WOMEN INVOLVEMENT IN CORRUPT PRACTICES IN EKITI STATE CIVIL SERVICE, NUIGERIA

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Abstract

The issue of corruption has led to loss of confidence in Nigeria by its citizens at home and abroad due to the activities of fraudsters and corrupt public officials. The study examined the knowledge, forms, and causes of corruption in the public sector with a focus on women in Ekiti state Civil Service, Nigeria.

The study adopted the Structural Functionalism of Merton and Reasoned Action of Fishbein's as theoretical perspectives. A descriptive research design was employed for the study, using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The sample size was collected through random purposive technique and a total of 500 questionnaires were distributed to women civil servants across all 18 ministries at the state secretariat but only 456 were retrieved and used for the analysis. The quantitative data was analyzed using both chi-square and correlation at both univaraite and bivariate levels. Also, 20 In-depth Interviews were conducted with male and female respondents, as well as 1 Focus Group Discussion among women and content analysis was employed for qualitative data.

Findings showed that a weak significant relationship (0.135) exists between income of women and their involvement in corrupt practices. However, the chi-square result ($x^2 = 2.146$ (0.143) showed that there was an association between involvement of women in corruption and their reportage of corrupt practices, indicating that the level of women involvement in corruption may influence their frequency of reporting corrupt practices. Also, bribery (34.6%), extortion (27.9%), embezzlement (21.3%), Fraudulent (1.8%) and false accounting (10.3%) were identified as the most common forms corrupt practices. Women civil servants also perceived themselves to be less tolerant of corruption than men, and most female respondents felt that the practice did not have much effect on them.

The study concluded that corruption was reality in public sector and women were aware of it, though their level of awareness appeared to be low, and that it was not very likely that they would report corrupt practices even when such information was in their possession. It was therefore recommended that Anti-corruption Feedback

Structures should be established to in the public sector to protect and encourage the attitude of whistle-blowing among women, while internal work assessment should be integrated into civil service operation. Also, sensitisation programmes should be implemented to intimate women civil servants about the dangers of corruption, both on them, the family system and the society at large.

Keywords: Corruption, Public Sector, Women, Civil Service, Nigeria

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Introduction

Public sector corruption has attracted a lot of attention worldwide. Bribery and extortion are the most common examples of public sector corruption. Other examples of public sector corruption include misappropriation of funds, illicit enrichment, patronage, nepotism, misuse of information or property, and influence peddling (Laver, 2010). The magnitude of public sector corruption varies from one society to another and it has been argued that some countries are more corrupt than others (Transparency International, 2010). Public sector corruption is more pervasive in Asia, Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa compared to the Newly Independent States and North America.

Globally, the rate of increase in public sector corruption has become unprecedented (Sandholtz, 2003). The 2010 Global Barometer report by the Transparency International shows that the levels of public sector corruption have increased in the past three years preceding the report. The 2010 Global Barometer report is based on survey of 91,500 people in 86 countries, making it the most comprehensive edition since it was launched in 2003. The Barometer explores the general public's views about levels of public sector corruption and government's efforts to fight it. The international development agencies have primarily focused on public sector corruption since 1996 (Laver, 2010). Then, the President of the World Bank publicly announced the Bank's commitment towards prevention of corrupt practices. The World Bank has equally canvassed support for increase in the level of women's participation in the public sector. This is based on its finding that public sector corruption is less severe where women make up a large share of senior government officials.

Public sector corruption has continued to exist in society from the past to the present. Aluko (2005) asserts that public sector corruption had always been with humans and it would always remain with them. Dike (2002) also observes that public sector corruption has been ubiquitous in complex societies from ancient Egypt, Israel, Rome, and Greece to the present. Since two thousand years ago, the discourse on corruption appeared in a book written by Kautilya, the prime minister of an Indian kingdom (Tanzi, 1998). The book was titled Arthashastra, meaning corruption in Hindu.

Previous research has shown that corruption is endemic in the public sector, and that it is not peculiar to any continent, region and ethnic group (Folarin, 2010; Laver, 2010; Ajakaiye, 2006; Dike 2002). For instance, Folarin (2010) mentioned that public sector corruption was found in democratic and dictatorial politics as well as in feudal, capitalist and socialist economies. In fact, Nigeria is among the countries with the highest levels of public sector corruption as shown in the 2010 Global Barometer report (Transparency International, 2010). Other countries with the highest levels of public sector corruption include Afghanistan, Cambodia, Cameroon, India, Iraq and Liberia. The most corrupt institutions identified include political parties, the civil service, the judiciary, parliaments and the police.

Nigeria remains one of the most corrupt countries in the world, despite its prestigious position as the most populous African country (Adebanwi and Obadare, 2010). The manifestation of public sector corruption in Nigeria is recognized in the context of bribery, fraud, embezzlement, extortion, favoritism, oppression, and nepotism. It is important to note that many Nigerians acquire wealth through illegal means associated with public sector corruption.

In the light of the foregoing, the present study examines public sector corruption from the perspectives of knowledge and experience of women in Ekiti state civil service. The study also focuses on how women have contested or condoned public sector corruption. In its policy statement on gender equality, the World Bank (2001) asserts a strong relationship between relatively high levels of women's participation in public life and low levels of public sector corruption. Other studies have shown that women tend to be less corrupt than men (Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead, 2007; Goetz, 2007; Hunt, 2007; World Bank, 2001). In her critique of the abovementioned policy statement by the World Bank, Goetz (2007) notes that it is a huge exaggeration and a myth, which she attributed to exclusion of women from opportunities for corrupt behavior. The above critique implies that debates on public sector corruption in relation to women remain inconclusive.

Several high profile cases of women's involvement in public sector corruption have been reported in Nigeria, especially during the current phase of democratization, which began in 1999. In 2004, Mrs. Mary Obegolu, a Commissioner for Legal Services with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was forced to resign over a bribery scam involving N21million. Also, the first woman speaker of the House of Representatives and her deputy were alleged to have misappropriated the sum of N628 million in the process of awarding contracts for the renovation of their official residences. The speaker was found guilty by a nine-man panel of inquiry and she was eventually forced to resign on the 30th October 2007 (Adeyemo, 2007). Moreover, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) charged another high profile woman, Professor Adenike Grange, the erstwhile Minister of Health and 12 others on allegations of corruption involving N300 million, being unspent Ministry of Health funds allegedly shared by the accused persons under the leadership of the Minister. Furthermore, another top female politician, Mrs. Obasanjo-Bello, the Chair, Senate Committee on Health was alleged of embezzlement of N10 million (Ige, 2008).

The Nigerian experience of high profile cases of women's involvement in the public sector corruption can invalidate the assertion that a substantial increase in the rate of women's participation in the public sector would lead to low levels of public sector corruption. However, this does not mean that all women in the public sector are equally corrupt like the high profile women, who have been found guilty of public sector corruption. This situation therefore reinforces the need for an empirical study on public sector corruption with a focus on women in Ekiti state civil service.

The Problem

Public sector corruption remains a serious problem across the world and the overall success in attempts to control it has not been encouraging. In its 2007 Global Corruption Barometer Report, Transparency International predicted that public sector corruption will increase in the near future. The prediction was based on observation of inefficiency and lack of effectiveness in efforts geared towards the control of public sector

corruption. The emerging culture of corruption among men and women has become an obstacle against efforts to control public sector corruption in many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

In his description of public sector corruption in Africa, Crook (2010) enumerated two propositions regarding the reasons for failure in attempts to control the public sector corruption. The first proposition stipulates that African public services lack the staff and resources to do a good job. The second proposition shows that the best way to improve performance of the public sector is to identify and work with existing competent and committed public servants. The level of competence and commitment of women in Ekiti state civil service can be examined in the light of their willingness or unwillingness to engage in the public sector corruption.

Unlike the situation in many countries, the efforts to control public sector corruption have been successful in few countries including Hong Kong and Singapore (Laver, 2010). Attempts to control public sector corruption in Nigeria are yet to yield adequate results. As such, Nigeria still attracts bad reputation. Several attempts have been made to improve the reputation of Nigeria in the local and international community. Yet, Nigeria's image has continued to deteriorate globally and locally. The expectations of the majority of Nigerians have not been realized despite the successful transition from dictatorship to democratization in Nigeria since 1999. The democratization process is expected to result in the actualization of the promise of the dividends of democracy (Afrobarometer, 2006). Instead, the Nigerian experience of democratization has been marred by public sector corruption and violence. Nigeria was rated as the third most corrupt nation in the world in the 2004 Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index based on a survey of 146 countries (Agba, Ushie and Akwara, 2009). The Transparency International has continued to describe Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. This situation suggests the need for more research on the issue of public sector corruption in Nigeria.

The Nigerian situation is precarious given many allegations of corruption among government officials. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), an anti-corruption agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria has been investigating several cases of corruption leveled against many public officials including head of states, presidents, governors, ministers, directors among others too numerous to mention.

A recent verdict of the British court in the United Kingdom shows that a former governor in Nigeria has been sentenced to 13 years jail term as a result of his involvement in various cases of public sector corruption during his tenure as state governor in Nigeria. In fact, most of the Nigerian 36 state governors have been accused of corruption. The reported allegations of corruption in Nigeria are usually based on misappropriation of funds and illegal acquisition of wealth (Ajaikaye, 2006).

Unfortunately, public sector corruption has affected different segments of the Nigerian society including women in the civil service. It has been shown that poor people pay larger shares of their income in bribes and are marginalized from gaining adequate access to public services (Folarin, 2010; Laver, 2010). Obviously, resources intended for the poor are usually diverted to enrich corrupt elites. This situation introduces dilemma for women given the fact that men dominate in virtually all major sectors of the society, especially in the civil service where women's rate of participation remains low.

Women have been victims of corruption, although they can also be among the perpetrators depending on their positions. There are obstacles to women's employment in public bureaucracies, particularly at senior

levels. Also, the civil service in many countries has acquired an elitist culture and has institutionalized male privilege and superiority (Goetz, 2007). Women's willingness or unwillingness to embrace public sector corruption can be affected by their relative positions in the civil service. Women's level of involvement in public sector corruption may be low, given the fact that there are few women in top positions in the civil service.

Women can equally encourage corruption in this context, especially if they give bribes to senior bureaucrats in order to enhance their chances of being considered for attractive positions or promotion. As reported by Goetz (2007), it is difficult for women to become either clients or patrons in the male-dominated patronage networks through which public sector corruption usually occurs (Goetz, 2007). This implies that women's knowledge or experience of public sector corruption may depend on their positions and personal relationship with powerful men in the civil service. Women's knowledge or experience of public sector corruption may equally depend on other factors such as religiosity, ethnicity, marital status, level of education, and age. These factors show the possibility of relative disparity and lack of homogeneity in women's knowledge or experience of public sector corruption.

Unfortunately, studies on public sector corruption largely focus on men while research on women's knowledge or experience of public sector corruption remains inadequate. This situation shows a major gap that is addressed in the study. Instances of exclusion of women in research on public sector corruption can be seen in the following description:

Nigerians need value reorientation and attitudinal change. This is because an average Nigerian desires to: (i) finish secondary school (ii) get into a tertiary institution preferably a university (iii) finish his or her degree and get a waiting job (iv) rent a house (v) buy a flashy car not minding whether the spare parts are available or not (vi) start building a house (vii) start stealing from his employer to enable him finish his building project and stop paying the murderous rent (viii) become an expert in shady deals because of his bazaar mentality (ix) seek to become a godfather, breed and gloom people in this evil act and the circle continues. Put differently, the ethical and moral values of the Nigerian society have become so bad and require urgent and decisive therapy. (Agba, Ushie and Akwara, 2009: 6)

The above description shows a typical example of public perception about the means of survival in Nigeria. Public sector corruption is clearly shown as a major means for survival and it is mostly connected with men's identity. Does this imply that women lack capacity to promote or prevent public sector corruption?

Questions

A number of issues raised in the statement of problem warrant the following research questions in order to give a clear direction for the present study:

1. What are the most common forms of corruption in Ekiti state civil service?
2. What are the perceived causes of corruption in the public sector?
3. What are the structures put in place to prevent corruption in the public sector?
4. What is the level of women involvement in corruption in the public sector?
5. How does corruption affect women and what are their coping strategies in Ekiti state   Civil service?

Objectives

The general objective of the study is to examine public sector corruption with a focus on women's knowledge or experience on the issue in Ekiti state civil service. The specific objectives of the study are presented below:

1. To identify the most common forms of corruption in Ekiti state civil service,
2. To investigate the perceived causes of public sector corruption from women in Ekiti state civil service,
3. To ascertain the structures put in place to prevent corruption in Ekiti state civil service,
4. To investigate the levels of women's involvement in corruption in the public sector, and;
5. To investigate the effects of corruption on women in Ekiti state civil service.

Methods

The research methods adopted for the present study was discussed under the following sections: research design, the study area, the study population, sampling procedure, sample size, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis, and ethics of research.

Research Design

A descriptive research design was adopted for the present study because it is suitable for survey of opinions among members of a known population. Specifically, some techniques of quantitative and qualitative research design were used during the process of data collection for the study.

The Study Area

The study area was restricted to the Ekiti state civil service including its headquarters located in Ado Ekiti. Ekiti state was created in 1996. Prior to the creation of Ekiti states, the state was administered under Ondo State. Ondo/Ekiti was, among other towns in Yoruba land were under the administrative control of the western region. This implies that Ekiti state civil service metamorphosed from Ondo State civil service. The Ekiti state secretariat is located in Ado Ekiti. The Ekiti state secretariat accommodates different ministries and departments which are directly under the state civil service.

Methods of Data Collection

Secondary and primary sources of data collection were used for the study. The secondary sources of data was generated from relevant documents such as text books and journals, while the primary sources of data was collected through the use of a structured questionnaire, in-depth interviews (IDIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). One FGDs was conducted in ministries with large population of women in Ekiti state civil service.

The structured questionnaire was administered to each of the 452 respondents in Ekiti state civil service. Both open-ended and closed ended questions were included in the questionnaire in order to give the respondents adequate opportunity to express their opinions in different ways. The questionnaire was structured into different sections to clearly reflect the objectives of the present study. The structured questionnaire was subjected to validity tests such as construct and content validity as well as construct validity. A draft of the questionnaire is attached at the end of this project.

Also, a total of 20 in-depth interviews (ten each for men and women) were conducted in various ministries in Ekiti state civil service. Men and women were included in the IDIs in order to ensure balanced views on public sector corruption. Inclusion of men and women in the IDIs is also considered necessary in

recognition of possible collaboration between men and women in Ekiti state civil service. The purpose of using the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions is to compliment the information in the structured questionnaire and provide a deeper insight into the issue of public sector corruption with a focus on women in Ekiti state civil service. The drafts of the guide for IDIs and FGDs are also attached.

Methods of Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the data from structured questionnaire. Specifically, quantitative data was analyzed through percentage, chi-square and correlation. Also, the data from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions was analyzed through the content analysis and ethnographic technique.

Ethics of Research

Basic ethics in social sciences was observed in the course of the present study. Attention was directed towards the following research ethics: informed consent, respect for persons, safety, anonymity, honesty, beneficence, justice, and confidentiality. Also, permission for the fieldwork was obtained from the head of service in Ekiti state civil service.

Findings

Findings are presented in line with the study objectives for clarity. Necessary inferences are drawn from some of the findings in the light of the theoretical framework for the study, while observed similarities and differences between the present study and extant literature are reconciled using appropriate sociological explanation .

Table 1: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

AGE YEARS	Frequency	Percentage %
21 – 25	33	7.2
26 – 30	83	18.2
31 – 35	72	15.8
36 - 40	108	23.7
41 – 45	66	14.5
46 – 50	32	7.0
51_+	62	13.6
MARITAL STATUS	**Frequency (No)**	**Percentage (%)**
Single	83	18.2
Engaged	9	2.0
Married	341	74.8
Separated/Divorced	10	2.2
Widowed	13	2.9
Total	**456**	**100**
Educational Level	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Primary school.	4	0.9
Secondary school	73	16.1
Diploma/NCE	175	38.5
Bachelor/HND	177	39.0
Others	27	5.5
Total	**456**	**100**
Ethnic Group	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**

Yoruba	434	95.4
Igbo	12	2.6
Hausa	3	0.7
Others	6	1.3
Religion	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Christianity	307	67.0
Muslim	140	31.0
Traditional belief	6	1.3
Other	3	0.7
Total	456	100
Monthly Income	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
< 25000	154	33.5
25001 - 50000	184	40.2
50001 - 75000	63	14.1
75001 - 100000	28	6.3
> 100000	27	6.0
Year of Work Experience	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
1-10	116	27.2
11-15	109	26.5
16-20	71	14.8
21-25	69	14.3
26-30	45	8.5
>30	46	8.8

Source: Fieldwork: (2014)

Table 1 above shows the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents for the study:. For the age distribution, the data shows that the respondents age range between 21-100+ years which is in line with labour force age for women. While the majority of respondents between ages 36-40 years 23.7% constitute the highest. Respondents of age range 21-25 years have 13.8% of the total respondents. Furthermore, respondents within the age range 26-30 and 31-35 were 18.2% and 15.8% respectively while those between age 41-45 and 46-50 years were 14.5% and 7.0% respectively. 13.6% of the respondents were above 50 years of age. The result shows that the number of civil servant women is higher at the extreme age of productive life. The above finding indicates that respondents of age between 36-40 years old were many in the study.

Furthermore, the marital distribution of the respondents shows that married women may not likely engage in corruption like other age category of respondents. Majority of the respondents (74.8%) were married. This signifies that married women with the full support from their husbands as regards family responsibilities may not likely engage in corrupt practices than the separated/divorced (2.2%) and widows (2.9%), which lack the resources to support them in taking care of their responsibilities. Also, the single, never married respondents were 18.2%. This is supported by Ogbu (2009) that the extended family system and high poverty level in the society is another reason why corruption thrives in the society. About sixty percent of the average Nigerian workers are beneficiaries of the Extended Family System practiced in Nigeria. Such beneficiaries are thus obliged to accommodate such extended family members. And since the take home pay of the average

Data on educational attainment of the respondents revealed that the population consists mostly respondents with higher level of education. Respondents with primary educational level were 0.9%; respondents with Secondary education were 16.1%. Respondents with tertiary education, ranging from diploma/NCE (38.4%) to Bachelor (38.8%) were higher in the study. The extreme cases of corruption are higher

among those with tertiary education than lower level of education. This shows that many of the respondents did acquire formal education.

The majority of the respondents 95.2% were Yoruba, followed by Igbo 2.6%, Hausa 0.7% and 1.3% were from other ethnic groups in Nigeria. This finding was expected because the study was conducted in the Yoruba speaking community. The proportion of the Yoruba respondents was higher compared to other ethnic groups. The religion affiliation of the respondents shows that the highest number of the respondents (67.0%) identified with Christianity followed by Islamic (31.0%) religion while 1.3% of the respondents practiced traditional religion.

An examination of the monthly income reveals that the population consisted of low income earners. The figure shows that majority of the respondents were between the average income of ₦25,001 – ₦50,000 (39.5%), those with income below ₦25,000 were 32.9% while those that earned between ₦50,000 – ₦75,000 of the respondents were 13.8%. Respondents with income between ₦75, 000 – ₦100, 000 and above ₦100, 000 constitute 6.1% and 5.9% respectively. This shows that respondents that do not have good income may attempt to engage in corrupt practices. People with low income would find means of survival.

Table 2: Forms of Corruption and its Prevalence

Prevalence of corruption in Civil service	Frequency	Percentage %
Very high	121	25.3
High	183	41.7
Moderate	80	15.9
Low	58	13.2
Very low	14	3.9
Total	456	100.00
Form of corruption is more prominent in Ekiti state civil service	Frequency	Percentage %
Bribery	158	34.6
Extortion	127	27.9
Embezzlement	97	21.3
Fraudulent	8	1.8
false accounting	47	10.3
Others	19	4.2
Total	456	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, (2014)

The table above shows the frequencies and percentages of respondents' responses on the forms of corruption that exist in Ekiti state civil service. An examination on the prevalence of corruption in Civil service, 25.3% of the respondents, indicated that prevalence of corruption is very high in Nigeria civil service, 40.1%, which is the highest percentage, agreed that prevalence of corruption is high in Nigeria civil service while 15.9% of them indicated that corruption is moderate. Those that were of the view that prevalence of corruption is low in Nigeria civil service were 13.2%.

To corroborate the above, a respondent during an IDI indicated that;

> *Corruption is something that has eaten deep into the fabric of our nation and it will only take the grace of God to revive our economy, more so, public sector corruption is very high, and it starts from the top, it is those at the top that is more corrupt and it goes down to the lower level.*
>
> **(IDI/Civil Servant/June 17, 2014)**

In examining the more prominent form of corruption in Ekiti state civil service, it is indicated that 34.8% of the respondents said that Bribery is the prominent form of corruption in Ekiti state civil service; 27.9% of them were of the view that Extortion is the more prominent while those that believe prominence of Embezzlement as a form of corruption in Ekiti state were 21.3%. Also, 1.8% of the respondents observed that fraudulent practices are more prominent while the respondents 10.3% and 4.2%, indicated false accounting and others respectively as more prominent in Ekiti state civil service. In explaining the prevalence of corruption in Ekiti state civil service, an IDI with a 37 years old woman indicated that;

> *I don't know why? Because I am a civil servant and it is against our rules and*
> *regulations to mention names If I am to mention names we need to seek approval*
> *from head of service. But all what I know is that every department in government*
> *has an element of corruption.*
> (**IDI/Civil Servant/July 11, 2014**

In examination of what forms of corruption are more prominent in Ekiti state civil service, the IDI revealed that:

> *The most prominent ones are kick back pension fund, inflation of awarded*
> *contract. For example, when they want to award a contract, they know 10 million*
> *can cover the project, but those in charge will inflate the price by double.*
> (**IDI/Civil Servant/July 14, 2014)**

In corroborating the assertions above, Ogundana (2008) observed that kickback is a very popular form of bribery in Nigeria public offices and even among private company executives charged with the responsibility of awarding contracts of purchase on behalf of government department or company. Kickback is responsible for the over-inflation of contracts. This has led to so many while Elephant projects in the country.

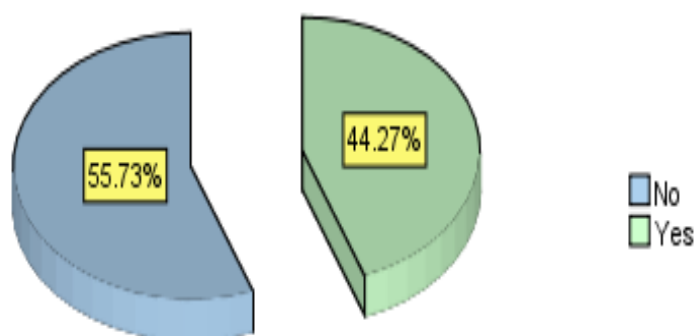**FIG. 1: Corruption Has Affected The Civil Servants In Anyway**

Fig. 1 above shows the respondents' responses on whether they had been affected by corruption or not. Here, it is indicated that 44.3% of the respondents were of the view that they were affected by corruption while only 55.7% of them had not in anyway been affected by corruption. Buttressing this, an interviewee made this comment:

> *It has affected me, most especially my promotion, my boss told me without missing words that it is only*
> *if I agree to date him before I can be promoted, so it has affected me and Nigerians at large i.e. our naira keeps*
> *dropping by the day, no value, so this is as a result of corruption.*

(IDI/Female/July 17, 2014)

Another interviewee also asserted that corruption has greatly affected her in many ways. In her statement, she said that;

> *It has really affected me in all ways of life but let me take the Ekiti state water cooperation as an example, if you check the breakdown of the civil servants salary, you find out that we are still paying for water and yet we don't get any water. There is a breakdown that you are paying for water for example in Ibadan you can hardly see water (pipe borne water) provided by the government. The only thing you see is well or borehole in almost every house, so it is part of corruption, some set of people are eating that money meant for the provision of water people in Ibadan use their money to run pumping machine to generate water and yet they are paying for the services that is not rendered. So corruption has affected me in all ways of life that I can't even explain it, that is what I can say, and it has a toll on our economy.*

(IDI/Male/June 10, 2014)

In confirmation of the above assertion, some literature revealed that corruption has been a stumbling block to people enjoying the social fruits of good governance (Ibrahim, 2003). Corruption contributes immensely to inhibition of economic performance; it negatively affects investment and economic growth, which is antithetical to national development. If corruption discourages investment, limits economic growth and alters the composition of government spending, it unconsciously hinders future economic growth and sustainable development (SelloTmam, 2004). Corruption contributes to the problem of mass poverty and rendered millions of Nigerian citizen's unemployed and uneducated.

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In the FGD, a 37 old woman was of the view that:

> *It affected me and every other community, the money that is supposed to be used to better the lives of the civil servants is diverted for private use only. Take for example infrastructure, we don't have good roads, take Lagos, Ibadan express road for instance, several lives have being lost because of bad road, also the Dana aircrash that happened few weeks ago, all these are issued tied to corruption. I must say that in this country we don't love one another.*

(FGD/Female/July 10, 2014)

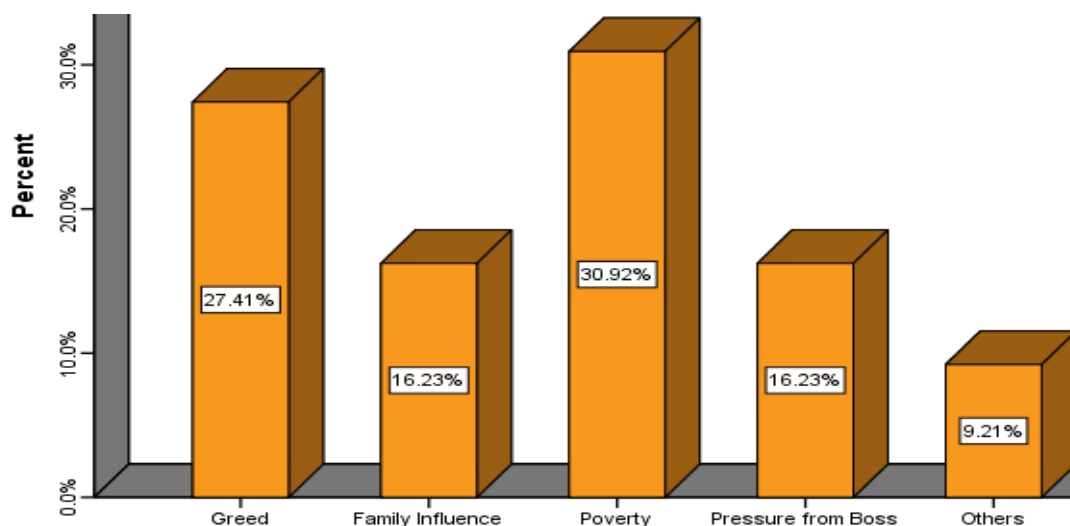**FIG. 2: Major Cause of Corruption in Public Sector**

Fig. 4.2 above shows the respondents' responses on the major cause of corruption in public sector. The finding shows that 27.4% of the respondents viewed that greed is the major cause of corruption in the public sector; 16.2% of them were of the view that corruption in the public sector is as a result of family influence on the workers. Those that were of the opinion that poverty is the major cause of corruption in the public sector were 30.9%, which is the highest percentage. 16.2% and 9.2% of the respondents believed that the major cause of corruption in the public sector were pressure from bosses/top officials and others respectively. The finding is an indication that many people that engage in corruption did not have the notion to engage in such but due to the situation in Nigeria, they were forced into doing so.

In supporting the assertion above, the FGD with some civil servant indicates that family background and pressure are the major cause of corruption in the public sector.

> *For me I think it is pressure, the kind of background you come from matters a lot. For example a director in the ministry who is not corrupt and is sincere, relies only on his/her salary, there is tendency for pressure from the office and at home because such pressure can lead one to engage in corrupt act. That is one secondly poverty is another factor responsible for corruption. I believe our leaders that is the whole leaders in this country (the founding father left a trend for them to follow, but poverty did not allow them to follow suit. For me poverty is the main reason for corruption.*
>
> **(FGD/Male/July 18, 2014)**

To support the above findings, the theory of Robert Merton of Structural Functionalism shows the structural crisis that necessitates public sector corruption, it does not adequately explain the process which could make public sector corruption more preferable than conformity.

The willingness or unwillingness to engage in public sector corruption will be analyzed through Fishbein's Theory of Reason Action, which explains an individual's ability to make informed decision in a given situation. As shown in the Theory of Reasoned Action, behavioral intention is determined by personal evaluation of a given action and subjective norm of the significant others.

To support the findings from both quantitative and qualitative data, literature confirmed the major causes of corruption in the public sector. A number of factors have been identified as instrumental to enthroning corrupt practices in Nigeria. These include, briefly, the nature of Nigeria's political economy, the weak institutions of government, and a dysfunctional legal system. Absence of clear rules and codes of ethics leads to abuse of discretionary power make most Nigerian vulnerable to corrupt practices. The country also has a culture of affluent and ostentatious living that expects much from "big men," extended family pressures (Muhammad, 2002), village/ethnic loyalties, and competitive ethnicity. The country is also one of the very few countries in the world where a man's source of wealth is of no concern to his neighbours, the public or the government. Once a man is able to dole out money, the churches, the Mosques pray for him, he collects chieftaincy titles and hobnobs with those who govern. The message to those who have not made it is clear: just be rich, the ways and means are irrelevant (Taylor, 2010). Low civil service salaries and poor working conditions, with few incentives and rewards for efficient and effective performance, are strong incentives for corruption in Nigeria.

Table 3: Women's Experience of Public Sector Corruption

Women Do Engage In Corrupt Practices	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	163	35.7
No	265	58.0
No comment	28	6.3
Total	456	100

Do women receive seek bribe in order to perform their regular duty	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	212	46.4
No	142	31.3
I don't know	27	5.9
No comment	75	16.6
Total	456	100

Do women offer bribe in order to get favour/promotion in Ekiti state civil service	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	148	66.7
No	270	28.1
No comment	39	5.2
Total	456	100

Do women embezzle money such as cash advance or impress meant for an official task	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	156	31.2
No	300	68.8
Total	456	100

Source: **Fieldwork, 2014**

In examining whether women receive or seek bribe in order to perform their regular duty, the majority (46.5%) of the respondents were of the point that women receive or seek bribe in order to perform their regular duty while 31.1% believed that women did not seek or receive bribe before performing their normal duties. Those that were of the view that women embezzle money such as cash advance or impress meant for an official task were 31.2% while 68.8% disagreed to that.

In relation to above, one of the men interviewed was also of the opinion that;

> *"I do not see any effect of corruption on some women, most especially those of them engaged in corrupt practice. For real I have not seen any women being cut of corruption in Ekiti state civil service. They always get away with it"* **(IDI/Male/July 18, 2014)**

Table 4:   Income and Women Engagement of Corruption In Public Sector

Monthly Income	women involvement in corruption					
	Yes		No		Total	
< 25;000	66	45.2%	80	54.8%	146	100.0%
25,001 – 50,000	62	38.0%	101	62.0%	163	100.0%
50,001 – 75,000	20	32.3%	42	67.7%	62	100.0%
75,001 – 100,000	8	29.6%	19	70.4%	27	100.0%
> 100,000	5	20.8%	19	79.2%	24	100.0%
Total	**161**	**38.2%**	**261**	**61.8%**	**422**	**100.0%**

$\chi^2 = 7.874$; df = 4; Asymp. Sig. 2-sided = 0.096;   P < 0.05; R = 0.135; Asymp. Sig = 0.005

Source: Fieldwork, (2014).

Table above shows the distribution of respondents by income and women involvement in corrupt practice. The result shows that among 146 of the respondents with monthly income of less than N 25,000, 45.2% of them believed that women do engage in corrupt practices while 58.0% of the respondents did not agree to that. Among the respondents with income between N25, 001-N50, 000, 38.0% of them were of the view

that women do engage in corrupt practices while only 62.0% of them did not believe that women do engage in corrupt practices. Those that earned between N50, 001 – N75, 000 and N75, 001 – N40, 000 and believed that women do engage in corrupt practices were 32.3% and 29.6% respectively. By taking a critical look at the relationship between income and women engagement in corrupt practices, it reveals that the low income earner have lower shows great belief that women engage in corrupt practices as at when necessary.

Moreover, the correlation result R = 0.135 (0.096) also points out that there was a weak significant relationship of 0.135, which shows that there was a relationship between monthly income and the responses of the respondents that women were engaging in corrupt practices. Although, this explains that low monthly income can partially influence respondents to engage in corrupt practice. Though, from the findings, respondents who earn lower income would find it difficulty to believe that women in high positions would not involve in corrupt practice. This is because they engage in such if there is a means to do so for economic reasons. Conversely, respondents with higher income disagree that women do engage in corrupt practices. This may be as result of their level of income and they may also be involving in corrupt practices in their place of work too.

The country also has a culture of affluent and ostentatious living that expects much from "big men," extended family pressures (Taylor, 2010), village/ethnic loyalties, and competitive ethnicity. The country is also one of the very few countries in the world where a man's source of wealth is of no concern to his neighbours, the public or the government. Once a man is able to dole out money, the churches, the Mosques pray for him, he collects chieftaincy titles and hobnobs with those who govern. The message to those who have not made it is clear: just be rich, the ways and means are irrelevant (Ubeku, 1991). Low civil service salaries and poor working conditions, with few incentives and rewards for efficient and effective performance, are strong incentives for corruption in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Corruption is a cankerworm and endemic, ravaging the nation's economy, has been of great concern to well-meaning Nigerians. The causes of this mischievous acts or evil phenomenon are numerous. These includes, great inequality in distribution of wealth, the use of political offices as the primary means of acquiring and gaining access to wealth, inefficient contract awards, standard and procedures, excessive federal involvement in corporate business enterprises, late payment or non-payment of wages to public employees.

The effects of corruption therefore are the negative impacts on the economic growth and development of the nation. Corruption impedes the nation's economy, as it breeds nepotism and inefficiency in the public service. Corruption tarnishes the image of the country as it discourages honest and valuable economic activities and forestalls foreign investment in the country.

Overall, conclusions might be drawn from the discussion. First there may be a correlation between a less corrupt environment and societies in which women have attained higher levels of political and economic power. However, the impact of confounding variables, including the opportunity for women to offend, the motivational factors, the strength and transparency of democratic organisations including oversight bodies and the media, needs to be examined empirically.

Obviously the sample size is very small and so assertions in this regard must be qualified, but if this trend is representative of the broader population within Oyo State, then it may have ramifications for anti-corruption efforts on both micro and macro levels. For example, it may benefit the Nigeria community and indeed individual firms, if both business organizations and governments made greater efforts to appoint more women to both oversight, and to policy development roles, in those contexts in which experience has demonstrated that corruption might be more likely to occur. Such a response may also prove to be beneficial for countries that are considered to be afflicted with a high level of corruption. However, as Goetz (2007: 102, 103) notes, women cannot be viewed as a magic bullet for problems of corruption that may be systemic in nature or 'a panacea for problems of corruption in politics and public bureaucracies by the World Bank or other major development agencies.'

More investigative work involving larger scale studies is required, constituting not only a representative cross-section of actors, but also a broad array of social and institutional settings in order to test whether the findings of this preliminary study equate with the reality of corruption and its prevention across contemporary Nigeria. In terms of furthering research on corruption more generally, it would also be beneficial to determine if the Nigerian findings have traction with respect to perceptions of corruption in other jurisdictions

Corruption engenders the break down in law, order and insecurity due to mass unemployment, political instability leading to loss of confidence in the system. The end product is that citizens resort to self-help in order to ensure their survival, which can no longer be guaranteed due to institutional corruption

Recommendations

Corruption is not a recent phenomenon that pervades the Nigeria state. Since the creation of modern public administration in the country, there have been cases of official misuse of resources for personal enrichment. Nigeria is ranked 143 out of 182 countries in Transparency International's 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index

In light of the literature review and study evidence, in order to reduce the level of corruption in the civil service of Oyo State, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Anti-corruption Feedback Structures that permit anonymity should be established within the public service so as to encourage the attitude of whistle-blowing among civil servants, particularly among women who have been found to possess knowledge about corrupt practices but lacked the courage to step forward.

2. Sector-wide sensitisation programmes should also be implemented in order intimate women about the dangers of their continued involvement in corruption as perpetrators. Because a very high proportion of women public servants believed that there were not affected by corruption in any way, such programme must emphasise its actual and potential effects on them, especially with regards to how it can intensify the poor socio-economic conditions of other women, children, the family and the society at large.

3. Persistent Internal Organisational Work Processes Assessment should also be made an integral part of *modus operandi* of the public service. This should aim at discovering areas of tipping points for the

most common form of corrupt practices within the Service, especially bribery, extortion and embezzlement. These should be effectively analysed and workable rules should be deployed to prevent occurrences.

4. At a more macro level, enforcement of anti-corruption laws should be intensified, and administrators of anti-corruption agencies should design frameworks of partnership with the civil service so as to entrench cooperation and mutual trust.

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