



## **Addressing Unethical Issues in the Nigeria's Public Sphere**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Nigerian civil service and other institutions are poorly rated. Popular perceptions, pronouncements of high ranking public officials, reports of government-appointed commissions, observations by former top and serving civil servants as well as academic assessments are all unanimous in scoring civil servants and institutions very low in their professional conduct. Above all, government's dissatisfaction with the operations of the civil service is demonstrated by its penchant for setting up extra-ministerial bodies to implement some crucial or pet projects. Reference to professional standards has been identified as the key to the resolution of the problems facing the civil service. Curiously enough, administrative ethics is an issue that has currently engaged the attention of both academics and practitioners in Nigeria despite the perennial search for a more responsive and effective civil service. This study examines the ethical issues in public services sectors in Nigeria. Adopting the historical and literature review methods, this paper examines the historical antecedents of Civil Service in Nigeria; and reveals some specific unethical behaviour among the actors. All these come under the umbrella of corruption and indiscipline. The paper recommended some possible solutions that improve the Ethical standard in the public service.

**Keywords:** Civil service. unethical behavior, Code of conduct

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is important to state right from the onset that, for the purposes of this paper, Code of conduct, and Ethics will be used interchangeably with public accountability. Although the three concepts are clearly different in underscore a point, albeit a very important one, concerning the demands of public office or a position of public trust. Moreover, the requirements of one entail those of the others, and it is this entailment that provides the organic link between and among code of conduct, ethics and public accountability, and hence the decision to use them interchangeably here.

The Civil Service Hand book (FGN,2001) acts as a reference book and guide for all levels of personnel in the service. The scope of the hand book is quiet exhaustive, dealing with all salient features of the service, the role of the civil servant in government and the manner in which government business should be conducted in order to have an efficient and effective administrative system capable of winning public confidence in a chapter titled code of ethics in government business, the values of discipline, loyalty, honesty, courage, courtesy, cooperation, tact, industry, honesty, courage, courtesy, tact, , fairness and equity were emphasized. In a bid to have an ethically upright and accountable public service the hand book and the CSR are further complemented by the following documents the guidelines for appointment, promotion and discipline issued by the civil service commission, the code of conduct bureau whose mandate covers behavior of both political and public servants alike.

The fifth schedule of the 1999 federal constitution which contains codes to guide the conduct of officials with emphasis placed on how to avoid conflict of interests and finally the code of conduct tribunal whose responsibility is to bring to trial or prosecute all cases of infringement or non – compliance of the ethics governing the conduct of government business.

In view of the above, the issue of Ethics is beginning to gain ground in public organizations in the polity. For instance, in Nigeria, the public service sector is experiencing a myriad of problems ranging from lack of indiscipline among the Civil Service workers, misappropriation of Public funds, laziness at work, corrupt practices and their poor attitude towards their job and colleagues and moral values of the community. Commenting on the issue, Appleby (1952) posits that:

Moral performance begins in individual self –discipline on the part of officials, involving all that is meant by the word “Character”. But this is not enough. Moral performance also requires a systematic process which supports individual group judgment enriched by contributions from person variously equipped and concerned and differentiation in responsibilities to each other and to a whole public responsibility. The official, individually and organizationally, must be concerned to be beyond simple honesty to a devoted guardianship of the continuity reality of an ethical behavior and environment (Appleby,1952,p7).

Accountability/ Responsibly and Ethics in politics and administration have been debated since political and administrative theory began. Attempting to define the terms as well as controlling behaviour to achieve the desired ends has been difficult in all democratic nations. It is known that elected officials are held responsible through periodic elections; but bureaucrats who are not appointed, do not come under this control. Non-elected bureaucrats are not neutral executors of legislative policy and do in fact have enormous discretionary powers and responsibility in decision making which also creates opportunities for irresponsible action (Richardson and Baldwin, 1976 cited in Eme, Elekwa &Asogwa, 2014 ). Public office holders shy away from discussing Ethics /Accountability Responsibility and Transparency in the conduct of their actions in government positions.

Ethics are standards and rules that are meant to be guiding principles for any institution such as public institutions. With ethics in place there is every likelihood that every organization will want to stand by it with the assurance that a negation of ethical rules and standard shall be made to face full wrath of the law. If the two meanings of responsibility are accepted they may pull employees in two different directions. In the first, the employee looks upward and is accountable to the boss or to the policymaking groups. In the second, employees may be loyal to and identify with individuals and groups other than those in the hierarchy-outside pressure groups, professional groups of which they are a member and peer groups. As a result of these two tendencies, there is the very real possibility that an individual will be faced with and have to choose between conflicting interpretations of responsibility.

Davis (1990) has defined ethics as those morally permissible standards of conducts that each member of a group wants every other to follow them too. Thompson (1985) has defined administrative ethics as involving the application of moral principles to the conduct of official responsibilities and duties. Chapman (1988) on the other hand has defined civil service ethics as the application of moral standards in the course of official work.

The Nigeria public servants are mandated to abide by conduct rules otherwise known as public service rules which are in the nature of dos and don'ts. The rules are totally not enough to deal with cases of misconduct of public servants as they give numerous escape routes for the unscrupulous. It is therefore high time the rules are expanded to make them adequate and properly strengthen code of ethics and values for civil servants. Ethics and value are meant to prescribe standards of integrity and conduct that are to apply to public service. Code of ethics and values cover such issues as; public comment, release of information, integrative role of public services, and continuous improvement through professional socialization and team work.

Thus, ethics and values among other things should include; integrity, impartiality, service orientation and procedural fairness, open accountability and transparency, devotion to duty and exemplary conduct, etc. Ethics and values help give public servants a vision, a purpose and an idea to strive for in the course performing their duties. A high standard of ethics and values among public servants is necessary to set example for the lager populace (FGN,2001).

In view of the above, we can posit that there is a general unaccountability in all governmental institutions in Nigeria and this has led to wide spread corruption and related vices. Particularly of note is that the administration of the local governments has in recent time been given enormous financial responsibility and the incumbents of political offices appear to be having a field day. Public funds are expended for purpose other than what they are meant for, yet no one account to the people for the use of their money by those in authority. In fact, without accountability, cardinal principle of democratic governance is lost. Accountability is a sine-qua-non for democracy, and implies that public officers are made to give account of their stewardship to members of the public. This raises questions about the costs of misconduct on the part of those who have been entrusted with guarding public interest and resources. These costs are losses in trust and confidence in public institutions and losses in precious resources which were meant to support the economic and social development of nations and peoples (United Nations 2000).

### **Code of Conduct, Ethics, and Public Accountability: A Theoretical Discourse**

The origin of code of conduct and ethics can be located essentially on the need to ensure public accountability by public officials. This need, of course, is contingent upon the conception and treatment of public confidence, he must, of course, be a man of impeccable integrity, transparent honesty, and dogged discipline. Appointment to a position of public trust is a conferment of a high degree of responsibility matched with an equally high degree of obligation to discharge the duties of the office to the satisfaction of the people. In other words, a position of public trust is one of stewardship or trusteeship, which requires the rendering of account to the people, who are the real owners of the position. The incumbent opt public position is, therefore, obligated to ultimately, accountable for all his actions while in office to the public (Plamenatz, 1963).

Eme, et.al (2014) adds that “Responsibility” like the “public interest” is a nebulous concept; it is a basic democratic ideal, bound up with the idea of one’s obligation to some external body or standard of behavior (Presthus, 1975:410). Responsibility is also commonly used to denote the obligation of an individual to behave according to certain ethical and technical norms. In Public Administration responsibility has often had a negative connotation due to two obstacles, the difficulty of defining responsibility and developing techniques for monitoring and insuring responsible performance. According to Mosher (1968) cited in (Richardson and Baldwin, 1976) there are two types of responsibilities. He labels one objective responsibility and the other subjective or psychological responsibility. Richardson and Baldwin, (1976) went on to posit that the responsibility of a person or an organization to someone else, outside itself, for something or some kind of performance. This meaning of responsibility is quite similar to accountability” and refers to the hierarchical or legal locus of responsibility (Presthus, 1975).

In this sense one who accepts and executes directives from those in a position of legitimate authority is acting responsibly and a refusal to do so is irresponsible action, which exposes the individual to possible sanction. The latter focuses not upon to whom and for what one is responsible (according to law and the organization chart) but to whom and for what one feels responsible and behaves responsibly”. This meaning is oriented toward loyalty and identification rather than accountability (Richardson and Baldwin, 1967)

This notion of public accountability, emanating as it were from the need to scrutinize the ethics and conducts of public office holders, has dominated and continues to dominate discourses on political thought (Moore, 1966). The liberal political theorists believe that an ideal state is one which exists for and pursues the happiness and welfare of its entire people. John Locke (1980) was blunt in his assertion that the purpose of government is to protect the lives and properties of its citizens. Any government that fails to do this abdicates its responsibility and thus, loses the right to rule. Jeremy Bentham (1968) maintained that the primary purpose and, indeed, the test of any good government, is the promotion of greatest happiness for the greatest number of its citizens who are the ultimate sovereign.

John Locke (1980) and his fellow social contract theorists, believes that the state is a product of a contract, although the nature of the contract varies from one theorist to another. But John Locke was convinced that the relationship between the state (its agent inclusive) and the people is reciprocal. It is a quid pro quo situation, whereby the ruler is obligated to his own side of the contract in much the same

way the ruled are obligated. And as long as this reciprocal relationship exists, the ruler remains in his position and wields authority, while the ruled obey and support him. Of course, this reciprocity, with its attendant obligation, is the basis of law in any society. This is precisely because even in his reciprocal relationship, there is always a limit, which each group cannot exceed. And once some authority is confined to specific sphere, then rule of law becomes operational. After all, the real definition of dictatorship is absence of constraining laws to the actions of government (Benn and Peters, 1959).

It is this orientation that has given the general impression that any meaningful discussion of code of conduct, ethics and public accountability by public officers can only take place in a constitutional government or a democracy (Popper, 1962). While this position is very persuasive and theoretically sound and compelling, it should be noted that the issue of code of conduct, ethics or public accountability is more of a consequence of leadership disposition than of any inherent qualities of a democratic regime. In this conception, however, code of conduct ethics or public accountability is restricted to the world view of the leaders, indeed, his ontological reality. Any public office holder under his leadership remains accountable to him and the code of conduct for such an officer is his own decree.

The point being made here is that code of conduct, ethics or public accountability is relevant in any of regime. The major distinguishing characteristic is the locus of accountability. To whom is the officer accountable? Is it to the people as a whole or the ruler as a person? Even here the confusion is not removed. After all, the ruler believes that he has the mandate of the people and in fact his regime is levitated by the people; otherwise he would not be there. In conclusion, therefore, discussions on code of conduct, ethics or public accountability are relevant and important no matter the nature of the government in place.

#### **Code of Conduct and Ethics: Origin and Practice in Nigeria**

The Nigerian government over the decades has tried to stem this very ugly trend with the establishment of various agencies and bodies. In 1966 for instance, the Public Accounts Committee was set up to assist the legislature in monitoring the expenditure of public funds. In 1975 the Public Complaints Commission was set up largely because of the failure of the public account committee to address unethical behaviours of civil servants and politicians. Under

Murtala/Obasanjo military junta, there was a massive sacking of top public servants who are found to have enriched themselves and abused their office. Today, agencies like Civil Service Commission; the Independent Corrupt Practices commission (ICPC), SERVICOM and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), introduction of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) — a single account to manage government payments, adoption of the Whistle-Blowing Policy and the establishment of the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption, to combat the systemic theft of public resources and its pernicious effects on human rights and development have been empowered to investigate and prosecute all those engaged in questionable practices in Nigerian civil service in particular and the polity in general. In some cases these bodies and policies have been partially successful in achieving some of the objective of government as regards the public service accountability and ethics.

The origin and practice of code of conduct and ethics in Nigeria followed logically the imposition of British administration on, and the consequent application of British political philosophy to, Nigeria. Apart from imbibing large doses of liberal political thoughts, the imperatives of empire-building, constrained the British people to present to their subject people a deliberately constructed standard of behaviour and decorum befitting an imperial power (Achebe, 1966). Hence, the British colonial officers were specifically schooled to carry themselves with studied men and candour both in their private and public affairs. As would be expected these “dos” and donts”, which constituted the code of conduct and ethics of these officials, were embodied in the colonial civil service rules. The best known and respected of these rules were the General Orders (G.O) and the Financial Instructions (F.I.).

With increased tempo of political activities in Nigeria, the need for public accountability, code of conduct and ethics became more urgent. The 1954 Lyttleton Constitution and the subsequent Nigerian constitutions contained provisions on these. The adoption of the parliamentary or cabinet system of

government encouraged the use of techniques for ensuring control and accountability in the British parliamentary system, such as the Question time, debates, and public Accounts Committee (PAC) (Carter, 1966). Unfortunately, like most concepts copied by Nigerians, these ones did not prove effective. In a situation where the Nigerian parliamentarians recorded annual session of 30 days as compared to 160 days for their British counterparts, how could the question time, debates and public accounts committee be effective? (Schwartz,1966). With particular reference to the public account committee, its ineffectiveness emanated from the insistence of the ruling political party to provide its chairman, the lackadaisical attitude of most members and, of course, the uncooperative attitude of the civil servants.

The Ad-Hoc constitutional conference convened by the then Head of state, General Yakubu Gowon (rtd) in 1966, provided another milestone in the appreciation of code conduct and public accountability in Nigeria. The Late Chief Obafemi Awolowo, a prominent member of that conference, argued persuasively for the inclusion of rules of discipline for ministers, members of commissions, boards, corporations and other persons holding positions of public trust (Kirk-Green, 19...). These rules he called code of conduct. It would appear that the late sage was far ahead of his contemporaries, for although his suggestions were not taken in 1966, ten years later, in 1976, they formed the basis for the activities of the sub-committee on National objectives and public accountability.

The sub-committee on National Objectives and Public Accountability of the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) convened by the then head of state, General Murtala Mohammed, in 1976, identified three major causes of lack of public accountability in Nigeria as follows:

- 1) The conditions of underdevelopment, with the primacy of politics in Nigeria.
- 2) The inability of Nigerian governments to adopt an appropriate ideology to guide the Nigerian state, and
- 3) Unnecessary emphasis, in previous Nigerian constitutions, on the power and rights, rather than on duties and obligations of public office holders (the CDC, 1976).

As part of solution to these problems, future Nigerian constitutions should, among other things:

- i) Declare and uphold the following beliefs (which remind us of the position of John Locke) that the people are the source of all power entrusted to government; that the government is responsible and accountable to the people; that the prime purpose of establishing government is to promote the welfare of the people;
- ii) Establish a code of conduct and ethics to be built and incorporated into the constitution;
- iii) Establish a code of conduct bureau to monitor compliance, with sanctions for non-compliance or breach of the code of conduct.

Surprisingly, although most of the recommendations of the sub-committee were accepted as part of the “decision” of the Constitution drafting Committee (CDC), the government rejected the recommendation that the code of conduct and the machinery for its implementation be incorporated in the main body of the constitution. Instead, it was included as an addendum or the fifth schedule to the constitution (the constitution, 1979).

The main reason given by the government for this action is very revealing and interesting. According to the government, “this was a better arrangement in order not to encumber the constitution unnecessarily and forecast of amendment”. Accordingly, the code of conduct was incorporated in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979 as the fifth schedule. This schedule provided for the establishment of a code of conduct Bureau.

The aims and objectives of the Bureau are: To establish and maintain a high standard of morality in the conduct of government business, and to ensure that the actions and behaviour of public officers conform to the highest standard of public morality and accountability”. Given these aims and objectives of the Bureau, the subsequent Nigerian governments had taken steps to actualize them. Some of these practical steps included, Buhari’s “war against indiscipline” and Babangida’s Mass Mobilization for Self-Reliance, Economic Recovery and Social Justice (MAMSER).

### **Code of Conduct and Ethics for Public Officers**

Arising from the establishment of a Code Conduct Bureau, a corpus of “don’ts” given to public officers, both elected and non-elected, including the following:

- i. A public officer should not put himself in a position where his personal interests should conflict with his official duties and responsibilities.
- ii. A public officer should not receive or be paid emoluments for two public offices at the same time, nor should he engage himself or participate in the management or running of private service.
- iii. A retired public officer should not accept more than one remunerative position as chairman, director, or employee of a company owned or controlled by the government or public authority, or receives any other remuneration from public funds in addition to his pension and the emolument of such one remunerative position.
- iv. A public officer should not accept gifts or benefits in kind for himself or for any other person on account of anything he has done or omitted to do in the discharge of his duties. Receipt by a public officer of any gift or benefit from commercial firms, business enterprises or people who have contract with the government should not be allowed. A public officer can only accept personal gifts or benefits from relatives or personal friends to such extent and on such occasions as are recognized by custom. However, gifts or donations given to a public officer on any public or ceremonial occasion should be treated as gifts or donations given to the appropriate institution represented by the public officer, and in such an occasion, their acceptance does not contravene any code of conduct.
- v. Public officers heading public institutions are not allowed to take loans from anybody except the government or its agencies, a bank, building society or any other financial institution recognized by law. They should not accept any benefit of whatever nature from any company, contractor or businessman, or a representative or agent of a person.
- vi. No person should offer a public officer any property, gift or benefit of any kind as an inducement or bribe for the granting of any favour or the discharge of his official duties.
- vii. A public officer should not do or direct to be done, in abuse of his office, any arbitrary act prejudicial to the rights of any other person knowing that such act is unlawful or contrary to any government policy.
- viii. A public officer should not be a member or participate in any society the membership of which is incompatible with the functions or dignity of his office.
- ix. Every public officer shall, within three months after assuming office, and thereafter at the end of every four years and at the end of his term of office, declare all his assets, properties and liabilities and those of his wife and unmarried children under the age of twenty one.
- x. Any allegation that a public officer has committed a breach of the code of conduct shall be reported to the Code of Conduct Bureau.
- xi. A public officer who breaches this code of conduct through a nominee, trustee or other agent should be considered to have committed the breach himself (FGN, 1979).

### **Costs of Unethical Behaviours such as Corruption in Nigeria**

Adamolekun (2008) posits that accountability is closely linked with the notion of responsibility, with answerability at the hub of it. To Stapenhurst and O’Brien, accountability exists when there is a relationship with an individual or body, and the performance of tasks or functions by that individual or body, are subject to another’s oversight, direction or request that they provide information or justification for their actions. These scholars equate accountability with answerability and enforcement, with the former referring to the obligation of government, its agencies and public officials to provide information about their decisions and actions and to justify them to the public and those institutions of accountability tasked with providing oversight. Enforcement, on the other hand, suggests that the public or the institution responsible for accountability can sanction the offending party or remedy the contravening behaviour. Along this line, Aliyu (2010) first described accountability as a critical ingredient and requisite

of democracy and sustainable partnership between government and the citizens, and secondly as an obligation to answer for a responsibility conferred, which makes it simply answerability.

Aliyu also went further to emphasize that accountability is ethic-driven behaviour in line with defined code of conduct that recognizes the right of the citizens to be informed, consulted and allowed to make inputs in not only decision-making but also implementation of decisions taken. Aliyu smoothed up by placing emphasis on government's being open and transparent in pursuing defined objectives by optimally using resources to achieve those objectives for the common good and secondly government taking responsibility for successes and failures within the limits of available resources as part of accountability commitment and where there are proven cases of wrong doing, leaders must not shy away from application of the appropriate sanctions. It is the abandonment of the sense of accountability that creates the fertile ground and climate in which unethical behaviour thrives (Wamalwa, 1993). This rests on the fact that the concept of accountability grows from the laid down procedures and sanctions for their enforcement. By extension, for one to be accountable for something, he must have responsibility and the associated authority. This takes us to the changes that can pose challenges to accountability systems.

Ethics is synonymous with morality (Ezeani, 2006). For Rohr J (1976), it is "a system of moral principles" governing or influencing a person's behaviour (Victor, 2014). This corroborates the assertion credited to Adamolekun (1974) that the term accountability is closely linked with the notion of responsibility, and that it is synonymous in a way with answerability. To Stapenhurst and O'Brien, accountability exists when there is a relationship with an individual or body, and the performance of tasks or functions by that individual or body, are subject to another's oversight, direction or request that they provide information or justification for their actions. According to them, the concept of accountability involves two distinct stages: answerability and enforcement, with answerability referring to the obligation of government, its agencies and public officials to provide information about their decisions and actions and to justify them to the public and those institutions of accountability tasked with providing oversight. Enforcement, on the other hand, suggests that the public or the institution responsible for accountability can sanction the offending party or remedy the contravening behaviour. Along this line, Aliyu (2010) first described accountability as a critical ingredient and requisite of democracy and sustainable partnership between government and the citizens, and secondly as an obligation to answer for a responsibility conferred, which makes it simply answerability. Aliyu also went further to emphasize that accountability is ethic-driven behaviour in line with defined code of conduct that recognizes the right of the citizens to be informed, consulted and allowed to make inputs in not only decision-making but also implementation of decisions taken.

Ethics is synonymous with morality (Ezeani, 2006). For Walking (1956) it is "a system of moral principles" governing or influencing a person's behaviour. From the consequentialism's stand point, the relegation of every ethical standard or questions of morality will inevitably produce corruption and corrupt practices in public organizations thus hindering sustainable development and quality of service delivered to the government.

The effects of ethical erosion and criminal practices in the public sector is unsupportable and will be discusses below;

The populace expect government and her representatives to be ethically just as they expect from any other kind of business (Ezeani, 2006:385). Thus, Bonzek (1991), observed that today's public managers face increasingly complex ethical dilemma, often having to weigh personal and professional values against current public opinion and the law. Their personal value of giving a job to an unqualified relative may conflict with the professional value of employing a qualified applicant who is not related to the public manager. Ethics in the Nigerian Public Service can be briefly summarized into impartiality, meritocracy, honesty, transparency, loyalty, discipline, courtesy, etc. In the Public sector, the acceptance of bribes and secret profits, and the use of spare time are regulated by statute. The fifth schedule of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides that a public officer must not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflicts with his duties and responsibilities. A public officer must not ask for or accept any property or benefits of any kind for himself or any other person on account of anything done or omitted to be done by him in the discharge of his duties (FGN, 1999).

Employment into the Federal Public Service is to be based on the principle of meritocracy and is to reflect the federal character principle. More so, promotion is based on merit and performance. Every recruited worker must be medically examined to determine his physical fitness to do the job for which he is employed and the employer must provide transport to the place of employment. With the recent emphasis on result oriented public service, public servants are ethically expected to treat the public (customers) with courtesy and services rendered in a timely, qualitative and satisfactory manner. Despite the above ethical principles, the Nigeria public service have come to be associated with corruption, inefficiency and ineffectiveness thus calling for a mechanism of curbing the tide of corrupt practices. The overall effects of corruption especially on developing societies with weak socio-economic and political base such as Africa can be enormous and debilitating. As Al Gore noted:

Corruption accelerates crimes, hints investments, stalls growth, bleeds the national budget, and worst of all undermines our faith in freedom. Corruption is an enemy of democracy, for democracy lives on trust, and corruption destroyed our trust (Ngunu, 1999:19).

James Wolfenshon, the former President of the World Bank, sums up in clear and concrete terms the devastating effects of corruption when he said:

In country after country, it is the people who are demanding action on this issue. They know that corruption diverts resources from the poor to the rich, increases the cost of running businesses, distorts public expenditures and deters investors. They also know that it erodes the constituency of aid and humanitarian relief. And we all know that this is a major barrier to just and equitable development. Corruption is a problem that all country has to confront solutions however, can only be home grown. National leaders need to take stand. And civil society plays a key role as well (The Guardian, On Sunday, 1998:14).

While there may be some slight variations as to what truly constitutes corruption, it is generally agreed that corruption involves misuse of a position of trust and that it is motivated by direct or indirect gain to suspected perpetrators, their relatives or friends. Moreover, whereas some early scholars in the field such as (Nye,1967, Leff,1964 & Huntington,1968) argued that corruption in poor economies like Nigeria can be 'welfare enhancing', empirical evidence suggests that corruption is far worse than this description, as it invariably impedes sustainable development, and thus disproportionately affects the economically and socially vulnerable, weakens the rule of law, erodes public trust in government, and permeates (and undermines) critical institutions of the state. Corruption can be harmful across national borders-regionally and internationally-and has been stated to undermine 'economic development and political stability [of countries] while also being a threat to international peace and prosperity, as well as facilitating drug-trafficking, money laundering, and other international criminal activity'.

In the light of globalisation and advanced technology, the consequences of corruption in one country are now easily felt continentally and beyond. Underdevelopment, lack of opportunities, violence, and insecurity in one country can bring about forced migration (including economic migrants) and consequently inflows of refugees and mercenaries to other parts of the region. Economic and social migrants may for instance constitute a strain on the resources of poor neighbouring countries, and sometimes lead to rivalry with local population, resentment, violent competition for resources, and ultimately, insecurity. Furthermore, corrupt immigration and customs' officials make countries' borders porous and easily accessible by, for example, drug traffickers and 'terrorists', thereby not only endangering the security and well-being of individual countries in the region, but also foreign countries and potentially international peace.(SERAP, 2019).

Ruzindana (1998:96) adds that:

Corruption has led to bad roads and decaying infrastructure, inadequate medical services, poor schools and falling education standards, and the disappearance of foreign aid and foreign loans and if entire projects without a trace (or their delayed),



completion, leading to high costs). Corruption has meant that fewer imported goods enter the country than were paid for; foreign exchange earned from exports is not repatriated; national assets are run down and ruined; production capacity in industry, agriculture, and services has been reduced; and repair of buildings, equipment, vehicles; and physical and social infrastructure have been paid for repeatedly but never performed.

Specifically, the effects of corruption on African countries as articulated by Eme & Ezeibe(2012,p.82) and Nwoye (2000:132-139) include the underlisted:

1. Low international esteem and confidence.
2. Resource mismanagement, misplacement and diversion.
3. Increase the cost of doing business.
4. Corruption distorts and impedes public expenditure.
5. Corruption defers foreign investment and creates risky investment climate.
6. Distorts and perverts legal and administrative rules and procedures.
7. Impedes foreign humanitarian and assistance.
8. Impedes egalitarianism and social justice
9. Perpetuates other development problems
10. Impedes democratic aspirations and popular participation.
11. Fuels political conflict and incessant struggles for power.
12. Weakens the moral and social fabric of the society.
13. Undermines credibility and legitimacy of African governments externally and internally.

The state of corruption in Nigeria is not only disastrous but has far-reaching implications on the survival of the nation. In spite of portraying the country in a bad image internationally, foreign investors who would have come to contribute in industrializing the country are scared away because of lack of confidence and trust on Nigerians, due to prevailing corruption.

Ikejiani-Clark (1995) summarized the implications of corruption on Nigeria's economic development thus:

1. Corruption slows down the pace of economic development through manipulation of funds for projects.
2. Corruption diverts energy into lobbying, fiddling etc, resulting in inappropriate criteria for arriving at decisions.
3. Corruption leads to non-achievement of goals
4. It diverts resources from public purposes to private ones
5. It weakens public bureaucracy.
6. Corruption exerts a corrupting influence on other members of the administrative apparatus.
7. Corruption lowers respect for authority.
8. Corruption dilute individual and group commitment to national values and civil responsibilities
9. Corruption endangers national security, internally and externally, e.g (a) officials selling state secrets or bargaining with foreign bodies on terms detrimental to Nigeria, and (b) member of the police force taking bribes to subvert justice.
10. Corruption destroys or weakens efficiency and effectiveness of public services (both civil and the corporations
11. Corruption detracts from the sovereignty of Nigeria and its international standing especially when foreigners distrust Nigerians nationally for act that are unspeakable.
12. Corruption distorts the functioning of the economy because it heads and government officials to take actions that are not in the general interest.
13. Corruption detracts government from giving priority to the areas of income and social inequality, poverty, malnutrition and other areas of need.

14. The political-economic consequences of corrupt practice is that it concentrates wealth in fewer hands and hence widens the gap between the rich and the poor creating discontent among people.
15. Corruption distorts political participation, stultifies the development of strong political institution and weakens the national economic base.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Our findings in the body of literature vividly reveal that Nigerian civil servants, like other employees in the public sector, are poorly remunerated. This has led to poor motivation and has been rightly identified as the root of unethical conduct. The first step in turning around the fortunes of the Nigerian civil service therefore lies in motivating its staff. As a matter of fact, there is unanimity of opinion among scholars that the greatest problem facing the civil service today is poor motivation.

Motivation is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to translate principles and philosophies into ethical behaviour among Nigerian civil servants and politicians. For one, motivation is not a magic wand that will automatically bring about a re-orientation in the civil service. Old habits die hard. Secondly, past experiences like the Udoji awards of 1974 have shown that jumbo pay is hardly sufficient to make civil servants conform to rules of conduct. There is therefore the need to complement motivation with the establishment of an effective mechanism of compliance. In order to redress this problem, we advocate the establishment of a special administrative Court to try those found guilty of violating ethical rules and laws.

At the policy level, there has been an over-reliance on the existing plethora of rules and regulations in place to guide the conduct of civil servants and politicians. In addition, many other *ad hoc* measures have been taken to sensitize civil servants to ethical considerations. This is where the impositions of heavy punishment on both individuals and organizations that breach business and societal ethics is relevant. The sanction must be heavy and prompt so as to serve as a deterrent to other offenders. If offenders are not punished, it tends to encourage other people who have potentials in crime committing. Strict sanction could be sufficient to discourage and curb unethical behaviour and make people obey instructions, customs or laws. Strict sanctions was exemplified during the Buhari/Idiagbon regime 1983-1985 in Nigeria, people were fearful of breaking laws, rules and regulations among others that were designed for the good of all (Asobie,2001, Ayida, 1987).

Massive public service education, training and development in schools, colleges and universities and offices are significant. Ethics and anti-corrupt programmes, education and curriculum should be made compulsory subject cutting across all the various disciplines. Rewarding excellence will equally add value to ethical education. Media campaigns can encourage action against un-ethical behavior and corruption.

### CONCLUSION

Ethics and values, code of conduct and accountability in the public service have been espoused. To behave ethically implies that public servants and politicians should behave in a manner that is consistent with what is generally considered to be right or moral. They are morally enjoined to tell the truth, keep to their words, respect the people and their property, and always observe the provisions of the law in the discharge of their official duties.

Deriving from the above, it should be realized that accountability is essential for the efficient functioning of the public services especially as it is the primary agency for the implementation of government accountability programmes.

In conclusion, we hold that the codes of conduct and ethics public officers are more or less the same as those for other private officers. The only difference lies more in the nature, content, degree and level of their operations. And in the final analysis the three positions demand absolute loyalty and commitment to the personal aspiration and vision of the boss and the state.

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