with the mean response of 3.05 respectively. Thus, the responses showed on this table indicate that lecturer's welfare is mostly responsible for the decay in their professional practices.

Table 3: Effects of professional gaps in teaching and learning.

s/n	Item statement	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed	Mean	St/dev
1	Lecturers loose respect of students	119 (50.2%)	45 (19.0%)	53 (22.4%)	20 (8.4%)	3.11	1.027
2	Students become lazy and unserious with studies	76 (32.1%)	128 (54.0%)	27 (11.4%)	6 (2.5%)	3.16	.717
3	Teachers become lazy and pay lip service to work	81 (34.2%)	86 (36.3%)	67 (28.3%)	3 (1.3%)	3.03	.823
4	Schools will become dumping ground to all comers	88 (37.1%)	99 (41.8%)	37 (15.6%)	13 (5.5%)	3.11	.860
5	It destroy the integrity of the school	49 (20.7%)	109 (46.0%)	61 (25.7%)	18 (7.6%)	2.80	0.854

6	Educational goals will remain unattained.	119 (50.2%)	45 (19.0%)	53 (22.4%)	20 (8.4%)	3.11	1.027
7	It negatively impacts on the well-being of the society	88 (37.1%)	135 (57.0%)	14 (5.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31	.578
8	Certificates will lose it values	108 (45.6%)	100 (42.2%)	29 (12.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3.33	.685
9	Society will experience dearth of man-power	76 (32.1%)	128 (54.0%)	27 (11.4%)	6 (2.5%)	3.16	.717
10	Learners or graduates will constitute nuisance to the society.	81 (34.2%)	86 (36.3%)	67 (28.3%)	3 (1.3%)	3.03	.823

Response rate as presented on the table shows that lecturers will lose the respect of their students; this item attracts agreement of 164.4 respondents representing 69.2% with the mean response of 3.11. This will equally make the students lazy on their studies, 204, respondents with 65.4% and the means of 3.16 responded to this. The item on the table shows it makes the school become a dumping ground with 78.9% and makes the school lose its integrity with 158 representing 76.7% respectively. Succinctly, respondents agreed that the certificate will lose it values with 208 agreed representing 87.9%.

HYPOTHESES

Table 4: Independent t-test sample statistics on the mean perception of male and female students towards professionalism gap among lecturers of public tertiary institutions in Kogi state, Nigeria

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	std.dev	std.error	df	T Cal	t critical	Sig (p)
Professionalism decay among lecturers of tertiary education	Male	19	38.73	7.34	.28	13	1.88	1.96	0.06
		2							
	Female	19	37.96	7.14	.29				

Calculated $p > 0.05$, calculated $t < 1.96$ at $df 1278$

The Independent sample t-statistics showed that there are no significant differences between male and female students in the tertiary institutions that were involved in the study. This is due to the fact that the calculated significance (P) value of 0.06 is higher than the 0.05 alpha level of significance while the calculated t value of 1.88 is lower than the 1.96 critical t values at $df 13$. Their calculated mean perceptions were 38.73 and 37.96 by all the male and female social studies students respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted.

Table. 5: Hypothesis 2: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant difference between the mean opinion of male and female students from the selected tertiary institutions on socio-economic drivers for professionalism gap.

Variable	gender	N	Mean	std.dev	std.error	Df	T Cal	t critical	Sig (p)
Socio-economic drivers for professional decay among lecturers of tertiary education	Male	192	40.73	7.34	.28				
	Female	191	39.96	7.14	.29	13	1.88	1.96	0.06

Calculated $p > 0.05$, calculated $t < 1.96$ at $df 1278$

The Independent sample t-statistics showed that there is no significant difference between the opinion of male student's respondents and the opinion of the female student's respondents of the tertiary institutions in their mean perception on the socio-economic drivers for professionalism decay among university lecturers. Reason being that the calculated significance (P) value of 0.089 is higher than the 0.05 alpha level of significance while the calculated t value of 1.704 is lower than the 1.96 critical t value at $df 13$. Their calculated mean perceptions were 40.73 and 39.96 by all the males and female students respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted.

Table. 6: Hypothesis 3: The null hypothesis state that there is no significant difference between the mean Opinion of male and female students on the effect of professional decay among lecturers from the selected tertiary institutions on socio-economic drivers for professionalism decay.

Variable	gender of students	N	Mean	std.dev	std.error	Df	T Cal	t critical	Sig (p)
Effect of professional	Male	192	38.91	8.34	.28				
	Female	191	37.38	8.14	.29	13	1.88	1.96	0.06

decay
among
lecturers of
tertiary
education

Calculated $p > 0.05$, calculated $t < 1.96$ at $df 1278$

The Independent sample t-statistics showed that there is no significant difference between the opinion of male student's respondents and the opinion of the female student's respondents of the tertiary institutions in their mean perception on the socio-economic drivers for professionalism decay among university lecturers. Reason being that the calculated significance (P) value of 0.06 is higher than the 0.05 alpha level of significance while the calculated t value of 1.88 is lower than the 1.96 critical t value at d.fs 13. Their calculated mean perceptions were 38.73 and 37.96 by the male and female students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted.

The study finds out that;

1. Some lecturers are involved in unlawful activities in tertiary institutions.
2. Weak lecturer's welfare by government accounts for their actions.
3. Extortion of money from students, students bribing lecturers with money or sex, illegal sales of hand out, sales of marks male lecturers harassing females' students among others have negative consequences on the part of lecturers and the integrity of the institutions.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The main conclusions drawn from the finding of this study indicate that lecturers are participating in illegal activities in higher institutions. This includes male lecturers harassing female students sexually. In the course of carrying out their professional duties to pass the students or give them unjustified grades, some male lecturers make repeated sexual attempts toward the female students. This conclusion is supported by views of Daniel (2005) and Kirya (2019) who assert that it is a gender issue that women are now grappling with. The finding of the study has shown that academic dishonesty is widespread at universities as can be seen in the students' response.

The data on Table 2 shows that academic corruption is more common among male lecturers than female lecturers (87.85), and it affects parents, students, lecturers, and school officials (82.7%). This demonstrates that the two groups of responders to the items had a high level of agreement. This result is consistent with earlier findings that parents pay bribes to have their kids admitted to institutions, that lecturers forge students' test scores, and that students many students engage in examination misconduct (Osipian 2007 & Jubril, 2010). This finding is also in agreement with that of Rostiashvili (2004) who identified university management as the most dishonest and claims that both students and lecturers initiate bribes. In other words, the result is consistent with the observation that one of the most significant causes causing the standard of higher education to decline is academic corruption (Kingston, 2011). The finding supports the idea that students shouldn't bear all the responsibility

because lecturers helped them and encouraged them to do so (Jubril, 2010). Poor study habits of students (68.8%) and low admission qualifications of students (66%), on the other hand, were the main reasons of academic corruption. The study supports past literature that suggested that students' entry behaviour and mental capacity could influence the quality of education, and those parents' payments to tertiary institutions to expedite their children's admission indicate low entry qualities (Osipian, 2007; Babalola, 2010).

Academic corruption was found to have two main effects: a slower rate of graduates entering the workforce (91.5%) and poor-quality graduates (87.8%). This study supports the observations made by Okebukola (2005) that students who pay bribes for good grades are not academically competent, as well as those of Moja (2000), who reaffirmed that the quality of graduates in Nigeria has declined since the early 1970s. This study found that lecturers engage in this dishonourable activity to make up for their financial inadequacies caused by poor compensation and the late payment of salaries and benefits. Every action has a result; there is no doubt about it. Thus, this research has shown that these behaviours have negative impacts on lecturers as well as the institutions' reputations. According to Ukeje and Ehiamezor (2003), the underfunding of tertiary institutions is to blame for lecturers' unethical and ineffective behaviour while doing their duties.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown the prevalence of professionalism gaps among lecturers in tertiary institutions in Kogi state Nigeria. Male lecturers are shown to have a higher incidence than female lecturers. Building public trust and providing a strong basis for national prosperity require solid and quality education. Nigeria's citadel of learning has a significant impact in determining both personal and societal integrity. In this paper, a number of interesting concerns have been raised. This work has made it abundantly evident that there is professionalism gap when it comes to lecturers at Nigerian tertiary institutions carrying out their official duties. This gap exists and is now being discussed in academia as a menace threatens the growth of Nigeria as a nation. This study was able to touch on a few of these issues, including sex for grades, cash for grades, illegal handout sales, sexual harassment, financial mismanagement, political gaming of the tertiary education system, admission racketeering, bribery in accreditation, and awarding of academic degrees that weren't earned.

Recommendations

1. Regular orientation and re-orientations exercise should be organized for all the tertiary education lecturers on ethical best practices through regular workshops and seminars.
2. Government should ensure enhanced welfare package and allowances for tertiary education as well as prompt payment of salaries.
3. Appropriate disciplinary measure and actions should be enforced by tertiary education administration against lecturers who fail to honestly, morally and ethically follow set quality assurance procedures in assessing students work but engaged in gross manipulation of procedures.

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Declaration of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.



Dr. Shuaibu Kennedy is currently a lecturer in the Department of Social Science Education, Kogi State University, Anyigba, Nigeria. He obtained a PhD Degree in Social Studies Education from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. His area of research interest is in Social Sciences and Curriculum Studies and educational practices. He has publications in so many national and international academic journals.

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