

Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

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Abstract

The study examines political leadership and corruption in Nigeria. One of the greatest threats to socio-economic and political development of any nation is corruption. Democracy, on the other hand, is based on the will of the people and it is generally agreed that it is the best form of governance suited for allowing people to live in dignity and freedom. With huge resource expansion, unparalleled and unprecedented corrupt practices, it is unthinkable to expect democracy to thrive and derive dividend therein. Nigeria, a country richly endowed with natural resources and high quality human capital is yet to find its rightful place among the comity of nations. A major reason that has been responsible for her socio-economic stagnation is the phenomenon of corruption. The kernel of the study rests on the fact that political leadership and corruption are interwoven and it is against this background that it examines the corrupt tendencies of the political leadership class in Nigeria and its implications for socio-economic development. The study adopts secondary sources of data collection for overall understanding of the subject matter. Writings were accumulated from works of researchers in the territory of examinations under audit. The study contends that for corruption to be reduced in Nigeria, the constitution should be reviewed in such a way that all pro-corruption clauses should be removed from it. For example, the "immunity clause" which protects people in power from being prosecuted while in office has not only hindered effective prosecution of corrupt public and private officials in Nigeria, it has also made corruption to thrive.

Keywords: Political Leadership, Corruption, ICPC, EFCC, Fourth Republic, Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria's inability to consolidate her democracy is blamed largely on the high level of corruption in the country (Aluko 2008) Corruption can be said to be attempt to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private gain at public expense or the misuse of public power for private benefit. Corruption has existed in human society for a long time and remains one of the problems in many of the world's developing economies with devastating consequences. Corruption, as a phenomenon, is a global problem, and exists in varying degrees in different countries (Agbu, 2003). Corruption is not only found in democratic and dictatorial politics, but also in feudal, capitalist and socialist economies. Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist cultures are equally bedeviled by corruption (Dike, 2005). Corrupt practices are not an issue that has just begun today; but the history is as old as the human society (Lipset & Lenz, 2000), Corruption not only distorts

competition, hinders economic growth and endangers the stability of democratic institutions; it pulls down the moral foundation of society (Inokoba & Ibegu, 2011).

In Nigeria, corruption is one of the many unresolved problems that have critically hobbled and skewed development (Ayobolu, 2006). It remains a long-term major political and economic challenge for Nigeria (Sachs, 2007). It is a canker worm that has eaten deep in the fabric of the nation. It ranges from petty corruption to political, bureaucratic corruption or systemic corruption (International Center for Economic Growth, 1999). World Bank studies put corruption at over \$1 trillion per year accounting for up to 12% of the GDP of nations like Nigeria, Kenya and Venezuela (Nwabuzor, 2005). Corruption is endemic as well as an enemy within (Agbu, 2003). Corruption has been the primary reason behind the country's slow pace of development (Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), 2006). This is evident in Transparency International consistent rating of Nigeria as one of the top three most corrupt countries in the world (Ribadu, 2003).

As part of the efforts at fighting corruption and strengthening the economy, Nigeria has since 1999 embarked on an aggressive pursuit of economic reforms through privatisation, banking sector reform, anti-corruption campaigns and establishment of clear and transparent fiscal standards since 1999. The major aim of the economic reforms in Nigeria is to provide a conducive environment for private investment (African economic Outlook 2006). The reform process has the following three key pillars: improved macroeconomic management, reform of the financial sector, institutional reforms, privatization and deregulation, and improvement of the infrastructure. The importance of infrastructure for economic growth and development cannot be overemphasized. The poor state of electricity, transport and communications is a major handicap for doing business in Nigeria. The Federal Government of Nigeria through its Central Bank made progress in consolidation of the banking system which prior to the reforms was highly fragmented, with many banks having very small and undiversified capitalization. The reform stipulated a minimum paid-up capital of \$188 million, up from \$15 million, with a deadline for compliance at the end of December 2005. This resulted in a record number of bank mergers and acquisitions. As a result, the number of banks in Nigeria has shrunk from 89 in 2004 to 25 in December 2005 (Aluko, 2008).

Extrapolating from the above, various governments over the years have also continued to apply one measure or the other in stemming the tide of corruption, albeit in an uncoordinated manner until the establishment of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) and the Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC) by the democratically elected government of Olusegun Obasanjo. This new approach offered a boost to anti-corruption in Nigeria. The unprecedented powers and promise of political support given to these institutions led many analysts to believe that a lasting solution might have been found in Nigeria's perennial struggle with corruption. As it later turned out, these institutions achieved very little in

terms of deterring Nigerian public officials and politicians from looting public resources. Therefore, this paper therefore examines the impact of political leadership on corruption in Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification

Political Leadership and Corruption

Leadership has been defined in so many ways that it is hard to come up with a single working definition. However, leadership may be defined as a body of people who lead and direct the activities of a group towards a shared goal. It also denotes the ability to lead, direct and organise a group. In line with this understanding, Ekong (2010) notes that leadership is a process whereby an individual directs, guides, influences or controls the thoughts, feelings or behaviors of other human beings. All the above considered, it can be discerned that leadership is a phenomenon and occurs in a situation calling for interaction between a group of people, the problem or task and its possible solution. Following from this, a leader refers to a person or an actor in any social situation in which his ideas and actions influence the thoughts and behaviors of others (Offong, 2012) Consequently, leadership is a process of social influence by which a person inspire others to accomplish an objective and directs the organisation in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent (Chemers, 2002). A leader, therefore, is expected to demonstrate qualities, which include but not limited to good character, vision, tact, prudence, and ability to lead by example.

Political Leadership refers to the ruling class that bears the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of a political entity by setting and influencing policy priorities affecting the territory through different decision-making structures and institutions created for the orderly development of the territory. It could also be described as the human element that operates the machineries of government on behalf of an organised territory. This includes people who hold decision making positions in government, and people who seek those positions, whether by means of election, coup d'état, appointment, electoral fraud, conquest, right of inheritance or other means (Wikipedia, 2009). Broadly defined, however, political leadership goes beyond the ruling elites that directly manage the affairs of a territory; it embraces the totality of the political class that has the capacity to manipulate the machineries of government even from behind the scene.

Corruption

The concept of corruption has no single generally accepted definition or meaning. The word “corruption” has been variously defined by many scholars, agencies; writers from different standpoints and perspectives. Sometimes, the boundaries of corruption are hard to define. However, there are series of literature on corruption. According to Klitgaard (1991), corruption exists when an individual illegally or illicitly puts personal interest

above those of the people and the ideals she or he is pledged to serve. It can involve the use of policy instruments in the area of tariffs and credit, agricultural projects, housing policy, the enforcement of laws and rules regarding public safety, the management of contracts and loans among many other policy instruments.

Brooks (1979) defines corruption as the intentional mis-performance or neglect of a recognized duty or the unwarranted exercise of power, with the motive of gaining some advantage more or less directly personal. Alatas (1990) defines corruption as the abuse of trust for the sake of private benefit. These definitions are indicative of the issues subsumed under corruption but do not sufficiently bring out the prioritization process by the individual, which is, putting self above the collective. To Gire (2001), corruption is defined as a betrayal of trust resulting directly or indirectly from the subordination of public goals over that of the individual. Thus, a person who engages in nepotism has committed an act of corruption by putting his family interest over those of the larger society. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) defines corruption as “abuse of authority or trust for private benefit; and is a temptation indulged in not only by public officials but also by those in position of trust or authority in private enterprises or non –profit organizations” (IMF, 2000). To Nye (1967) as cited in Tsuwa (2011), Corruption is a behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private gains regarding pecuniary or status gain.

The World Bank (1997) defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gains. Public office is abused for private gains when an official accepts, solicits or extorts a bribe. It is also abused when an official accepts, solicits or extorts a bribe. It is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Public office can also be abused for personal benefit even if no bribery occurs, through patronage and nepotism, the theft of state assets or the diversion of state revenue. Accordingly, in the Anti- corruption Act (2000), the Government of Nigeria describes corruption as “literally antithetical to development and progress”.

Political Leadership and Corruption: The Nexus

As prior expressed from the former literary works, corruption discovers articulation in the abuse and maltreatment of open office for private or financial purposes. From the beginning, we said that this brand of defilement includes the infringement of open trust which in itself is an invalidation of the aggregate implicit understandings went into between the administered and those in charge of issues of state. It happens in two stages. From one perspective, it includes the unwholesome cornering or preoccupation of open assets into private coffers through the instrumentalities of crude gathering without any potential repercussions by the open office holder. Then again, it shows itself in the self-assertive utilization of badly gotten riches and the compelling use of state forces to either

sustain itself in office or keep up the norm by each accessible methods fundamental. Preye (2011) states that this type of corruption happens at the degree of political basic leadership field and even at the circle of electioneering exercises.

It was Paul (1997) who argues that the nature, extension and potential for corruption may shift starting with one nation then onto the next. This is so on the grounds that it is just by making reference to lawful standards that the reason for politically degenerate act can be recognized. In another measurement, vote based system, which has shaped the reason for debasement today in Nigeria, might be portrayed as a type of government under which the electorate practice overseeing power straightforwardly or through their delegates intermittently chosen by them (and by and large chosen by the forces that be). Any political clime might be named vote based system just on the off chance that it gives empowering institutional structure to the articulation and, in the last examination, the amazingness or generally of the prevalent will of the electorates on the fundamental question of social bearing and strategy (Anifowose & Enemu, 1999; Paki & Inokoba, 2006). Alternately, the basic component of majority rule system incorporate, however, not restricted to sacred guideline or what has been differently dedicated 'rule of law', lead of free and rough free and reasonable decisions, assurance of minority intrigues and opportunity of residents (yet inside the details of the law); making helpful condition for the acknowledgment and additionally realization of residents goal and, most importantly, relative provisioning of human existential to serve the best number (Erunke, 2012).

As needs be, Heater (1964) agrees with the perspectives on Anifowose and Enemu (1999), Paki and Inokoba (2006) and Erunke (2012) about the central significance and principles of a vote based society when he asserted that majority rules system is basically a technique for sorting out society politically, financially and socially with all its fundamental fixings been placed into thought as a considerable column that supports such social orders. Heater (1964) at that point plots five factors without which a general public can't label itself really fair. They incorporate equity, power of the individuals, regard for human right and human life, the standard of law inside the setting of reasonableness or potentially judicious utilization of state assets for the general pleasure in the overflowing people.

Battling corruption is an essential establishment for equitable administration and the standard of law, which are the structure squares of manageable advancement in a nation (TNV, 2014). In Nigeria, open jobs and duties are generally endowed to the open office holders by the individuals in a mission for good administration, particularly in the current popularity based framework. The vast majority of the occasions, this trust has been debased whereby these open jobs and assets were utilized for private advantages. Investigating, the World Bank (2000) has recognized three particular parts of administration, which are thusly utilized as markers in dissecting the impacts of defilement on vote based administration in Nigeria. These are;

- i. The type of political system, which alludes to the level of democratization in the nation
- ii. The level of responsibility in the administration of the country's monetary and social assets for national improvement
- iii. The limit of governments to recognize, detail and actualize improvement arrangements. This identifies with the fitness of government.

Theoretical Framework

There is hardly any valid paper that has no theoretical construct. It is on this note that this paper adopts "Elite theory". In general sense, the elite theory is based on the idea that every society "consist of two broad categories:

- i. The selected few, who are able and, therefore, have the right to Supremes leadership
- ii. The vast masses of people who are destined to be ruled (Varma, 1999; Agarwal, 2012). Elite theory does not actually have its origin from political science it was developed by sociologist but was adopted by political scientists in analyzing politics. The theory was popularized into politics by Harrold Laswell. The theory was used to oppose socialism and democracy because the elitist argue that in every society there is always a small clique of people that are engaged in policy formulation and implementation, unlike the claim by socialism and democracy that the masses are involved in governance.

The major proponents of Elite theory includes; Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), Garetano Mosca (1854-1941), Roberto Michels (1876 - 1936) and Ortega Y. Gasset (1883-1955). All the proponents are of the view that in every society political leadership plays vital roles in its development or otherwise, and society is divided into two groups ruling and non-ruling elites Pareto on his part, believed that every society is ruled by a minority that possesses the qualities necessary for its accession to full social and political power. They are known as the elite. To him, the Elites consist of those successful persons who rise to the top in every occupation and stratum of societies; there is elite of Lawyers, elite of mechanics and others (Varma, 1999). In its pyramidal structure, Pareto used circulation of elites" to explained that in every society, there is an unceasing movement of individuals and "elites" from higher to lower level, and from lower to higher levels resulting in a considerable increase of their degenerate elements in the classes which still hold power .

Mosca, on the other hand, opined that, in all societies, two classes of people appear a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class is directed and controlled by the first in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent and supplies the first in appearance at least with the instrumentalities that are essential to the vitality of political organism. Mosca believes that, in every society elites, the governing elite tries to find a moral and legal basis for its being in the citadels of power and represent it as the

logical and necessary consequence of doctrines and beliefs that are generally recognized and accepted. Michels in his part used his concept of “Iron law of oligarchy” described that, leadership is a necessary phenomenon in every form of social life. That all order and civilization must exhibit aristocratic features that as organization or polity grows in size more functions have to be delegated to an inner circle of leaders.

The majority of human beings are apathetic indolent and are incapable of self-governing. However, Michels is of the opinion that, leaders easily take advantage of these qualities to perpetuate themselves in power. Ortega Gasset placed his assumption that, a nation’s greatness depends on the capacity of the masses to find their symbol in certain chosen people (Leaders), or whom it pours out the vast store of its vital enthusiasm”. A nation is organized as a result of selected few individuals as their leaders. In politics, the elite denote specifically those who exercise preponderant political influence in a community. There are differently designated as the power elite, the ruling class, political entrepreneurs, the establishment and the governing minority. Politics is seen in terms of a small group dominating the whole society and taking the decision which makes the mark and history of politics. Even when there is a mass participatory democracy, consensus is generally brought about by a few or supported by few people who constitutes informal exclusive group (Mba, 2006).

Proponents of the theory like Pareto (1848-1923) believe that every society is ruled by minority that possesses the essentials qualities needed for accession to full social and political power. Those who get to the top are always the best. The elites consist of those successful persons who rise to the top in every occupation and stratum of society. Thus, there are elite of Lawyers, elite of mechanics, elite of thieves, and even elite of prostitutes (Varma, 1999).

In addition, the theory assumed that, people in every society fall into two divisions; those who have important or decisive political power and those who have none as a result cannot exercise any decisive power over government output functions. The major argument here is that in every society a minority of the population takes the major decisions while the majority simply obeys. The elite perform the political functions, monopolize power and enjoy the advantage of power. The non-elite on the other hand are directed and controlled, they are assumed by the elitists to be indolent, slavish and un-intelligent. In other words, what there elites are trying to point out that the elites in the society are entitled to political leadership and by implication they influence the political system and happening

However, this theory is considered suitable for this research because since it argues that elites are bound for political leadership as such they influence policy formulation and implementation. Leaders in the context of this study are also viewed as political leaders and they influence policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria. The attitudes and conducts of leaders in office have a far-reaching impact on the development process of their areas since they are charged with the responsibility of spear heading the affairs of the respective society. In other words, since leaders make decision on behalf of the people or

masses, when the leader makes wrong decision or does things that are unethical, or morally and constitutionally wrong. For example engaging in corrupt practices, it will definitely impacts on the national development of the nations or society they are leading. The theory is suitable for this study because political leaders influence policies and programmes that engendered national development in the state. The leaders in Nigeria, at every successive administration, their attitude and conducts in office has a far-reaching impact on the developmental process since they are charged with the responsibility of spear heading their affairs of the nation. Thus, leadership success or otherwise is the product of elite decision which definitely impacted on the development of that society they are leading.

However, in spite of the usefulness of the theory in understanding formulation and implementation of policy that thereby enhances development in a given society, the theory is criticized as follows:

- i. That the elitist has failed the scope of influence wielded by numbers of the elite class.
- ii. That the elitist believing that power is cumulative have tended to regard all influential as exercising political which is not the case in Nigerian state as civil society organization also influences the policies and programmes.
- iii. That there is no significant correlation established between leadership on the hand, and the hierarchies of wealth, status and power

Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

It is unarguable that for a country to achieve growth and development, the people must do away with all forms of corrupt practices to create an enabling environment for development to thrive. The level of corruption experienced in all spheres of Nigeria public life has posed a serious challenge to the nation, in search of an enduring socio-economic, political and technological development.

Corruption has been made manifest in both the economic and socio political spheres of Nigeria. Specifically, the high incidence of corruption in Nigeria and the fourth republic in particular (1999-date) cannot be overemphasized. Corruption is a cancerous ailment that has eaten deep in the public sectors of Nigerian economy. In short, there is no aspect of the public service that is spared. In fact, considering the various cases of corruption being perpetrated in governance since 1999 till date, one can easily conclude that corruption has actually been institutionalized in the country.

One major challenge confronting the new democratic government since 1999 is endemic corruption in every arm of governance (Executive, Legislative and Judiciary) including all aspects of public sectors. For example, government department such as; Customs, Immigration, Inland Revenue, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Nigeria National Petroleum Co-operation (NNPC), Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN),

Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), all in one way or the other bear tails of corruption.

A number of corrupt practices have been carried out in the executive arm of government since 1999. The corruption was not limited to federal government alone. Both the state and local government are equally guilty of corrupt practices. For example, at the state government level, a number of ex-governors who ruled between 1999-2007 were alleged by EFCC to have been involved in financial impropriety when they were in government within these years. Among them are Lucky Igbinedion of Edo State, Ayo Fayose of Ekiti State, Peter Odili of River State, Chimaroke Nnamani, of Enugu State, Saminu Turaki of Jigawa State, Orji Uzor Kalu of Abia, James Ibori, Diepreye Alamieyeseigha of Bayelsa State and Rev. Jolly Nyame of Taraba State. For instance, James Ibori was arraigned on a 170-count charge of money laundering over N9.1 Billion (Kofarmata, 2005). Orji Uzor Kalu of Abia was arraigned on a 191-count charge of money laundering, criminal diversion of public fund, official corruption totaling N5.2 Billion. He was also accused of using his loot of N 3.1 Billion to fund SLOK Airline and two banks in the Gambia and Sierra Leone, in addition to owning houses in London and U.S just to mention a few (Kofarmata, 2005).

One important area where corruption was noticeable in the executive arm of government with specific reference to the federal government in particular, was in the area of road infrastructure. Since the birth of the fourth republic, majority of federal roads across the six geo-political zones were awarded contract by different successive government at huge amount, up till today none of these roads have been completed. For example, the report of the CBN on the survey of highways in Nigeria revealed the total number of roads to be constructed throughout the six geo political zones between 1999 and 2001 but was not constructed as a result of outright embezzlement. Among those notable roads are Owerri-Onitsha roads, Enugu-Onitsha road, Owerri-Umuahia road (all in the South-East zone) : Lagos-Ibadan-Ife road, Benin Lagos road and Ibadan Ilorin road (all in the South-West); Akwanga- Makurdi road, Ayingba-Makurdi road (all in the North Central) and Bauchi – Gombe road, Bauchi-Ningi,(all in the North-East) (CBN Report, 2013). The report showed that less than 10% of the funding request made by the federal ministry of works and housing for road maintenance was appropriated. Also, it was revealed that no fewer than 37 contracts awarded by the federal government for the construction and rehabilitation of roads between 2002 and 2012 awarded by the federal ministry of works valued at N308.13billion were yet to be completed. (Sachs, 2014)

In the legislative arm of government majority of corruption being carried out deals with cases of bribery scandals which are being levelled against chairmen and members of the probe panels of different special commission set up within the legislative body to investigate reported cases of corruption committed in the country. It is very pathetic that some members of these committees who are expected to investigate cases of corrupt practices also ended up becoming corrupt. In fact, there were several cases of this ugly

incidence since the fourth republic began. In the National Assembly, both the Senate and House of Representatives were guilty of this scenario. In a bid to address cases of corrupt practices leveled against the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), the House of Representatives set up a committee known as Ndudi Elumelu Committee on power probe in 2007. The committee started well by inviting both former ministers of power and other officials of NEPA but up till today, the report of the committee was not only disowned by some members of the committee but drowned by counter-attacks. Besides, the chairman of the power probe, Hon Ndudi Elumelu was alleged to have involved in corrupt practices during the hearing of the case. (Ugochukwu, 2009).

Another noticeable area where the federal legislatures have equally involved in corruption, is the recent allegation of bribery scandal levelled against the Chairman of the House of Representation Ad Hoc Committee on fuel subsidy regime probe and other members of the committee following the removal of subsidy on fuel on 1st January 2012 by the president, Dr Jonathan which led to the increase in fuel price from N65 per litre to between N138 and N200 per liter across the country. The Nigeria Labour Congress, Trade Union Congress (TUC) and other associations and Civil Society groups after agreement had been reached with the presidency resulted in the partial removal of subsidy on fuel and the reduction of fuel to N97 per liter. The development that later followed was the investigation of fuel subsidy being paid in the importation of fuel into the country. This made the House of Representatives to constitute an Ad Hoc Committee on fuel subsidy regime probe. The committee was constituted and Hon. Farouk Lawal, former Chairman, House Committee on Education was made the chairman of the committee. The committee also started well initially like that of power probe committee (The punch, Monday 9, 2012). Having worked for some month, the committee was able to discover about 18 oil companies that were not registered but collected subsidy on fuel illegally from the federal government. It was in the process of listing the names of the oil companies that it became known that the chairman of the committee had been bribed with \$3 million by one of the oil marketers, so that the name of his company will be removed from the list. In order to investigate the allegation of bribery scandal leveled against Hon Farouk Lawal, House of Representative Committee on ethics and privileges was set up. The chairman of Zenon Oil and Gas Limited, Mr. Femi Otedola was invited by the committee and thus, testified before the committee that a sum of \$620,000 was given to Hon Farouk Lawal and the clerk of the committee, Mr. Boniface Emenalo, from agreed \$3 million as part payment for the clearance deal (Orji, 2016). It was also asserted that, Hon. Farouk Lawal gave the said amount to Hon. Adams Jagaba, Chairman of House of Representatives Committee on Drugs, Narcotics and Financial Crimes. But Hon. Jagaba disapproved of the allegation levelled against him by Hon Farouk, up till now, Hon Farouk has not been able to prove his innocence of the allegation. (Orji, 2016)

Also, in the upper House of National Assembly between 1999 -2007, there have been allegations of corruption. In August 2000, Okadigbo was impeached for corruption

and misappropriation of funds, after his impeachment, Okadigbo was indicted for spending public money on cars and car furnishing and had to resign in October of that same year (Falana, 2012). Also in March 2005, Education Minister Fabian Osuji was fired for allegedly bribing the National Assembly Appropriation Committee to secure more funds for his Ministry. He formally protested that such behavior is common at all levels of government. In April, Senator Adolphus Wabara resigned after President Obasanjo accused him of accepting Osuji's 51 million naira (US \$400,000) bribe. In addition, the former president daughter, Senator Iyabo Obasanjo Bello, Chairman Senate Committee on Health was enmeshed in two different financial scandals. In December 2007, Iyabo Obasanjo was involved in a contract scandal amounting to N3.5 billion involving her and an Austrian firm (Falana, 2012).

In the Judicial Arm of Government, various cases of corruption since 1999 were mainly centred on bribery involving the acceptance of financial or material gain and non-material gain, with the sole aim of influencing judicial proceedings or administration of justice. For example in 2005 arising from the handling of the appeal in a senatorial contest in Anambra State, Okwuchukwu Opene and David Adeniji, both of the Nigeria Court of Appeal, were removed from their post for well-proven act of corruption. In fact, their judgment ended in bizarre drama when members of the audience, in an expression of anger when the judgment was being read, forced the judges to flee in different directions. A committee set up under the auspices of the National Judicial Council and chaired by a retired judge of the Court of Appeal established that Opene took 15 million naira (US \$100,000) in bribe, while Adeniji accepted 12 million naira (US \$80,000) (Akinkuotu, & Affe, 2009).

This trend of corruption in the judiciary continued in 2007 following the outcome of the general election which was recorded to be worst election ever conducted since post-colonial Nigeria. The result of the general election spawns the largest amount of election cases in the country's history. Allegations of corruption were made a fresh against members of the tribunals. Again, though no judges were caught, in some cases those allegations contained credible claims that could have been further investigated but for the most part were not. In Anambra State, for example, a member of one of the state tribunals resigned as its chairman, citing pressure from unnamed sources to transfer cases on three different occasions to another tribunal for no given reason (Oke, 2002). The chairman of the tribunal that first examined the 2007 presidential election James Ogebe, was promoted to the Supreme Court just days before the judgment of the tribunal apparently, reacting to public outrage at this development, he stayed away from the tribunal on the day Judgment was given. The government had no explanation for why the promotion not at least was delayed until the job of the tribunal was completed.

Corruption was also noticeable in the outcome of the Court of Appeal Judgment over the 2007 governorship election in Kebbi State. At the tribunal established in the state, the election of Governor Usman Saidu Dakingari (PDP Candidate) was nullified.

Meanwhile, at the Court of Appeal, strange thing happened to the earlier verdict given at the tribunal. The Court overturned the judgment of the lower Court in favour of the PDP Candidate, ordinarily, it is expected of the Court of Appeal to uphold the decision of the lower Tribunal, especially where the lower Tribunal is not bias in its judgment as seen in the similar judgment of the Tribunal and Court of Appeal in the 2007 governorship election in Ondo, Ekiti and Edo States. (Ugochukwu 2009). The case of Kebbi State was entirely different; a more favourable verdict went to the party whose governorship candidate of PDP married to the daughter of late president Umaru Yar'Adua The dilemma was made more real given that Court of Appeal did not indicate that it was departing from the earlier judgment, as required by the principles of precedent. It however became clearer that the Court of Appeal that overturned the tribunal judgment of the 2007 governorship election in Kebbi State was corrupt following the judgment of the Supreme Court. All these are among the few recorded cases of corruption levelled on the judiciary. (Falana, 2012).

Another Government department where corruption is clearly manifested is Customs and Excises. According to allegations of corruption against officers of the department usually take the form of collusion of officers with importers to bring in prohibited items. Some of the officers at the Ports are involved with the actual falsification of import documents, with a view to avoiding payment of full duty. It is on record that Customs Officers over the years connived actively with smugglers to allow banned or contraband goods into the country. This process allows billions of Naira that should be government revenue into private pockets (Agboola, 2015)

Also, in the Department of Federal Inland Revenue Service, the greatest challenge in the fight against corruption is, perhaps, the propensity of the average Nigeria to evade tax payment at every opportunity. But this is further complicated by widespread dishonesty and in effect collusion between the tax payers and certain personnel of the Board of Internal Revenue Service to declare false returns usually lower than the actual income, in exchange for underserved financial gain (Orji, 2016).

The Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), like other parastatals, has its own share of scandals and financial improprieties. One good example of corruption which has for long been practiced is the usual collusion between certain Power Holding Company of Nigeria, officials and electricity consumers to deny the company of its legitimate revenue. There are even cases of certain PHCN officials who connive with other individuals of dubious character to move from place to place stealing meter boxes and apportioning them to other prospective electricity consumers usually at very low prices. This is outright stealing and criminal and could be regarded as the zenith of corruption. (Agboola, 2015).

Furthermore, the men of the Immigration Department usually liaise with their counterpart in Customs Department. However, both departments are under the direct control of Internal Affairs Ministry. Like other government parastatals, the department has

been known to produce its own bad eggs. Corrupt officials of the department have also been known to collaborate with persons of dubious characters to rip off foreigners especially at the airport. Immigration officials have for instance, been accused on several occasions of giving illegal aliens easy passage into the country, usually at an agreed fee, unscrupulous men of the department not only assist aliens, they often times secure for them fake resident permit. This is criminal, unpatriotic and a betrayal of trust reposed on them. (Orji, 2016).

Also, there is no gainsaying the fact that, the Nigerian police have an array of corrupt officers. Though, the Police was primarily established to enforce law, order and peace within the society, it has been discovered that the force has not been quite successful in this respect because, the society inadvertently put barriers on their path. The average Nigerian, who is quick to offer the Police constable some form of kola to escape retributions for a crime or misdemeanour committed, will also accuse the Police of corruption. The Police in Nigeria since the inception of the fourth republic have been known to collaborate with dubious characters to defraud other Nigerians to even engage in the more violent crimes of robbery (Oke, 2002)

It was reported in October 2013 that Nigeria was losing 150,000 barrels of petroleum products daily to oil theft 'and vandalism. It was believe those criminals are members of the president's inner circle who have turned the nation's petroleum product into their own personal commodity, while the federal government watched in pretence as if they are oblivious of what is going on, the nation's economic mainstay is dwindling away (Ugaka 2015). Between January and March 2013 the Nigerian government had lost 190 billion naira to oil theft in Niger Delta (Ugaka, 2015). It is interesting to note that Nigeria's foreign reserve was 2 billion dollars when Obasanjo came into office in 1999. Though Obasanjo cannot be exonerated from the cause of the problems in Nigeria but at the end of his tenure in 2007; foreign reserve had risen to 43 billion dollars. From 2007-2014, there has not been any significant changes in the nation's foreign reserve and of course it was announced by CBN that the nation's foreign reserve dropped from \$44.8bn on November 18,2013 to \$41.4bn on February 18,2014.(CBN Report, 2014). In addition to the crippling foreign reserve, the Emir of Kano and the former governor of CBN Lamido Sanusi, expressed dismay over the collapse of the excess crude oil from 11.5bn to 2.5bn just within a year. He had continued to call on President Jonathan to check the nefarious activities in Nigerian National Petroleum Coperation (NNPC) with regards to financial misconduct. With all the obvious proof of billions of dollars disappearing from NNPC, yet the presidency continued to gamble with the lives of Nigerians by compromising their oath of office. He lamented over the reckless exploitation of the nation's petroleum products. Jonathan suspended Mr. Lamido Sanusi because he had consistently voiced concerns against the uncontrollable level of corruption that had become a trade mark of his government. The former CBN Governor continued to call for investigation on the 20 billion dollars that NNPC had failed to remit into the nation's account. He also stated that

since 2005, NNPC had not been audited. If within the period of nineteen months, NNPC officials have lynched 20 billion dollars, one could only imagine how much had been stolen since 2005 (Ugaka 2015). Mr. Lamindo Sanusi became a subject of ridicule by criminal elements in Nigeria who have subjugated the state to financial and economic imbroglio. He was labelled as the worst criminal in Nigeria simply because of his attempt to curb the excesses in the Jonathan's administration. (Sajo, 2015).

There is no need to state that, corruption has been institutionalized in our public life. In fact, people seek to occupy the highest political offices in the country to have unfettered access to huge sums of money to loot. The over \$200 billion dollars earnings from oil wealth has not translated into any meaningful development. Rather, it has become a source of nightmare due to recent hostilities from the host-Communities in the Niger-Delta region. What is experienced from the Niger Delta despite several years of oil exploration are scares of pains and underdevelopment and above all excessive deprivations and sometimes intimidation of the people of the region. (Jev, 2011).

Howeve, since the Buhari administration declared war on corruption, hitherto untouchable Nigerians have been hauled into the EFCC's net. Once powerful men now sit in detention facilities of the agency and prisons across the country. High ranking politicians and former and serving military chiefs now take turns at the EFCC's interrogation facilities while awaiting formal arraignment in court. Few of those arrested include those of former governors of Imo and Jigawa States, Ikedi Ohakim and Sule Lamido, both of the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP). They were accused of money laundering, embezzlement and misappropriation of funds running into the billions of naira. Mr. Timipre Sylva, a former governor of Bayelsa State and chieftain of the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) who played an active role in the electioneering campaign of President Buhari was also tried on corruption charges instituted under the present administration. Rear Admiral Murtala Nyako, a former Adamawa State Governor and chieftain of the APC who had fled the country shortly before his impeachment in 2014 returned to the country on Saturday May 30, 2015, 24 hours after the swearing in of President Buhari, possibly hoping for some solace only to be arrested and charged to court.

It was reported in the media that the police reopened a forgery case involving the National Chairman of the APC, Chief John Oyegun, the wife of the Senate President, Mrs. Toyin Saraki, and others such as former National Security Adviser (NSA), Sambo Dasuki ,AIT Chairman Raymond Dokpesi, former spokesman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Olisa Metuh, former national leader of the PDP Chief Bode George, former Sokoto State Governor Attahiru Bafarawa, fomer Aviation Minister Femi Fani Kayode, former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke, all were grilled by the EFCC for corruption (Jones, 2018). It was also reported that the High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, Gudu, Abuja, on Tuesday 12th June, 2018 sentenced Dariye, ex-Governor of Plateau state, to 14 years' imprisonment on the charges of criminal breach of

trust and misappropriation of funds (1.6 billion naira) while he was the Governor of Plateau State.

Recently, and by extension, the searchlight of anti-graft war has moved to the judiciary arm. In its wake, some judges, under a sting operation, carried out by men and officers of the DSS, have been arrested. They are currently standing trials before Federal High Courts on charges of corruption. Walter Onnoghen, the 20th Chief Justice, became the first to be removed in a corrupt case, since 1914 when Edwin Speed, a British, assumed the exalted position as head of the judicial arm of the government of Nigeria, presiding over the country's Supreme Court and the National Judicial Council. On Friday, January 25, 2019, the President of Nigeria, Muhammadu Buhari, suspended the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Walter Nkannu Samuel Onnoghen from office, and immediately administered the judicial oath of office to the most senior Supreme Court Justice, next in rank to him, Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammed as the Acting Chief Justice of Nigeria. The CJN, instead of resigning his position took steps to frustrate his trial. The CJN had been accused in the charges of receiving into and retaining in many banks accounts huge sums of money in foreign and local currencies, without disclosing them in his asset declaration forms and documents submitted to the CCB. He however resigned and he turned in his resignation letter to President Muhammadu Buhari a day after the National Judicial Council (NJC) recommended that he be compulsorily retired for misconduct.

The present democratic government "has between 29th May, 2015 and 25th May, 2016" recovered money totalling N78,325,354,631.82 (Seventy eight billion, three hundred and twenty-five million, three hundred and fifty-four thousand, six hundred and thirty one Naira and eighty two kobo); \$185,119,584.61 (One hundred and eight five million, one hundred and nineteen thousand, five hundred and eighty four United State (US) dollars, sixty one pennies); 3,508,355.46 Pounds Sterling (Three million, five hundred and eight thousand, three hundred and fifty-five Pounds and 46 Pence) and 11, 250 Euros (Eleven thousand, two hundred and fifty Euros). Moreover, the Minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed reported that the recovered loot under break relinquishment (money and resources) totalled N126,563,481,095.43 (One hundred and twenty six billion, five hundred and sixty three million, four hundred and eighty one thousand, and ninety five Naira, forty three Kobo); \$9,090,243,920.15 (Nine billion, ninety million, two hundred and forty three thousand, nine hundred and twenty Dollars, fifteen pennies); 34 2,484,447.55 Pounds Sterling (Two million, four hundred and eighty four thousand, four hundred and forty seven Pounds, fifty five Pence) and 303,399.17 Euros (Three hundred and three thousand, three hundred and ninety-nine Euros, 17 pennies). In light of the details provided above, in all, the assets anticipated, add up to \$321,316,726.1 (Three hundred and twenty one million, three hundred and sixteen thousand, seven hundred and twenty six Dollars, one penny); 6,900,000 Pounds (Six million, nine hundred thousand Pounds) and 11,826.11 Euros. It was also reported that the non-monetary assets, recovered (Farmlands, Plots of Land, Uncompleted Buildings, Completed Buildings, Vehicles and Maritime Vessels) were 239 in number. If the counter corruption war of government runs smoothly without interruption, Nigeria will change positively and the level of corruption will drastically reduce among public institutions holders. The following is a recent analysis of Buhari's administration as regards money related and resource repossession, two years into his tenure. Drawing from this investigation, it is evident that the present democratic

government intends to eradicate corruption completely. Many Nigerians were satisfied when the eagerly awaited rundown on the plunderers' activities was released by the government, as the release of the rundown on stolen public assets has helped the masses to have greater trust in the present government's anti-corruption war.

The following is the breakdown of the recovered cash and assets

Interim Report on Financial and Asset Recoveries Made by the Federal Government of Nigeria from 29 May 2015 to 25 May 2016.

Table 1. Cash Recoveries

Serial	Items	Naira	US Dollar	GB pounds	Euro
1.	EFCC Cash at hand	39,169,911,023.00	128494,076.66	2,355	11,250
2.	Royalty/tax/payment to FGN account in JP Morgan account New York	4,642,958,711.48	40,727,253.65		
3.	ONSA Funds Recovery Account in CBN	5,665,305,527.41	8,000,000.00		
4.	VAT recovered from companies by ONSA	529,588,293.47			
5.	EFCC Recovered Funds Account in CBN	19,267,730,359.36	455,253.80		
6.	ICPC Revenue Collection Recovery in CBN	869,957,444.89			
7.	Office of the Attorney General	5,500,000,000	5,500,000		
8.	DSS Recoveries	47,707,000.5	1,943,000.5	3,506,000.46	
9.	ICPC Cash Asset Recovery	2,632,196,271.71			
	Total	78,325,354,631.82	185,119,584.61	3,508,355.46	11,250

Table 2. Recoveries under Interim Forfeiture

Serial	Items	Naira	US Dollar	GB pounds	Euro
1.	Cash in bank under interim forfeiture	8,281,577,248.92	1,819,866,364.73	3,800.00	113,399.17
2.	Amount Frozen in bank	48,159,179,518.90	7,131,369,498.49	605,647.55	
3.	Value of properties under interim forfeiture	41,534,605,998.00	77,844,600.00	1,875,000.00	190,000.00
4.	Value of cars under interim forfeiture	52,500,000.00			
5.	ONSA funds under interim forfeiture	27,001,464,125.20	43,771,433.73		
6.	Value of Assets Recovered by ONSA	512,000,000.00			
7.	ONSA Assets under interim forfeiture	260,000,000.00			
8.	DSS Recoveries Frozen in Banks	658,929,000.00	226,476.20		
9.	EFCC Cash in Bank under final forfeiture	103,225,209.41	17,165,547.00		
	Total	126,563,481,095.43	9,090,243,920.15	2,484,447.55	303,399.17
	Grand Total	204,888,835,727.25	9,275,363,504.76	5,992,803.01	314,649,17

Table 3. Funds Awaiting Return From Foreign Jurisdictions

S/N	Jurisdiction	US Dollar	GB Pounds	Euro
1	Switzerland	321000000		
2	UK		6900000	
3	UAE	310501		11826.11
4	USA	6225.1		
	Total	321,316,726.1	6,900,000	11,826.11

Table 4. Non Cash Recoveries

Serial	Items	Quantity		
		ICPC	EFCC	ONSA
1	Farmland	22		
2	Plot of Land	4		
3	Uncompleted Building	1		
4	Completed Building	33	145	4
5	Vehicles	22	3	
6	Maritime Vessels		5	
	Total	82	153	4

Source EFCC Report 2016

Effects of Corruption on Nigeria's Development

The presence of corruption in a majority rule society (Nigeria inclusive) is seen as a variation. This is on the grounds that the real practice of just standards lay decisively on the lawful code of society. Along these lines, the presence of high rate of corruption will in general have more genuine results on popular governments more than any type of government. This is so in light of the fact that it presents hazardous sign to the standards of majority rule government. There is a solid agreement among researchers that recommends that corruption does nothing more than a bad memory to majority rules system. Therefore, corruption disintegrates and consumes the importance, instruments and the very embodiment of majority rule government. Once more, corruption breaks the connection and individuals' capacity to impact aggregate choices, contribute input into the framework, influences casting a ballot design, creates general lack of care for significant investment (Mark, 2007) and fundamentally overheats the commonwealth because of open irritation and disillusionments.

Most social orders particularly in the North African axis have deteriorated into confusion, political agitation, fear of mongering and even avoidable war because of what has been commonly seen as elitist misinformed mission to remain on in control unceasingly, or even due to obvious instances of poor administration coordinated by corruption. By method for expanding the contention from the prior, since political corruption is a degenerate conduct that hinders the principles and precepts of majority rules system, it moreover presents perilous danger to the combination of majority rules system in Nigeria. Corruption devastatingly affects the Nigeria since it impedes any development in democratic government. Corruption squanders assets by twisting government strategy against the interests of the larger part and away from its legitimate objectives. It turns the energies and efforts of public officials and citizens towards easy money instead of productive activities. It hampers the development of intensity, baffles endeavors to lighten neediness and produces lack of concern and criticism. The damages brought about by corruption, which are as various as the shapes corruption can take, have wrecked benevolent improvement extends just as undermined great administration and improvement in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Corruption is responsible for the Nigeria's absence of good administration, poor development and improvement just as rot in ethics and qualities. It is helpful to see that corruption is a genuine threat to viable majority rule administration is putting it mildly. In reality, corruption is a central point responsible for the country's lethargic condition of underdevelopment regardless of the copious riches. Corruption can wreck a state its political foundations, hindering financial and social advancement for a considerable length of time to come. As contended above, it is practically unthinkable not to be corrupt in Nigeria as both the pioneers and the residents discover it totally difficult to limit from compromising. The resultant outcomes incorporate a ruined economy with gigantic negative effect on poor people. Undoubtedly, on account of corruption, the citizens have lost trust in the political framework, its organizations and administration consequently the fierce conflicts and cases that generally trail political race results.

Recommendations

Arising from the above, this paper further proffers the following recommendations:

- i. Owing to the weak judicial system resulting in slow adjudication of cases and the belief that the judiciary often compromise in handling corrupt cases, this research supports the creation of special courts to try corruption cases instituted by anti-corruption agency. It is an established fact that the commission by compromising with culprits and causing unnecessary delays in the prosecution of cases. Special court will rather enhance the speedy adjudication of cases, which will save the commission a lot of troubles and nation of resources

- ii. Anti-corruption agencies should be given autonomy to operate, government should give total support and encouragements so as to enable it have sustainable impact on the body policy of the country. This could be done through the removal of all illegal political and social constraints that hamper the effective operation of the agency. The current situation whereby the agency operates based on the “government directive” should be discouraged. This can also be done by decoupling it from the office of the Attorney General of the Federation. It must be totally independent such that their salaries should be paid from the consolidation account to the extent that, its chairman should no longer be a presidential appointee. The chairman must in addition, enjoy security of tenure, not to be hired and fired at will.
- iii. Anti-corruption agencies such as ICPC, EFCC CCB and even CCT, should be strengthened the more to prosecute those found guilty of corruption practices. Over the years, these commissions have indicted some people, but nothing happened after all. This kind of attitude will definitely not scare anybody from getting involved in corruption.
- iv. It is an undisputable fact that the delays in the conventional courts in Nigeria are a big obstacle against the quick dispensation of justice especially on cases brought in by the anti-corruption agencies most especially the EFCC. In fact, the conventional courts, be improved upon so as to impact on their handling of corruption cases. There has to be ways to bolster the human and material capacity of the judiciary including the appellate courts. Also, there has to be some reforms to the federal criminal procedure and evidence rules, which have remained largely unmodified since the colonial period. Counsels standing in for their client (offenders) should be made to stop their unjustifiable dalliances in the court processes to ensure quick dispensation of such cases.
- v. In addition to the above recommendations, the constitution should be reviewed in such a way that all pro-corruption clauses should be removed from it. For example, the “immunity clause” which protects people in power from being prosecuted while in office has not only hindered effective prosecution of corrupt public and private officials in Nigeria, it has also made corruption to thrive.

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