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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a
troubled and
that pulses by
other issues
movement
election

MAN OF THE PEOPLE: AN ANALYSIS OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

Good governance is an ingredient that is at variance with conduct of Nigerian public officials enamored of an environment deeply infested by corruption. Promises made by politicians on the campaign trail end up as empty and often not delivered to the people as a result of their preoccupation in draining the public to keep their political machine active. This of course renders development comatose and the citizenry pauperized.. This paper examined the sociological imperative to corruption in the Nigerian political milieu particularly under the Fourth Republic political dispensation. The paper argued that corruption is one of the worst problems, hindering Nigeria's progress in socio-economic growth and development. Some non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations have been propagating the causes of anticorruption, yet corruption seems endemic and a cancerous monster ravaging the country. The issue of corruption in Nigeria requires thorough analysis to get an understanding of the matter. The paper pointed out that curbing corruption has to do with full awareness of its devastating effects and how the political elites as well as leaders in power are playing with peoples' well being. In the light of this, the paper recommends that a campaign of national orientation is necessary, not only to fight corruption but to change the entire attitude of Nigerians to officials in public service. This would ensure enthroning a value system that rejects corruption at all tiers of governance and levels of society. In addition, government should reduce the extent of poverty; provide infrastructure and amenities conducive for entrepreneurial skills to thrive in the society.

Introduction

The issue of political corruption has been a recurring decimal in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation that is richly endowed with immense natural and human resources. This endowment has been squandered in hysterical adventure of corruption that has led the nation into a state of underdevelopment instead of national development due largely to uncommitted self-serving leaders. The inception of corruption in Nigeria is rooted in the collapse of oil price in the world market in the early 1980s. The expansion in economic activities which Nigeria witnessed in the 1970s as a result of oil boom came to an abrupt end and affected the economy very badly. Some of the attendant consequences of this collapse ranged from low capacity utilization in industries, unprecedented retrenchment of workers, unemployment, and irregular payments of wages and salaries in both public and private sectors. These forces either singularly or collectively fueled the advent of corruption in the system. The intervention of the military in governance and politics and their style of administration worsened the situation. The Nigerian economy being public sector driven; encourages the incredible increase in the level of corruption in the public sector and in the system generally.

It is indeed due to the absence of good leadership that explains why Nigeria has an incurable widespread corruption. Corruption converts government from a potential servant of the public into a system of plunder which hits the poor hardest (Clunies-Ross et al, 2009). Though corruption over the years have been identified as a problem, none of its leaders, past or present, has been able to address the problem of corruption head-on which has brought the country to its knees with numerous problems leading to poverty, misery and low quality of life among a large segment of the Nigerian populace. It is non arguable that corruption contributes to acute power shortage, dilapidated and inadequate infrastructures, poor roads, unsafe aviation, unavailability of potable water supply, alarming graduate unemployment, poor health care delivery and education, high crime rate, violence, religious conflicts, ethnic tension, galloping inflation, untold hardship, ever widening gap between the rich and the poor and massive institutional failure. It may be summarized that the Nigeria's state is a victim of high level corruption, and bad governance with an uncertain political environment. This paper interrogates the sociological factor that drives public officials into corrupt activities and the specific factors that sustain and reproduces corrupt practices at high stakes in Nigeria.

Thus, this paper is essential and timely because it provides relevant information on corruption that can help in formulating right policies which aimed at tackling the hydra-headed corruption in Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature on Corruption

The concept of corruption means different thing to different people depending on the individual's cultural background, discipline and political leaning. It is an act in which the power of the public office is used for personal gain in the manner that contravenes the rules of the game (Jain, 2001). Given its impact on the society Mulinge and Lesetedi (2002) sees corruption an antisocial behavior by an individual or social group which confers unjust or fraudulent benefits on its perpetrators, inconsistent with the established legal norms and prevailing moral ethos of the land and likely to diminish the capacity of

the legitimate authorities to provide fully for the material and spiritual well being of society in a just and equitable manner.

According to Dike (2003) corruption in Nigeria occurs in so many different forms. Political corruption which takes place at the highest levels of political authority, affects the manner in which decisions are made, electoral corruption which is the buying of votes, special favors to anointed candidates or promises of illegitimate votes to certain candidates, and bureaucratic corruption which takes place among public servants. This type of corruption is what the citizen's experience in ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) including schools, hospitals and police stations (Ovienloba 2007). Electoral corruption finds an intimate link between electoral process and poor governance. When electoral process are subverted, it leads to the installation of individuals who pursue their private interest rather than the general interest hence this will eventually lead to bad governance, poverty and economic underdevelopment that have plagued Nigeria (Olarinmoye 2008). Agba (2010) has examined the different types of corruption and concluded that bureaucratic and political corruption weaken good governance. This is so because policy makers become hesitant in taking decisions to reduce corruption or introduce new reforms to combat it once there is a compromise.

Corruption has remained one of the most complex problems that have impeded development in Nigeria. Ribadu (2006) also stated that corruption is one of the most dangerous social ills of any society because corruption, like a deadly virus, attacks the vital structure that makes society to progress, thus putting its very existence into serious perils. Preventing corruption in Nigeria has been very difficult, based on the dimension it has taken in addition to lack of political leadership. A situation where looters of nation's wealth go without charge, awarded contracts that were never executed and yet given recognition in the society, makes corrupt practices to seem legitimate. This trend encourages the 'attitude of 'this is my time to grab' syndrome. According to Kaufmann & Dininio (2006), corruption flourishes in conditions of poverty and weak public institutions. Given the grip of poverty on the citizenry of the country, corruption becomes not only inevitable but also prevalent. According to Osuagwu (2008), it involves the violation of established rules, practices and procedures for personal and for group interests. It is concerned with actions directed towards securing wealth, power, authority, influence, relevance or sundry advantage through illegal means. Despite the enormous income from oil in the last four decades, 54.4% of Nigerians are still poor (NBS, 2008), and the percentage of the population living below income poverty line, at purchasing power parity (PPP) of \$1.25 a day is 68% (UNDP Human Development Report, 2013). Nigeria is at the low human development index (HDI) of 153 out of 186 countries with low gross national income per capita of PPP of \$ 2,102, low life expectancy at birth (52.3) and high annual rate of population growth (2.5%) (UNDP Human Development Report 2013). The gladiators constantly manipulated the people and the political processes to advance their own selfish agenda, while the society remained pauperized and the masses in a supposedly blessed country wallowed in abject poverty. Obayelu (2007) has specifically identified a number of factors propagating corrupt practices in Nigeria. They include lack of clear rules and code of ethics that leads to the abuse of political power; low salaries and unfavorable working conditions.

Therefore, one of the damaging consequences of the politics of identity is that it tends to render the state soft, laws are discriminately applied and the anti-corruption laws are not implemented.

For Omonijo and Fadugba (2011) the reasons for the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria are two; firstly, when individuals believe and are sure that when they commit malpractice, they will not be caught. Secondly, when such individuals perceive that even when they are caught, they will not be penalized for their wrong doing and thirdly, when they are caught and penalized, the penalty will be lower in value than the gains derived from the corrupt practices. For instance, the recent case involving a Deputy Director in the Police Pension fund scam Mr John Yusuf who confessed that he misappropriated about N3 billion naira was convicted and asked by the court to pay a fine of N750, 000, which he promptly did at the court premises, sparking off a national outrage.

Several related theories on corruption exist and few of them are given below:

- i. **Public Choice Theory-** this theory focuses on the explanation of corruption at the level of the individual. The causal chain is that of an individual making a rational decision that leads to a predetermined outcome. Central to the public choice theory is the individual corrupt official who tries to maximize his or her utility. These individuals who are usually portrayed as a rationally calculating person decides to become corrupt when its expected advantages outweigh its expected disadvantages in terms of combination of possible penalty and the chance of being caught. This theory is in line with Rose-Ackerman (1999) observation that public officials are corrupt because they perceive that the potential benefits of corruption exceed the potential costs.
- ii. **Bad Apple Theories-** bad apple theories also focus at the level of the individual corrupt agent for the causes of corruption. The theory observed that corruption exists in people with faulty (moral) character, which is referred as the bad apples. There is a causal chain from bad character to corrupt acts; the root cause of corruption is found in defective human character that predisposition toward criminal activity.
- iii. **Organizational Culture Theories-** this theory focuses on the culture and structure of the organization within which the agent is working. It is a departure from the first two that centers on the micro level of individual corrupt agents, but the macro level of their respective organizations. The underlying assumption is that a causal path from a certain culture, a certain group culture – leads to a certain mental state. And that mental state leads to corrupt behavior. Failure in the “proper machinery” of government, not faulty character, leads public officials to act corruptly.

- iv. **Contagious Theory of Corruption**- this theory was propagated by scholars such as, Klitgaard (1988); Caiden and Dwivedi (2001). In their studies they argue that once an organizational culture is corrupt, every person who comes in contact with it also runs a big risk of becoming corrupt. As such, corruption itself seems to be the 'cause' of corruption even though the specific causal relationship is hard to define. Contagious theory is anchored on the metaphor of the 'slippery slope' (Punch 2000).
- v. **Clashing Moral Values Theories**-these theories make a distinction between the public role and private obligations of corrupt officials, focuses on the macro level or more precisely, the level of society. Since the culture of an organization is also influenced by society at large, there is an overlap between this group and organizational culture theories. The causal chain in these theories begins with certain values and norms of society that directly influence the values and norms of individuals. These values and norms influence the behavior of individual officials, making them corrupt.

According to this theory, private appropriation of the spoils of office is not regarded as morally reprehensible or illegitimate. In other words, morality has an opportunity to cause behavior and thereby cause corruption.

The Character of Nigeria State

The Nigerian State is surely an instrument purely designed for exploitation just like many other sub-Saharan African states. That is to say that the Nigerian state from inception operated a structural system that promotes the interests of the capitalists at the detriment of the citizenry. On this score, the evolution of the Nigerian State runs contrary to the Aristotelian natural evolution of society which promotes the interests of the general collectives who lay claim to it as members. That Nigeria is an amalgam of disparate ethnic and religious groups locked up in a marriage of convenience by European overlords who did not care about the various fault lines that have continued to generate instability and underdevelopment even after the colonialists had left the scene, cannot be in doubt. Even though there was unity among the Nigerian political elites to dislodge the colonialists, the system which the Nigerian nationalists inherited was never designed to serve the interests of the collectives, but has largely remained an instrument for the advancement of the parochial interests of a few privileged classes within the ruling elite. Ake (1996) aptly captured the picture when he argued that politics in Nigeria is a form of struggle for the control of the commanding heights of the state where main decisions about public policy are made and enforced.

The competition for power in Nigeria has been shaped over the years by the structure of the country's political economy. The nationalist elites, who wore the toga of liberating the masses from the throes of colonialism, were only motivated by class interests. According to Ake (1996), throughout Nigeria's post-independent history, the principal competition for political power has always been the members of the Nigerian *petit bourgeoisie*. The

bourgeois class in Nigeria was a loose coalition of the elites of the disparate ethnic and religious groups and economic interests. In the struggle against the colonial regime, this class united under common grievances even though it was fragmented along the fault lines of Nigeria's incoherent economy and its multi-ethnic and religious makeup.

According to Ake (2002), the logic of colonialism did not allow the Nigerian political class to be anything more than marginal economically. Because of this weakness, the only instrument available for this class to ascend to power was politics and mass mobilization. With the acquisition of political power, this class used the state to expand their economic base. The use of political power for accumulation of wealth makes Nigerian capitalism unproductive. This is because the wealthiest people in Nigeria are generally people who have acquired wealth through state power either by political corruption, access to state contracts (never or partially executed), agency rates or concessions such as import licenses that hardly involve them in direct productive activity.

The penchant to use state power for economic accumulation is aptly behind the expansion because as the economic role of the state expands, opportunities of appropriation for those who control state power also expand. In other words, if the state sets up a company, the political leader will decide who manages the company. Again if the State decides to extend regulation to new areas of the economy, in which those whose decision it was has a new source of power and income. This means that every new creation of venture is an avenue to accrue or maximize wealth by the very few ruling elites.

The increasing exploration and exploitation of oil resources transformed the country and made it increasingly reliant on oil, thereby destroying the reputation of the country as an agricultural producer. In fact, the nature of the oil wealth spawned a political culture in which emphasis was laid on how to share the providential wealth rather than how to engage in the production of renewable and viable alternatives. For instance, the current nose-dive in oil price has already caused austerity in Nigeria. This contributed to the neglect of other sources of revenue in the rush for oil resources. The reliance on oil made the country a mono-cultural economy and distorted the relationship between successive regimes in the country and the citizenry, creating a wide gulf of alienation in the relationship.

The texture of this argument is to drive the point that the federal dominance has proven unfair, exploitative and subversive of the spirit of federalism which Nigeria professes, bringing about a situation where political power is concentrated in a tier of government that also controls the collection and distribution of all oil resources making other tiers dependent and marginalized from oil power. The conflict in the Niger Delta is therefore an attempt to redress this character of the Nigerian state which goes back to the colonial era that foisted a political-economic structure sustained for the benefit of the profiteering alliance of ruling elites and the oil majors (Adebanwi 2001).

The global economic crisis of the 1980s was very significant in creating the condition for the new form of ethno-nationalism that arose in the 1990s in Nigeria. The resultant

decline in oil revenue and mismanagement of resources by unaccountable military elites plunged the country into an economic crisis that left its trail of social consequences that partly contributed to this new form of ethno-nationalism manifesting in Nigeria (Duruji, 2010). The severity of the crisis compelled the government to implement an economic reform program premised on stabilization and adjustment, which was supervised by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. This reform consisted of liberalization, privatization, deregulation, and the removal of subsidies, all of which were ideas aimed at scaling down the state's role in the economy. The effects of these policies were reflected in the collapse of local industries and decline in the capacity of the ones that survived including rising costs of business in vital energy and power sectors. The consequent shrinking of economic opportunities and mass unemployment created a large army of frustrated people. The socio-economic condition of this class made them vulnerable and ready tools in the hands of elites with parochial objectives.

The economic crisis signaled an expansion in criminality such as armed banditry, fierce and rampant kidnapping, political assassinations, and the use of thugs during electoral contests, thereby reinforcing the magnitude of corruption in the country. The inability of the Nigerian state and its persistent failure to respond to these vices forced a large section of the populace to resort to self help (Obi 2004). As a result of this, the dependence of the people on the government for security is low, and this explains the increasing privatization of security and widespread vigilantism at the personal and community levels, respectively (Obasi 2002, Fabiyi 2004). These private security units transform into ethnic militias and quickly consolidate as champions of ethno-national interests (Obasi 2002). The OPC, MASSOB, MEND and Boko Haram among other ethnic militia groups emerged as part of that resistance of ethnic groups' elements asking for a fair share in the Nigerian polity and challenging the legitimacy of the state through their modus operandi (Duruji 2008).

This state of affairs weakens pan Nigeria civil society base that is necessary to give effect to the anticorruption campaign. The implication of this reflects wide spread corruption leading to poor developmental progress.

The Sociology of Corruption in Nigeria

The sociological dimension of corruption in Nigeria is deeply rooted in Nigeria's political economy and the character of Nigeria State. It is a fact that Nigeria was a creation of colonialism to serve purely British economic interest without regard for the natives. The struggle for independence, initially premised on the plank of correcting the exploitation of Nigeria's resources by foreign interests became fractionalized along ethnic and other fault lines dividing the country. Consequently instead of a pan Nigerian struggle for independence, it became an ethno-regional struggle to replace the colonialists. The implication of this is that the faction of elites that acquires power comes in and pursues ethno-regional agenda that negates pan-Nigerian interests. Secondly, the renter nature of the Nigerian State and the near zero industrial productivity base, make access to power in Nigeria vital as that is the most important means of accumulation of wealth especially through corrupt practices. To retain power and the access to wealth, the

power elite must dispense favor to retinues of supporters.

Given this scenario, corrupt practices in Nigeria had involved myriads of political elites/leaders in various levels of political offices who engage in corrupt activities to enrich themselves and their circle of friends and supporters as well as retain positions. This is done through gross misappropriation of budgets meant for development purposes to benefit the general interests. For instance, the former Head of State General. Sani Abacha siphoned \$2.3 billion from the government treasury, awarded contracts worth \$1 billion to his personal companies, and took \$1 billion as bribe from foreign contractors (Edikan and Emem 2008) Likewise Professor Adenike Grange, a former Minister of Health (2007-2008) along with others, was arraigned in an Abuja court over financial impropriety involving the sum of 5.2 billion naira (\$34,666,666.67 US Dollars) (The Nation, 2009)

Causes of Corruption in Nigeria -The causes of corruption are myriad resulting in the perpetuating of the monster in Nigeria. Nevertheless, some of the fundamental factors that engender corrupt practices include-great inequality in distribution of wealth; political office as the primary means of gaining access to wealth/massive looting of public money; conflict between changing moral code; weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanisms; absence of a strong sense of national community and patriotism; government ridiculous minimum wage/ low wages in civil service which does not reflect inflationary pressures; poverty, poor governance, culture of flamboyant affluence and conspicuous consumption, poor judicial system which set an offenders free with ridiculous fines or jail terms, poor reward practices and social malady of glorifying thieves, influence of extended family system and pressure to meet family obligations, corrupt attitude of enforcement officers-police, judges, customs, power holding company officials, immigration officers, etc., corrupt practices of parents in order to make their wards to pass, be it NECO, WAEC, JAMB or secure admission to Unity Schools, Polytechnics or even university screening tests, coaching/special centers that charge exorbitant fees in order to aid and abet cheating in external examinations, teachers in higher institutions that make students pay money in disguise, either through handouts or direct payment called 'sorting' for unmerited marks,

Consequences of Corruption in Nigeria

The consequences of corruption are enormous, more so in a country such as Nigeria whose human development index is very low. These are: corruption leads to infrastructural decay as money meant for projects is cut short in payment of up-front of ten percent or more to the awarding officers, leads to diversion of development resources to individual interests, leading to poor service delivery, erodes the rule of law as the officials of the executive, legislation and judiciary are fully involved in the quest for wealth, accelerates weak institutions, poverty and its vicious cycle, it reduces quality of goods and services as well as promotes sub standard products, loss of government revenue and induced wrong sectoral priorities, corrodes trust, undermine integrity and legitimacy, breeds poor governance and political instability, accelerate unemployment and misallocation of talents, breeds insecurity and slowing of economic growth, leads to

fallen standard of education and health care delivery sectors.

Trio-Governmental aspect of Corruption in Nigeria.

Incidentally, all the arms of governance are involved in corruption in Nigeria. The Executive under the Fourth Republic dispensation, some big politicians have been convicted including Diepreye Alamieyeseigha the former Governor of Bayelsa State and James Ibori former Governor of Delta State, are the first former public office-holder of their caliber to serve a prison terms for looting state funds and other corrupt practices perpetrated while in office. The convictions of Alamieyeseigha, Ibori and that of the former Chairman of the Nigerian Ports Authority, who was also the National Vice-Chairman in the South-West zone of the Peoples Democratic Party at the time, Chief Bode George, remain the only high-profile corruption cases that has resulted in prison terms since the establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2000 and 2003 respectively.

Beside the ineffectiveness of EFCC and other anti-corruption agencies to effectively prosecute corruption cases and obtain conviction (which perhaps reflected government stand), is the attitude of Nigerians who quickly coalesce to protect these corrupt elements, a bully ruling class. The cases of Ibori, Alamesegha and Bode George indicate the same trend. When Alamesegha had issues of money laundering with the British authorities and EFCC, the people of Bayelsa state gave him heroic welcome in spite of the fact that he misused their trust in him as their elected governor. Even though a convict, Alamieseigha who brought President Jonathan to political limelight as his deputy has been rehabilitated in his home state of Bayelsa, often invited and given very important personality treatment by the political elites in Bayelsa state. Even after serving his jail term Bode George was given a heroic welcome by his associates, including an elaborate thanksgiving service attended by top politicians and government functionaries and beamed live on national television. Today Bode George is still celebrated as a political leader in Nigeria (Aziken et al 2011).

Nigeria's National Assembly in the Fourth Republic from inception has been an arena where the endemic corruption in Nigeria has played out. This is a House of 469 members most of whom emerged from the capital intensive electioneering campaign in Nigeria but lacked the executive powers over appropriated funds. The pressure of recouping campaign investments under this scenario pushed a lot of principal officers at the National Assembly to soil their hands with funds that accrued to the National Assembly (Lewis, 2011). So many scandals have trailed the Fourth Republic National Assembly since it was inaugurated in 1999 (Falade 2011). The first scandal over furniture allowance and award of bogus contracts led to the fall of Senator Chuba Okadigbo during the first term of Obasanjo's administration. Senator Haruna Abubakar who was the deputy Senate President in 2000 was accused of embezzling of 16.9 million naira (\$140,833) of Christmas and Sallah gifts. Senator Adolphus Wabara who became the Senate president after the 2003 General election was also forced to resign after accusation were leveled against him for demanding gratification from ministries and agencies to uphold their budget proposals. The next principal officer of the National Assembly that was forced to

step down on accusation of corruption related to inflation of contract terms was the first woman to become the speaker of House of Representatives, Mrs Patricia Etch. The former speaker of the House of Representatives, in 2007 lost her seat due to award of contracts at inflated price of 628 million naira (\$ 233,333) in 2007 (Falade 2011), but was later exonerated by her colleagues.

The man that took over from Representative Patricia Etch, Representative Dimeji Bankole was not free of this corruption bug in the National Assembly as he was in constant battles with a segment of the House that accused him of corrupt practices and also sent deluge of petitions that EFCC found credible and used against him. Dimeji Bankole was alleged to have over invoiced the bill for the purchase of vehicles for oversight functions at the rate of 2.4 billion naira.(Alabi and Fashagba,2010). Even though he completed his tenure with the 6th Assembly, Bankole's people rejected him at the polls during the 2011 general elections and the EFCC arrested him and charged him to court for taking loans on behalf of the House of Representative that was not appropriated and awarding contracts for sundry items.

The question that arises from these instances highlighted above boils down to motives behind these corrupt tendencies. Certainly, sociological factors has been shown to exert pressure even upon the unwilling who eventually succumb to temptations of corruption so as to remain relevant and retain such highly exulted office. Professor Fabian Osuji an academician who was the former education minister between 2003-2005 was stunned at what he met at the National Assembly when he went to defend his education budget. He was asked by members of the education committee in collaboration with some principal officers including Former president of the Senate, Senator Adolphus Wabara to grease their hand before his ministries budget can be passed. As a neophyte he went back to his ministry and its parastatals to mobilize 55 million naira (\$458333) bribe money he offered Senator Adolphus Wabara and the House Committees on Education in 2005 (Falade, 2011.Lewis, 2011). This tendency of making demands was also exposed with the imbroglio between the House of Representatives and Chairman of Security Exchange Commission Miss Arunma Oteh.

The most surprising, is the case of Representative Farouk Lawan, a ranking member of the House, who has been re-elected to the House since 1999. The admission that he collected \$620,000 from Mr Femi Otedola a business tycoon close to corridors of power, who accused him of demanding for bribe to strike out the name of his company from a list of companies that collect 1.6 trillion naira petroleum subsidy without delivering the products. That Otedola's company name was removed from the initial report at the behest of Representative Lawan at the floor of the House before the lid was blown has made many to doubt his side of the story, more so when the transaction was captured on tape bandied in media cycles.

Judiciary

Though the judiciary is seen as temple of justice, in Nigeria the judiciary is not immune from the infestation of corruption in the Nigerian society. The Nigerian judiciary is enmeshed in corruption practices, a core accessory to the systematic problem of corruption plaguing the Nation. In fact, the perception has been that judges are easily

bribed and litigants hardly rely on the courts to render impartial judgments. The issue of litigation over election related matters buttresses the point that the report echoed in the sense that the National Judicial Commission (NJC) had dealt with a number of judges confirmed that they have compromised on their integrity. The issue of Nigerian elections ending in court rooms after voters have cast their votes is evidence that really exposed the Nigerian judiciary. Politicians have always complained that the judges award judgment to the highest bidder. The summary dismissal of judges found culpable as in the cases of Justice Thomas Naron and Charles Archibong and three other judges who was investigated and indicted by the NJC for the ruling he gave over the 2007 Osun state gubernatorial election tribunal (Odunsi 2013). The partisan involvement of the judiciary got to a crescendo following the Justice Ayp Salami saga, the former president of Nigerian court of Appeal who refused his promotion to the Supreme Court. Justice Salami had alleged that his elevation to the Supreme Court followed his refusal to accede to the interference of Justice Katsina-Alu in the 2007 Sokoto Gubernatorial case between Maagatagaata Wamako of the All Nigerian Peoples Party and Magari Dingiyadi of Democratic People's Party. Katsina Alu who was then the Chief Justice of Nigeria had asked Ayo Salami to dismiss the case because the judgment has leaked and that his promotion to an ordinary seat at the Supreme court was rather a demotion from the exalted seat of president of Court of Appeal with powers to appoint Electoral Tribunal panels after each election (Grassroots and Gender Development 2013). Beside these, the court has been aiding and abetting corruption by the long delays in prosecution of corruption cases and sometime outrageous ruling on corruption cases as it was with Justice Abubakar Talba who sentences police pension boss Yakubu Yusufu to two years in prison each on a three-count charge with an option of N 250,000 on each charge for stealing N 2 billion. He had earlier been accused of embezzling N30 billion police pension fund (Odunsi 2013).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Corruption in Nigeria has become part and parcel of the Nigerian society. However, the fact is that corruption has been long recognized both by the government, civil society and the populace as a hindrance to development in the country. All attempts to tackle corruption in Nigeria seem to be hitting the brick wall. The reason for this is not farfetched; it revolves around the values system in the country which seems to have made corruption the normal way of life in Nigeria. The sense of entitlement in the country and the fratricidal division of the people along multiple fault lines tends to encourage corruption and give it fillip to endure. The character of Nigeria's political economy as well as massive poverty of the populace has kept reinforcing the fabrics that support corruption in Nigeria.

In the light of this, the paper recommends that the only way corruption can be tackled in the country is not only strengthening of the laws and the institutions that enforce them, but much more than that, a national rebirth that targets at reorientation of the entire Nigerian populace is imperative. This should be aimed at instituting a value system that rejects corruption and should have zero tolerance for such practices. To this regard designing an academic curriculum that incorporates corruption and its negative vices in school

curricula should be part of the educational system from the basic level to the tertiary level. In addition, government should empower the masses through provision of infrastructure and amenities needed for entrepreneurial skills to flourish and thereby reduces the extent of poverty in the country. Furthermore, evolving special public enlightenment and social transformation strategy, radical reduction in poverty, re-institute and practice of good governance, reinvigorate effective and strong law enforcement anti corruption agencies and enactment of anti corruption laws will all go a long way in winning the war against corruption in Nigeria.

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