

## Family Background and Corrupt Practices in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

Toinpre C. Titus<sup>[a],\*</sup>; Nkereuwem Stephen Ekpenyong<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup>PhD. Department of Sociology, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

<sup>[b]</sup>PhD. Department of Sociology, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

\*Corresponding author.

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### Abstract

The study investigated family background and corruption nexus in selected Local Government Areas in Bayelsa state. The correlational design was adopted for the study. With Taro Yemane formula, the study sampled a total of (400=100%) respondents. Data for the study was gathered through structured questionnaires. However (203=50.75%) copies of questionnaires were retrieved from eight selected communities. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the research instrument. Both Probability (simple random, cluster) and non-probability (purposive, accidental) sampling techniques were adopted for sampling procedures. Data for the study were analyzed with univariate and multivariate statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. The study found that defaulting family background led to corrupt attitude among children during adulthood. Telling lies was the major corrupt attitude reported in the study. Parental irresponsibility led to sociopathic tendencies which influence corruption among others. Based on the findings, the study recommends family restricting, national juvenile re-orientation, monitoring of unwanted pregnancies, enforcing of swift punishment on individuals found guilty of corruption among others.

**Key words:** Corruption; Family; Background; Sociopathic

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### INTRODUCTION

Corruption is a spoke in the wheel of sustainable development. It is a major threat in realizing the millennium developmental goals (MDGs) in developing countries. Nigeria, the giant of Africa is not immune to corrupt practices. The menace of corruption leads to slow movement of files in offices, police extortion at tollgates and slow traffics on the highway, port congestion, queues at passport offices and gas stations, ghost workers syndrome, election irregularities, among others. Thus, it believed by many in the society that corruption is the bane of Nigeria.

Corruption hinders good governance, democratic dividends, human rights, security and government's ability to provide basic amenities. Corruption causes inequality and wide-spread poverty by diverting public funds into the pockets of a few individuals. It creates waves of economic, social and political unrest. It hinders poverty alleviation initiatives, foreign investment and development aids in-flow. It reduces public revenue and increases public spending, contributes to fiscal deficits and destabilizes sound fiscal, monetary and economic policies. Corruption is a phenomenon whose adverse social and economic effects can be wide ranging (Mauro 1995, Tanzi & Davoodi 1998). It is against this background that the study seeks to investigate the impact of family structure on proliferating corrupt practices like bribery, fraud, embezzlement, favoritism just to mention a few.

### 1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to Ibaba (2017), perverted values within the family structure can lead to the proliferation of corruption which a reflection of anti-social behaviour. He further argued that it is a pervasive pattern for, and violation of the right of others. Thus, individuals who are product of defaulting family structure are susceptible to sociopathic tendencies. Sociopathic personality begins in childhood

or early adolescent and transcends adulthood. Parental irresponsibility is the major cause of such personality disorder. Ibaba (2017), described children raised from such family as “orphans with living parents” due to parental irresponsibility. Hence, in an attempt to satisfy “self” at the expense of societal interest, sociopaths indulge in corrupt practices not limited to bribery, embezzlement, pilferage, nepotism just to mention a few. For instance, if a sociopath is given any ministerial appointment, he/she envisage it as “this is my time” (Ibaba, 2017). Those with anti – social personality disorder tends to lie, break law, act impulsively, lack regard for their safety and that of others and engage in widescale corruption. Therefore, the gale of anti-social acts exhibited by sociopaths make it imperative to investigate family background and corruption nexus in Nigeria with reference to some selected communities in Bayelsa state.

### 1.1 Study Objectives

- To find out if family indiscipline lead to corruption;
- To know if early childhood experiences lead to corruption;
- To identify the regulatory mechanism of family structure towards corruption;
- To discover the nature of corruption mostly practiced.

### 1.2 Study Hypotheses

Ha1: There is an association between socio demographic characteristics of family and corruption.

Ha2: There is an association between family indiscipline and corruption.

### 1.3 Conceptual Clarification

- **Sociopathic:** It is an anti-social personality disorder (ASPD). This refers to prohibitive attitudes that are developed during childhood but transcends adulthood. It is mostly exhibited by children from irresponsible parents or home with self-interest cheating society.

- **Family:** This refers to group of individuals who share common ties or are related by blood.

- **Corruption:** These refers to the manifestation of sociopathic tendencies which are not limited to bribery, embezzlement, pilferage, nepotism and etcetera.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The correlational design was adopted for the study. It was used to measure the correlational effect of family structure on corruption. The study population comprise both sexes. According to National Bureau of Statistics (2018), the total population of Bayelsa is put at 2, 277,961. However, with the application of Toro Yamen statistics, the sample size for the study is put at (399.9≈ 400). Also, multi stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. Firstly, the cluster sampling technique was used to cluster

Bayelsa State into eight (8) Local Government Areas. This was done in order to envisage the sociodemographic characteristics of family structures across the entire study population. Secondly, the simple random sampling technique was used to select four (4) Local Government Areas from the eight(8) LGAs in cluster. This was done by balloting system, particularly by coding only four out the eight sheet of folded papers and placing it inside a basket. Eight (8) respondents drawn from the eight (8) Local Government Areas in cluster where asked to pick randomly. This was done in order to create equal and independent chance for respondents from the eight Local Government Areas to participate in the study. This was done without replacement. Consequently, Yenagoa, Southern-Ijaw, Nembe and Sagbama LGAs were selected for the study. Thirdly, purposively sampling technique was used to select only two (2) communities from the four (4) LGAs. In Yenagoa= Akenfa, Swali were selected, for Southern-Ijaw= Amassoma and Oporoma where selected, in Nembe= Ogbolomabiri and Basambiri where selected while in Sagbama= Sagbama and Ogobiri were selected respectively. Fourthly, the accidental sampling technique was used to select respondents who where meet by chance. This method was adopted because the Covid-19 protocol prohibits the assemblage of respondents.

A close ended questionnaire was used in gathering information relating to the study objectives. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the research instrument. Data collected were analyzed with quantitative tools. Univariate (mean, standard deviation, simple percentage) was used to analyze the study objectives. Bar-chart was used for analyzing the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Multivariate statistics (Multinomial Logistic Regression) was used to test the study hypotheses with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0.

## 3. RESULTS

**The Table 1** shows that a total of four hundred (400=100%) copies of questionnaire where distributed to the access population. Of this lot, only two hundred and three (203=50.75%) copies of questionnaire where retrieved while one hundred and ninety-seven (197=49.25%) copies of questionnaire where not retrieved. Thus, analysis will be based on (203=50.75%) copies questionnaire that were retrieved.

**Table 1**  
**Analysis Response Rate**

Close ended questionnaire	F	P
Copies of Questionnaire Distributed	400	100.0
Copies of Questionnaire Retrieved	<b>203</b>	<b>50.75</b>
Copies of Questionnaire not Retrieved	197	49.25

Source: Field Work

**Table 2**  
**Socio-demographic profile of respondents**

Variables	F=203	P=100.0	
<b>Age:</b>			
Male	97	47.8	
Female	106	52.2	
<b>Age:</b>			
18-25	32	15.8	
26-32	27	13.3	
33-39	104	51.2	
40>	40	19.7	
<b>Education:</b>			
No formal education	52	25.6	
Primary	53	26.1	
Secondary	70	34.5	
Tertiary	22	10.8	
Others	6	3.0	
<b>Language:</b>			
Ijaw	143	70.4	
English	45	22.2	
Others	15	7.4	
<b>LGAs:</b>			
<b>Communities:</b>			
Yenagoa=87(42.86)	Akenfa	58	28.6
	Swali	29	14.3
Southern-Ijaw=48(23.65)	Amassoma	34	16.7
	Oporoma	14	6.9
	Ogbolomabiri	16	7.9
Nembe=51(25.12)	Basambiri	35	17.2
	Basambiri	10	4.9
Sagbama=17(8.37)	Sagbama	17	8.3
	Ogobiri		

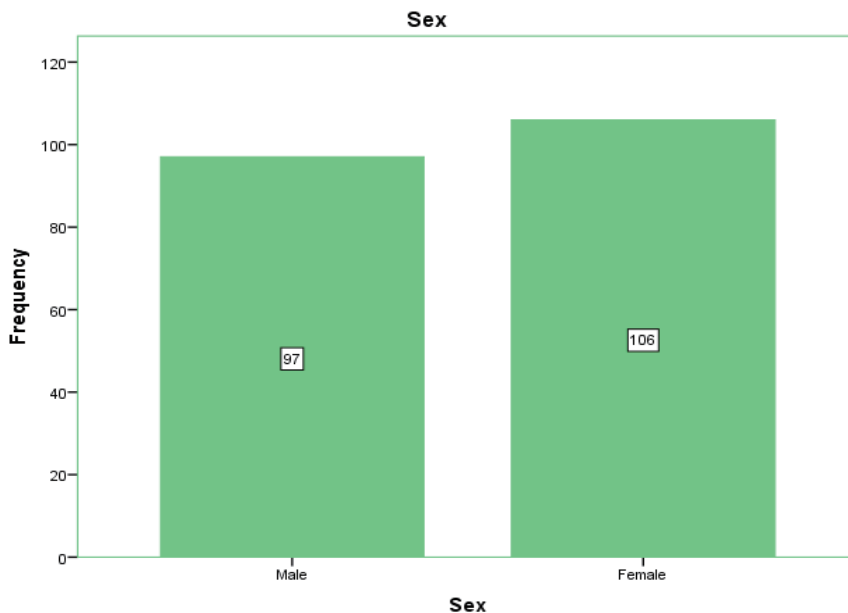
To be continued

Continued

Variables	F=203	P=100.0
<b>Occupation:</b>		
Unemployed	29	14.3
Farming/Fishing/Hunting	151	74.4
Trade	3	1.5
Civil Servant	13	6.4
Others	7	3.4
<b>Religion:</b>		
Christianity	193	95.1
Islam	5	2.5
African Traditional Religion	5	2.5
<b>Estimated Income Per-month:</b>		
5,000-20,000	43	21.2
21,000-35,000	19	9.4
36,000-50,000	11	5.4
51,000>	6	3.0
No regular pattern of income	124	61.1

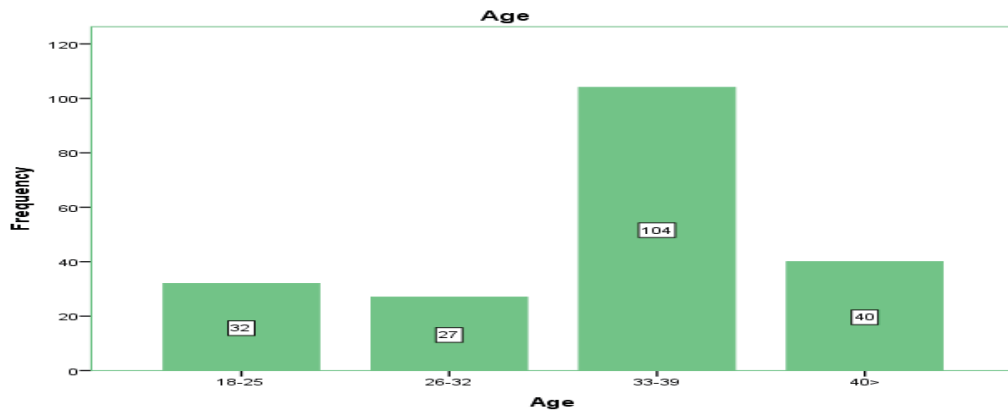
Source: Field Work

**Table 2** above shows the socio demographic characteristics of respondents. According to table 2, 97(47.8%) of respondents are male while 106(52.2%) of respondents are female. Agreeably, female respondents represent the overwhelming majority in the study. **The bar chart below attest to this fact:**



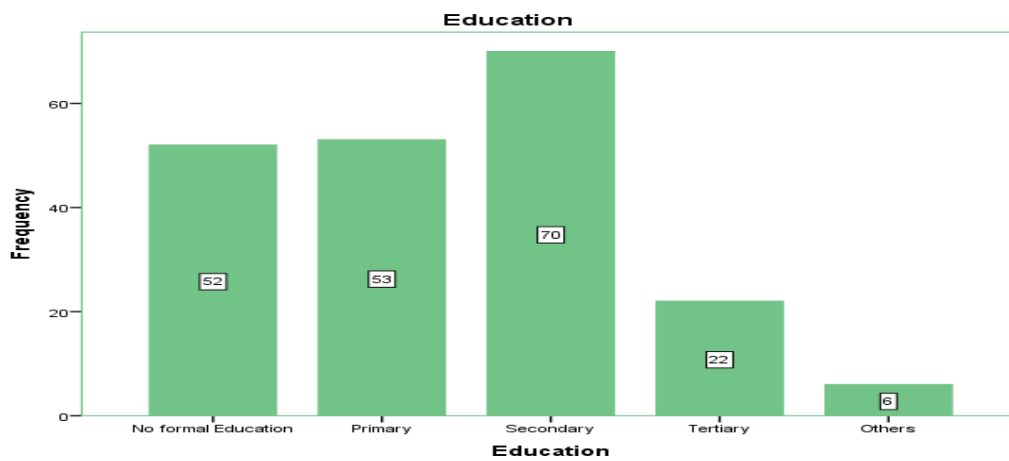
Also, the next variable in **Table 2**, shows the age of respondents. Analysis shows that 32(15.8%) of respondents fell within the age bracket of 18-25 years, 27(13.3%) of respondents fell within the age limit of 26-

32 years, 104(51.2%) of respondents fell within the age limit of 33-39 years while 40(19.7%) of respondents are 40 years and above (>). **Also, the bar chart below shows these details at a glance:**



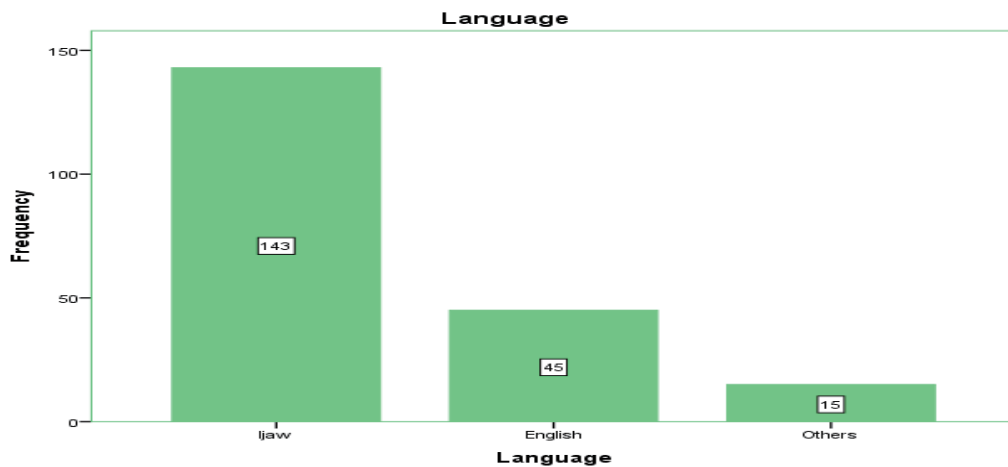
Again, the next variable in **Table 2**, shows the educational qualification of respondents. A breakdown of the analysis shows that 52(25.6%) of respondents had no formal education, 53(26.1%) of respondents had primary qualification, 70(34.5%) of the study population attended

secondary school, 22(10.8%) of respondents had tertiary qualification while only 6(3.0%) of respondents had other qualifications. Based on this result, it is clear that majority (70=34.5%) of respondents attended secondary school. **The bar chart below shows more details:**



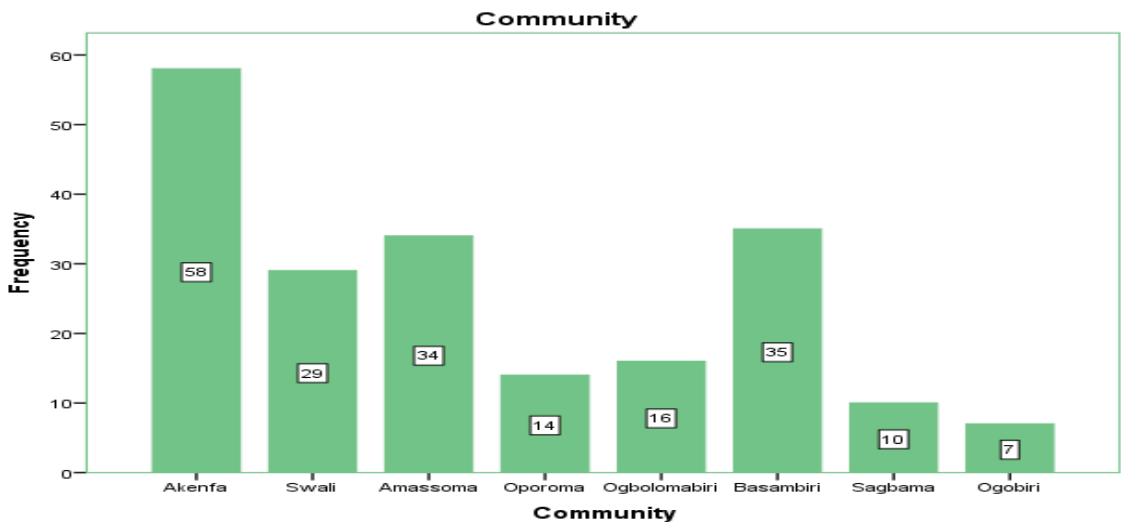
**Table 2** shows the language of respondents. According to the table, 143(70.4%) of respondents spoke Ijaw, 45(22.2%) of respondents spoke English while 15(7.4%)

of respondents spoke other language(s). Thus, it is evident that majority (143=70.4%) of respondents spoke Ijaw. **The bar chart below reveals more information:**



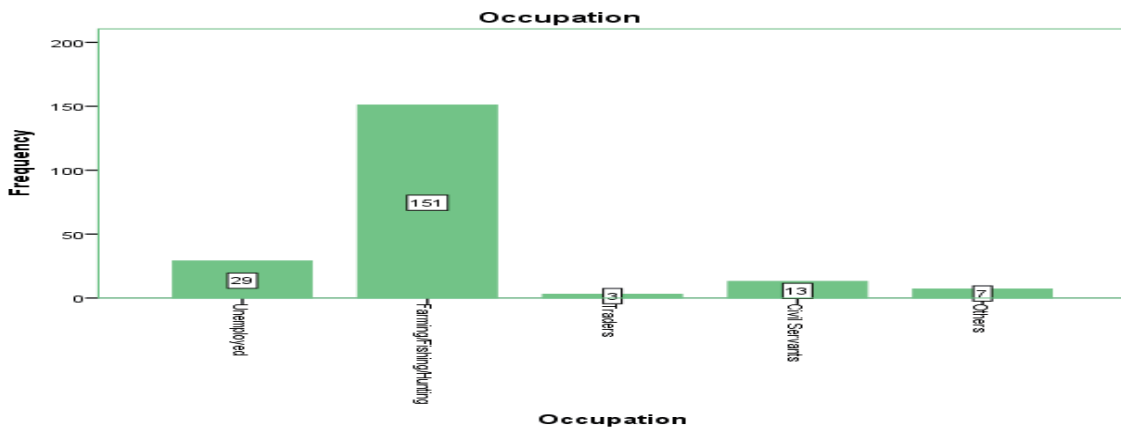
Furthermore, **Table 2** shows the Local Government Areas of respondents. Analysis revealed that 87(42.86%) of respondents were located at Yenagoa, 48(23.65%) of respondents resided at Southern-Ijaw, 51(25.12%)

of respondents resided at Nembe while a least score of 17(8.37%) of respondents were located at Sagbama respectively. **The bar chart below shows the breakdown of the analysis on the basis of communities:**



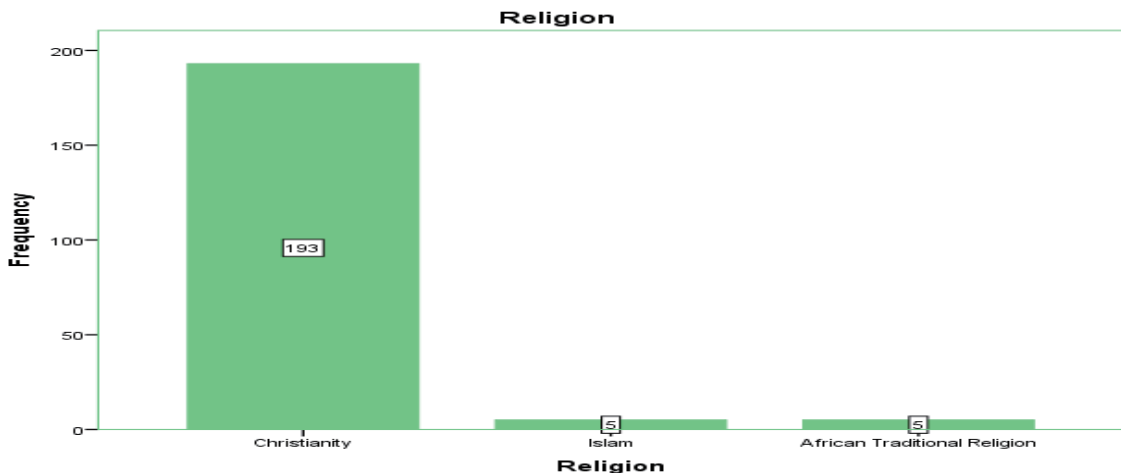
The next variable in **Table 2**, reveals the occupation of respondents. According to the table, 29(14.3%) of respondents are unemployed, 151(74.4%) of respondents engaged in fishing/farming/hunting, 3(1.5%) of respondents engaged in trade while 13(6.4%)

of respondents are civil servants. Also, 7(3.4%) of respondents engaged in other occupation(s) during the period of the study. Therefore, it is agreeable that majority 151(74.4%) of respondents engaged in fishing/farming/hunting occupation(s). **The bar chart below provides more details:**



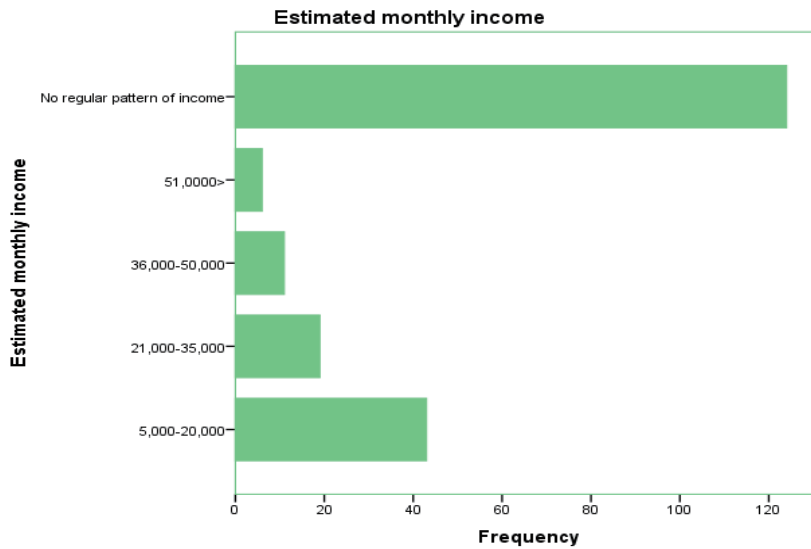
**Table 2** shows the religious profile of respondents. According to table 2, majority 193(95.1%) of respondents are Christians, 5(2.5%) of respondents are Muslims

while 5(2.5%) of respondents are African Traditional Worshippers. The bar chart below shows the details at a glance:



Finally, the next variable in **Table 2**, shows the estimated monthly income of respondents. According to the result, 43(21.2%) of respondents earned #5,000-#20,000 on monthly basis, 19(9.4%) of respondents earned #21,000-#35,000 as estimated monthly income.

Also, 11(5.4%) of respondents earned #36,000-#50,000 as monthly income, 6(3.0%) of respondents earned #51,000 and above (>) while majority (124=61.1%) of respondents had no regular pattern of monthly income. **The bar chart below corroborates these findings:**



**Table 3**  
**Family indiscipline and corruption**

S/N	Questions	Variable	F=203	Mean	SD	R. Decision
1	Do you punish your child for wrong doing	Yes No Sum	186(91.6) * 17(8.4) 203(100.0)	1.0837	0.27769	Affirmative
2	How often do you punish your child for wrong doing	None of the time A little of the time Some of the time Most of the time All of the time Sum	36(17.7) 55(27.1) 57(28.1) * 22(10.8) 33(16.3) 203(100.0)	2.8079	1.30784	Rarely
3	How worried are you about child wrong doing	Not worried Not too worried Somewhat worried Very worried Never been worried Sum	90(44.3) * 45(22.2) 32(15.8) 17(8.4) 19(9.4) 203(100.0)	2.1626	1.32687	Not worried
4	How do you punish your child for wrong doing	Flogging Word of mouth Difficult task Food deprivation Not at all Sum	44(21.7) 84(41.4) * 24(11.8) 34(16.7) 17(8.4) 203(100.0)	2.4877	1.23625	Word of mouth

Source: Field Work

**Table 3** shows family indiscipline and corruption. Specifically, the study revealed an affirmative score of 186(91.6%) for parents who punish their children for wrong doing. Also, majority (57=28.1%) of respondents affirmed that they punish their children some of the time. In the same vein, an overwhelming majority (90=44.3%) of respondents indicated that they were not worried

about their child wrong doing. This corroborates with Ibaba (2017), who posit that sociopathic personality develop in children due to parental irresponsibility. Lastly, high score of (84=41.4%) shows that respondents preferred punishing their children with word of mouth. A situation that might lead to sociopathic personality due to lack stringent disciplinary techniques.

**Table 4**  
**Childhood experience and corruption**

S/N	Questions	Variable	F=203	Mean	SD	R. Decision
1	Have you exhibited any childhood experience as an adult	Yes	160(78.8) *	1.2118	0.40961	Affirmative
		No	43(21.2)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			
2	How often do you exhibit such childhood attitude	None of the time	14(6.9)	3.7537	1.08016	Regularly
		A little of the time	11(5.4)			
		Some of the time	32(15.8)			
		Most of the time	100(49.3) *			
		All of the time	46(22.7)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			
3	At times, you exhibit childhood attitude unknowingly	Strongly Agree	97(47.8) *	4.1330	1.08867	Affirmative
		Agree	66(32.5)			
		Undecided	18(8.9)			
		Disagree	14(6.9)			
		Strongly Disagree	8(3.9)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			
4	How often do you indulge in corrupt attitude?	None of the time	6(3.0)	3.5123	0.86379	Often
		A little of the time	3(1.5)			
		Some of the time	104(51.2) *			
		Most of the time	61(30.0)			
		All of the time	29(14.3)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			
5	What corrupt attitude do you exhibit	Bribery	3(1.5)	4.0640	0.59772	Corruption
		Embezzlement	3(1.5)			
		Nepotism/Favoritism	3(1.5)			
		Telling lies	163(80.3) *			
		Others	31(15.3)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			

Source: Field Work

**Table 4** shows childhood experience and corruption. However, analysis shows an overwhelming majority (160=78.8%) affirmative response for respondents who exhibited childhood experience in adulthood. This corroborates with Freud (n.d.) assertion that early childhood experiences may impair adult personality. In the same vein, majority (100=49.3%) of respondents affirmed that they exhibit childhood experiences most of the time. In this wise, majority (97=47.8%)

of respondents strongly agreed that such childhood experiences are exhibited unknowingly. On the basis of corruption, majority (104=51.2%) of respondents affirmed that it occurred some of the time. Attempt to find out the nature of corruption exhibited, majority (163=80.3%) of respondents indicated that they told lies. This further affirms that family structure could serve as catalyst for corruption in adulthood with sociopathic inclinations.

**Table 5**  
**Family control and corruption**

S/N	Questions	Variable	F=203	Mean	SD	R. Decision
1	How sure you about the source of your child income?	Very sure	27(13.3)	2.7143	1.28862	Not sure
		Sure	30(14.8)			
		Somewhat sure	40(19.7)			
		Not sure	70(34.5) *			
		Not very sure	36(17.7)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			
2	How often do react to your child corrupt attitude?	None of the time	52(25.6)	3.0148	1.43671	Regularly
		A little of the time	26(12.8)			
		Some of the time	17(8.4)			
		Most of the time	83(40.9) *			
		All of the time	25(12.3)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			

To be continued

Continued

S/N	Questions	Variable	F=203	Mean	SD	R. Decision
3	When last did you advice your child on corrupt attitude?	None of the time	55(27.1)	2.4039	1.05041	Often
		A little of the time	36(17.7)			
		Some of the time	94(46.3) *			
		Most of the time	11(5.4)			
		All of the time	7(3.4)			
		Sum	203(100.0)			
4	Rate your child level of discipline	Very High	27(13.3)	2.3448	1.30851	Low
		High	14(6.9)			
		Moderate	16(7.9)			
		Low	91(44.8) *			
		Very Low	55(27.1)			

Source: Field Work

**Table 5** shows family control and corruption. Analysis shows majority (70=34.5%) response for respondents who are not sure of their child source of income. Also, majority (83=40.9%) of respondents affirmed that they reacted “most of the time” to children corrupt attitude. In the same vein, majority (94=46.3%) of respondents indicated that they advised their children on corrupt attitude “some of the time”. Regrettably, an overwhelming majority of

(91=44.8%) indicated low level of indiscipline among children. Family structure of this nature will breed children Ibaba (2017) described as “orphans with living parents”. He further asserts that such if child ascends into position of authority in adulthood, he/she will envisage it as “this is my time”. It is this self-interest that serve as catalyst for corruption among public office holders in Nigeria.

**Table 6**  
**Family Structure and Corruption Type**

Questions	Variable	F=203	Mean	SD	R. Decision
How of often do your child indulge in corrupt attitude	None of the time	38(18.7)	3.4236	1.59759	Regularly
	A little of the time	37(18.2)			
	Some of the time	11(5.4)			
	Most of the time	35(17.2)			
	All of the time	82(40.4) *			
	Sum	203(100.0)			
What type of anti-social act are you conversant with?	Bribery	3(1.5)	3.6798	0.66819	Corruption
	Embezzlement	12(5.9)			
	Stealing	34(16.7)			
	Telling lies	152(74.9) *			
	Nepotism/Favoritism	2(1.0)			
	Sum	203(100.0)			
A child learns how to tell lies from the family	Strongly Agree	66(32.5)	3.7833	1.29060	Affirmative
	Agree	88(43.3) *			
	Undecided	12(5.9)			
	Disagree	13(6.4)			
	Strongly Disagree	24(11.8)			
	Sum	203(100.0)			
A child with good home training may likely not engage in bribery in adulthood	Strongly Agree	102(50.2) *	4.3251	0.87468	Affirmative
	Agree	79(38.9)			
	Undecided	13(6.4)			
	Disagree	4(2.0)			
	Strongly Disagree	5(2.5)			
	Sum	203(100.0)			

Source: Field Work



**Table 6** shows family structure and corruption type. Thus, analysis shows that majority (82=40.4%) of respondents indicated that children indulge in corrupt attitude all of the time. Also, majority (152=74.9%) of respondents indicated that telling of lies was the major corrupt attitude they were conversant with in their homes.

**4.1 Testing Hypotheses**

**H01: There is no association between socio demographic characteristics and corruption.**

**Table 7 Likelihood Ratio Tests**

Effect	Model fitting criteria		Likelihood ratio tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.	
Sex	188.419b	15.488	4	.004	
Age	44939.700b	44766.769	12	.000	
Language	173.349b	0.418	8	1.000	
Community	173.844b	0.913	28	1.000	
Occupation	175.268b	2.337	16	1.000	
Religion	18787.873b	18614.942	8	.000	
Estimated Monthly Income	291.144b	118.213	16	.000	

Source: Field Work

In Table 7, the socio-demographic characteristics was tested with the chi-square, when this was done, the sex status of respondents has a chi-square level of 15.488 at 4 degree of freedom with a P value of **0.0004**. Therefore, sex is statistically significant to corruption, based on this; we reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the sex of respondents and corruption. Further investigation on the age of respondents, revealed a chi square value of 44766.769 at 12 degree of freedom with a P value of **0.000**. This indicates that age is statistically significant to corruption, based on this criterion; we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate which states that there is a relationship between the age of respondents and corruption. This is followed by language which has a chi-square value of 0.418 at 8 degrees of freedom and a P value of 1.000. Thus, language is not statistically significant; we therefore accept the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between the language of respondents and corruption. Also, result for community shows a chi-square value of 0.913 at 28 degrees of freedom and a P value of 1.000. Thus, it implies that community is not statistically significant with corruption. In the same vein, analysis for occupation shows a chi-square value of 2.337 at 16 degree of freedom and a P value of 1.000. This also means that occupation of respondents is not statistically significant with corruption. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. However, analysis for religion shows a chi square value of 18614.942 at 8 degrees of freedom and a P value of **0.000**. This implies that there is a relationship between religion and corruption. Lastly, analysis for

In the same vein, majority (88=43.3%) of respondents agreed that children learn how to tell lies from the home. Hence, majority (102=50.2%) of respondents strongly agreed that a child with good home training may not engage in bribery in adulthood.

respondents estimated level of income shows a chi square of 118.213 at 16 degrees of freedom and a P value of **0.000**. This shows that estimated monthly income of respondents is statistically significant to corruption. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

**H02: There is no association between family indiscipline and corruption.**

**Table 8 Likelihood Ratio Tests**

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria		Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.	
Family indiscipline	225.860	209.651	16	.000	

Source: Field Work

In Table 8, family indiscipline and corruption was tested with chi square, when this was done, analysis shows a chi-square level of 209.651 at 16 degree of freedom with a P value of 0.000. This indicates that family indiscipline is statistically significant to corruption, based on this criterion; we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate which states that there is a relationship between family indiscipline and corruption.

**5. FINDINGS**

The study affirmed that defaulting family structure will likely breed corrupt attitude among children during adulthood. This corroborates Ibaba (2017), who posits that parental irresponsibility can lead to the sociopathic tendencies among children during adulthood. Also, the

study discovered that children learnt how to tell lies from the family. This bore semblance with Agbese, (2010), who reported that the Nigerian family structure reflects the general mood in the country. These are major catalyst to varying degrees of corruption experienced in recent time. The study also revealed that sociopaths are children who engage in corrupt attitude due to family indiscipline.

### 5.1 CONCLUSION

The study concluded that family indiscipline led to sociopathic tendencies among adults who lack basic moral training. To this end, corruption is therefore a manifestation of personality dysfunction due to parental irresponsibility. Early childhood experience influences either positively or negatively the attitude of public office holders.

### 5.2 Recommendations

There is need for national juvenile re-orientation by government. The family institution needs urgent restructuring. There is need to inculcate basic discipline on children. This is because studies have shown that early childhood experience are carried to adulthood. The culture of unwanted pregnancy must be closely monitored by government. In order to slow the tide teenage parenting and corruption. Nigerian parents should regulate the childhood experiences of their children. They should encourage their children to be hard working and honest. Punishment should be swiftly administered on any one found guilty of corruption. This will serve as deterrent to any one who intends to indulge in corruption.

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