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**THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CORRUPTION AND SERVICE  
DELIVERY IN AFRICA: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE**

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**ABSTRACT:** Corruption has been identified as one of the major cankerworms responsible for African underdevelopment since independence. In addition to the lack of development or at best slow pace of development occasioned by the monumental level of corruption on the continent; the basic needs of the people, which have to do with the availability of food, shelter and security, are all not available to the common man across the continent. This paper therefore aims at identifying the cause(s) of existing gap in infrastructural development and its subsequent effect on service delivery to the people and to identify those behind the causes of these gaps. In other words, the paper identifies the perpetrators and the benefactors of corruption and their cronies on the continent, with particular focus on Nigeria. It discussed how this has affected service delivery, in terms of the provision of basic needs of life to the citizenry. To achieve this, the paper adopted the secondary method of data generation, which has to do with the use of text books, Journal articles, news magazines and internet sourced materials, amongst others. The paper observed that the high level of profligacy among the political class and the tradition of the elevation of mediocrity over merit in Africa, especially in Nigeria, are responsible for the inability of the states in Africa to deliver on the basic needs of the people. The paper suggests that it will take a major revolt by the people or the emergence of a revolutionary leadership for there to be a radical change from the prevailing order.

**Keywords:** Corruption, Political Economy, Service Delivery, Nigeria, Africa.

**INTRODUCTION**

Over the time, corruption has become a major challenge that has brought the continent of Africa untold hardship, embarrassments and stalled development at all fronts; even though the foundation of African culture is built on strong moral norms. It has thus become the home for corruption and bad leadership. A day hardly passes, without the media reporting one incident of corruption practices about an African leader or their accomplices. Just as it is to most African countries, so it is in Nigeria. The Nigeria state, which was once seen as a beckon of hope to the continent in general and to the black race in particular, has become a big source of embarrassment to the continent as she is ranked among the most corrupt in the world and most recently have been ranked as the third most miserable country in the world. No wonder Nigeria was described as being “fantastically corrupt” by the immediate past Prime Minister of Britain, David Cameron, (Efebeh, 2018). Corruption has done a lot of damage to the corporate image of Nigeria. It dominates the entire political as well as national discourse; this is so because it is the major cause of lack of development at all

fronts in the Nigerian state; next only to lack of visionary leadership. Corruption is perpetuated in Nigeria as also across the continent of Africa through such channels as slow movement of files, police extortion on the roads, ghost workers syndrome, election irregularities, misappropriation of funds meant for projects by government officials, demand for bribe at all fronts and outright stealing of public funds by those entrusted with the day to day running of public affairs and the padding of budgets. It is a known fact that corruption is found in all human societies at various stage of human existence. Even in contemporary times, corruption can be found in every establishment or governments, and it is not peculiar to any region of the world, continent, country and or ethnic group, it is however the degree or rate of corruption in a polity as it affects the delivery of social services to the populace that differs and that matters. Corruption affects the young, the old, men and women, Christians and Muslims and so forth. As Igwe (2012) notes, “corruption is one of many intractable social pathologies ravaging Africa. It is also one that is better described as it occurs than conceptually defined since its effects and implications lack coherent and definitive bounds”. For instance, a proximate or determinate price cannot be easily drawn to equate the cost of a single act of corruption since an act of corruption bears multiple and ripple effects on human society.

On a vital note, researches have shown that young nations are by nature poor and thus more susceptible to the problems of corruption. In young Britain, the corrupt parliamentarians were known as the ‘Rotten Boroughs’ (Trevelyan, 1948, cited in Ogbimi, 2017). In decades before 1900 in the United States, corruption and greed were witnessed, to the extent that the two major political parties were viewed with disdain and even referred to as parties that had no distinct tenets, Ogbimi, (2017) further notes that “though they had certain war cries, organization and interest enlisted in support of getting or keeping patronage of government”. It follows that at various stage of the national lives of most countries of the world, if not all, there was corruption; in fact one form of corruption or the other still exist in all human societies. Nelson (2016) alludes to this position when he noted, that one study has found that in eight European states, public projects were on average 13 percent higher because of corruption. Nelson (2016) further notes that, world bribery alone, which is a subset of corruption, is estimated at \$1.5 – 2trillion, roughly 2 percent of global Gross Domestic Product. Thus, the difference in various countries lays in certain variables such as the scale and or percentage and whether the society in question takes its existence for granted. This paper therefore, will endeavour to unravel the benefactors of these identified varied corrupt practices on the continent of Africa, with particular emphasis on Nigeria, and then establish how this has affected the benefit and purpose of government to the people. The paper finally suggested stiff penalties such as death sentence, amongst others, to the perpetrators of the act in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Corruption may be classified as either systemic or sporadic in character. In other words, corruption may be occasional or entrenched in a given society. Sporadic Corruption is the opposite of systemic corruption and occurs as petty (bureaucratic) or incidental variant of corruption. Corruption is sporadic if it occurs irregularly and as such does not threaten the

economy of a country. It could, however, dampen morale and sap the economy of resources but does not bear crippling effects on the economy since it is controllable. On the other hand, the systemic or endemic corruption is not just opposed to sporadic or occasional occurrence of corruption; it rather describes a situation in which the phenomenon becomes an integrated aspect of the economic, social and political system, such that, honesty becomes irrational. The system forces participants to follow what otherwise would be termed unacceptable ways, and actually punishes those who resist. Hence, systemic corruption is not a special category of corrupt practice, but rather a state of affairs in which the major institutions and processes of the state are routinely dominated and usurped by corrupt individuals and groups, and in which most people have no alternatives to dealing with corrupt officials. Within such an environment, deviant conduct is institutionalized to the extent that people are not faulted for participating; hence, inefficiency and mediocrity is actually encouraged and protected. Traits such as listed below are observable within the scenario:

- Non-violators suffocate under the venal atmosphere without relief and forego the rewards accruing to getting along with the system.
- Violators are protected, and when exposed, treated leniently; their accusers or whistle blowers are intimidated and victimized for exposing organizational hypocrisy.
- widens class inequality, perpetuates closed politics and prevents social change
- Bears heavily on economic development and contributes to the affluence of a few, leading to a situation of few affluent amidst a 'sea' of people who live in acute squalor, (Igwe, 2012).

The effects of systemic corruption are multiple or varied. It brings along divergent effects on public perception and expectation while subverting trust and cooperation far beyond the impact upon the economy that may not be immediately felt. When corruption has eaten deep or has become systemic, it becomes resistant to ordinary anticorruption reprisals due to the character of its preponderance. Systemic corruption, as Igwe (2012) notes, is akin to the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). In this semblance, it could be observed that as the virus renders comatose, inbuilt immune capacity of the human body system so also this corruption brand subverts the immunity of a political system by destroying all its institutions and consequently rescinds its growth, which is why nothing works wherever it exists; no social programme or economic policy, however lofty, can achieve its set objectives to the letter or as expected. This particularly explains the plight of the Nigerian state in relation to corruption. As it were, it has eaten up all social institutional framework of the country that none is spared and free from its practice. This has led to a total breakdown of the social system to the extent that there is a near system collapse as nothing really works. On the other hand, systemic corruption is a phenomenon of systems, rather than of (just) immoral individuals. It is also ubiquitous as one altitude of corruption begets another of its kind in a network of unending chain reactions and ripple effects and inducing amidst other social and economic ills, poverty, economic stagnation and ethnic strife to mention but a few. And each of these resultant effects carries with it other multiplier effects. For example, when corruption provokes poverty; the latter may result to an enormity of vices including:



petty robbery, armed robbery, kidnapping, internet scams, rape, unethical and other dissolute activities. Hence, it is illusory to control the phenomenon by exclusively penal repressions. It is easier to address marginal unlawful defaults to acceptable limits, but not widespread corruption, (Igwe, 2012). Summarily, systemic corruption is best fought on a wholesome scale other than in bits; in other words, eradication of this form of corruption necessarily implies a thorough purgation of the system.

Corruption embraces a broad spectrum of activities ranging from fraud (theft through misrepresentation), embezzlement (misappropriation of corporate or public funds), bribery (payments made in order to gain an advantage or to avoid a disadvantage) to budget padding (inserting falsified figure into a government annual budget document after passage by the National Assembly but briefly before the President assents to it). The concept of corruption means different things to different people depending on the individual's cultural background, discipline, perception and political orientation. The definition of corruption varies from country to country depending on both legal and moral standards or norms of a given society or country. However, though with variations, most legal definitions of corruption in most countries are similar in many respects, including their ambiguity. The Zambian Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) for instance, defines corruption under its Act of 1996 (No. 42) as; "the soliciting, accepting, obtaining, giving, promising or offering of gratification by way of bribe or other personal temptations of inducement or the misuse or abuse of a public office for private advantage or benefit". Corruption affects any polity in a negative manner. Its effects are particularly acute in emerging economies and worse off for endemically corrupt polities where positive change and economic growth cannot possibly occur as in the case across the continent of Africa where development and the provision of basic necessities of life by the government have been hampered by the negative impact of monumental corruption. Corruption is universal and constitutes a phenomenon in itself and is invariably the product of a conglomeration of distinct failures; a failure of institutional control over bureaucrats or a failure of the legal system that checkmates the behaviour of those who perpetrate the crime. Akçay (2006) advances that; corruption is a symptom of deep institutional weakness which leads to inefficient economic, social, and political outcomes. On the other hand, Sen (1999) describes corruption or corrupt behaviour as the violation of established rules for personal gains and profit. And still from a sociological viewpoint, Altas (1968) thinks "it is a symptom of dysfunctionality of the relationship between the state and the people, characterized by bribery, extortion and nepotism".

According to Transparency International (2011), corruption can be classified as grand, petty and political corruption depending on the amount of money lost and the sector where it occurs. Corruption may take varied forms or dimensions but: state corruption, otherwise called grand corruption or political corruption stands out as the progenitor of all other forms of the vice. Others include - petty or bureaucratic corruption, electoral corruption, bribery, fraud, embezzlement, extortion, nepotism and cronyism (neo-patrimonialism), (Igwe, 2012). Grand corruption consists of crime committed at a high level of government that distort policies or the central functioning of the state, enabling leaders to benefit. The petty corruption refers to everyday abuse of entrusted power by low and mid-level public officials in their interactions with ordinary citizens, who are often trying to access basic goods or

services in places like hospitals, schools, police departments and other agencies of government. Political corruption has been defined as the use of power by government officials for illegitimate private gains. It is also viewed by Transparency International (T.I) as a manipulation of policies, institutions and rules of procedures in the allocation of resources and financing by political decision makers, who abuse their position to sustain their power status and wealth. Charap and Har (1999) enumerated some forms of corruption. They include bribery, extortion, cronyism, despotism, patronage, graft and embezzlement. To add to this list is the budget padding. They further note that corruption may facilitates criminal enterprise such as terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering and human trafficking, though it is not restricted to these activities. What political corruption is may differ from country to country. Government corruption is another type of corruption that exists in public life. This type of corruption is very popular with dictators. In this case, they use foreign aid and internationally generated revenue on shoddy projects, at the end they end up looting the treasure of the nation in a bid to amass more wealth and power, thereby ignoring the economic and social problems of the citizenry.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In order to effectively articulate the possible causes of the inordinate quest for primitive accumulation of wealth across the continent of Africa, and particularly Nigeria, to the detriment of the larger society; the Marxian theory of political economy was adopted to explain the cause(s) from a theoretical purview. The Marxist political economy is anchored on dialectical materialism. The Marxist method of political economy is dialectical materialism which according to Agah (2016) presupposes “the investigation of production relations in the process of their emergence and development, the consideration of this process as an objective reality and the revelation of the internal contradictions of development inherent in social production”. Thus, the system of economic production is the foundation on which the institutional and ideological superstructure of society is built.

The central thrust of the Marxist political economy is the production (economic) relations between people. These include the forms of ownership of means of production, the position of the various classes and the social groups in production and their interrelations and the forms of distribution of the national wealth. As forces of production (most notable technology) improve, existing forms of social organization become inefficient and stifle further progress; these inefficiencies, as Aboribo (2014) notes, manifest themselves as social contradictions in the form of class struggle. As Hegel (cited in Agah, 2016) aptly observed,

At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, the forms of development of the productive forces turn into their fetters. These inefficiencies manifest themselves as social contradictions in society in form of class struggle ..... This struggle materializes between the minority (the bourgeoisie) who own the means of production, and the vast majority of the population (the proletariat) who produce

goods and services. Taking the idea that social change occurs because of the struggle between different classes within society who are under contradiction against each other, leads the Marxist analysis to the conclusion that capitalism exploits and oppresses the proletariats.

Marxist theorists do not see the state as a product of the will of the people or as an entity that stands for the benefit of all society; rather, they see it as an instrument devised by the dominant class for its own benefit. It follows that; the state cannot be understood separately from the economic structure of the society. As Marx and Engels (1975) posit “The executive committee of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie”. They further argued that, when the state came into existence, the society became divided into two antagonistic classes – one owning the means of social and economic production, and the other being constrained to live on its labour. The point here is that, the ruling class in any capitalist system is the class that owns the means of production and uses its economic power as its instrument for the domination of society,(Efebeh, 2018). The state here encompasses the bureaucracy, judiciary, legislature, coercive organs of the state, trade unions and party machineries. All these are designed to promote and protect national security in order to create the atmosphere for capital accumulation and maintain social control, (Miliband, 1970).

Thus, those owning the means of production acquire the power to dominate the other class, not only in the economic sphere but in all spheres of life. Marx argues further that, the ruling class uses the state as its instrument to dominate society by virtue of the interpersonal and social ties between state officials and economic class. Aboribo’s (2014) ellude to this view, when he posit that, “in Nigeria, as it also applies to most African countries, the ruling class uses the state power to accumulate wealth or rather, uses political power in their control to acquire economic power.” This is so because politics has now become one big enterprise, and thus, being in power means having access to economic resources of the state and the spoil of office, and being out of power means being deprived of economic resources of the state. Thus, politicians want to capture state power by all means and at all cost for their economic survival and the maintenance of the status quo. This creates an atmosphere of mutual suspicion among the political class on one hand, and between the political class and the mass of the people on the other hand. This suspicion brings about a heated polity that can be likened to the Hobbesian state of nature in which there is war of one against all, especially during periods of state or national elections, where life indeed becomes solitary, nasty, brutish and short as exemplified in the Rivers state rerun elections that took place in December 2016, where as many as 12 people across both contending political parties were killed and the general elections of 2019 where many also lost their lives across the country during the elections.

Ihonvbere (1985) summarizes that “the intense and normless struggle for power generates differences and insecurity and fear of violence even among the powerful.” In the absence of an autonomous force to mediate these contradictions and bring things (the contradictions inherent in a political system) to a state of normalcy, Ake (1985) argues, confusion, conflict

and political instability are thus abound,. Under this condition, high premium is placed on political power as the means of welfare and security, so that political competition becomes exceptionally intense and tangentially normless (Ake, 1985). The insatiable urge for wealth and riches has continually created a scenario in the Nigeria society where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Marx's central theme is that, all forms of exploitation and impropriety from which graft or corruption emanates, are products of the infrastructure, the force that thwarts the popular will. It concentrates power and its derivatives; impunity, corruption, authority, among others to the economically powerful. In Nigeria, just as in most African countries, the power/political class comprise the economic, and also political, military and religious elite who have the financial muscle to continually access power, define situation, 'settle' their protectors and protégées, and generally act with impunity and yet escape. As Falana, 2011 cited in Agah, 2016) notes, "Today in our country, it is only the poor or the disadvantaged segment of our society that are railroaded into jail for stealing a cell phone or tuber of yam. For the rich, it is a different ball game. Even the language of law is stupidly discriminatory". Thus, it becomes a known fact that the existing dichotomy in the Nigerian society and the inordinate quest to amass wealth at all cost by the ruling class, are the very factors that promote corruption.

The significance of this theory to this study therefore, is that, the ruling class in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular has abused as well as corrupted political offices, as they have turned public office to one big corrupt industry, where public funds are siphoned, using the instrumentalities of the state. This has left the states in Africa with little or no fund with which to provide the basic services and meet the needs of the people; the people have thus become frustrated as well as disenchanting in the face of such injustices.

### **Corruption on the African Continent and the Benefactors**

The very nature and extent of corruption in Africa has reached a phenomena level that it is almost assuming the status of a second name for the continent. According to Rothberg (2004), "Africa has long been saddled with poor, even malevolent leadership crisis, predatory kleptocrats, military installed autocrats, economic illiterates, and puffed-up posturers. By far the most egregious examples come from Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Zimbabwe - countries that have been run underground despite their abundant natural resources". But these cases are by no means unrepresentative, by some measures, 90% of sub-Saharan African nations have experienced despotic rule in the last three decades. Such leaders use power as an end in itself, rather than for the "greatest happiness of the greatest number"; they are indifferent to the progress of their citizens (although anxious to receive their adulation); they are unperturbed by reason and employ poisonous social or racial ideologies; always shifting blame for their countries' distress. Ayittey (2012) affirms that the character formats of looting going on in Africa are not the grand-daddy cases where a million here, a million there disappears. Rather, there are cases of kamikaze banditry, where entire treasuries are being carted away by unrepentant leaders with impunity. This brings to mind the startling revelation that a former military president of Nigeria developed a desert in Monaco to a small city as part of his private investment, built refineries just like many past presidents did in some African countries alongside a fixed



deposit of billions of dollars generating more than a million dollar (155 Million naira) daily as interest while citizens back home flounder in want for food, (Igwe, 2012).

Ayittey (2012) identified some of the African leaders who mismanaged the wealth of their countries: The late Muammar Gadhafi's fortune exceeded \$60 billion within his 23 years in power; Mr. Ben Ali, former President of Tunisia, (who is being tried in absentia) and his relatives amassed a fortune in banks, telecommunications firms, real-estate companies and other businesses, giving them control over as much as one-third of Tunisia's \$44 billion economy; according to anticorruption group, Transparency International, the family displayed its wealth by throwing extravagant parties and jet-setting among several mansions in Tunisia and overseas, (*The Wall Street Journal*, 2011). Mubarak was said to have amassed a £25 billion (USD\$40 billion) fortune for his family since grabbing power in 1981 (*The Sun*, 2011). Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir faces accusation of siphoning up to \$9 billion of his country's funds and placing it in foreign accounts, (*BBC*, 2010). To place this in perspective, Ayitteh, (2002) provided an analysis of the net worth of all 44 United States of America's Presidents — from George Washington to Barak Obama, that is between 1776 and 2010, and found the combined net worth to be USD\$2.7 billion in 2010. Furthermore, Sani Abacha, Ibrahim Babangida both of Nigeria, Omar Al-Bashir of Sudan, Ben Ali of Tunisia, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory Coast, Moussa Traore of Mali; Muammar Ghaddafi of Libya, Kamuzu Banda of Malawi and Mobutu Sese Seko of former Zaire now Democratic Republic of Congo, each stole more than the net worth of all United States of American Presidents combined. Ayittey (2012) further reveals that there were robber barons in America's history too: Rockefeller, Carnegie, Vanderbilt, Morgan, Astor, Jay Gould, and James J. Hill. But they used their loot to build Railroads, Steel mills, Banks, Oil companies and their enterprise drove the American industrial age from 1861 to 1901. By contrast, Africa's kleptocrats stash their loot overseas. According to a March 26, 2010 report by Global Financial Integrity, Africa lost \$854 billion in illicit financial outflows from 1970 through 2008, ( Cited in Igwe, 2012). The findings of a panel chaired by the former South African President Thabo Mbeki in 2014 revealed that, about USD\$50 billion are illicitly transferred from the continent annually. About 60 percent of this amount is transferred from Nigeria only. Thus, the worst cases of corruption have occurred in Nigeria, Angola, Cameroon, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, and Tanzania, with Zimbabwe not far behind. Back in 1995, critics of the Arab Moi's government in Kenya claimed that many of the people in government had the biggest accounts in foreign banks and that there was more money from Kenyan in foreign banks than the entire Kenyans foreign debt, which is about \$8 billion (*The Washington Times*, 1995). A 2011 report commissioned by the United Nations Development Fund estimated that between 1990 and 2008, \$34 billion disappeared from Angola's public coffers (*The Wall Street Journal*, 2011). If that loot is divided by Angola's 19 million people, each would get \$1,789, which would make Angola a middle-income country — not the desperately poor where 70 percent live on less than \$2 per day.

Nigerian leaders are classic example of a vampire cum predator political class. Between 1970 and 2004, more than \$450 billion in oil revenue flowed into Nigerian government coffers. But much of it was looted by Nigeria's kamikaze military bandits. According to

Blair (2005, cited in Igwe, 2012), Nigeria's past rulers stole or misused £220 billion (\$412 billion). That is as much as all the western aid given to Africa in almost four decades. The looting of Africa's most populous country amounted to a sum equivalent to 300 years of British aid for the continent. The stolen fortune tallies almost exactly with billions of western aid given to Africa between 1960 and 1997. That amounted to six times the American aid given to post-War Europe under the George Marshall Plan. If one divides that loot by Nigeria's 180 - 200 million people, each would get \$2,543, which would also qualify as a middle-income country, not the poor one where over 60 percent earn less than \$2 per day. Former President Obasanjo of Nigeria went after the loot the Abachas had stashed abroad. Much public fanfare was made of the sum of about \$709 million and another £144 million recovered from the Abachas and his henchmen. But this recovered loot itself was quickly re-looted. The Senate Public Accounts Committee found only \$6.8 million and 2.8 million pounds sterling of the recovered booty in the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) (*The Post Express*, 2000). Responding to the African situation in comparison to the impact of slavery and colonialism, Ayittey (1992) reveals that "post-colonial African leaders have caused the death of more than 13 million Africans since 1960:

- Over 1 million Nigerians died in the Biafra War (1967)
- 200,000 Ugandans were slaughtered by Idi Amin in the 1970s,
- 100,000 were butchered by President Marcias Nguema in Equatorial Guinea in the 1970s,
- Over 400,000 Ethiopians Mengistu Haile Mariam,
- Over 500,000 Somalis perished under Siad Barre,
- Over 1 million have died in the wars of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast,
- Over 1 million died in Mozambique's civil war,
- 1.5 million in Angola's civil war
- 800,000 perished in Rwanda's genocide
- 300,000 in Burundi
- 3 million have perished in Sudan's civil wars,
- 4 million have died from Congo's wars".

The rough estimate is 13.8 million and this does not include deaths in Chad, Western Sahara Republic, Algeria and those who perish at refugee camps across the continent or in the Mediterranean Sea trying to reach Europe fleeing from the harsh economic condition on the Continent. Historians tell us that the total number of black Africans shipped as slaves to the Americas in the 17th centuries was about 10 million and Africa lost 2 million through the East African slave trade ran by Arabs. This means that, in a space of just 40 years after independence, post-colonial African leaders have slaughtered more Africans than were lost to both the West and East African slave trades that lasted for over a century, (Ayittey, 2012). Still according to Ayittey, China takes more harsh methods to stem corruption - it executed corrupt public officials almost every year. On July 14, 2010, Wen Qiang, former director of the Chongqing Justice Bureau, was convicted of corruption charges involving organized crime. He was sentenced to death by a lower court for accepting bribes, shielding criminal gangs, rape and failing to account for his cash and assets. On August 7, 2009, U Peiyong, a former senior aviation official who had been convicted for bribery, was executed, the

Supreme People's Court said Li, former chairman and general manager of Capital Airports Holding Company (CAH), was sentenced at Jinan after allegedly taking bribes of 26.61 million Yuan (\$3.9 million) between 2000 and 2003. On July 10, 2007, Zheng Xiaoyu, former head of China's State Food and Drug Administration, was executed for corruption. He was convicted of taking 6.5m Yuan (\$850,000; £425,400) in bribes and of dereliction of duty at a trial in May, 2007. These are example of how China has been able to put corruption under maximum check and thus reduced it to the barest minimum.

Political corruption in many African countries appears to be chronic because it is underpinned and defended by a very strong military and security architecture, (Ayitteh, 2005). As a result of the fact that political masters have free access to military and public security services that are under their pay; it becomes easy to manipulate military and security hardware for narrow political ends. In such an environment political actors and interests become so dovetailed that relations of interdependence are forged to the detriment of the common good of the majority of the despondent population. This practice is directly linked to questions of deficient political accountability. It can be linked to dimensions of corruption before assumption of office and during service. Concretely they pertain to electoral fraud (including unconstitutional takeovers and renewals); nepotism and tribalism; flawed separation of powers; weak levels of rule of law; inactive or inexistent civil society groups and entities. All these combined has made corruption to flourish on the continent leading to very poor or none availability of basic infrastructures across the continent and the enabling environment for its teeming population to realize their potentials, thereby making the average African youth to be a potential emigrants to Europe or America. As an irate African note, *"any observer who knew Sierra Leone, (this is also very common to most African countries and even worse off in some cases) two decades ago can bear witness that it has been reduced to a country where there is virtually no medical facility; a country where potable water is a rare luxury; a country where pothole-free roads only exist in history; a country where a monthly salary is not sufficient to feed oneself...."* (Ayittey, 2005). An act which has led to the untimely death of hundreds of thousands of Africans, who are trying to seek greener pastures in Europe, on the Mediterranean sea trying to reach Europe by boat.

### **Corruption in the Nigeria State and the Benefactors**

The history of corruption in Nigeria dates back to the period of the colonial rule and of the First Republic. During this period, corruption ran rampant first at the local level and then at the regional and federal levels. Virtually all the levels or tiers of government were involved in one form of corruption or the other. For instance, in the cocoa-rich Western region, Ayittey (1992) records that investigation showed that the activities of a small clique of the ruling party, politicians and businessmen had drained the region's Marketing Board of more than ten million naira and eventually bankrupting it in seven years. Also, the commission of enquiry headed by Justice Stafford Forster-Sutton in 1957, indicted Chief Nnamdi Azikiwe, the then Premier of Eastern region, over his role in African Continental Bank (ACB), (Ezera, 1960). The period after the 1975 coup that toppled the General Yakubu Gowon's government saw 10 out of 12 state governors guilty of corruption and the misuse of funds

totalling over sixteen million naira, (Diamond, 1988). This amount, as Diamond (1988) notes, is small in comparison with the level of corruption during the oil boom in early 1970s through the first republic, which saw a “frantic gap of the well-placed for easy wealth and hideous displays of affluence amidst appalling poverty”. By the prevailing oil price boom of the late 1970s, oil revenue per annum was put at \$29 billion; this implies that the government of Alhaji Shehu Shagari, in the second republic, had so much money at its disposal. Ayittey (1992) further records that, between 1979 and 1983, scandals involving billions of dollars dominated the headlines. These included, illicit auctions of much of the \$2,500 million annual allocation of import licenses; the arrest of several top officials of the Federal Capital Development Authority in Abuja over an alleged \$20 million fraud, and the revelation by a federal minister that Nigeria was losing \$50 million a month to ghost workers and other forms of payroll fraud. All through the period, newspaper headlines continued to publish reports of the escapades of politicians’ indulgence in various forms of fraudulent acts. In 1983 alone reports from London had it that fraudulent import-export transactions exceeding \$6 billion, the disappearance of millions of naira worth of building materials from the warehouse of the Nigerian National Shipping Company, the acceptance of large bribes by legislators deliberating on the renewal of monopoly contract to Swiss firm, among others, Ayittey (1992).

However, none of these charges was ever punished in court or even investigated by the government, but this failure only deepened the sense that things were out of control as theft of public resources was not only rampant but getting absolutely destructive. It is apt therefore to argue that the “rampant” and “destructive” dimension of corruption in the country, particularly public offices, was responsible for the return of the military to the Nigerian political space on December 31, 1983, led by Major-General Mohammadu Buhari. This new government soon set up tribunals to try corrupt politicians, former ministers, commissioners and governors. In all, so many governors and ministers were found culpable; some of the governors were found to have stocked caskets with large sums of money and buried same in their various compounds. Things were so bad that the government had to swap the colours of the naira notes in order to render all of such monies buried or stashed somewhere useless. Some of the ex-governors and ministers are Bisi Onabanjo of Ogun state, Ambrose Ali of the then Bendel state, Jim Nwobodo of Anambra state, Bola Ige of Oyo state, Abubakar Rimi of Kano state, Abba Musa Rimi of Kaduna state, Adamu Attah of Kwara state, Melford Okilo of Rivers state, Apar Aku of Benue state, Awaal M. Ibrahim of Niger state, Sam Mbakwe of Imo state and Minister Victor Masi, amongst others. Also the then minister of Transport and Aviation – Alhaji Umaru Dikko was alleged to have amassed a fortune of over \$1 billion during barely three years as minister. A bungled attempt to kidnap him in a crate from London caused a diplomatic rift between Britain and Nigeria in 1984, (Ayittey, 1992). In all, the reconstituted tribunal led by Justice Sampson Uwaifo under the new government of Major –General Ibrahim Babangida reported that it recovered over N200million in cash, real estate and cars and more than N35million from politicians, contractors and public officers, (*West Africa*, 1986).

Ayittey (1992) argues that the precise estimate of the amount stolen during the four years and three months of the government of Alhaji Shehu Shagari will never be known, but the

amount is reckoned in the billions of dollars. The “wealth exported by top government officials was unofficially estimated by western diplomats at \$5 billion to \$7 billion during the period of the second republic”. Furthermore, a government investigation estimated that at the height of the oil boom in 1978, corrupt politicians were transferring \$25 million abroad daily. In another vein, Morgan Guaranty Trust Company estimated that Nigeria’s then foreign debt of \$32 billion would have been only \$7 billion had there been no capital flight, (Business week, April 21, 1986). There was a case of missing N4 billion in the Ministry of Petroleum being payment of part of crude oil sold between 1980 and 1986; a trend of which still lingers till the forth republic in which NNPC could not account for over \$20 billion of the proceed of oil sales during the Goodluck Jonathan’s regime in 2013. By 1989 however, corruption had become endemic that it has penetrated virtually every government agency and indeed every facet of the society, as the period saw the emergence of the culture of “settlement”. It was also discovered, as confirmed by the then secretary to the Federal Government – Chief Olu Falae, that “over N30 billions of Nigeria’s foreign debt was discovered to be “fraudulent and spurious”, (*West Africa*, 1990). According to the *National Concord* (1990), the whopping sum of \$33 billion owned by Nigerians in foreign bank accounts was equivalent to Nigeria’s huge external debt. The Ibrahim Babangida regime also could not account for the \$12.5 billion in oil windfall from the Gulf war of January, 1991. By the time General Sani Abacha died in office as the Head of State of Nigeria in 1998, he was known to have stolen over \$20 billion, (Ayttey, 2002).

Nigeria, in the last four years has witnessed scandalous and alarming cases of corruption in the polity. Most of these scandals, as alarming as they were and still are, many were never investigated not to talk of any form of sanction and the ones that were prosecuted, their trials were inconclusive for years now. There was the N195 billion pension scam involving Alhaji Abdulrasheed Maina, discovered by Senate committee probing pension funds management. The committee found that Alhaji Maina mopped up pension funds from banks and deposited the money in his private accounts; this act made it impossible as well as difficult for thousands of pensioners across the country to be paid their entitlements for several months. In the wake of nation-wide protests that greeted the January 2014 removal of fuel subsidy, otherwise known as “occupy Nigeria” by the Goodluck Jonathan administration; the House of Representatives’ probe findings reveals that \$6 billion has been defrauded from the fuel subsidy funds in the past two years. Members of the then ruling party; the PDP and their families were involved in the scam, some of whom are Mamman Ali and Mahmud Turkur. The cases have been on-going since then. There was also the case of N123 billion frauds involving Stephen Oronsaye over Civil Service pension funds. The embezzlement of the N32.8 billion belonging to the police pension funds which was carried out by those employed to manage the fund, especially John Yusuf who was given ridiculous judgment of six months imprisonment with an option of N750, 000 fines; he promptly paid the N750, 000 cash and was set free. On another note, the former Minister of Aviation, now a serving Senator – Ms. Stella Odua was indicted for authorizing the purchase of two bulletproof cars at an inflated rate of N255 million during the Goodluck Jonathan administration; this sparked a nationwide controversy with many Nigerians calling for the sack of the minister and her probe; but in the ‘wisdom’ of the government, none of these was done. The former governor of Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, Lamido Sanusi now Emir of Kano, told the



Nigerian public that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC, has failed to remit \$20 billion from oil sales into the Federations Account.

The CBN governor, Lamido Sanusi, was fired as a result and the government went on to audit NNPC; the audit report indicted the Corporation and requested that it refund \$1.8 billion into the Federations Accounts. There was also the case of \$15 million in a private jet arms deal scandal, which the government claimed involvement but blamed the United States of America for its resort to black market for the purchase of arms with which to prosecute the war on Boko Haram terrorist group. Besides, there were also the cases of ex-governors who out rightly stole, abused and mismanaged public funds while in office. For example, the late former governor of oil-rich Bayelsa State, Depriye Alarmesegha was arrested in London with large sums of money. He was charged and awaiting trial but jumped bail and mysteriously returned to Nigeria, only to be impeached and prosecuted. He is reputed to have helped himself with substantially stolen public money belonging to the Bayelsa people. Another former state governor James Onanefe Ibori was discharged and acquitted in a Nigerian court sitting in Asaba, only to be jailed in the United Kingdom for money laundering and other related offences. We have also heard about high profile corruption cases settled out of court to create soft landing for individuals involved. The Halliburton scam readily comes to mind. Hence President Muhamadu Buhari's definition of corruption as the greatest form of human rights violation is one which tells a lot about the Nigeria corruption story.

The Malabu Oil scandal worth \$1.1 billion of proceeds of the sale of oil blocks OPL 245 in March of 2011. The said amount was shared by Chief Dan Etete and other people close to the government of Goodluck Jonathan as EFCC report of investigation revealed. No one was however charged or sanctioned over the scandal. Diezani Allison-Madueke was a one-time Minister of Works and Housing and later Minister of Petroleum under the Goodluck Jonathan administration. She was said to have stolen excess of \$5 billion and has properties in choice places in London, Dubai and other major cities of the world, no wonder she was nicknamed the "goddess of oil" during her tenure. She was reported to have refunded \$1 billion to the coffers of the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2016 and another N34 billion worth of property in Banana Island Lagos have been traced to her. Furthermore, about \$9.6 million was discovered in the home of a one-time Group General Manager of NNPC – Andrew Yakubu. There was also the issue of N6 billion bribe given to the Christian Religious leaders in the wake of the 2015 general elections by the PDP led government to help it campaign against the candidature of Mohammadu Buhari of the APC. In what has become known as the "Dasukigate". Also in November 2015, the Dasuki Gate started when the former National Security Adviser Col. Sambo Dasuki (Rtd.) was charged for sharing US\$2.1 billion meant for the procurement of arms with which to wage the war against Boko Haram insurgents, to relatives, friends, political associates, party loyalists and campaign officials of the then ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), (Efebeh, 2018). This was a period that Nigeria was under intense attack from Boko-Haram terrorist group and losing her monopoly of force and its very sovereignty was undergoing major challenge from a bunch of terrorists, (Efebeh et al, 2016).

Thus, when appointments are made, they are done with the understanding that ‘returns’ would be made to those who may have recommended the appointees for the particular political post. This is one of the major reasons why it is difficult to unseat an appointee who was ‘caught’ in the act of thievery; because they act as syndicates. Thus, whatever is stolen goes round members of the syndicate group who are usually made up of the people that recommends the actual appointer and the appointees. The case of Alhaji Abdulrasheed Maina, and the current NNPC Group General Manager Mr. Maikpanti Kacalla Baru who was alleged to have awarded contracts worth \$26billion without due process, are some of the examples that readily comes to mind. These appointees are never prosecuted by the state, no matter the amount of money involved and the level of public outcry. At worst, if they are ever arrested, they will be set free on a plea-bargain agreement or on a ridiculous ground. Such is the nature of the mutual collaboration among the network of corrupt public officials in Nigeria. The above analysis have shown the beneficiaries of corruption and corrupt practices in Nigeria; these being Nigerian ruling class and their cohorts. Those who are entrusted with political power to manage the common wealth of the people for the benefit of the people, they turned out to be predators who specializes in feeding fat on the people’s common wealth. Besides, all monies that accrues to the government are meant for the day - to - day running of the government and ultimately for the provision of basic amenities (social services) for the people, but when these monies are stolen, it leaves the people without such basic needs as portable water, food and shelter; good health care facilities, education and roads, among others, and at the end the people are made miserable and are hopelessly left to provide for themselves what the state ordinarily ought to provide.

### **The Impact of Corruption on Service Delivery in Nigeria**

The effects of corruption are as overwhelming as it could stagnate a nation’s developmental plans. It poses a serious developmental challenge. In the political arena, it undermines democracy and good governance by subverting the electoral processes and governmental procedures. Corruption in elections reduces the legitimacy of government, accountability and representation in policy making. More generally, corruption erodes and stultifies the institutional capacity to deliver the basic needs of life to the citizenry, the reason for which government exists in the first place. Thus, what becomes ‘normal’ and constant is that resources are siphoned off and officials are lured or promoted or even ‘elected’ without regards to performance. Corruptions also undermine economic development by generating considerable distortion and inefficiency; implying that the phenomenon of corruption, in itself, breeds inefficiency and thus lead to the down fall of a country. Corruption is the prelude to the down fall of a society as it balks economic development and totally stunt growths in all facets. In the private sector, corruption increases the cost of doing business through the price of illicit payments; it inhibits the ease of doing business, the management cost of negotiating with officials and the risk of breached agreements. Corruption is also a major source of brain drain in Nigeria. Nigeria intellectuals and professionals are forced by the economic realities in the country, due to corruption, to seek refuge and greener pasture in more stable climes. The result is the transfer of such intellectual competence to her competitors. Corruption also engenders the breakdown of law and order and political instability. Corruption has the capacity to create institutional break down in the policy

making and implementation, leading to loss of confidence in the system; the end product is that citizens resort to self-help in order to ensure their survival.

Corruption, for instance, has made the Nigerian security agencies, particularly the Police Force to be ineffectual; this is because monies that are meant for the buying of equipments and for training and retraining of officers and men of the force are out rightly stolen by the political class, (Efebeh, 2018). This has incapacitated the police to the extent that it can no longer properly carry out its constitutional responsibilities of protecting the lives and properties of the citizens as expected. And because the police cannot police the society as expected, the people have thus resorted to self-help by settling for vigilante arrangements and other forms of private security network to secure their lives and properties. In another vein, the Nigerian state has failed to deliver on its mandate to provide stable and uninterrupted power supply to the Nigerian people. As a result, Nigerians have resorted to self-help by providing energy for themselves to run their homes and businesses. They do this by relying on generators for their energy needs. This has made Nigeria to become the biggest generator market in the world. Available statistics provided by PowerGen, indicates that Nigeria imported a total of 28, 678 power generating units worth over \$185.5 million (about N40.8 billion) in 2014 (Okere, 2015). The statistics further forecast to see growth rates of 8.7 per cent, thereby driving up market volume from \$450 million in 2011 to reach \$950.7 million by 2020, (Okere, 2015). The energy crisis facing Nigeria is not predicated on the lack of investment in the sector by the government but that of corruption. This is so because between 1999 and 2016, the energy sector in Nigeria gulped N2.74 trillion of tax payers' money and still counting and yet the sector is still in comatose. Thus, the inability of the Nigerian state to provide adequate and uninterrupted power supply to Nigerians is purely as a result of the monumental corruption in the sector and in the country at large.

The problem of poor service delivery by the Nigerian state resulting from the endemic corruption, cut across all sectors of the economy as well as all areas of life. In the health sector for instance, the lack of adequate Medicare has made it a tradition as well as fashionable for Nigerians, who can afford it, to travel in their droves overseas for what has become known as medical tourism. Things have gotten to the level of hopelessness to the point that Nigerian leaders who are in a position to fix the health sector for the wellbeing of all are at the forefront of the bandwagon. The Nigerian President, Mohammed Buhari has travelled to the United Kingdom several times, since becoming president, for medical reasons including a trip to treat ear infection, and a three months long medical trip to the same UK for undisclosed ailment(s). This further cast doubt on the quality of health services the government has put in place for the people in the country. As Osagie Ehanire, the Minister of State for Health noted in a public forum, "Nigeria and Nigerians spends over \$1 billion annually on medical treatment abroad". This amount is enough to fix the troubled health sector and thus save Nigeria from the embarrassments of a failed health sector that cannot command the confidence of the people and the hard currency spent on medical tourism.

The educational sector presents another pathetic story of total neglect by the Nigerian state. In other serious climes, education is given topmost priority because it is regarded as the

sector that generates the ideas that grows other sectors of the economy and indeed the entire human society. It is in the realization of this that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended that a minimum of 26% of the total annual budget of a country should be allocated to the educational sector. But overtime, the Nigerian state has always budgeted a paltry 3 to 7% of its annual budget to this all important sector. For instance, between 2015 and 2019, the budgetary allocation for education of the Federal Government of Nigeria hovered between 12.46% in 2015, 6.1% in 2016, 6.01% in 2017, 7.04% in 2018 and 7.05% in 2019. On the other hand, out of the total combined budget of the 33 states of the federation of 6.1trillion naira, only 653.53 billion naira representing 10.70% of the 2019 budget of the states was allocated to education. Therefore, the massive underfunding of education by all the tiers of government in Nigeria has led to decayed infrastructures, low quality output and thus massive drain of its human resource persons to better climes where they will be better appreciated through better conditions of service and availability of “tools” to work with. This has culminated in the rush to Europe, North America and even to Asia and other African countries for further studies by Nigerians who can afford it. This bandwagon is however led by Nigerian leaders who are, once again, in positions of authority and thus in a position to fix the sector but would rather send their children abroad to study. Besides, these same leaders who could not fix public schools, particularly the Universities, have obtained licenses to own and operate private Universities. It has therefore become a status symbol among present and past public office holders, to own and operate private universities. It is a common place in Nigeria to hear or see former governors, former presidents and vice-presidents and their cronies alike owning private University. For example, former Presidents, Vice Presidents and Governors owns such Universities as Bells University in Abeokuta, Ogun State; Ibrahim Babangida University in Zaria, Kaduna State; American University in Yola, Adamawa State; the Western Delta University, Oghara; and Edwin Clark University, Kiagbodo, Delta state, amongst others.

In the area of provision of water supply to the citizenry, Nigerian state at all levels has failed totally to provide water to meet the needs of the people. The people have had to resort to self-help by sinking bore holes in their homes or dig wells to get water to meet their daily water needs as it is the case across town, cities and villages in the country. Thus, every average home in Nigeria has its borehole, signifying the failure of the state to provide it with water supply.

There is also a total neglect of the construction of road networks and the maintenance of existing ones across the country. A tour across the six geo-political zones namely North-North, North – East, North-West, North Central, South-South; South-West; South-East, of the Nigeria state show series of abandoned projects from road construction to housing units, from water projects to abandoned irrigation dams; from bridges to hospital projects. The reality on ground shows that there is a near total collapse of social infrastructures to the extent that anything government does not ever work well in Nigeria. This is despite the billions of naira that are budgeted to carry out capital projects in each sector annually, nothing are ever found on ground to justify the huge amounts spent. Thus, the people are made to suffer the consequences of the inordinate primitive accumulation of wealth by successive Nigerian leaders. Corruption has become a very big industry in the country that

the result is the inability of the Nigerian state to deliver on her mandate to the citizenry, which is the provision of the very basic needs of life and thus govern for the “greatest happiness of the greatest number”.

### **Conclusion**

It is obvious from the above analysis that the endemic corruption that plagues the African continent, especially the Nigerian state, has adversely affected the social fabric of the entire society. To that extent, there is now a collective corrupt practice in which case all are involved one way or the other, and as such the society sees it as normal for a public office holder and indeed anybody to steal public funds while in public office. Corruption has thus become like an alternative way of life within the Nigerian space. Again, when corruption has become systemic it means all the social fabric and institutional framework of the society have become ‘infected’ as well as enmeshed in the monster. This explains why known and convicted thieves are no more chastised or reprimanded but are celebrated by the people or institutions that should ordinarily be the custodian of moral values in the society. Such characters have even become king makers and political godfathers in the society. The level of criminality and profligacy in public offices in Nigeria has reached neck breaking point that, it is therefore apt to say that Nigeria is on the verge of being completely destroyed by corruption as corruption has turned the Nigerian state to a dysfunctional entity that is on the verge of becoming a truly failed state. This is against the backdrop of the fact that, in spite of the huge resources at the disposal of the government she still cannot deliver the very basic needs to people; which is the primary purpose of government in the first place as enshrined in the constitution of the land. It is therefore the cumulative of the corrupt practices in high places in government over the years that have stultified development in all facets of the Nigerian state. It is also the reason Nigeria is referred to as a crippling giant, judging by the level of enormous deposit of both human and natural resource endowment. Thus, the inability of the Nigerian state to deliver on the basic necessities of life to her teeming population has turned the average Nigerian to be social service providers unto themselves. Nigerians are known to provide their water, security, housing, energy needs and most times uses communal efforts to provide roads for themselves as well. It is apt to say therefore that, the Nigerian state has failed to meet its primary mandate, and that is the provision of the basic needs of the people; which in itself is the very purpose of government.

### **Recommendations**

Elsewhere, I had suggested a ‘soft’ approach (such as the reform of the entire government institutions and the re-orientation of the Nigerian people) as a panacea for the monumental corruption plaguing the Nigerian state. But as events are presently playing out, there is no sign that anything has changed even with the former opposition (All People’s Congress) now in power, there is also no sign that institutional reform would wipe out corruption from the system or minimize it all together. It is thus absolutely impossible (as experience has shown), for corrupt leaders or cliques who are direct beneficiaries of a corrupt system to reform the system, rather they would want the status quo maintained to guarantee the continued flow of illicit funds into their hands and bank accounts. Therefore, it is only a



revolutionary change that can guarantee and save Nigeria from the claws of the kleptocrats in power. The Nigerian state needs a total systemic overhaul and this can only be made possible through a popular revolt, not necessarily the type that happened in Algeria in April of 2019 which only succeeded in changing the regime of 82 years old Abdulaziz Boutiflika and that of Sudan which is still unfolding and thus too early to call, but that which will seek to change not only the entire political class who may have taken part in governance since independence but also the societal norm and value system. This became necessary as the ruling clique has, over the years, become very powerful and as such they have control of the economy, controls the military, the police force and all other institutions and agencies of coercion. Indeed, they determine who gets what, when and how, and even where. They steal everything including things that they do not need and get away with it. They waste the common patrimony of the Nigerian people on nothing or at best on worthless things. It is therefore only the numerical strength of the mass of the people, who are obviously in the majority, which can change the tide against the ruling clique. Else change of the status quo will continue to be elusive, especially if it is anchored on institutional reforms that will be carried out by the same ruling class who are the direct beneficiaries of the system as it is presently configured.

It is also apt to suggest a death penalty for any identified public official found to be corrupt as is the case in the People's Republic of China. Such a "criminal" should be seen as number one enemy of the state and of the people that must be eliminated at all cost by death sentence. This will serve as deterrent to others and act as a major check on the stealing spree that political office holders are known for. The era of kids-glove treatment for known thieves should be a thing of the past. The Plea-bargain policy being adopted by the Nigerian state can only but encourage corruption both in the long and short run; as it cannot curb corruption. It is only death sentence that can maximally minimize corruption in Nigeria especially judging by the height it has reached in the polity. Some may want to argue that death sentence is no more in tune with modern times, and that death sentence has not deterred criminals from carrying out their acts. The reality on ground is that, no policy is too old in any human society provided it is yielding the expected results; one cannot say that the Republic of China is living in the past for adopting the death penalty for corruption cases. Besides, it is true that death sentences for such offences as armed robbery has not been able to stop criminals from plying their trade on highways, but it has limited the act especially in well policed societies.

In another vein, the paper agrees with the school of thought that suggests a compulsory psychiatric examination for any prospective political office seeker before being allowed to contest elections at any level. This step has become necessary as public office holders wallow in practices and behaviours that can be considered to be psycho-pathological. As *The Guardian* (2017) notes, the excessive revelling in emotional and material self-importance, the selfish inclination towards fraudulent accumulation of wealth and obsessive pillaging of national resources due to misconstrued and over exaggerated self-worth of being a political office holder are expressions of obsessive-compulsive psychiatric disorder. To lay credence to this line of thought, a recent study in Zimbabwe identified the cause of what it terms Excessive Executive Entitlements (EEE) of chief executives in government

establishments and political office holders as Hyper-core self-evaluation (HCSE) and narcissistic personality disorder (NPD). Thus, this test would ascertain the level of mental, psychological and emotional balance and to check if the candidate has psycho-social problem that is capable of making a person to get involved in inordinate quest for material things, such that would make him or her be involved in a stealing spree that could inflict pains on the generality of the people and on a system. This way, the high level of senseless and mindless stealing of public fund by the political class can possibly be avoided. This proposal has the backing of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Amended. Where in Sections 66 (2a-b); 107 (2a-b) and 137 (2a-b), disqualifies persons of unsound minds or adjudged to be lunatic from contesting for public office.

In all, African leaders must get about eradicating corruption while charting the course for aggressive industrialization by which to enable economic growth, if they wish to refute the core hypothesis that development is not in the agenda of Africa's leadership. Thus, Africa and indeed Nigeria leaders do not require economic models to break through, as many of such - Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), has failed the continent. What Africa needs is good governance that is anchored on purposeful and visionary leadership. Africa must strive to put an end to corruption before corruption puts an end to Africa, just as Nigeria must strive to put an end to corruption before corruption effectively puts an end to the Nigerian state.

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