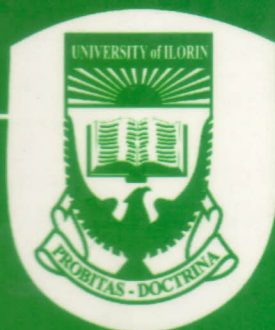


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Socio-Cultural Factors and Corruption Phenomenon in Kwara State

By

Fagbamila Olumide

Department of Sociology

University of Ilorin

Phone: +234806079965

Email: olufagba@gmail.com

Abstract

Most studies on corruption primarily focus on economic factors like unemployment, poverty, economic inequality, neglecting the relevance of socio-cultural factors like social norms, religion and cultural values in shaping or determining corruption in the country. This study explores sociocultural factors and their roles in the perpetual incidence of corruption using Kwara state as the case of examination. 1,175 questionnaires were administered. The analysis of data and test of hypotheses were carried out using the descriptive method as well as inferential statistics of the t-test. It was discovered that there are significant differences between religion, social norms, cultural values and corrupt behaviour in Kwara state. It can be concluded that the roles of cultural factors (religion, social norms and cultural values) cannot be neglected while addressing the perpetual cases of corruption in Nigeria. It is therefore recommended that plans to strengthen the cultural values, social norms, lifestyles and religious institutions towards effective reduction of corruption in the society should be taken seriously.

Keywords: Corruption, Cultural, Norms, Religion, Social, Values

Introduction

Corruption is not a peculiar phenomenon to any people, race, culture or country. This is particularly so since no single country can claim to be free from corruption in some form. Nigeria is one such nation where it is agreed that corruption is a major problem on the one hand but not too many people are keen tackling the problem on the other hand. The country today faces a serious crisis in its economic, social and political development due largely to problems that can easily be traced to pandemic corruption (Aluko, 2009). One unique distinction between humans and animals is the possession of culture by the former. As it is, the existence of culture among human groups makes human being one of the most superlative beings created by nature (Abodunrin, 2007). Technically, culture represents all of human behaviours and attitudes that are learned (directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly) through the process of social interaction and which are inherited by generations. Adams, (2018) describes culture mainly as social heritage. Generally, culture is so much attached to human life that human- animal is often classified as cultural being. Culture is a very important phenomenon in human life because it determines how individual acts, thinks and behave in any social settings. Because cultural elements determine human behaviour, social scientists have always found it difficult if not impossible to study, understand or predict the behavioural pattern of people in any human society around the globe without studying their culture (Ekei, 2001). The question is how culturally relevant is the discussion of corruption in Nigeria?

Culture is significant because it shape the values, motives, and beliefs of individuals. Corruption is fundamental in almost all societies the world over but its interpretation and perpetration vary across countries. This is because the cultural interpretations and meanings

attributed to a specific action or gesture are not universalistic; rather, they are determined by the environment in which it takes place. Example abounds in the case of whether receiving a gift is a bribe or expression of a kind gesture or whether using public funds to address problems that are culturally originated (for instance, burial or naming ceremonies). Henslin, (2017) defined culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes people included in one category from another; this may include an ethnic group, religious group, family group, etc. In this scene, culture includes systems of values; and values are among the building block of culture (Adler, 1997). Culture can also be viewed as a collection of mental knowledge developed by a group of people exposed to a similar context.

Culture as a concept is not only relevant to the immediate topic of this research works but also, more importantly a concept that is very crucial in any social discourse. According to Henslin (2007), culture is conceivably the most significant and influential idea twentieth-century social thought. Human life is so attached to a culture that the history of humans will be incomplete without the reckoning of cultural development in human history (Marvin, 1995). In this regard, Henslin (2007) describes the human being as essentially a cultural being. This is so because our culture defines our life from the cradle to the grave –it determines the kind of language we speak, the type of food we eat, the type of cloth we put on, the type of house we live and even the type of work we do. In fact, the influence of culture in human life is numerous that it influences all of our actions, attitudes and behavior.

There is no way we can ignore how some Nigerian cultural values have been affected. The traditional cultural standards supporting honesty, sincerity, selflessness are seriously fading away. For instance, many households in Nigeria socialize their children on corruption and neglect societal norms and values. Highly upheld values of the family such as integrity and honesty, respect for the rules and regulations have all gone with the wind in the instance that it is even the parents that teach their children to be 'smart', to 'wake up' and not be left behind. Moreover, religiosity as a cultural phenomenon also has an effect on corruption. There are cases or stories of people embezzling money from their offices and donating it to the churches in the name of prosperity. Many Nigerians in search of quick miracles and in a bid to put an end to a life of misery and dejection quickly fall into this "kind of preaching" to do anything being proffered by these 'clerics' to free themselves of the poverty. Yusuf, (2003) argued that the culture value system, polygamous households, extended family system, lacking of effective control of taxing systems, poor reward system, the lukewarm attitude of officers enforcing the laws, poverty and income inequalities are some of the reasons for corruption. Traditionally, and in most customs in Nigeria, individuals are accorded respect and recognition not based on integrity, honesty, academic excellence and high moral values but the financial strength or material affluence and acquisitions. Also on another dimension, culture can foster corruption and this is evident in the socio- cultural beliefs of most societies constituting Nigeria. For instance, the creed about partaking in family responsibilities and contributing (mostly financially) to community events has forced some people to engage in corrupt practices to meet those goals.

This study will boycott or take another dimension (cultural factors) into looking at corruption in Nigeria. There are a good number of articles and empirical contexts addressing issues regarding the perpetual incidence of corruption in Nigeria but it should be expressed that most of these articles primarily focused on economic factors, neglecting the roles of cultural factors such as religion, cultural values and social norms in determining or influencing corruption in the country, hence, the need for this study.

Literature Review

Religion and corruption in Nigeria

Religion according to Yusuf (2003), is a unified system of values and practices linked to sacred things. It is a world-wide fact because it exists everywhere; from the simple most isolated to the most compound and urbane; religious beliefs and practices exist in all known human society. Religion is one of the basic social institutions and has been a subject of sociological discourse almost from the start of the discipline. The founding fathers of Sociology since Auguste Comte, Karl Max and Max Weber all have studied the influence of religion on human behaviour. Max Weber (1864-1920) is the first to see the influence of religious beliefs and practices on the economic development of a society. According to Robertson (1987), religion is significant because it promotes social solidarity and reinforces social norms and values. Religion makes people share common beliefs and thus a common value system. According to Lawrence (2013), most of the cultural beliefs in many societies develop due to religion. It provides the philosophical foundation for beliefs and values. There are two primary reasons for a study of religions in the world economy. One is that religion is a major element of the cultural environment. The second reason is that religion is a driving force of culture, an inner determination of many of the external manifestation of culture (Lawrence, 2013).

In essence, many mosques and churches have introduced the doctrine known as the "Prosperity Gospel" in Nigeria. According to Abogunrin (2007), the summary of "Prosperity Gospel" is as follows: If you come to Jesus or Allah, he will save you, give you all you want, including good health, make you rich and successful, and free you from poverty and disease. The chief product of what is offered is the "New You", instead of the "New life" in Jesus Christ or Allah. Since poverty is seen as evil in the churches and mosques in Nigeria, everybody is struggling to be free from it at all costs. Biblical and Quranic passages are being interpreted to meet the needs and expectations of the followers. In this case, many people are drifting away from the mainstream African independent churches. The way many churches and mosques raised money for "God's work" in Nigeria is questionable. Abogunrin said "You can go to a church with a car and good shoes, but return home barefooted, and with nothing after donating all the money a person has on himself, he is encouraged to sow seed by parting with his car, shoes, bags and pieces of jewellery. There are cases or stories of people embezzling money from their offices and donating it to the churches in the name of prosperity. Many Nigerians in search of quick miracles and in a bid to put an end to a life of misery and dejection quickly fall into this "kind of preaching" to do anything being proffered by these 'clerics' to free themselves of the poverty. Suffice here to say that many have fallen into these due to the economic conditions that Nigerians find themselves. Those in the churches and mosques who don't have a wish to have and those who already have to wish to have more.

Furthermore, Pastors and Imams have ascended to elite positions in society; cases of misconduct and financial management have become a reoccurring decimal in religious circle. They ride in posh cars and own massive mansions both home and abroad while members of their congregation wallow in poverty. Regardless of the mighty cathedrals and imposing mansions, members of the congregation whose money was used to erect the imposing structures still have below the poverty bracket while pastors and imams boast to multi-million dollars empire. Forbes includes; Chris Oyakhilome of Christ Embassy in the net worth of \$30million-\$50million; T.B Joshua of Synagogue of all Nation in the net worth of \$10million-\$15million; Mathew Ashimolowo of Kingsway International Christian Centre(KICC) in the net worth of \$6million-\$10million and Chris Okotie of House of God church in the net worth of

\$3million-\$10million (Brockner 2010). Within the Muslim fold, the super-rich Islamic clerics are Sheikh Ahamad Abubakar Gumi in the net worth of \$6million-\$ 10million and Sheikh Grazali Akewudola in a net worth of \$2million-\$8million (Forbes, 2011).

Cultural Value and Corruption in Nigeria

The erosion of our cultural values in the mind of the citizenry in general and our political office holders in particular, has made corruption thrive over the years in Nigeria. Values are the importance that is attached to a particular behaviour which thus signifies how right or wrong an action maybe. In Nigeria, our core values include honesty, integrity, accountability, uprightness, hard work, truthfulness, communalism, brotherhood among others. Thus, it is expected of every individual members of the society to embrace and appreciate their cultural values to assist us as a nation. Unfortunately, these core values have been assuaged in the mind of the political office holders. Rather than upholding honesty, they devise ways of manipulating figures in such a way that it will enhance the perpetuation of the fraudulent activities they intend to carry out. Day by day, there tends to be political propaganda, telling lies to the citizens in terms of promises made which are yet to be fulfilled. Such lies have replaced truthfulness (Nduka, 2006). Furthermore, they are not concerned about what benefits entirely people will gain, rather they are concerned with what their kinsmen and other community members stand to benefit. Thus, ethnicity and tribalism mentality has replaced integrity, honesty and accountability which the broader populace entrust in them to drive the affairs of the society to which they both belong. Furthermore, several other areas of African culture also tend to inspire and lend socio-structural support to corruption (Nduka, 2006). In the first place, in many African cultures, extended family assistance and high level of community spirit encourage those who are economically better placed to act as their brothers' keepers through financial and other support to relatives and community members. Thus, the average person's financial and other forms of resources must be seen to assist the uplifting of others in his immediate community and even beyond. This often determines the position given to any individual and in particular the level of political support due to a person.

The above situation, combines with a tendency towards ethnic allegiances and parochialism, to encourage the average African to condone unethical acquisition of wealth by friends and relatives. A prominent community member or one aspiring to prominence is expected not only to give gifts to well-wishers, but also to finance economic projects for the less privileged, constantly give financial support for the sustenance of the needy in his community and donate to public projects. Personal relationships with friends and relatives also extend to providing them with jobs and contracts. The wider an individual's largess extends, the wider the scope of the prestige that society allocates to that person.

All these often result in an inbuilt system for the looting of government coffers or bending the rules of probity in government business transactions. Quite often the practice of bending the rules for unqualified employment candidates at the expense of those more qualified not only helps to enthrone patronage but also causes inefficiency (Ladipo, 2013). These incompetent and often unmotivated workers tend to have little or no respect for the hierarchy of authority operational in their work place, as their main focus of loyalty is on their benefactor. The above situation may constitute and facilitate tentacles of nepotism and dichotomy, which are often blamed for individual and public greed, disrespect for rules and regulations and consequent mismanagement in the public sector. Thus, personalized ties have tended to be incompatible with efficiency in these contexts. Additionally, Gift giving is a formal valued aspect of African tradition. The gift may serve as an informal symbol of expected

gratitude for the benevolence received. This may take the form of money, cloth, farm produce, animals and so on. It signifies gratitude on the part of a receiver of a benevolent act, or behalf of such a person by friends or relatives. It also serves as a testimony of the benevolence received (Ladipo, 2013). Thus, a patient in a government hospital, may on recovering his health, decide to take some gifts to a doctor whom he considers was very helpful to him while in hospital. He may buy a goat, chicken, yams and so on, or make a gift of money. The ex-patient may go to see this doctor with his wife and other relatives; the idea being that the testimony of the doctor's goodness to him should be spread as wide as possible.

Sometimes, gifts are given in anticipation of a favour; as when the parents of a potential trainee take some gifts to the expected trainer. This may take the form of drinks and kola-nut, which are prayed over and partaken of as a way of cementing relationships. Gifts also may serve as a means for obtaining support. This may be for a planned venture, to gain a favour or to engender favouritism (Obuah, 2010). In such cases, the gifts generate implicit obligations from the receivers, who are expected to reciprocate by providing some form of favour. Gifts of drinks, tobacco, animals, birds, cloth, kola-nuts and so on abound in African culture, as means of showing gratitude, cementing relationships or signifying anticipation of favour. With industrialization and modernization, coupled with the difficulties of recession, people more and more do not wait for recipients of favours to show gratitude. Rather specific demands for apriori gratitude are often imposed for transactions regarding employment, admissions to the school, elections, issuance of licenses, permits and so on (Obasanjo, 2000). These demands, stipulations and specifications for gratitude for performance of official duties, have little or no bearing with traditional culture, and indeed constitute a major basis of corrupt practices of today. This situation is further reinforced by the fact that there tends to be no clear distinction between public and private roles in many African societies.

Social Norms and Corruption in Nigeria

Social norms are normally understood as a shared understanding of acceptable forms of behaviour. It can also be viewed as a shared understanding of obligatory actions, permitted or forbidden within a society (Ostrom, 2000). Social norms are shared by other people and sustained by their approval or disapproval. Consequently, the validity of the typology of culture as ideal and real culture is a clear depiction of what is obtainable in contemporary Nigerian society. It is pertinent to state very clearly at this point, that there are certain aspects of our culture that encourage corruption. For instance, most societies celebrate individuals with great affluence without minding the sources of their wealth. Also, when an individual is accused of corruption or found guilty of corruption, more often some ethnic groups often see it as a form of "victimization" by the other ethnic group(s) against theirs. This kind of attitude by certain sections of Nigerian society helps in promoting corruption. Rather, if an individual is accused of corruption, he/she should be allowed to face trial and if he/she is guilty of the fence(s) committed he/she should be allowed to face the full wrath of the law to deter others, instead of being shielded by his/her ethnic group.

In addition, as rightly observed by Smith (2001), our culture recognizes only the rich no matter how he has required his wealth. In society, he is smuggled out for praises, honour and recognition. He is hailed when he lavishes large sum of money at social gatherings or when he lavishes ill-gotten money in public places, whereas in tent societies, such people are outcasts. He is the one selected for string of chieftaincy titles, important streets, schools, hospitals and other public institutions are named after him. On the other hand, the innocent but poor workers are derailed and shunned. On the whole, a culture that does not allow for honesty and integrity

will remain a breeding ground for corruption. Also, in Nigeria and other countries, corruption exists because of a certain tradition, custom, economic conditions, government or social disorder. Dike (2010) argued that the cultural value system, polygamous households, extended family system, lacking effective control of taxing systems, poor reward system, the lukewarm attitude of officers enforcing the laws, poverty and income inequalities are some of the reasons for corruption. Traditionally, and in most customs in Nigeria, individuals are accorded respect and recognition not based on integrity, honesty, academic excellence and high moral values but the financial strength or material affluence and acquisitions. It is only those who have made it materially and financially that are honoured with chieftaincy titles. It is not how much you have advanced and promoted the course of your people that earned people honour and respect in Nigeria but how much you have in your pocket. It is based on this that most people resort to corrupt activities to make it big and fast. For instance, among the Igbos of eastern Nigeria, there exists open competition for wealth. The allure for material wealth among Nigerians has therefore killed social values and ethics of honesty, integrity, trust, good conscience and good name (Obasanjo, 2000). Now, it is only money that gives one a reputation and a "good name". This decay in social values and ethics is worsened by the prosperity gospel pioneered by Pentecostalism in Nigeria. Even within churches, it is only the rich that are constantly being administered and cared for by the clergies.

Theoretical Framework

Anomie theory assumes that corruption (which is an aberrant behaviour) primarily originated from the social structure or system of the society and the phenomenon which exercises great pressure upon some individuals in the society to engage in non-conforming or conforming conduct. Merton (1957) has laconically put this in another way when he argues that a society in which there is a remarkably strong emphasis upon specific goals without a corresponding institutional means or procedures, will inescapably lead to what Durkheim termed as "anomie" or normlessness or deviation from the established way of doing things. Amuwo (2005) remarks that each culture or social standard creates goals and interests which are encouraged and expected to pursue and prescribes the method to be followed in seeking these approved objectives. It is when these means fail to match the goal of the individual in question that the individual becomes socially disorganized. Nigerian society tends to over-emphasize individual goal attainment at the expense of the legitimate means of achieving these set goals. In Nigeria, material acquisition has virtually become the ultimate goal and society does not appear to be concerned with how one "makes" it. All that is important is that one has "arrived." The marked discrepancy between the goals and means in our society invariably leads to various forms of corruption such as embezzlement of public funds, offering, and acceptance of a bribe, electoral rigging, examination malpractice, etc.

Methodology

The research method adopted for this research was descriptive research which means describing some particular explanation. Descriptive research deals with the description of the present situation rather than giving judgments and interpretations about the present situation. The entire people of Kwara State who are residents of the study area formed the population of the study. This excludes those below the age of 18 years. The exclusion of under 18 years from the population stems from the fact that, Nigerian Law puts the age of maturity at 18. According to the 2006 census, the totality population of Kwara state was 2,371,089 (National Population Commission, 2009). A sample size of 1,200 was used for the study. This number was derived

through Slovin's sample size formula. The multi-stage sampling that involves successive random sampling was employed in selecting senatorial zones, constituencies, wards and individual respondents in the study. The multi-stage design is very relevant because the study population is very large and made up of several clusters like towns, villages and households. The researcher clustered Kwara State into her three senatorial zones which are Kwara North, Kwara South and Kwara Central. The senatorial zones were first categorized into constituencies which are Baruten/Kaima; Ekiti/Isin/Irepodun/Oke-Ero; Asa/Ilorin West; Ilorin East/Ilorin South; Offa/Oyun/Ifelodun and Edu/Moro/Patigi constituencies. From each category, three (3) constituencies were purposively selected. Given this, Baruten/Kaima, Ekiti/Isin/Irepodun/Ple-Ero and Asa/Ilorin West constituencies were purposively selected. The choice of choosing these constituencies was as a result of the fact that the research study entails selected ethnic groups. As a result, each constituency is a representative of major ethnic groups in Kwara State which are Baruba, Nupe, Yoruba and Fulani. In the selected constituencies above, five wards each were further selected using simple random sampling. The questionnaire was adopted as an instrument of data collection and 1,175 were retrieved from the respondents. Frequency counts, tables and simple percentages were used descriptively analyze the data while T-test was used to test the hypotheses.

Data Presentation

Table 1:

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Demographics Features	Frequencies	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	679	57.8
Female	496	42.2
Total	1,175	100.0
Age		
Below 25 years	125	10.6
25-35 years	409	34.8
36-45 years	357	30.4
45 years and above	284	24.2
Total	1,175	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	205	17.4
Married	731	62.2
Separated	55	4.7
Divorced	101	8.6
Widowed	83	7.1
Total	1,175	100.0
Academic Qualification		
Primary	57	4.9
Secondary	183	15.6
Diploma/NCE	275	23.3
First Degree	593	50.5
Higher Degree	67	5.7
Total	1,175	100.0

Monthly Income		
Below N30,000	321	321
N30,000-N60,000	437	437
N61,000-N91,000	211	211
N91,000-N120,000	131	131
N120,000 & above	75	75
Total	1,175	100.0
Nature of Employment		
Private sector	307	26.1
Public sector	639	54.4
Self employed	131	11.1
Charity Dependant	98	8.3
Total	1,175	100.0
Religion		
Christianity	319	27.1
Islam	794	67.6
Indigenous Religion	62	5.3
Total	1,175	100.0

Source: field survey, 2019

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between Social Norms and attitude towards corruption in Kwara state

Table 2:

A Summary Table of the Independent t-test showing the Influence of Prevailing Social Norm on Attitude towards corruption

Prevailing Social Norm	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-Cal	Critical Value
Injunctive	617	27.45	10.21	161	4.32	1.96
Descriptive	558	22.18	7.83			

Researcher's Survey (2019)

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between cultural value and attitude towards corruption

Table 3:

A Summary Table of the Independent t-test showing the Influence of Cultural Value on Attitude towards corruption

Cultural Value	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-Cal	Critical Value
High	417	40.34	5.46	161	5.34	1.96
Low	758	46.98	7.32			

Author's Fieldwork (2019)

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the influence of religiosity and attitude towards corruption

Table 4:

Summary Table of the Independent t-test showing the Influence of Religiosity on Attitude towards Involvement in corruption

Religiosity	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-Cal	Critical Value
High	745	62.74	12.34	161	6.32	1.96
Low	430	58.36	11.36			

Author's Fieldwork (2019)

Discussion

Respondents' Socio-demographic Characteristics

Table 1 reveals the Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The percentage frequency distribution of the respondents regarding gender as presented in the table 1 shows that 679 (57.8%) respondents were male, while 496 (42.2%) respondents were female. The gender distribution reveals that male was numerically greater than the female respondents. The reason for the higher number of males during the fieldwork may be due to the nature of the research topic which has to do with crime in which male folks are more involved. An examination of the distributional percentage frequencies of the respondents by age shows that 125 (10.6%) of the respondents were below 25 years; 409 (34.8%) respondents reported that they were between 25 and 35 years old; 357 (30.4%) respondents said that they were between 36 and 45 years; and 284 (24.2%) respondents were 45 years old and above. It should be noted that the majority (89.4%) of the respondents are within the age bracket of 25-45 years old. The reason for this is that, mostly, people in such an age-bracket are those who are active and agile. As such, they engage in one form of work activity or the other and may be able to give their opinion on the current research discourse. The respondents were also examined relative to their marital status. The data gathered from the respondents on this variable reveals that 205 (17.4%) respondents were single; 731 (62.2%) respondents were married; 55 (4.7%) claimed that they have long separated from their spouses; 101 (8.6%) respondents indicated that they were divorced; while 83 (7.1%) respondents said they were widows. The education distribution revealed that 57 (4.9%) respondents reported that they have primary education; 183 (15.6%) respondents claimed to have secondary education; 593 (50.5%) respondents said that they are first degree holders; while 67 (5.7%) reported that they have higher degree certificate in different academic disciplines. The education distribution revealed that the respondents used in

this study were literate and should be able to discuss the main substances of the research topic, which is about corruption. Although corruption is a problem that does not exclude anybody in society, in a general sense, it is more of elitist problem. This explains why all the respondents used in this study have attained one level of education. Furthermore, the respondents were also examined relative to their monthly income. The above table revealed that 231 (27.3%) respondents earned below N30,000 as monthly income; 437 (37.2%) respondents earned between N30,000 to N60,000; 211 (18.0%) respondents earned between N61,000 to N90,000; 131 (11.1%) respondents earned between N91,000-120,000, while 75 (6.4%) respondents earned N120,000 and above as monthly income.

When the respondents were questioned on their employment status, 307 (26.1%) respondents reported that they work in the private sector, 639 (54.4%) respondents reported that they work in the public sector, 131 (11.1%) respondents reported that they are self-employed, while 98 (8.3%) respondents claimed they were unemployed. It can be indicated that those who work in the public sector were numerically greater than the employees in the private sector. This, therefore, justifies the fact that Kwara State is a civil servant state, as it is often described. Finally, when the respondents were questioned on their religious affiliation, 319 (27.1%) respondents reported that they practised Christianity, 794 (67.6%) respondents claimed they practiced Islam while 62 (5.3%) respondents practice Indigenous religion. Hence, it is glaring from the result that those who practise Islam were numerically greater than the adherents of Christianity. The frequency distribution of the religious affiliation of the respondents is a testimony to the fact that Muslims form the majority of the inhabitants in Kwara State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: An in-depth consideration of the contingency data presented in Table 2 reveals several statistical information regarding the hypothetical relationship between social norms and attitude towards corruption. The t-test data presented in the Table indicate that a significant difference exists between the two variables. This is so because the observed calculated value of t-test of 4.32 exceeds the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 with 161 degrees of freedom. Simply put, the calculated t-value of 4.32 was greater than t-value of 1.96. Therefore, significant difference exists at 0.05 alpha levels. This implies that when the social norm is injunctive, there will be negative attitude towards corrupt behaviour in the country. What this implies is that the expected standard of behavior in the society such as upholding integrity, accountability, hard work, uprightness, selflessness etc. have been replaced by flamboyancy, selfishness, greediness etc. All these dominate the heart of the people. Without probing to the source of their wealth, many of which may be through embezzlement and fraud, such individuals are showered with praises and accolades amidst their people.

Hypothesis 2: Table 3 statistically examined the relationship between cultural value and attitude towards corruption. The t-test data presented in the Table indicates that significant difference exists between the two variables. This is so because the observed calculated value of t-test of 5.34 exceeds the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 with 161 degrees of freedom. Also, the calculated t-value of 5.34 was greater than t-value of 1.96. Therefore, significant difference between cultural values and attitude towards corruption exists at 0.05 alpha level. What this implies is that the break down in our value system paves way for corrupt behaviour in our society. Our cherished values of integrity, accountability, hard work, uprightness, selflessness etc. have been replaced by flamboyancy, selfishness, greediness etc. All these therefore, necessitated people's involvement in criminal activities such as corruption, cybercrime, kidnapping, fraud etc.

Hypothesis 3: The t-test data presented in the Table 4 indicates that significant difference exists between the two variables. This is so because the observed calculated value of t-test of 6.32 exceeds the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 with 161 degrees of freedom. Therefore, significant difference exists at 0.05 alpha level. This implies that when the essence of religion is well appreciated, there will be negative attitude towards corrupt behaviour in the country. Also, our high level of religiosity should go a long way in discouraging us from engaging in corrupt act and embrace truthfulness, uprightness and holiness. However, the teachings and lifestyles of most religious clerics of the two major religions in Nigeria today propel their followers towards engaging in corrupt act.

Conclusion

It should be expressed that many cultural value traits have begun to be faded away. This is because an average Nigerian keeps looking for ways to cheat his or her fellow colleagues, especially if he or she is naïve about the dealings and operation. The entrenchment of individualism as against collectivism has equally affected our cultural values thus breeding criminal behavior like corruption. People are mostly concerned about their own personal affairs and that of their family. They devise means and ways through which they can make fortune and preserve it for their children and generations to come at the expense of the large members of the society. Such devised means maybe fraudulent, and more so, the drive and pressure towards such accumulation of wealth by all means tend to encourage corruption. This study has clearly revealed that there is a strong connection between cultural factors (social norms, religion and cultural values) and the perpetual phenomenon of corruption in the country. It is pertinent to state very clearly that there are certain aspects of our culture that encourage corruption. For instance, most societies celebrate individuals with great affluence without minding the sources of their wealth. Also, when an individual is accused of corruption or found guilty of corruption, more often some ethnic groups often see it as a form of "victimization" by the other ethnic group(s) against theirs. This kind of attitude by certain sections of the Nigerian society helps in promoting corruption. The breakdown of social norms and the continual degradation of cultural values cannot be ignored while addressing the issue of corruption in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Since culture plays important role on corruption, there is the need to strengthen the cultural values, prevailing social norms, lifestyles and religious institutions towards effective reduction of corruption in the society. Efforts should also be directed towards changing or sensitizing parents about adopting the best, sustainable and efficient parenting styles that will help their children to appreciate expected social and cultural values in order to reduce tendencies of engaging in corrupt practices. Government should take every appropriate measure to ensure that the legislation provides an adequate framework for effective legal measures against all forms of corruption including nepotism. Therefore, there is the need for the enactment of legislation to complement the existing criminal law by making nepotism a corrupt offence. Appropriate mechanism for effective enforcement of anti-corruption legislation must equally be provided. Moreover, it is recommended that serious efforts should be made through organizing seminars and enlightenment programmes for the Nigerian citizens on the dangers of corruption and the attendant problems. In the same vein, the anti-corruption agencies need to be enlightened and re-oriented by abiding with the rule of law in fighting corruption.

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