University Academic Dishonesty and Graduate Quality for National Development and Global Competitiveness: Nigerian Universities in Perspective

Chris-Valentine Ogar Eneji[*]
Dept. of Environmental Education, University of Calabar, Nigeria

Janet Sunday Petters, **Stella Bassey Esuabana**
Dept. of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education,
University of Calabar, Nigeria

Nkanu Usang Onnoghen, **Bassey Obeten Udumo**, **Benjamin Ayua Ambe**
Dept. of Environmental Education, Faculty of Education,
University of Calabar, Nigeria

Ekpenyong Essien Essien, **Fidelis Abunimye Unimna**
Dept. of Social Science Education, Faculty of Arts and Social Science Education,
University of Calabar, Nigeria

David Adie Alawa and **Ajigo Ikutal**
Dept. of Vocational Education, Faculty of Science and Vocational Education,
University of Calabar, Nigeria

Abstract. This study was carried out to assess how academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities influences university graduates' quality and how these graduates contribute to national development for global competitiveness. The study area is Nigerian universities (private, state, and federal owned). The inferential survey research design was adopted for this study. A sample of 18 universities (12%) out of the 154 universities in Nigeria was selected, 6 each from among private, state, and federal-owned universities, 3 from each geopolitical zone of the country. From these universities, 1440 respondents (academic staff and students) were selected as sample. Two sets of structured questionnaires (open- and closed-ended) were administered to the respondents between February 2019 and October 2019. Simple percentage, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis, and chi square analysis were used for data analysis. Respondents listed 14 causes of academic dishonesty. A significant correlation was found between academic dishonesty and poor graduate

---

[*] Corresponding author: Chris-Valentine Ogar Eneji; *vcogareneji@gmail.com*

quality from Nigerian universities. In addition, the chi square analysis showed a significant relationship between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and contribution to national development for global competitiveness. It was concluded that universities where academic dishonesty is perpetrated usually produce low-quality graduates who at best may contribute little to national development for global competitiveness. One of the recommendations is that the government should overhaul the curriculum content of the Nigerian educational system to meet the development challenges of the Nigerian state, while also improving funding for Nigerian public universities.

Keywords: academic dishonesty; dimensions of academic dishonesty; global competitiveness; graduate quality; national development; school facilities

1. Introduction

Training universities and other higher education institutions provide for the training of highly qualified graduates who can be employed to fit into the machinery of government. As such, the training they offer needs to be of a high quality for the sustainable economic, social, technological, and scientific growth of the country. This means that the future of every nation is dependent on the quality of graduate training the universities and other higher education institutions provide to their students during their formation (schooling) years. All institutions of higher learning are expected to train their students according to international best practices and standards set for that purpose, which should greatly impact positively on the general population both on short- and long-term basis. This type of training should be more centered on the developmental needs of the society and country, and as such should be learner centered. The duty of every higher education institution is to provide high-quality student-centered learning with comparative study programs and lecturing methods and processes to meet the different needs of the labor market economy in a global economic perspective.

In recent times, the Nigerian education system has been under scrutiny due to the quality of Nigerian university graduates. Most graduates employed or completing their compulsory one-year national service are found wanting in terms of writing or speaking the English language in their workplace. In addition, most graduates serving heads of parastatals or agencies cannot even write a simple memo. This situation is at best worrisome. It is not uncommon for a graduate with a first- or second-class upper division to be employed in an office and even having obtained a high graduation result to not be able to defend the quality of the results they graduated with.

The term academic dishonesty can be synonymous with academic misconduct, academic integrity, or academic malpractice. For the layman, academic dishonesty can be seen as any unprofessional misconduct perpetrated or carried out by lecturer and/or student during the discharge of their duties. For the lecturer, this may take place in their testing of students to assess what they had learnt during the course of an academic program. Bricault (2007, in Anzene, 2014)

explained that academic dishonesty includes a diverse range of unacceptable and deliberate conducts and behaviors that some students and lecturers exhibit to achieve an unfair advantage over their peers in term papers, theses, projects, tests, assignments, or examinations which they ordinarily would not have been able to achieve. Both students and their lecturers or other officers can commit one of various offenses that goes against the ethical standards or expected norms of an educational institution (be it school, university, or any other tertiary institution). When the conduct of students or their lecturers goes against the expected standard codes of conduct which are permissible by the law of the school, this is referred to as academic dishonesty or academic misconduct.

It is heartbreaking to know that some students no longer see the value of hard work in educational institutions and hence prefer to participate in all forms of academic dishonesty to pass their examinations at all cost. They do this because excelling in their examinations is a prerequisite for graduation leading to securing a white-collar job. To these students, what they studied and learnt is not as important as how they passed their examinations to graduate. When students are not committed to hard work, they engage in all sorts of academic misconduct and dishonesty, sometimes in collaboration with their willing lecturers, to earn marks or grades they did not earn. This phenomenon has destroyed the Nigerian educational system and further reduced the falling standard of education in the country to an abysmal level (Asamoah, 2018; Eneji et al., 2017; Mbilinyi & Msuya, 2018).

Adebakin (2014) established that academic dishonesty is not only perpetuated by students alone, but that even lecturers in tertiary institutions are culpable of this crime. The grading of students' scripts and assignments and their certification are done by lecturers who are responsible for teaching, assessing, grading, and certification of these students for graduation. Nonetheless, another dimension of academic dishonesty in tertiary institutions is where lecturers and other staff members turn their faces the other way to award arbitrary scores to students who did not attend lectures or those who wrote their examinations and failed.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Dimensions of Academic Dishonesty
Arong and Ogbadu (2010), Asiyai (2013), Bamiro (2012), and Chirikov et al. (2019) in their respective studies have shown that academic dishonesty or misconduct has different dimensions in university systems. These include but are not limited to what is discussed next.

Cheating during examination in the hall. This practice involves copying from another student's answer sheets or from extraneous prepared scripts. This practice has also been referred to as "brain support", "ekpo", "micro chips", "expo", "not allowed", "exhibit", and "copycat". Students place these scripts in their clothes, on handkerchiefs, or under their shoes; others write them on their palms; while still others put them in their braziers or in their waist (Onyibe, et al., 2015).

Copying assignments from peers, or having peers do assignments for them. Most students hardly attend lectures and hardly carry out their independent practice assignments. Female students have been found to go from one city to another flirting in the name of hustling, while some male students who are working might stay away because of the location of their duty post or commitment. These students hardly have time to attend classes and are then compelled to get another student who is always regular in school to help them out in doing assignments for them. In addition, lazy students prefer copying assignments from peers who do their own assignments, regardless of whether it is right or wrong (Arong & Ogbadu, 2010).

Committing plagiarism. This is a form of academic dishonesty where students make verbatim copies of others' work or projects and submit it as their own for assessment. They thus represent someone else's work or ideas as if they are the original author. This may include copying a passage of paragraph directly from a book, article, website, or any other source without quoting or properly citing the source to acknowledge the original author. Plagiarism can also be committed by academic staff, who use others' work or term papers or even articles and publish it in their name as if they are the original author of the work. Some lecturers have also given students completed student projects for them to copy and submit for graduation (Asiyai, 2013).

Paying for examination questions before examinations. Some students buy set questions for their examinations either from the lecturer(s) involved directly or from some supporting staff who have access to such questions before the actual examination.

Sorting or gratification from students to lecturers to influence their examination grades. This is a situation where students who hardly attend classes or cannot do assessments will give gratification to lecturers through sex, gift items, food, etc., or in cash to influence their examination grades. Studies have shown that most often, this can be achieved through the cooperation of lecturers who are willing tools in the hands of these students (Bamiro, 2012).

Multiple submission of written works. This involves the use of work that has been previously submitted at a particular institution or level to meet the academic requirements of a particular class or institution. An example is the submission of another student's previously completed thesis, project, or term paper. In some cases, the content may be slightly altered.

Impersonation. This involves the use of electronic tools to allow an individual to write examinations on behalf of someone else. Here, the hired individual uses the identity and registration number of the actual student who is supposed to sit for that examination and does the examination on their behalf.

False citation. Students and academic staff have been found to copy work from specific sources and to then cite a different author/s for the work. This occurs mostly with the writing of theses, dissertations, and articles. Most often, these

false citations can be identified with sophisticated plagiarism software such as iTenthicate, Turnitin, and other plagiarism checkers.

Falsification of data. This is where research data are cooked or fabricated and where the researcher did not actually go to the field to collect such data. In addition, this is where students falsify, fabricate, or alter data to deliberately mislead people that the data were actually generated from the studied population or sample from the field (Onyibe, et al., 2015).

Adding another researcher's name/false co-authoring of articles for publication. This is one of the most grievous forms of academic dishonesty committed by some university lecturers. A popular dictum among academic staff in most tertiary institutions is "publish or perish", which implies that lecturers must publish in order to be promoted (Bamiro, 2012). Some lecturers cannot publish, and hence collaborate with their colleagues to add their names to their publications. These lecturers share in the cost of publication but do not contribute any idea to form the research outcome (Chirikov et al., 2019).

Other forms of academic dishonesty are cheating, misrepresentation, bribery, collusion, and conspiracy.

2.2 Causes of Academic Dishonesty
Studies have shown that there are diverse causes of academic dishonesty, which are usually personal to those who are involved in the dishonesty (Adebakin et al., 2015; Imhonopi & Urim, 2009; Isah, 2010). Scholars such as Okebukola (2008), Mimiko (2012), and Chirikov et al. (2019) found various major causes of academic dishonesty. These include the inability to manage the pressure and demands of student life on campus, peer influence, poor study habits, poor performance anxiety, conditions permitting academic dishonesty, and unnecessary excuse-making. It also includes irregular attendance of lectures, prompt and correct doing of independent practice assignments, issues relating to student program funding, and self-justifying habits. Furthermore, it includes poor knowledge of what academic dishonesty actually is, and the poor understanding of the consequences of academic dishonesty to the individual students and the society as a whole (Pidlisnyuk, 2010; Pitan & Adedeji, 2012).

Scholars such as Timothy and Abubakar (2013), Phiri and Nakamba (2015), and Hodges (2017) determined other causes of academic dishonesty. These include the desire of some parents to have their children placed in lucrative jobs or to have their children graduate towards a particular profession, such as medicine, engineering, law, or nursing. These also include protecting the reputation of teachers and the school status, laziness on the part of the students and their teachers, and threats and intimidations from parents and the society. Some parents want their children to go into a certain profession for pride and to satisfy their own desire to be in that profession, even when the children are not intelligent enough to meet the demands of such profession or course. Some researchers have found that academic dishonesty could be committed by students with low self-esteem, lazy students who are good at procrastinating in their studies or doing of assignments, absent students, and students who see school as a paper to get a

meal ticket (Oke & Olowonefa, 2019). Lack of adequate preparedness on the part of students, unrealistic expectations, and emphasis on success have also been identified as some causes of academic dishonesty (Anzene, 2014; Eneji et al., 2017; Freiburger et al., 2017; Israel, 2019).

2.3 Academic Dishonesty, Graduate Quality, and National Development
It is common knowledge in Nigeria that in most Nigerian universities, students who cheat far outnumber those who do not engage in academic dishonesty. The extent to which academic dishonesty has penetrated the Nigerian university system is difficult to determine, but it has seriously affected the quality of Nigerian university graduates. Bower (1964, in Oke & Olowonefa, 2019) conducted an academic dishonesty survey and found that 75% of the 5000 students in higher education institutions who participated in the survey had committed one or more form of academic dishonesty at one point or the other (Owunwanne, 2010, in Oke & Olowonefa, 2019). In another survey on student academic dishonesty or misconduct by Duke University's Center for Academic Integrity between 2002 and 2005, about 60 campuses in the US reported cheating (Israel, 2019). Oke and Olowonefa (2019) investigated the management of strategies for curbing examination malpractice in public secondary schools in Abuja, Nigeria, using a descriptive survey. They found that the graduates produced through academic dishonesty are deficient in quality in terms of knowledge, entrepreneurship, leadership, innovation, and critical thinking.

Onyibe et al. (2015) posited that it is better to graduate with a third-class result and to be able to defend it than to graduate with a first- or second-class upper division without the commensurate knowledge and academic prowess to defend such result. These authors went further to state that most students who engage in academic dishonesty do so because they see the university degree as only a means to an end, where they can obtain the degree and use it to secure a white-collar job. This is exactly the bane of modern society, where the priority is to obtain a paper qualification to earn a white-collar job rather than practical knowledge to apply what has been learnt in school to solve societal problems. No nation can grow without commensurate entrepreneurial skills and technological and scientific knowledge to meet the yearnings and needs of the country (Onyibe et al., 2015).

Taking a closer look at the issue of graduate quality from a perspective of academic dishonesty, Eneji et al. (2019) found a positive correlation between the quality of university graduates and the curriculum content designed for Nigerian education institutions from its colonial masters. These authors challenged the curriculum content as provided for Nigerian tertiary institutions and challenged the strength of the curriculum to solve the nation's technological and scientific development and national economic growth. They dismissed the current curriculum as lacking in strength, luster, and creativity to provide the rudiments for national development. This position adopted by Eneji et al. (2017) as well as Israel (2019) was earlier deliberated by Anzene (2014), who challenged the national curriculum planners of the Nigerian university education system to do a thorough overhauling of university and other tertiary institution educational curricular content to be in line with what developmental challenges Nigeria faces.

Anzene highlighted that the world over, scientists and technologists are looking at 5G networks, nanograms, robotics, bloodless surgery, nuclear technology, space science, clean and renewable energy, etc. Contrariwise, the Nigerien school curriculum prescribes drawing butterflies and labeling the parts, rehearsing the periodic table, and drawing world maps and labelling them, among other topics.

The Nigerian educational system is backward because of the type and quality of school curriculum passed on from the country's colonial masters. This curriculum was meant to teach middle-level clerks how to read and write and take stock of the colonial masters' business account and inventory, not for Nigerian self-development and emancipation. Anzene (2014) charged the government and curriculum planners to overhaul and revise the Nigerian school curriculum to be in tandem with modern-day Nigerian development needs, with the type of curriculum that is based on technological and scientific development for global competitiveness.

Kyei (2014) found a positive correlation between academic dishonesty and poor graduate quality from universities where academic dishonesty is committed. Nnam and Inah (2015) also found a positive correlation between academic dishonesty and low-quality university graduates, likening it to the popular dictum by Prof. Bab Fafunwa, that "the standard of any nation's educational system cannot rise above the quality of its teachers and products" (Nnam & Inah, 2015, p.59). Therefore, where graduates work hard, they will be worth their salt, and where they neglect to work hard, they will engage in all forms of academic dishonesty.

Onuka and Durowoju (2013) posited that hard work, rigorous studying, carrying out every assignment given, and preparing well for examinations guarantee success, and those committed to hard work will never be found wanting in their chosen career. Therefore, students who engage in academic dishonesty can never do well. This is so because academics goes with practice of what is being taught and not what students did to compromise integrity during their formative years. Most countries in the world have developed ways to contribute to their growth and development, making use of their scientists and technologists for this purpose. Graduates are people with independent critical thinking skills. They are innovative and sensible to environmental conditions and can meet the daunting development challenges of a country.

Onyibe et al. (2015) found that high-quality graduates can influence a country's developmental needs by providing the needed workforce to fill technological and scientific gaps, and design and implement programs that can ginger development imperatives. In addition, they can contribute to the entrepreneurial development of the country, thereby reducing dependency on government-paid jobs, making them creators of jobs by engaging young scholars in innovation, and driving and emancipating the country from poverty and social issues. For any nation to become self-reliant, self-sufficient, and scientifically and technologically developed, the works of their research institutions must tell on the products of such institutions and what they can offer to the society to contribute to the

development initiatives of that country (Phiri & Nakamba, 2015; Tabsh et al., 2019; Timothy & Abubakar, 2013).

The quality of any country's university graduates is determined by the curriculum implementation processes and how the students respond to such programs as transmitted by the school. The educational standard of a country is normally judged according to the quality of their graduates, whose quality can be used for comparative analysis and juxtaposition between and among countries' educational systems, structures, curriculum content, and equation. This comparison can only be made when an objective assessment of student performance can be measured. For this to happen, schools must be prepared to employ the best assessment methods that are most suitable for judging student performance based on merit and not on dishonesty. According to Sotiriadou et al. (2019), attempting to promote academic integrity in school assessment has become a case of continuous priority for all institutions of higher learning across the globe (Nnam & Inah, 2015).

Studies have shown that providing authentic school assessment with the laying of a sound academic foundation on the basis of academic integrity is necessary for the skills development of graduates to advance their employability. This will also put these graduates at par with their peers across the world. Attempting to provide academic uprightness coupled with the fact that schools struggle to uphold global best practices, it is necessary to provide an accurate and reliable academic evaluation of students' progress (Pittman, 2020; Sotiriadou et al., 2019; Suwaldiman & Tyas, 2019). Through such foundation, higher education can meet the global challenges facing mankind from different parts of the world. Promoting academic honesty or integrity is important. It encourages students to practically search for true knowledge, with the attendant skills, values, capacity, and willingness to take up rigorous challenges to put to use the knowledge acquired to finding solutions to the multitude societal problems.

To ascertain the authentic effectiveness of assessment of students, Sotiriadou et al. (2019) carried out a survey using the scaffolder assessment task of interactive oral examination that would prevent students from engaging in academic dishonesty and help them to improve their academic skills and employability prospects. These authors found that the scaffolder assessment task using an interactive oral examination helps in the prevention of academic dishonesty. It was observed that once assessments are made with regard to the true world situation, there is the tendency for students to avoid misconduct. Above all, the interactive oral examination allowed the students to develop their knowledge, skills, and values in a professional manner. It did so while helping them to create their own identities and awareness, including their leadership and communication skills, thereby helping them to promote their employability anywhere in the world. In this way, graduates of school systems where academic misconduct or dishonesty is not practiced can obtain the requisite skills, knowledge, values, and capacities to compete globally.

Scholars who support the fight against academic dishonesty have advanced several reasons schools should promote academic honesty. Their postulation holds that the education provided by the school to students is very important, because it helps to build in the learners the skills to make them leaders of tomorrow. This will encourage them to actively teach themselves and discover new ideas and become innovative and productive (Pittman, 2020; Sotiriadou et al., 2019; Suwaldiman & Tyas, 2019). These scholars further observed that students can only develop academic honesty when the school and the drivers of the process help them develop academic confidence by building their moral vocabulary. This the school can do by responding appropriately to cheating and dishonest tendencies among university students (Pittman, 2020; Sotiriadou et al., 2019; Suwaldiman & Tyas, 2019).

The best way to achieve academic honesty among students is through the development of necessary skills needed for a successful living with very strong moral judgement. Authors such as McNair and Haynie (2017), Devine and Chin (2017), and Abel et al. (2020) reported and insisted in their respective studies that it is very important for schools to teach students sound moral judgement through the basis of social behaviors as well as appropriate actions. These authors further posited that for schools to improve integrity among their students, there is the urgent need to build inner honesty, mutual respect, and courage. Students should be able to build integrity from the classroom setting, as this will help them apply these moral integrity principles to other aspects of their lives. When these are acquired properly from the school setting, it helps them develop self-confidence and enables them to compete with their peers anywhere in the world.

This can only be achieved if technocrats bring to bear what they have learnt at school and carry out groundbreaking research. They should do this by formulating hypotheses, based on feasible theories, testing them, and drawing inferential results and making generalizations that can inform policy decisions for the growth and development of their countries. It is doubtful whether this could be said about graduates of Nigerian universities. It is therefore the intension of this paper to examine how academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities influences university graduate quality and how quality graduates can contribute to national development for global competitiveness.

2.4 Variables and Parameters Used for Assessments
Academic dishonesty. This includes different types of behavior by both lecturers and students to cut corners which are against the rules and regulations governing the participation in examinations to give them an undue advantage to pass their examinations.

Graduate quality. This is defined as the product that the university system delivers after students have graduated from university. It includes what these graduates have and what have they learnt to help solve societal problems.
Graduate quality and national development. This refers to what graduates can contribute to national development, how creative and innovative they are, and

how dependent they are on their paper qualification to get white-collar jobs from companies and government agencies.

Graduate quality and global competitiveness. This involves the extent to which graduates can compete favorably with graduates of the same courses from other universities across the globe in terms of innovation, creative thinking, discovery, and becoming functional members of their community and country. This relates to the quality of graduates produced from these universities; and how staff from these universities are welcomed to foreign universities for postdoctoral programs, collaboration and interlinkage programs, and also as visiting researchers. In addition, it concerns, among other aspects, how many foreign students and staff universities attract each year as students or employees, and the quality of research outcomes from these universities.

3. Research Objectives and Hypotheses
The major objectives of this study therefore are to:
1. Examine the concept, causes, and dimensions of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities.
2. Ascertain the correlation between academic dishonesty and graduate quality.
3. Investigate the relationship between academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and national development.
4. Examine the association between academic dishonesty and graduate quality for global competitiveness.

Based on the objectives of the study, the three following null hypotheses were formulated:
1. There is no significant correlation between university academic dishonesty and Nigerian university graduate quality.
2. There is no significant association between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and contribution to national development for global competitiveness.
3. There is no significant association between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and global competitiveness.

4. Methodology
The research design adopted for this study is the survey research design. A sample of 18 universities (12%) were selected from the pool of 154 Nigerian universities, comprising 40 federal universities, 44 state universities, and 70 private universities. From each of the geopolitical zones of the country, three universities each were selected from federal universities, state universities, and private universities. The multistage random sampling technique was used at this stage to select respondents. Purposeful sampling was used to select 30 academic staff from the rank of lecturer 1 and above and 50 students from 300 level and above from each university. This provided a total of 80 respondents from each university, thus with 240 respondents from each geopolitical zone, and a total of 1440 respondents from the six geopolitical zones. Five departments were randomly selected in each university, where six academic staff and 10 students

were then selected from each department. The choice of lecturer 1 and above was to sample lecturers who are very knowledgeable about the causes, dimensions, and implications of academic dishonesty on graduate quality and how they can contribute to national development. Likewise, 300 level students and above were chosen because they may have experienced or practiced one form of academic dishonesty or the other.

The instruments for data collection were researcher-designed structured open-ended and closed-ended questionnaire, respectively. The instrument was designed with five parts. Part A elicited respondents' sociodemographic characteristics. Furthermore, Part B covered the causes of academic dishonesty, Part C the relationship between academic dishonesty and graduate quality, and Part D graduate quality and its contribution to national development. Part E looked at the relationship between academic dishonesty and graduate quality and how graduates can compete with their peers in other climes in terms of thinking outside the box, and how they can improve their skills in innovation, creative thinking, discovery, and application of knowledge acquired from the university in solving societal problems.

The instrument was validated by three experts in test construction, measurement, and evaluation from the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Calabar, Nigeria. Using the table of specifications and Pearson's product-moment correlation, the instrument achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.89, implying that the instrument is reliable. Both content and face validity were done by these same experts. The table of specifications provided a clear indication of the instrument as being valid to be used for data collection. Based on the experts' report, we concluded that the instrument was both valid and reliable for data collection for this study.

The response option used for the closed-ended questionnaire was the modified four-point Likert scale option of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The instruments were administered to the research respondents at their respective departments and universities. The instrument administration took place between February 2019 and October 2019. Heads of departments and student class representatives assisted us in the administration of the instruments. A 100% return rate was recorded, meaning no single questionnaire was damaged or wrongly completed. After collation and coding, data generated from the field were analyzed using simple percentage, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis and chi square analysis, while tables were used to present the analyzed results.

5. Results and Discussion
Data analysis was done in accordance with the objectives and hypotheses formulated to guide the study.

5.1 Concepts, Causes and Dimensions of Academic Dishonesty in Nigerian Universities

Table 1 shows respondents' opinions on some causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. An open-ended questionnaire was administered to the respondents on which they had to indicate the perceived causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities.

Table 1: Perceived causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities

S/N	Sampled Nigerian universities	School factors	Cultism and peer influence	Poor funding	Admin bottleneck	Lack of qualified academics	Lack of adequate facilities	Poor reading culture	Too much dependence on paper	Lack of labs, studios, and theaters	Student home factors	Lack of reagents and equipment for	Poor staff motivation and welfare	Corrupt staff	Incessant striking by staff	Total scores per university
1	Afe Babalola University	4	5	3	6	6	2	7	8	7	6	9	11	3	3	80
2	Madonna University	5	4	5	5	5	2	6	9	8	5	10	10	2	4	80
3	Igbinedion University	6	6	2	6	4	3	4	8	6	7	9	9	5	5	80
4	AAUN, Yola	5	3	4	2	6	6	8	7	6	5	11	10	4	3	80
5	Baze University	5	5	4	6	4	3	6	6	9	5	10	9	6	2	80
6	Ibrahim Babangida university	4	5	6	3	4	4	7	7	8	7	7	9	5	4	80
7	CRUTECH, Calabar	3	7	6	2	3	9	6	7	5	5	5	8	9	5	80
8	Lagos State University	3	7	5	3	4	8	7	6	5	4	7	7	10	4	80
9	Odumegwu Ojukwu University	4	6	6	4	4	6	7	7	5	5	6	6	8	6	80
10	Nasarawa State University	5	5	5	7	6	7	6	2	3	9	3	9	8	5	80
11	Kaduna State University	3	6	6	4	5	8	7	6	4	6	5	7	9	4	80
12	Taraba State University	3	7	6	2	3	9	6	7	5	5	5	8	9	5	80
13	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	5	9	9	2	5	6	4	4	7	4	5	7	6	7	80
14	University of Uyo	6	8	8	3	4	7	3	5	7	4	5	7	5	8	80
15	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife	4	6	6	4	4	6	7	7	5	5	6	6	8	6	80
16	Bayero University, Kano	3	7	6	2	3	9	6	7	5	5	5	8	9	5	80
17	University of Jos	6	6	7	5	5	5	4	5	6	6	6	6	7	6	80
18	University of Maiduguri	6	7	8	3	4	7	3	5	8	4	5	7	5	8	80
	Total scores per cause	80	109	102	69	79	107	104	113	109	97	119	144	118	90	1440
	Percentage scores	5.55	7.56	7.10	4.79	5.48	7.43	7.22	7.84	7.56	6.73	8.24	10.10	8.20	6.30	100%

Note: Total sample size = 1440

Source: Data collected from fieldwork, 2019–2020

Eighty (80) respondents (5.55%) indicated school factors as a major cause of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities, 109 (7.56%) selected cultism and peer influence, while 102 (7.10%) and 69 (4.79%) selected poor funding and administrative bottleneck, respectively, as causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. Seventy-nine (79) respondents (5.48%) indicated that lack of qualified academics to teach and mentor students is a cause of academic dishonesty, with 107 (7.43%) respondents indicating lack of adequate facilities for teaching and learning as a major cause of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. Another 104 respondents (7.22%) felt that poor reading culture on the part of both academic staff and students is a major cause of academic dishonesty, while 113 respondents (7.84%) indicated that too much dependence on paper qualification is a major cause of academic dishonesty. Additionally, 109 respondents (7.56%) ticked lack of laboratories, studios, workshops, and theaters as cause of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities, while 97 (6.73%) felt that student home factors also played a very significant role in academic dishonesty. For lack of reagents and other equipment for students to carry out practical work in the laboratory, 119 respondents (8.24%) indicated this as major factor encouraging academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. Then, 144 respondents (10.10%) agreed that poor staff motivation and welfare is a major cause. Regarding academics conniving with willing students to engage in academic dishonesty, 118 respondents (8.20%) ticked the cause on corrupt staff forcing or encouraging their students to engage in academic dishonesty. Lastly, 90 respondents (6.30%) selected that incessant striking and industrial actions by university staff (academic and non-academic) is a major cause of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities.

Table 2 shows the marked similarity among the different types of universities, private, state, and federal. The three sets of universities had similar results as the scores were similar for the same causes of academic dishonesty. One would expect to see a marked difference as to the causes of academic dishonesty, since it is assumed that private universities are properly equipped and have better staffing and remuneration than government-owned universities. Since there was no significant difference in the scores for the causes of academic dishonesty between private and state or federal-owned universities, a critical look was again taken into the different sets of schools. It was discovered that in Nigeria, most private universities have abused the standard of education by awarding first-class degrees to most of their graduates as a marketing strategy to compel parents to enroll their children in those universities with the belief that the teaching is better in those universities.

It was found that it is true that most private universities have all the equipment, but they hardly employ qualified lecturers to run the programs they advertise. The same situation affecting most government-owned universities is also happening in most private universities since their proprietors are profit oriented. They therefore assign little for funding and for providing facilities for the institutions while pursuing profits that the institutions were set to achieve in the first place.

Table 2: Perceived causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities per type of university

S/N	Sampled Nigerian universities	School factors	Cultism and peer influence	Poor funding	Admin bottleneck	Lack of qualified academics	Lack of adequate facilities	Poor reading culture	Too much dependence on	Lack of labs, studios, and theaters	Student home factors	Lack of reagents and equipment for	Poor staff motivation and welfare	Corrupt staff	Incessant striking by staff
	PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES														
1	Afe Babalola University	4	5	3	6	6	2	7	8	7	6	9	11	3	3
2	Madonna University	5	4	5	5	5	2	6	9	8	5	10	10	2	4
3	Igbinedion University	6	6	2	6	4	3	4	8	6	7	9	9	5	5
4	AAUN, Yola	5	3	4	2	6	6	8	7	6	5	11	10	4	3
5	Baze University	5	5	4	6	4	3	6	6	9	5	10	9	6	2
6	Ibrahim Babangida University	4	5	6	3	4	4	7	7	8	7	7	9	5	4
	Total score	**29**	**28**	**24**	**28**	**29**	**20**	**38**	**45**	**44**	**35**	**56**	**58**	**25**	**19**
	Percentage	**6.0**	**5.8**	**5**	**5.8**	**6.0**	**4.2**	**7.9**	**9.4**	**9.2**	**7.2**	**11.8**	**12.1**	**5.2**	**4.4**
	STATE UNIVERSITIES														
7	CRUTECH, Calabar	3	7	6	2	3	9	6	7	5	5	5	8	9	5
8	Lagos State University	3	7	5	3	4	8	7	6	5	4	7	7	10	4
9	Odumegwu Ojukwu University	4	6	6	4	4	6	7	7	5	5	6	6	8	6
10	Nassarawa State University	5	5	5	7	6	7	6	2	3	9	3	9	8	5
11	Kaduna State University	3	6	6	4	5	8	7	6	4	6	5	7	9	4
12	Taraba State University	3	7	6	2	3	9	6	7	5	5	5	8	9	5
	Total score	**21**	**38**	**34**	**22**	**25**	**47**	**39**	**35**	**27**	**34**	**31**	**45**	**53**	**29**
	Percentage	**4.4**	**7.4**	**7.1**	**4.5**	**5.2**	**9.5**	**8.0**	**7.3**	**7.0**	**7.1**	**6.5**	**9.0**	**11.0**	**6.0**
	FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES														
13	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	5	9	9	2	5	6	4	4	7	4	5	7	6	7
14	University of Uyo	6	8	8	3	4	7	3	5	7	4	5	7	5	8
15	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife	4	6	6	4	4	6	7	7	5	5	6	6	8	6
16	Bayero University, Kano	3	7	6	2	3	9	6	7	5	5	5	8	9	5
17	University of Jos	6	6	7	5	5	5	4	5	6	6	6	6	7	6
18	University of Maiduguri	6	7	8	3	4	7	3	5	8	4	5	7	5	8
	Total score	30	43	44	19	25	40	27	33	38	28	32	41	40	40
	Percentage	6.25	8.95	9.17	3.90		8.33	6.20	6.77	7.82	5.83	6.57	8.34	8.33	8.33

Note: Total sample size 1440

Data collected from fieldwork, 2019–2020

5.2 Correlation between academic dishonesty and graduate quality in Nigerian universities

The data presented in Table 3 show the relative contribution of each factor of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. A no-relationship hypothesis was formulated thus: University academic dishonesty does not significantly influence Nigerian university graduate quality.

Table 3: Percentage contribution of each factor of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities

Some causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities	Private universities		State universities		Federal universities	
	Score	**%**	**Score**	**%**	**Score**	**%**
Lack of lecturers' commitment to their jobs	374	26	576	40	490	34
Quality of lecturers/ professional qualification	619	43	490	34	331	23
Poor teaching and learning environment	288	20	562	39	590	41
Poor study habits	518	36	432	30	490	34
Peer influence and social distractions	475	33	418	29	547	38
Students' home background	259	18	605	42	576	40
Students' education funding	662	46	432	30	346	24
Lack of learning facilities/classrooms/ offices	216	15	576	40	648	45
Lack of commitment to fund and provide for universities	144	10	619	43	677	47
Corrupt nature of university lecturers/management	158	11	562	39	720	50
Students' anxiety to pass at all cost	317	22	533	37	590	41
Poor sanitary nature of students' hostels	173	12	648	45	619	43
Near absence of modern libraries and current materials	302	21	576	40	562	39
Lecturers' condition of service and welfare	331	23	562	39	547	38
Other student- related factors	158	11	605	42	677	47
	4994	347	8196	569	8410	584
	332.9333	23.13333	546.4	37.93333	560.6667	38.93333
	333	23.1	546	37.9	561	39

Table 4 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis of the relationship between academic dishonesty and Nigerian university graduate quality.

Table 4: Pearson product-moment correlation analysis of the relationship between university academic dishonesty and Nigerian university graduate quality (N = 1440)

Variables	$\sum X$	$\sum X^2 \sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r value
University academic dishonesty	12,988	2889		
			67,653	0.778
Quality of graduates from Nigerian universities	13,894	3458		

Note: Significant at 0.05 level, critical r = 0.177, df = 1438

The results of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis in Table 4 show a calculated r value of 0.778 at 0.05 significance level and 1438 degrees of freedom, while the critical table value for r is 0.177. Using the rule of thumb, since the critical r value is 0.177, which is lower than the calculated r value of 0.778, the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, university academic dishonesty does significantly influence Nigerian university graduate quality. The implication of this result is that academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities has a very significant influence on the quality of graduates these universities produce.

5.3 Relationship between academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and national development

For this objective, the no-relationship hypothesis was formulated thus: There is no significant association between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and contribution to national development for global competitiveness. Table 5 shows the chi square analysis of data generated to test this hypothesis.

Table 5: Summary of chi square analysis of the association between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and national development for global competitiveness

S/N	University type	Variables			Total	N	X^2	Sig
		Academic dishonesty	Graduate Quality	National develop-ment				
1	Private	113	75	122	310			
2	State	180	167	158	505	1440	54.600[a]	0.05
3	Federal	203	199	223	625			
		496	441	503	1440			

Note: *Significant at 0.05; df = 2; X^2critical = 5.991*

From the chi square analysis shown in Table 5, the calculated chi square value of 54.600 is higher than the critical table value of 5.991 at 0.05 significance level and 2 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is thus rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The implication of this result is that there is a significant association between Nigerian university academic dishonesty, the quality of

graduates produced, and their contribution to national development for global competitiveness.

5.4 Relationship between academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and global competitiveness

The third null hypothesis generated for this study was: There is no significant association between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and global competitiveness. To test this hypothesis, another chi square test was conducted (Table 6).

Table 6: Summary of chi square analysis of the association between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and global competitiveness

S/N	University type	Variables			Total	N	X^2	Sig
		Academic dishonesty	Graduate quality	Global competitiveness				
1	Private	99	145	133	377			
2	State	199	201	163	563	1440	52.860[a]	0.05
3	Federal	176	188	136	500			
		474	534	432	1440			

Note: *Significant at 0.05; df = 2; X^2-critical = 5.991*

The chi square results in Table 6 indicate that the calculated value of 52.860 is higher than the critical table value of 5.991 at 0.05 significance level and 2 degrees of freedom. This shows that there is a connection between university academic dishonesty, quality of graduates produced, and how these graduates can compete with their peers in other climes. Where university students engage in academic dishonesty, the quality of their graduates is compromised and watered down. This is because instead of using their productive time to study hard to pass and be successful in their examinations, they cut all sorts of corners to make quick successes. This type of conduct is detrimental to the quality of education any university can offer to their graduates.

6. Discussion

The open-ended questionnaire as used requested respondents to willingly list the possible or presumed causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. Data analysis showed a list of 14 causes, although there could be more. These were: school factors; cultism and peer influence; poor funding; administrative bottleneck; lack of qualified academics; lack of adequate facilities; poor reading culture; overdependence on paper qualification; lack of labs, studios, and theaters; student home factors; lack of reagents and equipment; poor staff motivation and welfare; corrupt staff; and incessant striking by staff. This confirms findings by Phiri and Nakamba (2015), who found that most causes of examination malpractice/academic dishonesty include poor student preparation, poor class

and lecture attendance, teacher incompetence, and poor funding of students' academic program.

Scholars such as Onuka and Durowoju (2013), Onyibe et al. (2015), and Nnam and Inah (2015) found similar results to this current finding. These researchers collectively found the following causes of academic dishonesty: poor funding for tertiary institutions; lecturers' lack of commitment to duty as a result of poor remuneration and welfare and few incentives; near absence of reagents; poorly equipped laboratories, studios, and theaters for students' practical work and learning; poorly stocked libraries; and poor resources for lecturers' use during teaching and learning. Other causes included poorly designed and congested lecture rooms, inadequate lecturer offices, and the jungle-like nature of student hostels.

Other scholars looked at factors such as school and student factors as major causes of academic dishonesty. Among the school factors were poor lecturer motivation and in-service training; provision of awards and prizes; sponsorship for symposiums, workshops, seminars, and conferences; comfortable lecture classrooms; lecturers' office spaces; further studies and regular retraining; prompt payment of honoraria; and lecturer entitlements, such as promotion arrears, leave arrears, and internship. Other school factors included university administrative bottleneck in terms of early promotion, fund disbursement, allocation of office spaces, acquisition and provision of state of the art equipment and textbooks, including virtual and hard copies, to enable lecturers to do research to teach modern and up to date facts (Anzene, 2014; Kyei, 2014; Nnam & Inah, 2015; Pittman, 2020; Sotiriadou et al., 2019; Suwaldiman & Tyas, 2019).

Student factors that cause examination malpractice or academic dishonesty include students' home environment; parents' socioeconomic status, including sources of income, income level, educational level, occupational status of parents, family type and size, and parenting style; peer influence; students' readiness to study and their study habits; sponsorship; students' reading culture (negative or positive); and students' understanding of their goal in life. Authors such as Pidlisnyuk (2010), Pitan and Adedeji (2012), and Oke and Olowonefa (2019) posited that cultism and peer influence are two inseparable factors that have influenced academic dishonesty in most universities. These authors were emphatic that students are influenced by their peers bullying and threatening them to either join a cult group or be killed. Once they have joined and committed criminal offenses, police or rival groups will come after them. They then begin to skip classes or are always on the run for their lives, only going to school during examinations to complete their studies. Most often, it is during this period that most of these students who are cultists are killed.

Scholars such as Abel et al. (2020), Devine and Chin (2017), and McNair and Haynie (2017) identified some major factors causing academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. These include poor funding; student factors; cultism; peer influence; poor teacher welfare and near lack of incentives to university staff; school factors; and funding of higher education. Added to these are absence or

near absence of modern learning facilities such as virtual libraries; poorly stocked libraries; lack of equipment and reagents; lack of modern laboratories, studios, and theaters for students' learning; poorly furnished lecturer offices; and over-congested lecture rooms. Other factors include employment of poorly qualified lecturers to teach in the university system who do not have proper training or pedagogical knowledge of the teaching profession and a firm grasp of the subject matter that they are expected to teach students.

The results in Table 4 showed a significant relationship between university academic dishonesty and university graduate quality (calculated r value = 0.778; critical r value = 0.177; sig. 0.05; df = 1438). These results imply that there is a significant correlation between university academic dishonesty and university graduate quality. This finding is a confirmation of the study by Eneji, et al., (2017), who compared the academic performance of Nigerian university graduates and their quality in the labor market or real-life environment. The author berated most Nigerian university graduates as having very good results yet which they can hardly defend. This author chided graduates who had a first- and second-class upper division yet were hardly able to write an official memo or identify solutions to simple societal problems or problems in the office or wherever they are engaged.

Eneji, et al., are not alone on this proposition. Authors such as Okebukola (2008), Pidlisnyuk (2010), and Mimiko (2012) were unanimous in their assertion that the quality of graduates produced from most Nigerian universities is alarming. These authors requested for the urgent overhauling of the Nigerian educational system. They blamed the poor quality of graduates of most Nigerian universities on the incessant industrial action taken by lecturers, while also observing that the government is also largely to blame. They further posited that most often when industrial action is taken, university academic calendars are disrupted. Once the lecturers' demands are met, they will return to campus and do a crash course and hurriedly administer examinations to students. More often than not, these students are not even taught, while in some cases, course content that should take 12–14 weeks are condensed and taught to the students within 2–4 weeks to catch up with the academic calendar which they had missed.

It has also been established by authors such as Imhonopi and Urim (2009), Isah (2010), and Mimiko (2012) that some lecturers give examinations on topics they do not teach just to make sure students fail and will then bribe them in some way to pass their examinations. While some scholars were critical in their findings, others have noted that some students hardly do their assignments or independent practice problems; they copy from their peers and submit that to satisfy lecturers. Sadly, some of these assignments or independent practice or homework are hardly marked by lecturers to correct students' errors (Adebakin et al., 2015). Other scholars who found similar results blamed the failure of the school system and poor graduate quality on universities, the government, and the students. Studies have shown that government does not adequately fund education and does not take lecturers' welfare seriously. In addition, some parents push their children to go to school just to acquire an education as a means to a meal ticket or

so that their children can be where they want them to be. Other parents even force their children to study courses they are not interested in. On the students' side, some of them just want to graduate to secure a white-collar job or the paper qualification to satisfy all righteousness (Arong & Ogbadu, 2010; Asamoah, 2018; Asiyai, 2013; Hodges, 2017; Israel, 2019).

The results in Table 5 showed a calculated chi square value of 54.600 opposed to the critical table value of 5.991 at 0.05 significance level and 2 degrees of freedom. This shows that with a compromised standard at universities and other tertiary institutions, there is bound to be a lacuna in the contribution graduates make to national development. This validates Prof. Bab Fafunwa's observation and strong belief that the standard of any nation's education system is determined by the quality of its teachers. This is applicable to national development all over. A country is developed when the graduates from its educational system are interested in more than just obtaining a paper qualification to look for white-collar jobs. Rather, if these graduates are creative, innovative, and daring, they can excel technologically, scientifically, economically, and otherwise, thereby contributing to national development. Scholars promoting education for national development are of the view that the collapse of a country's educational system can bring the country to its knees in a very short time. One sure way of destroying a nation is by destroying its educational system through all sorts of academic dishonesty (Nnam & Inah, 2015; Onuka & Durowoju, 2013; Onyiobe et al., 2015). Furthermore, the best way for any nation to achieve technological and national development is to strengthen their academic institutions to improve the quality of their graduates (Kyei, 2014; Sotiriadou et al., 2019). Other scholars also argued that if graduates cannot contribute to the economy in terms of job creation, innovation, discovery, and entrepreneurship, they will be unable to contribute to develop the economy of their countries in terms of tax, employment, and income remittance, among other things. In the developed world, it is the university graduates who developed what these countries and other dependent countries are consuming today. Onyibe et al. (2015) wondered if this low graduate quality is the reason most African countries produce what they do not consume and consume what they do not produce.

Some authors have also blamed the poor quality of graduates on the society as the society attaches too much value to a university certificate, without giving commensurate attention to entrepreneurial skills development. Scholars who have carried out extensive research on university academic dishonesty and graduate quality advocated for holiday work exposure for university undergraduates to give them firsthand work experience (Adebakin, 2014; Eneji et al., 2017). These scholars emphasized that there should be a compulsory internship program for all university undergraduates. Scholars such as Adebakin (2014) and Eneji et al. (2017) strongly believed that because of the near absence of holiday work experience for undergraduates, university graduates lack the necessary experience in job performance, are technologically backward, and scientifically cannot produce innovative ideas to contribute to technological or scientific development, let alone global competitiveness. Furthermore, because Nigerian universities are ill equipped, most science and technology students in the country lag behind their

peers in developed countries, where universities are well equipped with the necessary facilities (Adebakin, 2014; Eneji et al., 2017; Phiri & Nakamba, 2015).

In concurrence, Nnam and Inah (2015) posited that academic dishonesty is sometimes committed through collaboration between student and lecturer. When academic dishonesty is committed by both students and lecturers, the quality of graduates produced by the process or system is reduced. In all climes of the world, wherever academic dishonesty is fraught, there is a reduction in the quality of graduates produced from such institutions. Based on the aforementioned positions, university academic dishonesty does significantly influence the quality of graduates produced from such universities.

From the chi square analysis results shown in Table 5, the calculated chi square value of 54.600 is higher than the critical value of 5.991 at 0.05 significance level and 2 degrees of freedom. This implies that there is a significant relationship between university academic dishonesty, graduate quality, and national development for global competitiveness. In simpler terms, when academic dishonesty is practiced, the quality of graduates is reduced and this quality affects graduates' contribution to national development and global competitiveness. This result is in line with the findings of Timothy and Abubakar (2013), Hodges (2017), Asamoah (2018), and Israel (2019), who studied the impact of student empowerment on service quality. They found that when students are empowered to carry out groundbreaking research in the laboratory, studio, workshop, or theater by themselves with the guidance and facilitation of lecturers, they become used to working with those equipment or facilities. In their everyday lives, as they use this equipment, they come up with new ideas that can contribute to national discoveries and development. Contrarily, when academic dishonesty curtails these processes, it affects not only the students but the entire rubric of the society or nation.

Onuka and Durowoju (2013) were blunt in their discourse, positing that it is shameful that most graduates of Nigerian universities can hardly contribute to national development. Some of these graduates can hardly identify or recognize chemical reagents. This is because they have only heard the names of most of the chemicals, reagents, apparatuses, and items; they have not seen them physically, not to mention used them. Onuka and Durowoju (2013) averred that because of the near absence of these apparatuses and equipment, Nigerian graduates cannot contribute to any meaningful discovery or make groundbreaking discoveries within the country. The authors blamed the government and the proprietors of university education for the decay in the university system by not meeting the need in providing the necessary facilities and equipment for the universities (Freiburger et al., 2017; Morse & Foster, 2014; Mbilinyi & Msuya, 2018; Phiri & Nakamba, 2015; Tabsh et al., 2019).

Onyibe et al. (2015) concurred in their study on examination malpractice in Nigeria and what the causes and effects were on national development. They found that academic dishonesty is a major bane in society. It has permeated the rubric of the system so much so that in some universities, it has become a norm,

where parents even encourage their children to engage in academic dishonesty to produce the best result possible. Eneji et al. (2019) further observed that the case is so bad that many parents even pay for their children to be admitted into certain courses. Some will continue to pay their way through the university system to produce graduates who can hardly defend the courses they studied or the certificate they obtained from these universities.

The results in Table 6 indicated a calculated chi square value of 52.860 at 0.05 significance level and 2 degrees of freedom, against the critical table value of 5.991. This result shows that there is a connection between university academic dishonesty, quality of graduates produced, and how these graduates can compete with their peers in other climes. Where a university's students engage in academic dishonesty, the quality of its graduates is compromised. The technological, scientific, and economic developments enjoyed by the greatest part of the developed world today are products of their universities and students. The products of these universities learned to think outside the box to find solutions to national development challenges. One may wonder how well Nigerian graduates have fared over the years in finding dependable solutions to the country's multiple development challenges.

Development is a product of creative and innovative thinking and taking courageous actions to turn abstract ideas into reality and material results. This can only be achieved if university students are serious and occupy a central position in the teaching and learning process. On this premise, teaching had to make a transition from being teacher centered to learner centered, because the learner is at the center of the educational process. This result supports the work of Suwaldiman and Tyas (2019), who found that education is the bedrock of all development endeavors, and that a country owes its citizens the best functional education it can provide to guarantee the development and progress of the country. Pittman (2020) explained that providing education alone is not sufficient for the necessary changes. Providing students with equipment, facilities, studios, functional classrooms, et cetera will amount to nothing if the students are not properly trained on how to use these to design, innovate, and develop new innovations. The students are thus at the epicenter of all the learning processes. As such, they must actively participate and acquire the relevant knowledge to enable them to compete and fit in well with their peers in other climes. By so doing, they can compete globally and contribute to the national development of their country.

Eneji et al. (2019) further posited that when academic dishonesty is perpetrated, graduates are normally found wanting in the discharge of the duties assigned to them. Normally, there are mismatches between graduates' paper qualification and what they can contribute to the society. With this quality of results and graduates, there is a mismatch between what they can offer the nation and how they can favorably compete globally with their peers in other climes. These findings, and that by scholars, have shown that academic dishonesty is a canker worm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the university system in most parts of the world. This has led to a reduced quality of graduates from such institutions

where academic dishonesty is perpetrated. These graduates can subsequently hardly contribute to national development, never mind be globally competitive.

Scholars such as Kyei (2014), Anzene (2014), Phiri and Nakamba (2015), Oke and Olowonefa (2019), and Chirikov et al. (2019) were unanimous in their assertion that academic dishonesty destroys any country's academic system. It reduces the university graduate quality and disables such graduates from contributing to national development and competing locally, not to mention globally. Therefore, deliberate actions should be taken and policies formulated to curb academic dishonesty at whatever stage in Nigeria's educational system, from kindergarten to tertiary education. Competitiveness in this regard refers not only to graduates but also to the quality of teaching staff and what contributions they have made to the global economy. Looking at the SCImago ranking of universities and the ranking system developed by Morse and Foster (2014), one may wonder whether Nigerian universities and their graduates fit well into these global schemes in terms of ranking. It is our firm belief that when academic dishonesty is curbed, graduate quality and staff productivity will improve and such universities will be able to comfortably compete with universities in other climes.

7. Conclusion

Data analysis showed that there are about 14 causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. Respondents from the different types of universities that participated (private, state, and federal owned) agreed on the perceived causes of academic dishonesty in Nigerian universities. The correlation analysis used for testing hypothesis 1 showed a calculated r value of 0.778 against 0.177 at 1438 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 significance level. The chi square analysis used to test hypotheses 2 and 3 yielded calculated r values of 54.600 and 52.860, respectively, against a critical value of 5.199 and 2 degrees of freedom. The causes listed include but are not limited to: school factors; cultism and peer influence; poor funding; admin bottleneck; lack of qualified academics; lack of adequate facilities; poor reading culture/student study habits; too much dependence on paper qualification and anxiety to pass examinations at all cost; lack of laboratories, studios, and theaters; student home factors; lack of reagents and equipment for practicals; unsanitary hostels; poor staff motivation and welfare; corrupt staff; and incessant striking by staff.

While academic dishonesty has been found to reduce the quality of graduates produced by Nigerian and other universities, it is pertinent to state that academic dishonesty encourages laziness and procrastination leading to poor studying habits. Academic dishonesty impedes innovation, critical thinking, and learning among students. Such students will only pursue the quest for a white paper qualification without the commensurate skills, knowledge, capacity, values, and integrity to discover or invent anything to solve societal problems. How can these graduates compete with their peers from other climes who took their time to study hard and are inventing and innovating things to change the development narratives of their own countries?

It was also found that academic dishonesty reduces the quality of graduates from universities where dishonesty is perpetrated. This, in turn, makes such graduates unfit to make any meaningful contribution to national development. These graduates will seldom contribute to national development, not to talk of competing with their peers of the same courses, duration of studies, and the same qualification from other parts of the globe. It is therefore concluded that academic dishonesty diminishes the quality of university graduates and may at best hardly contribute to national development or global competitiveness.

8. Recommendations for Policy Directions

Arising from the foregoing, the following recommendations have been made to guide policy formulation and directions:

1. There should be an urgent curriculum overhauling. The curriculum content of Nigerian and African educational systems should reflect the developmental challenges of Nigeria and those of Africa, respectively. It should not depend on the "education for clerks and secretary" curriculum handed over by the colonial masters.
2. Government should as a matter of urgent public interest improve the funding of education and improve their lukewarm attitude towards funding education in Nigeria.
3. School administrators and government should design a reward system and incentives to motivate lecturers to enjoy their jobs by improving their conditions of services and their welfare.
4. University management should put stringent monitoring systems in place with appropriate sanctions for erring students and lecturers who engage in academic dishonesty.
5. University management and administration should partner with individuals and corporate organizations in hostel development to provide accommodation for students at a minimal cost. Universities should also improve their supervision of the hostel porters to improve sanitation and personal hygiene in the hostels.
6. Government and university administration should declare a state of emergency in infrastructural development in universities, regarding office spaces, staff quarters, lecture classrooms, and theaters.
7. Equipment, facilities, and reagents, including state of the art laboratories, theaters, studios, workshops, and educational technology laboratories, should be established for student learning.
8. In-service retraining programs should be organized regularly for lecturers to enable them to use these state of the art facilities in their teaching and learning.
9. A new policy should be formulated where all children of public office holders/their spouses must school and work in Nigeria. This will force those charged with the responsibilities of funding and managing the country's school systems to do the necessary.
10. The Nigerian Government and university management should open up collaboration channels with foreign universities for information and facility sharing.
11. Universities and parents should go back to the traditional reward system, where hard work is rewarded. Universities should identify students who are

naturally working very hard to pass their examinations honorably and reward them even if they graduate with second-class lower division. Universities should not reward and recognize dishonest students who graduate with first class without the commensurate knowledge to defend their qualification.

12. Universities should introduce national ethics and values into the general studies curriculum beyond citizenship education. Students should be encouraged to study hard and pass their examinations and to not commit bribery to pass examinations.

9. References

Abel, J., Sima, R. G., & Shavega, T. (2020). The intensity of academic dishonesty among postgraduate students in higher learning institutions in Tanzania and how to curb the situation. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences, 8*(9), 94-103. https://www.idpublications.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Full-Paper-THE-INTENSITY-OF-ACADEMIC-DISHONESTY-AMONG-POSTGRADUATE-STUDENTS-IN-HIGHER-LEARNING.pdf

Adebakin, A. B. (2014). *Assessment of university graduates' employability and productivity in public and private organizations in Lagos State* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Department of Educational Management, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife.

Adebakin, A. B., Ajadi, O. T., & Subair, S. T. (2015). Required and possessed university graduate employability skills: Perceptions of the Nigerian employers. *World Journal of Education, 5*(2), 115-121. https://www.sciedupress.com/journal/index.php/wje/article/view/6267/4090

Anzene, S. J. (2014). Trends in examination malpractice in Nigerian educational system and its effects on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2*(3), 1-8. https://ajhss.org/pdfs/Vol2Issue3/1.pdf

Arong, F. E., & Ogbadu, M. A. (2010). Major causes of declining quality of education in Nigeria from administrative perspective: A case study of Dekina local government area. *Canadian Social Science, 6*(3), 183-198. https://journaldatabase.info/articles/major_causes_declining_quality.html

Asamoah, G. (2018). Cheating in tertiary education in Ghana: Courses and ways to combat the problem. *International Journal of Science Education, 4*(8), 23-39.

Asiyai, R. I. (2013). Challenges of quality in higher education in Nigeria in the 21st century. *International Journal of Educational Planning & Administration, 3*(2), 159-172. https://www.ripublication.com/ijepa/ijepav3n2_07.pdf

Bamiro. B. (2012). *The Nigerian university system and the challenges of relevance*. In Convocation Lecture University of Lagos, Akoka-Lagos 12 January. Federal Government of Nigeria and Academic Staff Union of Universities Agreement, October 2009.

Chirikov, I., Shmeleva, E., & Loyalka, P. (2019). The role of faculty in reducing academic dishonesty among engineering students. *Studies in Higher Education, 2*(8), 2-17 https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1616169

Devine, C. A., & Chin, E. D. (2017). Integrity in nursing students: A concept analysis. *Nurse Education Today, 60*, 133-138. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2017.10.005

Eneji, C. V. O., Beshel, C. A., Onnoghen, N. U., & Okpachui, A. A. (2017). Academic research as nexus for national development and global competitiveness: University of Calabar experience. *The Researcher: A Journal of Contemporary Educational Research, 1*(1), 21-50. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322307166_Academic_Research_as_Nexus_for_National_Development_and_Global_Competitiveness_University_of_Calabar_Experience

Eneji, C. V. O., Onnoghen, N. U., Agiande, D., & Okon, G. M. (2019). Lecturer's industrial actions and environmental education student's academic performance in the University of Calabar, Nigeria. *Civil and Environmental Research, 11*(7), 45-55. https://doi.org/10.7176/CER

Freiburger, T. L., Danielle, M. R., Blake, M. R., & Catherine, D. M. (2017). Cheating behaviors among undergraduate college students: Results from a factorial survey. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education, 28*(2), 222–247. https://doi.org/10.1080/10511253.2016.1203010

Hodges, S. K. (2017). *Academic dishonesty in higher education: Perceptions and opinions of undergraduates* [Doctoral dissertation, East Tennessee State University]. Electronic Theses and Dissertations. https://dc.etsu.edu/etd/3292

Imhonopi, D., & Urim, U. M. (2009). Factors affecting scholarly research output in Nigeria: Perception of academics in south-western universities. *UniLag Sociological Review, 10,* 24-36. https://www.connecting-africa.net/query_2.php?rid=B00057564

Isah, A. (2010). Electronic library uses by academic staff at the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. *Journal of Library and Information Science (JOLIS), 7*(1/2), 138-142. https://www.academia.edu/25422841

Israel, J. (2019). Determinants of perception of cheating among graduate students in Egyptian colleges. *Journal of Business Ethics, 23*(6), 207-304.

Kyei, K. (2014). Inclining factors towards examination malpractice among students in Takoradi Polytechnic, Ghana. *Journal of Education Practice, 5*(22), 56-81. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357119350_Inclining_Factors_towards_Examination_Malpractice_among_Students_in_Takoradi_Polytechnic_Ghana

Mbilinyi, D., & Msuya, J. (2018). Knowledge and strategies of controlling plagiarism at the university of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *University of Dar es Salaam Library Journal, 13*(2), 33-48. https://www.ajol.info/index.php/udslj/article/view/184597/173954

McNair, M., & Haynie, L. (2017). Academic dishonesty: A multi-discipline view of faculty and students' perceptions. *International Journal of Caring Sciences, 10,* 294-302. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318378358_Academic_dishonesty_A_multi-discipline_view_of_faculty_and_students_perceptions

Mimiko, F. (2012). *Human capital development blueprint: A pragmatic approach to resolving the challenge of capacity gaps in organizations in Nigeria*. Paper delivered at the Ondo State Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget Year 2012 quarterly lecture, November 2022.

Nnam, M. U., & Inah, A. F. (2015). Empirical investigation into the causes, forms and consequences of examination malpractice in Nigerian institutions of higher learning. *International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences, 2*(1), 52-62. https://www.noveltyjournals.com/upload/paper/Empirical%20Investigation%20into%20the%20Causes-144.pdf

Oke, E. B., & Olowonefa, G. S. (2019). Management strategies for curbing examination malpractice in public secondary schools in Abuja, Nigeria. *The Journal of Arts, Humanities and Development Studies Research (JAHDSR), 1*(1), 10-25.

Okebukola, P. A. (2008). *Quality assurance mechanisms and academic mobility in Anglophone countries: Case study of Nigeria.* Paper presented at the capacity building workshop on the License-Master-Doctorate (LMD) reform held at Universite Gaston Berger, Saint Louis, Senegal, September 19–20, 2008.

Onuka, A. O. U., & Durowoju, E. O. (2013). Stakeholders' role in curbing examination malpractice in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economy, Management and Social Sciences, 2*(6), 342-348. https://www.academia.edu/66251676/Stakeholders

Onyibe, C., Uma, U., & Ibina, E. (2015). Examination malpractice in Nigeria: Causes and effects on national development. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *6*(26), 12-17. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1077379.pdf

Phiri, W., & Nakamba, J. (2015). The effects of examination malpractice (leakages) on pupils' academic performance in Geography in selected secondary schools of Kitwe District, Copperbelt Province, Zambia. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development, 2*(12), 324-331. http://www.allsubjectjournal.com/archives/2015/vol2/issue12/2-12-83

Pidlisnyuk, V. (2010). Education in sustainable environment. *The Role of Universities in Economic and Environmental Studies, 10*(1), 59-70. https://www.academia.edu/32621853/Education_in_Sustainable_Development_the_role_of_universities

Pitan, O. S., & Adedeji, S. O. (2012). Skills mismatch among university graduates in the Nigeria labor market. *US-China Review A*, *1*, 90-98. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED530695.pdf

Pittman, O. A. (2020). Academic dishonesty: What impact does it have and what can faculty do? *Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, 32*, 598-601. https://doi.org/10.1097/JXX.0000000000000477

Sotiriadou, P., Logan, D., Daly, A., & Guest, R. (2019). The role of authentic assessment to preserve academic integrity and promote skill development and employability. *Studies in Higher Education, 45*(11), 2132-2148 https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1582015

Suwaldiman, S., & Tyas, I. N. (2019). Accounting students' academic misconduct as the corruptive behavior: What academic factors influencing? *Indonesian Journal of Accounting and Governance, 3*(1), 33-55. https://doi.org/10.36766/ijag.v3i1.33

Tabsh, S., Hany, A., El- Kadi, H., & Abdelfatah, A. S. (2019). Faculty perceptions of engineering student cheating and effective measures to curb it. *Journal of Scientific Education*, *2*(8), 36-76. https://doi.org/10.1109/educon.2019.8725199

Timothy, A., & Abubakar, H. (2013). Impact of student empowerment on service quality: An empirical analysis on selected schools of Kitwe District, Copperbelt Province, Zambia. *Journal of Marketing Studies*, *1*(4), 32-40. https://doi.org/10.7763/ijesd.2015.v6.557