

Money, politics and corruption

In Nigeria

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Abstract

Politics cannot be effectively played or carried out without money. Even in those ancient days when politics started, some form of money was involved. At least, money or forms of it, was used in moving from one place to the other. In fact, people involved in moving from place to place playing politics, spent money to buy food in places outside their places of abode. Again, money breeds corruption. The result of corruption is always money or money's worth. There is no corruption anywhere in the world without some benefit to someone. And this benefit can usually be quantified in monetary terms. Thus, money, politics and corruption can be said to be bed fellows. They are somehow interrelated. This relationship is quite apparent in Nigeria where corruption is said to have eaten deep into the fabric of the society. The questions that may be asked, are: Has Nigeria always been involved in corruption? What role does money play if any, in politics and corruption in Nigeria? How influential is corruption in Nigeria's politics? Is it possible for politics to be played in Nigeria devoid of money and corruption? These and other questions are the things that this paper attempts to find answers to. It traces the origin of corruption in Nigeria's political life. It concludes on the premise that politics can be played with less involvement of money and corruption.

Keywords: Politics, money, corruption, quantified, relationship, involved, influential

1. Introduction

1.1 Money

Division of labour enables people to specialize in those jobs for which they are best qualified. It leads to an increase in output. At the same time, it makes exchange of goods and services necessary because no individual can produce all the goods he/she needs hence there is need to exchange one's product for money.

Therefore, money can be defined as anything that is generally acceptable in exchange for goods and services or for the settlement of debt.

1.1.1 The Barter Economy

Before the introduction of money, goods were exchanged for goods. "Trade by Barter is a term that is used to describe that process of exchanging goods for goods." The barter economy crumbled due the many problems faced. Some of these problems included:

- The need for double coincidence of wants;
- Multiple exchange rate;
- The problem of divisibility;
- Impossibility of future trade; and
- Impossibility of large scale production

1.1.2 Origins of Money

Money came into existence to serve as a medium of exchange as a result of the disadvantages inherent in the trade by barter. As an example, a yam farmer can take his yams to the market, sell them, obtain money and use the money to buy whatever he wants. He does not have to look specifically for a dealer. In addition, he can now buy a range of goods with his money. He can also engage in specialization and division of labour. This way, the introduction of money can contribute to economic growth. Furthermore, the introduction of money makes the determination of prices easy and it eliminates multiple exchange rates which we find under barter economy. Money also makes it easy to deal in future transaction. One can lend or borrow money since money serves as a means of deferred payments.

Over the years, several things have served as medium of exchange. There was a time in Nigeria when beads and cowry shells served as money. This is also true of all West African countries. Today, what we call money comprises notes and coins and they are referred to as legal tender because they have to be accepted in payment for goods services, and in settlement of debts.

1.1.3 Politics

In a political system, particularly in a multi-party democratic system, political parties are established to articulate contending interests of the population. Members of a political party meet to elect their officials. Citizens cast their votes on election day to elect their representatives in parliament. Members of parliament (National Assembly, etc) debate their contending views on national development and seek a compromise resolution. An elected government formulates policies and enacts laws that determine how the nation's policies and programmes are to be administered. Citizens involved in the above processes are engaged in

Politics.

What then is politics? In his celebrated book entitled “Politics: Who Gets What, When, How,” published in 1936, Harold Lasswell opined that politics is a process engaged by elected officials to determine “who gets what, when, where, and how”. This postulation subsequently influenced the widely held notion of politics in the West as a means of power for the distribution of resources in the polity. (Natufe, 2007). Thus, politics is a process of resolving societal conflicts that arise when determining who gets what, when, where and how.

Alternatively, Marxist scholars see politics as an ideological struggle for power acquisition and distribution of the resources of a nation. By infecting ideological struggle into their definition, Marxists sharpened the content of the concept of politics with the emphasis on class differentiation in the political process. Chairman Mao offered an interesting definition when he declared that: “Politics is war without bloodshed while war is politics with bloodshed”. Unfortunately, Chairman Mao did not live long enough to see that in Nigeria, politics is war with bloodshed (Natufe, 2007). President Olusegun Obasanjo’s claim that the 2007 general election in Nigeria was a ‘do or die’ affair is quite instructive here.

1.1.4 Origin of Politics

Politics is as old as man can remember. Politics is present whenever there is a choice to be made. This is more so that it is quite clear that human wants are numerous but the resources for the satisfaction of these varied wants are very limited in supply. This resource limitation gives rise to the problem of its distribution to ensure fairness and equity. This problem can be found in all aspects of man’s life. It can be found in the family unit, at village level and at national level.

From the above, it can be said without fear of contradiction that politics can be found in any organized group where decisions on how limited resources can be distributed or allocated among competing groups. Thus, in resources allocation decision, some power game comes in to play. This power play is what Harold Lasswell refers to as “who gets what, when and how”. Therefore, since decision bordering on resource allocation has been there from time immemorial, it then means that politics is as old as man on earth.

Even the Holy Book, Holy Bible, testifies to this in God giving man dominion over all His creation. Perhaps God did this because He created man in his own image and likeness. Infact, God’s commandment to our foster parents, Adam and Eve, to eat all fruits of the Garden of Eden but one, has already introduced some element of politics into the whole thing. Man cannot, therefore, be divorced from politics. This, of course, is not to say that God’s politics is that of do or die affair; far from it. What is being said here is that politics in itself is not a bad thing. The people involved in it and the way or manner in which it is played may be bad. This is particularly so in Nigeria where it has been taken to be a matter of power show.

1.1.5 Corruption

Like most other concepts in the social science field of study, corruption has a problem of definition. It has no single universally acceptable definition. A few of these will be examined in this write-up in order to properly examine the subject in greater detail. As an example, Sen A. in 1999 defined ‘corruption’ or “corrupt” behaviours as one that “involves the violation of established rules for personal gain and profit” According to Lipset and Lenz (2000),

corruption refers to “efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means – private gain at public expense; or a misuse of public power for private benefit.” Ayo (1986:7) sees corruption as “the sacrifice of public for personal benefits.” This definition, however seems to be too vague and not detailed enough. Again, Nye (1967:419) defines corruption as: “behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private gain regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gain, or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private right regarding influence. This includes such behaviour as bribery (use of reward to prevent the judgement of a person in a position of trust); nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private – regarding uses”) This definition by J.S. Nye appears to be more all embracing. It includes such behaviour as bribery (use of reward to influence and change the judgement of a person in a position of trust); nepotism which is the bestowal of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationship rather than merit; and misappropriation that is, the illegal appropriation of public resources for private uses (Banfield, 1961). In 1996, Osoba defined corruption as an “antisocial behaviour conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms, and which undermine the authorities to improve the living conditions of the people (Adenugba, 2009).

Again, Alatas et al (2006), define corruption briefly as a “situation where two people can act to increase their own pay-off at the expense of a third person.” However, this does not mean that an individual cannot perpetrate the act of corruption. This is because fraud, an aspect of corruption, can be planned and executed by a single person all on his own. The point being made here is that, very often, it takes at least two people to effect an act probably conceived by an individual.

Although some of the definition’s of corruption given above have been with us for some decades now, the recent development in Nigeria, where discoveries of stolen public funds running into billions of U.S. Dollars and Nigerian Naira; make these definitions very apt, adequate and appropriate. Corruption is mostly the main method of accumulating quick wealth in Nigeria.

1.1.6 Origin of Corruption

Corruption can be found in all forms of economy. It can be found in dictatorial and non-dictatorial politics; feudal, capitalist and socialist regimes. Religious cultures are equally bedeviled by corruption (Lipset and Lenz, 2000). They equally claim that corrupt practices did not begin today. The history is as old as man in the world. There are traces of corruption and illegality in ancient civilizations. Even corrupt practice can be found in the Holy Bible. The case of Ananias and Saphira is instructive here. Thus, “corruption has been ubiquitous in complex societies from ancient Egypt, Israel, Rome and down to the present”. The rise of public administration and the discovery of oil are two major events seen to have led to a litany of sordid corrupt practices in Nigeria.

A review of Nigerian’s colonial past would reveal that not only were the colonial masters responsible for the introduction of corrupt practices into Nigeria but they taught Nigerians how to practice it. The only thing is that, as usual with Nigeria and Nigerians, it is easy to copy anything (good and bad). Corruption is one of those things that was copied from the

colonialists and it became part and parcel of Nigeria and Nigerians.

An example here would show how Britain, knowingly or unknowingly introduced corruption into Nigeria. The history of indirect rule in Nigeria is a case in point here. It is on record that the British deposed all chiefs who, though very good and loved by their subjects, refused to comply with their instructions and replaced these chiefs with weaklings who were prepared to lick the boots of the British. Thus, the British were not looking for competence but mere allies and this was how decency was thrown to the dogs.

Again, it is also on record that promotion into various posts during the colonial era was not based on either qualification or competence but on other primordial considerations. In fact, up till the moment, a number of foreign companies in Nigeria still do not rate Nigerians with equal qualification, experience and competence as their peers from abroad. This is corruption in practice. The works of authors like Walter Rodney contain vivid examples of how Europe imported corruption into Africa.

Since the introduction of corrupt practices by the British into Nigeria, the discovery of crude oil has further promoted corruption to another level. This is succulently corroborated by Costa (2007) when he declares that “economists posit that countries blessed with natural resources are particularly vulnerable to corruption”. This phenomenon has been labeled as the natural resource trap or ‘Dutch Disease’. This is so because the export of a valuable natural commodity drives up a country’s currency and makes other traditional exports less competitive. Exports earnings become heavily dependent on this one resource and, therefore, vulnerable to the boom and bust or global price fluctuations. Little wonder then that Nigeria; whose one time Head of State during the oil boom days was quoted as saying that ‘our problem is no longer that of money, but how to spend it’ went cap in hand when the price of the single resource – crude oil – crashed in later years.

In an economic climate of corruption, prevalence of a single natural resource also perverts justice and politics. High revenue from oil translates into low taxes, but also low accountability and lack of transparency as well as limited public services. As a result, politics becomes defined by patronage network of favoritism based on ethnicity, religion or tribalism (Costa, 2007).

In the words of Mallam Nuhu Ribadu (2006), the erstwhile, chairman of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), “corruption in Nigeria could be traced to military incursion into politics. Successive military regimes subdued the rule of law, facilitated the wanton looting of the public treasury, decapitated public institutions and free speech and instituted a secret and opaque culture in the running of government business. The result was total insecurity, poor economic management, abuse of human rights, ethnic conflicts and capital flight.”

It is quite interesting to note that corruption and bad governance are the twin major reasons often cited by the military for rationalizing their incursion into politics in Nigeria (Adekanye 1993, Ikoku, 1985). It is however ironic that the succeeding military governments could neither stem the tide of corruption, nor enhance good governance. Rather with the wholesale deployment of force, the Nigerian polity passed through phases of deepening corruption and political instability (Adenugba, 2009). Thus, it can be said that each military regime in

Nigeria became worse than the civilian regimes they succeeded.

Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, the civilian regime headed by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo had taken some steps aimed at revamping the image of the country as far as corruption is concerned. Some of the steps taken include the establishment of two major anti-graft agencies: the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) under the chairmanship of a retired Judge – Justice Emmanuel Ayoola Akanbi in 2000 and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) under the chairmanship of Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, an Assistant Commissioner of Police in 2003. Since their establishment, only the EFCC could be said to have lived up to its bidding. This is because the EFCC has investigated, arrested and prosecuted some public officers. Infact, some convictions have been achieved. In the case of the ICPC, not much has been achieved. Indeed, it seems the ICPC died at conception.

1.1.7 Causes of Corruption

There is no doubting the fact that corruption is a universal phenomenon. It is also a truism that corruption is of special interest in developing countries to which Nigeria is a prominent member. A state where there is widespread corruption, functions very poorly and a poorly functioning state can only undermine economic growth.

In countries where corruption has become systemic, even those with extensive natural resources (e.g. Nigeria) may fail to develop in a way that benefits the ordinary citizen (Ovwasa, 2009).

The causes of corruption are as varied as there are scholars. While it was common to scholars with specialist bias to locate the root cause of corruption in post-colonial Africa, in the capitalist system of production and distribution inherited from colonial masters, prominent scholars like Walter Rodney, Nnoli O, Akinpelu, J.A. to mention but a few had argued that it was colonialism that destroyed the progressive values of pre-colonial societies, which elevated the ideals of egalitarian communalism and humanism above selfish considerations. Their main argument is that colonialism with its concomitant capitalist mode of production, distribution and exchange elevated values of individualism and materialism above all other values. This sudden change of value orientation, according to them, brought a lot of problems to the people of colonised territories. The first of such problems was that the colonised people acquired new tastes and desires, which the structures imposed by colonialism, could not sustain. Also, they were fully deprived of any meaningful control over the production and distribution of goods necessary for the satisfaction of the newly acquired needs and desires. (Ovwasa, 2009). This is quite evident from the change in the mode of dressing, and even the food eaten by colonised people who now prefer imported food and clothes to those indigenous to them. Colonised people were made to believe that indigenous things were inferior and only imported products were of superior quality.

As posited by Obasi (1986:18), “in a bid, therefore, to live up to the new standard of living which colonial contact brought, they resorted to any available means which the values of individualism and materialism approves”. Also arguing that corruption is caused by the capitalist system of production and distribution as imposed by colonialism, Akinpelu (cited in Ovwasa, 2009:123) completely exonerated the original African traditional culture from

having any hand in corruption. He specifically wrote:

...in the true African traditional culture in the tug between the individual and the society, it was the society or group that had the pre-eminence and the superior claim. The social conscience was at its highest. The individual was motivated to action by the interest of the community to which he belonged. Where as in the traditional African society, the economic arrangement was for the welfare of all the people, nowadays they are to enable those who have the access to make as much profit as possible.

Also, some writers have posited about the potential causes of flagrant corrupt practices that exist in the country and many blame greed and ostentatious lifestyle as a potential source of corruption (Wikipedia, 2009). This can be seen from the public display of affluence by the leadership of Nigeria. They have total disregard for the yearnings of the larger majority of Nigerians. They think only of themselves, their families and cronies.

Some people have also argued that corruption is a function of great inequality in wealth distribution; the perception that political offices are the primary means of gaining access to wealth, conflicts between changing moral codes and weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanism and a lack of a strong sense of national community (Adenugba, 2009). There is no wonder then that the race for political offices in Nigeria has become a matter of life and death where political assassinations have become the order of the day rather than exception and where the end justifies the means.

Seven factors that engender corruption were identified by Gray and Kaufmann in 1998. These factors, according to them, include the value of wages and salaries, presence of strong opportunities and awareness of how to perpetrate corruption, weak measures against accountability, population, natural resources wealth, lack of political will and community. These corruption enhancing factors vary from one culture to the other and from one political system to the other. One key point to note, however, is that it is possible to identify an act of corruption when it is perpetrated irrespective of cultural or political background. Corrupt practices are obvious (Adenugba 2009).

1.1.8 Types of Corruption

Corruption can be of various types. The main types of corruption are treated below:

1.2.1 Bribery

Bribery is an act of corruption that requires two participants to effectively implement. The first participant is to give the bribe while the other is to receive it. Bribery involves the exchange of valuable(s) between both participants. It is impossible for bribery as a type of corruption to be executed without a giver and a receiver. In Nigeria, corruption extends to virtually every aspect of public life. It has become almost institutionalised thereby making it very difficult for individuals to stay in business without resorting to bribes. Bribes may be demanded in order for an official to do something he/she has already been paid to do. As an example, I remember while working as a civil servant, I went on annual leave. After returning from the leave I went to the cash office to check if my leave allowance was ready. On going through the list pasted on the notice board, I discovered that my name was on the list indicating that my leave allowance was ready for collection. I then proceeded to the cashier to request that I be paid. While looking at somewhere else, the cashier casually asked me

whether one can expect any seed planted in the desert to germinate without water? Answering I said no. He waited for sometime expecting me to offer him bribe before he could pay me. I did not understand that the question was meant for my action rather than giving a verbal answer. After waiting without any thing coming out of me, he simply said, the leave allowance voucher was ready but the cheque had not been written not to talk of being signed. He proceeded to attend to the next person whose name was on the same list as mine but who understood the language and offered him bribe instantly. My protest did not help matters as people shouted at me to quit the queue so that they could be attended to. They shouted at me and said that those who work at the altar must eat from the altar. Again, bribes may also be demanded in order to by pass laws and regulations. In Nigeria, up to half of the population has paid bribes during the last 12 months.

1.2.2 Trading In Influence

Trading in influence, or influence peddling in certain countries, refers to the situation where a person is selling his/her influence over the decision process involving a third party (person or institution). The difference with bribery is that this is a tri-lateral relation. From a legal point of view, the role of the third party (who is the target of the influence) does not really matter although he/she can be an accessory in some instances. It can be difficult to make a distinction between this form of corruption and certain forms of extreme and poorly regulated lobbying where for instance lawmakers – or decision makers can freely “sell” their vote, decision power or influence to those lobbyists who offer the highest retribution, including where, for instance, the latter act on behalf of powerful clients such as industrial groups who want to avoid the passing of certain environmental, social or other regulations perceived as stringent (Wikipedia, 2009).

1.2.3 Graft

Whereas bribery includes an intent to influence or be influenced by another for personal gain, which is often difficult to prove, graft only requires that the official gains something of value, not part of his/her official pay, when doing his/her work. Large “gifts” qualify as grafts, and most countries have laws against it. But what is important is effective implementation of these laws. In Nigeria, the laws may be there but are they implemented? The answer is definitely no.

Another example of graft is a politician using his knowledge of zoning to purchase land which he/she knows is planned for development, before this is publicly known, and then selling it at significant profit. This is comparable to insider trading in business (Wikipedia, 2009).

1.2.4 Patronage

Patronage refers to a system of favouring supporters, for example with government employment or contracts. This may sometimes be legitimate, as when a newly elected government changes the top officials in the administration in order to effectively implement its policies. It can be seen as corruption if this means that incompetent persons, as a payment for supporting the regime, are selected before memorable ones. In many non- democracies, many government officials are often selected based loyalty rather than ability. They may be almost exclusively selected from a particular group (for example, political party members in

Nigeria, Sunni Arabs in Saddam Hussain's Iraq, the nomenklatura in the Soviet Union or the Junkers in Imperial Germany) that support the regime in return for such favours. In Nigeria, you can hardly get anything from government unless you are a card carrying member of the political party in power. That is why you either belong or nothing for you.

1.2.5 Nepotism and Cronyism

An official favouring relatives (nepotism) or personal friends (cronyism) is a form of illegitimate private gain. This may be combined with bribery, for example demanding that a business should employ a relative of an official controlling regulation affecting the business. The most extreme example is when the entire state is inherited, as in North Korea or Syria. A milder form of cronyism is "old boy (student) network", in which appointees to official positions are selected from a closed and exclusive social network – such as the alumni of particular universities – instead of appointing the most competent candidate. In Nigeria for instance, there is an official policy used to employ unqualified and incompetent people to official positions. The policy is known as "federal character". Ordinarily, the purpose of the policy is to ensure that people from all zones of the country are taken care of in employment consideration but this has been seriously abused and used to perpetrate incompetence.

Seeking to harm perceived enemies becomes corruption when official powers are illegitimately used as means to this end. For example, trumped-up charges are often brought up against journalist or writers who bring up politically sensitive issues, such as a politician's acceptance of bribes. This is often the case in developing countries where frivolous charges are brought-up to suppress opposition. In Nigeria, however, trumped-up charges are now of rare occurrence. What is now very common in Nigeria is assassination of perceived enemies or opponents.

1.2.6 Kickbacks

A kickback is an official's share of misappropriated funds allocated from his/her organisation to an organisation involved in corrupt bidding. For example, supposing a politician is in charge of choosing how to spend some public funds, he can give a contract to a company that is not the bidder, or allocate more than they deserve. In this case, the company benefits, and in exchange for betraying the public, the official receives a kickback payment, which is a portion of the sum the company received. This sum itself may be all or a part of the difference between the actual (inflated) payment to the company and the lower market-based price that would have been paid had the bidding been competitive. Kickbacks are not limited to government officials; any situation in which people are entrusted to spend funds that do not belong to them are susceptible to this kind of corruption. In Nigeria, the House of Representative probe of the power sector revealed a lot of kickback issues that involved very highly placed people in government.

Kickbacks are also very common in the pharmaceutical industry, as many doctors and physicians receive pay in return for added promotion and prescription of the drugs these pharmaceutical companies are marketing. Another scenario is seen when pharmaceutical companies are requested to lower the quality of particular drugs for the same price. This is very much in practice these days as discovered by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) where fake and adulterated drugs are a common

feature in Nigeria.

1.2.7 Unholy Alliance

An unholy alliance is a coalition among seemingly antagonistic groups, especially if one is religious, for ad hoc or hidden gain. Like patronage, unholy alliance are not necessarily illegal, but like patronage, by its deceptive nature and often great financial resources an unholy alliance can be much more dangerous to the public interest. (Wikipedia, 2009)

1.3.1 Conditions Favourable for Corruption

For anything to thrive in any society there must be some conditions that serve to encourage such a thing. Corruption thrives under certain conditions in Nigeria. These conditions include the following:

1.3.2 Information Deficits

In Nigeria today, there is shortage of information. Nearly everything is shrouded in secrecy thus making corruption to thrive. For over two months, Nigerias president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua was away from the country on medical grounds. Nobody in government knew the exact state of his health. In fact nobody could claim to have seen him in the hospital in Saudi Arabia where he was said to be receiving medical treatment. Scenario such as this is a very fertile ground for corruption.

Also, a situation where there is lack of transparency in governance is another fertile ground for corruption to thrive. A situation in which ministers appointed by the president cannot have easy, unhindered access to the president shows how secretive that kind of government is. Thus, any minister can decide to do whatever he/she likes since there is no one to query him/her.

Again, lack of measurement of corruption makes corruption to be in vogue in a country. For example, using regular surveys of households and businesses in order to quantify the degree of perception of corruption in different parts of a country or in different government institutions may increase awareness of corruption and create pressure to combat it. This will also enable an evaluation of the officials who are fighting corruption and the methods used (Wikipedia 2009).

Lack of investigative reporting in local media also serves to encourage corruption. This is particularly so in Nigeria where media practitioners who have been targets of assassination have been cautious so that their lives are not cut short midstream. This has become heightened by the fact that all assassinations for the past two decades have not seen any culprits or suspects being prosecuted. This situation has therefore, allowed assassinations to continue to be the norm. Hence journalist has relented in taking some risks thus corrupt officials are having a field day.

1.3.3 Social Conditions

The presence of some social conditions in a country can serve to foster corruption in such a country. Social conditions such as self-interested closed cliques and “old student networks” can serve as a fertile ground where corruption breeds. In Nigeria, being a retired military officer places you in a situation where you can do anything and go away freely with corrupt practices.

Again, in Nigeria, family, and clan – centered social structure, with a tradition of nepotism/favouritism being acceptable is gradually becoming a breeding ground for corruption. This is because any action of government official, as an example, can always find support from members of his/her ethnic divide whether or not such action is right.

In societies where personal integrity is rated as less important than other characteristics, such societies will breed more corrupt officials than in societies where people of integrity are held in high esteem. In today Nigeria, people of integrity are looked down upon with scorn. The people that are held with reverence are those with high degree of wealth though they may have become wealthy through corrupt practices. People of this calibre are respected, revered and accorded the highest places at public functions. Hence corruption is on the increase in Nigeria.

2. Money Politics in Nigeria

Money is very important for democracy because much of democratic political activity simply cannot occur without it. Political finance is influenced by, and influences relations between political parties, politicians, party membership and the electorate. Narrow definitions of political finance tend to focus on campaigns and party funding. In fact, many extra-party actors are involved in political competition, with the objective of shaping public policy agenda, influencing legislation in doctoral debates and outcomes (Walecki 2003).

According to a typology developed by Vifredo Pareto, there are three motives for providing political funds. These are (a) idealistic or ideological (b) social, aiming at social honours or access, and (c) financial, striving for material benefit. The later comes as no surprise, but it can have major political consequences. These political consequences have posed serious political challenge to Nigerian democracy today. It is a well known fact that in Nigeria, this last motive has led to God-fatherism and problems that have come with it. It is an incontrovertible fact that this has led to the people not reaping the dividends of democracy in Nigeria. Anambra State is a clear example of how money has caused serious problems in Nigeria's nascent democracy.

Problems of political finance are at the centre of the debate on political corruption. Yet the meaning of political finance-related corruption is often unclear. In general, "corrupt" political finance involves behaviour on the part of a candidate or a party, in which they improperly or un-lawfully conduct financial operations for the gain of a political party, interest group, or of an individual candidate (Walecki, 2003).

In the first place, against the general perception among public opinion, it should be stressed that political finance and political corruption are separate notions. It is only when their valences overlap does the zone of corrupt political funding emerge. Secondly, the narrow definitions of political corruption, such as "the use of public office for unauthorised private gain.", do not include many forms of political finance related corruption; mainly because high positions within political parties are often not included in the definition of public office and the abuse of money as a political resource can often benefit parties or organisations as well as individuals. In the third place, there is an important difference between political finance regulations and actual practices, and the meaning of "corrupt" political financing

should not limit itself to the term” illegal political finance” Illegal political finance refers to contributions or use of money that contravene existing laws on political financing. The concept is based on legalistic criteria and assumes that a political act is corrupt when it violates formal standards of behaviour set down by a political system. Such a definition of corrupt political finance is generally clear. However, certain problems emerge. Laws are not necessarily consistent in interpretation or application across different countries. For instance, what is taken as a norm in Nigeria may be viewed as serious in Europe or America. Furthermore, this definition suffers from being simultaneously too narrow and too broad in scope. This is because some illegal act are not necessary corrupt. For instance foreign funding of democratic opposition, such as Polish Solidarity Trade Union (P.S.T.U) in the 1980s and some corrupt acts are not necessarily illegal (campaign contributions from organised crime).

It is worth mentioning here that illegality is crucial to many definitions of political corruption. However, some legally sanctioned but dubious uses of state resources in semi-authoritarian and authoritarian regimes cannot be defined as corruption according to this approach. As a result, the law is not a proper guide. This not only because it is not perfect with regards to encompassing all cases widely perceived as corrupt but also, because the law itself may be a result of political corruption. Indeed, the range and scope of illegal political funding depends on country-specific funding regulations, while irregular political finance emerges in the gap between a country’s legal provisions and the reality of its corrupt political funding practices. In this case, the irregular or “informal political finance system” refers to legal contributions from disregulated sources or acceptance of money in return for favour. This has been the bane of the Nigerian political system. The restrictions imposed on political parties and individual candidates by funding regulations often create loopholes allowing for irregular political finance. As an example of a legal but questionable donation in 2001, Indian billionaire Lakshmi Mittal had donated £125,000 to Labour Party Funds prior to receiving British Prime Minister, Tony Blair’s support for the takeover of the Romanian Sidex Steel Plant. Similar things have happened in Nigeria. In 2003, prominent businessmen, e.g. Alhaji Aliko Dangote donated several million Naira to President Olusegun Obasanjo’s campaign fund. After Chief Obasanjo won the election, Transcorp was incorporated and Dangote was made the chairman.

It is easier to describe the hundreds of political funding scandals than to analyse their character. Money matters for democracy because much of its political activity simply could not occur without it. However, when discussing its costs and benefits one should stress that the misuse of money in politics can create some major problems for a political regime. This is already steering us in the face at least in Anambra State of Nigeria.

Since the nineteenth century, most of the democracies have managed to eliminate the buying of votes and associated methods of electoral bribery. Yet, even those regimes face a situation where a number of different problems related to money in politics still remains to be solved (Walecki, 2003). Nigeria is a case in point here- where vote buying, electoral bribery, ballot box snatching and intimidation of voters, candidates, electoral officials, is still the order of the day.

It is necessary, however, for a system that prohibits corrupt electoral practices in the funding of parties and election campaigns should be designed differently from a system that promotes political equality. The unfair advantages of some parties or candidates in democratic

regimes are not classified here as political finance-related corruption as they result from the unequal distribution of income and wealth among the public into the political process. However, the abuse of state resources giving a baseless electoral advantage would be a different case.

2.1 Types of Political Finance-Related Corruption

The major types of political finance-related corruption are described in the table below, though there are ambiguities as to whether a particular case of political corruption is directly related to party and campaign finance.

Type	Actor Group	Description
Illegal expenditure including vote buying	Voters and election officials	A political party or candidate may directly or indirectly bribe voters and election officials. They may alternatively, offer the electorate different kinds of incentives (gifts, food, alcohol, or even short-term employment). Beside election in some parliaments these is an unofficial market for votes-parliamentarians or councillors might be paid for votes or-for joining different caucuses
Funding from infamous sources	Candidates and political parties	A political party or candidate make money from organised crime (such as drugs traffickers), terrorists groups or foreign governments. These groups might even form their own political parties
Selling appointments, honour, or access to information	Public servants not candidates	Contributors may gain rewards in the form of job selections, appointments (ambassadorial, ministerial or judicial), decorations or titles of nobility. Money may also be used to buy a seat in parliament, a place on a party's national list of candidacy.
Abuse of state resources	Public Sector	Certain state resources, such as money and infrastructure, which are available to office holders may be extensively used for electioneering. In addition, through the unauthorised channelling of public funding into controlled companies, organisations or individuals the political party or candidate may capture state, resources.
Personal enrichment	Candidates and politicians	Candidates are required to contribute significant amounts, much higher than their official income, to a

		party's election fund and are to pay for their individual campaign. Politics became a rich man's game and elected representatives accumulate necessary fund to pay for the next elections by taking a percentage on secret commissions and accepting bribes.
Demanding contributions from public servants	Public servants and public sector	A political party or candidate in need of money often imposes exercises upon office holders both public and elected. In some regimes a political party may also force public servants to become party members and then extort kickbacks for some of its expenditure from their salaries.
Activities disobeying political finance regulations	Political parties	A political party or candidate may accept donations from prohibited sources or spend more than the legal ceiling permits. Violations of disclosure requirements, such as inaccurate accounting or reporting or lack of transparent funding, are often the cause of political scandals.
Political contributions for favours, contacts or policy change	Private sector	One of the motives of political contributions to a political party or candidate is the possibility of payoffs in the shape of licenses and government public contract. Donations may also be given for a governmental policy change or legislation favourable to a specific interest group.
Forcing private sector to pay "protection money"	Private sector	Extortion, for instance through blackmail, raiding taxes and customs inspectors may be used to force entrepreneurs to hand over part of their profits to a political party.
Limiting access to funding for opposition parties	Opposition parties and candidates	Authoritarian regimes with patrimonial economic system and political repression may seriously constrain financial resources available to opposition parties.

*Actor group that is particularly vulnerable/corruptible

Source: Political Money and Political Corruption: Considerations for Nigeria by Dr. Marcin Walecki, November 2003.

In consolidated democracies, progress in liberalising the economy, strengthening bureaucratic accountability and promoting transparency in political finance might be expected to place some, albeit still imperfect, constraints on the extent to which individual firms can be directly affected by illegal political finance.

However, regimes in consolidated autocracies are often based on strong presidential systems or one-party systems, with the opposition political parties having only weak power. In these regimes, economic power is also derived from political patronage. This is exactly the case in Nigeria where the party in power at the centre is gradually eliminating opposition political

parties. Most people engaged in economic activity in consolidated autocracies are closely linked to the president and his inner circle. Thus, there is no interest in supporting opposition political parties. This, plus the concentration of economic resources in the executive branch and the lack of or control over foreign investment, limit financial resources for political parties and gradually wipes out the opposition political parties, as they simply cannot rely on the financial support of their members or controlled interest groups. At the same time the vast public resources available to office holders are deliberately used for sustaining the regime (Walecki, 2003).

As a consequence, it is important not only to evaluate illegal private political finances, but also to analyse the degree of illegal state funding and abuse of state resources. But can this be an easy exercise in a country like Nigeria where those in power are not only suppressing opposition but also killing opposition and its members. Government favouritism to maintain privileged positions within the economic system for powerful political and economic elites, together with the general lack of political accountability, leads to corrupt political finance.

3. Political Corruption in Nigeria

Political corruption, according to Wikipedia, is the use of legislated powers by government officials for illegitimate private gain. Thus, misuse of government power for other purposes, such as repression of political opponents and general police brutality, is not considered political corruption. Neither are illegal acts by private persons or corporations not directly involved with the government considered to be political corruption. An illegal act by an office holder constitutes political corruption only if the act is directly related to their official duties.

All forms of government are susceptible to political corruption, be they autocracy, democratic, socialists, etc. The forms of political corruption vary from place to place and the degree of political corruption also vary but they include bribery, extortion, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, graft and embezzlement as already discussed. Though corruption may facilitate criminal enterprise such as drug trafficking, money laundering, human trafficking, kidnapping etc., it is not restricted to these activities.

On the whole the activities that constitute corruption differ from one country to another. As an example certain political funding practices that are legal in one country may be illegal in another. In some cases, government officials have based or poorly defined powers, which make it difficult to differentiate legal from illegal actions.

Corruption of all forms is rampant all over the world. There is no country throughout the world that could be said to be corruption free. Worldwide, bribery alone is estimated to involve over one million US dollars annually. The degree of citizen involvement in corrupt practices vary from place to place. A state of unrestrained political corruption is known as a Kleptocracy. This means “rule by thieves”. Nigeria was gradually becoming a kleptocratic country before May 1999 when Chief Olusegun Obasanjo became the president. President Obasanjo’s administration took some positive steps aimed at stemming corruption in Nigeria. It was this era that established two anti-graft agencies where some prominent people hitherto considered as untouchables were prosecuted and jailed. Former governor Alamesiegha of Bayelsa State, South South Nigeria and Inspector General of Police (Tapha Balogun) are

living examples.

3.1 Governmental Corruption

Sometimes, corruption is carried out by the people holding highest government appointments. These government appointees engage in corrupt practices and often embezzle from the state treasury money meant for the general wellbeing of the people. This is sometimes referred to as neologism or kleptocracy. In Nigeria as in most developing and corrupt countries, government officials often time appropriate public funds for private and personal purposes.

In most cases, a corrupt dictatorship typically results, which engenders many years of general hardship and suffering for the vast majority of citizens as civil society and the rule of law disintegrate. In addition, corrupt dictators routinely ignore economic and social problems in their quest to amass more wealth and power. This was the case with Nigeria in the years of military dictatorship. It came to a climax in the late General Sani Abacha administration where opposition was clamped down by either detention or complete annihilation. General Sani Abacha is reputed to have corruptly enriched himself to the tune of US\$3-4 billion. Despite the fact that he died in 1998, he and his relatives are up to now, often mentioned in Nigerian advance fee fraud otherwise known as 419 letter scams claiming to offer vast fortunes for “help” in laundering his stolen fortunes which in reality turn out to be false. Over US\$400 billion was stolen from the treasury by Nigeria’s leaders between 1960 and 1999.

3.1.1 Measuring Corruption

Measuring corruption statistically is a difficult task if not an impossible one due to the illicit nature of the transaction and imprecise definitions of corruption. While “corruption” indices first appeared in 1995 with the Corruption Perceptions Index, all of these matrices address proxies for corruption such as public perceptions of the extent of the problem (Wikipedia, 2009).

Transparency International, an anti-corruption Non-Government Organisation (NGO), pioneered this field with the Corruption Perception Index, first released in 1995. This effort is often credited with breaking a taboo and forcing the issue of corruption into high level development policy discourse. Transparency International currently publishes three measures, which is updated annually: a corruption perception Index (based on aggregating third-party polling of public perceptions of how corrupt different countries are). A Global Corruption Barometer (based on a survey of general public attitudes toward and experience of corruption); and a Bribe Payers Index, looking at the willingness of foreign firms to pay bribes. The Corruption Perceptions Index is the best known of these metrics, though it has drawn a lot of criticism and may be declining in influence. For now it remains the best, if not the only measure of corruption in use throughout the world today.

Also, the World bank collected a range of data on corruption, including survey responses from over 100,000 firms globally and a set of indicators of governance and institutional quality. Moreover, one of the six dimensions of governance measured by the worldwide Governance Indicator & Control Corruption, which is defined as the extent to which power is exercised for private gain, including both petty and grand forms of corruption, as well as

“capture” of the state by the elites and private interests. “While the definition itself is fairly precise, the data aggregated into the Worldwide Governance indicators is based on any available polling; questions range from “is corruption a serious problem?” to measure of public access to information, and not consistent across countries. Despite these weaknesses, the global coverage of these datasets has led to their widespread adoption, most notably by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (Wikipedia, 2009).

In part and as a response to these criticism, a second wave of corruption metrics has been created by Global Integrity, the International Budget partnership and many lesser known local groups, starting with the Global Integrity Index, first published in 2004. These second wave projects do not aim to create awareness but to create policy change by targeting resources more effectively and creating checklist toward incremental reform. Global integrity and the International Budget partnership each dispense with public surveys and instead uses in-country experts to evaluate ‘the opposite of corruption’- which Global Integrity defines as the public policies that prevent, discourage or expose corruption. These approaches compliment the first wave, awareness-raising tools by giving governments facing public outcry a checklist which measures concrete steps toward improved governance (Wikipedia, 2009).

3.1.2 Controlling Political Finance

Every democratic system has to regulate the flow of money into politics. Uncontrolled political financing presents certain problems for modern liberal democracy. It fails to guarantee that candidates and political parties compete on equal pedestals. Political competition under uncontrolled political financing in the opinion of Keith Ewing would be like inviting two people to participate in the race, with one participant turning up with a bicycle, and the other with a sports car.

On the whole, measures concerning political financing are divided into regulation (control) and subventions. Most democracies restrict the use of at least some sources of private donations, either by banning them outrightly or by setting contribution limits. Restrictions on donations are aimed at preventing parties and candidates from obligating themselves to private interests. Headline cases such as those involving the former Vice President of Nigeria, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar as well as those mentioned in Nigeria House of Representatives probe of the Power sector make this imperative.

It is quite obvious that corrupt political funding undermines the democratic system. It leads to compromising democratic ideal, the growth of political apathy among voters and mistrust of the authorities, as well as the consolidation of authoritarian tendencies in the state when other forms of political corruption are viewed with it. The public interprets irregularities in party and campaign finance in a broader perspective. This often leads to distrust of the institutions and processes of politics. A large number of voters assume that parties respond primarily to organised, special interest and that politicians are not concerned about ordinary citizens. It must, however, be stated here that there is no ideal form of political finance system anywhere in the world.

In many democratic regimes, new restrictions and substantial state subsidies have been introduced as a response to financial scandals and public pressure, to prevent corruption by

limiting undesirable and disproportionate influence over parties and candidates. In Nigeria, these measure can include:

- a. Bans on certain types of donation
- b. Contribution limits
- c. Transparent public subsidies and subsidies-in-kind (including regulations concerning political broadcasting)
- d. Spending limits for political parties and its candidates,
- e. Comprehensive disclosure and reporting regulations, and
- f. Severe but proportional penalties (Walecki, 2003).

With the above measures in place in Nigeria, some political experts have argued that political finance regulations have brought increased probity, transparency, and a degree of equity to the monetary aspects of politics in established democracies. Indeed, the funding of political parties in most democratic countries is more transparent than a decade ago.

4. Consequences of Corruption In Nigeria

One of the consequences of corruption in Nigeria is the fact that as corruption spreads, foreign direct investment dries up or is chased away. Poverty deepens and public discontent grows, as a result, society becomes even more vulnerable to corruption, bad governance and poverty, even the risk of violence and serious damage to the environment, as evident in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria in the recent past. Thanks to the amnesty programme embarked upon by the Federal Government. The current peace in the region may be temporary depending on the implementation of the amnesty programme.

Another consequence of corruption in Nigeria is loss of potential revenue. In fact, Nigeria has lost several billions of U.S. dollars which have been expatriated by corrupt leaders. Between 1960 and 1999, close to 400 billion US dollars was stolen by Nigerians leaders. This is an astronomical amount, because if the \$400 billion were to be put in a developmental projects the current hues and cries would not be there.

Again, failure of state institutions is a direct consequence of corruption in Nigeria. Corruption kills trust in government, public institutions and companies. It kills the environment through the dumping of hazardous waste, illegal logging, over-fishing, or the extraction of solid minerals. Corruption also kills growth by stealing public money needed for schools, hospitals, roads, other infrastructural facilities and by driving business into the shadow economy.

Corruption also results into negative economic impact. The prevalence of crime in Nigeria has discouraged numerous potential investors leading to decreased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), causing Nigerian Banks to lose viable businesses precipitating economic instability, business failures and unemployment (Ribadu, 2006).

Negative National image is also a consequence of corruption in Nigeria. Over the years, Nigeria has become notorious for financial crimes. Advance fee fraud (419) has brought disrepute to Nigeria all over the world. Nigerians are treated with scorn, disrespect and suspicion in all business dealings all over the world. Even honest Nigerians are treated the same way as dishonest ones. In fact it is very difficult to separate honest from dishonest ones thereby discouraging the honest one from going into genuine businesses.

The current brain drain in the country is also one of the consequences of corruption in Nigeria. This is so because corruption breeds mediocrity. Capable hands who are not prepared to bribe their way through quit the system for those places where they are honoured and treated with dignity.

Electoral malpractices (election rigging) is another consequence of corruption. This is quite evident from the pronouncements of the judiciary in most of the election petitions so far decided.

5. Policy/Legal Option to Reduce Political Corruption In Nigeria

For political corruption to be reduced or eradicated in Nigerian some policy or legal strategies can be adopted to control the flow of money into politics, thereby creating a framework within which political parties and individual candidates can operate.

An effective formular for public control of political money will require the existence of a comprehensive system of political finance based on the following:

5.1 Full Disclosure

Disclosure requires systematic and detailed reporting, auditing, public access to records and publicity. The term “disclosure” suggests that voters receive information on the various financial activities of politicians through the public exposure of large contributions and expenditures. A new legal framework should secure three main types of disclosure:

- a. Disclosure by political parties of income and/or expenditure accounts;
- b. Disclosure of election accounts by candidates for national office (presidential and/or parliamentary candidates);
- c. Disclosure by particular donors (in case of larger donations).

Political parties, presidential and parliamentary candidates should be required to disclose:

- i. Specific items of income and expenditure. The objective is to identify and control all sources of money, enforce contribution and limit expenditure;
- ii. All in-kind contributions, i.e. goods and services offered free of charge must be included in the expenditures of an election committee. These must be valued at their prevailing net prices (no higher than the normal purchase price or cost of production);
- iii. Bank loans, credits with the specification of conditions set forth by a lending institution/individual.

Disclosure of the donors identity and the amount of the individual donation is meant to control the flow of private money into campaign coffers. Regulations concerning the disclosure of private contributions are a common feature for most of democratic regimes.

The objective of disclosure of political finances is to make politicians’ accounts a subject of public knowledge and political debate. These declarations are offered for public scrutiny by publishing them in official media and making them available on the internet. The ease with which members of the public can access the accounts and lists of contributions by individuals and institutions will have a major impact on the degree of openness of the system (Walecki, 2003).

5.1.1 Doctrine of Agency

In order to improve financial management of political parties and candidates, the law should assign responsibility within each political party for obedience to political finance regulations. New regulations should encourage political parties to comply with requirements for professional and accurate book-keeping. It is recommended that each party should appoint one specific official who will have responsibility for ensuring that the party obeys political finance laws. This practice is adopted in Britain, Canada, France and now in Poland, with this official being called the ‘agent’. The system based on the doctrine of agency foresees that all campaign expenditure must be authorised by the “agent” who must also check incoming donations to ensure that they are in conformity with the rules. Thus, the political parties financial agents have a clear responsibility for the management of the financial resources. New regulations, obliging parties to report on all the money flowing in and out of their coffers, will require parties to maintain a solid centralised organisation based on party discipline and professional book-keeping (Walecki, 2003).

5.1.2 Sanctions

Effective enforcement of political finance regulations requires the law to impose sanctions and penalties to serve as deterrence to violators. According to Keith D. Ewing:

“At the end of the day, however, effective and severe sanctions are not the province of the criminal law only. Potentially more significant would be powers to prevent individuals from standing for election, to prevent them from taking their seats when elected, and to have a political party deregistered. Although the last is unlikely ever to be used in the case of the large parties, there are no doubt other sanctions which could be employed, such as the refusal of election expense rebates or the denial of income tax credits for contributions to their funds.”

Political finance regulations identify different types of offences and provide for a range of penalties and sanctions depending on the seriousness of the offence such as:

- a. Financial sanctions including modest monetary fines;
- b. Larger fines for serious violations;
- c. Criminal sanctions for significant violations that undermine the integrity of the elections;
- d. Withdrawal of public funding; and
- e. Stripping the party or candidate of his/her mandate if it is established that campaign finance rules have been seriously violated.

In addition, financial benefits transferred or accepted by a party in violation of specific prohibitions might be forfeited to the government treasury – should such a benefit be spent or lost, its value may be forfeited.

5.1.3 Eliminating Patronage Politics and Controlling Costs of Elections

The regulation of political expenditure generally involves restrictions concerning direct vote buying or limitations on the expenditures of political parties or individual candidates (both parliamentary and presidential). Some of the most important legislation should be designed to prohibit all forms of vote-buying (direct and indirect) and associated methods of electoral

bribery as this is the root of political finance-related corruption in Nigeria (Walecki, 2003)

Thus, the normative framework around elections and political finance must first of all generate an environment hostile to vote buying. The law needs not only to establish a clear definition of the offence but also provide for adequate sanctions. In this respect, a modification should be introduced into the Nigerian legislation on vote buying to make it more enforceable: the new law should exempt those who sell their votes from sanctions in order to encourage voters to denounce vote buying candidates. Instead, sanctions, should be directed both against the party and against the individual party official or party member personally involved in the illicit transaction (Walecki, 2003).

5.1.4 Control of Donations

Most democracies restrict the use of at least some sources of private donations, either by leaving them (e.g. anonymous donations) or by setting contribution limits. Anonymous donations should be prohibited, having in mind the transparency of political finance. In general, however, it is advisable that the provision regarding anonymous donations are such that it keeps the administrative burden of parties proportionate by excluding low value donations from their obligation to refuse anonymous donations. It is, therefore, advisable that ceiling is set on both the amount of anonymous donations parties may receive from a single source and on the total amount of anonymous donations a party or candidate may receive in a given year or for a particular election campaign.

Again, contribution limits on donations can be introduced aiming at preventing parties and candidates from obligating themselves to private interests. It is reasonable that an individual wishing to donate modest sums to a party or to a candidate should be able to do so as a private matter. Small donations do not carry the same risk of corruption and influence as large ones. The political finance system should be reducing the role of large-scale donation from rich individuals and should lead to a significant increase in the number of ordinary citizens making “moderate” political contributions.

5.1.5 Effective Implementation And Enforcement

Regardless of complex regulations, analyses show a worrying gap between legal requirements and the political practice of funding politics.

One implication of the ineffectiveness of control mechanisms within the political finance system has been the growing level of political corruption. The major weakness that undermines the working of effective political finance system is the lack of fully independent enforcement mechanisms.

Any enforcement agency’s autonomy must result from many factors viz:

- a. Its membership;
- b. Terms of appointment;
- c. Funding; and
- d. Administrative jurisdiction

The budget of an enforcement agency should preserve its impartiality and independence (while at the same time retaining a degree of accountability for the proper use of public funds). The enforcement agency should have specialised personnel and should be

unconditionally supported by the judiciary, police and other anti-corruption bodies.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1 Conclusion

6.1.1 Recommendation

This paper has shown that money plays a major role in politics and therefore, corruption in Nigeria and all over the globe. It has also been shown that successive governments in Nigeria, especially since the advent of democracy in 1999, have taken steps aimed reducing the influence of money, vis-a-vis corruption in Nigeria's polity. The above steps notwithstanding, the following are recommended for further reflection and action.

- a. Since corruption is seen mainly as a public sector phenomenon, it has been argued that corruption thrives only in poverty-stricken societies. It is recommended that effort should be made by governments in Nigeria to streamline salaries in such a way to help reduce corrupt practices. This can be done by ensuring that salaries paid to workers are enough to dissuade them from taking bribes, whenever offered.
- b. Efforts should be made to ensuring proper dissemination of information in government. There should be transparency in governance. A situation where there is lack of transparency in governance is another fertile ground for corruption to thrive. The freedom of information (F.O.B) Act is a good effort in the right direction. However, efforts should be geared towards ensuring the free flow of information in Nigeria so as to discourage corruption.
- c. Again, government should wake up and take decisive stand against corrupt official and not pay leap service to their stand against corruption. This can be done by making scape goats of few highly placed government officials caught by anti-graft agencies. This, if done, would serve as deterrent to others.
- d. Government should also ensure there is accountability in governance. Weak measures against accountability create room for corruption. It is, therefore, recommended that government should take firm stand in favour of accountability so as to reduce corruption.
- e. Government should strengthen its political will to stem the tide of corruption. This is because corruption thrives because the government tolerates it or does not possess the political will to fight it. Government should go the whole lot to ensuring that it stems the tide against corrupt officials.
- f. There should be full disclosure by political parties of income/expenditure accounts; disclosure of election accounts by candidates for national office; and disclosure by particular donors (in case of larger donations). If this disclosure policy is strictly adhered to, it would help reduce the level of political corruption in Nigeria.
- g. Again, efforts should be geared towards ensuring that sanctions and penalties are imposed on defaulters. Sanctions such as: modest monetary fines; larger fines for serious violators; criminal sanctions for significant violating, withdrawal from public funding; and stripping the party/candidate of his/her mandate if it is

established that campaign finance regulations have been seriously violated. If the above are religiously implemented, political and other forms of corruption would be drastically reduced in Nigeria.

From the analysis, it has been shown that Nigeria is a politically corrupt country. It has also been revealed that although corruption has not been institutionalised officially, its operation in the country makes it systemic. The consequences of corruption on our body polity manifest in the forms of social instability (e.g. the Boko-Haram/Jos Crises), poverty, economic loss and falling standard of living.

It has also been shown that successive governments in Nigeria have taken one step or the other to tackle the problem of corruption in Nigeria. There is no doubting the fact that political corruption, if well handled in Nigeria, would reduce the other forms of corruption drastically. One can only hope that the various steps being taken by the Federal Government would be followed to logical conclusion.

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