SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS DETERMINNING CORRUPT PRACTICE AMONG SELECTED INDIVIDUALS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Corruption has become systemic and institutionalized at all levels in such a way that it has become an integral component of the Nigerian culture. This study assessed social influence and demographic determining corrupt practice behaviour among some selected Nigerians. This cross-sectional survey purposively sampled 920 participants in Ilorin West and South Local Government Area in Kwara state Nigeria. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 49years; they completed a questionnaire pack that included the Corruption Behaviour Scale (CBS) and the Perceived Social Influence Scale (PSIS). Results showed that the first model of hierarchical multiple regression analysis corresponded to gender, age and corrupt practice behaviour. The analysis showed the significance of gender and age as controlled variables while age showed significant adverse effects. The most significant variables were social influence. Moreover, job statuses of participants significantly influenced corrupt practice behaviour $(F(4,871)=10.265, p<.01)$ with undergraduates having the highest scores. The study concluded that age, gender, types of job status, length of service and social influence are determinants of corrupt practice behaviour among Nigerians. Therefore, stakeholders should utilize the forensic experts in curbing corruption taking into cognizance these factors discovered during the intervention.

INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, almost every nation in the world has witnessed a tremendous rise in crime rate like corruption which has attracted revived attention amongst scholars and policy-makers (Dille, & Chayes, 2016). However, this is not the case in Nigeria, corruption has become systematic and almost institutionalized at all levels in Nigeria. Looking at the administrative, social, political and culture aspects of life (Ajakaiye & Adeyeye, 2002; Peter, Sunday & Bassey, 2012) corruption have severe economic costs, such as increasing the proportion of public resources, which is already limited, to strengthen police enforcement, to support the growing prison population, to finance demands on the judiciary (Bassey et al., 2013). Other costs include the costly protection systems which businesses now need, loss of potential income from foreign investors and visitors preferring alternative destinations as a result of corruption and other risks related to crimes (Ajakaiye & Adeyeye, 2002; Peter, Sunday & Bassey, 2012).

One of the factors that account for the underdevelopment of any society is corruption (Bassey, Abia, Attah, & Bassey, 2013). Corruption has almost become a way of life in Nigeria, the problem of the upsurge of corruption is alarming, and unimaginable is the harm it has done to its politics (Aleyomi, 2013; Dike, 2001). The theoretical explanation of corruption in Nigeria has not been fully explore especially in blending the disparities in income distribution, unequal distribution of income and resources, social influence and the absence of a good sense of the national culture with corrupt practices.

The theories used in this study to explain corruption include the theory of social learning and social disorganized theories used by some researchers to explain criminal behaviours (Sandholtz & Taagepera, 2005). According to the philosophy of social learning theory, behaviour is influenced by standards of acceptable and moral conduct norms, peers, and positive or negative reinforcement. A key variable is differential association, or peer influence. The social learning theory can be traced to Robert L. Burgess and Ronald L. Akers in 1966, in their work entitled "A differential association-reinforcement theory of criminal behaviour" which was a combination of the earlier sociological theory of differential association with the developmental psychological theory of reinforcement. Social learning theories can be broadly understood as a social behavioural approach that emphasizes the "reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental determinants" of human behaviour. (Akers and Sellers, 2004).

Simply put, the theory of social learning states that criminal behaviour is learned when the positive consequences of deviant behaviour are more powerful than the positive consequences of normative behaviour (operant conditioning). Aker's theory of social learning poses the question of *how* criminal behaviour is learned. Accordingly, the learning of criminal behaviour is dependent on whether it is differentially amplified – i.e. whether a deviant behaviour is positively stimulated or negatively stimulated – or whether it is punished or conformal behaviour is amplified more than criminal behaviour (Meng & Friday, 2010).

Additionally, social disorganization theory sees dysfunctional behaviours such as cultural, political, and economic factors as the causes of corrupt practice behaviour (Akers & Sellers, 2009). Established societies suffer changes in deviance and violence when implicit societal structures break down allowing deviance and criminal behaviours to grow. Such communities lack the collective effectiveness for combating

crime and disorder (Hochstetler & Copes, 2008; Vito, Maahs, & Homes, 2007). The theory assumes that there would be more violence in communities with broken socioeconomic systems such as education deficiencies, abandoned or vandalized houses and high unemployment (Steenbeek & Hipp, 2011). In this perspective, it is important to resolve a broader societal concern such as corruption by reflecting on a culture, not just the actions of a single person (Steenbeek & Hipp, 2011). In line with the theory of social disorganization, corruption can be minimized through the establishment of improved criminal justice, political, social and economic structures that will lead to social empowerment (Colombatto, 2003; Johnson, 1998).

As such, behaviours of individuals as largely guided by the prevailing social norms which invariably metamorphose into social influence, which is a behaviour standard to which people prefer to adhere provided they believe that both (a) the majority of their reference network adheres to it (empirical expectation) and (b) the majority of their reference network believes they should adhere to it (social expectation) (Bicchieri, 2016). Similar to this, depending on the situation, a person may hold general normative beliefs about corrupt actions and particular normative beliefs about those activities. Together, generic and particular normative beliefs play a critical role in weeding out improper social influence. Individuals' normative beliefs about corrupt activities can be influenced through socialization, which happens as a result of exposure to specific national cultures and workplace cultures. For instance, Barr and Serra (2010) discovered a positive correlation between students' levels of corruption with regards to social influence on corrupt practices from their home countries among undergraduate foreign students in United Kingdom. In a similar vein, Ashforth and colleagues found that workers in organizational settings act in tune with social influence from colleagues for personal profit maximization disregarding ethical business practice which invariably leads to corrupt practices (Ashforth, Gioia, Robinson, & Trevino,2008).

Apart from social factors, other demographic elements have been found to culminate into corruption. For instance, age according to a study has been shown as a factor that could likely predispose young people to engage in bribery as subcomponent of corruption (Ivlevs & Hinks, 2015). In contrary, a study by Torgler and Valev (2006), showed that individuals between 30 and 65 are more likely to justify corruption than respondents younger than 30. Also, gender could determine corrupt practices, in some studies (Cameron et al., 2009; Mocan, 2008; Razafindrakoto & Roubaud, 2007; Torgler & Valev, 2006) it was shown that males or male-headed households were more likely to engage in and justify corrupt practices. According to Mocan (2008), possible explanations for this include a higher activity level of males in the labour market, which increases the frequency of their contact with government officials. However, Torgler and Valev's (2006) explanation is that men have lower norms regarding bribery. In addition, females report a higher level of corruption perception (Gutmann et al., 2014). Income is another important predictor of micro-level corruption. Individuals with higher incomes (Mocan, 2008; Ivlevs & Hinks, 2015), rich individuals (Hunt & Laszlo, 2012), affluent households, and households with higher levels of consumption (Deininger & Mpuga, 2004) are more likely to engage in bribery. However, contrary results obtained by Razafindrakoto and Roubaud (2007) show that the poorest individuals are 'more vulnerable and less able to avoid or resist bureaucratic corruption'.

Similar results were obtained by Islam and Lee (2016). So also, Liu and Peng (2015) found that students from middle-income families were more likely to bribe.

Considering corruption as an acute psychosocial problem, it is a behaviour geared towards the manipulation of established processes for private gains. Corrupt behaviours include bribery, misappropriation, nepotism, fraud, embezzlement, extortion, favoritism, rigging of elections, and falsification of voters register, over-invoicing, money laundering, examination malpractices and cultism. Nigeria like many developing countries has continued to face many social and economic problems. These include poor public spending on education and healthcare, high unemployment, low incomes and high level of poverty, rising insecurity, kidnapping, cattle rustling, and cultism, to mention just a few. A major factor that has been blamed for the poor standards of living in Nigeria is the massive corruption in the public sector. For instance, Abu (2015) submitted that corruption is deep-rooted in almost every segment/section of the Nigerian economy including the various arms of government (that is, executive, legislature and judiciary). Despite the levity of this problem, no study from Nigeria has considered the roles of social influence as determinant of corrupt practices meanwhile certain studies (Cerqueti, Correani, and Garofalo, 2013; Shi & Pan, 2018) have established this in some western world. Though, there are studies on demographics as determinants of corrupt practices, these studies have been ambivalent therefore this study could address some of these gaps in literature. Also, the current study addressed some specific social factors responsible for the thrive of corruption among people in Kwara state, Nigeria, these are generally citizens who are skilled workers and belong to the middle working class thus being the biggest set up where the greatest number of gainfully employed citizens are found. Therefore, this study postulated that:

i. there will be a significant influence of demographic variables (age, length of service, gender, type of organization and social influence) on perception of corruption among the workers

ii. undergraduate participants will score high significantly on the measures of corrupt practice behaviour compared to participants to participants who are public civil servants, private employees, artisans/traders, and unemployed graduates

METHODS

Design

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The independent variables are sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, type of job status, length of service, and social influence) while the dependent variable is a corrupt practice behaviour.

Settings

This study was conducted in Ilorin the Kwara State capital and purposively sampled respondent from Ilorin South and West Local Governments (LGAs). These areas accommodated many undergraduates, unemployed graduates, private employees, and public civil servants (between the age 20-49years). More so, it was considered suitable because the populations portray the characteristics that fit in for the study as the LGA in the heart of the state capital especially having the highest numbers of the stratum of job statuses being

considered across different age categories, ethnic backgrounds, and religious and socio-economic backgrounds.

Participants

The study involved 920 participants comprising public and private personnel; unemployed graduates, artisans/traders and undergraduates of tertiary institutions within Ilorin South and West LGAs, comprising of males 550(59.7%) and females 370(40.2%). Regarding participants' age range; those aged between 18-30years were 125(13.5%), between ages 31-40years were 600(63.2%), while participants between 41years and above were 195(21.1%). The Christian participants were 419(45.5%) and Muslims were 495(53.8%) while those from traditional religions were 6(0.6%). The public civil servants were 185(20.1%), private civil servants 172(18.6%), unemployed graduates were 169(18.3%), the self-employed (artisans/traders) respondents were 179(19.4%) while undergraduates were 215(23.3%). Their monthly incomes were; below ₦10,000 income 166(18.0%), ₦10,000 to ₦30,000 respondents were 177(19.2%), respondents with ₦31,000 to #50,000 income per month were 139(15.1%), those having monthly income of ₦51,000 to ₦100,000 were 232(25.2%) while those receiving above ₦100, 000 were 206(22.3%).

Instrument

Section A of the instrument consisted of questions on demographic characteristics of respondents which elicited biodata information of the respondents such as age, sex, marital status, location, occupation, etc.

A Corruption , behaviour scale (CBS) is a 14-item scale designed by DeCelles et al. (2012) to measure the corrupt practice behaviour was adapted for use in this study especially in the Nigerian context.CBS items have been validated based on statistical analysis by the original authors and in Nigeria (DeCelles et al., 2012; Ishola, Kenku, & Oyewo, 2019)**.** This scale has four Likert points namely 1 for Very Disagree to 4 for Very Agree response. The aspects employed for the test are bribery, extortion, and nepotism aspects of corruption (e.g., "take advantage of weak internal controls to make something for myself", "helping or being helped because he/she is a relative, friend, or colleague", "receiving or giving a bribe instead of following procedure" and "rendering services to receiving a percentage in return". The scale is reliable for the present study because it has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 and authors recorded .828 (DeCelles et al., 2012). Furthermore, all the items were directly scored and the highest score is 56 while a mean 11.2 was gotten and a score bellow this mean indicate low corruption tendencies.

The Perceived Social Influence Scale (PSIS) was designed to assess the tendencies for individuals to be influenced by another person's behaviour or behave in accordance with others in their environment (Cheryl et al., 2010). It consisted of ten items that were graded on a four-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree). The instrument has a score range of 10 to 40 points, with higher scores indicating more of low assertiveness beliefs. The average score in this sample was 20.50, with a standard deviation of 6.25 (median score was 21). The overall instrument's internal consistency was.90 according to Oguntayo et al. (2019). For utilitarian influence subscale, Cronbach alphas .84, =.85, value-expressive influence, and =.81 for informational influence were found among Nigeria population. The average item-total

correlation was .69, with values ranging from.60 to.75 and during the two-week interval, test-retest reliability was acceptable (r =.73, p.001 for utilitarian) (Cheryl et al., 2010).

Procedure and Sampling Technique

The study received the approval of social science ethical committee of University of Ilorin. Participants were educated on the essence of the study, and those who agreed to participate were enjoined to sign the informed consent before they can be involved in the study. They were educated that they have the right to decline and exit the participation any time during the study. Confidentiality of the participants' responses was assured. The filling of questionnaire took 20minutes. After removing the incomplete questionnaire pack, the 920 participants' responses were evaluated.

The research participants were purposively sampled from Ilorin South and West Local Government among undergraduates, unemployed graduates, private employees, and public civil servants.

Data analysis

The data collected for this study was subjected to statistical analyses using a frequency percentage table in analyzing the demographic characteristic of the respondents and other variables. In analyzing the data collected from the field, inferential statistics in form of hierarchical regression and one-way analysis of variance for hypotheses 0ne a two.

RESULTS

On formulated hypothesis 1 which states that there will be a significant influence of demographic variables (length of service, type of organization and social influence) on measures of corrupt practices among the workers while controlling for age and gender. Table 1 results showed the model summary of the R-square, Adjusted R-square and R-square changes that are related to each step in the hierarchical regression analysis. The first model revealed an R-square of 0.095 suggesting that gender and age only account for 9.5 percent of the changes that occurred in corrupt practice. Though, the Adjusted R-square looks moderately small to be considered, the F-change (from 0 to 29.26) for model 1 is still significant. The ANOVA table (Table 2) confirms the significance of model 1.

In Model 2, we entered the variables associated with corrupt practice. The R-value appreciated from 0.320 to 0.497 while the R-square at the same times increased from 0.095 to 0.198. These results indicate that model 2 can account for 19.8% of the variance in corrupt practice by participants. However, the variables in model 2 are significant but the number of percent look moderately low. Table 2 shows the specifics regarding each regression model and the associated residuals. For better illustration, Table 3 shows the coefficients of the significant variables included in the models. A total of 4 variables included in model 2 are significant however, the impacts seem moderately low generally. Meanwhile, when age was negatively associated with corrupt practice, gender, length of service, type of organization and social influence were positively and significantly associated with corrupt practice tendencies.

Table 1. Hierarchical multiple regression model summary.

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate	R^2 Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.220	.095	.046	5.57	.095	29.26	2	.756	.000
2	.397	.198	.158	5.25	19.8	58.10	2	.756	.000

Table 2. One-way ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	1195.644	2	297.822	19.264	.000
	Residual	23460.994	756	31.033		
	Total	24656.638	758			
2	Regression	3894.182	4	973.546		.000
	Residual	20762.456	754	27.536	35.355	
	Total	24656.638	758			

Table 3. Model coefficient

	Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig	
Model 1						
(Constant)	15.366	1.325		11.597	.000	
Gender	1.976	.414	170	4.775	.000	
Age	.3.939	1.093	-.128	-.3603	.000	
Model2 (Constant)	11.295	1.514		7.463	.000	
Gender	1.148	.399	.099	2.875	.004	
Age	-3.567	1.036	-.116	-3.445	.001	
Length of Service	.130	.013	.335	9.813	.000	
Social influence	.102	.015	.193	5.911	.040	

Regarding hypothesis two which states that participants who are undergraduates will score high significantly on measures of corrupt practice compared with participants who are civil servants, artisans/traders, unemployed graduates and private employees. Results in Table 7a showed that job status has a significant influence on measures of corrupt practice (F(4,871)=10.265, p<.01).To ascertain the magnitude significant determinant of F Value, a multiple group comparison test was conducted. Consequently, Bonferroni post hoc analysis was used to compare the three groups in Table 7b. The post-hoc result presented in Table 5b shows that there is a significant difference on measures of corrupt practice between participants who are civil servants (n= 98) and artisans/traders (n = 96) with a total adjusted mean of 4.063, compared to participants who are private employees (n=426) who had adjusted mean difference of 2.958, while artisan/trader participants (n=129) had adjusted mean difference of -3.454 compared with unemployed graduate participants, also, undergraduates (n=151) scored high compared to unemployed graduates with a total adjusted mean of -2.350. From the mean scores, participants at the undergraduate level have the highest measures of corrupt

practice compared with other participants while scores of others followed this order respectively; unemployed graduates, private employees, artisan/traders and civil servants scored the lowest. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed.

Table 4a Showing the significant influence of Job Status on Corrupt Practice Behaviour among Participants

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	P
Job Status	1281.333	4	320.333	10.265	< .05
Error	27181.145	871	31.207		
Total	28462.478	875			

Table 4b. Showing the Summary of LSD analysis of Job Status on Corrupt Practice Behaviour among Participants

	Groups	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	1	2	3	4
1	Civil Servants	83	12.48	5.80	1			
2	Unemployed graduates	87	15.87	4.78	.608	1		
3	Artisan/Traders	129	13.42	6.35	4.063*	-3.454*	1	
4	Private Employees	426	15.52	5.28	2.958*	-1.310	2.144*	1
5	Undergraduates	151	16.56	6.03	1.919	-2.350*	1.104	-1.093

Note: ** $p < .05$.

Dependent variable: Corrupt Practice Behaviour

DISCUSSION

This research was carried out in Kwara State-Nigeria among civil servants, private employees, artisans/traders, unemployed graduates, and undergraduates to assess corrupt practices. The findings are intriguing; some were consistent with previous research, while others were not; this make the current study unique and interesting. The analysis in the first instance showed the significance of gender and age as controlled variables while length of service, type of organization and social influence influenced corrupt practices. This result is consistent with a previous research of Torgler and Valev's (2006) which showed that individuals between 30 and 65 are more likely to justify corruption than respondents younger than 30. According to Okochuwu (2002) in most developing countries civil service job appointments often depend on factors that have nothing to do with qualifications or competence. Instead, appointments are based on party loyalty, friendship, and cronyism. The net result of having a highly politicized civil service is among other things producing unethical civil servants who are prepared sacrifice the interest of public to please their political masters.

The second hypothesis which states that participants who are undergraduates will score high significantly on measures of corrupt practice compared with participants who are civil servants, artisans/traders, unemployed graduates, and private employees was tested using one-way analysis of variance. The results showed that participants at the undergraduate level have the highest measures of corrupt practice compared with other participants while scores of others followed this order respectively; unemployed graduates, private employees, artisan/traders while the civil servants scored the lowest on measures of corrupt practices.

The current results contradicted the result obtained by Razafindrakoto and Roubaud (2007) which showed that the poorest individuals are 'more vulnerable and less able to avoid or resist bureaucratic corruption. While a similar result was obtained by Islam and Lee (2016). Also, Liu and Peng (2015) found that students from middle-income families were more likely to bribe. However, in Torgler and Valev's (2006) study, economic status and financial satisfaction do not have a statistically significant association with the justifiability of corruption. Individuals with higher incomes (Mocan, 2008; Ivlevs & Hinks, 2015), rich individuals (Hunt & Laszlo, 2012), affluent households, and households with higher levels of consumption (Deininger & Mpuga, 2004) are more likely to engage in bribery.

CONCLUSION

The result showed that gender and age are determinants of corrupt practice therefore these variables were controlled for in this study. Meanwhile, length of service, type of organization and social influence determined corrupt practices. This result is consistent with other previous research. Furthermore, the participants at the undergraduate level have the highest measures of corrupt practice compared with other participants while scores of others followed this order respectively; unemployed graduates, private employees, artisan/traders while the civil servants scored the lowest on measures of corrupt practices. Based on this conclusion, the study therefore recommends that government and relevant stakeholders should:

i. strengthen campaign programmes using Psychologists for the re-orientation of citizens towards corrupt practices;

ii. integrate in the educational curricula at the secondary and tertiary levels an anti-corruption crusade course;

iii. promulgate an Act that would make corruption a capital offence to discourage social influence, this will go a long way to help curb this nefarious behaviour and make it unattractive;

iv. provide social security or welfare for unemployed citizens, to give them basic needs of food and shelter. This program will be able to stop employees from indulging in corrupt practices at all cost to save for means of surviving and

v. To tackle corruption, living wages should be paid to employees in the private and public sectors because employees live on salaries and if the salary is poor, this will make some of them to find other ways (i.e. collecting bribes) to make ends meet;

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