Anti-Corruption Agencies and the Search for Good Governance at the Grassroots in NIGERIA

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I. Introduction

At a time like this when the quest for good governance is a global desire of people of different land and clime, most especially in the African region, the discourse of good governance and progress at the grassroots' level in Nigeria could not have been more apposite. This paper examines the concepts of governance, development, progress and corruption within the Nigerian socio-economic and political milieu with the view to showing assessing the governance status and the various efforts of the government in combating the scourge.

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Many factors have been offered to explain the apparent failure of the (governance) enterprise[*emphasis mine*] in Africa: the colonial legacy, social pluralism and its centrifugal tendencies, the corruption of leaders, poor labour discipline, the lack of entrepreneurial skills, poor planning and incompetent management, inappropriate policies, the stiffling of market mechanisms, low levels of technical assistance, the limited inflow of foreign capital, failing commodity prices and unfavourable terms of trade, and low levels of saving and investment. These factors are not irrelevant to the problem. Alone or in combination, they could be serious impediments to development [and good governance]. However, the assumption so readily made is that there has been a failure of development is misleading. The problem is not so much that development has failed as that it was never really on the agenda in the first place. By all indications, political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediment to development (Claude Ake, 2001:1).

II. Section One: Conceptual Clarifications

The concepts to be clarified in this section are governance, development and donor agencies.

a) Governance

Governance is a concept that has acquired vast meanings in the past decades. A precise definition of the concept is undoubtedly elusive. For this reason, attempt shall be made to present definitions by different countries and international agencies. In the final analysis, the commonalities of the different definitions will be extracted and listed as key elements of governance.

The perspective adopted by Olowu and Erero (1997) and Dencentralization: Finance and Management Project (DFM) (1991) is very helpful. Olowu and Erero classified governance into three operational categories namely – functional, structural and normative. The functional refers to the process of formulation, legitimation and enforcement of rules in a society; the structural refers to the three composite elements or institutions of governance namely, the rule or law, the ruler, otherwise referred to as the state and the ruled otherwise referred to as the society. DFM on the other hand advances a little further to enunciate the constitutive qualities of governance as including:

i.) Managerial and organizational efficiency;
ii.) Accountability;
iii.) Legitimacy and responsiveness to the public;
iv.) Transparency in decision making; and
v.) Pluralism in policy options and choices

In stating the above-enunciated qualities, DFM also emphasizes the need to institutionalize the rule-governed relationship and adopt strategies that will be multi-faceted and balanced. In other words, in ensuring good governance, all the qualities must be taken cognizance of.

The identifying elements of Governance are also contained in a publication of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 1995: XII-XIV) namely "political accountability, freedom of association and participation, reliable and equitable legal frameworks, bureaucratic transparency, the availability of valid information and, effective efficient public sector management".

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Focus Areas of Governance Assessment Tools

Focus areas	Elements of assessment
Political	Elections Human rights Conflict Rule of law Decentralization
Public administration	Corruption Public administration Public financial management Public procurement
Social and cross-cutting governance issues	Revenue mobilization Service delivery Gender Environmental sustainability
Market governance	Business/trade environment

Source : OECD (2009), Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: 2009 Sourcebook.

The elements in the table above came from divergent emphases by countries and agencies. From the views of the World Bank, European Commission (EC), Department for International Development (DFID) UK, African Development Bank (AfDB), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Switzerland, French Development Agency (AFD) France, Millennium Challenge Corporation, United States, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United States, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands, United nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); the focus of analysis of governance covers the following long list:

Functioning of Political Institutions Law and order	Public Governance Operating Freedom of Markets
Security of Transactions and Contracts Social Cohesion	Openness to the outside World Control of Corruption
Government effectiveness	Voice and Accountability
Economic freedom Policies for social inclusion and equity Public-sector management and institutions (property rights and rule-based governance; quality of budgetary and financial management; efficiency of revenue mobilization; quality of public administration and transparency; accountability, and control of corruption in the public sector). Decentralization Transparency Respect for, protection and fulfillment and all human rights	Investing in people (public expenditure on health/primary education, immunization rate, girls' education completion rate). Political Stability and Absence of Violence Participatory approach to development Regional integration/trade/migration Economic/social policy management capability Revenue mobilization/public financial management. Pro-poor and sustainable policies Efficiency and transparency of the state Crisis and conflict
Might and right Poverty Sustainability and management of natural resources.	Exclusion and gender HIV/AIDS Non discrimination
Efficiency	

Source : Extracts from OECD (2009), Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: 2009 Sourcebook

b) *What is governance?*

Governance is an ambiguous term for complex social phenomena, related to similar terms like "State", "institutions" and "government" which are equally susceptible to the crisis of universally agreed definitions.

There are many schools of thought stressing different perspectives on governance and with varying suppositions about the nexus between governance on the one hand and 'development' on the other suffering the same fate of elusiveness of definition.

The country by country definitions showing different emphases are presented below.

c) Australia :

"Governance is the exercise of authority-political, economic, administrative or otherwise- to manage a country's resources and affairs. It includes institutions, mechanisms and processes, through which citizens and groups state their interest, exercise their legal rights and mediate their differences" (Australian Aid, 2006).

d) France:

"Art of governing, articulating the management of public affairs at various levels of territories, regulating relationships within society and coordinating the interactions of the various actors (Ministry of foreign Affairs, 2006).

e) Germany/GTZ:

"Good governance implies effective political institutions and the responsible use of political power and management of public reasons by the state. Essentially, it is about the interaction between democracy, social welfare and the rule of law. Good governance thus extends beyond the public sector to include all other actors from the private sector and society. Good governance is guided by human rights and by the principles of the rule of law and democracy, such as equal political participation for all."(GTZ, 2009: 1)

f) Ireland:

"Governance is essentially understood as the way in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (IrishAid, 2009:1)

g) Sweden:

"On the whole, good governance implies an efficient and predictable public sector incorporating participation and the rule of law, i.e., with the characteristics of democratic governance. In the concept of democratic governance, a stronger emphasis is placed on central democratic institutions like a democratic constitution, a parliament, general elections, participation and an active civil society, as well as human rights" (SIDA, 2002: 6).

h) Switzerland :

"By governance, we understand the diverse and complex mechanisms, resources and institutions through which groups and individuals in society articulate their interests, find compromises in a maze of differing interests, and exercise their legitimate rights and obligations. Originally, the term was applied in development co-operation work primarily to governments, but today it includes all actors in a society: government, the private sector, civil society and international organizations." (SDC, 2009:1)

i) United Kingdom:

"Governance is about the use of power and authority and how a country manages its affairs. This can be interpreted at many different levels, from the State down to the local community or household. Governance analysis considers all the mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests and exercise their rights and obligations. It concerns the way that people mediate their differences, make decisions and enact policies that affect public life and economic and social development"
(DFID, 2007: 7).

j) United States USAID:

"Governance issues pertain to the ability of government to develop an efficient, effective, and accountable public management process that is open to citizen participation and that strengthens rather than weakens a democratic system of government."
(USAID, 2009:1)

k) European Commission:

"Governance concerns the State's ability to serve the citizens. It refers to the rules, processes and behavior by which interests are articulated, resources are managed, and power is exercised in society. The way public functions are carried out, public resources are managed and public regulatory powers are exercised is the major issue to be addressed in that context. Governance is a basic measure of the stability and performance of a society. As the concepts of human rights, democratization and democracy, the rule of law, civil society, decentralized power-sharing and sound public administration gain importance and relevance, a society develops into a more sophisticated political system and governance evolves into good governance" (EC, 2006. Communication COM 2006 421: 3)

l) IMF:

"Governance: The process by which decisions are made and implemented (or not implemented). Within government, governance is the process by which public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources. Good governance refers to the management of government in aw manner that is essentially free of abuse and corruption, and with due regard for the rule of law" (IMF, 2007:128)

m) UNDP:

"Governance is the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the State, civil society and the private sector. It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions-achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action. It comprises the mechanisms and processes for citizens

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and groups to articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligations. It is the rules, institutions and practices that set limits and provide incentives for individuals, organizations and firms. Governance, including its social, political and economic dimensions, operates at every level of human enterprises, be it the household, village, municipality, nation region or globe. (UNDP: *Governance Indicators: A User's Handbook*, 2006: 1-2).

n)   World Bank :

"Governance refers to the manner in which public officials and institutions acquire and exercise the authority to shape public policy and provide public goods and services" (World Bank, Strategic Document March 2007: 1)

III.   "Development" Clarified

Development as a generic concept has acquired various adjectival qualifications in the '80s. The term takes care of the limitations of economic growth measured by such indices as gross national product and per capita income. The term is taken as a synonym of 'Progress'. It makes the concept a more inconclusive one, embracing "wider concerns of the quality of life, educational status, access to basic freedoms and spiritual welfare. The emphasis on sustainability suggests that what is needed is a policy effort aimed at making these development achievement last well into the future. By implication, some at least of past development efforts have achieved only short-lived pains" (Markandya, 1990:1).

'Development is a value-laden word which presupposes a desirable change. A precise definition of the concept also suffers acceptance by consensus. Markandya further argues that

What constitutes development depends on what social goals are being advocated by the development agency, government, analyst or adviser. We take development to be a sector of desirable social objective... The elements of this sector might include:

i.)   Increase in real income per capital;
ii.)   Improvement in health and nutritional status;
iii.)   Educational achievement;
iv.)   Access to resources
v.)   A fairer distribution of income
vi.)   Increase in basic freedoms (Markandya, 1990:1)

IV.   What is Development/Progress?

The concept of development is one of public administration's contentious academic discourses. It may be said that the conflicting definitions and interpretation of the term are a product of history, authors' discipline, ideological belief and training. A review of extant literature on the subject-matter reveals that the definitional proliferation and divergences may

have prompted the post-development school to argue that the term is unjust and has never really worked and thus it had better be dismantled. The school argues that the term is unjust, has never worked and should be dismantled. However, there are other definitions, which expressed positive opinion about development. For instance, Chambers defines development as "good change". The manifestation of this definition is that development is tantamount to progress. Latent also in this regards is that progress should entail a comprehensive enhancement, building on itself and involving both individuals and social change. However, there are other scholars who have argued that conceptually development should be differentiated from progress. According to Alan Thomas "progress implies continual development reaching higher and higher levels perhaps without limit, whereas development, as an analogy from the development of living organisms, implies moving towards the fulfillment of a potential. Immanent development means a spontaneous and unconscious (natural) process of development from within, which may entail destruction of the old order to achieve the new. International development implies deliberate efforts to achieve higher level in terms of set objectives" (Thomas A. 2000:1)

Historically, the opinion of Cowen and Shenton regarding the modern doctrine of development is that it was invented in the first half of the 19th century to control the social disruption of poverty, unemployment and human misery caused by capitalism. In all, the opinion as expressed by various scholars mean the concept of development to capitalism differently based on ideological orientations.

In this regard, scholars' views are mixed. The neo-liberals have insisted that an independent price-mechanism may occasion a spontaneous process of development. Also the structuralists see development as encompassing changes in social and economic structures. On the other hand, the interventionists argued that unfettered market economy is prone to bring poverty, unemployment and economic oppression of man to man by reasoning that the market is just too germane to be left unregulated.

The case of Nigeria may be situated within this province. Adelegan (2009:4) argued that development would always elude the nation as those who successfully cornered the good chunk of the nation's wealth "have engaged in wanton profligacy and demonstration of affluence, a development which led to a feverish struggle for acquisition of wealth at all cost by the old and the young, male and female." The contemporary view about development is economic development. The view posits that, though under-development was initially universal, every nation willing to break the yoke must float enduring policies and ensure that policies are immune from failure. The essence is to ensure that policies are suitable to the

society in question, rather than some abstract and often dysfunctional development strategies, which though may have succeeded in the North, may not bring about the necessary social engineering because of the peculiar nature of economic and political transformation in Africa.

There are three perspectives from which we can look at the concept of development. The first perspective is to see development as a vision, description or measure of the state of being of a desirable society. However, different people have different visions of what is desirable based on their ideological inclination. Three different views can be delineated. The first vision is the vision of a modern industrial society, which is elaborated by modernization theorists. The second is a society where every individual potential can be realized in conditions characterized by the capacity to obtain physical necessities (particularly food), employment, equality, participation in government, political and economic independence, adequate education, women quality, sustainable development and peace. This vision, which is otherwise referred to as human-centred development, places a lot of emphasis on empowerment of the people. The third vision is the one that sees development as reducing poverty, improving health, mitigating environmental degradation, etc. The second perspective of development is to see it as an historical change in which societies are transformed over a long period of time. Some scholars have argued that the process that produces development in some parts of the world was at the same time responsible for producing under development in other parts. This process has been dominated by the struggle between pro-market and protection movements. The third perspective of development is to see it as consisting of deliberate efforts aimed at improvements on the part of various agencies, including governments and all kinds of organizations and social movements. In this context, the important point to make is that it is crucial for people to be the agencies of their own development (Igbuzor, 2005:22).

From the above perspectives of development, it is clear that development is a very complex concept that defies a single interpretation but it encapsulates the efforts, programmes and policies that can nurture and consolidate democracy, promote human-centred and sustainable development, reduce poverty, improve health and mitigate environmental degradation. For all these to happen, radical changes in the constitution, power relations, gender relations, institutions and governance must take place.

To make matter worse, those who successfully cornered a substantial part of the society's wealth engaged in wanton profligacy and demonstration of affluence, a development which led to a feverish struggle for acquisition of wealth at all costs by the old and the young, male and female. Here lies the very salient factor that produced armed robbers in a nation which placed great premium on family values, morality and good name (Adelegan, 2009: 4).

What now exists is a simplified view of economic development, which posits that under-development was initially universal and that every country can grow out of it by following policies that are known, tested, and unfailing. This the late starters are saddled with the singular burden of carrying out an abstract and misdealing conception of development that does not reflect the realities of their own history or even the histories of the North. Because Africa, in particular, is guided by fictitious concepts and is working with blunt instruments, its social transformation has been unduly difficult (Ake, 2001:93).

V.   SECTION TWO: THE CHARACTER OF GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

Politics, as the major defining factor in power and resource sharing in any country, occupies a critical position in the governance configuration of Nigeria in an era where power arenas ought to be diverse and mutually complementing. This anomaly continues to haunt the character of governance in Nigeria. This position comes out clearly when the definitions of governance from across many countries of the world as well as multi-national donor agencies are considered.

A historical exegesis of the character of governance in Nigeria is uncompromisingly needed at this juncture, because the events that culminated into the present character of governance are rooted in history. Nigeria, like most other African countries, is shaped by colonialism. Knowing well that these countries were ill-prepared for independence, coupled with the fact that the necessary institutional framework that could nurture a virile state were not in place, the African nationalists scrambled their respective countries into independence only to be left for post-colonial onslaught. Arising from this fact is that nationalism succeeded in breeding elitism rather than patriotism; guided egocentricism rather than national interest; and tribal/ethnic politics rather than national state-making.

Military rule is another encumbrance to the dented character of governance in Nigeria. Its advent, tenure and activities coalesced into a reshape of the character of governance in Nigeria around violence, arbitrary rule, patrimonialism, clientelism, and warlordism. Fortunate as the military juntas were, they failed to convert their rare opportunity to govern against the backdrop of the mis-match of their rhetorical promises vis-à-vis their actual performances. Their messianic mission oftentimes ended on the bedrock of failure, corruption, high-handedness and gross mismanagement of national resources.

The discovery of oil in commercial quantity at Oloibiri around mid-50s, in the then Rivers but now Bayelsa State, is another germane factor the character-shaping of governance in Nigeria. Really, the stupendous oil wealth blossomed in the 70s, the revenue derivable from it between 1955 and early 70s was too paltry to significantly affect the character of governance. However, with the torrential flow of the revenue from oil, now nomenclatured 'black gold', politics in Nigeria became a different ball game. To make the matter worse, the then Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon uttered an inflammatory statement that "money was not the problem of Nigeria but how to spend it". This singular utterance, coming from the number one citizen of the country, is capable turning politics into a highly competitive arena; where political now engage in fearsome contestation over the abundant national resources. It could also precipitate violence at virtually all levels of politics and perhaps predispose contestation into zero-sum game whereby the winners takes all.

From the foregoing, it is arguable that the present character of governance in Nigeria is a reflection of the historic-political antecedents discussed above. Arising from the foregoing also is that those who were fortunate to attain political positions have been reluctant to leave the political arena. In this regard, a multi-ethnic elite group has emerged across the polity, instituting themselves in key positions of power, reproducing and replicating themselves in various forms. These power elites control vast amount of money, control entrance into politics and determine the rule of political game. The indivisible and formidable interests of the power elites have consistently downplayed serious ethnic conflicts as well as the forces of ethnic struggles. The emergence of the different ethnic militias has not achieved much also because of the impervious interests of the multi-ethnic but united power elites. Once anything is conceived as capable of adversely affecting the accumulation and exploitation of national resources, which sums up the interests of these elites, they are willing to nib the problem in the bud irrespective of its ethnic or personality dimension. It stands to reason, therefore, that the fact that these power elites have been acting as a binding force for the country is completely at variance with good intentions for State-making; rather, they are inwardly driven by personal and parochial interests.

VI. Section Three: The Ideology of Development/Progress

The ideology of development is a paradigm that came immediately after independence to pacify the citizens of different nations of Africa by the ruling power elites. It has twin goals which are nation building and socio-economic progress. On one side, it appears lofty, but on the other, it is self-contradictory. For instance, nation building is a conscious way of pooling a great number of people together for the purpose of self-government, unity and social integration towards the realization of community goals. However, on the other side, nation building is a way of isolating a group of people from the rest of the humanity (Heady, 1984).

Nationalism is an off-shoot of the nation building project, which African nationalist like Leopold Senghor of Senegal, Nnamdi Azikwe of Nigeria, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and Amicar Cabral of Guinea Bissau could not sustain for so many reasons, particularly, because it creates an intimidating sense of common purposes; hence the need to replace it with a softer and elite-friendly ideology. This is the history of the development paradigm. The ideology of development thus replaces the euphoria of independence. The ideology of development was amenable to and congenial with the political strategy of power-craze and the accumulation syndrome.

This goes further to explain how these African leaders craftily replaced nationalist ideas and the immediate post-independence legacies with non pragmatic development plains, adulterated cum westernized modernization models and semi-dictated slogans. For example, the slogan of "Uhuru", meaning freedom was changed to "Uhuru nakaze" meaning, freedom is equal to hard work. This method facilitated the bastadization of the political process and ultimately led to the emergence of single party system. Claude Ake noted with grief that:

The ideology of development was exploited as a means for reproducing political hegemony; it gets limited attention and served hardly any purpose as a framework for economic transformation. Of course, development plans were written and proclaimed. But what passed for development plans were aggregations of projects and objectives informed by the latest fads of the international development community such as import substitution and export promotion. As these fads changed in the larger world, so they were abandoned in Africa. The ideology of development itself became a problem for development because of the conflict between its manifest and latent functions. The conflict is apparent in the actions of African leaders who proclaimed the need for development and made development the new ideology without necessarily translating it into a program of societal transformation. They did so not because they were uninterested in societal transformation but because their minds were absorbed in the struggle for power and survival. In the end it fell to the West to supply a development paradigm. What was supplied was a more specific form of a broader Western model of social transformation; namely modernization theory. (Ake, 1996:9)

The second aspect of the goal of the development ideology, which is economic progress

relates to the sustained and marked improvement in the material and social welfare of the people. This is expected to include the reduction of poverty and the equitable distribution of the benefits of the wealth of the nation. This is indeed a hard task to accomplish by the quality of leadership in loss developed countries. The modernization theory which was the next stage to the ideology of development further compounds the delusion of African leaders of which Nigeria is chief. In this connection, it is important to point out that the modernization theory borrowed to Africa such as W.W Rostow stages of economic growth, Malthus Theory, Keynesian Theory, Adam smith theory etc do not capture the exigencies and realities of the African situations.

The African leaders contended between the efforts to increase the wealth of the nation and the welfare of the people. Furthermore, there was also the problem by the African leaders to decipher between which area to place emphasis in their development endeavour. Specifically. They did not know whether to emphasis on industrialization or agriculture. Most wait for industrialization to the neglect of agriculture. The implication of the ongoing discussion is that the African state suffered because the development paradigm could specifities of the realities of the African environment

VII. Section Four

a) Theoretical Considerations of The Term, Corruption

The term corruption derives from a latin verb to break, *rumpere* – meaning something is badly broken (Tanzi, 1994; Hope and Chikulo 2000: 18). The verb to break could refer in this instance to an ethical code or administrative rule or regulation. Furthermore, the breaker of this code is likely to have been motivated by personal tangible benefits for either himself, his family, tribe, party or group, defying the injury or consequences such action might have on public good.

Corruption can also be defined as misuse of public power for private gain. Corruption according to Alatas (1990:1) 'is the abuse of trust in the interest of private gain'. Corruption is deviant behavior having to do with private gain at public expense. The act is more notorious when a public office holder bestowed with public trust and resources sees his office as a convenient opportunity to derive personal gains from such practices as bribery, rent-seeking, forgery, impersonation, falsification of records, misappropriation of public resources and such other related acts. In such situations, the public office holder regards public office as market.

The two theories explain the behavior of the public office holder described above and this is the **Theory of the Market** "where office bearers regard the office as a business through which they must maximize

their income. Thus, the office is the maximizing unit and the size of the income is directly dependent on the market situation and the talents for finding the points of maximal gain". (Osei-Hwedie and Osei-Hwedie, 2000:42 and cf. Heidenheimer, 1977).

Three major theories explain governmental corruption and these theories are credited to Wilson (1977:386-387). They are stated paraphrased as follows:

i. Any political system that does not extol the ethical values of probity, transparency, accountability, personal efficiency but rather extols favours, individual loyalty and private gain will inevitably breed and promote corruption. The underlying assumption here is that the less privileged may require welfare attention and help, not justice. Embedded in this theory are values that generate unavoidable demands for favouritism, hence corruption.

ii. Corruption also derives from processes or situations of unusual temptation which confront ordinary people. In this scenario, corruption is a seen as a consequence of a social system that rewards persons in political position with power, fame and riches as against the result of defect in character or cultural values. The assumption underlying this theory is that public office holders are like any other human being susceptible to corrupt practices as long as there is no formidable institution or person to check him or her. Moreover, since the act is system-wide, he is not expected to be honest when everyone else is stealing.

iii. There is also the theory that government is made up such that governmental activities and corruption are inseparable. Politics in this sense employs strategies for political conveniences that entail corruption. For example the strategy of lobbying, public relations and selective negotiations with some groups (trade unions, companies or international organizations) are nothing other than corruption related strategies.

The foregoing shows that corruption stands for anything that is not right; anything that violates the obligation that public agents have to their principals; or any transaction that are against the law of the land. From this point, it is important to progress to examine in a fair detail the various forms and causes of corruption.

b) Forms and Causes of Corruption

The forms of corruption are difficult to classify because different scholars adopt different classifications. However, in this paper corruption shall be classified into five major forms (Cooksey, Mullei, Mwabu, 2001: 43-44).

i. Petty Corruption

ii. Systemic (routine) Corruption

iii.   Lootocracy
iv.   Grand or Wholesale Corruption
v.   Political or Bureaucratic Corruption

i.)   *Petty Corruption*

Petty corruption refers to all practices such as extortion, collusion between citizens and public officials. Petty corruption is committed when state officials bend rules in favour of friends. Those who commit the corruption are usually middle or low level officials. In most cases, they do it to compensate for insufficient salary. For example policemen at check points extorting small money from commercial drivers, gatemen in public institutions extorting money from car owners, clerks extorting money from members of the public seeking service. Petty corruption systematically taxes the informal sector. The unfortunate thing about petty corruption is that the ordinary citizens really have no power to defend themselves against petty corruption when they come in interaction with state officials.

a.   *Systemic (routine) Corruption*

Systemic corruption is the pervasive form of corruption in public office where public officials wantonly accept bribes or gifts from the public when they exercise favouritism in official appointment and contract awarding. It is entrenched when wrongdoing is taking to be the norm and standard accepted behavior. It differs from petty corruption in that participant are made to see the corruption as the acceptable way or norm. Un-cooperating citizens who try to stick to the normal norms are punished. This form of corruption is common where bribery on a large scale is regularly experience.

b.   *Lootocracy*

Lootocracy refers to government-by-looting of state treasury. It occurs when officials are charged with public responsibilities and trust steal public assets. It can involve embezzlement of public funds when huge public funds and other public properties like cars, furniture, office equipments are carted away from government or state corporation treasuries with the aid of tricks or advances to themselves that are never repaid (draw pay of fictitious "ghost" workers. Lootocracy is prominent among the senior levels of the bureaucracy. During auctioning of state assets for example senior state officials favour themselves friends and family members in the allocation of public assets. A good example was when senior state officials bought land in Abuja and properties in 1004 area of Lagos at ridiculous prices.

c.   *Grand or Wholesale Corruption*

This occurs when politicians and senior bureaucrats as well as private sector cooperation collude in sharing profits accruing from bribes and business transaction. This form of corruption involves huge amounts of money running to millions or billions of Naira. It thrives among senior bureaucrats and politicians as well as prominent business men during auctioning, privatizing or allocating public assets.

d.   *Political or Bureaucratic Corruption*

Political corruption involves violation of election laws, use of political power to bend rules for private gains or to favour relations and friends. It may take the form of patronage in the award of contract or the establishment of patrimonial ties with foreign multinationals or powers to siphon state resources from which they get their own cuts. It flourishes where power is highly centralized in a patron base political system. Bureaucratic corruption is related to corruption that takes place among senior career official in the state bureaucracies. This form of corruption is usually perpetrated in conjunction or collusion with political office holders. Nowadays the line demarcation between political and bureaucratic corruption has thinned out as the status of prominent career officials has politicized. For example, the position of a permanent secretary has been politicized; that of the Vice Chancellor has been politicized; that of the Director General, Chief Executive of Parastatal, Agencies and Government Companies, Permanent Secretary, Executive Secretary (e.g. NUC) Auditor General of the Federation, Director General have all been politicized.

ii.)   *Causes of Corruption*

The following are the salient causes of corruption regardless of its form. The analysis given by Osie-Hwedie and Osie-Hwedie aptly captures in a comprehensive manner the causes of corruption. The analysis shows that corruption may be cause by any of the following:

1.   Political factors, including patronage, patron-client relationships, unequal access to public resources, abuse and misuse of office and political position, and administrative quagmire;

2.   Economic factors including the worsening situation of poverty and the desire to be wealthy, and the mismatch between expectations and available resources;

3.   Social factors including the cultural basis of socioeconomic and political organizations, pressures from the extended family and friends, and the lack of distinction between personal and private property. (Osei-Hwedie and Osei-Hwedie, *2000:41)*

4.   Another cause may have to do with "the uncertainties of politics and the absence of insurance schemes to provide for their future when they fall out of office" (Wamalwa 1993:44).

5.   The attitude of some politicians who see themselves as the ultimate source of solution to the crises of the country portends danger to a corruption free nation. As we all know that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely, those politicians who

stay too long in office may abuse the power of that office.

c) Efforts at Curbing Corruption: An X-ray of Anti-Corruption Agencies in Nigeria

Every successive government particularly from the time of General Murtala Muhammed had made serious efforts at addressing problem of corruption in the Nigerian State. Various reforms have been set up. Specialized Agencies and Commissions have also been established.

Despite the fact that corruption was one of the reasons given by the military for overthrowing the first civilian government (1960-6), the succeeding military regimes of General J.T.U. Aguiyi-Ironsi and General Yakubu Gowon did nothing to combat corruption. In fact, the Gowon regime itself was seen to be very corrupt. Corruption was one of the reasons given by the coup plotters who flushed him out of power in July 1975. The successor military regime (initially led by General Murtala Muhammed and, following his assassination, by General Olusegun Obasanjo) was, thus, the first actually to make a visible effort to combat corruption. This entailed investigating the sources of wealth of the overthrown regime's state governors. Of the 12 governors in post at that time, only two were found not guilty of using their positions to acquire wealth illegally. Those civilian governors who were found guilty were forced to forfeit their illegally acquired wealth to the Nigerian state while the military ones were also dismissed from the armed forces.

A second major effort at combating corruption was a mass purge of about 11000 public officers on the grounds of corruption, misappropriation of public funds, divided loyalty, abuse of office, and so on. Though the exercise later degenerated into a witch-hunt, the government to a large extent succeeded in sanitizing the use of public funds and the management of public affairs. The regime also established some anti-corruption agencies before they left office in 1979. The details regarding the agencies established are discussed later.

The successor civilian government of President Shehu Shagari (1979-3), in response to the popular mood and the record of its military predecessor, launched an ethical revolution, which only existed in the pages of the policy document of the revolution, as unbridled corruption soon became synonymous with the regime. It was no surprise, therefore, that the military intervened again on the last day of 1983 to overthrow Shagari's government (Falola and Ihonvbere, 1985; Osala, 1996). The military government of General Muhammadu Buhari (19884-85) immediately launched a programme tagged 'War Against Indiscipline' to, among other things, combat corruption. In fact, the programme was aimed at bringing some sanity into the every day behavior of Nigerians and, to a large extent, the regime

recorded remarkable success in making Nigerians more disciplined in both their private and public lives.

As part of its crusade, a special military tribunal was set up to recover public properties from the erstwhile politicians and those found guilty were usually handed stiff prison sentences. Some politicians were actually sent to prison for periods longer than the normal life-span of a human being. No sooner had Nigerians started blending towards the new disciplinary order than the regime was over-thrown in 1985 by its Chief of Army Staff, General Ibrahim Babangida, on the grounds that the regime was too rigid, uncompromising and highhanded. As Babangida gradually consolidated his powers as a military programme and, by design or default, presided over the most corrupt regime that Nigeria has ever had.

The administration of General Ibrahim Babangida did not have a specific popular programme for combating corruption. During this regime, the highest incidence of corruption was recorded. As Lewis (1994:330) has observed: 'Corruption has long been endemic to Nigerian politics, but the levels of malfeasance in the waning years of the Babangida regime eclipsed those of preceding governments'. The regime even facilitated corruption in the private sector. For instance, it was during this regime that various decrees (No. 49 of 1991; No. 70 of 1992; and No. 24 of 1993) were promulgated which directed that various properties earlier seized from past government officials be returned (African Concord, 7th March 1994:29). The obvious reason for this benevolent act was to lure the beneficiaries into supporting him to extend his tenure in office.

After the exit of Babangida in August 1993, an interim national governmental headed by Chief Earnest Shonekan took over. However, Shonekan's tenure was too short for him to make any credible contribution towards combating corruption other than to forward a proposal to the National Assembly. To his credit, Shonekan acknowledged the prevalence of corruption in government, but his intentions never translated into visible action. The administration of General Sani Abacha, who came into power through a palace coup in 1994, made some efforts to curb corruption. The most popular programme credited to the General is the 'War Against Indiscipline and Corruption' (WAIC). He had also reconstituted the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and many probe panels were set up to investigate several government agencies and parastatals, for example, Nigerian Customs, Nigeria Airways, and Nigeria Telecommunications (NITEL). The activities of the 'Failed Banks Tribunal' are also credited to the Abacha administration. Nevertheless, the administration's crusade against corruption is not seen as credible because some members of the Cabinet have been indicted by some probe panels in the past. In addition, top government functionaries did not declare

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their assets as required by the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB). All of these lapses tend to cast aspersion on the integrity of the government and thus diminish its legitimacy.

Apart from the popular programmes with which specific regimes are associated, we also examine below some specialized institutional strategies as well as *ad hoc* bodies that have been put in place by various Nigerian governments to fight corruption.

i. *Code of Conduct Bureau*

The Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) emanated from the popular reform of 1974. It was entrenched in the 1979 constitution in a clear and explicit form. The content of the code is, no doubt, lofty and commendable but the extent to which public officials accepted it in good faith is debatable. The code seemed to be merely cosmetic. During the Second Republic, for example, only the President and his deputy declared their assets. Members of the present military junta did not declare their assets. How then do we judge these regimes as serving the public? Perhaps the better judgement would be to say that they are serving themselves.

ii. *Code of Conduct Tribunal*

This body is saddled with the responsibility of adjudicating on matters arising from the CCB and, in difficult cases, the file appeals to the Federal High Courts. The unfortunate thing about this body also is that there was never a time, even during the Second Republic, when the Code of CCB gained prominence. The crises of corruption that rocked the CCB itself adversely affected its legitimacy.

iii. *Public Complaints Commission (PCC)*

This commission is a constitutional body established in 1975 and charged with the responsibility of looking into complaints concerned with the administrative activities of public officials or private agencies which the citizens consider to be irregular, unlawful, oppressive, unfair and inordinate in motivation. The Commission maintains offices at federal, state and local levels. However, the Commission is limited in responsibility in view of several exemptions to its scope. In the final analysis its success is confined to petty cases. Its performance is also limited because it does not have police powers of its own (Olowu, 1993).

iv. *Public Accounts Committee (PAC)*

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) was established to provide assistance to the legislative arm of the government by performing oversight functions over all executive offices in relation to the expenditure of public funds. When the Auditor General submits his annual report and comments on government accounts to the legislature, it is the function of the PAC to scrutinize and vet the submission.

Since PACs only thrive effectively in democratic regimes, there have been problems regarding its efficiency in the governance of Nigeria. During military regimes, it is usually the first committee to be suspended. Similarly, during corrupt civilian regimes, the committee is usually neglected. Nevertheless, records indicate that between 1966 and 1979, which was dominated by the military, the committee convened a few times. About four months prior to General Obasanjo's departure from office, he reconstituted the PAC which speedily considered all outstanding accounts of ministries, departments and parastatals for the past 13 years. One wonders what level of thoroughness such an exercise entailed.

However, the Babangida administration gave some teeth to the PAC when it promulgated Degree No. 7 of 1987 where it is stated that the PAC has constitutional powers to examine federal government accounts and accounts of its parastatals. The take-off of the committee sparked off chains of resentment, disaffection, and outright crimes. For instance, some documents and buildings were deliberately set on fire to cover up fraud.

v. *Quasi-Judicial Bodies*

The use of quasi-judicial bodies has been a popular strategy which several regimes have adopted. Such bodies are used on an *ad hoc* basis to handle cases swiftly and secure judgement within a specified time frame. The emphasis is on speed, avoidance of legal technicalities, and results. A good illustration would be the Special Military Tribunal which some regimes have used in trying cases of corruption and where the evidence used is not likely to be admissible before a normal court.

Two major problems are identifiable with regard to this approach. The first is that such quasi-judicial bodies are prone to abuse by the regime which established them. When this happens, people tend to lose confidence in such bodies and this leads to the second problem, that since the bodies are not institutionalized, there is a tendency for their verdicts to be overturned by the regular courts, especially when a military regime leaves office and a democratic government is installed. This is seen in the fact that virtually all the persons jailed by previous military regimes, on the grounds of corruption, are free men today and some of them even became members of successor governments.

vi. *Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC)*

ICPC and EFCC are commissions that were specifically established to combat corruption. The commission directed its operations against fraudsters, and indeed recorded a huge success. While ICPC was a

product of Obasanjo's first term, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission came during his second term in office. The reason generally adduced for the statutory duplication of anti-corruption crusade which led to the establishment of EFCC was that the level of bureaucracy needed for prosecution of corruption cases under the ICPC is cumbersome, whereas the EFCC can easily circumvent such bureaucracy. The headship of the two institutions is another contentious issue. While the ICPC was headed by a retired senior judge the EFCC was headed by a serving senior police officer.

d) *Assessing Corruption in Public Institutions in the Nigeria of Today*

From the foregoing, it can be safely affirmed that corruption is still very much with us in Nigeria. Even though the rating by Transparency International (TI) shows an improvement in Nigeria's disposition to corruption, the position is not still good enough. Nigeria presently occupies 59th position out of 180 most corrupt nations. According to Adamolekun (2008:28), "it is incontrovertible that EFCC under Nuhu Ribadu (2003-2007) took the fight against corruption to a high level with some impressive results: the recovery of about $5billion from financial criminals and rogue public officials and the conviction of over 120 offenders, including a former Inspector General of Police and a former state governor." The table below aptly shows the trend of the position Nigeria in the group of corrupt nations.

Table 1: Nigeria's Score on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 1996-2008

Year	CPI Score	Nigeria's	Remarks
1996	0.69	54/54	Most corrupt
1997	1.78	52/52	Most corrupt
1998	1.9	81/85	2nd most corrupt
1999	1.6	98/99	2nd most corrupt
2000	1.2	90/90	Most corrupt
2001	1.0	90/91	2nd most corrupt
2002	1.6	101/102	2nd most corrupt
2003	1.4	132/133	2nd most corrupt
2004	1.6	144/146	2nd most corrupt
2005	1.9	152/159	3rd most corrupt
2006	2.0	142/163	5th most corrupt
2007	2.2	147/180	9th most corrupt
2008	2.7	121/180	59th most corrupt

L. Adamolekun, 2008:27 (based on data extracted from the website of Transparency International)

Nigeria's Human Development Index (HDI) and Ranking between 1990 and 2007 has also shown signs of improvement the table below attests to this fact. The reading of the HDI will be such that the higher the number the better the result. The total value of HDI stands between 0-5 and any value below 0.5 would be taking to represent low development while from 0.5 and above will be taking to represent high development.

Table 2 : Nigeria's Human Development Index and Ranking – Selected Years between 1990 and 2007

Year	HDI	Ranking
1990	0.43	112/134
1995	0.45	118/144
1998	0.44	151/174
2000	0.46	N/A
2002	0.46	125/151
2004	0.45	159/177
2006	0.45	159/177
2007	0.47	158/177

L. Adamolekun, 2008:33 (The Governors and the Governed: towards improved accountability for achieving good development performance, Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited)

The huge number of cases of corruption and other related offences in the court of law; with ICPC and EFCC as well as reports in newspapers and magazines about political systemic and bureaucratic corruption, all confirm the seriousness of the phenomenon of corruption in Nigeria. Moreover, the ostensible revelation of serving senior bureaucrats and politicians leaving above their income calls for interrogation. These officials cannot pretend that people in their respective communities do not have access to their statutory incomes. Within one year in public office, these officials gathered so much wealth that if the Code of Conduct bureau were to investigate them, they would never be extricated from corrupt practices. In spite of the good effort of ICPC and EFCC, fresh cases of corruption keep emerging. For instance, a good number of political office holders, both past and present have been fingered to be involved in the complicity of embezzlement and sharp practices in some commercial banks and public institutions in Nigeria. The former Director-General of the Board of Public Enterprises in

Nigeria, a body responsible for disposing, commercializing and privatizing public enterprises, as it may be, is also currently being indicted for corruption-related cases, which he allegedly perpetuated while in office. He is also large. He however claims to be enjoying political asylum accorded him as a student of Law in one university in the United State of America.

e) Ethical Decorum: The Panacea for Development and Progress at Grassroots in Nigeria

Ethical decorum is a situation of ethical sanity, where political and career officers live/abide by the rules and regulations guiding official conduct. In such situation, the public officer puts the public concern above his own desires. It is therefore apposite at this juncture to be acquainted with some key ethics for political and career officers in government establishments.

i. Integrity:

This is all about moral excellence. An officer with integrity matches his words with action. He does not lie; he does not bend rules for the benefits of relatives or friends or pecuniary gains. He faithfully follows rules and procedures and charges his subordinates to do so. This officer places a very high value on his name and would not allow anything to tarnish it. He is content with what he legitimately earns.

ii. Public Accountability:

For the political officer, this goes with the expectation that public office is like an agency, and the public officer, an agent, who must render account of his stewardship to the owners, which in this case are the electorates. Herein lies the principle of sovereignty and representative democracy. Where public accountability holds, corruption is an anathema. **Bureaucratic accountability** derives from the principle of hierarchy. Every officer is answerable to the officer directly above him. This prevents insubordination and arbitrariness. It reinforces the principles of unity of purpose and unity of direction. Answerability is the underlying factor here.

iii. Transparency :

This is a moral virtue that stresses openness in the conduct of public business. The political and career officer is expected to operate based on sincerity of purpose, truthfulness, faithfulness and honesty.

iv. Responsibility :

This is about the preparedness to serve with heart and might as the national anthem demands. It does not permit laziness at all. It also requires that the officer can be relied upon based on professional competence, moral pedigree, and rare sacrifice.

v. Non-malfeasance/Fairness:

Some officers use their voffice to oppress people. This is not proper. Public officers are expected to be fair to all without inflicting physical injury on subordinates or members of the public.

vi. Discipline:

Every public officer is expected to exhibit high level of self-comportment and discipline. They are expected to exhibit discipline in their language, official duties, financial transactions and in their interaction with members of the public. They are expected to relate with everybody in the work environment with courtesy and respect. They are not to divulge confidential information to forbidden sources.

vii. Loyalty/patriotism:

Public official must be loyal to their organization and bosses. Political and career officers on the other hand must be patriotic. They must not be sectional or tribalistic. They must think well; say well; and act well so that Nigeria can go well. Like an average American, public officers must set precedents by professing that – God bless Nigeria.

viii. Responsiveness to public interests/needs:

Good governance is concerned with prompt response to the welfare, security and social needs of the people. Therefore, public officials must not be plastic to the concerns, worries and aspirations of the people. Senior civil servants must employ dynamic and transformatory leadership and conflict resolution approach to delicate and burning issues in their institutions.

VIII. SECTION FIVE

a) Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

As it were, Nigeria is blessed with natural and human resources in abundance. The major problem with the governance of Nigeria; why it has been difficult to achieve development and progress at the grassroots in mainly attitudinal. Hence, a change of attitude in the right direction is all that Nigeria reads to achieve progress. In specific terms the following recommendations may be considered very helpful.

i.) The emergence of a transparent and honest leadership class that has vision, mission and passion for the people;

ii.) Institutional mechanism that would enable citizens to expose public officials who are corrupt, without any fear of persecution is put in place;

iii.) Credible election and legitimate rule;

iv.) Strengthening of accountability institutions;

v.) Extermination of Poverty from the social and economic fabrics of the nation;

vi.) Existence of congenial policy environment that will facilitate productive activities in all sectors;

vii.) Existence of favourable political climate for the operation of civil society organizations.

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