Perceived Effect of Corrupt Practices in Fisheries Livelihood of Fisherfolk in Borgu Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria

[1]G.O. Nwabeze, [1]P.I. Ifejika. [2]A.P. Erie [1]J.O. Ayanda and [2]E.A. Onemolease

[1]Socio Economics and Extension Services, National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research
(NIFFR), P.M.B. 6006, New Bussa, Niger State. Nigeria
[2]Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension,
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract: The study determined perceived effect of corrupt practices in fisheries livelihood of fisherfolk in Niger State. Multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 120 respondents in five fishing communities in Borgu council area whereas data was collected through semi structured interview schedule. Data collected were analysed with statistical tools of frequency, percentage mean, standard deviation and multiple regression. From the result, respondents are ageing, dominated by men, illiterate and mostly engage in fishing. Majority of the respondents (67.5%, n=81) perceived Fisheries Research Institution as the leading agency involved in fisheries development in the area among government agencies. Result of regression analysis established that reduced access to quality health care, reduced access to quality education, lowered basic livelihood outcome, deliberate obstruction of access to information, diverted resources and holding back development and increased cost of basic services have significant influence on fisherfolk livelihood activities. It implies that fisherfolk suffer the negative influence of corrupt practices in government circle. It is recommended that adequate structure be put in place to further rededicate fisheries workers and other stakeholders on negative effect of corrupt practices.

Key words: Corruption · Fisherfolk · Fisheries · Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Corruption has diverse views of definition in literature. One of such views is Sen [1] who defined corruption to be the violation of established rules for personal gain and profit. While Lipset and Lenz, [2] see corruption as efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private gain at public expense. Therefore, corruption connotes misuse of public power for private benefit. Hence corruption is pervasive in our societies with serious consequences for development. It is a global phenomenon that cut-across all continent, region, ethnic group and facets of human life [2].

One of the major challenges that confronted the Nigerian nation over the years is the issue of corruption and its debilitating ancillaries; bribery, graft, fraud and nepotism. Corruption is endemic in government transaction and has contributed immensely to the poverty and misery of a large segment of the world population.

As such, Dike (2010) and Sen [1] enumerated negative effects of corrupt practices as follows; corruption discourages honest effort and valuable economic activities; breeds inefficiency and nepotism; leads to possible information distortion as it cooks the books and make public policies ineffective. Report of Transparency International on Corruption Perception Index (CPI) reveals that corruption is linked with poverty and under development of many countries. As shown in the Table 1 below, Nigeria ranked 81 out of the 85 countries in 1998, depreciated to 90 out of 91 countries in 2001 and further slipped down to 131 out of 132 countries in 2003. It signals that Nigeria is one of the top ranking corrupt nations in the world with serious consequences on the socio-economic development of the country. Confirmed by The Nation Newspaper [3], on country report of field survey on perception of very common corruption techniques in Africa, Nigeria ranked the highest in all the corruption techniques studied (Table 2).

Corresponding Author: G.O. Nwabeze, Socio Economics and Extension Services, National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research (NIFFR), P.M.B. 6006, New Bussa, Niger State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Corruption Perception Index (The top 10 and bottom 10 countries)

1998		2001		2003	
Country	Rank	Country	Rank	Country	Rank
Denmark	1	Finland	1	Finland	1
Finland	2	Denmark	2	Ice land	2
Sweden	3	New Zealand	3	Denmark	3
New Zealand	4	Ice land	4	New Zealand	4
Iceland	5	Singapore	5	Singapore	5
Canada	6	Sweden	6	Sweden	6
Singapore	7	Canada	7	The Netherlands	7
The Netherlands	8	The Netherlands	8	Australia	8
Norway	9	Luxembourg	9	Norway	9
Switzerland	10	Norway	10	Switzerland	10
Vietnam	75	Russia	81	Angola	124
Russia	76	Tanzania	82	Azerbaijan	125
Ecuador	77	Ukraine	83	Cameroun	126
Venezuela	78	Azerbaijan	84	Georgia	127
Columbia	79	Bolivia	85	Tajikistan	128
Indonesia	80	Cameroun	86	Myanmar	129
Nigeria	81	Kenya	87	Paraguay	130
Tanzania	82	Indonesia	88	Haiti	131
Honduras	83	Uganda	89	Nigeria	132
Paraguay	84	Nigeria	90	Bangladesh	133
Cameroon	85	Bangladesh	91		

Source (s): The CPI (1998; 2001) as cited by Lipset and Lenz (2001)

Table 2: Perception of "Very Common" Corruption Technique

Corruption Technique	Benin (25)	Cote d'voire (34)	Ghana (30)	Guinea-Bissau (36)	Liberia (22)	Nigeria (80)	Senegal (32)	Sierra-Leone (34)
Bribery of government official	40.0%*	55%	56,7%	44.4%	45.5%	87.3%	28.0%	85.3%
Bribery of foreign officials	4.0%	14%	6.7%	16.7%	4.5%	23.6%	0.0%	5.9%
Embezzlement, misappropriation or other diversions of property by government officials	52.0%	58%	56.7%	66.7%	54.4%	88.6%	25.0%	82.4%
Abuse of misuse of office	35.0%	50%	46.7%	58.3%	40.9%	79.7%	19.0%	76.5%
Trading in influence to get things done or not done	44.0%	62%	50.0%	58.3%	36.4%	67.9%	44.0%	64.7%
Bribery or embezzlement in the private sector	12.0%	23%	10.0%	8.3%	22.7%	41.6%	13.0%	44.1%
Illegal transfer or taking of money abroad	32.0%	14%	13.3%	36.1%	45.5%	57.0%	9.0%	35.3%
Inflation of contracts	28.0%	56%	56.7%	55.56%	45.5%	86.1%	16.0%	82.4%

Source: The Nation Newspaper (2010)

* Percentages in column computed from nominal figures provided by the Research Associate

Total number of respondents (N) who consider technique as "very common"

Recent discoveries of stolen public funds run into billions of US Dollars and Nigeria Naira. Hence corruption pose enormous burden on integrity of Nigeria in international community. In the country, corrupt practices are probably one of the quick and clever ways to accumulate wealth. There is no doubt that corruption is the leading factor to poverty and misery experienced in different sectors of the economy.

As such, issue of corruption has attracted the attention of stakeholders on the menace leading to establishment of two agencies; Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offenses Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to fight the scourge.

There are ample opportunities for corrupt practices to take place in fisheries. Sumaila and Jacquet [4] wrote

that corruption on the water is rampant due to the vastness and visual impermeability of the medium. Isolation and terrain in coastal communities make it difficult for enforcement agencies to locate fisheries corruption in the far reaches shores of the water bodies. On this note, Shleifer and Vishny [5] asserted that weak governments that do not control their agencies often experience high levels of corruption. Corruption in fisheries can occur in the entire chain of production from the time a fish is taken from the water to the time it reaches the mouth. For instance, in one South African case, 18 fishery officers were convicted due to a paper trail that uncovered bribes [6].

Incidences of corruption in fisheries are a potential threat to the livelihoods of millions of poor fishers, processors, marketers, gear and craft entrepreneurs in fishing communities. It is against this background that this study attempts to examine perceived effect of corrupt practices in fisheries livelihood of fisherfolk in Borgu area of Niger State.

Objective of the Study: The broad objective of the study was to examine the perceived effect of corrupt practices in fisheries livelihood in Borgu Local Government Area of Niger State, Nigeria.

The Specific Objectives Are To;

- Identify respondents personal characteristics in the study area
- Ascertain livelihood activities of respondents in fisheries
- Determine effect of corruption on the livelihoods of the fisherfolk

Research Methodology: Niger State is one of the 36 States in the country with a number of inland freshwater bodies rich in capture fish production. Two of such inland water bodies are Kainji and Jebba Lakes. Bordering part of the two lakes is Borgu Local Government Area (LGA) in Niger State. This informed the decision to use multi stage sampling technique for the study. First was purposively selection of Borgu LGA from 25 LGAs in the state for study due to high volume of fisheries activities on Kainji and Jebba Lakes respectively. Second step was identification of active fishing communities in Borgu Area Council and purposively select 5 namely; Fakun and Awuru in Jebba Lake and Monai, New Bussa and Yuna in

Kainji Lake. The third step was random selection of 25 fisherfolk from each of the 5 communities to get sample size of 125 respondents. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to collect relevant information from the respondents. Finally, 120 questionnaires were used for the analysis due to error of omission and irregularities observed in 5. Descriptive statistics consisting of percentage, frequency counts, mean and standard deviation were used to analyze data collected. Friedman test was used for ranking of the perceived effects of corruption in fisheries. Multiple regressions analysis was used to determine level of relationship between the effects of corrupt practices in fisheries and fisherfolk livelihood activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 discusses selected personal characteristics of respondents in the study area. Respondents ages ranged from 23 to 75, mean age 47 (SD=11.5, N=120). Half (50.0%, n=60) of the respondents were 44-66 years old. Nwabeze *et al.* [7] study reported 41 to 60 years as dominate age among fisherfolk in Delta State and supported by Ifejika *et al.* [8] in Niger State, Nigeria. It implies that fisherfolk in the study area are aging. Also, most of the respondents were male (82.5%) and 21 persons (17.5) were female. Vast majority (75.8%, n=91) had no formal education, (21.7%, n=26) are primary school certificate holder and few (2.5%, n=3) had a secondary school certificate. The trend is consistent with earlier assertion that artisanal fisheries in Southwestern Nigeria are dominated by large illiterate population by Onemolease and Erie [9]. It indicates that high level of illiteracy is a contributing factor to low use of information and adoption of fisheries technology. Higher proportion of the respondents (62%, n=74) were married whereas (32.5%, n=39) were single and 5.8 percent (n=7) were divorced. This suggests that a large number of the fisherfolk shoulder family responsibilities in their household. Respondents household sizes ranges from 2 to 20, mean household size 7 (SD=0.55, N=120). According to Thompson [10], household size constitutes an important source of family labour in production activities.

Response in Table 4 is on fisheries livelihood activities of respondents in the study area. As shown, respondents are involved in four fisheries livelihood lead by fishing (70%) and fish processing (15.8%). The result agrees with Nwabeze [11] observation among fisherfolk in

inland fisheries communities in Delta state. While Ovie *et al*. [12] said that fisheries account for 74 percent and 90 percent of annual income generated by this group.

Entries in Table 5 are on Government and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) involved in fisheries development in the area. Evidence from the data indicates that fisherfolk agree to government organizations as the major agents involved in fisheries development, distantly followed by individuals and traditional institutions. Majority of the respondents (67.5%, n=81) perceived Fisheries Research Institution as the leading organs of involved in fisheries development in the area among government agencies. This is could attributed to the presence and effort of Fisheries Research Institute in the area.

Data in Table 6 is on effect of perceived corrupt practices observed in fisheries by fisherfolk. From the response, the leading effect of perceived corrupt practices observed in fisheries is reduced access to quality health care (mean=1.068). This implies that corruption reduced the access of the resource poor fisherfolk to basic services such as health care, quality education and portable water supply among others. This have overall negative impact in development of human capital base necessary for the improvement of fishers livelihood. The result agree with DFID/FAO [13] reported that unofficial payments were often needed for health, education and other services and that some people went without services as a result. They also demonstrated diversion of resources as essential medicines and supplies went missing.

Table 6 further revealed that corruption reduced fisherfolk access to quality education (mean=1.058), despite the pledge by the world's governments (Nigeria inclusive) to make access to primary education universal and free, corruption and misuse of public resources remains one of the biggest barriers in achieving this fundamental human right.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to selected personal characteristics

Personal Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years):		
< 23	3	2.5
24 – 43	45	37.5
44 – 63	60	50.1
>64	12	10.0
Sex:		
Male	99	82.5
Female	21	17.5
Educational level:		
No formal education	85	65.0
Primary	26	21.7
Secondary	3	2.5
Marital status:		
Married	74	61.7
Single	39	32.5
Divorced	7	5.8
Household size		
2-7	85	70.8
8-13	25	20.8
14-19	7	5.8
>20	3	2.5

Source: Field Survey 2010

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by involvement in fisheries livelihood

Fisheries livelihood	Frequency	Percent
Fishing	84	70.0
Processing	19	15.8
Gear and craft construction	3	2.5
Marketing	14	11.7

Source: Field Survey 2010

Table 5: Percentage distribution on multiple responses on Government and NGOs involved in fisheries development in the area

Government and NGOs involved in fisheries	Frequency	Percent
Ministry of Agriculture	39	32.5
Local Government	73	60.8
Individual	53	44.2
Fisheries Research Institute	81	67.5
Traditional Institution	34	28.3
ADP	27	22.5

Source: Field Survey 2010

Table 6: Perceived effect of corruption observed in fisheries.

Effect of corruptions	Mean	Ranking
Reduced access to quality health care	1.068	1
Reduced access to quality education	1.058	2
Lowered basic livelihood outcome	1.050	3
Deliberate obstruction of access to information	1.045	3
Diverted resources and holding back development	1.042	4
Increased cost of basic services	1.033	5

Source: Field Survey, 2010

This collaborate the finding of Community Information, Empowerment and Transparency (CIET International) [14] on social audits in Costa Rica, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan and Uganda highlighted petty corruption in primary education. According to the results, in Nicaragua, she reported that 86% pay extra "contributions" to the teachers. One in ten children had to pay extra charges to teachers in exchange for an education in Uganda. It further confirmed that of 47% of girls who managed to get into primary school in the Sindh province in Pakistan, nearly all reported unofficial demands for money. As is often the case with corruption, it is not only those who can afford it who are asked to pay, but those who are thought to have no other options. The price tag put on the right to an education by corruption filters out those who need to access it most.

Result in Table 6 indicate that corruption affects fisherfolk basic livelihoods (mean=1.050). This is attributed to non- compliance of fishers' to legal fishing and institutions facilitating illegal fishing which undermines the management of the resources. Globally, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing was estimated at 16 million tons in 2002 (roughly 2% of global catch) valued between US$ 2.4 and $9.5 billion [15]. IUU fishing can lead to the collapse of fishery and impede effort to rebuild depleted fisheries resources [16].

Table 6 also revealed that corruption lead to deliberate obstruction of access to information (mean=0.045). The finding showed isolation of fisherfolk from development programs that have significant impact on their livelihood. Aruna and Nikhil [17] on corruption effect on poor's basic livelihood in Rajasthan confirmed that due to mismanagement, corruption and the deliberate obstruction of access to information held by local officials responsible for the programme's administration, wages which were part of a drought relief program organized by the state, were hardly ever paid to workers.

Record on Table 6 showed diverting resources and holding back development (0.042) as fisherfolk perceived effect of corruption. This indicates that corruption hinders the establishment of infrastructure and production resources necessary for the improvement of fisherfolks livelihood. According to Anti Corruption Centre [18] in a report presented by African Union in Addis Ababa, it estimated that corruption costs African economies in excess of 148bn dollars a year. This figure, which includes both direct and indirect costs of corruption, i.e. resources diverted by corrupt acts and resources withheld or deterred due to the existence of corruption, is thought to represent 25% of Africa's GDP and to increase the cost of goods by as much as 20% deterring investment and holding back development.

Data in Table 6 also indicated fisherfolk perceived effect of corruption to include increase cost of basic service (mean=1.033). The effect of corruption on the poor can be gauged through increasing the cost of public services and lowering their quality and often all together restricting poor people's access to basic essential services.

Table 7: Regression result on perceived effect of corrupt practices on fisheries livelihood

Variable	Variable name	Regression coefficient	P-value
X1	Reduced access to quality health care	0.091	0.926*
X2	Reduced access to quality education	0.099	1.003*
X3	Lowered basic livelihood outcome	0.009	0.100*
X4	Deliberate obstruction of access to information	0.179	1.742*
X5	Diverted resources and holding back development	0.213	2.264*
X6	Increased cost of basic services	0.181	1.747*

*=Significant at 5% level of confidence; R-square=0.160; F-value=3.580

Table 7 shows regression analysis on the effect of corrupt practices in fisheries on fisherfolk livelihood activities. From the result, reduced access to quality health care, reduced access to quality education, lowered basic livelihood outcome, deliberate obstruction of access to information, diverted resources and holding back development and increased cost of basic services have significant influence on fisherfolk fisheries livelihood. It implies that fisherfolk bear the consequences of negative influence of corrupt practices in government circle.

Conclusion and Recommendations: The study indicated that fisherfolk are of the view that corruption occurs at three levels; government agencies, individual and traditional institutions. Also, the fisherfolk are of the view that corruption has significant negative effect in livelihood outcome, human and physical capital development.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- There is need for development program to put adequate structure in place to check mate fisheries workers and other stakeholders on negative effect of corrupt practices
- Fisherfolk must be carried along in the planning and execution of any development program for the purpose of transparency and accountability.
- Fisherfolk should be linked with means of reporting corrupt practices in fisheries to the appropriate agencies.

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