

# THE INFLUENCE OF CORRUPTION ON THE MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** The study examined the influence of bribery and corruption on the management of the Teaching Service Commission in Nigeria, particularly in the Ekiti state. Two studies' questions and hypotheses guided the study. The research design adopted for the study was an ex post facto type. A random sampling technique was used to draw out 180 participants for the study. Corrupt Practices of Teaching Service Tool (CPTST) and Influence of Corruption on the Teaching Service Commission Scale (ICTSCS) were used to get the opinions of the research participants. Data collected were analyzed with the use of a frequency distribution table and t-tests. The findings of the study showed that laziness among staff, poor student performance in external examinations like WAEC and NECO, low standard of education, employment of unqualified and incompetent teachers, and increase in cases of examination malpractices are the influences of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state, Nigeria. The findings also revealed that sanctioning corrupt offenders in the Teaching Commission, ensuring due process of registration and recruiting of teachers, and enacting laws to check on irregularities in the Teaching Service Commission are managerial strategies to curb the practice of corruption in the Teaching Service Commission. It was recommended that the Management of public secondary schools promote mentoring and value reorientation services for the senior teaching staff to help the junior live up to expectations in secondary school education.

**Keywords:** Influence; Bribery; Corruption; Management; Teaching Service Commission; Ekiti state

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Nigerian society is now undergoing a reformative solution largely due to the confusion in governance, moral decadence, corruption and corrupt practices on the part of educational stakeholders [1]. These actions have affected the quality and delivery of education. It is unfortunate that the educational system has lost its values and that society is not anything better. Education in Nigeria has become one of the most vital and powerful tools for instilling good moral values into its citizens to foster national development [2]. Education serves as the driving mechanism for national development, both economic and political. The school as an agent of socialization in promoting quality education is relied upon to mould the character of people morally, mentally, spiritually, socially and emotionally. Students' ability to adapt to any environment they are in solely depends on support from teachers, classmates and school authorities during the education process.

Education is given great importance by any responsible society that awaits progressive achievements and advancements in the lives of its citizens [3]. Recently, the vision of Nigerian society towards the benefits of education has faced a terrible challenge and downfall due to the rise in corruption and corrupt practices in the education sector, precisely the Teaching Service Commission [4]. Education in Nigeria has been disastrous and become more prone to corruption, thereby setting out the realization that the society perceives it as a sector being relied upon for continuity, change and criticism.

The Nigerian educational system and teaching service commission have over the years been characterized by high levels of bribery and corruption [5,6]. This menace has not been perceived to subside as time goes on. The performance of teachers has been for long used in determining school learning outcomes and effectiveness, as teachers' interaction with students is the pathway to educational quality [7]. However, it is quite unfortunate that most of the corrupt practices perpetrated at the school level by teachers are due to the perception and growing rate of bribery and corruption during their stay at the Teaching Service Commission. The Nigerian case in the direction of the rate of bribery and corruption is somehow critically unfortunate. The reason for this is that teaching officials entrusted with overseeing responsibilities in education simply and ingloriously embezzle or misappropriate whatever funds for this purpose and this decadent behaviour is correspondingly matched with strike actions that make students stay more days in the house than they stay in schools.

Corruption has undermined the education sector, putting product quality from primary to tertiary in jeopardy. Teachers, school officials, parents, students, and other stakeholders are all complicit in these problems, preventing even the best-intentioned efforts to address them from producing the desired results. The school administrator wants a bribe to register a child in school, even though many parents are willing to pay to ensure their children's entrance. Furthermore, school heads work with teachers to solve test questions for their pupils, particularly during external examinations,

because they want to record good marks in the school to attract more students. In recent years, loopholes in the performance of the Teaching Service Commission to produce quality teachers were reported with the 1,300 teachers who failed test meant for primary four pupils in Kaduna, Nigeria [8]. This is largely due to the high rate of nepotism where unqualified teachers are recruited because of knowing someone in the commission or having good connections. Another incident reported by the ICPC webpage of the Provost and Bursar of Federal Cooperative College, Eleyele, Ibadan being sentenced to four years imprisonment without an option of fine, as a result of not remitting a total deficit balance of N3,351,851 back into the coffers of the Federal government in 2006. Teachers' gratuity and pensions for retired teachers are often held by officials by the Teacher's Service Commission, despite being in the annual budgetary allocations.

Bribery and corruption have damaged the educational system, resulting in reduced efficiency, resource waste and misappropriation, and poor service delivery. Because colleges are breeding grounds for destiny generations, corruption within the schooling machine affects more people than corruption in other sectors, both rural and urban places [5]. The Teaching Service Commission's high prevalence of corruption in creating quality and competent instructors has resulted in the majority of cases of absenteeism among public school teachers [9]. Students suffer greatly as a result of instructor incompetence and poor administration since they fall behind in receiving a sound education. Embezzlement and mishandling of funds intended for education development reveal a lack of infrastructure and equipment to support successful teaching and learning [10]. Teachers do not get the most out of their jobs, and this has the potential to cause a major exodus of professionally competent teachers from the teaching profession, leaving it largely staffed by quacks. Any state whose teachers are quacks must evade sound education, which can lead to the production of people whose efforts can contribute to national growth. Again, some courses that need a significant amount of capital to set up and administer cannot be found in a corrupt education system, and where they do exist, the standards are appalling. Poor academic standards in any education system result in a low quality of graduates who are unable to contribute meaningfully to their state's national growth [11].

The practice of corruption has damaged the Nigerian education sector and has led to inefficiency, poor teaching and a high rate of failure among students [8]. Schools which are the breeding ground for students have been immensely corrupted. When a youngster is exposed to all of these unethical behaviours at a young age, he tends to grow up with them and reflect the character traits wherever he goes in the future. However, the study investigates and examines the influence of bribery and corruption on the management of the Teaching Service Commission in Ekiti state, Nigeria.

Corruption is a global phenomenon that affects virtually all strata of the education sector in Nigeria. It varies from one teaching service commission to another, secondary school to another, ministry to ministry, place to place, time to time, culture to culture, and with the level of economic growth. The notion of corruption in Nigeria, particularly in secondary schools, is widespread and uncontrollable. This is because corruption damages every area of the educational system, including political, economic, and social development. It is important to note that corruption is not only prevalent in the governance and educational systems; it is also visible in every human community in Nigeria today [12]. On this note, Samson and John [12] hypothesized that the issue of corruption leads to a point when the common man will look at the trend and conclude that if the rich can do it, then their child must be able to survive as well. As a result, even if they lack the financial means, they will imitate. The total impact is what we are seeing now, and the Ministry of Education and policymakers are doing little to help with the problem of continued corruption in secondary school education.

Nicholas emphasized the impact of corruption on the educational system at a European Commission (EC) conference to help Nigeria's anti-poverty initiatives [13]. According to reports, he remarked, "Nigeria has sufficient funds to address its poverty issues. If the government succeeds in fighting corruption and inefficiency, the money will begin to flow into a working public school system, health care, and water supply, creating the groundwork for poverty eradication" [14]. Furthermore, it has been contended that the government's inability to effectively support the nation's postsecondary institutions in Nigeria is due to 'mismanagement of public monies,' rather than a lack of funds, as the federal government frequently maintains [11].

Corruption hurts our social and economic development, as well as the development of a true nation, particularly in the areas of diversion of development resources for private gain, misallocation of talent, loss of national value tax revenue, negative impact on infrastructure and private services, and economic growth retardation. In a commonwealth summit in London on June 12, 2002, Oyinlola cited the magnitude of loss corruption has caused African countries [8]; it claimed that African countries had lost about 140 billion US dollars due to corruption alone. Taaliu gives a good overview of the negative effects of corruption that have been assessed in recent studies [15]. These include:

- Reduced investment and hence growth due to rising costs and uncertainty;
- Reduce spending on health and education, as these spending are not easily corrupted by those controlling budgetary constraints;
- Reduction in operation and maintenance costs for reasons similar to those in the previous point;
- Arbitrary Increases in public investment because they are easier to manipulate by public and private bidders;
- Reduced productivity of public investments and infrastructure;
- Reduction of tax revenues due to corruption in tax and customs administration;
- Reduce foreign direct investment as corruption acts like a tax: The less predictable the level of corruption (the higher the variance), the greater the impact on foreign investment. Higher volatility makes bribery an unpredictable and arbitrary tax.
- Accepting bribes to enrol a child in school (usually at the school owner level);

- Paying teachers for lessons that have not been taught (usually at the principal's level with notification to the school owner) [16].

Furthermore, when corruption leads to bad management and administration of secondary schools, teaching and learning become affected. Corruption not only disproportionately harms the poor, but it is also likely to create income inequality by allowing specific individuals or groups of individuals to benefit from state activities at the expense of the rest of the population. Taaliu [15], for example, noted that there are significant indicators that recent shifts in income distribution in transition economies have been largely caused by corrupt practices such as non-transparent privatizations.

Corruption among stakeholders, particularly among students, hurts learning. Learners do not attend lectures since the regulations for qualifying for writing examinations, which require 70% attendance, are rarely followed if they can bribe their way through writing and passing the tests [17]. Exam misconduct and other actions like sorting might be caused by insufficient learning and a lack of grasp of the course content. Inadequate learning results in poor student performance and the generation of half-baked graduates, which can lead to low self-esteem and the inability to compete in the labour market, especially in today's market.

Because teachers who accept any sort of bribe from students are unable to look the students in the eyes and often become suspicious to avoid being detected, corruption impacts impartiality in the grading of students' scripts, resulting in low self-esteem and morale. They become authoritative with students who refuse to pay bribes, destroying the mentored-mentor connection that should exist between lecturers and students. It leads to poor service quality among non-teaching employees, particularly in the implementation of building projects at the management level.

Character and moral education are some of the key methods that the Nigerian Ministry of Education, Teaching Service Commission, Examination Councils, Policymakers, and other educational institutions can use in combating corruption in secondary schools. Corruption is a human behaviour that has harmed the minds and emotions of legislators, secondary school proprietors, parents, principals, instructors, and officials charged with enforcing laws and rendered them powerless. In other words, corruption has ruined the morality of secondary school Educational Inspectors, who are responsible for coordinating, assessing, and enforcing the regulations that govern secondary schools in Nigeria. Farzanegan & Witthuhn proposed that character and moral education be made mandatory in Nigerian secondary schools and that it be made a legal requirement [14]. He went on to say that excellent character and moral education would aid young people in developing good judgment, integrity, trustworthiness, and other important attributes.

According to Kayode [18], if children are properly educated and their minds and hearts are cleansed of corruption, they will grow up knowing what is good and wrong, as well as their societal obligations and constraints. The lack of excellent moral character among private school owners could be the source of greed, selfishness, and corruption. The core causes of the nation's social troubles are addressed through good character and moral education, which goes beyond the symptoms of corruption. Corruption is a moral issue; it is incompatible with decent citizens' ethical principles [19]. It is not evident that the Nigerian educational system can combat corruption by monitoring and severely supervising secondary school morals and integrity, and moulding them, to be honest, and trustworthy in their service delivery in the country. "The life of the nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful, and virtuous," Wawo correctly observed [20].

According to Okoye [21], a successful fight against corruption must focus on at least three axes, which are prevention, detection, sanctions and restitution. While certain attempts have been taken in the past to prevent corruption and sanction violators through due process, current efforts to uncover corruption are at best half-hearted. He went on to say that a law should be passed that establishes Federal Tribunals for Corruption Offenses (FTCO). The authority of such courts, which sit in Abuja and state capitals, as well as the form of punishments that fall under their jurisdiction, must be clearly defined, as well as the appeal court of law.

The issue of corruption has long been a challenge in the management of education in Nigeria, especially at the secondary level of education. The bane in corrupt practices in public secondary schools in Nigeria and Ekiti state especially is biting very hard and needs to be checked before it goes out of hand. Students who are supposed to learn good morals are faced with the domination of schools with corrupt practices, thereby making them endangered as a result of imitation and replication of people's behaviour they meet at school.

Teachers' absenteeism and carelessness of duty have increased as a result of corruption and the achievement of educational objectives after being confronted by the teaching body. Absenteeism, sexual harassment, mandatory sales of study materials, favouritism, and sex for grades have all become big issues in public education which have become rampant because so many teachers are participating. Because of the high rate of bribery and corruption in the Teaching Service Commission and other teaching bodies, teachers' pay is virtually constantly in arrears; absenteeism appears to be the norm, to the point that some state governments have had to dismiss instructors due to absenteeism. Another contending issue is that the National Union of Teachers (NUT) has frequently shown their displeasure towards the government's neglect and exclusion of teachers from the state governments' minimum wage scheme. Most of the teachers being produced by the Teaching Service Commission are unqualified due to the practice of corruption in the system, while the majority frequently use school hours to further get more studies and leave out their duty and role as teachers. For example, statistics in the year 2010 revealed that only 60% of the more than 550,000 primary school teachers are qualified, with just 17% being proficient in the use of computers.

Despite the global acknowledgement of the importance of education for development, Nigerian teachers continue to work in poor working conditions and receive low and irregular compensation. This is in direct opposition to the widely held belief that teachers are nation-builders whose contributions can never be overstated. Corruption has always been a serious issue in Nigerian education administration, particularly at the Teaching Service Commission. The majority of

debate participants have expressed concern about the rising tide of corruption in the commission. The study's gap necessitates a deeper understanding of bribery and corruption in the Nigerian Teacher's Service Commission, as well as its consequences for the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state. It is against this background that the study investigates and examines the influence of bribery and corruption on the management of the Teaching Service Commission in Ekiti state, Nigeria.

## 2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to examine the influence of corruption on the management of teaching service commission in Ekiti State, Nigeria. However, the specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the influence of corruption on the management of the Teaching Service Commission.
2. Identify the managerial strategies to be employed to curb the practice of corruption in the Teaching Service Commission.

## 3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the influences of corruption on the management of the Teaching Service Commission?
2. What administrative strategies can be employed to curb the practice of corruption in the Teaching Service Commission?

## 4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses guided the study:

H0<sub>1</sub>: Bribery and corruption have no significant influence on the management of the Teaching Service Commission.

H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between teachers' perception of the practice of bribery and corruption and the management of the Teaching Service Commission in Ekiti State.

## 5 METHODS

The ex-post facto research method was employed for this study. The choice of this design was to a variable on the influence of corruption being unable to be manipulated by the researchers. Besides, the research question posed utilizes data that has already been collected. The population of the study comprises teachers in public secondary schools in Ekiti state. According to the Ekiti State Teachers Commission, their figure stands at 7237. Participants for the study were selected using a random sampling technique to select three local government areas in Ekiti state comprising Ado-Ekiti, Oye-Ekiti and Ikole-Ekiti local government areas. Two public secondary schools were thus selected from each local government area sampled given 180 teachers who served as study participants. Corrupt Practices of Teaching Service Tool (CPTST) and Influence of Corruption on Teaching Service Commission Scale (ICTSCS) were used for data-gathering. CPTST was a 2-point response mode of Yes and No. The ICTSCS was drawn on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree dichotomous scale. Participants were approached at the various public secondary schools of study to partake in the research proceedings. Copies of the questionnaires were self-administered to each participant and the retrieval was done instantly to avoid missing in transit.

Data collected for the study were analyzed using frequency distribution tables. The choice of statistical tool was to identify and analyze the study as reported by the study research questions. T-test was adopted as the statistical technique as it allows the researcher to determine the mean difference in the study hypothesis. However, a significant p-value of .05 was the decision rule for acceptance and rejection of the stated hypothesis of the study.

## 6 RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the effects of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state?

**Table 1** Frequency and Percentage of the Influence of Corruption on the Management of Public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

Items	Yes		No	
	F	%	F	%
Increase in cases of examination malpractices	122	67.8	58	32.2
Increase in cultism and anti-social behaviours among students	122	67.8	58	32.2
Employment of unqualified and incompetent teachers	124	68.9	56	31.1

Laziness among staffs	137	76.1	43	23.9
Poor students performance in external examination like WAEC and NECO	136	75.6	44	24.4
Release of half-baked and unproductive graduate into the labour market	114	63.3	66	36.7
Low standard of education	126	70	54	30

Source: Field work 2024

Table 1 above shows that 76.1% of respondents approved that laziness among staff is an effect of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state. 75.6% of respondents approved that poor student performance in external examinations like WAEC and NECO is an effect of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state. 70% of respondents approved that a low standard of education is an effect of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state 68.9% of respondents approved that employment of unqualified and incompetent teachers is an effect of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state, while 67.8% approved that increase in cases of examination malpractices is an effect of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state.

Research Question 2: What are the administrative strategies to be employed to curb the practice of corruption in the teaching service commission?

**Table 2** Frequency and Percentage of the Administrative Strategies Employed to Curb the Practice of Corruption in the Teaching Service Commission

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Emphasis should be made on character and moral development of teachers.	61	33.9	69	38.3	24	13.3	26
Laws should be enacted to check on irregularities in the teaching service commission.	63	35	64	35.6	24	13.3	29	16.1
Sanctioning of corrupt offenders in the teaching commission.	74	41.1	53	29.4	23	12.8	30	16.7
Ensuring due process of registration and recruiting of teachers.	65	36.1	68	37.8	21	11.7	26	14.4
Managing and strictly supervising secondary schools administration by the teaching commission.	62	34.4	61	33.9	26	14.4	31	17.2

Source: Field work 2024

Table 2 shows that 41.1% of respondents strongly agreed that sanctioning corrupt offenders in the teaching commission is an administrative strategy to curb the practice of corruption in the teaching service commission, 29.4% agreed, 12.8% disagreed, and 16.7% of respondents strongly disagreed. Respondents who strongly agreed that ensuring due process of registration and recruiting of teachers is an administrative strategy to curb the practice of corruption in the Teaching Service Commission were 36.1%, 37.8% agreed, 11.7% of respondents disagreed, and 14.4% strongly disagreed. 35% of respondents strongly agreed that laws should be enacted to check on irregularities in the Teaching Service Commission, 35.6% agreed, 13.3% disagreed, and 16.1% strongly disagreed.

### 7 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis 1: Bribery and corruption have no significant impact on the management of the Teaching Service Commission in Ekiti State.

**Table 3** One-Sample T-Test for Hypothesis One

Test Value = 0					
T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
107.540	179	.000	9.10556	8.9385	9.2726

Source: Field work 2024

The result from Table 3 above showed that bribery and corruption have a significant impact on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti State, considering the item significance level at 1% (as indicated by the sig. level of 0.000). Based on this, hypothesis one is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the perception of teachers and management on the strategies to be adopted to curb the practice of bribery and corruption in the Teaching Service Commission in Ekiti State.

**Table 4** Correlation Analysis between Teachers and Management on Strategies to be Adopted to Curb Bribery and Corruption in Teaching Service Commission

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	P value	Remark
Teachers perception of practice of bribery and corruption	180	9.11	1.14	-.045	.550	Not Significant
Management of public secondary schools	180	10.83	2.38			

Source: Field work 2024

The result in Table 4 revealed a significant outcome ( $r = .011$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ). This implied that the mean score on teachers' perception of the practice of bribery and corruption 9.11 is not correlated with the mean score of 10.83 on the management of public secondary schools at the 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the perception of teachers and management on the strategies to be adopted to curb the practice of bribery and corruption in the Teaching Service Commission is accepted.

## 8 DISCUSSION

### 8.1 Influence of Corruption on the Management of Public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

The study revealed that laziness among staff, poor student performance in external examinations like WAEC and NECO, low standard of education, employment of unqualified and incompetent teachers, and increase in cases of examination malpractices are the influences of corruption on the management of public secondary schools in Ekiti state. Hypothesis testing also revealed that bribery and corruption have a significant impact on the management of the Teaching Service Commission in Ekiti State. This finding corroborates that of Justesen and Bjornskov who found a decline in the overall performance of number one college students in Brazil and extended dropout quotes in municipalities wherein corruption became prevalent[22]. In addition, the finding agreed with that of Katharina that corruption jeopardized the realization of the objectives of education at the basic level[23]. The implication of this finding on education is that appointment of teachers by taking bribes and appointment qualified teachers or appointing teachers who do not have a teaching certificate will spell doom for the delivery of quality teaching and learning. These non-professional teachers do not even know the philosophy of education and teaching methodologies. The cumulative effect is poor delivery, limited access to education and low student outcomes [6]. The effects or consequences of corruption are long-lasting, spreading over several generations. The young citizens of the country are made to believe that the best way of making it in life is through short cuts as bribery, nepotism, and favouritism. There is this slogan they popularly say "Use what you need to get what you want".

### 8.2 Administrative Strategies Employed to Curb the Practice of Corruption in the Teaching Service Commission

The findings showed that sanctioning corrupt offenders in the Teaching Commission, ensuring due process of registration and recruiting of teachers, and enacting laws to check on irregularities in the Teaching Service Commission are administrative strategies to curb the practice of corruption in the Teaching Service Commission (See appendix 1(table 3). The null hypothesis 2 which states that there is no significant relationship between the perception of teachers and management on the strategies to be adopted to curb the practice of bribery and corruption in the Teaching Service Commission was accepted. The study finding corroborates that of Meet & Narayan who noted that with appropriate compensation for civil servants[24], they would be motivated to improve performance and productivity. Corruption in secondary education can be controlled by applying some administrative strategies including prompt payment of

teachers' salaries, ensuring that teachers are paid a good salary commensurate with the standard of living in the society, formation of anti-corruption clubs, proper value re-orientation, character education and by checkmating the movement of teachers during school hours. Corruption in secondary schools must be curbed. A complete value re-orientation is a best practice that can be adopted to successfully address corruption in secondary schools in Nigeria. The teaching of moral values acceptable by society will be the right option in the present situation to help re-direct Nigerian youths in the right way.

## 9 CONCLUSION

The issues and dimensions of corruption are different in every country. The fight against corruption is the collective responsibility of all citizens. This can be achieved with commitment, good diagnosis and structure, and citizens and parliament working together. However, the fight against corruption has been left to the government and educational institutions alone. The fight against corruption cannot be won in the classroom alone without the support of the family, community and society at large.

The conclusion drawn from this study is that some stakeholders in secondary education perpetrate corruption. Corruption in public secondary schools impacts negatively the quality of teaching and learning, results in dropouts and leads to understaffing of some schools and overstaffing of others. Several administrative strategies can be adopted to curb corruption in public secondary schools in Ekiti state and Nigeria.

## 10 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Management of public secondary schools should put measures in place to promote awareness of the eradication of corrupt practices. This will enhance carefulness among the erring staff of the commission.
2. Federal and state governments should revisit teachers' condition of service and equip public schools to standard. This will boost their morality in the avoidance of corrupt practices under the watch of the commission.
3. Management of public secondary schools should promote mentoring for the senior teaching staff to help the junior to live up to expectations in secondary school education. Such mentoring in the form of conferences, supervision, workshops, and capacity building among others will expose them to the danger of corrupt practices that are capable of killing the system and will be extraordinarily careful in its exhibition in the system.
4. A complete value re-orientation is a best practice that can be adopted to successfully address corruption in secondary schools in Nigeria. This will put them on the right track to a decent society that will make them live a holistic life in society.

## 11 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The findings of this study should be perceived in the context of certain factors.

1. The adoption of survey research limits the assertion and evidence of cause-effect relationships.
2. The study also fails to show comparisons between the public secondary schools in Ekiti state that participated in the study.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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