

Corruption in Nigeria: an Appraisal

Kayode, Olufemi Runcie
 Department of Social Sciences
 Faculty of Social Sciences and Communication Studies
 Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

“Nigeria could be one of the most prosperous nations but instead, it has squandered oil and mineral wealth generated horrendously, unfair income distribution and has become notorious as one of the world most corrupt country” *Awojobi (1982)*

ABSTRACT

Corruption pervades every continent of the world however it is endemic in Nigeria. It is said to be the root cause of every ill bedeviling the nation, the primary cause of stagnancy, gross underdevelopment, high rate of criminality and terrorism. This paper intends to examine corruption in Nigeria, causes and effects with a view to suggesting methods for effective amelioration.

INTRODUCTION

The word “corruption” is derived from the Greek word “corruptus” meaning aberration or misnomer. Corruption indeed is a global phenomenon that cuts across global divide. It is a cankerworm that is bedeviling every country of the world, though its effect differs from one country to another depending on the attitude of the people towards it and the seriousness with which the government tackles its menace. Bin Dang (2011) in his PHD thesis argued that corruption understood as abuse of public office is persistent feature in human societies throughout time and space and contemporaneous corruption scandals not only occur in developing countries such as Nigeria, India and China where corruption is regarded as a norm, but also in developed economies such as France, Britain and America. The sale of Parliamentary seats in rotten boroughs in the late 19th and early 20th century are two famous historical examples. Even in Scandinavian countries like Sweden and Norway which are supposedly free from corruption, managers of state owned companies have been found to take bribes. Dike (2011) gave allusion to the universality of corruption when he wrote in his paper that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had to relieve some of its members their seats because they had taken bribes and all the commissioners of the European Union (EU) resigned because they were found to be corrupt beyond acceptable limit. He wrote further that in the United States recently two multinational business organisations, Enron Corporation and WorldCom, were charged for fraud.

In Nigeria corruption is endemic. There is no gainsaying the fact that it pervades every facet of the country’s social, political and economic system. There is no structure or department in Nigeria that is free from corruption and its ancillary problems. Corruption is a social malaise that has holistically permeates all the nerves of any polity. It is contagious and malignant to the physiology of any political system. Once it sets into any part; it automatically contaminates all the strata of the systems socio-political structures in ways symmetrical to the spread of a bush fire. Aluko (2002). Osheviri (2002) said inter alia that the problem of Nigeria is corruption. The average Nigerian is corrupt and we need to shed this toga. Given the enormous resources God has blessed us with, it is a shame we are in situation where nothing works. There are no good roads, water and electricity. In Nigeria, corruption lives. It is so palpable that it can be felt and touched. The whole economic machinery of the country stinks and ooze with corruption.

Olanipekun (2013) had this to say, corruption, no doubt, is one such challenge and a huge one at that. For many years, Nigeria and her teeming masses have been straining under the yoke of corruption. The cankerworm has not only burrowed deep into the fabric of the society, it has inflicted a serious damage to the national psyche and grossly undermined successive developmental efforts aimed at placing the country at par with the rest of the modern world. Little wonder Olagunju.(2012) opined that corruption has been institutionalised in Nigeria. Transparency International in their perception index of 2012 ranked Nigeria as the 37th most corrupt country. Scoring 27 out of a maximum 100 marks to clinch the 139th position out of the 176 countries surveyed. It shared the position with Azerbaijan, Kenya, Nepal and Pakistan. In the report Togo, Mali, Niger and Benin fared better than Nigeria

Commenting on the transparency report, the following Nigerians had these to say

Mike Chuduz “I think this ranking is wrong. Those who did the perception study don’t live with us to know we ought to be at the bottom of the ladder...the sort of money being stolen by politicians and contractors daily makes Nigeria of deserving least placement “ **Nicholas Chieme** “No no no no who rates this? This is real cheating our birth right”. **Ofiah Charles** “Who rates this? Then who is number 1?” **Nicky Diplomacy**” I don’t

believe this report. The Nigeria I know today remains the most corrupt in the world. It is a lawless society. The law is made to indict the poor ones only, while the leaders run the resources for the benefit of them and their loved ones only. The common man has no share in the resources of the nation.

It is disheartening that in spite of this perception, the country does not appear to be ready for the fight against corruption as indicated by the recent development in the country. The case of Ibori the former governor of oil rich state of Delta that was let off the hook by the court in Nigeria only to be jailed in the United Kingdom for corruption and the state pardon granted to the convicted former governor of Bayelsa state come to mind.

The advent of corruption in Nigeria has been traced to the first republic. Awolowo (1979) said since independence our governments have been a matter of few holding the cow for the strongest and most cunning to milk at the expense of the others. Corruption is in the first republic, no doubt, its existence was at manageable level and also clouded in incessant political imbroglio. Ten of the twelve military Governors of the administration of General Yakubu Gowon were found guilty of corruption by a probe panel. It will appear; however, that corruption became official and institutionalized during Babangida and Abacha regimes. The annulment of June 12, 1993 President election is the high point of President Babangida corruption issue and long after the demise of General Abacha his loots are still being discovered all over the world. Akindele had this to say about the regimes of Abacha:

“On a contemporary note, the proclivity of Dictator, General Sani Abacha and his men for kleptocracy and ruination of the nation’s economy through pen robbery and looting of the national treasury is unequalled in annals of Nigeria’s history’

The Nigeria Planet.Com (2013) contends that the discovery of oil and the consequential wealth which flows there from to the country is largely responsible for the rise of corruption in Nigeria. Prior to oil wealth, agriculture was the country economic mainstay, particularly Cocoa, Rubber, Groundnut etc. However these were shoved into oblivion with the discovery of oil which became the country main source of earning. It opened Nigeria into a large flow of large sum of money. The money from oil in a year was far more than what was made from agro based sources for several years. In a bid to harness the new wealth to leverage infrastructure, roads, bridges, airports etc huge contracts were awarded without regard for normal process. Government spent money without much control paving way for corruption to hold sway ever since and it has remained till today, spiralling, unfortunately, out of control. In his analysis of the connection between corruption and political leadership in Nigeria, Ohai (2013) in his article published in the Punch Newspaper quoted Michael Ogbeidi, associate professor, Department of History and strategic studies, University of Lagos, as saying that, “during the first four years of the Obasanjo administration, federal ministers allegedly stole more than N 23 billion from the public coffers, an audit report released by Vincent Azie, acting Auditor General of the federation, showed that the amount represented financial frauds ranging from embezzlement, payments for jobs not done, over-invoicing, double-debiting, inflation of contract figures to release of money without the consent of the approving authority in ten major ministries”

It is contended in Punch of 29th May instant that the present government of president Jonathan Goodluck does not appear to possess the requisite will to fight corruption in view of his lack of sincerity, the Alamiyeseigha state pardon amply demonstrate that. There are also issues of misplaced power in various governmental quarters which is believed to be fuelling corruption; state governors are the alpha and omega of the people’s funds without requisite checks. It is only in Nigeria that the Central Bank Governor can donate one hundred million naira (N100, 000.000) to institution or people without recourse to any check and balancing authority.

DEFINITION AND TYPES OF CORRUPTION

Corruption, which currently is a burning issue in political and academic circles, has attracted varied definitions. Akindele (1995) defines it as any form of reciprocal behavior or transaction where both the power / office holder can respectively inflate the inducement of each other by some rewards to grant illegal preferential treatment or favour against the principle and interest of specific organizations or public within the society, overall corruption covers such act as using ones office for pecuniary advantage, gratification, influence peddling, insincerity in advice with the aim of gaining advantage, less than full day’s work for a full day’s pay, tardiness, slovenliness. Osoba (1998) defines corruption as an anti social behavior conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms and which undermine the authorities to improve the living conditions of the people. Jens Chr. Andvig et al (2000) opined that the phenomenon of corruption ranges from simple act of payment contradicted by law to an endemic malfunction of a political economic system. Arvind Jain (2001) sees corruption as acts in which the power of public office is used for personal gain in a manner that contravenes the rule of the game. The World Bank defines corruption as the abuse of Public Office for private gains. Aluko (2002) stated very strongly that corruption appears to have become a permanent feature of Nigerian polity. It had become completely institutionalized, entered into the realm of culture and the value system; it is now a norm and no longer an aberration. The young ones are born into it, grow up in it, live with it and possibly die in it. The aged are not left

out as they re-socialized and began to conform in it. Perhaps simply put, one may define corruption as acts which are at variance with acceptable legal standards and behavior.

Corruption is complex and multifaceted. It takes various forms and functions in different context. However, the types commonly identified by various authors are: Grand corruption, political corruption, Bureaucratic (Petty) corruption, Legislative corruption, Systemic corruption and Sporadic (Individual) corruption.

Grand Corruption takes place at the high level of policy formulation end of politics. Elaine Byrne (2007) believed that Grand corruption is usually but not always synonymous with political corruption. Arvind Jaide (2001) opined that

Grand corruption refers to act of the political elite by which they exploit their power to make economic policies as elected officials or in the government's role of a benevolent social guardian. Corrupt political elite can change either the national policies or the implementation of the national policies to serve its own interest at some cost to the populace

- Political corruption is usually any transaction between the private and the public sector actors through which collective goods are illegitimately converted into private-regarding payoffs. This is often used synonymously with grand corruption or high level corruption. This type of corruption, Elaine Byrne (2007) says takes place at high level of political system when politicians and state agents use the authority of the state to sustain their power, status and wealth, It is when the laws and regulation are abused by rules to side stepped, ignored or even tailored to fit their interest.
- Bureaucratic corruption, this is also referred to as small scale or petty corruption. This is the everyday kind of corruption that takes place at the implementation end of policies where the public officials meet the public. Arvind Jaide (2001) say Bureaucratic corruption refers to corrupt acts of the appointed bureaucrats in their dealings either with their superiors or the public. The public may be required to bribe the bureaucrats either to receive a service to which they are not entitled or to speed up a bureaucratic procedure. A bribe may provide services that are not supposed to be available. This manner of corruption appears to be the most common in Nigeria. Evidence of this pervades every facet of Nigeria system: the hospitals, school, police, courts, licensing and tax offices.
- Legislative Corruption refers to the manner and extend to which the voting behavior of legislators can be influenced. Legislators can be bribed by interest groups to enact legislation to suit their whims and caprices. It is a common
- saying in Nigeria that "Ghana must go "(a local bag commonly used in Nigeria) must and do passes hand between the legislators and the executive in most cases for the executive to have their ways with bills at the National Assembly and respective state assemblies.
- Systematic corruption is when corruption is an integral and essential aspect of the economic, social and political system. It is a situation in which a major institution and process of the state are routinely dominated and used by corrupt individuals and groups and in which most people have no alternative than to deal with corrupt officials. This, no doubt, is acceptable norm in Nigeria.
- Sporadic (Individual) corruption, this is opposite of Systematic corruption, it does not occur regularly, however it can undermine morale and sap the economy of its resources.

CAUSES OF CORRUPTION

The causes of corruption are plethora and several reasons have been attributed for this, they include: great inequality in the distribution of wealth, political office as the primary means of gaining access to wealth, the weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanism, the absence of strong sense of national community (Bryce 1921) compulsion for a short cut to affluence, glorification and approbation of ill-gotten wealth by general public, ethnic and tribal loyalty.

In Nigeria, the causes of corruption are not farfetched from the above identified ones. Chiefly amongst the causes of corruption in Nigeria are:

-Brazen display of wealth by public officials without any consequences whatsoever. It is a common fact in Nigeria that before people get into office whether political or civil service, some, in most cases, most of the people have modest if not even poor income, however few months into office, they began to display wealth that is out rightly disproportionate to their income. They become owners of expensive properties, drive fleet of expensive cars, relocate their children education from the local schools to foreign schools overseas and acquire properties in exclusive and choice parts of the city. It is no secret that the best houses in reserve areas of cities in Nigeria are owned by civil servants and public office holders. The question is how do these people whose total income throughout their working life could never have afforded one of the properties they own become owners of fleet of properties? Nobody asked, nobody cares, no effective control or check system. Nigeria is seen as national cake where you take your own share when opportune to do so. It is only in Nigeria that the margin

between one's present status and stupendous wealth is just an office, you get there you are made. In Nigeria you can sleep a pauper and wake up a millionaire. So well and good

-Family ties, influence and obligation, the feeling of obligation to assist family members as one of the opportunities of office. As a matter of fact once a person gets into office, the conclusion of the family members is that such a person has come into wealth and he is expected to use the office to benefit himself and entire family members. It is a common saying that if certain office holders fail to make wealth at the time of occupying the office, then the officer will never make it again as if the office is a venture to make wealth. The pressure from family members and the urge to meet these demands sometimes puts so much pressure on these officers that they began to deep their hands into public coffers.

-Avarice and arrantly dangerous get rich quick syndrome is a trend that is besetting the fabric of the country and consuming everything in its part. Evidence of greed and get rich quick mentality is palpable and cuts across every sector of the society be it public or private .Appointment into office is seen as an opportunity for grand pilfering. In Nigeria today everybody is on the fast lane, the end justifies the means. What is important is to make money, it does not matter the source of the wealth. Nobody ask anyway. Yahoo-yahoo and 419 (stealing by false pretenses) are mere play things in Nigeria. Ritual killings are on the rise, maybe we should pause and wonder why agitation into political office is a do or die affair? Is it as a result of genuine desire to serve? The story is told of an honourable member of the House of Representative from Ondo state previously resident in the United States of America, on getting into office exclaimed that the money he made within the short time of getting into office he never made in all his years of sojourn in America. It is just grab, grab and grab without an iota of consideration for the people who should be the ultimate beneficiary of their services and at the expense of value that should be added to the society in terms of society resources such as good roads, water, electricity etc.

-Poor Infrastructure and Lack of Access to Economic Opportunities, Lipset and Lenze (2000) observed that those going through corrupt means to achieve their objective have little or no access to opportunity structure. The hindrance to opportunity according to the study could be as a result of their race, ethnicity, lack of skills, capital, material and other human resources. They observed further that the culture that stresses economic as an important goal but never the less strongly restrict access to opportunities will have higher levels of corruption. This appears to be true of Nigeria society where several workers are under employed and by implication under paid. Varying paid structures with same qualifications depending on where you find yourself. An average Nigerian must provide for himself water, electricity, security and other basics of life, if he must enjoy seemingly comfortable existence. As a matter of fact the challenges of meeting the burdens placed on persons as a result of the dilapidation of public infrastructures and collapse of public institutions are some of the fundamental reasons why corruption thrives in Nigeria.

-Breakdown in Morals, Societal and Ethical values. It is believed among African traditional practitioners that African traditional religions have elaborate system of morals and levels of discipline that are expected of different groups of people. Simbine quoting Egberongbe (1998) Observed that the traditional Ifa corpus associated with the Yoruba speaking of South West, Nigeria imposes dos and don'ts on man in relation to nature dictates. This is to make an individual conscious of his or her role in the community to be a good citizen and to contribute to social stability and prosperity. Ifa abhors amongst others stealing, fraud, pride and avarice to do otherwise is visited by instantaneous justice. He opined further that the justice system received from the West is part of the causes of corruption because it is too slow and devoid of any spiritual which explains why Nigerian leaders can swear to the Bible to preserve the constitution and uphold public interest and then proceed to prey on the state. He believed with Ifa or any other deity one cannot display act of dishonesty and go scot-free because the foundation of conscience among the Irumole(gods) is based on absolute piety.

EFFECT OF CORRUPTION

It is consensus of opinion amongst writers that corruption has dire detrimental effect on the development and social welfare of corrupt nations. Karata (1999) argued that corruption is detrimentally pronounced on the social cultural economic and political foundation of corrupt country. It is also considered to be an impediment to foreign investment. Munro (1995) speaking along this line opined that corruption discourages investments, limits economic growth and alters the composition of government spending often to the detriment of future economic development.

It is pertinent to point out that despite the general perception that corruption is evil; some school of thought believed that corruption has some beneficial value; they contended that corruption helps to overcome bureaucratic rigidities and helps to maintain allocation of efficiency when there is competition between bribers but not interestingly between officials. Bardhan(1997) small side payments to officials could speed up bureaucratic process and thus promote economic growth Leff (1964) Leys (1970) Karfmann (1998 and Wei (2000) show that there is a positive relationship between the incidence of bribery in a society and the time managers of international firms have to spend with bureaucrats. However ,the danger Identified in this kind of

situation is aptly described by Jain when she said once bureaucrats recognized their potential of enhancing their income through petty corruption, they enact regulations that require increase interaction between the managers and the bureaucracy or they refuse to provide “free” services without a fee, thus, even if bribery speed up individual transactions, the number of required transactions in the presence of bribery may increase sufficiently to offset the efficiency with which each transaction is carried out. This argument seems to be true of Nigeria situation which underscore why some scholars argued that corruption has been institutionalized in Nigeria. The truth of the matter is that nothing moves in Nigeria if something does not change hands, this is evidently palpable in every public office and or department. Files may be left forever or forgotten somewhere if the owner fails to play ball. Police and twenty naira are synonymous. As a matter of fact the Civil and Political offices in Nigeria ooze and stink of corruption.

The consequences of corruption are basically the same all over the world. In Nigeria the consequences include:
--Impact on Socio political Economy, It is trite that corruption has dire detrimental effect on the economy of the country, It is said to be responsible for wrath in the country’s economy. An Article titled Fighting Corruption the Nigeria Way contained in This Day Newspaper of January 5, instant seems to aptly describe corruption in Nigeria and the effect in these words

“When you are awarded a contract in a Federal or State ministry, even when you did not participate in the bid process, all you need is to know somebody who knows the Permanent Secretary, one who can speak not only his language, but also speak the idiolect of corruption. They will tell you how to circumvent the system, how to get certificate of completion for a job without ever knowing where the site of the project was supposed to be. They will tell you how to process your papers for payment, even with a VIP speed. It is all about knowing who is who. And then next year, that undone-but-paid-for- project gets back to the budget. And the circle begins all over again. At the end of the day, you wonder how such humongous sums (our federal budgets are now in Trillions, Yes, Trillions!!!) fail to transform our cities, towns and villages, year in year out.”

--Reduction of public spending in Education. It is my contention that incessant strikes in the educational sector in Nigeria are due majorly to under financing. The government prefer to spend more on items where they can get bribe easily, large and hard project to manage such as Airports, highways etc

--Corruption has succeeded in breeding generations of lazy, indolent and dishonest Nigerians. An average Nigerian no longer believes in hard work and honest means. This is due to arrogant display of ill-gotten wealth by corrupt politicians and office holders. Since the society seems to have acquiesced in the face of this wanton robbery. It has appeared to be right to be corrupt and be rich at whatever cost. After all the end justify the means.

--Discourages Foreign Aides and Assistance, Duke in his article submitted that International organizations are reluctant of further aids and financial assistance to countries perceived to be corrupt. He wrote further that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have withdrawn development assistance and introduced tougher anti-corruption standards into lending policies. Recently, the United States threatened that it might suspends further aid to Nigeria following the state pardon granted the disgraced former governor of Bayelsa state that was impeached for issues bordering on corruption.

Other consequences of corruption includes low quality of goods and services, underdevelopment, poor infrastructures, underfunded institutions vis a vis poor graduates output, , hospitals and health facilities becoming mere consulting wards, high rate of criminal activities, among restive youths in the country. The country, today, has been divided along tribal lines each having its own militant groups, maiming, killing and committing all sorts of atrocities. These group include the highly vicious Boko Haram in the North, the Oodua People’s Congress (OPC) in the South West, Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in the South East and the Niger Delta Boys in the South South amongst others. It is believed generally that these groups are rooted in corruption and are sustained by corruption. Little wonder the American President Barrak Obama observed that Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria was due principally to corruption.

Legal Framework

Corruption thrives in Nigeria; this is not due to dearth of legislations or institutions to fight corruption. As a matter of fact various legislations exist in the law books directed at combating the menace of corruption and successive governments have put in place several measures/institutions with the desire to eradicate or at least reduce corruption to the barest minimum. Some of these legislations include:

- Section 15(5) of the 1999 Constitution which states expressly that the state shall abolish corrupt practices and abuse of office
- The Fifth Schedule of the same Constitution provides for Code of Conduct for Public Officers at the Federal and State levels and in actualizing this requirement the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal were established. The Code prohibits bribery and abuse of office by public officers
- Corrupt Practices Decree of 1975 promulgated by the Murtala /Obasanjo’s. Regime. This has since been repealed

- The Public Complaints Commission Acts of 1976 established The Public Complaint Commissioners vested with powers to investigate allegations bordering on misuse of office, administrative incompetence and abuse of power
- Recovery of Public Property (Special Military Tribunal) Decree of 1984 of Idiagbon / Buhari's regime. This decree established Tribunals for the investigation of alleged corrupt public officers. The same regime also created War Against Indiscipline
- The Advance Fee Fraud and other Related Offences Decree of 1995 enacted by the Abacha's regime and Re-enacted as the Advance Fee Fraud and other Related offences Act of 2006 by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's regime
- Corrupt Practice and other Related Offences Act, 2000
- Corrupt Practices, The Money Laundering Act, 2004
- The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, 2007
- Due process offices at the State and Federal level of government was established to ensure that standard processes are followed in the execution of government activities and projects.

Farida Waziri (2010) identified the following as some of the agencies specifically put in place to combat corruption. The agencies include:

- The Nigerian Extractive Industrial Transparency Initiative (NEIT)
- The Independence Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC)
- The Technical Unit of Governance and Anti Corruption Reforms (TUGAR)
- The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC)
- Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU). This later transformed into Bureau of Public Procurement.

With the avalanche of legislations and existing institutions primarily put in place to address the issues of corruption, one wonders why corruption still holds sway in the country? The answer to my mind is not farfetched. The truth is that successive governments in Nigeria have been paying lip service to the fight against corruption. As a matter of fact the political leadership that should be at the fore front of fight against this deadly malaise lacks the will to fight because they are extremely corrupt. Every department of government that is in one way or the other connected with the fight against corruption; that is the police and other Anti graft Agencies and even the judiciary is corrupt. Mike Ikhariale (2012) observed that the Chief Justice of Nigeria Justice Aloma Muktar alleged that the office of the Attorney General (AGF) is undermining its sacred responsibilities of prosecution. She says "the court cannot on its own prosecute criminal cases; there must be the willingness of all prosecuting agencies to prosecute cases brought before our courts, especially high profile cases of corruption and all others.

Combating and Control of Corruption

It is trite that one of the reasons corruption seems to defy every attempt to curb it is simply because "corruption cannot fight corruption". In the city of Armed robbers the law against armed robbery is a mockery". The truth of the matter therefore is that those saddled with the responsibilities of fighting corruption are themselves corrupt and thus lack the will to seriously fight corruption. The political class and those with responsibilities of addressing corruption must desist from corrupt practices and be law abiding. They must resist the temptation of using their offices for personal gains and see themselves as trustees of the people's power and money and should not run the state as personal estate and the resources as their exclusive preserve which they can utilize at their whims and caprices. Fighting corruption no doubt requires commitment and determination from the political leadership. This was well expressed by Centre for Advanced Social Science (CASS) when it stated that the problem is that government which is needed to defeat corruption is the core of the problem in Nigeria. It is the government that has contributed mostly to lowering the moral tone of society in Nigeria. It is in the government that corruption thrives most, wasting resources we need, defeating all prospect to democracy and turning all of us to hardened cynics with no concern for public good, no faith in public morality or even in its possibility

Re-orientation and change in value system: there is a need for reorientation of all and sundry in Nigeria to a better value system. Corruption is deep rooted and can be said to flow in everybody's vein, there is the need therefore to ensure adequate education and enlightenment on the ills of corruption and the dire consequences on the country. As a matter of fact it would not be overreaching if it is suggested that orientation and requisite enlightenment should start at the primary school level and possibly be built into the curricula of Tertiary institutions. There must be constant public enlightenment through all means of mass communication.

Rule of Law: Nobody however highly placed should be above the law. The tenets of rule of law must be adhered to in the fight against corruption. The judgment of the court which sentenced a man to forty years imprisonment for stealing a mobile phone and another that sentenced a supposed big man to mere two to seven years for stealing billions of naira is not good for the fight against corruption. If corruption must be dealt with the sacred

cow syndrome must be jettisoned. Kanu Agabi,(2002) Attorney General and Minister of Justice in Chief Obasanjo's regime observed in a meeting with a commissioner of police as follows:

“Some of our leaders are doing everything they can to make the work of the police impossible. Big men are the greatest criminals and except you bring them to book the rate of crime may not reduce but if you bring three or four of these big men to book the rate of criminal activities would reduce. He declared, arrest ministers, arrest the big people and others would fear.

Public servants and politicians now appear to have a leeway with the introduction of Plea Bargaining which allows them to plead guilty to lesser offences by negotiating the other and serious ones. The Abacha family was to keep about \$1 billion so as to return the over \$100 billion of the Abacha loot to the federal government. The Hong Kong Corruption Ordinance of 1971 Approach can be adopted as panacea for Nigeria's corruption debacle. In Hong Kong, in view of the devastating corruption crisis prevalent then, a working party was inaugurated in 1968 to look into the problem of corruption. This resulted in the prevention of Bribery Bill 1970, which came to force in 1971. It was amended in 1973 and 1974. The law inter alia makes it an offence for public officials to solicit or accept bribery, to maintain a standard of living above that commensurate with his present or past official emoluments or to be in control of pecuniary resources or property disproportionate to give a satisfactory explanation to a local court as to how he managed to maintain such a standard of living. The relevant section 10(2) of the Ordinance was further amended to read thus :where a court is satisfied in proceedings for an offence under section 1(b) that having regard to the closeness of his relationship to the accused and to other circumstances, there is reason to believe that any person was holding pecuniary resources or property in trust for or otherwise on behalf of the accused, such resources or property shall until the contrary is proved be presumed to have been in control of the accused. It will be interesting to know that convictions under this law include among others an order to pay to the value of the advantage received by the accused or may be ordered to pay a sum not exceeding the amount of the pecuniary resources of the value of the property the acquisition of which he could not satisfactorily explain to the court. He may also be asked to pay or sentenced to a number of years in prison.

The Hong Kong approach to me becomes significant to the extent that it questions ill gotten wealth even after leaving office and once it can be shown that a person definitely is exhibiting wealth he could never have acquired in his life time while in or outside office, then questions should be asked. Civil servants, public officials even people working with private organizations whose income in all their years of services are determined and known have choice houses, cars, sponsor their children abroad for foreign education even those schooling in Nigerian are in extremely expensive schools.

These could never have been done with their income; the question is what the sources are? Evidence of these is palpable. If a person income is not more than one hundred thousand naira (N100,000) and he rides a car of two million naira (N2,000,000) he should explain how he got the excess funds, failure to give explanatory answer, he should be made to pay the excess of one million, nine hundred thousand naira (N1.9 million) back to the coffers of the state or he goes to jail. If corruption must be curbed drastic measures must be taken. Robert McNamara, former President of the World Bank and Ford Motor Corporation gave the following suggestions on successful campaign for the control of corruption in Sub-Saharan Africa. He opined as follows:

- a. There should be direct, clear and forceful support of the highest political authority: the president or Prime Minister
- b. Encourage a free press and Electronic Media to forcefully report to public on corrupt practices in the society
- c. Organize civil society to address the problem of corruption brought to light by the process of transparency and the activity of the media
- d. Introduce into government watchdog agencies- anti corruption bureaus, inspector general , auditor general and ombudsmen(government officials appointed to receive and investigate complaints made by individuals against abuses or capricious acts of public officials etc) which will identify corruption practices and bring them to public attention
- e. Minimize and simplify government regulations, particularly those involving the issuance of licenses, permits and preferential positions thereby restricting opportunities for rent seeking by corrupt means
- f. Insert anti bribery clauses into all major procurement contracts and with the assistance of both International Financial Institutions and Bilateral Aid Agencies insist that International Organizations bidding of African Procurement contracts accept such clauses and the penalties associated with the violation
- g. Introduce similar anti bribery clauses into contracts relating to privatization of Government enterprises and the development of natural resources
- h. Ensure that enforcement is predictable and forceful

- I. To criminalize the act of bribery, prohibit the deduction of bribes for tax Purposes; and erect barriers to transfer Western Financial Institutions of Financial gain derived from corrupt practices

Other steps to control corruption include:

Legislation requiring compulsory declaration of assets by all and sundry at the point of engagement and disengagement and forfeiture to the state of assets improperly accounted for. Corruption is a disease worse than cancer, it is a crime with murderous Consequence, in effect it has claimed several lives, the perpetrators are the cruelest kind of criminals. It is not out of place therefore if maximum punishment is prescribed for convicted corrupt persons. Sam Tsokwa, Chairman House Committee of Rules and Business in his interview with Rotimi Akinwumi, opined very strongly that the only solution to the problem of corruption is to make the offence punishable by death. Whether death sentence or not there is no doubt that dire consequence is required if the disease must be tackled. The most potent weapon will be genuine and sincere intention to really want to fight corruption. The right attitude and will must be developed

on the part of the enforcers and they themselves must see corruption as an anathema. Above all only people of high and proven integrity should be appointed into positions of responsibilities.

Conclusion

It is palpable from the foregoing that corruption prospers in Nigeria not due to lack of Legislations and or necessary anti graft agencies but due to lack of will, guilt and justification. To combat corruption every hand must be on deck. There must be complete re-orientation of our value system. The adulation of money / wealth irrespective of the source must be discouraged and people must be taught to ask questions about sources of wealth shrewd in mystery. The younger ones must be properly educated on the ills of corruption; their mind must be conditioned in a way to abhor corruption. Rule of law must be given proper meaning. Nobody should be above the law. and the judiciary should assert its independence and not allow itself to be an appendage of the executive arm of government. Assets acquired in manner which borders on corruption should be confiscated and persons convicted for corruption should be made to face the full rigour of the law.

References

1. Abel Osheviri (2012) Corruption is the Heart of Nigeria Problems, Nigeria, Saturday Tribune, 1st September
2. Akindele, S.T (2002) Corruption: An analytical focus on the problem of its conceptualization. *Ife Psychologia: An International Journal*
3. Aluko, M.H (2002) The Institutionalization of Corruption and its impact on Political Culture and Behaviour in Nigeria, *Nordic Journal of African Medicine*
4. Awojobi, A. (1982) *Where our oil money Has gone*, Lagos, Awojobi Publishers
5. Ayobami, O.O (2011) Corruption Eradication in Nigeria: An Appraisal <http://un/iL.unL.edu/LDP/>
6. Bardhan, P. (1997) Corruption and Development: A Review of issues, *Journal of Economic Literature*, xxxv/3 (September)
7. Bin Dang (2011) The causes and consequences of corruption, PHD Thesis, Queensland University of Technology
8. Bryce James (1991) *Modern Democracies*, New York, Basic Books
9. Centre for Advance Social Science: Brief to participation for the Seminar on Corruption, Port Harcourt, December 2-4 (1993)
10. Chux Ohai (2013) *The vanishing war against corruption*, Punch Newspapers, Lagos, Punch Nigeria Limited
11. Corrupt Practice and other Related Offences Act, 2000
12. Corrupt Practices Decree of 1975
13. Corrupt Practices, The Money Laundering Act, 2004
14. Dr. Jonathan Okeke (2013) *Corruption in Nigeria, Ethical and Biblical Considerations*, Nigeria, University of Calabar
15. Elaine Byrne (2009) Definition and types of corruption. Notepad (from the net)
16. Farida Waziri, (2010) *Corruption and Governance in Nigeria*, Lagos, Kleen Foundation
17. Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 Constitution
18. Independent Corrupt Practices Commission(ICPC) (2013) *Nigeria and Corruption*, Abuja, Nigeria planet.com
19. Jen Chr. Andvig et al (2000) *Research on Corruption: A Policy Oriented Survey Final Report*. chr, Michelsen Institute (CMI) Norwegian Institute for International Affairs (NUPI)
20. Julian Recquet (2013) U S Threatens to cut off aid to Nigeria over corruption issues, The Hill, Sahara reporters: <http://the.hill.com/blogs/global-affairs/Africa/288485>. Us threatens to cut off

21. Kanu Agabi (2002) The Vanguard 30th March 2002 quoted in Dike, V.E. A Paradigm for Effective Control
22. Kaufman, p (1998) Research on Corruption: Critical Empirical Issues in Jain 1998
23. Kurata P(1999) Transparency International Issues, 1999 Corruption Rankings, Crossroads, VOL.5. No.9 p17
24. Leff, N.H (1964) Economic Development through Bureacratic Corruption, America Behaviourial Scientist 8
25. Ley, C. (1970) What is the problem about corruption in A.J Herdenheimer, ed Political Corruption: Reading in Comparative Analysis, Ney York: Holt Reinehart
26. Lipset and Lenz (2000) Corruption, Culture and Markets, Harrison & Huntington (eds) p113
27. Mauro,P (1995) Corruption and Growth. The Quarterly Journal of Economics. 110, No 3
28. Mike Chuduz (2012)Outrage of Corruption Ranking for Nigeria, On line Publications, Sunset News papers of outrage over corruption ranking for Nigeria/hmt
29. Mike Ikhariale (2012) High Profile Corruption Cases and The Rule of Law, Lagos, Punch Newspaper of September 16 2012
30. Monica Mark (2012)Nigeria Fuel Subsidy Scheme hit by Corruption, United Kingdom, The Guardian of Thursday 19th 2012, Guardian.co.uk
31. Nicholas Chieme (2012))Outrage of Corruption Ranking for Nigeria, On line Publications, Sunset News papers of outrage over corruption ranking for Nigeria/hmt
32. Nikky Diplomacy (2012))Outrage of Corruption Ranking for Nigeria, On line Publications, Sunset News papers of outrage over corruption ranking for Nigeria/hmt
33. Obafemi Awolowo (1979) Africa, London file/iic/users/hp//governments/ corruption in Nigeria.htm
34. Ofiah Charles (2012))Outrage of Corruption Ranking for Nigeria, On line Publications, Sunset News papers of outrage over corruption ranking for Nigeria/hmt
35. Olugbenga Olagunju (2012) Corruption Control in Nigeria, Holistic Approach, Advance in Arts, Social Science and Educational Research Vol.2 No. 1, Nigeria , Science Education Development Institute
36. Recovery of Public Property (Special Military Tribunal) Decree of 1984
37. Robert S MCNamara (1997) Suggestions on control of Corruption in Sub Sahara Africa, United States Information Agency, November 17 1997
38. Sam Tsokwa(2013) Only Death Sentence Can End Corruption in Nigeria, Nigeria Daily Independent Newspaper of Sunday 17th of March 2013
39. Simbine, A.T (2012)Religion, Ethics and Attitudes towards corruption, Ibadan, NISER
40. The Advance Fee Fraud and other Related Offences Decree of 1995
41. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment)Act, 2007
42. The Public Complaints Commission Acts of 1976
43. Victor Dike (2011) Corruption in Nigeria: A Paradigm for effective control
on line Publications, Nigeria world. Com. Features articles/corruption/htm
44. Wei (2001) Does “Grease Money” speed up the wheel of commerce, Working Paper WP/00/64 Washington D.C Monetary International Fund

This academic article was published by The International Institute for Science, Technology and Education (IISTE). The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open Access Publishing service based in the U.S. and Europe. The aim of the institute is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the publisher can be found in the IISTE's homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

The IISTE is currently hosting more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals and collaborating with academic institutions around the world. There's no deadline for submission. **Prospective authors of IISTE journals can find the submission instruction on the following page:** <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> The IISTE editorial team promises to review and publish all the qualified submissions in a **fast** manner. All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Printed version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Recent conferences: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

