



# **System Approach To The War Against Corruption In The Nigeria Civil Service**

<sup>1</sup>OBI, Ijoma Peter; <sup>2</sup>ADAH, Sunday Obi & <sup>3</sup>AKOGU, Allen

<sup>1</sup>Political Science Department,  
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers state, Nigeria  
Email: Peterijomaobi@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup>Economics Department.  
Federal College of Education (Tech), Omoku, Rivers State, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Political Science Department.  
Federal College of Education (Tech), Omoku. Rivers State, Nigeria

## **ABSTRACT**

This paper is focused on the system approach to the war against corruption in civil service in Nigeria. It is no doubt, that almost every country in the world is faced with the challenge of combating corruption but while other nations are making progress Nigeria continues to struggle in its fight against corruption, and always toying the rank as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. The worst of it all is the level of corruption that has swallowed the Nigeria civil service system, which was addressed in this study. Despite several measures explored by government and anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria towards its war against corruption, there is still much left to be done, especially in Nigeria's civil service. This study used descriptive analytical approach to provide an overview of corrupt practices in the Nigeria civil service. The paper elucidated several corrupt practices in the Nigerian civil service and further recommends that government should implore a more comprehensive approach that will address the institutional and structural deficiencies in its fight against corruption in the Nigeria civil service system.

Keywords: civil service, system approach, corruption, Nigeria

## **INTRODUCTION**

Corruption has become an overbearing cankerworm in Nigeria; most especially its catastrophic bedeviling of the public sector in Nigeria is not only worrisome but cannot be over-emphasized. The 2018 transparency international corruption perception index, Nigeria ranked as 144, out of 175 countries, which implies that Nigeria is one of the most corrupt of countries in the world. Discussion of corruption in this paper is based on the civil service perspective. The civil service was established under section 206 of 1999 CRFN (As amended). Civil service refers to civilian employees charged with the responsibility to ensure the functionality of government. In Nigeria, the constitution recognises the civil service of the federation, the state civil service of the federation, and the local government civil service; which is a sub category of the state civil service.

According to Obuah (2010a) corruption is the act of using power vested on you by virtue of your office for your self-aggrandisement, and it impounds the development of any country. Corruption in Nigeria takes place in the following forms- misappropriation, kickback, over invoicing, bribery, embezzlement, tribalism, nepotism, money laundering, outright looting of the treasuring, and so on. In Nigeria, both politicians and bureaucrats use their office to perpetrate corruption (Ijewereme, 2015, p. 1). In other

words corruption in Nigeria's civil service connotes every form of self-serving that is induced by public servants in government departments, ministries, parastatals and agencies.

The high level of corruption associated with Nigeria civil service or bureaucracy was captured in the World Bank (1995) reports, which states that "Nigeria's public sector lacks transparency and accountability"(Okotoni, 2001, p. 225). Taking a view from the system approach, corruption is perceived to be a norm in Nigeria civil service, it has become a system problem that requires systematic attention, this is because corruption in Nigeria's civil service is not only perceived as an individual compromise but also as an institutional default, a system failure and that corruption occurs in the civil service because highly placed public officials are co-collaborators and beneficiaries of the menace, which has made it difficult to curtail or minimise. This therefore implies that rather than chasing the wind in carrying out corruption fight that only seeks to track corrupt officers and prosecute them but most importantly an approach that considers all aspect of ensuring the system does not create an opportunity for corrupt practices. It is on this premise that this study seeks to use the system approach in the analysis of the fight against corruption in Nigeria's civil service.

The fight against corruption in the Nigeria civil service must be addressed holistically taking into cognisance the importance of the country's structural and functional roles that will ensure the workability of the system. It is based on this foregoing that this study is concerned.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Corruption has become a global pandemonium, and has attracted concern from political scientists, political actors and the world at large. There is scarcely any country in the world without the existence of corruption, what is most worrying is that corruption has not only questioned the credibility of governments but also contributed to the devaluation of any country's integrity and reputation and having her development undermined. Adongoi and Victor (2016) averred that the Civil Service provides the machinery and acts as a springboard for the development of a country, consolidation of programmes and policies of the government of the day. However, these realities are far from being achieved as corruption is perceived to have eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigeria civil service system; it exacerbates poor service delivery, unethical inducement, extortion, prebendalism, nepotism and its vice in the system.

The level of corruption in Nigeria civil service is worrisome, the rules of service seem not to be adhered to anymore, and the civil service in the eyes of the people is nothing but an overblown corrupt institution (Eke, 2016). It is important to note that despite several studies carried out on anti-corruption war in Nigeria and reforms in the civil service since Nigeria's independence, there are still much to be done, as corruption seems to persist in the skeletal of Nigeria civil service system. While scholars and policymakers are in near consensus about the importance of combatting corruption, there's need to find a better approach that will bring about near success in the fight against corruption (Gans-Morese, Borges, Makarin, Blankson, Nickow, Zhang, 2017). Thus, since after independence to contemporary times, successive governments in Nigeria have embarked on several patterns of reforms and strategies towards minimising the level of corruption in government ministries, departments, and parastatals (Ayodeji, 2014). Therefore, this paper aims to use the system approach to analyse the war against anti-corruption in the Nigeria Civil service. The Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) was focused on as the major regulatory agency for the purpose of this study.

## **CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

### **Concept of Corruption**

There is no general accepted definition of the concept of corruption. However this study will review some definitions put forth by scholars and as stipulated in the Nigeria laws. In Nigeria, the constitution is the most important law of the land. It is argued that corruption is more of a social problem than a legal one. However, there is no doubt that no significant progress can be achieved in fostering the fight against corruption if the role of law is overlooked. The Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, although

didn't define expressly what it meant by "corrupt practices", but under section 15(5) it requires the state to abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power.

Addressing corruption from the system perspective, the World Bank (1997, p. 2) stated that:

*"Corruption is systemic (or endemic) "where bribery, on a large or small scale, is routine in dealings between the public sector and firms or individuals. Where systemic corruption exists, formal and informal rules are at odds with one another; bribery may be illegal but is understood by everyone to be routine in transactions with the government. Another kind of equilibrium prevails, a systemic corruption "trap" in which the incentives are strong for firms, individuals, and officials to comply with and not fight the system."*

In the context of this study, also from a legal standpoint, Nigeria's Anti-corruption Law of 2010 (12), defines corruption as "gratification by an official": (1) any person who corruptly: a) asks for, receives or obtains any property or benefit of any kind for himself or for any other person. b) agrees attempts to receive or obtain any property or benefit of any kind or for himself or for any other person, on account of i) anything already done or omitted to be done, or for any favour or disfavour or disfavour already shown to any person by himself in the discharge of his official duties or in relation to any matter connected with the functions, affairs or business of-a government development, or corporate body or other organization or institution in which he is serving as an official; ii) anything to be afterwards done or omitted to be done or favour or disfavour to be afterwards shown to any person, by himself in the discharge of his official duties or in relation to any such matter as aforesaid, is guilty of an offence of official corruption..."(Nmah, 2017, p. 118).

#### **Civil Service**

Ezeani (2006, p. 190) defines civil service as "the administrative machine within which the work of government is carried out" (Eme and Ogochie, 2013, p. 32). According to Eke (2016, p. 287), "the civil services in Nigeria is supposed to be a vehicle by which government initiates, formulate and implement policies. In other words, it is a bureaucracy which regulates all aspects of the society".

Under section 318 of the 1999 CFRN(As Amended) civil service was defined as "service of the federation in a civil capacity as staff of the office of the president, the vice president, ministry or departments of the Government of the Federation assigned with the responsibility for any business of the Government of the Federation". This definition was further expanded under section 169, 170 and 171 of the Constitution, and by the provisions establishing the powers of the Federal Civil Service Commission in Section 10 of the third schedule of the Constitution. The Nigeria Constitution refers to this term as "Public service of the federation" at the federal level, and at the state level "the public service of the state of the federation", which also includes civil servants at the local government level.

Corruption is a major problem that stifles effective bureaucratic operations, corruption phenomenon characterise almost all ministries, departments, and agencies where virtually all members of the upper and lower levels of the bureaucratic structures are involved (Ayodeji, 2012). Considered as the primary vehicle of public administration, a corrupt civil service, however, cannot drive development. A typical example is Nigeria. At independence, the federal and the defunct regional bureaucracies followed the best British tradition of a neutral, efficient administrative corps that drove the rapid growth witnessed in the 1950s and 1960s. Although, previous studies have traced the ruin of the civil service partly to Nigeria's many years of military rule after independence, whose impatience for due process led to upheavals and the country had to rely on civil servants to make up for their inexperience, which exposed bureaucrats to the corruptive influence of unaccountable power. Some of these civil servants returned as politicians which further made the system vulnerable to corrupt practices.

There are several reforms carried out since after Nigeria's independence, such as Morgan Commission(1963), Eldwood Commission (1966), Adebo Commission (1971), Udoji Commission (1972), Dotun Phillips Commission(1985), Ayeda Review Panel (1994), Civil Service Reform under former president Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), Steven Oronsanye Panel (2010-2012). Despite all this

reforms the cankerworm of corruption continues to ravage the Nigeria civil service, thereby contributing to undermining Nigeria's development course.

### **OVERVIEW OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA CIVIL SERVICE**

Previous studies highlight key corrupt practices in the civil service in Nigeria (Nmah, 2017; Eme and Oogbochie, 2013; Adongoi and Victory, 2016). Some of these practices will be reviewed in this study but they are not entirely limited to these ones. They are:

#### **Ghost-Workers Phenomenon**

This is a practice where the management of a public organization deliberately inflates the payroll by including fictitious names to get more subventions for salary. The excess is siphoned by the members of management in connivance with some members of governing councils or boards (Azelama, 2005 as cited in Ijewereme, 2015). According to Adongoi and Victor (2016, p. 53) "...it has been observed that some unscrupulous civil servants put in names of non-existing workers (ghost names) in the payroll of government for pecuniary gains. This has over the years accounted for loss of billions of naira due to over bloated recurrent expenditure at the expense of capital expenditure and significantly weakened the State's capacity to function optimally." This situations most times arise due to overbearing influences of the elite class that plant their stooges into government departments and parastatals with the intention of covering up names in pay roll of government for "ghost workers" who do not physically show up at work. This mostly takes place at the state and local government levels of government, and even in the ministries and departments of the federal government.

#### **Bribery**

The payment of bribes by the people so as to get the service a public servant is paid by government to deliver to them, a situation where the employee uses his or her position to get extra income, at the expense of citizens or the service itself. For instance, the payment of bribes power distribution agents to record false meter readings or allow illegal electrical connections; to health workers for providing treatment at an earlier date; or to customs officials to allow goods to be smuggled without paying duties (Hall, 2012). A survey, which was supported by a U.N agency and European Union reported that almost a third of adult Nigerians pay civil servants and other public officials bribes totalling 400billion naira (\$1.27billion) annually. It shows that despite government efforts to prosecute accused public officials, Nigerians still have to pay every day for basic services such as dealing with customs, police, employees of ministries, judiciary etc. Nmah (2017) argues that to determine what constitutes a bribe, it is important to consider the motive for which such a gift was presented.

#### **Recruitment Process**

The canvassing for due process to be followed during recruitment process goes on to explain how public institutions of government during recruitment thrive on nepotism and prebendalism and all other vices which confirms the presence of corruption in the Nigeria's civil service. According to Eke (2016) recruitment and placement of workers should be on the basis of the skills and competence.

#### **Over Invoicing**

There's a common practice in government ministries, departments and parastatals, where government officials purposefully approve contracts that exceed inspection cost assessment. Osawe (2014) noted that public officers involve in over invoicing by their unholy alliance with contract bidders to loot public funds. In spite of the fact that the government created Budget Monitoring and Price Unit (BMPIU) to ensure the standards are adhered to in the area of public procurement, there also seems to be a lot of compromise in this regard.

## CAUSES OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA CIVIL SERVICE

Previous studies have been able to establish so many causes of corruption. These various causes of corruption are not limited to the selected few mentioned in this study.

- Low salaries: Studies have shown that corruption is worse where civil servants pay was low relative to other workers (Hall, 2012). Also, most states in Nigeria are fond of delay in payment of their civil servants, there are states that owe their public workers for even more than 9 months, such situation will breed corruption in the system.
- Lack of welfare packages: there are provisions of entitlements for civil servants, the government must be committed to payment of this entitlement, some of this entitlements are residential allowance, furniture, utility, domestic servant, motor vehicle loan and transport, and medical allowance etc. Although, the Nigeria government introduced the monetization policy in order to close in for their inability to meet up with some of these entitlements, for instance, formerly when they built and maintained housing estate for civil servants. Ayodeji (2014) stated that the introduction of the monetization policy was to take the place of those allowances by converting them into monetary value and having it paid to these public servants. Eme and Victor (2013) noted that when these allowances are paid religiously by government, it will minimise the level of corruption in Nigeria civil service.
- Fear of Prolonged Retirement Benefits: there are many civil servants that are yet to receive their pension after many years in service. The fear of prolonged retirement benefit aggravate corrupt practices in the civil service system, as civil servants are no more confident that after their retirement they will be paid all their benefits, because of this, while they are still in service they involve in all kinds of corrupt practices that will enrich them to survive after their end of service.
- Weak Institution: studies have shown that both structural and institutional weaknesses are contributory to the high level of corruption in Nigeria's service system. Hence, the need to drive reforms that can address some of these institutional weaknesses cannot be over-emphasized.
- Lack of strong legal framework: scholars have observed that one of the major reasons the fight against corruption in Nigeria has not yielded much progress is due to loopholes in the Nigeria legal system (Muhammed, Aluaigba, and Kabir, 2012). There are no sufficient provisions of laws to successfully prosecute most corrupt officials of government.
- Lack of Political will: there is generally low moral to fight corruption in the Nigeria system. Political elite or actors continually dominate the political system, so as to keep exploiting the porousness of the structural deficiencies that allow them to carry out all kinds of corrupt practices.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory that informs researchers approach in anti-corruption fight in the Nigeria civil service commission is the structural functional theory. The basic assumption of this theory is that all systems have defined structures and these structures are assigned with definite functions (Nwaodu, Adam and Okereke, 2014).

In applying this theory in the context of this study, Nwaodu, Adam and Okereke (2014) opines that there are therefore three angles to view its application:

- a. What basic functions are fulfilled by a political system?
- b. What are the structures in place?
- c. Under what condition?

The Nigeria civil service has continued to suffer the scourge of corruption despite all institutional reforms floated by the government since Nigeria independence. Williams (2019) believes that the reason why the fight against corruption in the Nigeria civil service has not yielded much progress is because corruption thrives when the system gives room for it. Using the three angles as was highlighted by Nwaodu et al (2014).

Studies have shown that there are structural and institutional deficiencies in the Nigeria civil service system, a system that allows political actors to influence it. This disheartening situation leads to compromise, and has left the civil servants in fear, which makes them submit to the whims and caprices of the executive and political elites. Until the system is purged from these structural shortcomings, it will not be able to sustain the reforms that can position the civil service system against corrupt practices.

In the Nigeria civil service system, there are structures established to monitor and ensure that civil servants comply with best public practices as provided by the constitution and other laws of the land. Some of these institutions were established as a result of previous reforms in the Nigeria civil service commission. These structural units play important roles in ensuring the system is devoid of corruption and sanitizing the system against corrupt practices, for instance, the judiciary, oversight function of the legislative (Stapenhurst et al, 2006), regulatory bodies such as EFCC and ICPC charged with prosecuting corrupt officers and ridding of corruption in the system (Ayodeji, 2012), code of conduct bureau saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that civil servants abide by the ethics of the commission and others. But also themselves must avoid being partisan in corrupt practices (Suberu, 2009)

This school of thought views that fight against corruption in the Nigeria civil service is not just requiring legalistic perspective, but a comprehensive system approach. An approach that oversees every aspect of eschewing/extinguishing corruption from the system, through a proactive strengthening of the Nigeria civil service system against any political interference, and also agencies established to fight corruption in the system must also play their role diligently in sanitising and ridding off corrupt practices in the civil service system.

#### **CHALLENGES OF ANTI-CORRUPTION WAR IN NIGERIA'S CIVIL SERVICE**

Nigeria tops the chart as one of the most corrupt countries in the world (Akor, 2014). Ogunidiya (2009) opined that successful anti-corruption efforts depend on political will. According to him, it includes both the political will to initiate fight against corruption in the first place and subsequently the will to sustain the battle over time, until results are achieved. However, a number of factors are responsible for poor political will in Nigeria. In the first place, corruption is used to acquire political position and sustain it. Returns to political godfathers can only be raised through corruption. It will result in a political suicide for a politician who acquired the political position with the help of political godfathers and allies to now turn around and prosecute them.

The incessant delay in the court system in Nigeria is also something to worry about, as many people believe that when justice is deliberately delayed it might lead to justice being denied. Most of the laws that establishes evidence in the court system are practical out-dated, for instance most court lacks the formal technical arrangement to absolve electronic evidence. There are many improper practices in the judicial system and this situation has hindered the course for justice, especially in the cases of highly placed individuals.

According to Klitgaard (2004), what makes systemic corruption different is that, every other part of government and institutions are also contaminated with this menace. Klitgaard (2004) further noted that this makes it difficult for even the anti-corruption agencies to perform effectively, since even themselves are not left out.

In Nigeria, the major anti-corruption agencies, such as the EFCC and ICPC has become a tool in the hands of political elite in advancing their course of political vendetta (Suberu, 2009) and have in the past been used as a tool to witch-hunt political adversaries and have themselves been embroiled in corruption scandals (Suberu, 2009, 264). This indicates that the civil servants are at the mercy of the executives and political elite if they refuse to cooperate with them in perpetuating corruption.

One of the traditional oversight institutions in democratic arrangement is that of the legislature. However, the role of the legislature in overseeing government ministries and departments and ensuring there's no leakage or corrupt practices perpetuated in the system cannot be totally relied on, since even among the members of the legislatures many are involved in all kinds of corrupt practices (Suberu, 2009, 266, 273).

Nmah (2017) highlighted four (4) consequences of corruption, which are erosion of moral values, increased social evils, lack of transparency, and disregard for rule of law.

The anti-corruption war seems difficult because the executive arm of the federal government only pays lip service to the fight against corruption, as many highly ranked government officials were also involved in corrupt practices and culpably fraudulent in ministries, departments of government, and agencies. It is glaring that they were active in the scam where trillions of naira from private investors was stolen. The anti-corruption agencies are not exonerated from being highly corrupt also (Tambuwal, 2013). The commission's inability to access adequate funds has also contributed to its poor performance. According to Udama (2013) in 2013, the chairman of ICPC Mr. Ekpo Nta noted that one of the reasons the commission's fight against corruption seems unsuccessful is due to poor funding and this has made the commission unable to convict any corrupt government official.

### **ACCESSING THE ANTI-CORRUPTION FIGHT IN CIVIL SERVICE THROUGH ITS REGULATORY AGENCY (ICPC) IN NIGERIA**

The establishment of the ICPC following the earlier establishment of EFCC by the former president Olusegun Obasanjo administration was aimed at addressing the problem of corruption in Nigeria public service and ensuring its minimization. The desire to install a viable anti-corruption agency that will oversee the minimization of corruption in government parastatals, departments, and ministries took a new turn when the government considered the need to establish ICPC even after it has created the EFCC, so as to address the problem of institutional corruption that has crippled the Nigeria civil service. The commission became full time operational after about three years of much resistance and litigations challenging the constitutionality of the establishment of the Act in 2000. The ICPC in collaboration with anti-corruption NGOs and has floated anti-corruption clubs in schools, also setting up anticorruption and Transparency Monitoring Units in ministries and parastatals across the country. However, overall the ICPC has a potential for combating corruption but its capacity seems to be weak. There is need to shore up its capacity for it to effectively perform its statutory role. It must be recognised that this will have to be done in a context where pro-corruption forces seek to scrap it or make it useless as an anti-corruption agency. Corruption has robbed Nigeria of its good image and undermined its development. Several studies have revealed that Nigeria is struggling from the comatose of corruption that has impoverished the Nigeria system.

A Survey on anti-corruption performance assessment conducted by Social Economic Rights and Accountability Project (2019), revealed in its findings that the police tops the rank of the most corrupt institution in Nigeria, followed by the judiciary/courts, Power sector, and educational institutions. The study also found that poor coordination among the state key players is one of the major challenges undermining the fight against corruption in Nigeria. Ekeh (2016) noted that ghost workers increases corruption and they are the reason why the cost of running the government is high. According to Punch Editorial (March 8, 2017), there are also the high incidence of "ghost workers," up to 60,000 in 2014, in addition to 50,000 fictitious workers in 2013. Undaunted by the anti-corruption credentials of the incumbent government, civil servants, in connivance with politicians and crony-contractors, have continued to "pad" the federal budget. They are undeterred by the indictment of the employees that embarrassed the President, who, unsuspecting, presented a fraud-infested 2016 budget draft to the National Assembly. Civil servants also disgorged N1.6 billion stolen pension funds in 2016 while N195 billions of pension funds once incredibly vanished under a task force that was, ironically, set up to stop the plunder.

The Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission, ICPC, has said it secured 11 convictions out of 70 corruption related cases it filed in 2016. Some officials of the Federal, state, and local government agencies are richer than their organisations. For instance, recently a Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court in Abuja ordered the final forfeiture of properties worth N124.5 million illegally acquired by a civil servant. The culprit, Daniel Obah, is a Principal Accountant in the Finance

and Accounts Department of the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs., and was charged by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC). The court ordered that the properties should be forfeited to the Federal Government of Nigeria (Premium Times, April, 15th 2019).

Onuigbo and Eme (2015) argue that the major drivers of corruption in public domain are the civil servants and the executives. For example, the pay roll fraud (ghost workers) seems difficult to unravel as there are no records to show that anyone has been sacked based on involvement in this corrupt practice (Adongoi and Victor, 2016). It is important to note that the difficulty to apprehend culprits involved in this corrupt practice, is largely owed to the fact that both highly placed and junior workers are collectively involved in this scam.

A former president, Olusegun Obasanjo, lamented that the civil service as presently constituted “cannot drive development,” initiating reforms that neither he nor his successors have fully implemented. Like the judiciary, the incumbent President of Nigeria President Muhammadu Buhari must swiftly ensure that anti-graft agencies give attention to the civil service. As the Chairman, Independent National Electoral Commission, Mahmood Yakubu, noted, “civil servants have drawn up rules to protect themselves and invariably outlive every administration. They are the ones who tutor political office holders how to steal and ensnare those they don’t like, like they did to a reputed doctor, who, as Health Minister, was enticed into misapplying funds” (Punch Editorial, March 8, 2017).

The Muhammadu Buhari administration’s started his administration by showing strong commitment to the fight against corruption and impunity in the Nigeria civil service. The level at which most civil servants flaunt wealth and are immersed with riches that is even surpassing the strength of the organization, shows how engrossing corruption has saturated the system. For instance, Nigerians are engrossed with news recovery of houses, cars and even millions of cash being seized daily by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission.

## **CONCLUSION**

The review of literature in this study was able to establish that there is intrinsic corruption in Nigeria’s civil service, while most scholars attributed the causes to low pay, weak institution, lack of political will etc., there may be other reasons why civil servants engage in corruption. It is also observed that there are intrinsic institutional and structural deficiencies that have undermined the fight against corruption in the Nigeria Civil service system. Therefore, this study proposes for further empirical study to be carried out in order to ascertain other causes of corruption in Nigeria’s civil service system. Even as the regulatory enforcement agencies continue to expose the rate at which funds have been stolen, and the overpowering height of corruption in civil service system, which evidences show fleets of vehicles and plum real estate to huge sums of money traced to public officials, unmasking of ghost workers through the biometric exercise and purging them, ensuring that due process is followed in the activities of the Nigeria civil service through asset declaration and effective functioning of the Code of Conduct Bureau must be continually and consistently ensured. Clearly, it has been established in this study that not only politicians have been stealing the country blind, but civil servants have also been neck-deep in the looting spree. The Nigeria civil service having experienced different government regimes (military and civil) that has shown commitment to the fight against corruption and undergone several reforms with the intention of curtailing the level of corruption in the system, is still yet to show an evidence of progress in the fight against corruption. This paper therefore, propose that for corruption to be drastically minimized in the Nigeria civil service, all parts of government must be committed to play its part in order to achieve a desired result.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study hereby makes the following recommendations:

- The civil service reforms should be revived, with an emphasis on stamping out corruption and imposing severe punishment to deter future malfeasance. Diligent investigation and prosecution



to avoid a repeat of the N750, 000 fine imposed by a judge on a pension thief involved in a N33 billion scam, are essential. No effort should be spared to recover ill-gotten assets.

- The Code of Conduct Bureau should begin to demand regular, periodic asset declaration by civil servants as provided for by its enabling law and any false claims taken up and offenders prosecuted.
- The government should ensure strict compliance to regular audits of all the 542 ministries, departments and agencies. A new culture of accountability should replace the prevailing reign of impunity and sleaze. A major component of the war on corruption should be cleaning up of the civil service, whose operatives remain in place to build or ruin amid the endless flowing stream of political office holders.
- The values of moneys equating the benefits such as highly subsidized residential accommodation, transport facilities, residential furniture, portable water deserving to government workers should be calculated and paid to them. This will contribute enormously to minimising corruption in the civil service in Nigeria.
- The regulatory agencies must be strengthened so as not to be influenced by the executive and political elites.
- The ICPC should be funded through a consolidated revenue account and its overall officers should appointed by the judiciary, and their removal should be subject to the same institution that appointed them. The commission must be entirely devoid of political influences.

## REFERENCES

- Adongoi, T., Victor, E.A. (2016). Corruption in the Civil Service: A Study of Payroll Fraud in Selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAS) in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(3)
- Akor, L. (2014). The transparency and Nigeria's perception index: implication for sustainable transformation. *Global Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*. 3(5), pp. 37-43
- Ayodeji, B.O. (2012). The federal civil service reform in Nigeria: the case of democratic centralism. *Journal of Rradix International Educational Research consortium*, 1(10).
- Eke, G.F. (2016). Corruption in the civil service: The dearth of effective service delivery. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 5(2).
- Eme, O.I., Ogbochie, V.A. (2013). Civil service and cost of governance in Nigeria. *International Journal of Accounting Research*, 1(2).
- Gans-Morese, J., Borges, M., Makarin, A., Blankson, T.M., Nickow, A., Zhang, D. (2017). Reducing Bureaucratic Corruption: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on What Works. Working Paper series 17-20. Institute for policy research.
- Hall, D. (2012). Corruption and public services. Public Service International Research unit (PSIRU). London: The University of Greenwich.
- Ijewereme, O.B. (2015). Anatomy of Corruption in the Nigerian Public Sector: Theoretical Perspectives and Some Empirical Explanations. DOI: 10.1177/2158244015581188
- Klitgaard, R., (2004, December) "Leadership Under Systemic Corruption" [Online] Available at [http://www.cgu.edu/include/Leadership\\_Under\\_System\\_Corruption\\_1204.pdf](http://www.cgu.edu/include/Leadership_Under_System_Corruption_1204.pdf)
- Mohammed, H., Aluaigba, M.T., Kabir, A. (2012). *Corruption, governance and development in Nigeria: perspectives and remedies*. Kano State, Nigeria: Becons Prints and General Enterprises
- Nmah, P.E. (2017). Corruption In Nigeria: A culture or retrogressive factor?. *A Journal of African Studies*, 13. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/og.v13i1.6>
- Nwaodu, N., Adam, D., Okereke, O. (2014). A review of anti-corruption wars in Nigeria. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 2, pp. 154-174

- Ogundiya, I. S. (2009). Political corruption in Nigeria: Theoretical perspectives and some explanations. *Anthropologist*, 11, 281-292.
- Okotoni, O. (2001). Problems and Prospects of Nigeria Bureaucracy. *Journal of Social Science*, 7(3), pp. 223-229
- Osawe, C.O. (2014). Reengineering professionalism in the Nigerian public service towards service delivery. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 3(6).
- Premium Times (April, 15th 2019). Corrupt civil servant loses properties worth N124.5M to Nigerian Government. Accessed on 7/August/2019 from: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/325482-corrupt-civil-servant-loses-properties-worth-n124-5m-to-nigerian-govt.html>
- Punch Editorial (March 8, 2017). Cleansing Nigeria's corrupt bureaucracy. Accessed online from: <https://punchng.com/cleansing-nigerias-corrupt-bureaucracy/amp/>
- Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project. (2019). Nigeria anti-corruption performance and assessment survey. SERAP publication.
- Stepenhurst, R., Johnston, N., Pellizo, R., (eds), (2006). *The Role of Parliament in Curbing Corruption*. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Suberu, R.T., (2009), "The travails of Nigeria's Anti-Corruption Crusade" in R.I. Rotberg (ed.), *Corruption, Global Security and World Order* Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Thai, K.V., (2001) "Public Procurement Re-Examined" *Journal of Public Procurement* 1 (1): 9-50.
- Tambuwal, A. (2013). Jonathan's government can't fight corruption; EFCC is very corrupt. Nigeria world news. Accessed online from: [www.nigeria-news-world-com](http://www.nigeria-news-world-com)
- Udama, R.A. (2013). Understanding corruption in Nigeria and its implication to Nigeria security and sustainable development. *Journals of Humanities and Social Science (JHSS)*, 10(1), pp. 60-73