

CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA: CAUSES, FORMS, EXTENT AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

¹Adejoh, E , ²Omada, M.O and ³Tukura, T.P

¹Registry, Salem University , Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria

²Registry, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba, Nigeria

³First Bank PLC, Lokoja Branch, Kogi State, Nigeria

(Adejoh, E : adejohemmanuel@salemuniversity.edu.ng)

ABSTRACT

This study reviewed and discussed corruption in Nigeria : causes, forms extent and mitigation strategies, to this end literature on the subject matter were assembled from journals, conference papers , magazines , official documents ,bulletins etc they were then collated reviewed and discussed, Corruption was identified as one of the causes of the under development and slow progress in Nigeria, corruption is said to have eaten very deep into the fabrics of the Nigerian society. Corruption was also viewed as a hydra headed problem, that could bring the country on its knees if there is no urgent drastic intervention. The paper concluded by stressing the need to fight corruption head on to save Nigeria . value reorientation , revival and strengthening of moral education in schools , the need for leaders at all levels to show good example as well as reorganizing and strengthening of anti graft agencies were put forward as recommendations

Keywords: Corruption, Nigeria, Causes, Forms, Extent, Mitigation Strategies

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Corruption as a phenomenon, is a global problem, and exists in varying degrees in different countries (Agbu, 2001). 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 just began today: but the history is as old as the world (Lipset and Lenz, 2000).

In Nigeria, it is one of the many unresolved problems (Ayobolu, 2006) that have critically hobbled and skewed development. 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). According to Graycar (2017) corruption demoralizes government and weakens the whole endeavour of policy formulation and its implementation

Ocheja *et al* (2023) reported the sharp increased in corruption in the civil/public service as a result of the 1988 civil service reforms, Ejigbo *et al* 2023 also corroborated this view

World Bank studies put corruption at over \$1trillion per year accounting for up to 12% of the Gross Domestic Products of Nations like Nigeria, Kenya and Venezuela (Nwabuzor, 2005). Corruption is endemic as well as an enemy within (Agbu, 2003). It is a canker worm that has eaten deep in the fabric of the country and had stunted growth in all sectors (Economic and Financial Crime Commission, 2005). It has been the primary reason behind the country difficulties in developing fast (Independent Corrupt Practices Commission, 2006). This is evident in Transparency International's has consistent rating of Nigeria as one of the top three most corrupt countries in the world (Ribadu, 2003).

As part of effort at fighting corruption and strengthen the economy, Nigeria embarked on an aggressive pursuit of 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, 2008). The reform process has the following 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 over emphasized. The poor state of electricity, transport and communications is a major handicap for doing business in Nigeria.

These measures were initially commended by large section in the media and public commentators who are aware of the grave challenge political corruption poses to the consolidation of democracy in Nigeria. It is glaring that the prevalence of political corruption in all spheres of Nigerian public life will undermine the principles of democratic government

such as accountability and transparency, thereby making the consolidation of democracy an uphill task. However, the efforts to eradicate corruption become even more problematic and complex when those officials and agencies that were set up to fight corruption are themselves corrupt.

The Crisis of the Nigerian state has been blamed on corruption since 1960 and the fight against this menace has been on without any meaningful result achieved. Consequent upon these, scholars from different backgrounds have classified the Nigerian State to be either failed, failing or disarticulated state.

In order to bring the Nigeria state into a proper shape, several administrations came up with different anti-corruption agencies ranging from Public Complaints Commission (PCC), War Against Indiscipline Commission (WAIC), Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). In spite of the fight against corruption, corruption still persists in different areas and dimension in Nigeria government and culture. The negative and damaging aspect of corruption have been its association with greed and self-perpetuation due to economic uncertainty and poverty, lack of sustainable social development, income, insecurity and distorted societal values. After many years of independence in Nigeria, corruption hindered meaningful development. The problem therefore is that, corruption has relegated Nigeria from achieving meaningful sustainable social development. That corruption has eaten deep into socio-economic life of the Nigeria society and as a result has reduced the impacts of development in country. It is worthy to note that the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria cuts across the rich and the poor making it therefore a culture that affects our value system.

The broad objective of the study was to review and discuss the causes, forms, extent of corruption in Nigeria as well as mitigation strategies

Specifically, this study attempts to:

- i. Define and explain the concept of corruption
- ii. Review and discuss the causes, forms and extent of corruption in Nigeria
- iii. Discuss and review mitigation strategies

Future researchers that will specifically embark on the study of this kind will find this literature very useful as a reliable reference material

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definitions

2.1.1 Corruption: The concept of corruption has been defined in various societies mostly in line with the culture or prescribed social life of the people. While some societies speak of corruption mainly in terms of illegal acquisition of material things, others tend to stretch it further by bringing social and moral values under it.

Corruption as dishonest or illegal behavior especially of people in authority. It's also the act of making somebody change from moral to immoral standards of behavior in similar manner. It's an announcement offered to someone to do what is improper or unlawful means such as bribery. Corruption is the perversion of public affairs for private advantage. Corruption includes bribery or the use of unauthorized rewards to influence people in position of authority either to act or refuse to act in ways beneficial to the private advantage of the giver and then that of the private advantage of the giver and then of the receiver, the misappropriation of public funds and resources for private gains, nepotism etc. The term corruption is any use of official position, resources or facilities for personal benefit or possible conflict of interest between public position and private benefit". This involves offences of misconduct in public offices and is also covered by a variety of internal regulations.

2.1.2 Federal Government: The Federal Government is the Central Government of Nigeria that represents the whole country and the government of component regions or the 36 States, the 774 Local Government Areas and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

2.1.3 Policy: Policy is a statement of goals that can be translated into a plan or program by specifying the objectives to be obtained.

2.1.4 Development: The term "development" has been so talked about that it means different things to different people. Development is the movement of the whole social system upward with positive changes. Adding that development is also "a process that enhances the effective freedom of the people involved to pursue whatever they have the reason to. Development can be defined in terms of attacking wide spread absolute poverty, reducing inequalities and removing the spectrum of unemployment. He perhaps, posed the most fundamental questions relating to the meaning of development when he asserted that "The question to ask about a country's development are therefore what have been happening to poverty? What have been happening to unemployment? What have been happening to inequality? All these questions have declined from high levels, and beyond doubts, this has been a period of meaningful

sustainable social system. This involves improvement of income and output through positive radical changes of institutions, social and administrative structures as well as popular attitudes, customs and beliefs.

2.1.5 Governance: This means the act of ruling influencing determining and exercising authority through the action, function or powers of government over others.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 The Concept of Corruption

According to Eigen (2001), corruption is seen as a daunting obstacle to sustainable development a constraint on education, healthcare and poverty alleviation, Corruption, according to Collins English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2001: 339) is dishonest and illegal behavior by people in positions of authority or power. Corruption occurs when an official transfers a benefit to an individual who may not be entitled to the benefit, in exchange for an illegal payment (the bribe). By taking the bribe, the official breaks a legally binding promise he gave to his principal or employer (usually the state government or a private company) to allocate the benefits to those entitled to it.

In the same vein, Otite (1986) sees corruption as, the perversion of integrity of state of affairs through bribery, favor or moral depravity. It involves the injection of additional but improper transactions aimed at changing the moral course of events and altering judgments and positions of trust. It consists in the doer's and receiver's use of informal, extra-legal, or illegal act to facilitate matters. He went on further to categorize corruption into political, economical, bureaucratic, judicial and moralistic manifestations. Our focus, however, is on the political manifestation of corruption though political corruption may not have a generally acceptable definition, through the examination of the views of several scholars we hope to establish some discernable features of phenomenon.

Political corruption according to Yagboyaju (2005) is:

Any act of a political class, civilian or military, or a highly placed public official aimed at changing the moral or lawful course of events especially when the perpetrators uses such a position of authority for the purpose of a personal or group interest.

Dike, (2003) also supported this new point by locating political corruption at the highest level of political authority. According to him, it occurs when the politicians and other important state

decision makers, whose duties are to formulate and implement policies in the name of the people, are themselves corrupt. It also takes place when public policy formulation and legislation are tailored to benefit political office holders.

In his own contribution to the discourse on political corruption, Gyekye (1997) defined it as:

The illegal, unethical and unauthorized exploitation of ones political or official position for personal gain or advantage ... thus an act, of misdemeanor perpetrated against the state agencies by a person holding an official position in pursuit of his or her own private profit.

To Gyekye like others before him, political corruption is synonymous to public affairs fortunes, agencies resources and institutions of the state. Again, political corruption as an act committed by public officers goes beyond the issue of receiving and giving of bribe alone. It also includes graft, fraud, nepotism, kickbacks, favoritism and misappropriation of public funds. Therefore, the policeman who receives a bribe, and consequently abandons charges against accused person; lawmakers who receives “Ghana-must go” bags of Naira to legislate or refuse to legislate on a bill to favor either the Governor or President; the President or Governor who stealthily and fraudulently siphon huge sum of money from the state treasury to his foreign bank account; the contractor who refuses to carry out the construction of a primary school building after collecting mobilization fee from government; and the bureaucrat who favor a less gudifud relative or friend for a position while rejecting candidates with better credentials are all involved in political corruption. From the foregoing presentation, we can conveniently identify some areas of convergence in the various scholars conceptualization of the phenomenon of political corruption. Firstly, political corruption is an illegal act as well as an aberration to the norms and ethics that sustain and maintain public (state) institutions and processes. Secondly, political corruption is an act committed by public officials against constitutionally agreed social norms and rules. And lastly, the act is usually committed at the expenses of the public. In other words, political corruption at ways sacrifices public interests on the alter of personal interest with these; identifying political corruption becomes a much easiertask. There is no disputing the fact that corruption, particularly its political manifestation is the baneof democratic consolidation in Nigeria. It has created legitimacy crises for several civilian administrations as a result of the perverse, lawless and violent ways through which political power was acquired by these regimes. It has also adversely affected the ability of the government in power to fulfill or attain goals for the society.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Public Choice Theory

First, there is rational choice theory: public choice theory. For the independent variables to explain corruption, it primarily looks at the level of the individual. The causal chain is that of an individual making a (bounded) rational decision that leads to a predetermined outcome. Central to the public choice literature is the individual corrupt official who tries to maximize his or her utility. The individual (usually male) is portrayed as a rationally calculating person who decides to become corrupt when its expected advantages outweigh its expected disadvantages (a combination of possible penalty and the chance of being caught). This group of causal theories is made popular by Rose-Ackerman (1978), who claims that public officials are corrupt for a simple reason: they perceive that the potential benefits of corruption exceed the potential costs. Or as Klitgaard (1988) states, if the benefits of corruption minus the probability of being caught times its penalties are greater than the benefits of not being caught, then an individual will rationally choose to be corrupt. Of course, the theory can be expanded when conditions that influence the cost-benefit calculations are taken into account. For example, trust can play an important role. When the state cannot be trusted to manage private property transfers, corruption might become more appealing (Gambetta 1993). Also, trust within close personal relationships increases the chance of getting the benefits from the delivered corrupt 'services' or reduces the chance of getting caught. In this kind of theory, actions of corrupt officials are caused by a rational, conscious and deliberate weighing process of an individual. In its purest form, autonomous agents are assumed to make more or less rational means-end calculations. This contrasts with most of the other theories we will consider, where behavior is explained by causes beyond individual control.

In organization sciences, this is closely related to decision theories. The reason is that just how 'choices' (which have the character of volition) cause actions (of a physical nature) must be made clear. In some theories, rational choice is combined with game theory and ideas that agent choice is bound by both the decision-making capacities of individual agents and a surrounding structure of political, economic and cultural rules (institutions), leading to a so-called institutional choice framework (Collier 2002).

The theory starts from the moment an official calculates whether to become corrupt or not. Public choice theories lead to a discourse on corruption control that maximizes the costs of

corruption and minimizes the benefits. Since the benefits of corruption are much harder to influence, most of the focus is on the costs of corruption. These costs can be made higher by improving the chances of getting caught and imposing steeper penalties. This can easily lead to a discourse asking for a comprehensive system of control based on surveillance, massive information gathering, auditing, and aggressive enforcement of a wide array of criminal and administrative sanctions (Anechiarico and Jacobs, 1996).

2.3.2 Organizational Culture Theories

Third, some literature is not so much interested in the background or motives of the corrupt official, but in the culture and structure of the organization within which the agent is working. For the first time, we are looking not the micro level of individual corrupt agents, but the mere so level of their respective organizations. The underlying assumption seems to be that a causal path from a certain culture – a certain group culture– leads to a certain mental state. And that mental state leads to corrupt behavior. Failure in the “proper machinery” of government, not faulty character, leads public officials to act corruptly. Therefore, it accounts for the context corrupt acts occur in. For example, Punch claims (2000) (when talking about corruption within police departments around the world): “If we scan these activities then it is plain that we are no longer dealing with individuals seeking solely personal gain but with group behavior rooted in established arrangements and/or extreme practices that have to be located within the structures and culture of police work and the police organization.” Punch concludes (2000): “The implication is that in tackling corruption and other forms of police deviance, it is vital to focus on group dynamics, the escalation from minor to serious deviance, and on the negative elements in the police culture.” Piet Neus's case would be explained by a culture within his municipality (Maastricht) in which everyone is corrupt. This influences Piet Neus in such a way that he 'cannot help' but become corrupt himself. Once again, in these theories there is a causal path from a certain culture, a certain group culture that leads to a mental state. And that mental state leads to corrupt behavior. But we could question whether this is a causal link at all, since not all people in the described organizations become corrupt. At best, we could say that these theories describe certain conditions under which corruption occurs. But that, too, is probably saying too much. It is more a matter of describing ‘facilitating factors’ which, in some cases (not all people in the organization become corrupt), strengthen a causal chain. These types of theory are not so much interested in the corrupt official, but in

the contextual features that make for the setting of corruption. In that sense, these theories are not really about the causes of corruption. Implicit in most of these theories is the contention that people in organizations act on the particular dynamics of the organization. Of course, many good arguments involving economic, natural or social forces, for instance, show that institutions (not in the sense of organizations or buildings, more in a sense of collective ways of thinking, feeling and doing) determine, in large part, the decisions and behavior of people. There are dynamics that transcend individuals. In that sense this group of research distances itself from methodological individualism.

This brings us to a related group of theories of corruption that should be grouped here, those that see corruption as ‘contagious’ (e.g. Klitgaard 1988; Caiden and Dwivedi 2001; Hulten 2002). These theories state that once an organizational culture (or country) is corrupt, every person who comes in contact with it also runs a big risk of becoming corrupt. Therefore (and interestingly enough) corruption itself seems to be the ‘cause’ of corruption (even though the specific causal relationship is hard to define). These theories sometimes use the metaphor of the ‘slippery slope’ (Punch 2000). Not becoming corrupt in certain organizational cultures means betraying the group (Jackall, 1988; Punch 2000). These theories lead to a discourse on corruption control in which the emphasis is on influencing the culture of an organization, the so-called ‘cultural instruments’ by, for example, altering the organization’s leadership (Trevino *et al.*, 1999; Trevino *et al.*, 2000; Huberts *et al.*, 2004)

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Types of Corruption

In an elaborate analysis, Alatas (1990) divided corruption into seven distinct types: autogenic, defensive, extortive, investive, nepotistic, supportive and transactive. Autogenic corruption is self-generating and typically involves only the perpetrator. A good example would be what happens in cases of insider trading. A person learns of some vital information that may influence stocks in a company and either quickly buys or gets rid of large amounts of stocks before the consequences arising from this information comes to pass. Defensive corruption involves situations where a person needing a critical service is compelled to bribe in order to prevent unpleasant consequences being inflicted on his interests. For instance, a person who wants to travel abroad within a certain time frame needs a passport in order to undertake the

journey but is made to pay bribes or forfeit the trip. This corruption is in self-defense.

Extortive corruption is the behavior of a person demanding personal compensation in exchange for services. Investive corruption entails the offer of goods or services without a direct link to any particular favor at the present, but in anticipation of future situations when the favor may be required. Nepotistic corruption refers to the preferential treatment of, or unjustified appointment of friends or relations to public office, in violation of the accepted guidelines.

The supportive type usually does not involve money or immediate gains, but involves actions taken to protect or strengthen the existing corruption. For example, a corrupt regime or official may try to prevent the election or appointment of an honest person or government for fear that the individual or the regime might be probed by the successor(s). Finally, transactive corruption refers to situations where the two parties are mutual and willing participants in the corrupt practice to the advantage of both parties. For example, a corrupt business person may willingly bribe a corrupt government official in order to win a tender for a certain contract. The focus in this paper will be on the extortive, nepotistic, and transactive corruption, not only because they appear to be at the core of the corruption phenomenon, but also because the other forms appear to be the offshoot of these three fundamental types. There would be no defensive corruption in the absence of the extortive type.

According to Okeme (2012), Corruption is divided into seven types:

- (i) **Bribery:** This has to do with giving and receiving money or material gifts in order to influence an officers or any person in authority so as to change certain decision or make an unmerited favour given to the bribe giver.
- (ii) **Extortion:** This is a situation in which a person is qualified to get something but the actor in charge whose duty is to give such a thing out insists on getting some money mostly in cash or in kind from the expectant party concerned before releasing it.
- (iii) **Graff:** This has to do with unethical means of profit making. For example kick backs. This can be described in a situation where by a contract sum has been paid to the contractor concerned and the line officers or people who were involved in facilitating the success are been given some money in return.
- (iv) **Over Invoking:** This relates to purchase of an item through an inflated price so that the difference between the actual price and the inflated price is shared between the parties involved.

- (v) **Blocking:** This is peculiar to educational institutions especially tertiary institutions. It means paying cash or kind to a person who supervises an examination, or marks examination scripts or records the result for favour. The favour could be to allow the student concerned to cheat in the examination hall or to give unmerited marks or to raise the student's scorers.
- (vi) **Tyrannical Show of Power:** This refers to excessive use of power as in the Armed Forces or Police Force to command obedience in an act so bad since it most times no one could stop them.
- (vii) **Tips:** This is a situation where a person gives something usually in kind to speedy up the process of getting what is qualified to get.

2.3.2 Causes of Corruption

According to Encarta (2005), Corruption is described as dishonest exploitation of power for personal gain and criminal depravity corruption has been attributed to the following as some of the causes:

- (i) *Strange culture and weird value system in Nigeria:* The society is becoming corrupt in third world countries, Nigeria inclusive because of strange cultural inclinations and weird value system morality is relaxed in the society and most of the time people struggle for survival without assistance from the state to the government. The influence or pressure of polygamy and extended family system which are very common in African countries contribute to the corrupt system in Africa and Nigeria in particular. Corruption linked to the strong family value that has feelings to fulfill the obligation attached to (Inokoba and Ibegu, 2011). Value system which has become part of the culture is such that the society does not check the background of rich individuals and their source of wealth. Once a wealthy man comes up in a society, he is instantly given a chair of fame of honor to the extent that chieftaincy titles await him wherever he goes. The churches hail him and always surround him and honor him. The Machiavelli principle of the end justifies the mean's manifest itself in this part of the society.
- (ii) *Poor remuneration/Reward system is another major factor of the corruption in Nigeria:* Nigeria is one of the poorest paying countries in the world. This is a country where there is no labour hourly payment or value as economic reward. Also, the meager monthly pay is irregular thereby giving room for workers to make ends meet hence; they compromise their duties to meet up with the exigencies of their daily obligation.

(iii) *Unserious Constituted Leaders and Authorities:* Our leaders in the discharge of their authority are nonchalant at fighting corruption because sometimes they also benefit from this evil. This attitude of the officers charged with enforcing the laws and ensuring probity in their work and in the society has rather aided corruption instead of abating it. The Legislature, Judiciary, Police Force, Law Enforcement Agents and other Public Officials sometimes treat cases of corruption with laissez-faire and lackadaisical attitude most especially if such offence involves highly placed and influential person who offer money to buy Justice at the expense of the innocent poor. All the investigations both public and private as well as National Assemblies and even the State Assemblies in most cases fizzles out. For example, the murder of Chief Bola Ige and the embezzlement of the fund released for the power sector during Obasanjo's last administration have all been forced to a natural death etc. All the cases of corruption against some of the former State Governors are being frustrated by the authority, changing and withdrawing statements at the police stations are common practices in Nigeria. Money influence is the main corrupt system of election worldwide and Nigeria as one of such flag bearers. The Independent Nigeria Electoral Commission (INEC), Party Officials, the Police Force and the Electorates are easy prey(s) for compromise once they are settled. No wonder Lottemen (2002) noted that bad leadership breeds corruption.

(iv) *Lack of Ethical Standards throughout the Agencies of Government and Business Organization in Nigeria:* This is a serious drawback to the unsuccessful fight against corrupt practices in Nigeria government because incompetent leaders through corrupt means handles the democratic governance in Nigeria and this certainly will inevitable render the government weak and corruption is most likely to flourish. One of the causes of this ugly experience under the democratic governance of Nigeria emerged and can be traceable to the negative impacts of colonialism which made Nigeria to shift from traditional communalism to individualism and from humanism to materialism. The interest of the leaders in material wealth (material comforts) and the desire to control power more strongly led them to abandon traditional values (Cook *et al*, 1978). Thus, it was a combination of excessive individualism and uncontrolled crave for material wealth and power that the traditional values of "being a brother's keeper" disappeared into an oblivion and the concern for others were replaced by colonial attitude of exploitation, greed, avarice, ruthlessness, dishonesty, corruption and ultimately political thuggery became the order of day. The cherished western norms are more of social vices rather than moral values which are supported to be reawakened in our social and political

relations within the framework of the democratic arrangement of Nigeria if the country is to move forward.

(v) On the other hand, obsession with materialism, shortcuts to affluence or wealth, glorification and approbation of ill gotten wealth by the general public, are among other reasons for the persistence of corrupt practices in Nigeria (Nyes, 1967).

(vi) Inequality in the distribution and redistribution of national wealth among citizens.

(vii) Delay of punishment over convicted cases involving the society's affluent person's results into denial or missing files. This situation now allows for the use of money to delay or cancel such a case. The 6billion Naira unaccounted for during the last Obasanjo's administration for the power sector is almost forgotten issue today.

(viii) *High Level of Poverty:* In Nigeria hunger is so pronounce that people throw away conscience and decorum for survival.

(ix) Political office has been conceived as a primary means of gaining access to wealth since the law could be compromised with money despite the magnitude of the offence committed.

(x) Conflicts between changing moral codes supports corrupt practices.

(xi) The weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanisms.

(xii) The absence of a strong service of national community (Bryce, 1921)

(xiii) Unfulfilled rising expectations of ones right.

(xiv) Relative deprivation

(xv) Moral decadence (without the fear of God).

(xvi) Personal interest

(xvii) Desire for gain at all cost.

(xviii) Lack of good conscience (morality)

2/3.3 Extent of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption in Nigeria, as it presently manifest can be appropriately termed endemic or systemic. What is unique about Nigeria is her persistence in corruption, though statistically non-significant position within the bottom five surveyed nations every year since 1996. Corruption has not only permeated the government and oil fields of Nigeria, it has attacked the entire nation (Haddi, 1999). Corruption and inefficiency are characteristics of service delivery in Nigeria, although private companies seem to perform more efficiently and less corruptly than public enterprise

(Amadi, 2004).

Corruption has become so blatant and widespread that it appears as if it has been legalized in Nigeria (Gire, 1999). As Goodling (2003) notes, “since 1996, Nigeria was labeled the most corrupt nation three times: 1996, 1997, and 2004: and placed in the bottom five four more times fourth from the bottom in 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2003”. The 1996 study of corruption by Transparency International and Goettingen University ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt, nation among 54 nation listed in the study with Pakistan as the second highest (Moore 1997). As this was not too bad enough, the 1998 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPT) of 85 countries pooled; (Lipset and Lenz, 2000) in 1999 Transparency International (TI) released its annual Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranking 99 countries in order of their perceived level of corruption with number one being the lest corrupt Nigeria at number 98, was only one rank above its neighbor Cameroon. In the 2001 corruption perception index (CPT) the position of remained unchanged as the second corrupt nation in the world (ranked 90 out of 91 countries pooled) with Bangladesh coming first. In October 2003 reports release in London, Nigeria at number 132 was still only one rank above Bangladesh – even though the number of countries in the latter poll had increased to 133 countries.

The 2004 corruption perception index released by Transparency International the watch dog on global corruption again ranks Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world. Up till June 2007 Nigeria has not been exonerated from the list of the top ten leading countries on corruption.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Relevant literature on the definations, concept of corruption, causes, forms and extent of corruption as well as mitigation strategies were assembled from Journals, Conference papers , Bulletins , government documents as well as the internet , they were then discussed and reviewed

4.0 DISCUSSION OF REVIEW

4.1 Recent Initiatives by the EFCC and other Anti Graft Agencies

The new EFCC Chairman in a speech in 2023 lamented about the forms and extent of corruption in Nigeria and exposed some mind boggling cases of corruption, he then read a “riot act” to Nigerians on the resolve and determination of the EFCC to fight corruption head on. The operations of the EFCC is currently being organized , some EFCC staff are currently undergoing prosecution including the immediate past Chairman, He also announced the revival of corruption

cases against 13 ex Governors involving the total sum of 772 Billion Naira. Other anti graft agencies have also reiterated their resolve to fight corruption and infact have stepped up their game, The federal government is also carrying out some reorganizations of its agencies and parastatals. Some high profile cases of corruption are currently under going investigation and prosecution, worthy of note are the corruption allegations against 2 serving Ministers in the President Tinubu's Cabinet

4.2 Mitigation Strategies

There is need for change in the value system, ill gotten wealth should be questioned and challenged rather than being celebrated, emphasis should be placed on moral values by our elders, teacher, religious leaders , the teaching of moral education in our primary and secondary schools should be revived and strengthened and even extended to institutions of higher learning. The virtues of hard work and dignity of labour should be promoted. Ocheja *et al* (2023) reported a sharp increase in corruption in the civil service after the implementation of the 1988 civil service reforms and recommended another reform to specifically tackle the problem of corruption. Government should pay a living wage to civil servants . Leaders at all levels must show good example by beign honest and hard working.

Heads of all the anti graft agencies in Nigeria should be appointed on merit rather than other pecuniary considerations. The immunity clause should be expunged from the Nigerian constitution, thus making it possible to interrogate and prosecute serving presidents , Vice Presidents, Governors and Deputy Governors , the current scenario is such that these elected officials will use the stolen wealth and influence to escape prosecution or get very mild punishments compared to the gravity of their offences

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Corruption is a hydra headed problem in Nigeria, it exists in various forms and has eaten very deep into the very fabrics of the Nigerian society .

Corruption has hindered development and progress in Nigeria

5.2 Recommendations

Good governance, transparency, accountability and the rule of law in Nigeria which are the key

requirements in achieving a stable and corrupt – free society are needed in Nigeria, as corrupt leaders cannot wage an effective war against corruption

- (i) The appointments of the heads of anticorruption agencies should be based on merit, rather than political patronage, nepotism, religion, Quota and other pecuniary considerations.

For the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and other anti graft Agencies to properly fight Corruption in Nigeria, they should be given high level of independence without any political interference , as well as an independent Judiciary where both the rich and the poor are judged under the law without inequality, fear or favour and delays in passing verdicts should not be condoned.

The Nigerian parliament must be an instrument of proper entrenchment of the rule of law as contained in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and should also serve as a vehicle for proper social engineering so that Nigerians can have and enjoy an ideal dividends of democracy having in mind that ‘democracy’ is the government of the people, for the people and by the people (Abraham Lincoln) and not ‘government’ of the elites, for the elites and by the elites alone as it is in Nigeria. True democracy should be gender sensitive and should make for conditions that can be affordable by the have and the have-not in order to be able to participate in Nigeria politics which is not supposed to be for the privileged class alone, since the mark of good leadership is not in wealth but the one that can deliver not minding the person’s financial strength. These among others are the ways through which corruption can be wiped out of the democratic governance of Nigeria to pave way for sustainable development

REFERENCES

- Ayobolu , J. (2006).** *EFCC, Corruption and the Due Process*. USA:Segun Toyin Dawodu
- Agbu. O. (2003).** Corruption and Human Trafficking: the Nigerian case. *West Africa Review*,5(2),12-23.
- Amadi, S. (2004).** *Privatizing without Reforming: the case of Nigeria. Report of Civil Society Policy Dialogue on the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS)* Edited by Sam Amadi Frances Ogwo. A Publication of the Human Rights Law Services (HURILAWS) and Centre for Public Policy & Research (CPPR).
- African Economic Outlook (2008).** *Nigeria. African Economic Outlook 2005- 2006*. Retrieved on the 20th April 2007 from: [Http://www.nigeria.gov.ng/reforms-anti-corruption-efcc.aspx](http://www.nigeria.gov.ng/reforms-anti-corruption-efcc.aspx)
- Bryce, J. (1921).** *Modern Democracies*. New York: Mc Graw Hill.
- Cook, K.S. and Homans, M. E. (1978).** Power, Equity and Commitment in Exchange Networks. *American Sociological Review* 43,721-739.
- Caiden, G., and Dwivedi, O. (2001).** Official Ethics and Corruption. In *Where Corruption Lives*, Caiden G.;G. Dwivedi; Jabbra J., (Eds.), Bloomfield: Kumarian Press.
- Collins English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (2000)** .Glasgow: Harper Collins Publishers
- Eigen, P. (2001).** Global Corruption Report 2001. *Transparency International* edited by Robin Hodess, Jessie Banfield and Toby Wolfie
- EFCC Reports (2012).** *Effect of Corruption on Nigeria's Economy*. Nigeria EFCC Information Communication Technology Department. Abuja. Retrieved from: www.efccnigeria.com
- Ejigbo, A, Achimugu, I, Agbaji, H.E, Kumije, D, Kirfi, I.M.I and Torna, S.S (2023)** Civil Service Reforms in Nigeria : A Historical Trajectory . *Int. Journal of Global Affairs Research and Development* 1 (1): 104 - 109
- Gire, J.T, (1999).** A Psychological Analysis of Corruption in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development*. Retrieved 20 April 2007 from <http://www.jsdafrica.com/Jsda/Summer1999/articlespdf/ARC%20-%20A%20Psychological%20Analysis%20of%20Corruption%20in%20Nigeria.pdf>
- Gambetta, D. (1993).** *The Sicilian Mafia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Graycar, A(2017)** Corruption,and Integrity,: Analysis and Control.. *Applied Network Science* 4 (2): 87 - 96
- Gyekye, K. (1997).** On political corruption: A philosophical inquiry into a Moral Problem. In: D Maduabuchi (Ed.): *Philosophy and Politics: Discourse on Values, Politics and Power in Africa*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, P. 248.
- Goodling, N.A. (2003).** "Nigeria's Crisis of Corruption - Can the U.N. Global Programme Hope to Resolve this Dilemma?" *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, 36(3), 997-1026.
- Huberts, L., Kaptein, M., and Lasthuizen, K. (2004).** Leadership and Integrity Violations at Work: A Study on the Perceived Impact of Leadership Behavior on Integrity Violations within the Dutch Police Force. Paper presented at IRSPM VIII, Budapest.

Inokoba and Ibegu, 2011). *Corruption and Government*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lipset, S. M., and Gabrie, S. L. (2000). Corruption, Culture, and Markets. In Lawrence E. Harrison, and Samuel P. Huntington, (eds.) *Culture Matters*, New York: Basic Books, p.112.

Moore, S. (1997). *Power and Corruption*. Visions Paperback, 1997.

Nwabuzor, A. (2005). Corruption and Development: New Initiatives in Economic Openness and Strengthened Rule of Law. *Ethics*, a publication of Springer 59(1), 121-138.

Ocheja, J.O, Ejigbo, A, Kirfi, M.M, Aririguzo, Z.I and Ocheholonu, P.A (2023)An Analysis of the 1988 Civil Service Reforms in Nigeria and its Impact on the Civil and Public Service . *Int. Journal of Global Affairs Research and Development*. 1(1) 1 - 5

Otite, O. (1986). Nigeria Corruption in Development. In: A Odekunle (Ed.): *On the Sociological Study of Corruption*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, P. 302.

Okeme,U.P.(2011). *The Contribution of EFCC to the Fight against CorruptionIn Nigeria*. Anyigba: God'stime Publishers

Punch, M. (2000). Police Corruption and Its Prevention. *European Journal onCriminal Policy and Research*, 8, 301-324.

Ribadu, M.N. (2003). *Economic Crime and Corruption in Nigeria: the Causes, Effects and efforts aimed at combating these vices in Nigeria*. A Paper presented at the Monaco World Summit 5th International Summit on Transnational Crime Monte Carlo 23rd and 24th October 2003

The Transparency International Corruption Index (CPI), 1998; pp.234-244