

A Gender Lens into Citizens' Lived Experiences of Corrupt Behaviour

Antonia Taiye Simbine¹, Temitayo Adeyemo², Adebukola Yewande Daramola³, Sebil Olalekan Oshota¹ and Segun Subair Awode¹

¹Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), Nigeria

²University of Ibadan, Nigeria

³Corresponding Author, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research (NISER), Nigeria

Abstract

This paper reports on the lived experiences of males and females in their bid to access some form of service from a public sector official in Nigeria. The research design is based on phenomenology, while the methodology used for story collection was the SenseMaker® methodology. This methodology allows respondents to 'signify' their position within a response space, following their narration on a lived experience. Stories were harvested from 2,560 citizens across the country's six geopolitical zones. The findings show that the patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society and associated gender-based roles naturally exposes men to more experiences with public officials. This however does not preclude females from experiences of corrupt behaviour. We find that while men were largely solicited for bribes in monetary (Naira) terms, the currency being demanded of women was sex. The feelings provoked by these experiences for most males was anger, younger males felt disgust. More women reacted with feelings of sadness and fear. Males largely attributed corrupt behavior to individuals, with hedonistic and competitive tendencies; while females perceived corrupt behaviour as a *community-based phenomenon* motivated by the need for accommodation. The summary of lived experiences of males and females show that the decision to act corruptly is motivated by the individual, however there are enablers for corrupt behaviour at the level of systems and groups. Behaviour change approaches are thus required at the level of individuals, groups and systems to modulate behaviors towards acceptable modes required for nation building.

Keywords: Bribery; Females; Males; Nigeria; Sex