

Assessing The Level of Corruption in the Public Sector in Nigeria. A Study of Gombe State Public Service

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to assess the level of corruption in the public sector in Nigeria, with a focus on the public service in Gombe State. The research aims to identify the factors that contribute to corruption in the Gombe State public service, as well as potential ways to reduce its prevalence. A comprehensive review of the existing literature is conducted, wherein the causes of corruption in public offices in Nigeria are discussed. Data collected from both primary and secondary sources, such as surveys and interviews, is analyzed to understand the prevalence and nature of corruption in the Gombe State public service. Descriptive analysis is used to understand the underlying relationships between the various factors that contribute to corruption. The results from this analysis are discussed to identify key areas where corruption can be reduced. The findings from the study are expected to be of benefit to the public service in Gombe State, as well as to the nation as a whole.

Keywords: *Corruption, Public Sector, Nigeria, Gombe State.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The major factor affecting the transformation of socio-economic of Nigerian states and the country at large is corruption. According to World Bank (2006) report states that corruption has a negative impact on economic growth, job opportunities, reduction of poverty and benefiting from public health and other public services. Corruption has remained one of the major setbacks to social and economic development in any economy's nation. The pervasive problem that affects many

countries globally mostly is corruption. Corruption is a phenomenon that many people involve the abuse of public office for personal gain (immediate wealth), and neglect the virtue of integrity, transparency, accountability and effectiveness of public institutions, leading to a loss of public trust and it reduces the quality of public services. Othniel (2018) states that corruption is a phenomenon plaguing both public and private sectors of an economy and it neither limited nor an exemption to a particular country. Corruption has become highly rampant problem and permeates every sphere of state and society. Only that it differs from level and degree of occurrence. This imply that no country is exempted both developed, under developed and developing economies are face with corruption thread as stated by Bappi, Mahdi and Ibrahim (2021).

Corruption is a problem not only to the developing economies alone, but the developed economies are not exempted. The problem of corruption does not start today, its history is old as man existed. Corruption is inherited, you cannot separate man from corruption. As we are dealing with corruption we are directly dealing with the nature of man. And corruption particularly acute in developing countries, where weak institutions, low levels of transparency, and limited accountability measures provide fertile ground for corruption to flourish. According to Cater and Herz in Ngu (1992) cited in Kayode, Sunday and Salisu (2019), public services is an organization through which the government provides its economic and social services to its citizens. Kayode, Sunday and Salisu (2019), state that, in diversified roles of governments have in recent years, bring about an uncontrollable growth of civilise bureaucracies, particularly in new states. In these new states, the expectation of peoples in government is growing everyday with the government becoming a part of the daily life of the average citizen (Reters 1978, Radley, 1979 cited in Kayode, Sunday and Salisu (2019).

Gombe State is one of the 36 states in Nigeria, located in the northeastern part of the country. The state has a population of approximately 3.5 million people, and its economy is largely dependent on agriculture. In recent years, there have been concerns about the level of corruption in the state's public service, with allegations of nepotism, fraud, embezzlement, and other forms of misconduct. This has led to calls for a comprehensive assessment of the level of corruption in the state's public sector, in order to identify the root causes of the problem and develop effective strategies to address it (FOI Act, 2011) Assessing the level of corruption in the public sector is a complex task that requires a multi-faceted approach. It involves analyzing the legal and policy frameworks that govern public institutions, as well as their organizational structures, processes, and procedures. It also requires examining the attitudes and behaviors of public officials, as well as the perceptions and experiences of the general public.

This study of Gombe State's public service aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of the level of corruption in the state's public sector. It will examine the legal and policy frameworks that govern public institutions in the state, as well as the organizational structures and processes that are in place. It will also explore the attitudes and behaviors of public officials, as well as the perceptions and experiences of the general public with regards to corruption in the state's public service.

Corruption in the public sector can take many forms, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and abuse of power. These practices have significant negative effects on the country's economic development, social welfare, and political stability. Corruption diverts resources away from public

services, reduces the quality of public services, and undermines public trust in government institutions.

The state's public service is responsible for the provision of essential public services, including education, healthcare, and infrastructure development etc. (Azelama, 2002; Waziri, 2010; Ijewereme, 2013; Othniel 2018)

Despite the attempts to combat corruption in Gombe state public service, the public service continue to experience serious challenges (setback) due to corruption cases experienced. There have been allegations of corrupt behavior among state public officials, including nepotism, theft, and bribery. As we investigate the reason for and government response to such wrongdoing, several examples that occurred between 2011 and 2022 will be considered. For instance, in July 23, 2020, the ex-commissioner was found guilty of N97, 640,000.00 (Ninety-seven million, six hundred and forty thousand naira) which were accused of fraud, cheating, and money laundering a case brought against him by the EFCC's Gombe Zonal Office. The corruption practices have a negative impact on the quality of public services and erode public trust in government institutions (Bappi *et al* 2021)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Corruption in the public sector is a pervasive issue that undermines the effectiveness and efficiency of government institutions, ultimately leading to a lack of trust in the government by citizens. Corruption is politically destabilizing, that is it has the capacity of creeping the political instability, breakdown of law and order, brain drain, inefficient of the public service among others (Lawal, 2006) cited in Niyi (2017). Gombe State, like many other states in Nigeria, has been grappling with corruption in its public service. Despite efforts to curb corruption, it continues to be a significant problem that affects the delivery of services and the overall development of the state. Therefore, the problem statement for this study is to assess the level of corruption in Gombe State's public service and identify the factors that contribute to its persistence. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the extent of corruption in the public sector in Gombe State and its impact on service delivery. Additionally, the study intends to identify the main drivers of corruption and provide recommendations for effective measures to combat corruption in the public service.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to assess the level of corruption in public sector in Gombe State public service which include:

1. To investigate the extent of corruption in Gombe State public sector.
2. To identify the types of corruption prevalent in the Gombe State public sector.
3. To investigate the factors that contribute to corruption in the Gombe State public sector.
4. To examine the impact of corruption on the effectiveness of the Gombe State public sector.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Concepts of Corruption, Public Sector and Public Service

Corruption

There is no generally accepted definition of corruption. Different scholars perceived corruption differently due to complexity of the word corruption other see corruption as a concept while others describe it using different terminologies. Dada (2014) cited in Othniel (2018) claimed that “corruption is a concept that is difficult to define because of its multi-dimensional nature. There is no single definition that is sufficient to appropriately describe the concept. According Ofoeze (2004) as cited in Keeper (2012) and Adegoke (2017) corruption refers to an action or inaction of a person, or group (public or private) deliberate action to secure advantages for self, or relation, friend, associate or group(s) in a manner that defame from the accepted regulations, ethical standard or code of conduct and hence constituting a caricature of justice, equity and fair play. Also, can be seen in McShane and Nilsson (2010) cited in Othniel (2018) corruption “is when a holder of public office motivated by self-centered gain gives preferential treatment to himself other than not officially approved. Any attempt of abused of entrusted power for private gain other than maximizing the organizational profit is refers to as corruption. Tanzai (1995) cited in Begovic (2013) posited corruption as the intentional non-compliance with the arm’s-length principle aimed at deriving some advantage for oneself or for related individuals from this behavior.” Begovic (2013) categorized the definition by Tanzai (1995) into three basic elements. The first element deals with the principle which requires the personal interest other than the interest of others and there should be equal treatment of all essential economic agents for a well-working market economy. Segregation/discrimination/stigmatization/bias towards particular economic agents definitely violates the principle and fulfills a necessary condition for corruption. If there is no bias, there is no corruption. Secondly, there must be some advantage for the individual who commits a violation of the first principle; otherwise, there is no corruption. Thirdly, sizing some benefit, the returned favor is sometimes not even specified, but the obligation is assumed. Olaiyan (2002) cited in Othiel (2018) defines corruption to include bribery, fraud and dishonesty, which is capable of destroying or perverting the purity of societal well-being. Also, Staats (1972) cited. Ekiyor (2005) and cited in David (2012) view corruption defined it as the unlawful use of official power or influence by an official of the government either to enrich himself or further his course and/or any other person at the expense of the public, in contravention of his oath of office and/or contrary to the conventions or laws that are in force.

Public Sector Concept

Public sector can loosely be refers to organizations and institutions that exist to serve a public purpose UNODC (Module 4), public sector exist for the benefit of citizens unlike private sector which seek to maximize profit. According to the SNA the public sector consists of general government, public non-financial corporate (and quasi-corporate) enterprises and public financial institutions. The SNA state that the distinction between private and public “is based on whether the ownership and/or control of an enterprise rests in the public authorities or private parties”. The part of the economy that is owned and operated by the government which includes government agencies, departments, and other entities that provide goods and services to the public, such as healthcare, education, law enforcement, public transportation and etc. is refers to as public sector. Also SNA (chapter) defined public sector as the national, regional, and local government plans institutional units controlled by government units.

Public Service Concept

Peter (2016) posits public service as to mean the collectivity of specialized government institutions or agencies established by law, financed by public money and staffed by professionals and career bureaucrats for the purpose of executing public policies. While for Ezeani (2006) see public service in much broader than the term civil service as the former (Public service) refers to the totality of services that are organized under public authority. Public service can be simply be define as a body or department in the executive arm of government saddled with the responsibility to assisting in the planning and implementation of government policies. The public service include: emergency services, urban planning, public transportation, telecommunications, education, law enforcement, military energy, environmental protection, water supply, immigration and customs, consumer protection, postal services, transportation infrastructure, sanitation service, recreational facilities, public broadcasting, natural resources management, agriculture programs, economic development services, public building, healthcare and public health and etc.

2.2 The Extent of Corruption in Gombe State Public Service

Gombe State was created on October 1, 1996, and civil rule began in the state on May 29, 1999, following the return of democracy to Nigeria. It is difficult to pinpoint the first case of corruption in Gombe State, as corruption has been a pervasive problem in Nigeria for many years. However, like other states in Nigeria, Gombe State has had its fair share of corruption cases over the years. Some notable cases of corruption in Gombe State as recoded in corruption database 2023 include:

1. The ₦ 1.5 billion Gombe State Scholarship Scandal: In 2018, the Gombe State government was embroiled in a scholarship scandal involving the payment of ₦ 1.5 billion for the scholarship of students from the state. It was alleged that the funds were misappropriated, and many beneficiaries of the scholarship were said to be non-existent.
2. The Gombe State Security Vote Scandal: In 2015, it was alleged that the former governor of Gombe State, misappropriated the state's security vote. The security vote is a discretionary fund meant for the governor to use in ensuring security in the state. It was alleged that the former governor diverted the funds for personal use.
3. The Gombe State LG Funds Scandal: In 2016, it was alleged that the former chairman of Gombe Local Government, misappropriated ₦ 104 million meant for the payment of salaries and allowances of council staff. It was alleged that the funds were diverted for personal use.
4. The Gombe State SUBEB Scandal: In 2019, it was alleged that the Gombe State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) mismanaged ₦ 1.3 billion meant for the construction and renovation of schools in the state. The funds were said to have been diverted, and many of the schools remained in a state of disrepair.
5. The admission (Education) scandal: In 2022, the Principal of Government Secondary School, Gombe State was accused of allegedly obtained by false pretense the sum of ₦ 3,884,200.00 from unsuspecting admission seekers under the guise of offering them admission into Muktar Polytechnic Gombe and Goni Muktar College of Education Gombe State, which are illegal institutions.
6. The forgery and financial embezzlement: In 2011, The former Governor of Gombe State, the accused were charged alleged forgery and financial embezzlement, including contract fraud on food supply to the State Government House as well as loan facilities taken from Access and Union Banks without following process.

7. The conspiracy Scandal: In 2018, the Chairman of Gombe State Board of Internal Revenue. The accused with intent to defraud, allegedly conspired and obtained the sum from the coffers of the Gombe State Government by using several fake payment vouchers and converted same to their personal use.

These are just a few examples of corruption cases in Gombe State. Unfortunately, corruption remains a major challenge in Nigeria and requires sustained efforts to eradicate it.

2.3 Forms/Types of Corruption in Gombe State Public Service

Even though, corruption is different perceived by different scholars due to complexity of the word corruption. Since corruption varies from one geographical location to another. The following behaviors are regarded as forms of public sector corruption in Nigeria: acceptance of gratification; succumbing to inducement and undue influence; embezzlement; conflict of interests, for example, the award of contracts by public office holders to cronies, family members, and personally held companies; bribery; fraud; nepotism and tribalism in recruitment/appointment, promotion; kickback on contract; rigging of elections; misappropriation and conversion of public funds for personal gains; procurement scam; leaking tender information to friends and relations; diversion and misappropriation of funds through manipulation or falsification of financial records; payment for favorable judicial decisions, and so on (Azelama, 2002 cited in Ijewereme, 2013, cited in Waziri, 2010 and cited in Othniel, 2018).

2.4 Factors that Contribute to Corruption in the Gombe State Public Sector.

According to Domènec (2014) highlighted possible ways of corruption such as: personal greed, decline of personal ethical sensitivity, no sense of service when working in public or private institutions, low awareness, cultural environments, lack of transparency, regulations and inefficient controls, slow judicial processes, lack of moral criteria in promotions, downplaying or reacting mildly to corruption charges. Little power of decision within organizations to penalize acts of corruption to set examples creates an environment conducive to perpetuating corruption.

As Bappi, Abubakar Mahdi & Yakubu (2021) cited Ajie and Wokekoro (2012) found this weak governmental institution among others; dysfunctional legal system; Lack of transparency; the high poverty / unemployment rate and political interference in the operations of anti-corruption agencies are the main causes of systemic corruption in Nigeria.

According to Othniel (2018) summarizes the causes of corruption in five categories such as: poverty, cultural foundations, inability of government to sanction corruption, weak institutions of government, lack of exemplary leadership. Also Paolo (1998) cited in Niyi (2017) outline three possible causes of corruption such as: **1.** government restrictions and intervention, which result to excessive profits. these include trade restrictions, price controls, multiple exchange rate practices, foreign exchange allocation schemes, government-controlled credit; **2.** Natural resources, **3.** Low wages paid to civil servant where by feeding their families might be difficult and they have to collect bribes in order to feed their families. Also Niyi added that lack of adequate and sustainable retirement benefits, under which employees may want to provide for their future through corruption and fraudulent practices. In accordance to what Niyi said, considering the new hardship of government policies (subsidy removal, weak price control system etc.) which resulted to the high cost of living might increase corruption and bring about corruptioneering (an expert corrupter

that teaches or influences is subordinate to do corruption whether direct i.e advising/lobbying or in direct intimidation/pressure or someone who engineer the act of corruption).

2.5 The Impact of Corruption on the Effectiveness of the Gombe State Public Sector.

Corruption has a significant negative impact on the effectiveness of the public sector in Gombe State, as it does in any region. Here are some key ways corruption affects the public sector:

1. Misallocation of resources: Bappi et al (2021) posit that corruption exacerbates poverty and disproportionately affects low-income people, drawing resources from national treasuries and putting money in the bank accounts of people with less political power. Corruption diverts public resources from their intended purposes. Funds meant for development projects, public services, and infrastructure improvements may be embezzled or misused by corrupt officials. This leads to a severe misallocation of resources, hindering the delivery of essential services to the people of Gombe State.

2. Weakened governance: according Natufe (2007) cited in Niyi (2017) view that the corruption is a major hindrance in ensuring good governance and development. He also said, corruption is no doubt an enemy of economic development. Corruption erodes the governance structures and institutions within the public sector. When public officials engage in corrupt practices, it undermines trust in government and weakens the rule of law. Corruption in the judicial system threatens the rule of law; Corruption in public administration leads to unfair and inefficient service provision Bappi et al (2021).As a result, the public sector becomes less effective in promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance.

3. Impaired service delivery: According to Haruna and Abu (2021), suggests that everything is in its right place while the variables that promote the effective and efficient functioning of the Public Services are also good and everybody should be considered in public service delivery and that the human element which manipulates the process is equally taken care of. Which corruption negatively impacts the delivery of public services. Public officials who engage in corrupt practices may demand bribes or engage in nepotism, favoritism. This undermines the principles of meritocracy and fairness, leading to the appointment of incompetent individuals to key positions and the provision of substandard services to the public.

4. Economic consequences: Corruption has adverse economic consequences. It stifles economic growth, discourages foreign and domestic investments, and distorts market mechanisms. As stated by Niyi (2017) cited Ojaide (2000) corruption discourages honest efforts and valuable economic activities; and it breeds inefficiency and nepotism. Also Bappi et al cite (Osimen et al., 2013, Agbu, cited in Raimi, Suara, and Fadipe (2013). When corruption is rampant in the public sector, businesses and investors may be deterred from engaging with the state, leading to reduced economic activity and fewer employment opportunities for the people of Gombe State.

5. Social inequality: Corruption exacerbates social inequality by diverting resources away from the most vulnerable and marginalized segments of society. When funds meant for poverty alleviation programs, healthcare, education, and social welfare are siphoned off through corrupt practices, it widens the gap between the rich and the poor, perpetuating social injustice.

To combat corruption and improve the effectiveness of the public sector in Gombe State, it is crucial to prioritize anti-corruption measures, strengthen accountability mechanisms, promote transparency, and foster a culture of integrity within the government. This requires robust legal frameworks, independent oversight institutions, and the active participation of civil society in monitoring and reporting corruption.

2.6 Theoretical framework

The principal-agent theory, game theory, collective action theory, social learning theory, institutional theory and prebendalism are theories that help to explain corruption. But this research paper, the social learning theory is adopted as the theoretical framework to guide the discussion. The theory was promoted by (Bandura (1963). Social learning theory can also be refer to as social psychology theory, it is a cognitive process which is more of social context, and can be achieved through direct teaching or observation as stated in Bandura , (1963) cited in Bappi *et al* (2021) . Bandura (1963) examined the learning processes that occur through in interpersonal relationship which are not adequately explained by other theories of psychologist or existing models of social learning. This theory supplies another social element, according to Bandura argue that people can learn new information by observing other people and through direct learning. Learning by observation (modeling), can be used to explain different variety of behaviors. To add to observing behavior, learning is also done by proxy reinforcement (observing rewards and punishments). The extension of this theory is the behavioral theories traditional, where the reinforcements of the important roles of divers' internal processes in the tensions individual can determine the behavior of people (Bandura, 1971). Attitudes, observing the behavior, and the outcome of these behaviors of others people can learn from it. Human behaviors mostly learned through observation models as reported by different scholars. Through observing behavior, individuals can get a knowledge of how new behaviors can be implemented and then this information encoded to serves as a guide for action. Even though, people can learn by observation Bandura also recognizes that it is not necessarily that every change behavior is driven from something that has been learned. Thus, the theory of Bandura is an ideal model for measuring the level of corruption. Both in public and in private organization, workers face daily reality to remember their friends or relative who live in wealth and affluence which may pressure them to seek beyond their capabilities and unfortunately will tend to learn and internalize the behavior of other corrupt people. As a result, many Nigerians' workers developed interest towards corruption because mostly those who got rich through practices were not prosecuted or punished. And those who were arrested and prosecuted were mostly pardon in many cases. In the context of Nigeria, most rich people that we celebrate and are worship they got their riches through corruption and therefore, it increases the tendency of corrupt practices in Nigeria particularly in Gombe State. The reason of adopting this theory it poses strong capacity of explaining the socio-psychological factor that are responsible for wide spread of corruption in Nigeria and which hampers the economic development of the country at large and the state of Gombe in particular.

2.7 Empirical Review

Since corruption is a complicated phenomenon, no one explanation can fully account for it. The primary theories used to explain why corruption arises are reviewed in this section of the research paper. A significant barrier to the socioeconomic transition of developing nations worldwide is corruption. Afolayan (2010) asserts that Nigeria's history of corruption is a result of more than 29

years of military rule. According to Ribadu (2006), referenced in Afolayan (2010), every positive development under the military rule was completely reversed and destroyed. Additionally, the World Bank (2010) Report notes that corruption has a detrimental effect on economic performance, employment prospects, and the fight against poverty, and access to services in the fields of public health and policy. Furthermore, the findings from the context of measuring corruption that, corruption can be measure (Osimen *et al* (2013) also he enlisted factors that mostly contributed to corruption such as lack of transparency of our government, attitude of official/discipline, moral laxi, poverty and unemployment. Bappi *et al* (2021) examine the perception of EFCC anti-corruption agencies it finding reveal that there is high level of corruption, institutional anti-corruption agencies are weak and corruption hampers the economic development of Gombe local government. According to Afolayan (2010), the history of corruption in Nigeria is rooted in the over 29 years of Military Rule. Perceptions Index clearly of 2015 corruption shows that, corruption remains a virus around the world. Even though, 2015 was also a year when people again took to the streets to protest corruption. With different signal across world sent to those in power to tackle the grand of corruption in Nigeria yet occurrence of corruption in Nigeria it keep increasing from one degree to the other. According to Lipset and Lenz (2000) cited in Dike (2010) and Kayode, Sunday and Salisu (2019), corruption is found in democratic and dictatorial politics; feudal, Capitalist and Socialist economies. The recent study is carried out by Bappi *et al* (2021), they examine the perception of EFCC anti-corruption agencies which there finding is limited in scope of study, they only carried out within Gombe local government.

Therefore, this study will help to shed light on the nature and extent of corruption in Gombe State's public service, and provide policymakers and practitioners with valuable insights and recommendations for addressing this critical issue. Corruption in the public sector has been a long-standing problem in Nigeria, and Gombe State is not immune to this issue. Nigeria has ranked poorly in global corruption rankings for many years, with the country consistently ranking among the most corrupt in the world.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

Descriptive survey research design was adopted, because it provide quick inexpensive, efficient, and accurate means of assessing information about the population. The study involved gathering data from various public sector to describe the level of corruption in public service. Men and women who reside in the Gombe State government make up the population of this study. The responder must reside in the Gombe State and be at least 18 years old in order to be eligible for involvement in this study. A simple random sampling was used because it gives equal chances without bias to select sample. Hundred (100) questionnaires were distributed in Gombe state public sectors for the study. The method of multi-stage sampling was employed to choose study participants. Questionnaires served as the research project's data sources. The responders were given access to a developed, organized questionnaire. The use of questionnaires was made possible by their speed, cost, and ability to produce comparable, quantitative data. To check the accuracy of the statement in the study, the researcher employed tables, percentages, descriptive analyses, as well as the responses to a questionnaire.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Nigeria's Gombe state. The Nigerian state of Gombe is in the northeast. The state, which covers an area of 18,768 square kilometers, contains eleven (11) local government areas (LGAs), each with a number of towns and villages. Gombe state is bordered to the north by Yobe, to the south by Adamawa and Taraba, to the east by Borno states, and to the west by Bauchi states. Numerous tribal groups can be found in the Gombe state, including the Cham, Tera, Tangali, Fulani, Bolawa, Waja, Lunguda, Tula, and Hausa. The predominant tongue among the populace is Hausa. There were just seven municipal governments chosen at random.

3.3 Method of Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study, descriptive statistics using SPSS version 23.0 was employed to establish the relationship between the variables in the study.

4.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Presentation and Analyses of Data

This section presents the data and the analysis of the data. Out of total of distributed questionnaire to respondents regarding their view on corruption in Gombe state, and all were successfully completed and voted on by respondents. Therefore, is considered statistically significant for a further study.

Table 1

Level of Corruption

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Very low	9	9.0
Low	14	14.0
Moderate	38	38.0
High	26	26.0
Very high	13	13.0

Source: Field 2023

Table 1 above reveals that, (38%) of the respondents confirmed that the level of corruption is moderate while (26%) of the respondents agrees that, the level of corruption is high. Furthermore, (9%), (14%) and (13%) respondents confirmed that the level of corruption is very low, low and very high respectively.

Table 2

Areas Mostly Affected By Corruption in Gombe State

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Recruitment and selection process	30	30.0
Procurement and contract management	8	8.0
Revenue collection and management	17	17.0
Service delivery and welfare programs	24	24.0

Human resource management (promotions, transfer etc)	21	21.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field 2023

In table 2 above, the result shows that, (30%) of the respondents believed that areas mostly affected by corruption in Gombe state is recruitment and selection process and (24%) agreed that service delivery and welfare programs are also mostly affected by corruption.

Table 3**Factors Contributing To Corruption in Gombe State**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of Transparency and Accountability	22	22.0
Inadequate Salaries and Benefit for Public Servant	29	29.0
Weak Frame Work and Enforcement	9	9.0
Political Interference and Favoritism	29	29.0
Inefficient Internal Control and Oversight Mechanism	3	3.0
Culture of Impunity	8	8.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field 2023

In table 4: shows that the major factor that contribute to corruption practices in Gombe State are: inadequate salaries and benefit for public servant (29%), political interference and favoritism (29%) and lack of transparency and accountability (28%) contribute to the occurrences or corruption cases in Gombe state

Table 4**Anti-Corruption Measures and Initiative Implemented By the State Government**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	31	31.0
Some How Effective	13	13.0
Ineffective	51	51.0
Don't Know	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field 2023

Table 4 above indicated that, (51%) of the respondents says anti-corruption measures and initiative implemented by the state government are ineffective on the issue of corruption and (31%) agreed that the measures of the state government on the issue of corruption are very effective.

Table 5**Effect of Corruption in Economic Development in Gombe State**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Hampers Economic Growth and Development	38	38.0
Corruption Led to Poor Infrastructure Development	22	22.0
Corruption Led to Poverty and Unemployment	30	30.0
As a Result, no Basic Equipment is Provided	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0

Source: Field 2023

In table 5 above shows that, (38%) of the respondents believed that corruption interrupt/hold back economic growth/ development, while (30%) agrees that corruption leads to poverty and unemployment (22%) of respondents believe that corruption leads to poor infrastructure development. Finally, 10% of respondents believe/indicated that corruption leads to the lack of basic services.

4.2 Discussion of results

The study found that, the level of corruption is moderate in the Gombe state as stated in table 1 above. And in table 2 above shows that, areas mostly affected by corruption in Gombe state is recruitment and selection process, service delivery and welfare programs. This finding is contrary to Bappi *et al* (2021), who argue that corruption is very high in Gombe State and also Osimen *et al* (2013) opined that, the judicial sector, police and, health are the area mostly affected by corruption. This finding is in line with the argument made by Otite (1986); Ike (2009); Ajie and Wokekoro (2012) according to which corruption occurs to different degrees which varies from nations to another and has severe consequences for political and economic development.

Furthermore, the result also revealed that, factors contributing to corruption in Gombe State include inadequate salaries and benefit for public servant, political interference and favoritism and lack of transparency and accountability as shown in table 3 above. This finding is contrary to Bappi *et al* (2021), who argue that, the factors contributing to corruption include: poverty and unemployment, a lack of patriotism, a weak justice system, a negative value system, and a lack of social and economic security. Also, Osimen *et al* (2013) opined that, the major causes of corruption include; lack of transparency in public sector, attitude of official/discipline, moral laxity, poverty and unemployment. The broad state control/regulation of economic resources usually create an avenue for corrupt occurrences, and hence corruption at all levels of society is socialized in a way that it is welcomed idea and tolerated. This is also supported by Ajie and Wokekoro (2012), who found that weakness in government institution among others; lack of transparency, inadequate salaries and benefits for public servant, weak frame work and enforcement, political interference and favoritism, inefficient internal control and oversight mechanism and culture of impunity in the operations of anti-corruption agencies and public sectors officers are the main causes of systemic corruption in Nigeria.

More so, table 4 above revealed that, anti-corruption measures and initiative implemented by the state government are ineffective on the issue of corruption. The study also found that, the consequences of corruption in the study area include interrupt/hold back economic growth/development and corruption leads to poverty and unemployment. This finding is in agreement with Bappi (2021) who said that, the consequences of corruption in the Gombe state include, hampers economic growth/ development and corruption leads to poverty and unemployment.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the assessment of corruption in the Gombe State public service, it is evident that corruption remains a significant challenge within the sector. The study aimed to assess the level of corruption in Gombe state, it shows that, the level of corruption is moderate. The result also indicates the various area mostly affected by corruption include recruitment and selection process and service delivery and welfare programs which have severely undermined the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of public institutions. Further findings show that, there are several factors that led to the persistence of corruption in Gombe state as we understood from the study, and these factors must be taken into account to combat corruption, the factors include; lack of transparency, inadequate salaries and benefit for public servant, political interference and favoritism and lack of transparency and accountability. The study suggests, to fight corruption political will is very necessary segment in combating corruption in Gombe state in particular and in Nigeria at large because corruption in Nigeria, is not only a cause for concern, but it has also become a serious issue to be address in other to reduce intensifying the problems. And this view is supported by Ugwuoke stated that, values change in the system that emphasizes the excess desire for material gains. For this reason, the social learning theory by Bandura which assumes that people learn from each other, when the behavior is rewarded positively. In line with the theory adopted, thus brought about the concept of corruptioneering (an expert corrupter that teaches or influences is subordinate to do corruption weather direct i.e. advising/lobbying or in direct intimidation/pressure or someone who engineer the act of corruption).

5.2 Recommendations

To address the level of corruption in the Gombe State public service, several recommendations can be considered:

1. Strengthen Anti-Corruption Measures: The government should reinforce existing anti-corruption laws and institutions by providing them with adequate resources, autonomy, and independence. This includes empowering anti-corruption agencies, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), to effectively investigate and prosecute corrupt individuals without political interference.

2. Enhance Transparency and Accountability: Implement measures to promote transparency and accountability in public service operations. This can be achieved through the establishment of robust financial management systems, regular auditing, and the publication of financial reports. Whistleblower protection mechanisms should also be put in place to encourage individuals to report corruption without fear of retaliation.

3. Improve Recruitment and Promotion Processes: Ensure that recruitment and promotion processes within the public service are based on merit, competency, and integrity. Implement standardized procedures that are transparent, objective, and free from undue influence. This will help reduce nepotism and favoritism, which are breeding grounds for corruption.

4. Encourage Ethical Leadership/internal control: Promote a culture of ethical leadership within the public service by fostering integrity, professionalism, and accountability among public officials. This can be achieved through the provision of continuous training and capacity building programs that emphasize ethical conduct and the consequences of corruption.

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