



## Articles

# Eradicating Corruption in Public Office in Nigeria

## Lessons from the Singapore Experience

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### Abstract

This paper attempts to provide a model for dealing with the problem of corruption in Nigeria. It uses an analytical approach to explore the Singapore model of dealing with acts of corruption to serve as a model for Nigeria. Corruption is inimical to socio-economic development of any country where it is practised on any scale. This explains why all nations make efforts to minimize or eradicate corruption in their economies. Nigeria has been ranked among the most corrupt nations of the World by many international anti-corruption agencies. If other nations take measures to eradicate corruption from their economies because of its negative consequences, Nigeria cannot be an exception. Corruption has led to gross misuse of public funds in Nigeria and has caused untold hardship to her citizens via non-payments of people's benefits and lack of provision of basic public utilities. To deal with corruption in Nigeria, various anti-corruption agencies were set up but the problem remains. This paper therefore recommends the Singapore model as a method of dealing with corruption in Nigeria. This model holds each sectional head responsible for any act of corruption in his/her unit if established. The government was strong and determined to deal with the transgressors; there was political will to tame corruption and therefore there was government support to the anti-corruption agencies. If this model is adopted and faithfully implemented, corruption could be eradicated from Nigeria. In addition, constitutional amendments that would update and clearly define acts that constitute corrupt practices as these acts manifest in various forms are necessary to facilitate interpretation and enforcement of anti-corruption laws.

*Keywords:* public office, corruption, defiance, eradicate

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## Introduction

Nigeria has been operating a kind of fiscal federalism that has vested greater power and control at centre since independence. As a result, the control of national resources has largely been that of the Federal government, leaving the federating units (the states and local governments) at the mercy of the centre. With the huge national resources accruing from oil and other sources at the disposal of the Federal government, it is expected that it would assume the responsibility of developmental and welfare services delivery to Nigeria and Nigerians. However, after many years of expectations, Nigeria's social and economic development has remained elusive. One major factor generally believed to be responsible for this situation is corruption.

As observed by [Catan and Chaffin \(2003\)](#), corruption is the single greatest obstacle to economic and social development. When corruption becomes systemic as it is in Nigeria currently, it decreases public revenue that could

have been used for the benefits of all the citizens, increases wasteful public expenditure, poverty, and inequality. In the same vein, [Odugbemi \(2000\)](#) opined that corruption is a major problem in developing countries, a problem which diverts scarce resources away from development and eradication of poverty. Corruption is dangerous and inimical to the systemic existence of any polity. It is a socio-political, economic and moral malaise that may permeate and cripple, as a result of its contagiousness and malignancy, the nerves of any polity ([Akindele, 2005](#)).

Because of its negative effects, successive governments in Nigeria have attempted to confront this ugly tide headlong. The more recent effort is the setting up of special anti-crime agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), and the Code of Conduct Bureau. These agencies are vested with the powers to deal with issues of corruption in Nigeria. However, the problem of corruption remains unabated. This paper aims to present a model that can be adopted to address the problem of corruption in Nigeria. In order to achieve the objective of this paper, we analytically approach the subject-matter of the paper.

## The Concept of Corruption

Generally speaking, the conceptualization of the term “corruption” has long been ideologically, morally, culturally, politically and intellectually elusive to the point of losing sight of its detrimental and parasitic symbiosis with many polities including Nigeria and their all over the world ([Akindele, 2005](#)). Attempts to define corruption have led to different meanings by scholars of various disciplines in the literatures. Corruption is thus a value-loaded term that resists easy measurement and simple interpretations.

Definitions of corruption have ranged from its typification as using of public or official positions in ways that forsake public interests; deviant behaviours that encourage private gains at public expense; maladjusted behaviours that flagrantly violates the acceptable and legitimized norms of societal expectations; to its conceptualization as spoiled, unethically polluted, and rotten behaviours that diverge from the formal and expected role which the society demands of everybody ([Akindele, 2005](#)).

Corruption involves the injection of additional but improper transactions aimed at changing the moral course of events and altering judgements and position of trust. It consists of the doers (givers) and receivers’ use of informal, extra-legal or illegal acts to facilitate matters. It is in this sense that one sees corruption as a lubricator of the social system, a means by which to overcome economic obstacles and bureaucratic red-tapism. Hence, the ambivalence and inconsistency in the theory and practice of corruption, although, it is generally regarded as a debasement of integrity, it may also serve as a nerve in social development.

[Friedrich \(1972\)](#) says a pattern of corruption may be said to exist whenever a power holder who is charged with the responsibility of doing certain things, that is, a responsible functionary or office holder, is by monetary or other rewards, such as expectation of a job in the future, induced to take actions which favour whoever provides the reward and thereby damages the group or organization to which the functionary belongs (more specifically, the government and, other socio-economic institutions).

[Nye \(1967\)](#) defines corruption as any behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private gains. This includes such behaviours as bribery, and nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationships rather than merit).

According to [Gibbons and Rowat \(1976\)](#), corruption in a broader sense means any behaviour pattern where a power holder is induced by some reward to take actions which favour the individual offering the reward and thus conflict with the public interest; or, any behaviour pattern where a power holder seeks to maintain or extend his personal advantage by inducing individuals with some reward to assist him in neglecting the public interest.

In the opinion of [Dwivedi \(1967\)](#), corruption includes nepotism, favouritism, bribery, graft and other unfair means adopted by government employees and the public alike to extract some socially and legally prohibited favours.

From the foregoing, it can well be said that corruption is/are an action(s) of the public officer in the workplace that is/are contrary to the norms of the office and public interest consequent upon personal gains that are derivable by him/her from his/her action(s). Such actions could be bribery, nepotism, favouritism, graft, expectation of a job in the future, etc. In other words, corruption means all those actions that are contrary to the laid down rules whether they involve money, time, or relationship with others.

There are various theories that have been used to explain the causes of corruption. These include the agency model, the resource allocation model, and the internal markets model.

The *agency model* considers the motives of legislators who must protect their own interest of being re-elected or who must extort payments from interest groups wishing to influence legislative policies. It helps explain the behavior of autocratic dictators and views legislators as predatory agents who are able to ignore the welfare of their principal or voters ([Owoye and Bissessar, 2012](#)). In [Rose-Ackerman's \(1978\)](#) agency model, she assumes that voters are misinformed, and that legislators are able to purchase their votes. In this set-up, the objective of legislators is re-election and private income gain; therefore, their ability to control grand corruption is dependent upon the strength of the existing political parties, political institutions, and their methods of campaign financing. Corruption therefore thrives from narrowly focused favors available for distribution, the ability of the wealthy to obtain funds legally, and the temporal stability of political alliances ([Jain, 2001](#)).

The *resource allocation models* of corruption are based on the rent-seeking behavior of entrepreneurs who try to escape the market system and who view this behavior as a regular part of economic activity. [Kaufmann and Wei \(1999\)](#) applied this model to Stackelberg game between a rent-seeking government official and a representative firm,  $k$ . The official moves first by choosing harassment or bureaucratic delay in order to maximize bribes and the firm, a price-taker, moves next by choosing bribe payment in order to maximize its after-bribe profit.

The *internal markets models* propose that because of an internal market between government officials, corrupt transactions can occur. Due to the uncertainty and penalties associated with corrupt acts, if the gains of corruption are shared, all the corrupt officials can enjoy enhanced incomes and corruption thrives. [Bliss and Di Tella \(1997\)](#) provide two examples of how corruption leads to the creation of an internal market. To examine a theoretical relationship between competition and corruption, they present a model in which both the equilibrium number of firms and the level of graft are endogenously determined. It is assumed that each firm is in the territory of one corrupt agent who is a profit maximizer, and that each agent cannot observe the firm's overhead costs,  $C$ , but knows all other firm's operating profit,  $P$ . In equilibrium, firms will only operate if  $C$  is less than or equal to some critical level of overhead costs,  $C_0$ . Therefore, the proportion of firms operating referred to as the abundance of firms is given by  $A$ , where  $A$  is a function of some critical value of overhead costs  $F(C_0)$ .

In addition, the corrupt official does not need to use information about  $A$  in his/her decision on the amount of graft to demand, given his/her knowledge of  $P$  and the distribution of the overhead costs. This then makes the corrupt official interested in their expected value of return and the official faces a maximization problem of the amount of graft,  $G$ . In one scenario, the corrupt official can demand a bribe and the firm has a choice to pay-up or exit the market. As some firms exit, equilibrium will occur with fewer sellers and each firm earns more profit but pays the extra to the corrupt official, thus corruption generates its own surplus. In the case of a multi-stage game, corrupt officials can strike a lower-bribe bargain with the first sets of firms who initially would have exited the market. In a second scenario, one corrupt official can grant or withhold a government good, such as a firm's licensed permit to operate; and in competitive markets with  $n$  homogenous firms with free entry and exit, there will be no surplus unless the official is corrupt. The discretionary power in this set-up allows the official to act as a monopolist.

In the *agency* model, the extensive length of terms held by a few leaders seems to protect their own interests of re-election and extorting payments from interest groups. The *resource allocation* models shed light on the rent-seeking behavior of entrepreneurs who try to escape the market and the *internal markets* model develops the internal market between government officials and corrupt transactions.

The forms of corruption are difficult to classify because different scholars adopt different classifications. However, in this paper corruption is classified into five major forms (Cooksey, Mullei, & Mwabu, 2001)

1. Petty Corruption
2. Systemic (routine) Corruption
3. Lootocracy
4. Grand or Wholesale Corruption
5. Political or Bureaucratic Corruption

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

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

Lootocracy refers to government officials looting of state treasury. It occurs when officials who are charged with public responsibilities and trust steal public assets. It can be embezzlement of public funds such as when huge amount of public funds and other public properties like cars, furniture, and office equipment are carted away from government or State Corporation and Treasury by tricks or advances that are never repaid (draw pay of fictitious "ghost" workers). Lootocracy is prominent among the senior levels bureaucrats. During auctioning of state assets,

for example, senior state officials favour themselves, friends and family members in the allocation of public assets. A good example was when senior state officials bought land in Abuja and properties in 1004 area of Lagos and paid ridiculously low prices.

Grand or Wholesale Corruption occurs when politicians and senior bureaucrats as well as private sector cooperation collude in sharing profits accruing from bribes and business transactions. This form of corruption involves huge amounts of money running to millions or billions of Naira. It thrives among senior bureaucrats and politicians as well as prominent business men during auctions, privatization or allocation of public assets.

Political or Bureaucratic Corruption involves violation of election laws, use of political power to bend rules for private gains or to favour relations and friends. It may take the form of patronage in the award of contract or the establishment of patrimonial ties with foreign multinationals or powers to siphon state resources from which they get their own share. It flourishes where power is highly centralized in a patron- base political system.

Bureaucratic corruption is related to corruption that takes place among senior career official in the state bureaucracies. This form of corruption is usually perpetrated in conjunction or collusion with political office holders. Nowadays, the line demarcation between political and bureaucratic corruption has thinned out as the status of prominent career officials has been politicized. For example, the positions of the Vice Chancellor, Director General, Chief Executive of Parastatal, Agencies and Government Companies, Permanent Secretary, Executive Secretary (e.g. NUC), Auditor General of the Federation, Director General have all been politicized in Nigeria.

The following are the salient causes of corruption regardless of its form. Corruption may be cause by any of the following:

1. Political factors, including patronage, patron-client relationships, unequal access to public resources, abuse and misuse of office and political position, and administrative quagmire;
2. Economic factors including the worsening situation of poverty and the desire to be wealthy, and the mismatch between expectations and available resources;
3. Social factors including the cultural basis of socioeconomic and political organizations, pressures from the extended family and friends, and the lack of distinction between personal and private property.
4. Another cause could be the uncertainties of politics and the absence of insurance schemes to provide for their future after retirement form office.

In Nigeria, many of these acts of corruption are in practice. What is worrisome is that public offices that are meant to deliver public goods to the people are also engaged in these notorious practices. This results in mis-use and wastage of public funds that are meant to be used to deliver services to the people. Various kinds of methods are used to practice these acts of corruption in Nigeria. These techniques as perceived by the people are presented in [Table 1](#) below.

## Perception of Very Common Corruption Techniques

Techniques by which corruption is practiced in public office are well known to Nigerians. The [Table 1](#) below presents people's perception of the corruption techniques in Nigeria alongside some West African countries.

Table 1

Perception of Very Common Corruption Techniques (%)

Corruption techniques	Benin (25)	Cote d'Ivoire (34)	Ghana (30)	Guinea - Bissau (36)	Liberia (22)	Nigeria (80)	Senegal (32)	Sierra - Leone (34)
Bribery of government official	40.0%	55.0%	56.7%	44.4%	45.5%	87.3%	28.0%	85.3%
Bribery of foreign officials	4.0%	14.0%	6.7%	16.7%	4.5%	23.6%	0.0%	5.9%
Embezzlement, misappropriation or other diversions of property by Government Officials	52.0%	58.0%	56.7%	66.7%	54.5%	88.6%	25.0%	82.4%
Abuse or misuse of office	35.0%	50.0%	46.7%	58.3%	40.9%	79.7%	19.0%	76.5%
Trading in influence to get things done or not done	44.0%	62.0%	50.0%	58.3%	36.4%	67.9%	44.0%	64.7%
Bribery or embezzlement in the private sector	12.0%	23.0%	10.0%	8.3%	22.7%	41.6%	13.0%	44.1%
Illegal transfer or taking of money abroad	32.0%	14.0%	13.3%	36.1%	45.5%	57.0%	9.0%	35.3%
Inflation of contract	28.0%	56.0%	56.7%	55.6%	45.5%	86.1%	16.0%	82.4%

Note. Percentage (%) total no. of respondents (n) who consider technique as "very common".

Percentages in column computed from nominal figures provided by the Research Associate.

Source: "Perception of very common corruption techniques" (2010).

Table 1 presents the report of the survey of people's perception of corruption techniques in some West African countries. A close look at the table reveals that most of the techniques of corruption surveyed are employed in public offices in these countries. A comparative analysis of country by country indicates that Nigeria has the highest percentages in all cases as indicated by their percentages. Since the respondents were members of the society from which the samples were drawn, their responses may not be far from the truth. It therefore means that the starting point of dealing with corruption in Nigeria is the public office, if the country is actually serious in eradicating this menace.

## The Defiance of Corruption in Nigeria

The monster called corruption has defiled all solutions adopted by various governments in Nigeria to deal with it. Part of the problem is that many of the heads of government that have spearheaded the fight against corruption have been alleged to be corrupt themselves and these heads of government have not been able to exonerate themselves. They therefore have no moral justification for prosecuting other public officers that are known or alleged to be corrupt. For instance, the regime of Obasanjo (1999 – 2007) established EFCC and ICPC to fight corruption when he was fingered for corrupt practices through the awards of "elephant" projects such as FESTAC '77, the account of which he is yet to give Nigerians. Also, the N2 billion jumbo loan he took from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in 1978 when Nigeria had no reason for borrowing, when he knew that he was to hand over power in 1979 is another example of his alleged corruption activity and, the questionable privatization of public enterprises in which he was accused of buying up a large number of them such as Oando oil in which he was said to be the core investor is yet another instance. Indeed, this beclouds the activities of the anti-corruption agencies as they are perceived as being established to witch-hunt Obasanjo's supposed enemies.



One other obstacle frustrating the fight against corruption is constitutional/legal problem. While the 1999 Constitution establishes a Code of Conduct for Public Officers and made it a Political Objective for the state to abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power, it does not define or provide a list of actions and activities that constitute corruption. In addition, it has been observed that the statutory criminal laws, the criminal and Penal Codes do not adequately define corruption. The criminal code for example merely states that an offence of corruption is committed where a public officer corruptly asks, receives, or obtains any property or benefit. The Corrupt Practices Decree of 1975 described corruption by restricting corruption to bribery, which it defines as the offer, promise or receipt of any gratification as inducement or reward. As a result, corruption is being trivialized as it connotes no definite concept and so any senior public officer who does not like the face of his/her subordinate or colleague will quickly accuse him/her of being corrupt.

Another constraint to fight against corruption in Nigeria is lack of political will. Leaders in Nigeria, either because they are guilty of the same offence or that they are afraid, do not dare to confront ex- and serving public functionaries that are accused of corruption. For instance, many Nigerians were urging President Obasanjo's regime to probe Babangida's regime over \$12 billion Gulf war windfall but Obasabjo's reaction was that if anybody had any charge against Babangida, he/she should prove it. This partly explains why public officers who are even being prosecuted by the anti-corruption agencies are comfortably occupying public offices with these accusations hanging on their necks while the government does nothing to prosecute them.

Furthermore, societal decay has contributed in no small measure to the promotion of corruption in Nigeria. About three decades ago, the Nigerian society frowned at and abhorred questionable wealth irrespective of who was involved. This helped to check frauds and immorality in the society. Today, people with questionable wealth are highly hailed and respected because people gun for the crumbs from their tables. These "wealthy" people now occupy the front seats in most public gatherings, including the church and mosque and are even conferred with chieftaincy titles. Thus, the quest to get rich quick irrespective of the sources has become the major interest of many people in Nigeria. People who pursue decency among them in public offices are mocked, victimized, humiliated, thrown out of office unjustifiably, and in some cases rejected by their societies.

### **Eradicating Corruption in Public Office in Nigeria**

Given the ills of corruption where ever it is practised or it obtains, every effort must be made to put an end to it. Singapore found that corruption was a cog in the wheel of progress in its economy and therefore sought to reduce it to its barest minimum. In the same way, Nigeria has come to appreciate the effects of corruption and has made efforts to eradicate but to no avail. Corruption is an evil that the society must fight against in all ramifications. This is because fighting corruption has positive implications for the economy. Among these are, that it:

1. has a strategic significance in national development;
2. provides a source of competitive advantage. Investors are happy doing business if there is an efficient, clean and transparent environment without being encumbered by bribery;
3. is part and parcel of good governance for the common good of the citizens;
4. contributes to the meritocratic ideal, levelling the playing field because unchecked corruption has the following detrimental effects:
  - a. distorts accepted and cherished values, particularly achievement orientedness and diligence;
  - b. undermines fairness and stability in society;

- c. subverts the course of justice and weakens the rule of law because if bribes are paid to prevent law enforcement, there will be contempt and hostility towards authority (Ali, 2000).

In order to fight against corruption in all ramifications, the Singapore experience provides a model for dealing with corruption in Nigeria. Just like it is in Nigeria, Lee Kuan Yew, the ex-Prime Minister of Singapore came to power in 1959, his government was confronted with challenge of corruption. In his words, “in 1960, we changed the out-dated 1937 anticorruption law and widened the definition of gratuity to include anything of value. The amendments gave wide powers to investigators, including arrest and search and investigation of bank accounts and bank books of suspected persons, children, or agents. Furthermore, he stated that “the most effective change we made in 1960 was to allow the courts to treat proof that an accused was living beyond his or her means or had property his or her income could not explain as corroborating evidence that the accused had accepted or obtained a bribe”. The then government was able to establish a climate of opinion that looked upon corruption in public office as a threat to society. It then became easy to start off with high moral standards, strong convictions, and determination to beat down corruption. Yew (2000) acknowledged that “it was difficult to live up to these good intentions unless the leaders are strong and determined enough to deal with all transgressors, and without exceptions. Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) officers must be supported without fear or favour to enforce the rules.” (p. 163)

As a result of their efforts and determination to rid Singapore of corruption, the Institute of Management Development's World Competitiveness Yearbook 1997 ranked the least corrupt countries in the whole world giving 10 points as the perfect score for the country with no corruption. Singapore was ranked as the least corrupt country in Asia with a score of 9.18, ahead of Hong Kong, Japan, and Taiwan. Transparency International (based in Berlin) placed Singapore in the seventh place worldwide in 1998 for absence of corruption (Yew, 2000, p. 163).

Given the wave of corruption in Nigeria, the Singapore model remains very relevant to the country and therefore its adoption is worthwhile. In order to do so, Singapore adopted the following measures:

- a. legislative measures against corruption
- b. administrative measures
- c. preventive measures
- d. actions against corrupt government officials
- e. court punishment for corruption
- f. departmental punishment for corruption
- g. roles of government agencies

### **Legislative Measures Against Corruption**

As noted by Ali (2000), after independence of Singapore, the political leaders amended the laws to give more powers to the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) officers. To win public trust and confidence, the leaders took it upon themselves to set good examples for the public officers to follow. For instance, they divested themselves from any involvement in financial or commercial ties and they reported for work earlier than their subordinates.

Besides setting good examples, legislative measures were also taken by the new political leaders to ensure that the anti-corruption laws were adequate and provided sufficient punishments for corrupt offenders. The laws were



revamped to give more powers to CPIB officers and punishments for corruption offences were enhanced. The laws were reviewed regularly to ensure that offenders did not escape from legal punishment and that corruption does not pay. This includes requiring the court to order any person convicted of corruption offences to repay as penalty an amount of money equivalent involved in corruption. CPIB officers, besides having all the powers relating to police investigations were also given other special powers. Under the law, the public prosecutor can also, among other things, order the Comptroller of Income Tax to provide information on the offender to the CPIB. The concept that corruption does not pay was fortified by confiscation of benefits Acts

### **Administrative Measures**

Along with the legislative measures, administrative measures were also taken to reduce the chances of public officers from getting involved in corruption and wrongdoings and making the CPIB more effective. These include:

- a. giving the CPIB a free hand to act without fear or favour against anyone irrespective of his social status, political affiliation, colour or creed;
- b. removing opportunities for corruption in government work procedures;
- c. streamlining cumbersome administrative procedures;
- d. slashing down excessive red tape which provides opportunities for corruption;
- e. reviewing public officers' salaries regularly to ensure that they are paid adequately and comparable to the private sector;
- f. reminding government contractors at the time when contracts are signed that bribing public officers administering the contracts may render their contracts to be terminated. A clause to this effect forms part of the contract;
- g. a contractor who gives bribe will be barred for a significant period of time from any public contract unless he cooperates fully with the authority.

### **Preventive Guidelines**

Strict guidelines in the form of instructions are stipulated in government instruction manual to prevent public officers from getting involved in corruption or wrongdoings. Some of these instructions include:

- a. a public officer cannot borrow money from, or in any way put himself under a financial obligation to any person who is in any way under his official authority or has official dealings with him;
- b. a public officer cannot use any official information to further his private interest;
- c. a public officer is required to declare his assets at his first appointment and subsequently, annually;
- d. a public officer cannot engage in trade or business or undertake any part-time employment without approval;
- e. a public officer cannot receive entertainment from members of the public;
- f. a public officer cannot accept any share issued by a company offered to him through a private placement without the approval of the Permanent Secretary.

### **Education of Public Officers on Corruption**

Complementing the legislative and administrative measures, regular talks are given by the CPIB officers to the public officers especially those in the enforcement agencies on the pitfalls of corruption. Furthermore, public officers are also made aware of the Prevention of Corruption Act through the incorporation of the relevant provisions of the Act in the Government Instruction Manuals.

### Action Against Corrupt Officers

Depending on the availability of evidence, a corrupt public officer is dealt with in any of the two ways:

- a. charging him in court if there is sufficient evidence for court prosecution;
- b. charging him departmentally if there is insufficient evidence for court prosecution.

### Court Punishment for Corruption

In Singapore, both the giver and the receiver of a bribe are guilty of corruption and are liable to the same punishment. Any person who is convicted of a corruption offence can be fined up to \$100,000 or sentenced to imprisonment of up to five years or to both. If the offence relates to a government contract or involves a Member of Parliament or member of public body, the term of imprisonment can be increased to seven years. Besides, fine and imprisonment, the person convicted of corruption offence will be ordered by the court to return the amount of the bribe, which he had accepted in the form of a penalty. In addition to the punishment, which the court may impose on a convicted person, the court is also empowered to order the confiscation of the property obtained by corrupt obtained by corrupt offenders.

### Departmental Punishment for Corruption

A public officer who is convicted in Court for a corruption offence will lose his job and if he a pensionable officer, he will also his pension and other benefits as well. He will also be debarred from any future public appointment.

A public officer who is convicted of a departmental charge may, depending on the severity of the charge, receive one or a combination of the following punishments:

- a. dismissal from the service;
- b. reduction in rank;
- c. stoppage or deferment of increment;
- d. fine or reprimand;
- e. retirement in the public interest.

### Role of Agencies outside CPIB in Combating Corruption

The responsibility of combating corruption does not lie with the CPIB alone. Whilst the bureau has been entrusted with the responsibility of investigating cases of corruption, the primary responsibility of prevention of corruption lies with the respective department. A Permanent Secretary of a Ministry is responsible for ensuring that each department under him has a committee to review anti-corruption measures and his responsibilities in combating corruption are incorporated in the Government Instruction Manuals. He is to ensure that reasonable and adequate measures are taken to prevent corrupt practices including:

- a. improving work methods and procedures;
- b. improving cumbersome work methods and procedures to avoid delay in granting permits, licences, etc;
- c. reviewing procedures, which promote corrupt practices to prevent them from occurring;
- d. devising control system to ensure junior officers who are given power to make decision have not abused such powers;
- e. ensuring that supervisors and administrative staff take anti-corruption measures seriously and that they are not relaxed in checking and reporting their subordinates;

- f. rotating the officers periodically;
- g. ensuring that besides routine checks, surprise checks are carried out systematically and regularly by senior officers as part of their duties and;
- h. reviewing anti-corruption measures.

What is very unique in the Singapore model is that the job of fighting corruption is not left to anti-corruption agency alone. At various levels of the government, officers heading the various departments and agencies are technically anti-corruption officers and have the duty to ensure that corruption does not take place in their agencies and departments. This complements the efforts of anti-corruption agency and therefore makes the work of the agency easier.

### **Constitutional Amendment to Identify What Amounts to Corruption**

In addition to the above, there is every need for constitutional amendment to identify what constitutes corruption beyond the narrow definition of bribery as currently contained in the Nigerian constitution. As noted earlier, the Government of Singapore changed the out-dated 1937 anticorruption law and widened the definition of gratuity to include anything of value. The amendments gave wide powers to investigators, including arrest and search and investigation of bank accounts and bank books of suspected persons, children, or agents". This ought to be the case in Nigeria. The Constitution should be able to clearly list what and what constitute corruption. This will help the enforcement agents to easily identify the offence and this will also facilitate prosecution as well as the enforcement of laws regarding corruption.

### **Conclusion**

While it is an acceptable fact that corruption exists in all countries of the World, its level among countries varies. What is worrisome is the magnitude it assumes and its attendant consequences in various countries. Nigeria over the years has been ranked among the most corrupt countries of the World. But this trend can be reversed by adopting the Singapore model as presented above. There is also need to engage in constitutional amendments on the issues related to corruption. The Constitution must clearly and definitely identify the items considered as acts of corruption. The Singapore model is, at various levels of leadership in Singapore, the head of the unit is held responsible for any act of corruption in his/her unit. In addition, the anti-corruption agencies are properly supported by government in dealing with this notorious act as the leaders were strong and determined to deal with the transgressors. Nigeria can considerably reduce by holding heads of units responsible for any act of corruption in their units. Furthermore, the Nigerian leaderships need to be strong and determined to support anti-corruption agencies to deal with the transgressors at all tiers of government. They must amass courage, political will and legal strength from the laws of the land to deal with corruption in Nigeria. If these measures are taken, they will go a long way in reducing corruption significantly, if not totally eradicating it from Nigeria.

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