

THE RETURN OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND THE RISE OF KLEPTOCRATIC RULING ELITES IN NIGERIA: THE IMPLICATION TO THE ELECTORATES

Mohammed Nuruddeen Suleiman¹

Abstract

The people of Nigeria overwhelmingly supported and embraced the return of democratic governance to the country in 1999 after a long period of military rule. This was due to the perceived potentials of the system in ensuring transparent governance through the principles of democratic governance. However, more than a decade into the democratic experiment in the country, this paper argues that corruption within the ruling political elites has rendered the application of democratic principles elusive. The diversions of public wealth to private pockets have prevented the dividends of democracy from trickling down to the general populace. In the realm of corruption, the only major difference between the various military regimes and the ruling elites in the democratic era is that, the military ventured into governance through coups, while the people elected the civilian governments.

Keywords: Military Regimes, Democratic Governance, kleptocratic elites, Corruption, Transparency, Accountability

Introduction

Nigeria became an independent nation-state in 1960 after more than five decades of British colonial rule and domination. However, since independence, the country remains one of the volatile countries in the African continent, and this is because of the internal dynamics that shaped the independent country. Before the departure of the British colonial government, they fused together about 250 diverse dialect groups to form the modern day Nigeria, and this heterogeneity continues to play a major role in reshaping the history of the country.

The first military coup led to the collapse of the first elected democratic government in 1966, and the majority of the military officers that organized and orchestrated the coup were from the Igbo ethnic group (Mwalimu, 2010, p. 905; Ojeleye 2010, p. 41). This heightened ethno-regional tensions and served as a prelude to the country's civil war in 1967. Although, the leaders of the first coup suggested it was motivated by nationalistic concerns, as they claimed the coup was staged to eliminate the then prevailing excessive corruption and to put the country back to its prosperity, they reiterated that:

Our enemies are the political profiteers, swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes and demand 10 percent, those that seek to keep the country permanently divided so that they can remain in office as Ministers and VIP's of waste (Falola 2004, p.63)

Furthermore, the first military intervention in governance served as a model for subsequent military coups, as such all-successive coups alleged unabated levels of corruption and poor governance in the country as the precursor for intervention. Though the military relinquished power to a democratically elected government in 1979, but it again wrestled the control of the nation through the same guise from the civilian government in 1983 (Dibie 2003, p.112). This time, the coup leaders alleged that:

You are all living witnesses to the great economic predicament and uncertainty, which an inept and corrupt leadership has imposed on our beloved nation for the past four years... Our economy has been hopelessly mismanaged. We have become a debtor and beggar nation... Yet our leaders revel in squander mania, corruption and indiscipline. After due consultations over these deplorable conditions, I and my colleagues in the Armed Forces have in the discharge of our national role as promoters and protectors of our national interest decided to effect a change in the leadership of the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and form a Federal Military Government (see, Siolluns 2013)

Nonetheless, corruption became pervasive even in the military regimes, particularly the regimes of General Ibrahim Babangida from 1984-1993, when corruption was said to be institutionalized (Alamu 2011, p.9), and the regime of General Sani Abacha from 1994 to 1998 which is recorded to be the most corrupt in the history of military regimes (Baker 2005, p63). The people accused these military regimes of high-level corruption amongst other issues of poor governance; as such, this prompted the sustained popular campaign by activist and politicians against the military. Eventually, the military relinquished power to a democratically elected government in 1999.

The corruption perception index of the Transparency International (TI) has for close to two decades, placed Nigeria in the notorious level of the most corrupt countries in the world. From 1996 to 1999, either the country was listed as the first or the second most corrupt country from the countries assessed in the world.² This is understandably for obvious reasons; it is by virtue of the absence of transparency and accountability that overshadowed military regimes in the country within that period. Nonetheless, with the return of democratic governance, the expectations for transparent government that may lead to reduction of corruption in the country became elusive, as the country maintained the same position from year 2000 until 2005. While from the year 2008 Transparency International weighed countries based on a scale from 0 as "highly corrupt" to 10 as "highly clean", and Nigeria scored 2.7, 2.5, 2.4, and 2.4 from 2008 to 2011, respectively. Indicatively the country remains in the horizon of pervasive corruption despite the promising features of the democratic governance in the country.

Furthermore, from 1999 to 2012, corruption, absence of transparency and accountability in the democratic governments has belied the dictates and tenets of the constitutional democratic governance. In this regards, this paper argues that corruption by the elected ruling elites has become pervasive and unabated since the return of

democracy to the country. The only difference between the democratic governments and the military regimes is that, the former secured authority through elections, and arguably popular democratic votes, while the later captured power through the barrels of guns. The consequences of the ruling elite's corruption have been debilitating social crises such as poverty and unemployment in the country. Though the country remains amongst the major producers of crude oil in the world (Mobbs 2012), and despite the increasing revenue accruing into the coffers of the government, available records from the Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics suggest that about 120 million people of the country's 150 million population in poverty (NBS 2012, p.23). This is as a direct result of mismanagement and direct theft of the country's wealth by its ruling elites.

There are a significant number of literatures on corruption in Nigeria, because it has been a phenomenon bedeviling the nation since its creation. The study by Olarinmoye (2008) suggests that the politics of "God Fathers" in Nigeria is essentially the roots of bad governance in the country, because it creates self-centered elites that manipulate the system to their interest. People are selected to fill positions of governance through processes devoid of the peoples' wishes. This endangers the whole purpose of democratic governance and gives way to corruption. Equally, the study by Ogundiya (2009) suggests that corruption in Nigeria has affected legitimacy, democratic stability and socio-economic and political development. This is because of governance through "Neopatrimonialism", "Clientelism", "Prebendalism", hence rendering the nation virtually stagnant. In their study, Ojukwu and Shopeju (2010) analyzed the resurgence of corruption from 1999-2007, and introduced concept such as "presidentialism", "clientelism" and "rent seeking" to describe the main aspect of corruption by political elites. Furthermore, the study by Azeez (2011) attempted to give historical antecedent of corruption in Nigeria, and blamed the military regimes for moral decadence, which led to corruption in the country. In the same vein, the study by (Ogbeidi 2012) recounts the history of corruption and traced in back to the colonial period. However, virtually all of these studies relied on secondary sources of data, and are conceptual and theoretical analysis. As such, this paper has attempted to fill the void by collecting primary data in the form of interviews and official sources.

Method and data

The data for this paper was derived from a major research work that looked at the mismanagement of petro-dollars in Nigeria. Through a qualitative approach, the study adapted purposeful sampling, and 50 informants were interviewed between December 2011 and March 2012 in Nigeria. The informants include two former Presidents of the country, former and serving Ministers, Commissioners, public servants, Non-governmental organizations, as well as ordinary Nigerians. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the informants using a tape recorder, and were eventually transcribed verbatim. Pseudo names in the form of numbers have been assigned to the entire participant as an ethical measure in order to protect their identity. Documents were also sourced from the anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria in order to complement the interviews.

Conceptual Analysis

The Classical elite theory suggests that few elites govern societies through the instrumentality of State (Berberoglu 2005, p.29). This gives the elites leverage to monopolize power and authority in discharging their duties, as such the political economy of the nation strongly depends on the foresight of the ruling elites. As the classical theorist, Mosca succinctly concludes that:

In all societies—from societies that are very meagerly developed and have barely attained the dawning of civilization, down to the most advanced and powerful societies—two classes of people appear—a class that rules and the class that is ruled, the first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantage which power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first, in a manner that is now more or less legal, now more or less arbitrary and violent (see, Jack 1974, p.265)

Hence, the work of Smythe and Smythe (1960, p.3), in contextualizing Nigeria's elites formation in the new independent nation suggest that; what persons are the elites, how they attain position of influence and power, the value they hold, are very critical issues attached to the survival and progress of the nation. However, the nation drifted, and the elites took the opportunity to milk the nation. The return of democratic governance in 1999 saw a recycling of post-independence leaders once again to the mantle of leadership of the country; people who have had a tight grip to the governance of the country. This gave the elected elites another round of opportunity, as one informant observed:

There is a complete dis-connect between those who are in power in Nigeria and the people of Nigeria for variety of reasons. One of the reasons is that the people who are in government, who are in power in Nigeria, in politics generally are not the people who should be in public life...I will dare say that 90 percent of the people who rushed into politics in 1999, were the kind of people who should have been kept away from politics...once they jumped in, they seized the apparatus of the state, and through corruption they enrich themselves. (Informant 27. 2012, pers comm., 26 Feb)

According to Rose-Ackerman (1999, p.9) every country, whether benevolent or authoritarian, controls the distribution of valuable benefits which is at the discretion of the elites. As such, the seamless domination by the Nigerian ruling elites, which lacks transparency and accountability, gave birth to pervasive corruption, which is sustained by the rent seeking culture. In this regards, Ogundiya observes that, this is because the very foundation of democratic governance in Nigeria is built and sustained by corruption, and the elites use it as an instrument of domination, manipulation and oppression (Ogundiya 2011, p.195). However corruption is multifaceted, many scholars have defined corruption through numerous fashions. One classical definition that has been cited numerously is that of Nye, he defines corruption as the "behavior 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-regarding influence" (Nye 1967, p.419). Furthermore, the definition of corruption as "misuse of public power for private gains" has numerously featured in literatures such as (Tanzi 1998, Rose-Ackerman 1999, Andvig *et al.* 2000, Karklins 2005, Velasquez 2010). The divergent view in defining corruption

brought about some categorization; from Grand corruption, to petty corruption (Laryea 2011, p.269). While Langseth describes both Grand corruption and petty corruption as:

“Grand corruption is corruption that pervades the highest levels of national government leading to broad erosion of confidence in good governance, while petty corruption can involve the exchange of very small amounts of money, the granting of minor favors by those seeking preferential treatment or the employment of friends and relatives in minor positions” (Langseth 2006, p.9)

Thus in this research, the focus is on political corruption at the return of democratic governance from 1999. Furthermore, Amundsen (1999, p.3) sees political corruption as “when political decision-makers use the political power they are armed with, to sustain their power, status and wealth”. Seger (2008, p.20) also observes, “Political corruption is where politicians use public resources in their struggle for power, abuse their political position and confuse their political goal with the public interest”. While Porta and Vannucci (2012, p.130) averred that corruption means employing money to attain private ends by political means which are criminal or at least illegal.

Elite corruption from 1999

Accountability, transparency and integrity are vital to the success of democratic governance (Cheema 2005, p.51), as this will ensure human rights and safeguard transparent management of a nation’s wealth. It was the absence of these ingredients of good governance in the military regime that led to the popular support by Nigerians to tirelessly campaign for the return of democratic governance to the country. As such, having this in mind, the first inaugural speech in 1999 by the democratically elected President signified the wish to uphold these democratic tenets (Obotetukudo 2010:129). The elected president reiterated that: “There will be no scared cows...nobody, no matter whom and where, will be allowed to get away with the breach of the law or the perpetration of corruption and evil. On my part, I will give the forthright, purposeful, committed honest and transparent leadership that the situation demands” (Cited in: Alumona 2012, p.317).

One of the major approaches towards achieving this was the creation of anti-corruption agencies in order to checkmate the culture of corruption with impunity, which might likely be inherited from the military era. As such, the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) was established in 2000, while the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) was established in 2002 to complement the work of ICPC (Human Rights Watch 2007, p.95). The trajectory of these institutions into the mainstream Nigerian socio-economic and political strata has redefined the dynamics of public governance in the history of Nigeria. There were tremendous changes in the way public servants, particularly the top-level government officials’ dealt with public wealth in their custody. The prompt actions and energetic response of the organizations toward investigation of corruption and economic crimes earned them the respect and admiration of the populace, while it ignited sense of fears to corrupt individuals. Particularly, the then Chairman of EFCC; Malam Nuhu Ribadu was feared by corrupt political elites, or as Larr observes, that the fear of Ribadu is the beginning of wisdom (Larr 2011, p.168).

The history of Nigerian ruling elites regarding condoning corruption was changed by the persistent determination of the anti-corruption agencies, as well as the application of measures of preventing corruption and economic crimes. This led to the delisting of Nigeria by Financial Action Task Force (FATF) from its list of Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories (NCCTs) in June 2006 (NFIU 2006, p.1). The removal of Nigeria from the list reduced difficulties in economic and financial transactions between Nigeria and other countries across the globe. Another remarkable achievement of the anticorruption agencies was the country's improvement in the Transparency International corruption perception index, in 2006 the country was 142 out of 163, in 2007 it was 147 out of 179, whereas in 2004 the country was the 144 out of 145 and in 2005 the country was the 153 out of 158 countries evaluated.

Nonetheless, the establishment of these intuitions was timely, as the culture of corruption and impunity of the military era was already mutating into an active pathology in the realm of some political ruling elites. The first major achievement recorded by ICPC was the investigation and prosecution of a high profile case involving some influential political office holders. This includes Sunday Afolabi, Hussaini Akwanga, Mahmud Shata, whom were all serving ministers, and R. O.Akerele, who was a Permanent Secretary at Ministry of Internal Affairs, while Nwodo Okwesilieze was the National Secretary of People Democratic Party (PDP); the party ruling the nation (IRIN 2004). These holders of high political offices were involved in bribery scandal after the Nigerian government awarded a French company; SAGEM the contract worth about US\$214 million to produce National Identity Cards for Nigerians. Similarly, the EFCC arrested Mustafa Adebayo Balogun, the Inspector General of Nigerian Police Force in 2005, and he was later convicted of corruption charges. These major breakthroughs in anti-corruption campaign in the recent history of the country, reassured the average Nigerian about the seriousness of government in acting out its rhetoric of zero tolerance for corruption.

The above cases, marked the beginning of a full-scale proactive investigation of political office holders, and it turned out to be a major move that was redefining democratic governance in the country. In 2006, the Executive Chairman of EFCC, Malam Nuhu Ribadu while addressing the national assembly members, stressed that 31 state governors out of 36, as well as the Vice President of the country, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar were all under investigation for various cases of corruption (Oxford 2010, p.40). However, the constitutional immunity³ conferred on the Governors was a major hindrance to their arrest and prosecution. However, the overwhelming evidence against them about public wealth embezzlement is glaring in the public domain. This information suggests that:

The governors collect significant part of the budget; called it security votes, put it in their pockets more or less... Nigerian state has become a criminal enterprise that is what it is, let's be honest with ourselves Nigeria state is a criminal enterprise ...to ensure that they keep the corruption cycle, they find people like them, duplicate people and produce people like them... all that seems to matter is; we have hunted down the big game "political office" let now enjoy our lives. (Informant 14. 2011, pers comm.,)

Nonetheless, in September 2005 the Governor of Bayelsa State, Deipreye Peter Solomon Alamieyeseigha slipped from the comfort zone of his immunity, and the

Metropolitan Police arrested him⁴ in London for money laundering (Maton and Daniel 2012, p.429). He stashed away millions of dollars belonging to his state in banks across the globe, and acquired choice properties in different locations outside Nigeria. However, Alamiyeseiha was impeached as the Governor of the state, and was subsequently arrested and convicted of corruption and money laundering in Nigeria. The seamless access to public wealth by the ruling elites, which is characterized by lack of accountability and transparency have been one of the major reasons for elite's corruption in the democratic dispensation. As one informant noted that:

It is really impossible to talk of elites that are accountable and transparent...They are just extra territorializing corruption... They put money in foreign accounts, and the only place those monies are not going to, is in the life of the people....the lack of right of people to quality living, to free education, to free health, better housing, good roads. It is directly related to the poor governance of people who have invested in corruption, stealing this money shipping them abroad, investing them for their own cronies and families. (Informant 23. 2012, pers comm., 29 Feb)

In this context, public wealth is managed as personal belonging of individual, and the monopoly of wealth by the elites have evidently made them more powerful which enable them to truncate the rights contained in democratic governance. Amundsen (2010, p. ix) equally observes that this is as a result of the oil revenue injected to the nation; as such the ruling elites have gained enormous powers that they could control state apparatus. Furthermore, this has also jeopardized the basic rights of the people towards achieving meaningful standard of life by utilizing the abundant resources of the country. The elected elites, as against the very norms of democracy, essentially hijack the promises of democratic dividends. As such, an informant observed that:

Having captured power, you have to be accountable to the people, you have to be transparent, you have to ensure that power translates into the development of society and the improvement of quality of life in the society, which has not really occurred. So the issue of governance is very fundamental. ... I do believe the considerable portion of those resources is leaking through lack of accountability and corruption. (Informant 28. 2011, pers comm., 16 Feb)

Another high profile conviction was that of the Executive Governor of Edo State; Mr. Lucky Igbinedion after the end of his term in office, he was convicted for embezzlement and theft of the about US\$24million from the treasury of his state, but was sentenced and fined US\$23,000. However, the sentence turned out to be very controversial, as a report by the United States Department of State (2010, p.452) suggest that the sentence was not in any way commensurate to the level of gross misconduct by a political elite entrusted with public affairs. This period marked the decline for the fight against corruption, as some elements in the judicial arm of government began to scuttle the campaign through various ways. This can be exemplified by the case of former governor of Delta State Ibori⁵ and that of Rivers State; Mr Peter Odili.⁶ The EFCC attempted to prosecute them for corruption and embezzling public treasury, but controversial judicial rulings have been an encumbrance. This is because of the influence and public wealth at the disposal of the elites can be used to corruptly manipulate outcomes of major decisions. One informant from the EFCC categorically reiterated that:

The nature of the mandate of this Institution which is economic and financial crimes, you are taking on the privileged class in the society, most of the people involved in committing these crimes are people that are well connected, who have a lot of resources at their disposal and who before now believe that they are untouchables. They think nobody can do anything to them and nobody can reach them. So the biggest challenge is that they have resources to fight you back, so they will do anything possible. (Informant 11. 2011, pers comm., 23 Jan)

The grip over the judicial system by some of the corrupt elites undermines the fight against corruption, and it gives way to more challenges, as the allegations of intimidation of political opponents of the president by the anti-corruption agencies cropped up. Particularly the EFCC was accused of arresting the opponent of the president (Kew 2006, p.433). Nevertheless, evidence suggest that those allegedly arrested at the instance of the president did commit crimes, as argued by the former Chairman of the Commission, he averred that known top loyalist of the president were equally arrested within the same period (Ribadu 2010, p.128).

Furthermore, 2007 presidential election and the subsequent change of government brought new face to the anti-corruption crusade in the country. As those under investigation by the Commission became actively influential in the new government, one of such people was Mr. Ibori, he was one of those that financed the election campaign of the elected president (Durojaye 2010, p. 241). The seeming influence of Ibori in the government marked the beginning to the end of his investigation and prosecution within the term of the incumbent government. As the former Chairman of the EFCC clearly recalls, he stated that:

[W]e were ready to move against Ibori. I notified Yar'Adua who had been elected president earlier that year...after several hours of siege, Ibori surrendered himself. One of the most powerful figures of Nigerian politics was arrested and sent behind bars, awaiting trial... few days later I was ordered to go on training for a year. I was never to return to the EFCC... I was forced to untimely leave the country. In December 2009, a warrant was even issued for my arrest (Ribadu 2010, p.137).

This period signified the threshold of government commitment to fighting corruption, political intrigues was allowed to derail the activities of the anticorruption agencies. The politicization of the institutions caused the country major setbacks in sustaining the campaign against corruption and economic crimes, in 2009, the country's TI index fell to 2.5 from 2.7 the previous year. The eventual death of President Umaru Yar'Adua in 2010 gave way to a new way of fighting corruption in the country. Though the anti-corruption crusade continued, however, corruption by political elites become unabated due to the level of acceptance it has within the ruling elites. This can be exemplified by the numerous investigation and arrest of some ruling elites or their cronies. Although many of the accused have been charged to court, the very delicate processes of prosecution and conviction in the Nigerian legal system is taking years to conclude. Even at the conclusion of such trails, the absence of stringent penalties has been arguably one major reason for the continued corrupt practices by ruling elites. The cases of Chief DSP Alamieyesegha, Lucky Igbmedoin, Tafa Balogun, Aminu Dabo, Chief Olabode George⁷ and others have always been a point of reference in this regard. While some public official steal billions of naira and are released freely, some hungry individuals

are condemned to death or remanded in prison indefinitely. The case of Obinah John is a vivid example where he was sentenced to death by a High court for stealing about US\$15 and a sachet of milk of costing about US\$4 (Reporter 2012). However, despite the mounting cases of corruption and abuse of office, the ruling elites have always got a way of escaping justice, as the Human right report suggested that as at 2012 no senior political elites is serving a prison sentence for corruption (Human Rights Watch 2013).

Furthermore, while the corrupt practices of the ruling elites goes unabated, the living standard of the people remain affected, hence creating the platform for grievances and eventually generating to violent reactions. These reactions are by groups and individuals who are frustrated by the level of marginalization and deprivation of basic needs in the country. The Director of Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit clearly draws the nexus between this social and economic denials and violence, he illustrates how denial of economic and social good can infuriate people, and he averred that:

Every money that is illegally gotten from government and is laundered, translates into denial of infrastructure....it makes people lose faith in government. Because if government makes promises and if because of corruption government is not able to deliver, then people won't have faith in government. It will also create a sense of hopelessness amongst the populace, and when people feel the sense of hopelessness, it becomes easy for them to mobilize against government or engage in other criminal activities (Informant 7. 2012, pers comm., 27 Jan)

Equally, Oberschall, (1978, p.291) observes that social conflict is the interaction in which the means chosen by the parties in pursuit of their goals are likely to inflict damage, harm or injury. This is because the aggrieved feels the use of violent means is the only way of echoing their anger against the constituted authority because they feel deprived. The absence of justice delivery and lack of basic needs that is a direct result of a corrupt elite class, eventually erodes the confidence of the populace in the entire democratic system. The unabated denial of justice and basic needs of the people creates fragments in the society that leads to some degree of anarchy amongst the youth. Aall (2007, p. 338) argues that in countries like Nigeria, youth within the age of 18 and 30 engage in violence due to the perceived level of alienation and exclusion from the economic and political opportunities in the country. Fisher (2008, p.31) also illustrates that corruption and lack of accountability by government often creates anger and fuels protest. In this regards, the Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria concludes that: "when you have corruption, bad governance and poverty, then people get radicalized; it could be religion, ethnicity, it could be anything. But extreme ideologies get root in an environment of poverty" (Informant 30. 2012, pers comm., 12 Mar).

Conclusion

The capacity of democratic governance to transform Nigeria hinges on adhering to its key tenets such as accountability, transparency and the rule of law. As such, the teeming population of the country significantly embraced the return of democratic governance due to the promising potentials of the system. However, after more than a decade of democratic experiment, democratic governance remains a structural rhetoric controlled by the ruling elites. This period has been marred by explosion of corruption amongst the ruling elite, hence endangering the prosperity of the people that helped in

pressurizing the military out of governance. This is because the elites serve their own personal interest through redirecting the wealth meant for development of the people and country, while negating the principles and purposes of governance. Hence, one informant concludes that:

Nigeria can't achieve any meaningful development... It will not be possible with this explosive level of corruption, because one thing that corruption does apart from shifting resource, apart from diverting resources. It reduces the capacity of governance; the ability of people to do the right thing, it undermines even the best policies and it subvert the society. So with this level of corruption I think that is not possible. (Informant 21. 2012, pers comm., 3 Mar).

This paper tries to analyze the surge of corruption since the return of democratic governance to Nigeria. It found out that corruption has become deeply entrenched in governance, because politics in the country is seen as the surest and quickest way of making money, rather than serving humanity. Politicians strive through unconventional ways to clinch to political power due to the potential financial benefits; hence, this has created a toxic perception within the politician. The remarks of the former president Olusegun Obsanajo, that it was a matter of "do or die" for him to be victorious in the 2003 election (Okurounmu 2010, p.211), evidently suggest that political elites can essentially sacrifice their lives trying to perpetuate themselves towards gaining political power and its spoils. To this eradicating corruption in the main stream governance requires active engagement and resilience from the citizens in order to signal to the political elites that just as the "Arab Spring" unfolds, a peaceful "Nigerian Spring" that will demand good governance is very much around the corner.

Appendix (A): Some High profile corruption cases involving Government officials arraigned in court from 1999

S/N	Name	Office
1	Saminu Turaki	Former Governor Jigawa State
2	Danjuma Goje	Former Governor Gombe State
3	Adamu Abdullahi	Former Governor Nasarawa State
4	Juashu Dariye	Former Governor Platue State
5	Attahiru Bafarawa	Former Governor Sokoto State
6	Jolly Nyeme	Former governor Taraba State
7	James Ibori	Former Governor Delta State
8	Orji Uzo Kalu	Former Governor Abia State
9	Michael Botmang	Former Governor Platue State

10	Ayo Fayose	Former Governor Ekiti State
12	Timipre Sylve	Former Governor of Bayelsa State
13	Gbenga Daniel	Former Governor of Ogun State
14	Alao Akala	Former Governor of Oyo State
15	Abubakar Audu	Former Governor Kogi State
16	Tafa Balogun	Former Inspector General of Police
17	Sunday Ehindero	Former Inspector General of Police
18	Dimeji Bankole	Former Speaker, Federal House of Representatives
19	Senator Adolphus Wabara	Former Senate President, National Assembly
20	Prof. Fabian Osuji	Former Minister of Education
21	Vincent Ogbulafor	Former National Chairman, PDP
22	Adetokunbo Kayode -	Former Minister for Defense

Source: EFCC The eagle magazine; 2008-2010 and ICPC Records (Complied by author)

Notes

- ¹ PhD candidate, Faculty of Arts and Social Science , Department of International and Strategic Studies, University Malaya
- ² More elaborate information and data about this can be access through the Transparency International website at <http://www.transparency.org/country>
- ³ In Section 308 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, it provides immunity for the President and his deputy, the governors and their deputies against civil or criminal proceedings. As such, these public officers cannot be arrested while still serving.
- ⁴ The Governor was arraigned in court in London and was later granted bail. He absconded mysteriously from London and came back to Nigeria. He was giving a controversial Presidential pardon for his criminal offence in March 2013 by his benefactor who is the current President of the country. Meanwhile, the British Government is still seeking for his extradition from Nigeria to London to face the criminal charges.
- ⁵ The EFCC filed 179 charges of corruption against Ibori, but he was controversially discharged and acquitted of all the charges by a federal High Court. However, he was arrested at the instance of the British government in Dubai for money laundering offences. He was extradited to Britain where he was charged and convicted of his crimes. He is currently in a British prison serving 13 years sentence.
- ⁶ In a bid to scuttle his arrest and prosecution, Peter Odili secured a controversial perpetual injunction from the court restraining the anti-corruption agencies from prosecuting him. A federal high court Judge granted the order, and the order has not yet been vacated as at April 2013.

- ⁷ The sentences of these public official triggered reactions from the public, as the sentence were not commensurate to their various offences.

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