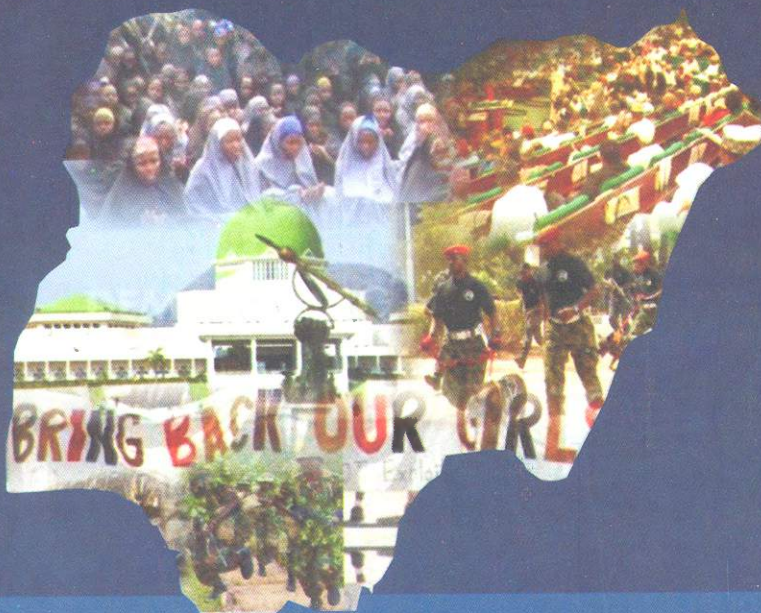


THE STATE IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

Issues, Perspectives and Challenges



Essays in Honour of **Professor Ben O. Nwabueze**

Editors

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The Challenges of Combating Corruption in Nigeria

Moses Metumara Duruji and
Dominic Ezinwa Azuh

8

INTRODUCTION

Corruption has been identified as a cankerworm and the major obstacle to the development of Nigeria (Igbuzor, 2008). Corruption is indubitably one of the greatest challenges of the Nigerian economy that stands out as contributing significantly to impoverishment and loss of lives. The impact, of course, threatens the stability of the Nigerian society. 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 but squandered in hysterical adventure of corruption that have led the nation into a state of underdevelopment due largely to uncommitted self-serving leaders to national development. The Nigerian state itself is a product of corruption leading to the award of independence and imposition of leadership tainted in corruption. 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 the oil boom came to an abrupt end and affected the economy badly. Some of the attendant consequences of this collapse ranged from low capacity utilisation 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 impact of this cankerworm called corruption is well documented and generally accepted as a challenge that has to be confronted if the Nigerian society

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is to move forward. The focus by the various administrations has led to the adoption of strategies, programmes and agencies to tackle the problem of corruption and the attendant poor service delivery in Nigeria. However the challenge remains. Several measures by various administrations over the years to fight corruption, yet the issue of corruption have continued to recur. What are the strategies that have been deploy in the fight against corruption and why are these strategies not winning the war against corruption? This chapter examines the attempts to address corruption against the backdrop of the nature and character of the Nigerian state.

THE CONCEPT OF THE STATE

According to Max Weber, a state is any human community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory. For Harold Laski (1961) a state is a territorial society divided into government and subjects claiming within its allotted physical area supremacy over all other institutions. According to him, the state is in fact the final legal depository of social will and sets the perspective for all other organisations bringing within its power, all forms of human activity. Whatever remains free of its control does by its permission (Laski, 1961). On the other hand, Chinoy (1967) defines "the state as an institution that possesses the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory". This defines how the power that

rests upon the monopoly shall be organised and used. From the definitions above, we can deduce that where right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or individuals, it is only to the extent to which the state permits it. A state therefore is based on the concept of territoriality, loyalty and exclusivity. A state is not necessarily the government but embodies the totality of institutions and the leadership possessing the social will of a given territorial space (Chinoy, 1967). A state therefore, must possess the monopoly of the legitimate use of force when this is not present such entity loses the characterisation of the state. Beside this, the state also exists to serve the purpose of creating an enduring environment for the dispersal of wellbeing of the society. The state is important if we judge by Georg Hegel's conception of it as an objective order of laws standing over and above and regulating the conflict between atomised individuals of civil society. This is so because the state is a neutral arbiter without which civil society will be chaotic. The state exists to protect its citizens, to ensure the best environment for its citizens to live the good life. In this sense the state can act as instrument for economic development or instrument providing the environment for orderly and reciprocal economic interaction. If that is the case, the state can exercise powers to meddle into the organisation of production so as to promote national power and security as well as the best possible welfare of its citizens.

CONCEPT OF CORRUPTION

According to Nye (1967), corruption is a deviation from the formal duties of a public role because of pecuniary exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence. This includes such behaviour as bribery, nepotism and misappropriation. This view perceives corruption as a deviant behaviour which implies that the normal behaviour will be antithetical to corruption. However one problem with the conceptualisation of corruption by J.S. Nye is the difficulty of its operationalisation in a place where corruption is widespread and regarded as the norm by majority of the people. In the same vein, Huntington (1968) characterises corruption as behaviour of public officials, which deviates from accepted norms in order to serve private end. Along that line, the Bretton Woods Institutions see corruption as the abuse of public office. For the World Bank, corruption is the abuse of public office through the instrumentality of private agents, who actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit (cited in Akanbi, 2002). Beyond bribery, public office can also be abused for benefit through patronages and nepotism in the form of theft of state assets or diversion of revenue (Bello-Iman, 2005). A different angle from the aforementioned is the position of Otite (1986) who posits that corruption is the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour or moral depravity. This conception is different and broader,

because it looks at the moral aspect as well as the distortion of procedures. However, Transparency International defines corruption as behaviour on the part of officials in the public sector, whether politicians or civil servants, in which they improperly and unlawfully enrich themselves, or those close to them, by the misuse of public power entrusted to them (cited in Pope, 1996). Although the definition of the Transparency International is very descriptive, it focuses only on the public sector and excluded the private sector even though acts of corruption in that sector may have implication for the society (Seturia, 1993). The Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000 defines corruption to include bribery, fraud and other related offences like gratification. The Act gave a very wide definition of gratification to mean among other things the offer or promise or receipt or demand of money, donation, gift, loan, fee, reward, valuable security, property or interest in property with the intent to influence such a person in the performance or non-performance of his/her duties (ICPC, 2000). Therefore, corruption entails abuse of trust and enrichment of oneself at the detriment of others.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

We anchored our theoretical framework on the rentier state theory which seeks to explain state-society relations in states where a large portion of incomes comes from rents (Herb, 2002). These rents which are mostly royalties are distributed to the society to relieve them of the burden of tax. A rentier state performs the role of allocating income that it receives from the rest of the world. The rentier state is free to do whatever it wants as long as the domestic economy is not tapped to raise further income through domestic taxation. This makes the rentier state autonomous from society (Luciani 1990, 1994). When it allocates a minimum amount to society to the level that the domestic economy produces, it leaves the state free to do what it wishes with the remaining wealth.

The Nigerian state is a typical rentier state where the income are mainly derived from rent from extractive oil companies and with an unproductive base, the struggle to control the Nigerian state is always fierce among the elites. The Nigerian state is surely an instrument purely designed for exploitation just like many other sub-Saharan African state. This means that the Nigerian state from inception operated a structural system that promotes the interests of the capitalists to the detrimental of the masses. 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. This implies that the Nigerian state was not created to serve the interests of Nigerian citizens.

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 élite 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 élite. Claude Ake (1996) captures 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. This, of course, has shaped the dynamics of politics in Nigeria and made it a zero-sum game in the sense that advancement in economics is synonymous with advancement in politics. The implication of this is the high value placed on political power in Nigeria which has created an obsessive preoccupation with politics since that is the only avenue for economic accumulation. Access to political power implies that the lucky elements would be in charge of the numerous government owned industries and enterprises of which they can lay their hands into the till without being accountable to the general public.

Oil exploration introduced an entirely new element into the structure of Nigerian state; the internal predatory élite saw it as a blessing from above meant only to serve their parochial interests without recourse to Nigerians even those from the communities where the oil is produced. It was in this light that fiscal centralisation that the country witnessed shortly after independence was introduced. Joseph (1987) links corruption to the fall of the Nigerian Second Republic. This as a result of prebendalism in which state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by office holders, who use them to generate material benefits for themselves and their constituents and kin groups. For Seteolu (2005) while clientelism and prebendalism might be mutually reinforcing, the two concepts have separate meanings. Clientelism defines the nature of individual and group relationships within the broader social and political space, prebendalism are essentially a function of the competition for, and appropriation of the offices of the state. According to Seteolu (2005) clientelism assists to understand the mechanism of (how) class control legitimises the lopsided distribution of resources among social groups and enhances the status of the political elite. This character of the Nigerian state makes it difficult to tackle corruption in spite of the measures that have been put in place over the years.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE SUBJECT OF CORRUPTION

The concept of corruption means different thing to different people depending on the individual's cultural background, discipline and political leaning (Gyimah, 2002). However, the manner in which corruption is defined ends up

determining what gets modelled and measured (Jain, 2001). 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 (2002:23) sees corruption in the following perspective:

corruption is an antisocial behaviour by an individual or social group which confers unjust or fraudulent benefits on its perpetrators, is inconsistent with the established legal norms and prevailing moral ethos of the land and is likely to subvert or diminish the capacity of the legitimate authorities to provide fully for the material and spiritual well being of all manners of society in a just and equitable manner.

Corruption from this perspective is seen as "outright theft, embezzlement of funds or other misappropriation of state property, nepotism and the granting of favour to personal acquaintances and the abuse of the public authority to exact payments and privileges" (Desta, 2006:19). Viewed from this angle, the general public is seen as the principal victim and the public officials as the agents.

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 is the buying of votes, special favours to anointed candidates or promises of illegitimate votes to certain candidates. Another type is 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). For Olarinmoye (2008), 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). One aspect of corruption that has contributed to Nigeria's underdevelopment is bureaucratic corruption which does not allow for effective management of resources by the government that could improve the well being of the citizens making it an obstacle to good governance in Nigeria (Lawal and Tobi, 2006). Agba (2010) examines 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.

Corruption has remained one of the most complex problems that have impeded development in Nigeria. Corruption is one of the issues ravaging the foundation of the nation. Ribadu (2006) also states 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 particularly 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. With this attitude perverse in the society, we get nothing but an endemic proliferation of corruption across within the private and public sectors such as the civil service, educational institutions, examination bodies and research institutes, the police, MDAs, private organisations, banking institutions, and political institutions such as the executive, legislature and the judiciary. According to Kaufmann and 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. Furthermore, Kaufmann and Dininio (2006) argue that bad incentives and systems, rather than bad ethics, induce people to act corruptly. If poverty and bad incentive system are critical to the ethical erosion in a state, then high incidence of corruption in the Nigerian public sector may rightly be attributed to poor and inadequate compensatory and remuneration structure. This view is corroborated by Bello- Imam (2005: 27) who argues that 'low wages and salaries (nominal or real) in the public sector relative to wages in the private sector are a source of low level corruption', insisting that 'where there is extreme poverty, the citizens are less able to resist corruption. Corruption may therefore, be defined generally as the misuse or abuse of position, power or procedures for personal or group interests. 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. Corruption seems to be everywhere afflicting both profit and non-profit organisations themselves. In the health sector, it manifests in several ways such as drug diversion, illegal charges, and fraud in product quality, purchase of substandard products, over-billing, theft, diversion and misappropriation of health funds for other items. In educational institutions and examination bodies corruptions are in the form of leakage of examination papers, arbitrary award of marks or certificates under financial or sexual inducement, operation of illegal universities and polytechnic/college of education campuses and collecting money from the public, falsification of results and other data and appointment of unqualified persons. Corruption in the banking sector takes place through cheating of customers. In the Civil Service, corruption also takes place through deliberate introduction on ghost workers, bribery, inducement for processing public documents, and issuance of false documents and falsification of records inflating quotation prices of contracts. In the electoral body we see it in the delivery of

fake voting papers and alteration of voting results. For security operatives it, it manifest in the extortion of money from vulnerable individuals and wrongful detention of innocent persons. In the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) it is such practices as sell of transformers that were meant for public use and distribution of fake bills by officials of PHCN. Corruption reduces the resources available for investment in health sector which lowers the quality of health care services and increases the cost of services. Therefore, preventing abuse and reducing corruption is important to increase for social and economic wellbeing of the society.

Despite the enormous income from oil in the last four decades, 54.4 percent of Nigerians are still poor (NBS, 2008). Many sources have reported that the percentage of the population living below or at purchasing power parity of \$1.25 a day is 64.4 percent (UNDP African Human Development Report, 2012). Access to quality and affordable health services and other basic amenities including safe drinking water and improved sanitation facilities is limited and economic opportunities remain poor for many citizens. With children under 15 years of age accounting for about 45 percent of the country's population (FGN 2004), the burden of the health sector has become overwhelming.

However, despite the increase in the budget over the last two and half decades (1990-2015), the challenges facing the poor masses, have remained enormous. The output in terms of service provision at all the three tiers of government has been very discouraging. The gladiators constantly manipulated the people and the political processes to advance their own selfish agenda, while the society remained pauperised and the masses in a supposedly blessed country wallowed in abject poverty

This is a threat to growth and development for the country. According to African Human Development Report (2012), Nigeria has been found to be among the very few countries that have the highest percentage (27%) of corruption victims who faced a bribe situation in 2008. It impacts negatively on individual or group behaviour leading to vices such as bribery, nepotism, and misappropriation of funds which have become the order of the day. According to Ike (2009), corruption is probably the fastest means to accumulate quick wealth in Nigeria. Hence, it has placed a great need for a critical appraisal of corrupt practices in relation to sociological issues of society pressures during the Fourth Republic.

Measures of combating this malaise of corruption and the challenges it poses, requires an understanding of its causes. Many factors contribute to the spread of corruption in Nigeria. For instance, Dininio and Kpundeh (1999), Dike (2003), and Obayelu (2007) have traced the root causes of corruption in Nigeria to; poor payment system in the country, tepid attitudes of officials who are charged with enforcing the laws lead to corrupt behaviours. Obayelu (2007)

specifically identifies 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; hence most Nigerians are exposed to corrupt practices. Furthermore low salaries and unfavourable working conditions with poor incentives for effective performance are strong indicators of corruption (Obayelu, 2007). Due to the fact that workers in Nigeria both in the private and public sectors are poorly paid and sometimes they are not paid regularly, it gives an opportunity for corrupt practices especially bureaucratic corruption. This is because when workers are not paid they will devise alternatives means to meet their family obligations even if it means infringing on the law (Dike, 2003; Igbuzor, 2008).

There are different forms of corruption in Nigeria. Ovienloba (2007) explains for instance that bureaucratic corruption which is endemic occurs in the public sector. He argues that this kind of corruption frustrates the free flow of administrative provisions for development and those who give in to this kind of corruption care less about the ideals of good governance but only interested in their private gains and benefits. The endemic nature of this type of corruption hinders the essence of good governance and effective delivery of services to the public. Dike (2003) describes bureaucratic corruption as the type that occurs at the low levels or street levels and is experienced in schools, hospitals, police stations and public arenas. Lawal and Torbi (2006) on their part, posit that bureaucratic corruption is an obstacle to the development of Nigeria since it hinders good governance which involves the effective management of resources by the government that consequently improve the well being of the citizens. For Agba (2010), this weakens good governance because policymakers become hesitant in taking decisions to reduce corruption or introduce new reforms to combat it.

However, Dike (2003) sees another type of corruption as political corruption which takes place at the highest levels of political echelon and affects the manner in which decisions are made in Nigeria. This is facilitated through electoral corruption which is the manipulation of electoral process to get ahead of competitors outside of the will of the electorate. But for Olarinmoye (2008), electoral corruption has linkage between electoral fraud or process and poor governance. To him subversion of electoral process leads to the emergence of individuals who pursue parochial interests rather than the overall interest which perpetuates bad governance, poverty and economic underdevelopment in the country.

Corruption cannot be discussed in Nigeria or Africa without examining the state as central to any analysis. Many theorists of African politics trace the problem of political corruption to the debauchery of colonial rule (Ekeh, 1975, 1985; Osaghae, 1988). Eke for instance, has propounded the theory of two publics

where prebendalism as an explanation for corruption was propounded by Richard Joseph. Gurnal Myrdal on his part advances what he calls soft state thesis. Beside this, other scholars have propounded rentier, patrimonial and neo-patrimonial theories of African state all of which are important explanations for the pandemic corruption in Africa and Nigeria in particular. For Ekeh (1975, 1985), the most striking impact of colonialism was the emergence of two publics, the primordial and civic publics which, interacted differently with the private realm in terms of morality Nigerians expected rights and benefits from the state but owe duties (responsibilities) to a native sector (Eke 1975). Ekeh further argues that there is an "amoral civic public realm", a "moral primordial public realm". The civic public realm was associated with illegitimate and exploitative colonial rule and had no moral linkages with the private realm. In this amoral public realm cheating the system was considered a patriotic duty (Ifidon, 1996). As a consequence, the same actors operate in the two realms, the state apparatus is used to build up the layer of the primordial public, thus making corruption the hallmark of the civic public (Osaghae, 1988).

A good citizen of the primordial public is one who gives out and asks for nothing in return and will only continue to be a good man if he channels part of the largesse from the civic public to the primordial public. That is the logic of the dialectics which makes it legitimate to rob the civic public in order to strengthen the primordial public. The acme of this dialectics is corruption which takes two dimensions – the embezzlement of public fund from the civic public and the solicitation and acceptance of bribes from individuals seeking services provided by the civic public by those who administer these services (Ekeh, 1975).

Joseph (1987) in another study links corruption to the fall of the Nigerian Second Republic. This is an outcome of prebendalism in which state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by office holders, who use them to generate material benefits for themselves and their constituents and kin groups. For Seteolu (2005), while clientelism and prebendalism might be mutually reinforcing, the two concepts have separate meanings. Clientelism defines the nature of individual and group relationships within the broader social and political space, prebendalism are essentially a function of the competition for, and appropriation of the offices of the state. According to Seteolu (2005), clientelism assists to understand the mechanism of (how) class control legitimises the lopsided distribution of resources among social groups and enhances the status of the political élite.

The soft state thesis propounded by Gurnal Myrdal also helps us to understand why corruption persists in a country like Nigeria. This theory gives us a better understanding of a postcolonial state and its predicament largely drawn from the Asian experience but applicable to the rest of third world including Nigeria.

A soft state whether democratic or undemocratic is bedeviled with the inability to institute reforms or enforce social discipline. It is a state where the legal system and its paraphernalia are moribund or at least ineffective. Even when framing policies, the authorities (under the control of politico-bureaucratic élite) are reluctant to place obligations on the people, especially in matters of corruption (Myrdal, 1968). Gulthorpe (1975) further explains that a soft state is one in which formal rules (laws, officially stated administrative rules and practices, etc.) are applied copiously and in a lax manner rather than vigorously and consistently. It is a state in which private advantage can be gained and private bargains struck concerning the enforcement or non-enforcement of the rules, as when a businessman bribes a tax official. Apart from money inducement, corruption is generated through kinship sentiment and nepotism. 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 an exception. Therefore, one of the characters of a soft state is its over-permissiveness of corruption and corrupt acts. This explains the non-workability of government anti-corruption agencies instituted by the Obasanjo administration such as the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), the Public Procurement Act, the Fiscal Responsibility Act and Due Process Office. The fact that all these institutions are not working becomes glaring when a look is taken at Nigeria's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of the Transparency International which continue to rank around the bottom of most corrupt country of the world.

Ojo (2011) notes that the reasons for the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria are three: first, when individuals believe and are sure that when they commit a misdemeanor, they will not be caught; second, when such individuals perceive that even when they are caught, they will not be penalised for their wrong doing; and third, when they are caught and penalised, the penalty will be lower in value than the gains derived from the corrupt practice. A good example of this is the recent case involving a Deputy Director in the Police Pensions Fund scam Mr John Yusuf who confessed that he misappropriated about ₦3 billion, but when convicted was asked by the court to pay a fine of ₦750,000, which he promptly did at the court premises, sparking off a national outrage.

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

Corruption is as old as the Nigerian state because the very conception and creation of the Nigerian state was mired in corruption. So the Nigerian state was designed, not to serve the interests of the citizenry but the parochial interests of

the few colonial officials and their collaborators. Even the whole philosophy behind the nationalists' movement in Nigeria was anchored on the objective that Nigeria requires to be liberated from the few colonial authorities so that it could serve the interests of the generalities of Nigerians. This is the understanding that elicited the widespread support the nationalists garnered from the generalities of the Nigerian citizenry.

But one important fact to note is that the transition from intrusive, atomised communities to the anonymous society built on the Westphalian model of the nation-state occurred without creating mechanisms to infuse or enforce these richly rooted African values in governance or its institutions and processes. And more tragically, the elites that inherited powers from the colonialists never thought it wise to reform the colonial state but rather carried on with the patrimony where the colonialist stopped. Over the years after colonial intrusion, the lucre of power and need to hold unto it firmly, had led to further deterioration of the African state, thus we have evolved a bifurcated system of public ethics that appears to subvert our community values at their point of contact with the postcolonial African state and, in so doing, denudes the state of both relevance to the people and the will to protect their best interests. This is a problem of institution and state-building which is fundamental to the systematisation of corruption in Nigeria. This systemisation which is deeply embedded in the fabric of the Nigerian state, manifest itself in different sectors of the Nigerian life but are reinforced in three major areas of counting and accounting as articulated by Odinkalu (2010).

According to him, corruption in Nigeria thrives because, as a system, Nigerians have failed to develop the skills or values for counting in a political economy as all of the crises with corruption and governance that plagued the nation have come down to that. He argues that the Nigerian people have failed to count honestly and unfortunately, there are no consequences for dishonest counting (Odinkalu, 2010). Odinkalu posits that there are three processes that are essential to the effective functioning of a country. These are the processes of legitimating public power (elections); the processes of quantifying the demographic coverage of the country (census); and the processes of estimating and distributing the commonwealth (public accounts, including revenues and appropriations). These three interrelated processes – elections, demography, and public accounts according to him, rely on the basic skills and institutions of honest policy numeracy. In elections, this involves the counting of votes and the conferment of a mandate usually on the persons usually with the greatest number of counted votes. In a census, the people are counted which in turn helps to determine the bases for allocation of representation, social services, revenue and sundry public goods. In the management of public accounts, we quantify in numbers the size of the common wealth, so as to know exactly the pool of

resources that those who have the legitimate mandate through elections can distribute for the benefit of those that we have counted.

According to Odinkalu, the proper conduct of these three signal foundations of public policy making in a modern political economy and this requires the articulation of a coherent national interest, norms of political ethics and values, and an infrastructure of capable state institutions to underpin them. Because so much hangs on this, logic and intuition would suggest that they should be taken seriously (Odinkalu, 2010). The case for Nigeria is however, both illogical and counter-intuitive. The multiple crises of governance that exist in Nigeria are resultant from absence and non-existence of these three signal foundations of public policy. Corruption is such a problem in Nigeria because the process of counting in Nigeria has always been compromised and the institutions that exist to do it are weakened and the processes of counting and accounting without which it is impossible to run a state that works are subverted.

An analysis of postcolonial Nigeria has revealed that this inability to count is the most constant feature in the history of Nigeria since independence. The country have never been able to organise credible polls or census nor developed a credible public accounts management system (Odinkalu, 2010). The first crises of postcolonial Nigeria arose with the 1963 national census, the federal elections of 1964, and the elections in the Western region in 1965. Dishonest counting, these three events was what ultimately preceded the descent into military rule, mass atrocity and war between 1966 and 1970 (Collins, 1970).

The end of the war was followed by an oil boom that was mismanaged by the government. Before the oil boom, there was a national census in 1973 which ended up as controversial as the results were never published. At this time, the head of state, General Yakubu Gowon, publicly declared that far from a preoccupation with knowing the result of the census but Nigeria's national priority was how to spend money. He went on to initiate a bogus and ambitious public infrastructure project requiring massive importation of cement that was done without planning. This was complicated because the people at the helms of affairs were uneducated in international commercial credits, the country received a deluge of useless sand imports that it had not ordered and did not need. This import of sand quickly overwhelmed the capacity of the ports in Nigeria, causing demurrage, lost maritime contracts and revenues, and the leasing of port space in neighbouring countries. This recklessness led to lots of money plunging the country into unnecessary indebtedness and that has been the trend over the years by the successive Nigerian administrations. Rather than find out and fix the source of this obvious mismanagement, Nigeria's leaders sought new frontiers for money without adjusting the way government business was conducted. The various elections conducted were marred by vote rigging and controversial results that led to violence and the various national planning and initiatives to fix the

economic angle could neither bring any solution, however what seemed as a departure from this cycle in June 1993, when it seemed Nigeria had for once broken the curse of a people that could not count with an election that was widely viewed as credible, General Ibrahim Babangida inexplicably nullified the outcome. That action further plunged Nigeria into crisis, forcing him to "step aside" but in doing so, he left the country in the hands of an Interim National Government headed by Ernest Shonekan, former CEO of United African Company (UAC) Nigeria PLC, then the biggest conglomerate in Nigeria and strategically leaving the Chief of Army Staff, General Sani Abacha behind. In this, the country had come full circle from its first contact with British colonial expedition a little over a century earlier when, in 1879, George Tubman Goldie's United African Company (UAC) received a Royal Charter to administer the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. It was under these circumstances the General Abacha, Nigeria's military ruler from November 1993 to June 1998 contrived to appropriate to himself an estimated 3-5 percent of the country's GDP. No one has ever quite managed to put a firm figure on how much he actually stole as issues dealing with the funds he stole have not been fully resolved (Odinkalu, 2010). However, since these events, elections in Nigeria have progressively and successively descended in 1999, 2003 and in 2007 into spectacularly farcical non-events, each succeeding one more jaw-dropping than its predecessor in which counting votes has become too inconvenient to bother with until the appointment of Attahiru Jega started to introduce reforms that are bringing some measure of credibility in that regard. In the meantime, the country still do not have credible census figures; and the collective illiteracy on the actual size of the economy in terms of how much is produced or how much is earned seem to be worsening rather than getting better.

IMPACT OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

Corruption is a cankerworm and can eat any society it besets to death. In fact, there are lots of negative impacts of corruption on every sphere of societal development: social, economic and political. For instance, Ikubaje (2003) posits that corruption is a global phenomenon and its effects on individual, institutions, countries and global development have made it an issue of universal concern. Why is it a concern? Because of the negative consequences it has on society and the citizenry. According to the Lima Declaration, the impact of corruption include the erosion of the moral fabric of society, violation of the social and economic rights of the poor and vulnerable, undermining of democracy, subversion of the rule of law, retardation of development and denial of society, particularly the poor, of the benefits of free and open competition (Ikubaje, 2003). No society sits by and watch to watch corruption retard efforts of society

at growth and development, that is why in many societies it is systemically embedded in the norms and laws to reduce if not totally eliminate the effects of corruption. But the aforementioned notwithstanding, Bello-Imam (2004) has been able to outline comprehensively, the negative consequences of corruption to include:

- (1) The retardation of economic growth in such a way that it lowers investment and retards economic growth.
- (2) The misallocation of talent where rent seeking proves more lucrative than productive work such that talents are misallocated and people will then be lured to rent seeking rather than productive work.
- (3) Corruption also brings about limitation of aid flows as donor agencies are unwilling to put in their money for development projects.
- (4) Corruption also brings about the loss of tax revenue as people and corporate entities evade tax or claims improper tax exemptions thereby resulting in loss of revenues.
- (5) It also leads to adverse budgetary consequences especially when corruption is rampant in the society as budgeted amounts are not used to deliver the required services.
- (6) Corruption also brings about negative impact on quality of infrastructure and public services in the sense that public contracts are procured through a corrupt system thereby resulting in lower quality of infrastructure and public services.
- (7) Corruption often tempts government officials to choose government projects less on the basis of public welfare than on the opportunity they provide for extorting bribes. Under such a situation, large projects, whose exact value and benefit are difficult to monitor, usually present lucrative opportunities for corruption while returns on workers' salaries and textbooks could be zero for the same set of officials.

In summary this is bad and should be confronted with all alacrity because as the former Chairman of Transparency International, Eigen correctly notes that, "corruption does not just line the pockets of political and the business élite it leaves ordinary people without essential services such as life saving medicines.

ANTI-CORRUPTION CRUSADE IN NIGERIA

Nigeria's corruption profile is worrisome and the devastating effects of corruption in Nigeria affect adversely her developmental agenda. Fighting corruption amidst poverty is a lose battle, and will not elicit the support and compliance of the people. This is so vital an assertion because a hungry man is more prone to temptations towards basic needs which undermine his active

participation. In other words, an anti-crusade cannot succeed under conditions of impoverishment. In Nigeria, poverty is very high and it does not seem to be abating. According to UNDP HDR (2013), 6 percent population of Nigeria is below income poverty line of ppp \$1.25 a day. The fight for corruption requires some degree of comfort. How can we stop low income earners from corrupt vices under the present inflationary situation? The situation is worrisome indeed, and its impossible task for Nigeria to achieve sustainable development even in the midst of abundant natural resources and human capital. A survey of nations by Transparency International, a Berlin-based NGO, ranked Nigeria among the most corrupt countries in the world. In 2005, 2006 and 2007, Nigeria ranked as the 8th, 22nd and 32nd most corrupt country respectively among the surveyed countries (Okoro, 2002; Ezeoke, 2009; Pogson, 2009; Transparency International, 2009). Successive governments in Nigeria embarked on various anti-corruption programmes consistently to educate the society at large on the adverse effect of corruption on the economy of the nation and the image of the country in the international scene.

In highlighting efforts of past regimes in the war against corruption, this study takes a cue from the General Murtala Muhammed war against corruption in 1976, which resulted in the major purge in public and private sectors; the Jaji Declaration in 1977 by Olusegun Obasanjo, sign-posting the commencement of the second-phased battle against the creeping culture of corruption, bribery and indiscipline; the Ethical Revolution of Shagari from 1981 to 1983; War Against Indiscipline by Buhari-Idiagbon in 1984; the National Orientation Movement in 1986, and the Mass Mobilisation for Social Justice by Babangida in 1987; to the War Against Indiscipline and Corruption by Abacha in 1996. The country is more corrupt than the imagination of the outside world. Corruption transcends to our unemployed youths who have metamorphosed to security risks to the society. Cases of Advanced Fee Fraud (also called 419), kick-backs, up-front payment of ten percent of contracts value to government functionaries for contracts awarded, gratifications to public office holders for executing their legitimate functions in their respective offices, etc. are common occurrences in Nigeria (Duruji and Azuh, 2014, Azuh, 2014).

Unfortunately, the conventional institutional instrument (judiciary) provided for by the constitution for the fight against corrupt practices is not immune from the disease including the legislative institution. This is evidence from the high profile scandals that a large number of members of the National Assembly have been involved appeared to have undermined the capacity of the Assembly to serve as anti-corruption agent. Since these institutions could not perform their statutory roles, there is need to create independent commissions that will fight the monster. To collaborate, writers on legislative studies in Nigeria view that legislative institution has been very weak (Omoweh, 2006; Lafenwa, 2006;

Alabi, 2008). For corruption to be tamed, leadership must be firm and decisive, ever behind the anti-corruption institutions for their actions to bear fruits. According to the need to institutionalise the efforts of government in waging war against corruption in Nigeria Obasanjo's administration sponsored the bill that gave credence to the law that established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC). This is a critical advancement in our march towards social development and it is a continuum to previous programmes designed to fight corruption. In addition to the EFCC and ICPC, other related anti corruption offences commissions include the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), the Public Procurement Act, the Fiscal Responsibility Act and Due Process Office. The earlier two agencies were mandated to apply Criminal Code, Penal Code, and Recovery of stolen public property. They have also the powers to investigate, search, and seize any property subject to investigation and arrest.

CHALLENGES OF ANTI-CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

The fact that all these institutions are not working becomes glaring when a look is taken at Nigeria's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of the Transparency International which continue to rank around the bottom of most corrupt country of the world. Invariably, the anti-corruption crusade appears only potent on paper but in reality only little was achieved. Thus challenges of anti-corruption are:

- (i) Lack of good governance.
- (ii) Loss of faith in government.
- (iii) Political interference.
- (iv) Lack of political will and accountability, institutions fighting corruption require leadership commitment for them to have impact and play a meaningful role.
- (v) Weak judiciary.
- (vi) Poor wage structure and remuneration.
- (vii) Ineffective law enforcement agencies.
- (viii) Inconsistency in administration and policies.
- (ix) Erosion of value systems.
- (x) Lack of effective public education and awareness of masses on their rights as well as against bribery, corruption and related offences.

CONCLUSION

Corruption has systematically become part of the fabric of the Nigerian society. The nature of the Nigerian state in itself engenders corruption and the

implication for the society has not been palatable. But corruption has been long recognised both by the government, civil society and the populace as a hindrance to development for the Nigerian society. Several measures have been adopted to tackle corruption in Nigeria but all the efforts are hitting the brick-wall. The reason for this is not far-fetched; 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.

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