

POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF CHINA AND NIGERIA

FADEYI, Taofiq James

Department of Political Science, Federal University Gusau, Nigeria

fiqfad6@gmail.com

&

ALIYU, Lukman Olalekan

Department of Politics and Governance, Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria

lukmanaliyu1@gmail.com

Abstract

Political corruption is a phenomenon that has severely ravaged China and Nigeria. It has adversely affected economic and political development of both countries. However, the consequences of political corruption in China slightly differ from Nigeria owing to stiff penalty meted on the corrupt officials in China. The objective of this paper is to compare corruption and offender prosecution in both countries, and how disparity in offender prosecution has affected economic development in both countries. The paper is premised on Soft State Theory, and solely relies on secondary sources of data such as journal articles, institutional and organizational publications, Newspapers, and books. Content analysis was employed to achieve the objective of the paper. The paper concludes that higher economic development recorded by China is traceable strict fight against corruption, unlike in Nigeria that is typified by uncertainty of prosecution of corrupt officials. Among others, the paper recommends that Nigeria needs a strong political will in fighting corruption because economic development is an illusion in any corrupt society.

Keywords: Political Corruption, Economic Development, Political will, Nigeria, China

Introduction

Globally, it is incontrovertible that corruption has been a major bane of good governance. Corruption has earned itself that popularity in academic discourse, national policies and decisions and organizational orientation. Corruption has assumed a prominent position in the politico-economic and social discourse. In fact, any attempt to understand the tragedy of development and challenges to good governance in the world must come to grips with the problem of corruption and stupendous waste of scarce global resources. Indisputably, corruption is neither culture specific nor system bound and in essence, its severity and devastating effects differ from one political arrangement to the other. The Third World Countries and developing countries, for instance, felt more severe and devastating impact of corruption as most of these countries have very weak economy, fragile political institutions and enfeeble legal and institutional frameworks.

The quest for development by nations of the world to placed tremendous pressure on available resources with intent by governments and private sector organizations to maximize economic development across the globe has turns unrealistic in many developing societies today due to the severe effect of corruption. Arguably, in the contemporary world, corruption scandals not only occur in developing countries but also in developed economies. The severity and prevalence of this menace and its attendant effects vary from one society to another. News about corruption in Nigeria, for instance, is no longer stunning, as the country is constantly rated as one of the most corrupt nations in the world by the Transparency International (TI) - the Global Watchdog on corruption. Likewise, China has not been

without its share of corruption syndrome. Corruption has become a major social and political issue in China. The surge of corrupt practices and its growing significance as a political issue is deeply rooted in the countries development.

Corruption in Nigeria has taken abysmal dimension. Unimaginably, a release by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), puts the cost of corruption in Nigeria since 1960 at a staggering figure of 220 billion Pounds (cited in Folarin, 2014:447). This effect of corruption may therefore explain the slow pace of economic development on the country's national development as a whole.

In fact, any attempt to understand the tragedy of development and the challenges to democracy in most developing countries (Nigeria inclusive), must come to grips with the problem of corruption and stupendous wastage of scarce resources (Ogundiya, 2009:281). It is on account of this that former President Olusegun Obasanjo remarked that 'corruption is the greatest single bane of our society today' (qtd in Muzhuthettu, 2016; www.thedailybrunch.com). This simply implies that corruption is the bane of legitimacy and socio-political and economic development in Nigeria. President Muhammadu Buhari also in his electoral victory acceptance speech maintained that:

[...] We shall strongly battle another form of evil that is even worse than terrorism- the evil of corruption. Corruption attacks and seeks to destroy our national institutions and character. By misdirecting into selfish hands funds intended for the public purpose, corruption distorts the economy and worsens income inequality. It creates a class of unjust enriched people. Such an illegal yet powerful force soon comes to undermine democracy because its conspirators have amassed so much money that they believe they can buy government (Vanguard, 2015; www.vanguardng.com).

In another development, China is also battling with this singular but democratically distasteful syndrome. The Congressional Executive Commission (2013) opined that 'corruption in China is a major source of discontent among the Chinese people and a barrier to commercial rule of law'. Put differently, corruption takes many forms in China, from corrupt officials at all levels using their public offices for private gain. To substantiate this assertion, China President- Hu Jintao was reported to have said that: '... if we don't fight corruption it will kill the party' (Wademan, 2013:26). Despite noticeable pervasive corruption in China, the country is surprisingly registering its dominance in the global economy system. While far beyond this was Nigeria with similar corruption cases.

The attendant effects of corruption in Nigeria are multi-faceted and multifarious. Far from being an alarmist, political corruption has manifests itself with pervasive poverty and mal-nutrition, poor infrastructure, insecurity, abominable healthcare services and dangerously growing unemployment. All these phenomena demand urgent arrest to save the country from imminent seismic downfall. It is against this premise that this study shall compare political corruption and economic development of China and Nigeria with a view to prescribe appropriate remedies to corruption malaise. In other words, this paper intends to underscore why Nigeria remains underdeveloped despite her shared corruption menace with China.

Theoretical Framework

As a tool of analysis, this study employs Soft State Theory. The theory tries to explain state/society and corruption in general. Soft State theory was propounded by Gurnal Myrdal in the light of the Asian experience; the theory comes to the grips with the paradox of the post-colonial state and its problems of corruption. The theory argued that a soft state whether democratic or undemocratic is bedeviled with the inability to institute reforms or enforce social discipline. A soft state (Ogundiya, 2009:286) is a 'state where the legal system and its paraphernalia are moribund at least ineffective'. Even

when framing policies, the authorities are reluctant to place obligations on the people, especially in matters of corruption. Put simply, the characteristics of a soft state is, its over-permissiveness of corruption and corrupt tendencies. This theory is largely reinforced by clientelism and prebendalism- that is, politics of identity.

Hence, considering the defective nature of government institutions to substantially consume political corruption in both China and Nigeria, the postulation of Soft State Theory is not inapplicable in this context. Put differently, there is basis and indeed justification for the adoption of this very theory to understanding the main subject of interrogation.

Conceptual Exploration

Corruption

The word corruption is from a Greek word, '*corruptus*' meaning an aberration or misnomer. Corruption is a behavior which deviates from the formal exercise of a public or private organizational role for self-interests. In narrow sense, it is a change in moral perspectives. Transparency International (2011), sees corruption as 'abuse of entrusted power for private gain that hampered the public interest'. Central to this definition was entrusted power to a body of trustees so as to execute it at the maximum benefits of the public. Hence, an abuse of such power is a clear deviation from its purpose which is referred to as corruption. Corruption can also be viewed as a perversion or change from the general accepted rules or laws for selfish gains.

However, in a broad sense, corruption is a term used to describe acts that are considered immoral, such as fraud, graft, bribery, stealing, perjury, lying, dishonesty, indiscipline and act of immorality or perversion (Folarin, 2014:447-448). Corruption thus, represents deviation from the normal that is an anti-social behavior (Okojie and Momoh, 2005:1). The above understanding of corruption suggests that, it is a confusion of the private with the public sphere or an illicit exchange between the two officials acting in the best interest of private concern disregarding procedures and policies on anti-corruption or corrupt-free use of power (Onimisi, 2014:187). To Esidene (2014:3), corruption consists of doer's and receiver's use of informal, extra legal or illegal act to facilitate matters. In a similar vein, Oshoba (1996) opined that corruption is any 'anti-social behavior conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms and which undermines the authorities' capacity to secure the welfare of all citizens' (cited in Atelhe and Timikoru, 2014:306).

From the foregoing definitions of corruption, it is inferable that it involves an individual holding a position of authority, trust or responsibility, whether in the public or private sector; the act committed contravenes any rule, law or regulation, including existing norms and values of a community or an institution and it is done intentionally to advance narrow private interests and or objectives. This kind of behavior characterized every society.

Political Corruption

Political corruption is an act that takes place within the sphere of political authority. Political corruption occurs when the decision-makers who are entitled to formulate, establish and implement the laws in the names of the people are themselves corrupt (cited in Atelhe and Timikoru, 2014). According to Peter (1978), there are three approaches to the definition of political corruption. These are: definition based on legal criteria; public opinion and; public interest. From legal sense, Peter argued that, political corruption is connected to any behavior that violates some formal standard or rule of behaviour set down by a political system for its public officials.

The public opinion of political corruption is that a political system is corrupt when the weight of public opinion perceives it to be so. This perspective was also fraught with certain limitations in that one

must be able to demarcate the boundary between elite opinion and public opinion. This is because what takes to be public opinion in many societies is often time the opinion of the elite. The public interest of political corruption is well understood when Eogow and Laswell (1963) argued that corruption is taken to be a violation of public interest (cited in Ogundiya, 2009:282). This definition though could be laden with ambiguities because public interest like public opinion is difficult to determine. Meaning that of enfeeble is public interest being a tool of corruption exploration.

Ogundiya (2009) sees political corruption as misuse or improper use of power and influence by public or private parties (but not limited) to politics, most especially if politics is defined from Harold Laswell tradition of 'who get what, when and perhaps how much'. In the context of Nigeria, political corruption is squarely rooted in weak institutions and bad politics; how Nigeria's experience differs from that of other developing countries. Political corruption involves the use of authority and decision making to abuse rules and regulations as well as exploit available resources (Onimisi, 2014:193). In a narrow sense, political corruption entails the manipulation of people and institution in order to attain or retain power and office. This dimension of political corruption usually takes place at the highest level of political authorities.

Economic Development

Development is the process of improving the quality of all human lives. That is, whenever the issue of economic development is raised, human beings are central. There are three equally important aspects (Todaro and Smith, 2009:820) of development. These include: one, raising people's levels of living- incomes and consumption levels of food, medical services, and education. Two, creating conditions conducive to the growth of the people's self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions that promote human dignity and respect and; three, increasing people's freedom by varieties of consumer's goods and services.

Indeed, development had been quite similar to the concept of 'progress', 'advancement' or even 'change'. Thus, there has been an equation of growth with development. That is, an orientation of development from the circle of an increase in total per capital income or output. Meanwhile, another thought of development is structural oriented. From this perspective, Nye (1967) maintained that structural changes as a major component of development, arguing that growth (increase in output) must be accompanied with structural changes- reduction in poverty, inequality, unemployment, access to basic social amenities among others (cited in Atelhe and Timikoru, 2014:306). It is inferable from the above discussion that economic development is centre around the positive advancement and good living standard of people in a given society.

Political Corruption in China

It could be noted that the nature, causes and control measures may serve as an established criterion for comparing corruption in China and Nigeria. Understanding corruption varies with time and space. From the perspective of Chinese official terminology- *Yi Quan Mu Si*, the core element of the definition of corruption in today's China is the notion of 'the use of public authority and public resources for private interests' (cited in Zengke, 2000:244). This is a very broad definition which may include different phenomena and behaviours and may vary with time. Consequently, it can be adapted to include new forms of corrupt practice. According to Zengke (2000:245), political corruption in today's China is often linked with negative phenomena and unhealthy tendencies within the party and government departments.

Heidenheimer (1985) provides three-category of systems as a useful framework for understanding nature of corruption in China. Class A- black corruption, this category includes graft, bribe, fraud,

embezzlement, extortion, smuggling, tax and evasion. Class B- grey corruption, this category of corruption implies leaders of public institutions using their institutional power to increase the revenue of their institutions and improve the welfare of their staffs through various legal, semi-legal and illegal ways. Class C- white corruption, this practice constitutes a kind of common practice of social life. It includes nepotism and favouritism in the personnel recruitment and promotion and, bending the law in favour of relatives and friends- preferential treatment in resource-allocations for relatives and friends. This very category entails preferential treatment by officials.

In another development, to understand the nature and measure of corruption is very difficult in most countries because of its illicit nature. In China, for instance, the general lack of transparency adds to the difficulty. Nevertheless, public perception, official audit, press reports, official anti-corruption enforcement data and estimates based on international norms indicate that corruption in China is both pervasive and costly. The Transparency International- TI (2011), ranks China as among the more corrupt nations in the world. Minxin (2007:2) opined that 'from 2001 to 2006, China's corruption perception score averaged 3.4 on a 1-10 scale' (the lower the score, the more corrupt a country is perceived to be by its public, domestic private entrepreneurs and foreign investors). This consistently places China among the bottom one-third of the countries included in the TI index. The results of annual audits performed by China's National Audit Agency (NAA) reported by Minxin (2007) offer another measurement of corruption in China. The NAA's audits from 1996 to 2005 uncovered 1.29 trillion yuan (\$170 billion) in misappropriated and misspent public funds.

By this measure, misused government funds represented about 8 percent of the on-budget spending for this period. Frequent press reports of high-profile scandals paint a grim picture of corruption in China. The amount of money stolen by perpetrators, for example, has risen exponentially. In the 1980s, few corruption scandals involved more than 1 million yuan. In another development, cases of corruption in China were made noticeable as the culprits are facing the wrath of the law. In this sense, a former Chinese legislator was sentenced to death for corruption. As reported by Taboola (2016a):

China today sentenced a 70-year-old former senior legislator to death for taking "a huge amount of bribes" and holding excessive assets with unidentified sources, becoming the latest official to be punished for graft under a campaign launched by President Xi Jinping. BaiEnpei, former senior lawmaker with China's legislature, the National People's Congress, who had also served as the head of the provincial committees of the ruling Communist Party of China in Qinghai and Yunnan province, respectively, has been deprived of political rights for life and had all his personal property confiscated (see www.ndtv.com/world-news).

It is instructive to note that large number of government and China's Communist Party (CCP) officials were disciplined and punished for wrongdoing. Indeed, recently a prominent party official was brought to justice for corruption. It was reported by Taboola (2017a) that:

[...] a court in southeastern China on Tuesday sentenced the former Communist Party boss of the northern province of Hebei to 15 years in jail after finding him guilty of corruption, the latest senior official jailed in a sweeping crackdown on graft. Zhou Benshun was the top official of Hebei province, which surrounds Beijing and is China's most important steel producer (see www.ndtv.com/world-news).

Thousands of local officials are disgraced by corruption scandals every year as well. From October 1997 to September 2002, 28,996 cadres at the xian (county) and chu (division) levels as well as 2,422 officials at the tin (department) and ju (bureau) levels were prosecuted for corruption and an

average, 6,000 senior local officials were prosecuted for corruption every year during this period (Minxin, 2007:3). Evidently, however, the strong commitment of the present administration to fight corruption was displayed as China's former statistics bureau chief Wang Baoan pleaded guilty to corruption charges. According to a report by Taboola, (2017b):

... A Chinese court on Wednesday jailed for life the former head of the statistics bureau after finding him guilty of corruption, the latest official to be brought down in President Xi Jinping's war on corruption. A court in the city of Zhangjiakou found Wang Baoan had illegally accepted the equivalent of more than 153 million yuan (\$22.5 million) in cash and other valuables, it said in a statement on its microblog (www.ndtv.com/world-news).

To unveil the causes of corruption in China is a very difficult and complicated task owing to many factors that contribute to the development and spread of corruption in the country. Yet, there are still some common factors relevant to the growth of corruption in China. These are: The co-existence of dual economic systems during the whole transition period provides plenty of incentives and opportunities for corrupt practices. Also, the breakdown of the prior distribution of national income among different social strata, that is, the relative reduction of officials' income, drives government officials and public institutions to seek extra income to supplement their own or their staff's relative low and fixed official salaries.

For instance, prior to the 1978, the income gap among different social strata was quite small and all social strata a relatively equal state of poverty. The new economic policies, which not only allowed but also encouraged people get rich first and fast, undermined this structure. The economic reform in China allowed three categories of individuals to become independent economically. This according to Zengke, (2000:248) has indeed created strong incentives for categories of economic actors to participate in corrupt practice. These includes the managers and staff that engaged in marketing and purchasing work in non-state owned enterprises, including village and township enterprises, household and privately owned enterprises, and foreign or jointly owned enterprises. All these have their income increased rapidly while the income of Chinese employees of foreign owned or joint-investment enterprises was maintained at a higher level from the beginning. Compared with these groups, public officials' income was relatively low and increased only slowly.

In another development, the loopholes and weakness/failures of regulatory policies and institutions on certain policy and lack of experience and technology in the anti-corruption agencies tackling the new forms of corruption contributed to the growth of corruption in China. Zengke (2000) asserts that the incompleteness of political reform and the weakness of the current political system undermine anti-corruption efforts which, in turn, promote the further proliferation of corruption. Put differently, the government's market-oriented reforms as well as political reform made some progress but lags far behind the economic reform. In the face of rising corruption, the weakness of the political system has become terribly weak, because there was no effective mechanism of checks and balances which makes it very difficult to supervise senior officials.

In addition, the decline in the moral costs of corruption stimulates further spread of corruption in China. This is because there are several factors which have contributed to the decline in moral costs of corruption. The first is the ideological change. Since 1978, the official ideology and policy focus has shifted from stressing class struggle to economic development, with the latter becoming the "strategic task" of the party and government Zengke (2000:254). Additionally, certain traditional and international factors also contribute to the growth of corruption in China. In fact, the cultural heritage of absolutist rule

that lasted for 2000 years and only ended at the beginning of this century contributed to the growth of corruption in China.

It is illogical to underplay the harmful effects of corruption in China. Although, beyond mouth-phrasing, China is recording high economic growth despite her reported cases of corruption. Proving that, corruption does not always limit economic growth. One may even argue that corruption in the Chinese context might be the proverbial grease for the bureaucratic wheels of an otherwise unmotivated state; productive economic transactions might not have occurred without it (Minxin, 2007:5). But in actual fact, such views do not correspond with either Chinese reality or historical fact. First, the total costs of corruption in China are huge. The direct economic loss owing to corruption represents a large transfer of wealth at least three (3) percent of GDP per year- to a tiny group of elites.

This annual transfer, from the poorer to the richer, is fueling China's rapid increase in socio-economic inequality and the public's perception of social injustice. Second, the indirect costs of corruption—efficiency losses; waste; and damage to the environment, public health, education, the credibility of key public institutions, and the morale of the civil service are incalculable. The high price China is already paying is ample evidence that the toll of corruption is not theoretical. For example, the bill for bailing out China's state-owned banks, prime victims of corruption in the financial sector is close to \$500 billion. Corruption has also contributed to China's massive environmental degradation, deterioration in social services, the rising costs of housing, health care, and education. But corruption has lowered the quality of China's economic growth because its economic expansion has been accompanied by assorted social ills, many of which will require heavy investment to correct. With a lower level of corruption, China would have achieved growth of a higher quality with much less damage to the environment, economic efficiency, public health, and social stability. But it would be foolish to conclude that the Chinese system has an infinite capacity to absorb the mounting costs of corruption.

Like every other country, China was not without mechanism of controlling various corrupt practices. Although, China does not have any independent anti-corruption agencies; there are four key state anti-corruption agencies: The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI); the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP); the Ministry of Supervision and; the National Bureau of Corruption Prevention (NBCP). The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection-CCDI: This is the China Communist Party- CCP's anti-corruption body and is empowered to investigate CCP officials suspected of violating party rules in each province, city and county. In fact, it was reported by Taboola, (2016b) that a top Chinese Official Faces Graft Probe as Xi Jinping Tightens Grip. According to the report:

[...] A top provincial official of China's ruling Communist Party is facing corruption probe, becoming the latest bigwig to fall in President Xi Jinping's anti-graft drive as he continues to consolidate his hold with new appointments ahead of a key party meet. Huang Xingguo, mayor of north China's Tianjin city where 162 people were killed and thousands displaced in a mysterious giant explosion last year, faced anti-corruption probe by the part (see www.ndtv.com/world-news).

The 2012 Xinhua article of the CCDI report affirmed that 4,843 Chinese officials above county head level were punished for discipline violations in 2011 (CCDI, 2012). It could be added that the power of CCDI is limited in practice because a major paradox of internal investigation in China's highly stratified and hierarchical government structures is that internal investigators must investigate top party officials who are either responsible for having appointed the members of the CCDI or who are simply higher-ranking than the investigators themselves, thereby preventing access.

The Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP). This is sole judicial organ that investigates and prosecutes corruption cases concerning public servants and public functionaries in China. The SPP and the Ministry of Supervision both investigate alleged wrongdoing by public servants and public functionaries, but only the SPP has the power to initiate public prosecution. According to China's 2010 corruption white paper, the people's procuratorate in accordance with the law directly file cases of job-related crimes committed by state functionaries for investigation and initiate public prosecution. The SPP is responsible for investigating embezzlement of state property and bribery of public servants and public functionaries through its General Bureau of Anti-Embezzlement and Bribery (also referred to as the Anti-Corruption and Bribery Bureau), which also investigates high-profile corruption cases involving top-ranking CCP officials.

The Ministry of Supervision: This anti-graft agent is similar to the SPP in that it also investigates corruption allegations against public servants and public functionaries, but such investigations concern violations of administrative regulations. If there is sufficient evidence of wrongdoing, the case is transferred to the SPP to initiate public prosecution.

The National Bureau of Corruption Prevention: This is another anti-graft agent that focused on corruption prevention and is primarily responsible for researching corruption prevention measures and both orchestrating and overseeing nationwide anti-corruption work. The NBCP coordinates corruption prevention systems for government agencies, private businesses, non-government organizations and other civil society groups. The NBCP is also responsible for international cooperation and international aid with regard to corruption prevention. Meanwhile, the NBCP does not have the power to investigate individual corruption cases.

Despite these measures, corruption in China does remain rampant, raising important question regarding the sincerity and effectiveness of these efforts and ultimately whether China can sustain its current economic growth, given that it lacks free elections, free press, an independent judiciary, and other checks and balances to hold officials accountable.

Political Corruption in Nigeria

Political corruption could be said to have remained a major obstacle to national progress in Nigeria. Indeed, the intractable challenges of poverty, disease, hunger, unemployment, bad roads, lack of access to good health care services, battered education system and other developmental challenges are convincingly linked to corruption. Corruption, Seteolu, (2004) maintained has been identified as a major challenge to national development in Nigeria. For the past fifty years, or so, corruption has manifested itself in bribery, graft, treasury looting, subsidy and pension theft, money laundering advance fee fraud, general indiscipline, favouritism and nepotism (Folarin, 2014:450). This is to submit that at every stages of Nigeria political journey since 1960, corruption has manifested itself with disheartened negative consequences on the entire system. With return of democracy in 1999, a lot of corrupt cases have been raised.

In 1999, for instance, Senator Chuba Okadigbo (the then Senate President) was involved in the inflation of street light projects to the tune of N117 million; N12.2 million in the furnishing of the Senate President's resident and; inflated the price of 100KVA generator to N15 million (Onimisi, 2014:202). This is therefore to argue that a lot of political office holders had involved in one corrupt practices or the other. Indeed, people like former Senate President- Adolphus Wabara; Professor Fibian Osuji (former Education Minister); Mr. Tafa Balogun (former Inspector General of Police); Late Chief Diepreye Alamieyeseigha (former Bayelsa State Governor) are all evidences of official corruption, as they amassed stupendous wealth that belongs to the general public.

In another development, Senator Chimaroke Nnamani faced about 124 count charges totaling about 5.4 billion naira (Vanguard, 2008). Also, Madam Patricial Etteh, the first Female Speaker of House of Representatives resigns following her indictment of contract scam of about N628 million. The bribery scandals of Honourable Farouq Lawal, Mr Femi Otedola and many others are still fresh in the memory of Nigerians. To mention but few are some of the corruption that went on in the legislative arms of government.

Ogundiya, (2009:289) argued that the executive arm is not spared. The Senate Committee, for instance, pronounced former Vice-President, Atiku Abubakar guilty on the allegation of diversion of \$145 million Petroleum Technology Development Fund. Meanwhile, the cases of embezzlement and looting of public treasury dominated national dailies. In fact, Talatu (2015) reported that 'Jonathan's Minister stole \$6 billion'. Governor Adams Oshiomole has put total money stolen by the immediate past Jonathan administration at over N11 trillion.

This is evidence as former Petroleum Minister- Diezani Madueke was arrested on October 2nd in London, as court seizes 27,000 pounds from her. Many former Governors and Ministers such as Gabriel Suswan of Benue State, Godswill Akpabio of Akwa Ibom State, Muritala Nyako of Adamawa State, Sule Lamido of Jigawa State and former Minister of Interior, Aba Moro are all under serious investigation over misappropriation and embezzlement of public funds. From the forgoing sampled cases, it is apparent that corruption has become the defining variable in determining politics of who get what, when and how in Nigeria. Surprisingly, most of these corrupt officials have partially and/or never been prosecuted in any law court.

In respect to the above, it is germane to view the causes of corruption in Nigeria. Of course, the causes of corruption are not universal in nature but according to the peculiarities of governments and societies (Onimisi, 2014:190). This is to say that the causes of corruption are myriad and it has political and cultural variables. Hence, the following variables were identified: Acute inequality in the distribution of wealth- this causes obsession with materialism, compulsion for a shortcut to affluences, glorification and approbation of ill-gotten wealth; political office as the primary means of gaining access to wealth; lack of ethical standard among agencies government; poor reward system: weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanisms propensity for personal aggrandizement.

In another development, the adverse effect of corruption in Nigeria is enormous and multi-dimensional. Indeed, corruption is a mechanism that results in the depletion of our national and organizational resources. According to Onimisi (2014:208), overzealousness in economic fraud and aggrandizement leads to the exploitation of the budget for selfish uses. In essence, the concept of corruption is one of the most fundamental causes of underdevelopment in Nigeria. This was manifested on the pervasive poverty, unemployment, high level of illiteracy, battered education system, poor health care services, deplorable state of roads, laziness, hunger and diseases and increase in cost of the provision of goods and services without a corresponding cost-benefits margin. It is estimated that from the 1970s to the early 2005, Nigeria took in about \$400 billion in oil revenues unlike the East Asian export economies; this money was not plowed back into investments in either physical or human capital (Fukuyama, 2014:220).

In the same vein, corruption has been viewed by New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) as major impediment to good governance not only in Nigeria but Africa. Corruption has cause sociological effect of sharp social distinction and by extension creates disharmony and undermining the zeal for common good.

Essentially, various control measures were put in place to have corruption arrested worth mentioning at this juncture. Legally, the 1999 constitution is the main embodiment of legal codes against corruption in Nigeria. Other specific statutory laws include the Criminal and Penal Codes; Procurement Act 2007; Advance Fee Fraud and other Related Offences Decree of 1995 among others. Institutionally, four important institutional arrangements are in place, these include: Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC); Code of Conduct Bureau; Bureau of Public Procurement. Others are: National Extraction Industry Transparency Initiatives (NEITI) and Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU). It must be stated that both the ICPC and EFCC are empowered by law to investigate, arrest and prosecute suspected corrupt public office holders and political appointees. The idea of Due Process was also introduced in all the federal ministries and parastatals in order to curtail the menace of corruption in the public sectors.

Despite these measures, the country has consistently occupied as one of the topmost position among the most corrupt nations in the world (Ogundiya, 2009:290). This implies that, all these measures are very weak and have proved to be inadequate panacea to the problem of corruption in Nigeria.

Manifestations of Political Corruption vis-à-vis Economic Development in China and Nigeria: Lessons for Comparison

Corruption, understood as abuse of public office for private gain is a persistent feature in human societies through time and space. Contemporaneous corruption scandals not only occur in developing countries such as Nigeria, India and China where corruption is regarded as a norm, but also in developed economies such as France, Britain and America (Dong, 2011:1). It is a known fact that both Nigeria and China as political systems shared the same characteristics of ravaging corruption. That is, as corruption is a pervasive problem in China today, so also the tale in Nigeria. Corruption in the countries touches virtually all corners of the country's sectors, economic, political and judicial fields to the social-cultural and education.

Corruption in both China and Nigeria are huge. In fact, from the sense of inequalities corruption distributive consequences is pervasive in both countries.

This implies that, a shared of country's wealth is distributed to insiders and corrupt leaders, contributing to inequalities in wealth (Rose-Ackerman, 1978:44). Regrettably, these countries with abundant mineral wealth face special challenges. This was well captured in (Olukoshi, 1994; Diamond, 1993; Olowu, 1993) that much of the oil wealth of Nigeria has been dissipated through corruption and other forms of rent seeking. In another development, damaged political legitimacy was another shared of similarities of the effects of corruption in Nigeria and China. This simply suggests that, systemic corruption undermines the legitimacy of governments. In essence, citizens in both countries believed that the government is simply for sale to the highest.

The Peterson Institute for International Economics (2007:5) opined that 'corruption corrode the state viability as a governing institution and threaten legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party' rising venality of office and alliances between corrupt officials and organized crime, as well as indications that younger officials are increasingly involved.

On the control of corruption in China, cases of strict enforcement through arrest, prosecution and execution of corrupt officials were recorded. For instance, Chen Lingyu and two dozen of other Shanghai officials were charged with lending RMB4.3 billion from the municipal social security fund to real estate speculators (Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007:5). Officials linked to one deceased Politburo's member, Huang Ju and one sitting member-JaQinglin was detained on bribery charges. The former Head of China's State Food and Drug Administration, Zheng Xiaoyu, was executed for accepting

briberies to approve a substandard antibiotic that killed at least 10 people (Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2007). Minister of Finance, Jin Renging lost his job after he was implicated in a sex-for-promotions scandal. Beijing Vice-Mayor, LuiZhihu was charged with corruption relating to the vast 2008 Olympics re-development projects.

Peterson Institute for International Economics (2007:6) reported that over 600 people including 360 officials and cadre were said to be involved but ultimately 10 were executed and six received suspended death sentences. Meanwhile, in the case of Nigeria, the Institutional and legal frameworks put in place are so weak that there is no single corrupt official slam with capital punishment as we have in China. Instead, many corrupt officials were shamefully celebrated. The above assertion put a clear distinction between the effectiveness of various control mechanisms put in place in both China and Nigeria.

Put differently, anti-corruption laws/policies and campaigns are nothing but empty jingles and propaganda and mere political rhetoric. But in the case of China, cases of capital punishment were recorded which served as deterrent to people and by extension reflects don the country's economic development. In a report by the Peterson Institute for International Economics (2007:6), 'corruption in China today is at least partially a byproduct of growth, not a barrier to it, as is so often the case'. China also continues to attract more foreign investment than any other developing countries. Indeed, public anger over official corruption has been the catalyst for much of the social unrest that has rocked China in recent years and the reason why the party leadership acknowledges that it is a 'life and death' issue.

It is of lesson from China political system that the techniques of fighting corruption cases are well structured and indeed decentralized which relatively effective and efficient. From the forgoing, Nigeria could borrow a leaf from China's anti-corruption institutional frameworks that is party specific. That is the Central Commission for Discipline and Inspection- CCDI which chiefly focus on corruption cases among the ruling party officials. Put differently, instead of having only Economic and Financial Commission- EFCC and toothless Independent Corrupt Practices Commission- ICPC laden with herculean task of fighting corruption broadly, the task should be divided along with more anti-corruption agencies.

Conclusion

It could be argued that corruption is a problem that confronts all countries of the world. What differentiate corruption from one shore to another is the prevalence, gravity and its persistence. Corruption as a phenomenon has eaten deep into the fabric of the economies of both Nigeria and China. In Nigeria, corrupt menace has not only blocks and frustrates genuine efforts at development, but it has disturbingly leaves its victims literally gasping for breath. To reason along this line is to conclude that corruption is an anti-social and immoral behaviour which set against the ideals of what is good and acceptable.

In both China and Nigeria, the causes and consequences of corruption are indifference. It has economic, political and socio-cultural effects with more severity on Nigeria owing to weak institutions to fight corruption. Of implication however, corruption distorts economic incentives by channeling resources not into their most productive uses but rather into the pockets of few citizens with political power. Apart from its severe effect on the economy, corruption is of damaging to political order. This explains the perception that political office holders are corrupt and by implication reduces the legitimacy of the government in the eyes of common people and undermine the sense of thrust that is critical to the smooth operation of the seemingly insolvable problem of poverty, diseases, hunger and acute development tragedy most severe in Nigeria than China.

Meanwhile, the pockets of severe and capital punishment noticed in China place it at edge over her Nigeria counterpart, which relatively manifests in her economic growth. Though, China has not arrived on its war against corruption, more efforts should be intensified to strengthen anti-corruption agencies and enforce very strictly capital punishment. On its own part (Nigeria) however, there is need for strong political will among the political leadership ensuring continuity and doggedness in the fight against corruption. Fundamentally, the cost of corruption should be made to be higher than the gains. In other words, severe punishment must be attached to corruption in the high places. All these are of necessity to have our democracy stabilized and engender socio-economic development in Nigeria.

References

- Atelhe, A. G. and Timikoru, A. F. (2014). "Revisiting Political and Development in Nigeria under Democratic Rule". *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*. Vol.3 (2):79-93.
- Diamond, L. (1993). "Nigeria's Perennial Struggle against Corruption: Prospects for the Third Republic" *Journal of Corruption and Reform*. Vol.7: 215-225.
- Dong, B. (2011). "The Causes and Consequences of Corruption": A *PhD Thesis (Unpublished)*. Submitted in partial requirement for Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Economics and Finance, Faculty of Business; Queensland University of Technology Gardens, Australia.
- Esidene, E. C. (2014). "Effects of Corruption on Nigeria's Political and Democratic Objectives: The Way Forward". *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol.3: 49-68.
- Folarin, S. (2014) "Corruption, Politics and Governance in Nigeria". In Ajayi, R and Fashagba, J. (eds). *Understanding Government and Politics in Nigeria*. Omuaran: Land Mark University Press.
- Fukuyama, F. (2014). *Political Order and Political Decay: from Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy*. London: Profile Publishers.
- Heidenheimer, A.J. (1985). "Political Corruption: Concept and Contexts" in Schmitt, C (eds). *Political Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Minxin, P. (2007). "Corruption Threatens China's Future". *Policy Brief*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Publications.
- Muzhuthettu, J. (2016). "The Psychology of Corruption". *The Daily Brunch Newspaper*. www.dailybrunch.com. Accessed on: 10/01/2017.
- Ogundiya, I. S (2009). "Political Corruption in Nigeria: Theoretical Perspectives and Some Explanations". *African Journal of Anthropology*, Kamlra-Raj. Vol. 11(4): 281-292.
- Okojie, P. and; Momoh, A. (2005). "Corruption and the Crisis of Development in Nigeria". *Paper Presented at the Conference on Redesigning the State: Political Corruption in Development Policy and Practice*. Held at Manchester Metropolitan University. 25th November.
- Olowu, D. (1993). "Ethical Violations in Nigeria's Public Services: Patterns, Explanation and Remedies" in Rasheed, S and Olowu, D. (eds). *Ethics and Accountability in African Public Service*. African Association for Public Administration and Management.
- Olukoshi, A. (1994). "Nigeria Economic and Political Reform at Cross Purposes" in Haggard, S and Webb, S. B. (eds). *Voting for Reform: Democracy, Political Liberation and Economic Adjustment*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Onimisi, A. M. (2014). "Causes and Effects of Corruption in Nigeria". In Abdulkarim, S. and Yusuf, H. (eds). *Readings in Nigerian Government and Administration*. Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.

- Peterson Institute for International Economics (2007). *Corruption in China: Crisis or Constant?* www.petersoninstitute.org. Accessed on: 08/08/2015.
- Rise-Ackerman, S. (1978). "Political Economy of Corruption". *Institute of International Economics*. Available on: www.iie.com. Accessed on: 12/10/2015.
- Seteolu, D. (2004). "The Challenge of Leadership and Governance in Nigeria". In Odion-Akhaine, S. (ed). *Governance: Nigeria and World*. Lagos: Cencod Publishers.
- Taboola, S. (2017a). "China's Former Statistics Chief Gets Life for Corruption". Available on: www.ndtv.com/world-news/chinas-former-statistics-chief-gets-life-for-corruption-1706231 Updated: May 31, 2017 15:59. Accessed on: 04/10/2017.
- Taboola, S. (2017b). "Ex-Senior Chinese Official Zhou Benshun Jailed for 15 Years for Graft". Available on: www.ndtv.com/world-news/ex-senior-chinese-official-zhou-benshun-jailed-for-15-years-for-graft-1659580 Updated: February 15, 2017 08:32. Accessed on: 04/10/2017.
- Taboola, S. (2016a). "Former Chinese Legislator Sentenced to Death for Corruption". Available on: www.ndtv.com/world-news/former-chinese-legislator-sentenced-to-death-for-corruption-1472082 Updated: October 09, 2016 15:46. Accessed on: 04/10/2017.
- Taboola, S. (2016b). "Top Chinese Official Faces Graft Probe as Xi Jinping Tightens Grip". Available on: www.ndtv.com/world-news/top-chinese-official-faces-graft-probe-as-xi-jinping-tightens-grip-1457270 Updated: September 11, 2016 14:50. Accessed on: 04/10/2017.
- Talatu, U. (2015). "Jonathan's Minister Stolen \$6m- Oshiomole". *Premium Times Newspaper*. Available on: www.premiumpages.com/news/headline Retrieved on: 10/06/2016.
- The Congressional Executive Commission* (2013). "Corruption in China Today: Consequences for Governance, Human Rights and Commercial Rule of Law". Available on www.cecc.gov. Accessed and retrieved on: 15/08/2015.
- Today, M. P. and Smith, S. C. (2009). *Economic Development*. England: Pearson Education & Addison-Wesley.
- Transparency International (2011). "What is Public Sector Corruption/Space for Transparency international". www.blog.transparency.org/2011/12/02/what-is-public-sector-corruption Accessed on: Accessed on: 21/08/2017.
- Vanguard Newspaper* (2008). February, 16th www.vanguardng.com
- Vanguard Newspaper* (2015). April 1st. www.vanguardng.com
- Wademan, A. (2013). "XI Jinping's Anti-Corruption Campaign and the Third Plenum". In *Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC), Corruption in China Today: Consequences for Governance, Human Rights, and Commercial Rule of Law*. Available on: www.cecc.gov Retrieved on: 10/12/2015.
- Zengke, H. (2000). "Corruption and Anti-Corruption in Reform China". *China Centre for Comparative Politics and Economics*. Vol. 33:243-270. Available on: www.elsevier.com/locate/postcomstud. Retrieved on: 15/08/2015.