
Fraud and Other Financial Crimes Prevention: The Legal and Regulatory Frame Work Versus Zero Tolerance Fraud in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria was ranked as the most corrupt nation among 54 nations studied in 1996 by a Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of Transparency International. The paper is a non empirical assessment of the legal provisions of some of the prominent fraud prevention legislations in Nigeria using some selected examples from the Nigeria's fraud case file with the view of ascertaining the impact of these legislations in the achievement of zero – tolerance fraud in Nigeria. The paper reveals that corruption has eaten so deep into the fabric of the society and the battle against corruption being prosecuted by men who are not morally qualified to lead the crusade. The anti-corruption agencies are only allowed to operate within visible boundaries imposed by the government of the day. The paper concludes that corruption has an inherent capacity within its operational framework that sustains it and gives it life in perpetuity; anti-corruption laws and agencies have not been allowed to take their cause as a result of deeply rooted socio-economic collapse of the system. As a result, the paper recommended a mechanism for the eradication and transformation of the culture and legacy of corruption; the establishment of a National Integrity System and a national value re-orientation program; and the reinforcement of the legal and regulatory framework.

Keywords: Fraud, Financial Crimes, Corruption, Legal and Regulatory Framework, Zero-Tolerance to Fraud, Detection, Prevention

Background of the Study

Fraud and other financial crimes constitute a very serious threat to the survival of the Nigerian nation state. It is very widespread and manifests itself in virtually all aspects of national life. The nation, organizations and individuals have lost huge funds to fraudulent practices (AbdulRasheed *et al.*, 2012). A 1996 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of Transparency International ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation among 54 nations studied, with Pakistan as a close second. Indeed, three times in 1996, 1997 and 2000, Nigeria earned the dubious honour of being the most corrupt nation on Planet Earth; and in four other instances was placed among the most corrupt five economies – in 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003. The Knell seemed to have sounded: our desperate national malady needs a radical remedy (Osisioma, 2013: 7-8).

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Nigerians view fraud with astonishment considering the divesting effect, uncontrollable increasing trend and magnitude in our business set – ups and this is daily read in our headlines. In recent times, the frequency of occurrence of frauds and fraudulent practices in almost all non – banking establishments, companies, government establishments, ministries, schools, etc is unimaginable. The sporadic rate of spread in banks and even the apex bank (Central Bank of Nigeria) is enough warning signals of imminent doom for the indispensable financial sector of the economy. The one biggest cause is insider abuse. This ranges from disloyalty and fraudulent activities by staff all the way up to the board level (Projectstoc.com 2014).

To fight, reduce, alleviate and if possible eliminate the occurrence and incidences of fraud in the country, several legislations have been put in place by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The most popular and prominent among them are (Owolabi, 2010:241):

- Companies and Allied Matters Decree (CAMD) No. 19, 1990
- Bank Employees, etc (Declaration of Asset) Act, 1990
- National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Act, 1990
- Special Tribunal (Miscellaneous Offences) Act, 1990
- The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Decree No. 24 of 1995
- Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) Act, 2004
- Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation Decree (1999)
- Criminal Code Act (CAP C38) – 1st June, 1961
- Anti – Corruption Law (ICPC) – 13th June, 2000
- Money Laundering Act (CAP M18) – 28th February, 1995.

But what is fraud and what constitute financial crimes? Osioma (2013) laments that, the concept of fraud is, itself chaotic. The cause is sometimes confused with effect (Bello, 2001) and defining fraud is as difficult as identifying it. Different scholars have defined fraud, forgeries and such other related crimes in various ways. Fagbami (1989) sees fraud as “the act of depriving a person dishonestly of something which is his or something to which he is or would or might but for the perpetration of fraud, be entitled”. Adewumi (1986) views fraud as a conscious premeditated action of a person or group of persons with the intention of altering the truth or fact for selfish personal monetary gain.

In the words of Apaa (1993:2), fraud is “all offences against ethical ... practices”. To Apaa, it includes “embezzlement, theft or attempt to steal or acts of unlawfully obtaining, missing or harming the assets or reducing the liabilities of banks”. Nwankwo (1991), also opined that fraud occurs when a person of trust and responsibility, in defiance of norms, breaks rule to advance his personal interests at the expense of the public

interest, which he has been entrusted to guide and protect. It occurs when a person through trickery or highly intelligent cunning ways, gain an advantage he could not otherwise have gained through lawful, just or normal process. From the aforementioned definitions of fraud, it is clear that fraud is generic in nature.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, fraud has stultified growth and national development, subverted the nation's values and norms, generated a culture of illegality and impunity in the public service, and frittered away the promise of the nation's future. It has caused decay and dereliction within the infrastructure of government and the society in physical, social and human terms. Corruption has been responsible for the instability of successive governments since the First Republic. Every coup since then has been in the name of stamping out the disease called corruption. The situation has continued to worsen with the country's image taking a serious bashing, as our beloved country began to feature on top of every corruption index.

From 1961 to date, several legislations have been put in place by the Federal Government of Nigeria to ensure that these impediments are put on halt. What are these legislations? To what extent do the provisions in these legislations cover the multifarious ways through which fraud is committed? Are these laws ever implemented? If yes, to what extent has the implementation of these legislations help in fraud detection and prevention in the country? The main thrust of this paper therefore is to give a snapshot of the legal provisions of some of the prominent fraud prevention legislations in Nigeria and to highlight some selected examples from the Nigeria's fraud case file with the view of ascertaining the impact of these legislations in the achievement of zero – tolerance fraud in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

As already mentioned, the concept of fraud is itself chaotic, the cause sometimes confused with effect and defining it is as difficult as identifying it. Osioma (2013) narrates that in the celebrated case of *Wells V Zenz*, fraud was defined as a generic term which embraces all the multifarious means which human ingenuity can devise and are resorted to by one individual to get any advantage over another. It includes all surprise, trick, cunning, dissembling and unfair ways by which another is deceived. Fraud covers a plethora of corporate crimes, like embezzlement, larceny, theft, misappropriation of assets, among others. Penny (2002) simply explains fraud as an illicit financial gain for the fraudster or loss for the victim, and deception. The terms fraud, theft, corruption and embezzlement are used interchangeably in the study.

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For purposes of clarification, Osisioma gives further insights to the following:

- **Embezzlement:** This describes a process whereby a perpetrator who has fiduciary duty to care for and protect a property, then converts it to his personal use. It is usually theft from an employer by an employee, and involves a breach of fiduciary duty. Three elements are involved here: there must be a relationship of employment or agency, the asset embezzled must have been possessed by the fraudster by virtue of that relationship, and there must be an intentional and fraudulent appropriation or conversion of the asset.
- **Conversion** is the unauthorized assumption and exercise of the right of ownership over goods or personal chattels belonging to another, to the exclusion of the owner's rights. The elements are again three: absence of authorization from the rightful owner of the asset, the exercise of dominion and control and rights of ownership over the property, and exclusion of the rights of the true owner.
- **Corruption** is an act of an official or fiduciary person who unlawfully and wrongfully uses his position or character to procure some benefit for himself or for another person, contrary to the duty and the rights of others. It is the giving and receiving of something of value (for example, money, sex, gifts, etc,) whether demanded or not, to influence the receiver's action favourably toward the giver. The different forms of corruption include bribery and extortion, fraud and embezzlement; illegal use of public assets for private gains, over – and under – invoicing; payment for goods not supplied or services not rendered (“air supply”), under – payment of taxes and duties on exports and imports through false invoicing or other declarations, purchase of goods at inflated prices; misappropriation of assets; court decisions awarding monetary damages well in excess of any injury suffered, removal of documents or even whole case files, nepotism and patronage (Ruzindana, 1998).

The Legal and Regulatory Framework for Fraud Prevention in Nigeria

The most popular and prominent legislations for fraud prevention promulgated in Nigeria by the Federal Government are: The Companies and Allied Matter Decree (CAMD) No. 19 of 1990, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) Act of 1990, Bank Employees (Declaration of Asset) Act of 1990, Special Tribunal (Miscellaneous Offences) Act of 1990, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Decree No. 24 of 1995, and the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation Decree No. 22 of 1998. Others are the Banks and Other Financial Institutions Decree (BOFID) of 1999, the

Criminal Code Act (CAP 38) June, 2000 and the Money Laundering Act (CAP M18) of 28th February, 1995 among others.

Very brief snapshots of relevant sections of fraud prevention laws are hereunder highlighted for three anti corruption agencies to show the strengths of those laws in fighting corruption in the country. They are:

a) Economic and Finance Crime Commission (EFCC) Act, 2004

The EFCC Act gave full rights to the commission to:

- In section 6, subsection (b) coordinate and enforce all financial crimes including advance fee fraud, money laundering, counterfeiting, illegal charge transfers, future market fraud, fraudulent encashment of negotiable instruments, computer credit card fraud, contract scam, etc.
- In section 6, sub section d, to adopt measures for identifying, tracing, freezing, confiscating or seizing proceeds derived from terrorist activities, economic and financial crime related offences or the properties the value of which corresponds to such and
- In section 6, sub section h to examine and investigate all reported cases of economic financial crimes with a view to identifying individuals, corporate bodies or groups involved (FRN, 2004).

Section 7 (1) of the EFCC Act gives the commission the special powers to: (a) cause investigations to be conducted as to whether any person, corporate body or organization has committed an offence under this Act or other law relating to economic and financial crimes; (b) cause investigations to be conducted into the properties of any person if it appears that the properties are not justified by source of income. Section 7(2) also empowers the commission to coordinate the enforcement of the provisions of:

- i. The money laundering Act 2004; 2003 No. 7, 1995;
- ii. The Advance Fee Fraud and other Related offences Act 1995;
- iii. The failed Banks (Recovery of Debt and Financial Malpractices in Banks) Act, as amended;
- iv. The Banks and other Financial Institutions Act 1991, as amended;
- v. Miscellaneous offences Act; and
- vi. Any other law or regulation relating to economic and financial crimes, including the criminal code and Panel code (FRN, EFCC Act, 2004: Sections 6(7)).

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b) Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000

On Tuesday, 13th June, 2000, the anti corruption law (2000) was signed into law by President Olusegun Obasanjo. This law gives the ICPC the powers to, in Part 4, sections 27 – 42 investigate, search, seize and arrest suspected offenders in cases relating to gratification, concealing offences relating to corruption, fraudulent acquisition and receipt of property, fraudulent postal system transactions, bribery, conspiracy, etc (FRN, Anti – corruption law, 2000: Part 4, sections 27 – 42).

c) Money Laundering Act (CAP M18) of 1995

On 28th February, 1995 the money laundering Act was enacted to make provisions for and the prevention punishment of money laundering, among other things. The Act was enacted to regulate over – the – counter exchange transactions and empower the NDLEA to place surveillance on bank accounts. In other words, the Act's principal objective is the prevention of money laundering through monitoring of limits of banks' cash payments or lodgments -local and international (FRN, MLA, Part 1, sections 1 and 2), the regulation of over – the counter exchange transactions (FRN, MLA, Part 1, section 3) and Casino business operations (FRN, MLA, Part 1, section 4), among others.

d) Criminal Code Act (CAP "C38") of 1961

On 1st June, 1961, the Federal Government enacted the criminal code Act (CAPC 38). The provisions contained in the code of criminal law set forth in the schedule to this Act "shall except to the extent specified in subsection (2) of this section, be state laws with respect to the several matters therein dealt with". Of specific interests to this study are Chapter 12 (corruption and abuse of office) and Chapter 40 (frauds by trustees and officers of companies and corporations: False Accounting).

Chapter 12, section 98 of the Act states that: any public official who corruptly asks for, receives or obtains any property or benefit of any kind for himself or any other person; or (b) anything already done to omit or any favor or disfavor already shown to any person, by himself in the discharge of his official duties or in relation to any matter connected with a function, affairs or business of a government department, public body etc which he is serving as a public official is guilty of the felony of official corruption and is liable to imprisonment for seven (7) years".

Also, Chapter 40, Section 434 stipulates that "any person who, being a trustee of any property, destroys the property with intent to

defraud, or converts the property to any use not authorized by the trust, is guilty of a felony, and is liable to imprisonment for seven years (FRN, CC Act – CAP “C38”, 1961: Chapters 12 & 40).

Impact of the Legal and Regulatory Framework on Zero – Tolerance Fraud

The challenge of fraud and corruption in Nigeria, and the impact of the various Acts, Commissions and other scheduled bodies enacted by law to fight corruption can best be illustrated by a review of some selected examples from Nigeria’s case file as follows (Osisioma, 2013: 4 – 7):

Case 1: The MD/CEO of a mega bank in Nigeria, in the wake of reforms that swept through the nation’s banking sector, was found to have violated her trust as banker. She was arraigned for granting credit facilities in the sum of \$20 million to a firm, well beyond her credit approval limits as laid down by the bank. Subsequent investigations revealed that under her watch, the bank’s monthly returns to the regulatory authority were far from accurate. Furthermore, she extended a \$2 billion credit without adequate security to yet another firm. It was found that she had granted credit facilities to the tune of ₦747 billion, with more than half going to her family and proxies. Assets in excess of ₦1 trillion (\$6.5 billion) were traceable to her, with properties and shares in companies across Nigeria, Dubai, South Africa, England and the USA. She held over a billion shares of her own bank and nearly ₦1.5 billion shares in top of the line banks and corporate firms.

She entered a plea bargain with EFCC at her trial and was sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment which is to run concurrently for six months without the option of fine, for abuse of office and mismanagement of depositors’ funds. She was also to forfeit assets worth \$191 billion comprising 94 choice properties across the world and choice bank and company shares (Editorial, 2010, This Day, October, March 11)

Case 2: The Governor in one of Nigeria’s oil rich States in 1999 who under Nigerian laws, should never have risen that far having been convicted in 1991 in London and fined for stealing from his employer; and in 1992 for possession of a stolen credit card on which he had run up huge bills. However, those convictions did not stop him from being appointed a Consultant in Public Policy and Implementation in 1994 to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In 1995, he was again convicted for negligent conduct and criminal breach of trust, and was therefore unfit for public office. After eight years in office as State Governor, he was arraigned on a 170 count charge of corruption and abuse of office. The Nigerian judicial system absolved him of all wrong doing, and discharged and acquitted him.

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It took a Crown Court in Southwark, London to convict this Governor on charges of false age declaration, corruption, embezzlement and money laundering amounting to a sum in excess of \$250 million (40 billion). The accused pleaded guilty to the same charges which the Nigerian courts failed to pin down against him; and in related cases, his wife, his mistress, his sister and his lawyer were all sentenced to various terms. This conviction immediately raises serious questions as to Nigeria's judicial system, law enforcement apparatus, the screening process of the regulatory authorities, the efficiency of the party structure, and the quality of the political class (Editorial, 2012, The Guardian, March 11, pp16, 61).

Case 3: In another case still awaiting trial, the State Police Command in one of Nigeria's Southern States unearthed quite a can of worms. It was discovered that some police officers attached to the department responsible for the payment of salaries, and the civilians attached to the audit department, in collaboration with some bank officials, defrauded the Command of an estimated ~~N~~49.54 billion over an eight – year period. The fraud was perpetrated through bloating of the payroll with fictitious names, embezzlement of burial expenses for late officers, and withholding of touring allowances and other charges released to the Command. Some of the officers were found paying themselves senior officers' salaries, whereas they were junior officers. For instance, a Corporal paid himself the salary of a Deputy Superintendent. In one month, April 2011, the fraud syndicate stole some ~~N~~70 million; over six months, the sum had risen to ~~N~~309.63 million; and by the end of the year, ~~N~~619 million (Onwuke, D., 2012).

Case 4: A Federal-Government owned Refinery and petro-chemical Company was experiencing several hiccups in its operations and ceaseless breakdowns, in spite of huge sums of money spent (~~N~~15 billion in 1993) on its Turn-Around Maintenance (TAM). An investigative team was appointed to find out what was amiss. The team discovered that the funds released by government for the TAM, were received and paid into a dedicated account, not the Central bank; and the interests paid on the deposits were withdrawn and transferred into private accounts. The original manufacturers were sidelined in the TAM, and a completely different firm was engaged to execute the task with sub-standard spares and poor quality results. Payments to the foreign experts were made through Letters of Credit obtained from a non-existent bank; and the regulator of the financial system never issued any queries but rather continued to release foreign exchange.

The indigenous engineers certified that the TAM was duly and properly executed justifying that further payments be made, even when the real

contractors were yet to commence work, or even arrive Nigeria on any occasion. The internal audit/quality assurance unit of the Refinery and its supervising agency were fully in the know of the anomaly, yet they continued to certify that nothing was wrong.

The Report of the Investigating Team was submitted to the Presidency at the time; it was ignored and no action was taken. When a new President assumed office, he set up a Committee to study the Report. The Committee undermined the Report and watered down its main submissions. Finally, a second Committee was set up by the President to put in place the modalities for implementing the watered down Report. They worked until the Report and its findings disappeared from public view and national significance.

Case 5: At the end of his eight year tenure, an elected Governor in a Nigeria was arraigned for corrupt enrichment while in office. He quickly entered a plea bargain, and opted to pay a fine of ₦3.5 million in lieu of imprisonment. Meanwhile, fresh facts are emerging of the extent of the fraud that attended his days in Government house. A team of forensic accountants retained to probe some contracts of Mr. Lionel's term, disclosed some embarrassing facts (Okafor, 2012, Ogbodo, 2012:61 & Anuche, 2012):

- Under Governor's watch, the State government incurred a capital expenditure of ₦100 billion on roads. An in-depth inquiry showed that out of the 50 contractors listed in the road construction and rehabilitation projects, 10 are non-existent, 4 had never ever worked for the State Government, 6 did not work for the Government in the period under review, 20 stoutly refuted the length of roads ascribed to their company, and 5 companies did not bother to respond. Only 5 companies in which the family of the Governor had controlling shares accepted all the responsibilities ascribed to them.
- The accountants further discovered that the bill of quantities revealed extensive over-valuation of the construction materials, to the tune of 412%. After the netting of all costs, the firm of forensic accountants came to the conclusion that out of a capital expenditure of ₦100 billion on roads, the government misappropriated a total of ₦81.3 billion. That is a record by any African or Asian standard – 81% attrition rate.
- In the Health sub-sector, this same Governor paid first, 15% and then 75% of agreed contract payment to foreign suppliers, ostensibly for the State hospitals. The foreign firms made no supplies. Upon investigation, the foreign experts presented letters

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of agreement which stipulates that the money given to them was meant for the development of pharmaceutical companies in Asia for the family of the Governor. The total amount involved was 19.8 billion.

- The Governor claimed ₦20 billion for the supply of rural water to the communities in his state. Out of the 9 urban water schemes the government claimed to have launched, it was discovered that only the one in the State capital actually attracted government patronage. Out of 300 sunk boreholes in the different communities, it was discovered that over 80% of them had only a length of 18" pipe buried underground. The overhead water tanks were filled on commissioning day with the help of water vendors, and thereafter the taps ceased to run. The forensic accountants concluded that out of an outlay of ₦20 billion on the water project, ₦18.9 billion was misappropriated.

It is not surprise that the regulatory agencies have decided to re-open the case against this former Governor. Fresh charges revolve around conversion of government shares and holdings in blue chip companies. Besides, State funds seem to have been applied in sponsoring a refinery, a palatial world-class hotel, top-of-class luxury cars and property acquisitions in Africa, Europe and Dubai.

Case 6: The Presidential Pension Reform Task Team (PRTT) was set up in 2010 under the Office of Head of Civil Service of the Federation, to reform the pension system and ensure a robust database that will encompass biometric credentials of all federal pensioners. The Task Team comprises officers from different agencies of government – ICPC, EFCC, SSS and Attorney-General of the Federation. Its findings include:

- At the office of Head of Service, some under-aged persons were listed as pensioners. After the actual biometric, the list of pensioners was pruned down from 141,790 persons, to 70,657. The budget for pensions was also reduced from ₦5 billion per month to a mere ₦825 million. The Team however, discovered a group of 50,000 pensioners which for 35 to 40 years, had never been captured in government pension payments.
- At the Police Pensions Office, the Team discovered two banks account with huge sums of money on deposit – ₦8.9 billion and ₦10 billion respectively. The bank statements revealed that an average of ₦295 million to ₦300 million was being withdrawn every other day from these accounts for no ostensible reason. Available records also revealed and obtained from government the sum of ₦24 billion

for this charge. Some 2,014 ghost workers and 133 duplicated names were found on the pension list.

- Following disclosures from the PRTT, a serving Federal Permanent Secretary was arrested and a cash sum of ₦2 billion found in his residence. The task Team detected illegal withdrawals from the Police Pension Funds amounting to ₦14 billion. The Team further recovered 1 billion in cash from a staff of the pension office, and secured forfeiture of three luxury estates with about 27 blocks of deluxe flats in Abuja, and other Nigerian towns. In 19 months of operation, the Task Team has been able to recover ₦151 billion for government.

Numerous other internal and international cases of fraud exist, which are still begging for final resolution. There is the case of the US energy service company, Haliburton, which was found to have, through a subsidiary, paid bribes totaling \$2.5 million to Nigerian officials, to obtain favourable tax assessment in 2005. Besides, an international consortium building liquefied natural gas plant in Nigeria came under investigation in France for suspected payment of bribes totaling \$180 million to Nigerian officials to obtain construction contracts valued at \$6 billion. In 2006, there was also the case of an investigation into business transactions involving the American company, IGATE, in which both the American and Nigerian officials were alleged to have been bribed. While the foreign counterparts to these frauds were conveniently and routinely prosecuted under the law, the Nigerian angle remains mired in needless controversies.

The above cases represent no more than a tip or the iceberg. The studied diversity in form and content of fraud and white collar crimes constitute a sore challenge to every administration that has governed the Nigerian nation. A 1996 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of Transparency International ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation among 54 nations studied, with Pakistan as a close second. Indeed, three times in 1996, 1997 and 2000, Nigeria earned the dubious honour of being the most corrupt nation on Planet Earth; and in four other instances, was placed among most corrupt five economies – in 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003. As far back as 1983, an erudite scholar and writer warned the nation in these words:

Nigeria is the only country where as a general rule, people are wrong and strong at the same time..... if Nigeria had effectively and efficiently utilized just only 25% of all the oil money she had earned between 1973 and 1983, she would have graduated from the member of the developing nations. Nigeria has produced more millionaires within the past ten years than any other country in the world, yet Nigerian governments are not

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able to pay their workers, finance educational systems, and meet her foreign exchange obligations (Ukeje, 1983).

Still from the archives, a commentator of blessed memory said:

Governments react to sudden affluence almost as individuals react to alcohol: some absorb it coolly and take it in their strides; others get easily drunk and heady. The change that overtook Nigeria's finances between 1962 and 1973 made the Nigerian government really drunk and heady. Most of the lessons of public sector management of the [1950s and 1960s] were lost in one heady five-year binge that began in 1973 and did not let up till 1978..... We need to recreate the system of values that can inspire efficiency, loyalty and dedication in our bureaucracies. Any Administration that succeeds in restoring the moral tone of our public officers and inducing them to greater productivity will have restored Nigeria on the path of greatness (Okigbo, 1983).

The sad commentary is that Nigeria's heady binge is yet to let up- fifty three years after the attainment of political independence. So how did subsequent governments address this national problem? From the aforementioned, it is evident that corruption has penetrated the warp and woof of the Nigerian society. The boss and his messenger, the police officer and the recruit, the classroom teacher and his student, the politician and the votes, the judge and the lawyer- none can remain untainted by this stigma.

Furthermore, there seems to be a clear case of insecurity among the leaders in truly addressing the problem, they have tested the forbidden apple of power, wealth and personal ambition nurtured and grown by corruption, and most of their protestations against corruption is mere lip service. It does appear that the anti-corruption agencies are allowed to operate, to the extent that they do not cross invisible boundaries imposed by the government of the day. This is so because in spite of spirited attempts by Nigeria's EFCC to battle fraud, no Chief Executive of that body has been allowed to serve out his or her term. They were all applauded when they hound the real or perceived enemies of the government of the day, and removed from office when they step on "sacred toes".

As a corollary to the above, the battle against corruption in Nigeria is being prosecuted by men who are not morally qualified to lead in the crusade. It takes a revolutionary to call forth a revolution, and revolutionaries are moral purists and idealists, who would rather place

their own necks on the chopping block than go against their convictions. Very few Nigerian leaders would qualify as moral purists. Lastly, corruption has been seen to be very rewarding in Nigeria; hardly is any one truly called to account for corrupt crimes in spite of the plethora of legislations and commissions put in place to do so.

Conclusion

In Nigeria, corruption has an inherent capacity within its operational framework that sustains it and gives it life in perpetuity. This is so because men of questionable character and less than wholesome pedigree have been elevated to the position of anti-corruption crusaders. Anti corruption laws are good, well focused and drafted, but the problem is implementation and these laws have not been allowed to take their course. Deeply rooted socio-economic collapse in the system has further succeeded in making the legal and regulatory framework look unimportant, weak and a mere formality.

Recommendations

Arising from the study and the aforementioned conclusion therefore, the following recommendations are hereby submitted:

1. In order to successfully combat fraud, Nigerians must put in place a mechanism that will eradicate and transform the culture and legacy of corruption. This must address the root causes of fraud in the polity and orchestrate those measures that will herald the emergence of honest leaders with the political will to truly combat corruption. The nation's leadership must demonstrate the willingness to track down and punish corrupt officials and citizens, even when their own friends and relations are involved.
2. There is the need for a reinforced accountability framework that will insist that men in public office live in full glare of the public-transparent, morally sound, and of high ethical fibre.
3. A deliberate national value re-orientation programme that goes beyond lip service should be put in place by the government. To change a people's value system, we must build values that are based on principles and develop a humane, responsive and merit-based society where people are judged, not by "colour of their skin" but by the content of their character".
4. There is the need to establish a National Integrity system that embodies a comprehensive view of reform, addressing processes, leadership codes, organization change, civil society participation, reformed democratic process, private sector interest and media attention.

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