
TACKLING CORRUPTIVE BEHAVIOURS AMONG
ELECTORATES IN NIGERIAN POLITICS: PERCEPTION
OF KWARA CENTRAL PEOPLE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper investigated the views of people on ways of addressing corruptive behaviour of electorates in Kwara Central Nigeria. A descriptive method of the survey type has been adopted to a total of 150 people who were purposively and randomly sampled. The researchers designed questionnaire tagged “perceived factors and measures of tackling corruptive behaviour among electorates in Nigeria” was used to obtain respondents perception. The result showed that electoral body deficiency is largely responsible for corrupt behaviour of electorates in the society and the average mean score of 3.28 indicating that all factors responsible for electorates corrupt behaviour in Nigeria as viewed by respondents in this study are equally significant. In addition the outcome of this study revealed effective judicial system as fundamental basis to curb electorates’ corruption and average mean score of 3.28 of all mean of items on ways to tackle electorates corruptive behaviour indicates that all other stated measures to tackle electorate corruption are very significant as well. Based on these findings, researcher made the

following recommendations that National Electoral Independent Commission should actually be independent of government control; secondly, effective economic policy needs to be vigorously pursued by government to provide better condition of living for electorates, thirdly, good governance should be watch words for all three tiers of government and their administration should be corruption free finally; judges and lawyers should diligently handle political or election tribunal cases without favour or preferential treatment because of inducement

Key words: *Electorates, Corruptive behaviour, Factors and Tackling.*

Introduction

The image of Nigeria as a nation has been tainted badly at home and in diasporas because of issues of corruptive behaviour of the leaders and followers. Leadership in all ramifications should be model for followers to copy. Electorates have significant roles to play during and after election. The electorates represent the followers in the realm of politics because of the unique role they have to play in ensuring good governance. Vocabulary.com (2017) defines electorate as a body of people allowed to vote in an election. Constitutionally, an eighteen years old person is eligible to vote during an election in Nigeria. Being an electorate one has ample opportunity to choose who represents him or her in governance. However the rate of political corruption in Nigeria is so endemic that hands of electorates are not clean.

Ogbeidi (2012) said political corruption constitutes government officials tendencies of embezzlement, cronyism, bribery, extortion, fraud and other forms of indiscipline in government circle. Also according to Free Encyclopaedia of Wikipedia, Nigeria president, Muhammadu Buhari viewed corruption as the high rate of human right violation. Olayiwola (2013) described options used by political leaders to corruptively get to power to include blatant rigging of election, manipulation of census figure, use of thuggery, gangsterism, religious and ethnic sentiment and host of others.

Electorates are agents often being used by the unscrupulous leaders to perpetrate all those evils. This means electorates themselves are corrupt. The electorates during electioneering processes perpetrate lot of political corruption ranging from bribery, multiple voting, ballot boxes snatching, and host of others. Bariledum (2013) weakness of electoral body itself is inherent in the electoral fraud which has resulted into bad governance.

According to Mike (2017) corruption permeate other areas of society such as education, military, religion, communication even family just to mention a few but the involvement of political actors in political corruption has caused more damages to entire systems in the country. The recent crisis of economic recession in Nigeria cannot only be attributed to global economic down turn but also result of domestic corruptive behaviour of Nigerian politicians. The available records have shown that political class has failed to offer good governance since the pre-independence of Nigeria to date due to political corruption. It is not understatement that Nigerian leaders from onset are corrupt but the question is what measure has been taken by the electorates to curtail them. This assertion gives the fact that attention on corruption must not be focused on leadership alone but that of electorate as well. Ajayi (2005) opined that power wielding is functional for both leaders and the electorates. This implies that the duo can influence each other. Electorates too have role to play in correcting erring political leaders for good. Ajayi (2005) reacted to jubilation of followers at the return of DSP Alamieyeseigha who was internationally tried for corrupt behaviour and jumped the bail in London as testimony to the fact that electorates are corrupt themselves. Constitution under democratic governance empowers electorates to recall their corrupt elected leaders. The credibility of electorates to do so depends on their own corrupt-free behaviour.

Marquet (2015) saw no distinction between leadership and followership because a follower at a level is also leader at another level. This also implies that an elected leader is like a twin brother of an electorate who are related and see themselves as kinsmen. The question is who is to blame for political corruption in Nigeria. Wraith and Simpkins (1983) observed that some kinsmen perceived presence

of their leaders in governance as means of their personal survivals and gains in politics. This belief often makes the electorates to patronise political office holders home and offices before, during and after election to seek gifts in kinds and cash. Yoruba adage says “*Eni ba je dodo koni le so ododo*” This literarily means that whoever takes undue favour or preferential treatment will not be able to abide by the truth. How would electorates exercise their constitutional rights to recall or query corrupt leaders they have patronised for undeserved favours?

This paper recognises the fact that some economic crises such as poverty, unemployment, poor youth empowerment are sources of corruptive behaviour in the society (Nigerian Finder, 2017). Also Several factors such as poor salary structure and condition of service, poor administration, staff negligence, opportunities and low chance of detection, traditional factors, monarchical tendencies and host of others are responsible for corruptive behaviour (Olayiwola, 2013). These have direct impact on the electorates and could constitute the factors that induces their corruptive behaviour. For example a poor paid or unpaid staff of an organization could involve in corrupt practices during an election provided there is assurance of getting money from a political stalwart.

According to Njoku (2015) value crisis in Nigeria had slowed down the progress of the nation because of upsurge of materialistic tendency of people. This implies a shift from positive value of contentment, courage, and perseverance to corruptive behaviour of excessive accumulation of material or wealth, quick rich syndrome and host of others that fuels the problems of corruption among the people in Nigeria. Corruption is ranked by all and sundry as the very worst of all major socio-political challenges confronting developing countries such as Nigeria in the world. The menace of corruption is endemic and burning like wild fire across all the institutions in Nigerian society. When Achebe (1983) put blame of corruption on leadership; Njoku (2015) opined that the issue of corruption is stemmed from leadership to the led because when leaders are corrupt, the followers often follow the same bane in the name of survival and so jettison the desirable and accepted standards of society. Sandel (2012) as cited in Brown (2017) opined that

behavioural tendency of not desiring to inconvenience others, or not being lured into altruism becomes low when money market is involved. This is pointed to the fact that positive values are subdued for negative values in the realm of politics because of monetary benefits. From this angle electorates' behaviour and decision to vote normally are influenced whenever monetary incentives are offered thereby eroding the normal value of equity, transparency and credibility of an election. Electorates' corruptive behaviour in this study is referred to act of selling voters card, collecting of bribe to vote, indulgence in multiple voting, snatching of ballot boxes, and perpetrating violence to disrupt peaceful conducts of election. Danjibo and Oladeji (n.d) attributed major irregularity of an election to electorate corruptive behaviour of vote buying and selling between party and electorate.

Proactive measures of anti- graft agencies such as Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes, Commission (EFCC) put in place by government have not yielded much desired result expected of them. Intellectual researches have unfolded many cases of corruption after math of President Jonathan administration in Nigeria, for instance \$2.2 billion illegally withdrawn from Excess Crude Oil Account and \$1 billion out of it was aimed at funding re-election bid of the president without the consent of National Economic Council (NEC). Sums of \$11.6 billion were reported missing from Nigeria LNG Company dividend payments, 60 million barrels of oil worth \$13.7 billion were reported stolen under the tutelage of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) from year 2009 to 2012 (Izeze, 2015). Dasukigate is about corruption case involving Sanmbo Dasuki and four other standing trial of laundering and diversion of money worth \$2.1 billion (N546 billion) meant for arms funds. Former EFCC leader Ibrahim Lamorde was also indicted of diverting 1 trillion naira being money recovered from looters such as Diepreye, Alamieyeseigha and Tafa Balogun. Former Director General of Nigeria Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) Patrick Ziadeke Akpobolokemi and five others were accused of stealing sum of N2.6 billion belonging to the organization. Money worth of \$1bn(260bn) was reported by ex Central Bank of Nigeria

Governor Muhammed Lamido Sanusi money that was being missed on monthly basis under administration of President Jonathan, 6 million bribe were reported given to a religious leader, sum of \$ three hundred and twenty two million dollar (N83.72 Billion) were reported diverted from Abacha loot by President Jonathan and the finance minister Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, there was also a case of N78 million website scam involving for Lagos State Governor, Raji Fashola, Saraki false asset declaration Scam, N195 billion Maina Scam (Olalemi,2016). The few cases above indicate corruption on the part of political leaders who were elected by their electorates into office. A theory says means justifies the ends. The manner in which electorates vote actually shows the kind of leaders that emerge after election.

Many research efforts have been conducted on ways to address menace of corruption in the society. Hunga (2015) considered the following as measures to tackle corruption in the society, (a) Identification of different kind of corruption, (b) creation of pathways that encourage citizen too to involve in governance, (c) allow government and non-governmental groups to monitor progress in societal institutions, (d) endorsement of sensible rule and practices that accommodate change, (f) device effective technology tool to build dynamic and continuous changes in society stakeholders, (g) adoption of integrity standards, (h) effective use of sanction on corruptive behaviour, (i) give global and local enlightenment to citizen on corruptive issues, (j) identification of building capacity or empowerment scheme to support people and, (k) give room for adoption of good strategy or best practices. According to Odock, (2006) good governance is main thing to tackle corruptive behaviour because it contains features such as participation, rule of law transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency as well as accountability. Olayiwola (2013) recommended the followings as antidote to corruption in society, (a) transformational leadership, (b) addressing poor economy, (c) overhauling judicial administration, (c) emphasis on effective leadership, (d) strengthening of civil society groups, (e) emphasis on fear of God, (e) emphasis on critical professional and mass media bodies, and

(f) implementation of quality of good governance. All aforementioned solutions to corruption have focus for leadership and not much attention is given to electorates which to certain extent determine the quality of leadership in the society. This thus inform the general purpose of this research is to examine the views of people in Kwara Central Nigeria about ways to tackle corruptive behaviour of electorate in Nigerian politics and to specifically find out the factors responsible for electorate corruptive behaviour and measures to be taken in tackling it.

By and large, issues of bad governance in Nigeria have generated a lot of debate and the blame is often placed on the leaders rather than the followers. Some people believe that leaders are responsible for the failure of governance while others believe that followers are the fundamental source of the leadership failure. The latter is an assumption that followers are the electorates that make leaders to be either good or bad. Political experience in Nigeria has exposed the electorates' involvement in one form of political corruptive behaviour or the other. These behaviours are expressions of sales of voters card, collection of bribe to vote, indulgence in multiple voting, snatching of ballot boxes, perpetrating violence to disrupt peaceful conduct of election. The establishment of anti-graft agencies in Nigeria is viewed as sort of preventive measure to tackle behaviour of the corruptive political leaders only and little attention is paid to the corruptive electorates. Numerous studies to find solution to problems of corruption in Nigeria have focussed on political corruption in which leadership is seen as active agent of corruption and not many efforts are given to the involvement of followership. It is on this basis that this study intends to explore people's views about ways to tackle corruptive behaviours among electorates in Nigerian politics.

Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions

1. What factors are responsible for electorate corruptive behaviour in Nigeria?
2. What measures can be put in place to curb electorate corruptive behaviour in Nigeria?

Methodology

Descriptive research of survey type was used in this study to seek views of people on ways to tackle corruptive behaviour of electorates in Kwara Central Nigeria. A total number of one hundred and fifty questionnaires were administered to one hundred and fifty literate people in four local government areas of Asa, Ilorin West, Ilorin East, and Ilorin South. The educational qualification of the respondents ranges from, Senior Secondary School Certificates, National Certificate in Education (NCE), Ordinary National Diploma (OND) to Bachelor Degree Holders. The researchers designed questionnaire tagged “perceived factors and measures of tackling corruptive behaviour among electorates in Nigeria” (PFMTCBAEIN). The instrument contained two sections A and B. A part deals with bio-data of the respondents while B addresses 4 structured items indicating factors responsible for electorate corruptive behaviour and 4 structured items indicating ways of tackling corruptive behaviour of electorates. The questionnaires were personally administered by researcher. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting literate people because the items on the questionnaires would be best understood and responded to by people who could read and write. The data collected was analysed using frequency counts, simple percentage, mean, standard deviation statistical tools. The research instrument was subjected to content and face validity by experts in areas of Social Studies, Psychology, and Sociology of Education from Department of Social Sciences Education University of Ilorin. To determine the reliability of the instrument, a trial testing was carried out in the Kwara South senatorial district of the state which is not part of the study area. Forty copies of the instruments were administered with help of two research assistants twice (interval of a week). The completed questionnaires were collected on the spot each time the respondents had administered them. Pearson Moment Correlation procedure was used to determine reliability co-efficient and 0.75 was obtained.

Results

Research Question 1: What factors responsible for electorate corruptive behaviour in Nigeria?

Table 1: Factors responsible for electorate corruptive behaviour in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	TOTAL NO	POSITIVE RESPONSE	NEGATIVE RESPONSE	X	SD
1	Poverty is the root cause of electorate corruptive behaviour	150	123 (82)	27 (18)	3.16	.85984
2	Bad leadership is responsible for corruptive behaviour of electorates	150	114 (76)	36 (24)	2.96	.87378
3	High rate of illiteracy is responsible for the corruptive behaviour of electorates	150	105 (70)	45 (30)	2.88	.79360
4	Weakness of electoral body is responsible for corruptive behaviour of electorates	150	141 (94)	09 (06)	3.36	.71682

From table 1 it can be seen that item 4 has the highest number of response i.e 141 (94%) with the mean of 3.36 and .71682 standard deviation while item 3 has the least number of responses i.e 105 (70%) with the mean of 2.88 and .79360 standard deviation. The average mean is 3.28. This implies that, all the items above are very significant and are factors responsible for electorates corruptive behaviour in Nigeria

Research Question 2: What measures can be put in place to curb electorate corruptive behaviour in Nigeria

Table 2: Measures for tackling electorates' corruptive behaviour

S/N	ITEMS	TOTAL NO	POSITIVE RESPONSE		NEGATIVE RESPONSE		X	SD
1.	Effective use of sanction would prevent electorates corruptive behaviour	150	128	(84)	24	(16)	3.26 00	.718 22
2.	Addressing poor economic situation would go a long way to prevent electorate corruptive behaviour	150	129	(86)	21	(14)	3.30 0	.903 02
3.	Implementation of good governance would provide basis to prevent electorates corruptive behaviour	150	128	(85.3)	22	(14.7)	3.20 67	.735 46
4.	Effective judicial system would boost confidence of electorates and thereby preventing them for committing corruptive behaviour	150	138	(92)	12	(08)	3.44 00	.699 76

From table 2, it can be inferred that item 4 has the highest frequency and percentage i.e 138 (92%) with the mean of 3.44 and .69976 standard deviation while item 1 has the least frequency and percentage of 126 (84%) with mean score of 3.26 and .71822 standard deviation. The average mean score is 3.28 signifying that all the stated measures to tackle electorate corruption are very significant and they serve as fundamental steps towards combat of electorates' corruptive behaviour.

Discussion

This study examined literate view of ways to tackle electorates' corruptive behaviour in Nigeria with specific attention given to factors and solutions towards tackling electorate corruptive behaviour in Nigeria. The outcome of the data analysis showed that weakness of electoral body is responsible for corruptive behaviour of electorates. This is in line with the submission of Bariledum (2013) that weakness of electoral body itself is inherent in the electoral fraud which has resulted into bad governance. Electorates often hide under the electoral body corruption itself such as encouragement of multiple voting, unjust disqualifications of opposition candidate, falsifying registration document and voters

card etc because of cash and kind motivation. The electoral fraud indeed is fundamental to corruptive behaviour of electorates because if the electoral body upholds sanctity and justice during election time it would be hard for any electorates to perpetrate evils. Electoral body as umpire in an election supposed to be independent, neutral in taking decision about election matter. This will prevent act of rigging, and undesirable influence of outcome of election by politicians and their follower. The outcome of this research also indicated that effective judicial system would boost confidence of electorates and thereby preventing them from committing corruptive behaviour. This approves recommendation of Olayiwola (2013) that if cases of corruption are to be wipe off in the society the judicial arm of government needs to be overhauled. Indeed legal institution of society is the last hope of common man; average electorates population would breach the law and take law into their hands if the judicial system of government itself is engulfed with the crisis of corruption. This also buttresses the view of Hunga (2015) that effective use of sanction on corruptive behaviour would ameliorate human indulgence in it. Therefore, if electorates know very well that chance of committing electoral malpractices is very slimmed because of effectiveness of judicial system and rule of law many of them would not want to trade the path. However the political leader inducement of judges to upturn the right decision against culprit behaviour identified during the tribunal stage of election process gives much confidence even to electorate to do and undo during voting time.

Conclusion

In view with the outcome of this study, it is worth to note that corruptive behaviour of electorates has done more harms than good to the welfare of all and sundry. The most powerful factor inducing electorates' corruption is malfunction of electoral body that controls affairs of election. Therefore effective sanction, improved governance and national economy as well as reliable judicial system are viable measures to tackle electorates' corruptive behaviour in the society.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the recommendations that have been put forward are that Independent National Electoral Commission should actually be independent of government control; this would enhance its decision on electorates' activities and conducts. Effective economic policy needs to be vigorously pursued by government to provide better condition of living for electorates which hitherto prevents them from corrupt behaviour. Good governance should be watch word for all three tiers of government and their administration should be corruption free. Judges and lawyers should diligently handle political or election tribunal cases without favour or preferential treatment because of inducement.

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