AN EXPLORATION OF EMERGING CORRUPT PRACTICES AMONG TEXTILE DEALERS IN EGBEDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
Rural dwellers as textile consumers are prone to the pandemic corrupt practices of dealers involved in textile manufacturing and merchandising. The need to ensure that consumers get value for money spent on textile materials led to this study. The study investigated the corrupt practices among textile dealers in rural areas of Oyo State. Structured interview schedule was used to elicit information from 216 consumers in Kukumoda village, in Oyo State using purposive sampling technique. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics. The results revealed that the respondents had a mean age of 35.5 years, 66.6% were females and 70.3% were married. Educational level of respondents shows that majority were non-literate. Analysis of the corrupt practices of textile dealers shows that all (100%) of the respondents had experienced colour bleeding, sub- standard and counterfeit textiles materials (100%). Other major corrupt practices were: wrong branding and labelling (97.3%), measurement cheat (85.1%), exchange of textiles for low quality after payment (77.8%) while 52.5% had suffered from used imported textiles not subjected to health check. Consequences of corrupt practices of textile dealers include: frequent replacement of textiles and loss of confidence in locally made textiles among others. This shows that consumers in the study area made choices in the consumption of textiles based on false claims by dealers. There is an urgent need for legislation to provide consumers with more reliable and comprehensive information about the content and the composition of the textile materials. Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) should be empowered to penalize erring manufacturers.
Keywords: Rural dwellers, textiles, consumers, corrupt practices, dealers.

INTRODUCTION

Textile is an indispensable material widely used in every society for different purposes primarily for covering one's nakedness. Fibre according to Jeffreys (2006) which is the major raw material used in the production of textiles undergoes series of processes such as carding, spinning, twisting, weaving and sometimes, dyeing to produce textiles. Until recently, textiles were basically produced from cotton. However, recent development shifted attention from cotton to synthetic-based clothing and this has left textile consumers with little or no information about textile materials (Damalie 2009). At every stage of textile production, dealers could engage in unethical behaviour which is a precursor to fraud. The experience of consumers in recent times in the consumption of textiles could be described as terrible and one that could endanger the safety of human life (Okunola, Lawal and Kehinde, 2014).

Corruption in textiles production and merchandising arises from the failure of manufacturers and retailers to adhere to the expected code of business conduct or specifications established by various nations across the world (Otaru, 2012). Burns *et al* (1997) states that several countries, including the US and the UK, are committed to rolling out enforcement programmes, with increasingly stringent standards as well as stiff penalties that would send shock waves to clothing manufacturers as well as retailers; however, the story appears to be different in Nigeria. Corruption among textile dealers is a specific form of misconduct engaged in by textile dealers to obtain financial benefits in textile manufacturing and distribution instead of consumers obtaining value for money as far as textile purchases are concerned (Jeffreys 2006).

Robust evidence as declared by (NAFDAC, 2008) showed that many consumers of the above mentioned essential material have been noted to have experienced varying degree of cheating, hurts, and short changing in the hands of numerous corrupt textile dealers. These false claims of the manufacturers and sellers appear to have led consumers into perplexity as far as purchases are concerned (Bello-Imam 2005). Generally, textile consumers make choices based on the false claims of manufacturers and sellers. As consumers become less tolerant of false claims of the manufacturers, efforts must be geared towards identifying these corrupt practices as well as curbing same in the textile sector. Dearth of empirical research on the corrupt practices of textile dealer necessitated the study. This study therefore came to being as a response to this with objectives of cross-examining the experiences of the victims of this incongruity through the dimension that the fraudulent practices is taking, corrupt practice experience of consumers in the consumption of textile materials, and the consequences of these deceptive acts on the consumers and the country at large.

Therefore, the study explores the sharp practices of textile dealers as identified by textile consumers in Kukumoda village in Oyo State so as to guarantee and help consumers to make informed buying.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Kukumoda village, Egbeda Local Government Area, Ibadan in Oyo State. The residents of the Local Government Area are Yoruba and other tribes from various parts of the country. The people are of Christianity, Islamic and traditional religious background and are predominantly farmers, civil servants and traders. Part of the Local Government assumes urban status as it seats around Ibadan International Airport. The selection of the village was based on the socio-economic status of the people and their accessibility to major textile markets in the city. To evaluate false claims of the textile dealers as experienced by the consumers and consequences of such practice, structured interview schedule was used to elicit information from two hundred and sixteen purposively selected respondents. Respondents whose garments were adjudged B-grade garments and textiles with print failure were selected at different locations in the village as this would offer a better statistical and geographical coverage of corrupt experience of rural dwellers as far as textile consumption is concerned.

Information such as age, sex marital status, occupation of respondents, types of textiles consumers consume, whether or not sharp practices take place in the textile sector, corrupt practices respondents experienced and consequences of such act on the consumers and country at large were collected from respondents. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequencies and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data in Table 1 show personal characteristics of respondents. Respondents' ages ranged between below 30 and above 40 years with a mean of 35.5years and standard deviation 7.1607. In addition, 62.5% of respondents were between 31 and 35 years and females 66.7%. Marital status revealed that 70.3% were married, 34.7% had no formal education but 19.0% had completed tertiary education. Also, 19.9% of respondents were students, Farming (27.8%), petty trading (33.3%) and civil service (19.0%). Findings revealed that more than have of the respondents were youth with females constituting majority of the study population. A plausible explanation could be that women take care of domestic matters in the house in which buying of clothes is not excluded. In addition, the consumers cut across educated and non-educated although educated constituted a slightly higher percentage compared to the non-educated ones as having education would hone respondents' knowledge of fabric identification.

Table 1: Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Socioeconomic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age (yrs)		
< 30	19	8.8
31 - 35	135	62.5
36 - 40	25	11.6
>40	37	17.1
	Mean=35.5	SD= 7.1067
Sex		
Male	72	33.3
Female	144	66.7
Marital Status		
Single	64	29.6
Married	152	70.3
Educational level		
None	75	34.7
Primary	41	19.0
Secondary	59	27.3
Tertiary	41	19.0
Occupation		
Schooling	43	19.9
Farming	60	27.8
Petty Trading	72	33.3
Civil service	41	19.0

Source: Field survey, 2014

Data in Table 2 show pattern of fraudulent practices of textile dealers as identified by the consumers. From the table, all (100%) of the respondents attested that textile dealers use low quality dye for printing textiles which crocks or bleeds easily, false guaranteeing, mislabelling and branding (93.9%), wilful importation of substandard quality textiles that did not conform to specifications (100%) and 99.1% textiles not subjected to health check. In addition, 88.9% of respondents declared that sellers altered their measuring tapes from 36 inches to 35 inches, 79.2% reported wilful measurement cheating of the amount of fabric measured and all the respondents indicated that textile dealers exchanged textiles for low quality materials after payment. Findings revealed that textile dealers engaged in various corrupt practices to deceive the consumers and this has given rise to the tradition of mutual suspicion among the consumers and sellers in terms of the sincerity in correctness of measuring tools being used (Odo, 2015). The attendant result of this is gradual destruction of loyalty, which in the long run will impact negatively on the developmental process of the country if allowed to continue unrestrained and increased health problems from unclean imported used clothing.

Table 2: Corrupt practice of textile dealers identified by respondents

Corrupt Practices	Frequency	Percentage
Use of low quality	216	100

Corrupt Practices	Frequency	Percentage
Paint for printing		
False guaranteeing, mislabelling and branding	203	93.9
Importation of sub standard textiles	216	100
Importation of used clothing not subjected to health checks	214	99.1
Alteration of measuring tool	192	88.9
Measurement cheat	171	79.2
Exchange of material for low quality after payment	216	100
Clothing purchased		
Ankara	216	100
Tie-dye/batik	139	64.4
Used imported clothing	119	55.1
Cut and sew materials	211	97.7

Source: Field survey, 2014

Corrupt practices as experienced by consumers are presented in Table 3. From the Table all (100%) of the respondents had experienced colour crocking/bleeding, 100% sub standard and counterfeit textiles materials, 97.2% had bought falsely guaranteed and mislabelled textiles while 85.2% had suffered measurement cheat In addition, 77.8% had experienced exchange of textiles for low quality material after payment and 52.8% had chosen textiles that were not subjected to health check. Among the consumers, the range of textiles mostly purchased include *Ankara* (100%), *tie dye/batik-adire* (64.4%), Used imported clothing (55.1%) and (97.7%) cut and sew. However, *ankara, adire* and cut and sew materials constituted the most cited textiles where the consumers reported experiences of fraudulent of practice. Overall, findings revealed the existence of fraudulent practices in the production and selling of textiles and since clothing is a basic need of humans, consumers purchased textiles inspite of the sharp practices of textile dealers in the study area as covering of one's nakedness is a necessity.

Table 3: Corrupt Practice Experience of Respondents

Corrupt experience	Frequency	Percentage
Colour crocking/bleeding	216	100
Sub- standard quality textiles	216	100
False guaranteeing and	210	97.3
Mislabelling		
Measurement cheat	184	85.2
Exchange of material for low quality after payment	168	77.8
Hazard from imported used clothing	114	52.8

Source: Field survey, 2014

Results in Table 4 show the consequences of the fraudulent practices of textile dealers both on the consumers and the country at large as identified by the consumers. From the Table, all (100%) of the respondents had frequently replaced textiles at short intervals and had led to waste of money. Also, 100% of the respondents had met with disappointment in the choice of textiles made, 91.7% had suffered health hazards arising from the importation of unclean used clothing and 99.1% had lost interest in made in Nigeria textiles. In addition, 96.8% of respondents stated that fraudulent practices of textiles dealers could led to reduction in export earnings which could portend danger for the country. These fraudulent practices have led to a loss of interest in textiles made in Nigeria by the international community and drastic reduction in the export earnings of the country and had increased the consumption of used imported textiles which has increased health problems of consumers (Oyinola, 2011).

Table 4: Consequences of the Corrupt Practices on the Consumers and the Country

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Frequent replacement of textiles	216	100
Waste of money	216	100
Loss of confidence/ Disappointment	216	100
High risk of health problems	198	91.7
Loss of interest in Nigerian textiles	214	99.1
Reduction in export earnings	209	96.8

Source: Field survey, 2014

CONCLUSION

Discovering sharp practices among textile dealers shows that corruption exists in every facet of human undertaking and not necessarily events that are peculiar to public sector and public officials. It is obvious that the absence of straightforward and effective political self-control to ensure that the menace of corruption is curtailed at the higher level in Nigeria has provided a fertile ground for the same to breed and manifest at the lower level as obtained in the textile sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to curb the prevailing corrupt practices in the textile sectors and to reinstate the consumer's confidence in the manufacturers and sellers of textile materials:

- Effective regulatory measures for ethical standard within the society should be established;
- All stakeholders should take practical steps towards the eradication of sharp practices being perpetrated in the textile sector;
- Manufacturers and sellers should be educated and enlightened to uphold good ethics so that product of these industries would rival their foreign counterparts for economic buoyancy of the country;
- There is need for stability of the economy in order to fight fraud in the society;
- Government should roll out stricter laws and legislations that would empower Standard Organization of Nigeria to enforce and mete out stiffer punishment to erring manufacturers or sellers in the textile sector.
- Subject used imported textiles to thorough health check to safeguard consumers' health.

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