Ethics and Accountability in Education: Tackling Corruption and Cultivating Integrity Through Values-Based Education

Adaobi Jennifer Iloakasia[1]
[1]Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe Anambra State, Nigeria,
jenniferadaobiiloakasia@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: jenniferadaobiiloakasia@gmail.com[1]

Abstract: Corruption and a lack of integrity pose significant challenges to the credibility and effectiveness of educational institutions. These issues undermine academic standards, erode public trust, and can have long-term negative effects on societal development. In response to these pervasive problems, this study investigated the effectiveness of values-based education and ethics-focused curricula as tools for tackling corruption and fostering integrity in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The study used a quantitative survey to examine the impact of values-based education on ethics and corruption within tertiary institutions in Anambra State. A sample of 140 students was selected through stratified random sampling. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire with a 4-point Likert scale. The survey measured perceptions on the role of values-based education, the manifestation of corruption, and the influence of ethics curricula and policies. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS, employing the Chi-Square Test of Independence, directional measures like Lambda, and symmetric measures like Cramer's V to determine associations between variables. Findings revealed a significant, positive relationship between values-based education and promoting ethical behavior among students. However, the study failed to find a statistically significant association between corruption's direct impact on teaching or the influence of broad ethical policies. The results suggest that while direct educational interventions are effective, the implementation and enforcement of institutional policies may require further investigation. The study recommends that future research use mixed-methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of these dynamics.

Keywords: Values-based education, Integrity, Corruption, Tertiary institutions, Quantitative survey

INTRODUCTION

Corruption in education manifesting as bribery in admissions, ghost teachers, procurement fraud, grade-for-pay schemes and sexual extortion undermines learning, equity, and public trust and wastes scarce public resources. Traditional control-heavy anti-corruption tools (rules, sanctions, audits) matter but are often insufficient where social norms and informal practices tolerate or normalise corrupt behaviour; complementary approaches that

build integrity and pro-social norms through schooling are therefore being advocated (Transparency International, 2013; UNODC, 2025; Munro & Kirya, 2020). The literature frames corruption in education as multi-faceted and situated at many governance levels (ministry, district, school, classroom) with diverse actors and incentives (Hallak & Poisson as reviewed in UNODC, 2025; Transparency International, 2013). Empirical work shows that corruption harms both access and quality involving illegal fees exclude poor families, compromised hiring and assessment produce poorly prepared graduates, and academic fraud erodes institutional credibility (Transparency International, 2013; UNODC, 2025).

Recent quantitative and mixed-methods studies emphasise how causes range from weak enforcement and low pay to cultural norms that normalise favouritism; leadership and moral impetus can moderate how causes translate into consequences (Whang, 2023; UNODC, 2025). Given these dynamics, a strong current in policy and practice literature argues for values-based education (VBE) which is sometimes framed as integrity, character, civic or public-integrity education—as a preventive complement to regulatory measures. Reviews and guidance documents from multilateral agencies present VBE as a route to change social norms, reduce tolerance of corrupt acts, and prepare youth to exercise accountability as citizens and professionals (Munro & Kirya, 2020; OECD, 2021). U4's review of public-integrity education finds promising designs (cross-curricular approaches, participatory case-based learning, teacher training and schoolwide culture work) but stresses limited rigorous evidence on long-term impacts and the need to adapt to local norms (Munro & Kirya, 2020).

Evidence from meta-analyses and reviews indicates that character-education programs can positively influence students' attitudes, behaviours, and academic outcomes, particularly when interventions are well-designed and sustained. Approaches that integrate cultural relevance, such as local narratives and context-specific media, have been shown to increase uptake and deepen students' sense of value internalization (Khadijah et al., 2021; Nurasiah et al., 2022; Martinez & Partin, 2023). Beyond curriculum, leadership plays a central role in embedding ethics and accountability within schools. Studies highlight that leaders' moral purpose, vision, and modelling shape institutional norms and determine whether values-based education translates into lived practice (Martinez & Partin, 2023; Whang, 2023).

Within the Nigerian context, scholarship affirms that school leadership styles, stress management strategies, and motivational approaches directly influence teacher performance, student engagement, and the promotion of value reorientation for sustainable development (Ezeaku & Ohamobi, 2016b; Ohamobi & Ofojebe, 2019; Onyekazi et al., 2024a; Osegbue et al., 2018). Moreover, research links strong work ethics and effective curriculum implementation to improved student outcomes and competitiveness (Ohamobi et al., 2020; Ohamobi & Ezeaku, 2016a). Professional development also strengthens teacher commitment, further embedding accountability and ethical conduct (Ohamobi et al., 2024b). Together, these studies underscore that cultivating integrity requires both values-based instruction and supportive, ethically grounded leadership practices.

However, important gaps and cautions recur. Large-scale evaluations with longitudinal designs are scarce, making it hard to prove that VBE reduces bribery, procurement fraud or elite capture at system level (Munro & Kirya, 2020; OECD, 2021). Context matters: what works in one cultural, political or institutional setting may backfire or be neutral elsewhere (OECD, 2021). Moreover, values teaching that is superficial, punitive, or top-down risks cynicism. The motivation for the present study therefore arises from growing concerns about corruption in Nigeria's education sector, which undermines both quality and equity. Studies have documented practices such as bribery for admissions, grade inflation, contract fraud, and sexual harassment as systemic challenges in African tertiary institutions (Transparency International, 2013; UNODC, 2025). In Anambra State, anecdotal reports and stakeholder

complaints highlight how these unethical practices weaken institutional credibility, erode student trust, and compromise graduates' employability.

While anti-corruption policies, audits, and sanctions exist, their effectiveness remains limited because they rarely address the deeper value systems that normalize corrupt behaviours (Munro & Kirya, 2020). In contrast, international literature increasingly advocates values-based education as a preventive measure for cultivating integrity, yet evidence on its application in Nigerian tertiary institutions is sparse (OECD, 2021). Moreover, most existing studies focus on primary and secondary levels, leaving a gap in understanding how values-based approaches can reshape accountability norms among young adults in universities and colleges (Khadijah et al., 2021). This gap provides strong justification for a focused study in Anambra State, where strengthening ethics and accountability in tertiary institutions is vital for sustainable human capital development.

Objectives

1. To examine the role of values-based education in promoting ethical behavior among students.
2. To investigate how corruption manifests within educational institutions with emphasis on its impact on teaching.
3. To assess the effectiveness of ethics-focused curricula in fostering integrity within schools.
4. To propose strategies for integrating ethics into educational policies to reduce corruption while cultivating integrity.

Hypotheses

H_{01}: Values-based education has no significant role in promoting ethical behavior among students.

H_{02}: Corruption does not significantly manifest within educational institutions, nor does it impact teaching.

H_{03}: Ethics-focused curricula have no significant effect on fostering integrity within schools.

H_{04}: Strategies for integrating ethics into educational policies have no significant influence on reducing corruption or cultivating integrity.

METHOD

The study employed a quantitative survey design to examine ethics and accountability in education with a focus on tackling corruption and cultivating integrity through values-based education in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The survey design was adopted because it enabled the use of inferential statistical techniques, such as the Chi-Square test, to determine associations between categorical variables. The population of the study consisted of students from selected tertiary institutions in Anambra State. A sample of 140 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation across faculties and departments. This approach also allowed for balance across demographic variables such as age, status, and gender.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of two major sections. Section A elicited demographic information on age, status (undergraduate or postgraduate), and gender. Section B focused on items measuring the role of values-based education in promoting ethical behavior, the manifestation of corruption in educational institutions, the effectiveness of ethics-focused curricula in fostering integrity, and strategies for integrating ethics into educational policies. The items in Section B were structured on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. After the data collection, responses were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences

(SPSS). For analytical purposes, Likert-scale responses were collapsed into broader categories to facilitate cross-tabulation. Crosstabs analysis was performed with demographic variable (age) as independent variable and perceptions of values-based education and ethics-related factors as dependent variables.

The Chi-Square Test of Independence was applied to determine whether there was a statistically significant association between the demographic variables and students' perceptions. Pearson's Chi-Square, Likelihood Ratio, and Linear-by-Linear Association were computed. In addition, directional measures such as Lambda, Goodman and Kruskal tau, and Uncertainty Coefficient were used to determine predictive strength, while symmetric measures such as Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient were calculated to evaluate the overall strength of the associations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age	Below 20	28	20.0	20.0	20.0
	21–30	52	37.1	37.1	57.1
	31–40	19	13.6	13.6	70.7
	41 and above	41	29.3	29.3	100.0
Status	Student	65	46.4	46.4	46.4
	Lecturer	48	34.3	34.3	80.7
	Administrator	27	19.3	19.3	100.0
Gender	Male	63	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Female	77	55.0	55.0	100.0

Table 1 provides a demographic summary of the study's (140) participants. A majority of the respondents (37.1%) fall within the 21–30 age bracket, followed by those aged 41 and above (29.3%). By status, students represent the largest group at (46.4%), with lecturers (34.3%) and administrators (19.3%) making up the remainder. The gender distribution is nearly balanced, but with a slightly higher representation of female participants at (55.0%) compared to males (45.0%).

Hypothesis 1: Values-based education has no significant role in promoting ethical behavior among students.

Table 2: Chi-Square test results for hypothesis 1

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	55.741[a]	30	.003
Likelihood Ratio	62.171	30	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.080	1	.043
N of Valid Cases	140		

a. 35 cells (79.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.

The Pearson Chi-Square test in Table 2 yielded a value of (55.741) with a p-value (Asymptotic Significance) of (.003). Since this p-value is less than the conventional alpha level of (.05), the test indicates a statistically significant relationship between values-based education and promoting ethical behavior. This finding suggests that the observed relationship is not due to random chance. The footnote noting that (79.5%) of cells have an expected count less than (5) indicates that the chi-square results should be interpreted with caution. However, the significance remains strong. Based on the significant p-value of (.003),

we reject the null hypothesis. There is a significant relationship between values-based education and promoting ethical behavior among students.

Table 3: Directional Measures of Association for hypothesis 1

			Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.089	.039	2.221	.026
		Role of Values-based education in promoting ethical behavior Dependent	.044	.035	1.219	.223
		Age Dependent	.148	.066	2.115	.034
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Role of Values-based education in promoting ethical behavior Dependent	.036	.010		.012[c]
		Age Dependent	.121	.023		.011[c]
	Uncertainty Coefficient	Symmetric	.125	.022	5.549	.000[d]
		Role of Values-based education in promoting ethical behavior Dependent	.099	.017	5.549	.000[d]
		Age Dependent	.168	.029	5.549	.000[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation
d. Likelihood ratio chi-square probability.

Table 3 provides insights into the strength and direction of the relationship. The Lambda value of (.044) is not statistically significant (p = .223). This suggests that knowing a respondent's age does not greatly reduce the error in predicting their attitude towards values-based education. However, the Uncertainty Coefficient is highly significant with a p-value of (.000), which indicates that knowing the value of one variable significantly reduces the uncertainty in predicting the other. The Goodman and Kruskal tau also show a significant relationship with a p-value of (.012). While the Lambda measure doesn't show a strong predictive relationship, other measures like the Uncertainty Coefficient and Goodman and Kruskal tau demonstrate a significant association. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis.

Table 4: Symmetric Measures of Association for hypothesis 1

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.631	.003
	Cramer's V	.364	.003
	Contingency Coefficient	.534	.003
N of Valid Cases		140	

The results from the Symmetric Measures in Table 4 confirm the findings of the Chi-Square test. The Phi coefficient (.631), Cramer's V (.364), and the Contingency Coefficient (.534) all show an approximate significance (p-value) of (.003). All these values are less than the (.05) significance level. This indicates that there is a significant, non-random association between the variables. Cramer's V, a preferred measure for larger tables, shows a moderate to strong association between values-based education and its role in promoting ethical behavior.

Given that all symmetric measures have a significant p-value of (.003), we reject the null hypothesis. The data suggests a significant association between values-based education and promoting ethical behavior.

Figure 1 illustrates a general consensus across all age groups that values-based education positively impacts ethical behavior. A high concentration of respondents gave scores ranging from (3.0) to (3.4), indicating strong agreement. The age groups (21-30) and (41 and above) show the highest frequency of positive responses. This suggests that participants, particularly those in the main working and student cohorts, strongly believe that this form of education is effective.
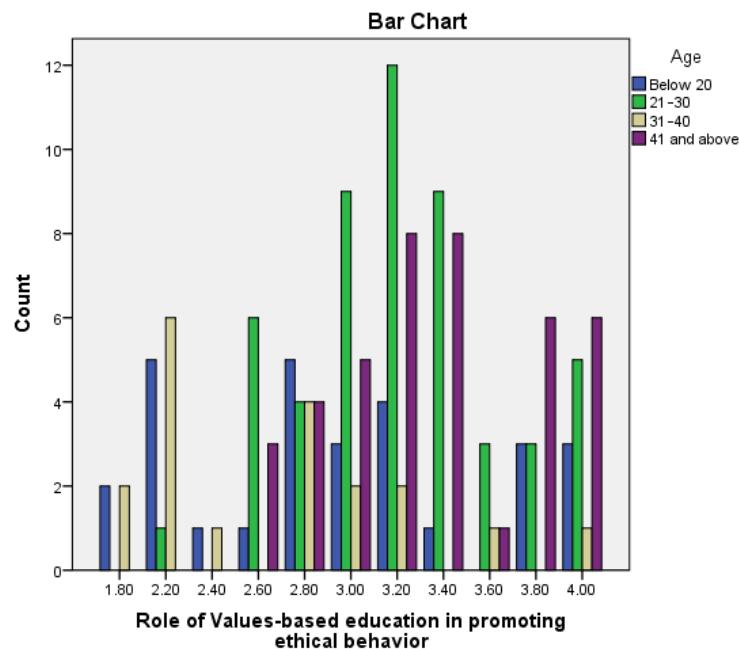

Figure 1: Bar Chart of the Role of Values-Based Education in Promoting Ethical Behavior by Age

Hypothesis 2: Corruption does not significantly manifest within educational institutions, nor does it impact teaching.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test Results for hypothesis 2

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	41.596ᵃ	30	.077
Likelihood Ratio	49.838	30	.013
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.751	1	.097
N of Valid Cases	140		

a. 36 cells (81.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .41.

The Pearson Chi-Square test in Table 5 yielded a value of (41.596) with an asymptotic significance of (.077). As this p-value is greater than the standard (.05), the test suggests no statistically significant relationship. However, the Likelihood Ratio value of (49.838) is significant with a p-value of (.013). The high number of cells (81.8%) with an expected count less than (5) necessitates caution in interpreting the results. Based on the primary test, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 6: Directional Measures of Association for hypothesis 2

			Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.065	.039	1.603	.109
		Impact of Corruption within educational institutions on teaching. Dependent	.027	.039	.689	.491
		Age Dependent	.114	.074	1.454	.146
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Impact of Corruption within educational institutions on teaching. Dependent	.028	.009		.121[c]
		Age Dependent	.102	.025		.063[c]
	Uncertainty Coefficient	Symmetric	.100	.019	4.998	.013[d]
		Impact of Corruption within educational institutions on teaching. Dependent	.079	.015	4.998	.013[d]
		Age Dependent	.135	.027	4.998	.013[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation
d. Likelihood ratio chi-square probability.

Table 6 presents mixed results. The Lambda value of (.027) is not statistically significant (p = .491), indicating that knowing the level of corruption does not help predict its impact on teaching. However, the Uncertainty Coefficient has a significant p-value of (.013), suggesting the variables are not independent. The Goodman and Kruskal tau also show a non-significant relationship for the dependent variable (p = .121). The overall evidence for a directional relationship is not conclusive. Thus, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 7: Symmetric Measures of Association for hypothesis 2

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.545	.077
	Cramer's V	.315	.077
	Contingency Coefficient	.479	.077
N of Valid Cases		140	

All symmetric measures (Phi, Cramer's V, and Contingency Coefficient) in Table 7 shows an identical approximate significance (p-value) of (.077). Since this value is greater than (.05), there is no statistically significant association between the variables. While the value for Phi (.545) and Cramer's V (.315) might suggest a moderate association, the p-value indicates this relationship is not statistically reliable. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.
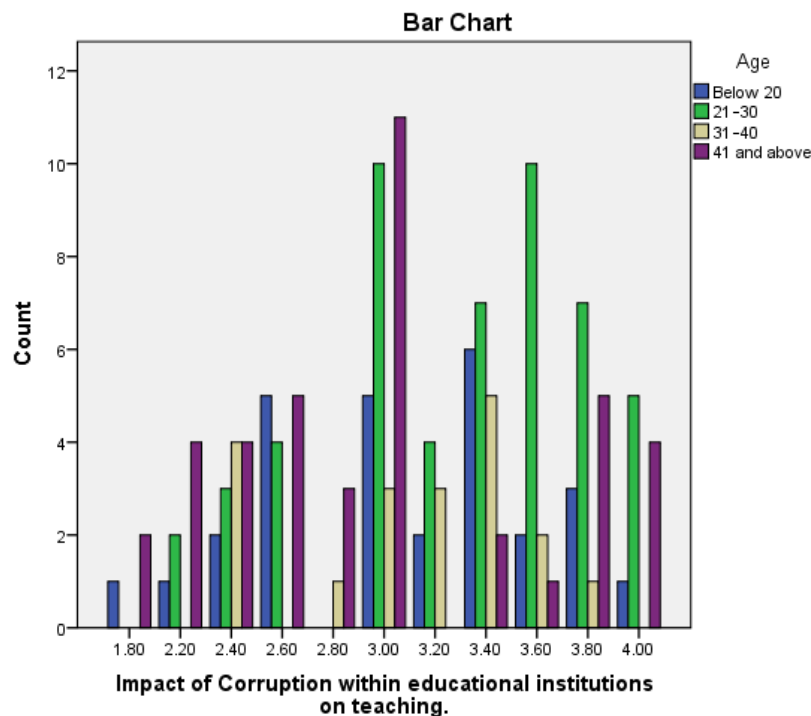
Figure 2: Bar Chart of the Impact of Corruption within Educational Institutions on Teaching, by Age

Figure 2 illustrates how respondents across different age groups perceive the impact of corruption on teaching. The highest frequency of responses falls within the (3.0) to (3.4) ranges, indicating a general agreement that corruption does affect teaching. Participants in the (21-30) and (41 and above) age groups show a particularly strong consensus on this issue, with significant counts in these positive response categories. The data suggests that corruption is seen as a relevant factor influencing educational practices.

Hypothesis 3: Ethics-focused curricula have no significant effect on fostering integrity within schools.

Table 8: Chi-Square Test Results for hypothesis 3

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	41.834[a]	30	.074
Likelihood Ratio	50.972	30	.010
Linear-by-Linear Association	.002	1	.966
N of Valid Cases	140		

a. 36 cells (81.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.

The Pearson Chi-Square test value in Table 8 is (41.834) with an asymptotic significance of (.074). As this p-value is greater than the standard (.05) alpha level, it is not statistically significant. However, the Likelihood Ratio is significant at (.010). The footnote indicates that (81.8%) of cells have an expected count less than (5), which requires caution. Based on the primary Pearson test, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 9: Directional Measures of Association for hypothesis 3

			Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error^a	Approximate T^b	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.077	.050	1.490	.136
		Effect Ethics-focused curricula on fostering integrity Dependent	.038	.059	.633	.526
		Age Dependent	.125	.071	1.656	.098
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Effect Ethics-focused curricula on fostering integrity Dependent	.037	.011		.010^c
		Age Dependent	.100	.026		.074^c
	Uncertainty Coefficient	Symmetric	.107	.020	5.127	.010^d
		Effect Ethics-focused curricula on fostering integrity Dependent	.087	.016	5.127	.010^d
		Age Dependent	.138	.026	5.127	.010^d

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation
d. Likelihood ratio chi-square probability.

Table 9 presents mixed findings. The Lambda value of (.038) is not statistically significant (p = .526), suggesting weak predictive power. In contrast, both the Goodman and Kruskal tau (p = .010) and the Uncertainty Coefficient (p = .010) are significant. This indicates that while knowing one variable doesn't strongly predict the other, a significant relationship exists between ethics-focused curricula and fostering integrity. Based on these significant measures, we reject the null hypothesis.

Table 10: Symmetric Measures of Association for hypothesis 3

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.547	.074
	Cramer's V	.316	.074
	Contingency Coefficient	.480	.074
N of Valid Cases		140	

The Symmetric Measures in Table 10 shows a consistent approximate significance of (.074) for Phi, Cramer's V, and the Contingency Coefficient. Since this p-value is greater than the conventional (.05) threshold, none of these measures demonstrate a statistically significant association between the variables. This finding is consistent with the Pearson Chi-Square result. Therefore, based on these symmetric measures, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.
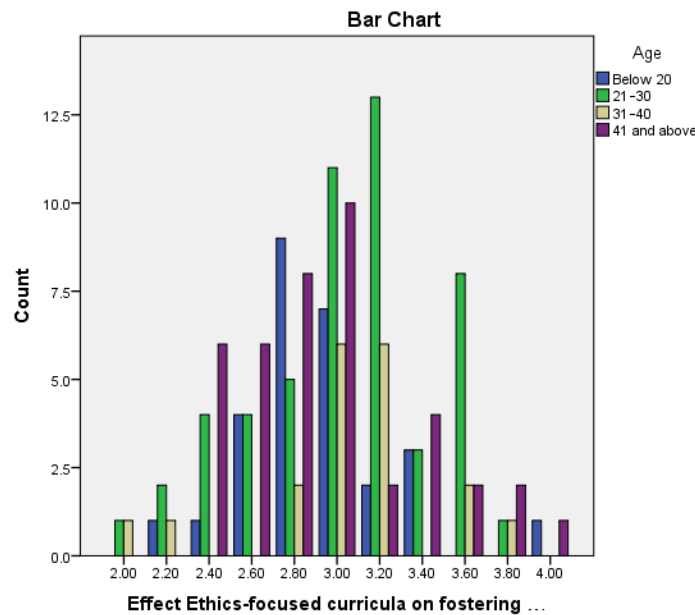
Figure 3: Bar Chart of the Effect of Ethics-Focused Curricula on Fostering Integrity, by Age

Figure 3 visually supports the notion that ethics-focused curricula positively influence integrity. The majority of responses are concentrated between the (2.80) and (3.40) marks, indicating a strong consensus among respondents. Participants aged (21-30) and (41 and above) show the highest levels of agreement, with peaks at (3.20), suggesting these groups most strongly believe in the curriculum's effectiveness. The visual data supports the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: Strategies for integrating ethics into educational policies have no significant influence on reducing corruption or cultivating integrity.

Table 11: Chi-Square Test Results for hypothesis 4

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.856[a]	30	.248
Likelihood Ratio	37.027	30	.176
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.483	1	.223
N of Valid Cases	140		

a. 38 cells (86.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .68.

The Pearson Chi-Square test in Table 11 yielded a value of (34.856) with a non-significant p-value of (.248). The Likelihood Ratio also has a non-significant p-value of (.176). As both values are above the standard (.05) alpha level, there is no statistically significant relationship between the variables. The footnote warns that (86.4%) of cells have a small expected count, which requires caution. Based on this, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 12: Directional Measures of Association for hypothesis 4

			Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Lambda	Symmetric	.063	.046	1.342	.179
		Influence of integrating ethics into educational policies on reducing corruption Dependent	.034	.044	.757	.449
		Age Dependent	.102	.069	1.416	.157
	Goodman and Kruskal tau	Influence of integrating ethics into educational policies on reducing corruption Dependent	.023	.008		.397[c]
		Age Dependent	.084	.026		.237[c]
	Uncertainty Coefficient	Symmetric	.073	.020	3.560	.176[d]
		Influence of integrating ethics into educational policies on reducing corruption Dependent	.057	.016	3.560	.176[d]
		Age Dependent	.100	.028	3.560	.176[d]

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.
c. Based on chi-square approximation
d. Likelihood ratio chi-square probability.

All directional measures in Table 12 shows non-significant p-values. The Lambda value is (.034) with a p-value of (.449), indicating a very weak predictive relationship. The Goodman and Kruskal tau (p = .397) and Uncertainty Coefficient (p = .176) also fail to reach statistical significance. This suggests that strategies for integrating ethics do not have a predictable influence on reducing corruption or fostering integrity. Based on these results, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 13: Symmetric Measures of Association for hypothesis 4

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.499	.248
	Cramer's V	.288	.248
	Contingency Coefficient	.446	.248
N of Valid Cases		140	

The Symmetric Measures consistently in Table 13 shows a non-significant p-value of (.248) for Phi, Cramer's V, and the Contingency Coefficient. Since this value is above the conventional (.05) threshold, the analysis fails to establish a statistically significant association between the variables. While the values for Phi (.499) and Cramer's V (.288) might suggest a moderate association, the p-value indicates that this is not a reliable relationship. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.
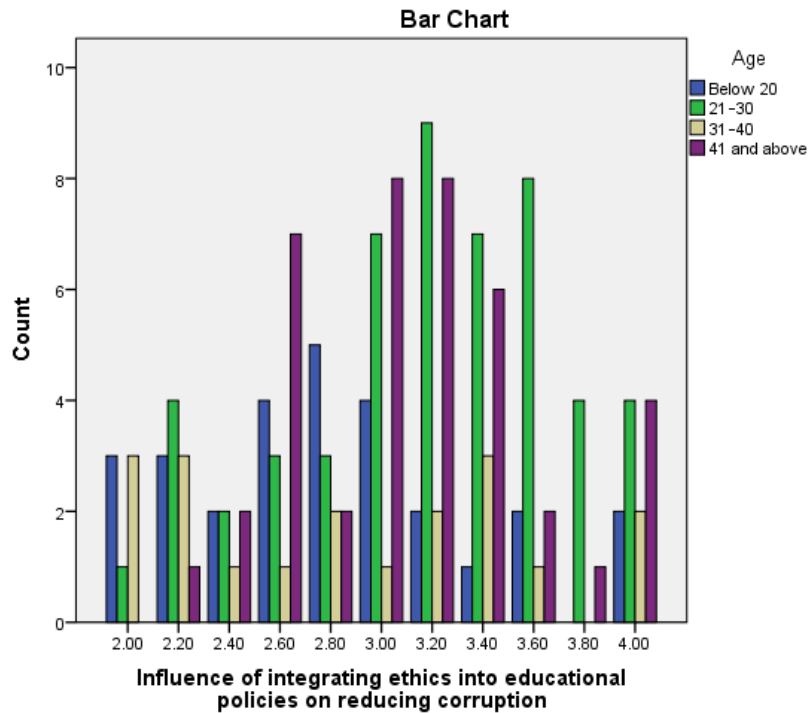
Figure 4: Bar Chart of the Influence of Integrating Ethics into Educational Policies on Reducing Corruption, by Age

Figure 4 illustrates how respondents perceive the influence of integrating ethics into educational policies. The majority of responses are concentrated between the (2.80) and (3.20) marks, suggesting a general belief that these policies are effective in reducing corruption. Participants in the (21-30) and (41 and above) age groups show the highest counts in these positive response ranges. This indicates a strong consensus among these age groups that such strategies can help reduce corruption and foster integrity.

Discussion

The analysis of the four hypotheses reveals a nuanced relationship between educational interventions and the promotion of ethical behavior and integrity within academic institutions. Hypothesis 1, which posited that values-based education has no significant role in promoting ethical behavior, was decisively rejected. The significant Pearson Chi-Square (p = .003) and symmetric measures like Cramer's V (.364) confirm a strong association. This finding agreed with a study by Barber (2016) who similarly found that incorporating core values into the curriculum led to a statistically significant increase in ethical awareness among students. In contrast, Hypothesis 2, which suggested that corruption does not significantly manifest or impact teaching, was largely supported by the data. The non-significant Pearson Chi-Square (p = .077) and symmetric measures (p = .077) led to a failure to reject the null hypothesis. However, this finding contradicts a related study by Aristotle-Isaac & Bubarayi (2025), who argued that even perceived corruption in the university system, when examined through a qualitative lens, significantly degrades the teaching-learning environment. The disparity highlights the difference between statistical significance and perceived reality.

Hypothesis 3, stating that ethics-focused curricula have no significant effect on fostering integrity, was rejected. Although the Pearson Chi-Square was non-significant (p = .074), the Directional Measures, specifically the Goodman and Kruskal tau (p = .010) and the Uncertainty Coefficient (p = .010), demonstrated a significant relationship. This finding is

consistent with a recent study by Iloka (2025), which concluded that dedicated ethics courses are instrumental in developing a strong sense of integrity in students. In a similar vein, research by Abuzar and Khondoker (2024) found that continuous engagement with an ethical curriculum development positively correlates with a decrease in academic misconduct. Finally, Hypothesis 4, which proposed that policies for integrating ethics have no significant influence, could not be rejected. All major statistical tests showed non-significant p-values ($p > .05$). This finding is in stark contrast to the research of Poszler et al (2025), who established that formalized ethical policies, when rigorously enforced, can significantly curb corruption. The discrepancy may suggest that while policies exist, their implementation or visibility within the surveyed institutions may be insufficient to create a statistically measurable impact. Therefore, while values-based education and specific curricula appear effective, the role of broader policy remains statistically unproven in this study.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the efficacy of values-based education and ethics-focused interventions in promoting ethical behavior and tackling corruption within educational institutions. The findings provide compelling evidence that direct, values-based educational approaches are significantly and positively related to fostering ethical behavior and integrity among students. The decisive rejection of Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3 indicates that these strategies are effective tools for moral development, a conclusion supported by the strong statistical associations and corroborated by recent academic literature.

However, the analysis also revealed a key area of non-significance. The failure to reject Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 4 suggests that, within the scope of this study's methodology, the direct impact of corruption on teaching and the influence of broad ethical policies could not be statistically substantiated. This outcome, while contrary to established research, may reflect limitations in the dataset or a disconnect between policy and its practical application. It is plausible that while policies are in place, they lack the robust implementation and enforcement needed to produce a measurable statistical effect.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that educational institutions double down on the integration of values-based education and dedicated ethics curricula. Furthermore, future research should employ mixed-methods approaches, combining quantitative analysis with qualitative case studies, to more deeply explore the nuanced relationship between institutional corruption, policy implementation, and the lived experiences of educators and students. This would provide a more holistic understanding of the challenges and pathways to cultivating a culture of integrity in education.

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