Taboo words and Expression in Hausa: A Pragmatic Analysis

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Abstract
This paper examines the taboo words and expressions of the Hausa people that relate to food, animals, family relations, obscene words, abuse, sickness and disaster. The paper also examines other taboo expressions that relate to some actions that are avoided because the society has sanctioned their usage. Thus, taboo is any word or expression that if uttered in public causes embarrassment and feeling of shame or sense of shock, offense to the hearers sensibilities or beliefs. The aim of this paper therefore is to expose these taboo words and expressions and their effect among the Hausa people. The paper adopts Goffman’s (1967), Linguistic Politeness/Face Threatening Act by Brown and Levinson(1987), J.L Austin(1975), Searle J.R(1969) Speech Act Theories as its frame work. The finding shows that these taboo words and expressions of the Hausa people are mostly attached to their religion, belief and culture and their violation is synonymous with disobeying the Islamic jurisdiction while culturally they are avoided because they are tied to the belief of the people. The paper concludes that taboo is avoided for the fear that both accidental breach and intentional defiance are frowned at by the society hence, such violations would result to wide condemnation.

Introduction
Language is a means by which we make our intentions known. These intentions can be expressed pleasantly or unpleasantly. So for communication to take place, there are expressions that need not to be said in a particular way because they are tagged forbidden or unmentionable in every culture. In view of this, Wardhaugh (2010: 249) asserts that `certain things are not said, not because they cannot be, but because people don’t talk about those thing or if those things are talked about, they are talked about in very roundabout ways`. Therefore taboos are so much avoided because of the shame and embarrassment to both the speaker and the hearer. Thus, the use of taboo word or expression varies according to the context of situation, the speaker, the place where the word is uttered, the person spoken to and anyone who might overhear.

In Hausa society, taboo words and expressions are replaced by euphemism in order to avoid embarrassment by the speaker and the listener. Communication regarding marital issues, children and adult quarrels, family affairs and other sociological aspects of the Hausa people fall under this category.

Historical Background of Hausa Society
The Hausa are a diverse but culturally homogeneous people based primarily in the northern Nigeria and southern Niger, with significant numbers also living in part of Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Chad, Togo, Ghana, Sudan, Gabon and Senegal. Predominantly, Hausa-speaking communities are
scattered throughout West Africa, and on the traditional hajj route north and east traversing the Sahara Desert, with especially large population around and in the town of Agadez. Other Hausa also moved to large coastal cities in the region such as Lagos, Accra, Banjul and Cotonou, as well as parts of North Africa such as Libya over the course of the last 5,000 years. The Hausa language is the largest and best known member of Chadic subfamily of the Afro-Asiatic family of language. Hausa has borrowed freely from other languages, especially Arabic, and is adapting well to demands of contemporary cultural changes. It has become a common language for millions of non-Hausa West Africans. Also, sizable Hausa-speaking communities exist in each major city of west and North Africa as well as along the trans-Saharan trade and pilgrimage routes.

Historically, Hausa is primarily the name of a language rather than of a people by extension, it has come to be used to describe the majority of group of northern Nigerians, linked by a sense of unity based on a common language history customs. Ethnically, however there exists some heterogeneity within this group, and religion-wise there are a few Christian and animist Hausa as well as Muslim faithful. The present day Hausa people originate from the Hausa bakwai, the seven historical states of Kano, Kastina, Daura, Zazzau (Zaria), Biram, Gobir and Rano which form the nucleolus of the Kano north central, and north western state of Nigeria and of the contiguous portion of Niger republic Charles et al,(1994 , P.3).

Hausa is classified by Greenberg as a member of the Chadic group of the Afro-asiatic family of languages. It is therefore more closely related genetically to Arabic Hebrew, Berber and other members of Afro-asiatic family than most of the rest of the language of sub-Saharan Africa. However, the Hausa’s and the Hausa language are in the highest position in Africa and world at large. Investigation shows that the place of Hausa or Hausawa in the world is the northern Nigeria and the Republic of Niger, (Sa’idu et al 2014).

The Effect of Taboo
The effects of taboo as stated by Miller (2007: 46) can be very powerful, as it could even result to death, poverty, sickness, and other fearful things that can affect the life of the people. Wardhaugh (2010) adds that there are probably few things we refuse to talk about and still others we do not talk about directly” then we use circumlocution and euphemism in order to free ourselves from normal constraints. As Nadel (1954) in Wardhaugh (2010:251) puts it “when they employ metaphors otherwise manipulate expressions they are always fully aware of the semantic implication”.

Another effect is that each social group is different from every other in how it contains linguistic behaviour or the way they use language. This is true because young people use vulgar and taboo word more than the older people. Also, non-linguistic taboos such as murder and incest, etc are more punishable than linguistic taboo. Roughly, linguistic taboo can be severe but it is hardly likely to cost.
Socially, taboo affects the social life of the people because it deprived them from social activities getting marriage and having marital affairs, bearing children etc. The problems of evil spirit (jinn) are mostly the effects of violating some cultural and religious norms by the members of the Hausa society.

Psychologically, violation of non linguistic taboo affects individuals in the society more especially females. There are many girls or women that are in psychological trauma and depression caused by the evil spirit as a result of the violation of non-linguistic taboo. This is a popular belief among the Hausa that once a cultural belief or religion (Islam) rules are violated, an evil spirit could penetrate into someone and cause a lot of problems as well as some damage in one's physical appearance.

Taboo as a Linguistic Phenomena
Wardhough (2010: 249) asserts that there are two types of taboo; Linguistic and non linguistic taboo. The non linguistic taboo is when much action is needed and is more punishable than linguistic taboo. Some examples of non linguistic taboo include murder, incest and suicide etc while linguistic taboos are words that many people consider offensive or shocking, (Apte, 1994) is of the view that linguistic taboos are words that are avoided because they are deemed unfit for normal linguistic usage and by the community consensus, are banned in everyday language in the public domain. Taboo words are those words that are considered in bad taste by some people or that are better avoided because they mention realities that are stark or vulgar. He claimed further that they are words that refer to sex, religion, and necessities such as the act of emptying the bladder or bowels and so on. Apte (1994: 120) posits that linguistic taboos are grouped into four

- Swear or curse words which when uttered involved damnation, misfortune or disrespect of the targeted object or person.
- Obscene word referring to sexual organs and act.
- Four letter words which are only accepted in English with examples such as sent, fuck, shut and cock with four letters in their spellings.
- Dirty words that are referred to sexual organs, act and scatological substances (urine, faeces, menstruation, spittle).

Jay (2000: 78) categorises linguistic taboos into eight types some of which are:

- Taboo or obscene languages and expressions restricted from public use such as fuck and bitch.
- Blasphemy- the use of religious terminology to degrade God and religion institutions, icons and soon.
Profanity- the use of religious expressions and terminology in an unrespectable manner. The intention of the speaker is to denigrate God anything associated with religion but may rather express emotional reactions towards certain stimuli.

Insult and radical slurs- verbal attacks on other people by denoting the physical mental or psychological qualities of the victim e.g. coconut head for un-lutelhgel person, monkey for ugly person.

In their own view Akaman, Derma and Hanish, (2004) see taboo words as words that are to be avoided entirely or at least avoided in mixed company while Troik (2003) has pointed out that attitude towards language considered taboo in a speech community extremely strong and taboo violation may be sanctioned by imputation of immorality, illness or death.

Le (2006), expatiates that the degree of avoidance of taboo words in language are culture specific, such that what is tabooed in one society may be the norm in another, as taboo is based on the cultural values and beliefs of the linguistic community towards certain topic. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2011: 472) posit that taboo words are “undeleted expletives used to express emotion or attitude”. It is the obscene word of your language that is forbidden and downright dangerous to utter.

Bloor and Bloor (2007: 131) see taboos as words which are "socially proscribed and whose utterance give offence". They stress that offence varies according to the context of situation which includes the people involved and the place of utterance. “Notwithstanding ,this means a word or expressions are only regarded as taboo based on the people involved in the communication and the context of situation which includes the people involved and the place of utterances.

Palmer (2002: 92) averts that taboo is a “word associated with a socially distasteful subject. It become distasteful itself and another word, a euphemism takes its place”. He continues that the process is unending since it is essentially the object, and not the word that is unpleasant. However, words become taboo when the distasteful object is rejected to by the word in a different sense whether it is homonymous or polysemous. Kristin and Lobeck (2013: 194), assert that taboos are “words or expressions interpreted as insulting value or rule of a particular language”. They are words that are not acceptable or are forbidden in the society. All societies have their taboo words but it differs from one society to another depending on the value system accepted in a society. For example, in Hausa land, a woman does not eat the testicles of a ram because it will destroy her breast.

Hausa scholars and researchers looked at taboo in two phases: as a tradition that exists in every culture as well as a belief in the tradition of Hausa religion Bunza, (2006). Taboo in Hausa, is a principle implanted in the minds of Hausas and they have firmed belief in their mind that if it is done, something will definitely happen to the participants. Finally, the understanding of taboo is situated in the purview of two sub- field of linguistics; semantics and pragmatics. The interpretation of taboo relies heavily in the context of situation in which it is said.
Theoretical Framework
The theoretical model of this research is based on the linguistic politeness theory and Speech act theory. The linguistic politeness is the act of using polite speech during a conversation. Goffman (1967) introduced this theory into linguistics on the study of face. Politeness only gets interest in linguistic studies in 1987 when Brown and Levinson successfully to develop a theory that help to understand the principles of politeness and at the same time account for the framework in any study regardless of religion, culture or language. Central to this framework two concepts namely face and euphemism are emphasize Alix (2012: 22).

Face, by definition is the personality of self-image that every person seeks to project to the society. According to Brown and Levinson (1987: 61) face is a public image that everyone wants to claim for himself. The notion of face can be studied from two standpoints, namely positive face and negative face. A positive face projects a self that identify with the society, in form of ‘we’, ‘us’. In this line of thought, Brown and Levinson define positive face as “the want of every member that his or her wants to be desirable to at least some others” or alternatively, the desire of interaction to be liked, desired, appreciated and approved by one another, thus, positive face refers to self-esteem. The negative face, which is to the person’s freedom of action and freedom of speech, means to be free to utter any term without any consideration of its negative effects on the hearer/speaker’s face or feelings.

Euphemisms or politeness on the other hand, provide conditions for smooth flow of communication between sender and receiver. As verbal politeness, as a common conversation strategy, in cooperative communicative interchanges, constitute a basic principle to analyse language as a social phenomena stands out as an integral part of the different pragmatic theories which deal with conversational analysis Crespo (2005: 88).

In Hausa society there are different taboo words/expressions that relate to religion (Islam), culture, animals, food and abuse. Islamically, since most Hausa people are Muslims they are prohibited from mentioning them publically.

The speech act theory was developed by J.L Austin, a British philosopher of language. He introduced this theory in 1975 in his well-known book of ‘How To Do Things With words’. Later, John Searle brought the aspect of theory into much higher dimensions. Crystal (1994:314) says that speech act is “a communicative activity defined with references to the intentions of speaker while speaking and the effects achieved on a listener.” Searle, (1969, p. 16) asserts that “the unit of linguistic communication is not …, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence … but rather a production of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of the speech act.” The speech act theory attempts to explain how speakers use language to accomplish intended actions and how hearers infer intended meaning from what is said. Austin divides his linguistic acts into three different categories namely: locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act.

A Locutionary Act
a. Locutionary act is the performance of an utterance, and hence of a speech act. The term equally refers to the surface meaning of an utterance, because according to J.L Austin’s posthumous work, “How to Do Things with Words”, a speech act should be analyzed as a locutionary act (i.e. the actual utterance and its ostensible meaning). We can use the locutionary act for particular purposes, for example, to answer a question, to announce a verdict, to give a warning, pronouncing a sentence etc.

b. Illocutionary Act
The concept of an illocutionary act is central to, if not identical with the concept of speech act. Although there are numerous opinions as to what illocutionary act actually is, there are some kinds of acts which are widely accepted as illocutionary, for example; promising, ordering someone, invitation, proposing etc. According to Austin’s preliminary informal description, the idea of an “illocutionary act” can be captured by emphasizing that “by saying something, we do something”. Therefore, for better understanding and orientation, Searle divides illocutionary act into five major categories. These categories are:
1. Representatives; which are such utterances which commit the hearer to the truth of the expressed proposition (e.g. asserting, concluding), for example, the name of the British Queen is Elizabeth.
2. Directives; which are attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something (e.g. ordering, requesting), for example, would you make me a cup of tea?
3. Commissives; commit the speaker to some future course of action (e.g. promising, offering), for example, I promise to come at eight and cook a nice dinner for you.
4. Expressive; express a psychological state (e.g. thanking, congratulating), for example, thank you for your kind offer.
5. Declarations; effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions (e.g. christening, declaring war) for example, I bequeath all my properties to my fiancée.

c. Perlocutionary Acts
Perlocutionary acts are performed with the intention of producing further effects on the hearer. A perlocutionary act (or perlocutionary effect) can also be seen as a speech act viewed at the level of its psychological consequences, such as persuading, convincing, scaring, enlightening, inspiring, or otherwise getting someone to do or realize something. Therefore, when examining perlocutionary act, the effect on hearer or reader is emphasized.

Analysis of Some Hausa Taboo
Based on the discussion of the frame work of this work, the analysis of data for this work will be divided into two groups. Group Analysis will be based on Linguistic politeness or Face
threatening act theory. The Hausa taboo will be presented in a table together with the English interpretation and its euphemism/polite form followed by the discussion. The speech act theory by J.L Austin and John Searle.e the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts will be used in the analysis of the data in group B.

Group A

Taboo words

Fig1.
Taboo Animals as food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Hausa taboo</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Alade</td>
<td>Pig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Kare</td>
<td>Dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>jaba</td>
<td>Stinking shrew mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Mage</td>
<td>Cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Mushe</td>
<td>Carcass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Barasa</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Dabobin dasukecinwasudadobin</td>
<td>Animal that eat the flesh of other animals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Naturally Hausa people consider as taboo what the Islamic Quran prohibits and they are not allowed. It is considered haram to eat pork (pig meat) or consume any swine product in Hausa because it is considered an unclean animal according the Holy Quran. Alcohol is also forbidden to consume openly in Hausa land and the implementation of shari’a law has made this a taboo. Consumption of alcohol such as gin, whiskey, bear and other alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the society. However eating carcass is a serious religious taboo because it is categorically mentioned in the holy Qur’an as forbidden (haram) so also the eating of all animals that eat the flesh of other animals.

Fig 1.2
Taboos of kinship relation and their euphemism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Taboo</th>
<th>Euphemism</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Miji</td>
<td>Maigida</td>
<td>Husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mata</td>
<td>Uwargida/amarya</td>
<td>Wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mahifiya</td>
<td>Umma/mama</td>
<td>Mother/mummy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>mahifi</td>
<td>Uba / baba</td>
<td>Father/dady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Danfari /yarfari</td>
<td>Shi/ita</td>
<td>First born male/ female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ibrahim et al (1958: 87) explains a special category of abusive Hausa phrases like Uwaka (your mother) ubanka (your father). These phrases have literal meaning and at the same time they are linguistically taboo because they have been assigned the connotation of abusive language in Hausa society. They further explain another set of linguistic taboo in expression such as kutumaruba (fathers penis) durunuwa (mother’s vagina) such phrases are however regarded as obscene in Hausa and they are also the most terrible verbal abusive language one can use to insult someone in Hausa community. Such utterances are completely taboo, filthy unmentionable and undesirable to be heard in Hausa culture.

**Fig 1.4.**

**Obscene Hausa taboo and their Ephemism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>Taboo</th>
<th>Euphemism</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kashi</td>
<td>Banyangida</td>
<td>Excrement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Fitsari</td>
<td>Kama ruwa</td>
<td>Urine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Bandaki</td>
<td>Kewaye/bayi/</td>
<td>Toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Gindi</td>
<td>Gaba/al’aura</td>
<td>Penis or vagina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Al’ada</td>
<td>Wanki</td>
<td>Menstruation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Hihuwa</td>
<td>Sauka</td>
<td>Delivered off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Mazinaciya</td>
<td>Karuwa</td>
<td>Harlot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Obscene here are words that relate to sex. Therefore, in Hausa society euphemistic forms of these words are used in order to avoid feeling of shame especially in face to face interaction. Thus, one needs to speak in a polite way to ease communication. Also, when we talk of menstruation (al’ada) according to the Hausa custom and religion, it is a taboo to come openly and say “I am menstruating” e.g. “inaalada” a typical Hausa woman will only say “I nawanki” this shows that
the society is not expecting her to expose herself face to face to people to know her condition of menstruating. This however shows that the Hausa culture does not allow mentioning menstruation openly instead the euphemistic form ‘wanki’ is used. The same thing also applied to all private parts which are expressed by euphemism ‘gaba’ in Hausa instead of the real sex organs vagina or pens which in Hausa is known as (gindi) for both male and female. ‘Gaba’ here means private part of both male female. Moreover, faeces such as ‘sheet’ excrement, ‘kashi’ ‘bayangida’ as the euphemism, ‘urinate’ that is fisari and ‘Kamaruwa’ as its euphemism. The place toilet also known as bayangida is not openly mentioned but is referred to as ‘kewaye’, ‘bandaki’ or ‘bayi’ especially when somebody asked of the present potion of someone who is in the toilet. This is covered by the euphemism in order not to mention the present condition of the person at that moment. While ‘haihuwa’ delivered off is a taboo because of the processes involved in it. So to avoid embarrassment the word 'haihuwa' because of what it entails one will just say ‘sauka’ meaning the pregnancy which the woman has been carrying has come down just like a woman carrying load on her head and then decides to put it down.

Group B

Taboo Expressions

1b Sleeping under light throughout the night in a room is an invitation for jinn’s to visit the room.

1a Barin fitila da dare a kunne Yana jawo aljannu zuwa daki

Illocutionary act:
Representative speech act (statement).

Perlocutionary act:
Attack by the jinn that may bring about sickness and the jinn may decide to have refugee in the person’s body till death. Therefore the hearer will not attempt to violate this rule in order not to be affected.

2a Ba Kyau me ciki taje debo ruwa rafi ko rijiya da dare domin in ta je aljannu zasu dauke yaron da ke cikin ta su sa nasu.

2b The pregnant woman should not fetch water from the streams or well at night because if she does the jinn’s will substitute her own child with jinn in her womb

Illocutionary act:
Directive (challenges).

**Perlocutionary act:**
Pregnant women strictly adhere to this in the society as no woman want to give birth to a child that does not belong to her. Thus, Hausa society regards this as a taboo in order to avoid repercussion.

3a. *Idan mace tai mafarkin maciji yasareta to tana da ciki.*

3b. If a woman dreams that she has been bitten by a snake, it means she has conceived.

**Illocutionary act:** Representative (claim)

**Perlocutionary acts:** hopping to be bitten by the snake in the dream in order to be certain of being pregnant.

4a. *Ba kyaushara da dare domin yanasa talauci.*

4b. Sweeping at night is taboo, because it causes poverty.

**Illocutionary act:** Commissive (threat).

**Perlocutionary act:** wretchedness

5a. *Zama a dokin kofa bakyaudan watarana aljannuzasu wurga mutum kasa da karfi.*

5b Sitting on the door step is a taboo because it is a place where jinns normally sit and they will throw a person and injure him.

**Illocutionary act:** declarative

**Perlocutionary act:** jinns may cause some sickness to the person

6a. *Idan aka rufeguguwa da kwarya zaaga jariri amman za a mutu*

6b. If one covers a whirl-wind with calabash, one will see an infant baby but the person will die.

**Illocutionary act:** representative (assertion)

**Perlocutionary act:** infant jinn will appear and the person will die.

7a. *Idan kado ki maciji da karanrama zakaga kafunsu amma zakamuta.*

7b. If you beat a snake with a peel stalk inchastem you will see the legs of the snake but the person will die.

**Illocutionary act:** commissive (threats).

**Perlocutionary act:** snake legs will appear and the person will die.

8a. *Idan kazuba yawu a wuta zakayi ciwon makogoro.*
8b. If you spit in the fire you will have infection in the oesophagus/gullet.

*Illocutionary act:* representative (assertion).

*Perlocutionary act:* the person will have guitar

9a. *Idan nonon mace maisha yar wayatsarara akan zakarin jariri zakarin zaimutu.*

9b. If the breast milk of a lactating mother pour on the penis of an infant, the penis will lose its strength.

*Illocutionary act:* warning

*Perlocutionary act:* the child will become impotent when he grows.

10a. *Idan aka shayar da yaro da rago war ruwan wakan matacce, yaro zai lalaee.*

10b. If one drinks from the reminance of the water that was used for the bath of a dead body, the child will became useless.

*Illocutionary act:* commissive (threats).

*Perlocutionary act:* useless life throughout one’s life time.

11a. *Idanaka doki mutun da tsintsiya bazaisamu mata ba.*

11b. If an unmarried man is beaten with a broom, he will not get a wife

*Illocutionary act:* commissive (threats).

*Perlocutionary act:* the person will not marry throughout his/her life.

12a. *Idan aka dokimutun da muchiya zailalace a duniya.*

12b. If a person is beaten with a stick used in stirring ‘tuwo’ the person will become useless or wayward in his life.

*Illocutionary act:* declarative

*Perlocutionary act:* the person will have a worthless life.

13a. *Idan wutsiyar kuregi ta taba zalean mutun zai mutu.*

13b. The tail of a ground squirrel touches the penis of someone the person will die.

*Illocutionary act:* representative

Perlocutionary act: death

14a. *Idanrana ta kama watababbar fitna zaifaru a garri.*

14b. When there is eclipse of the sun then there will be a serious trouble in the country
Illocutionary act: representation

Perlocutionary act: desasterous happening

15a. Idan zunni (masharuwata) yabayyana a hadaer ba’aruwa.
15b. When a rain bow appeared in the cloud then it is not going to rain
Illocutionary act: representative
Perlocutionary act: no rain will fall

16a. Share daki da sutura
16b. Sweeping room with a cloth
Illocutionary act: representative
Perlocutionary act: poverty

17a. Cin abinci akan tafin Hannu
17b. Eating food from the palm of a hand.
Illocutionary act: representative
Perlocutionary act: the person will become poor and lacks food

18a, Fyacehanci a lokacin da akeyin bayan gida (kashi).
18b. Blowing the nose when excreting.
Illocutionary act: representative
Perlocutionary act: poverty

19a. Cire farce da hakori
19b. cutting finger nails with teeth
Illocutionary act: representative
Perlocutionary act: a sign of rainy season

20a. Idan macen da ba ta da aure ta duba madubi da dare baza ta samu mijin aureba
20b. An unmarried woman who looks into a looking glass (mirror) will not get a husband.
Illocutionary act: representative
Perlocutionary act: the woman will remain a spinster throughout her life.

Discussion
In the above, we have Taboo expressions which are non linguistic in Hausa (Islam) that are not expected to be violated. Most of these taboo words are related to custom e.g. sitting by the door way (entrance) is a taboo because jinns are found there, so if one violates this he may sit on them and that is capable of affecting the person negatively. Most of these types of taboos are regarded as superstition (champ) in Hausa society. If any person violates any of the champ then he should expect the occurrence of either good or bad omen. It is expected that whenever one wants to sleep at night, it is necessary for one to switch off the light. For protection from the evil spirit

Another belief is that, if a pregnant woman fetches water in the well or steam at night she loses her pregnancy because the jinns may remove her baby or substitute the baby with that of the jinn in the womb. Also, when a woman dreamt that a snake bites her she is likely going to conceive (be pregnant). However, there are other cultural practices that are taboo which when violated may cause evil spirit to attack one in different ways. There are also some cultural practices that may cause poverty, social, psychological, and physical disturbances. Still there are others that are believed to have the tendency of causing disasters such as drought, madness, death, sickness and many social vices among the Hausa people. Also, the study discovers that some of these taboos instil moral discipline among the Hausa people.

**Conclusion**

This paper is a study of taboo words and expression of the Hausa people. The paper also explains the effects of taboo when violated in Hausa society. The study also reveals some of the repercussion attached to the violation of taboo. Some of these taboos are related to religion and culture because most of the cultural norms and tradition are tied to the religion of the Hausa people. These words and expressions and their euphemisms based on the societal views, norms, values and custom of the Hausa.

**Reference**


