

Corruption: Africa's Encumbers

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Abstract- This paper attempts to provide an accentuated understanding of corruption in Africa by delineating the role of Africa's leadership and donor agencies in abating mismanagement of public resources. Through a systematic approach, this paper reviews existing evidence on dynamics of corruption in Africa and notes its implications in the modern underdeveloped Africa. The paper notes that good governance, transparency, and accountability are sine qua non building blocks of 21st century democratic societies. African countries can reduce corruption by formulating tough anti-corruption policies, such as high profile convictions, ensuring that companies operating in Africa are more transparent in their dealings with the government and tougher on those companies and individuals paying bribes, just as African leaders must be ready to take a tougher stand on corrupt officials that take the bribes. Importantly, countries in the Global South should strengthen their institutions and create efficient and effective anti-corruption agencies. On the other hand, developed countries should support Africans in their fight against corruption by helping bring corrupt leaders to justice, and seize and return funds that have been stolen through corruption and invested in Western bank accounts.

Index Terms- Corruption, Patronage, Dependency, Ethics, Morals, Agencies, Underdevelopment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite the reality that corruption has been in existence all through time and in all societies, presently it has particularly distressing impact on development efforts in the third world countries. Corruption forestalls social justice and violates individuals' rights; it maintains and widens inequality and it wastes scarce resources (Bauman, 2011). Thus, it creates one of the most serious ethical problems for global development. In fact, the very term 'corruption' in general refers to the degeneration of values and moral principles (Dion, 2017). But are there any ethical elements involved in corruption? This paper opines that while the corrupt transactions as such are unethical, the institutional corruption tends to create its own internal inverted codes of social ethics particularly in the poor, developing countries in which corrupt practices have become part of everyday life - not only in high political offices but also on the grass -root level. It is instructive to note that inverted code of social ethics can be best combated with civic education that goes hand in hand with teaching of professional ethics and promoting the respect for professionalism. Towards this end, this paper portends that various forms of corruption, particularly abuse of office, are on the rise in Africa. Thus, as much as the paper would have desired to posit that corruption is on a decline

in Africa given the world-wide attention it has garnered in the international community in recent times and the efforts and interventions of donor agencies, the bitter truth is that it has not. Although there is no proof suggesting that globalization aids the increase of corruption in a wide scale, however, the near elimination of trade barriers and increasing opportunities for the free flow of money, goods, and information tends to facilitate the unfortunate occurrence of global corrupt practices, and in the case of Africa, its endemic.

Statement of the Problem

Despite several initiatives formulated towards combating corruption in the third world and developing countries, the notion of corruption continues to persist. Corruption continues to permeate Africa since political leadership is less committed to changing the status quo. Plundering of public coffers is sanctioned by those in political offices. Medard (2017) argues that Africa cannot develop amid a cloud of unaccounted public funds. According to Transparency International report of 2018 as cited in Audeyev and Hancock (2018), corruption in sub-Saharan Africa, such as in Kenya and Nigeria, are so high to an extent that these countries cannot progress since resources are in the hands of the few corrupt state officers. Various scholars have pointed out that deficit and crisis of political leadership pose enormous challenges to Africa. Widespread patronage has been cited as one of the consequences of lack of astute leadership in Africa as those in charge of public offices are not rewarding merit, but entrenching rent-seeking culture. Electoral fraud continues to be a topic of interest as most incumbent presidents rarely lose an election, and when they lose, they refuse to handover office to their successors.

Concept of Corruption

Corruption is not in the slightest a new political and/or social problem, nor is it a novel cause for concern. It has existed in one form or another in every society. For instance, Plato, Aristotle and other early philosophers were concerned that many politicians in Ancient Greece were not interested in the good of the whole society but rather promoted their own personal benefits (Jaede, 2017). Much later, the fast decline of the Roman Empire was said to be the result of raging corruption and lack of both civic and private virtue. Presently, the developing countries are provenances of the most all-embracing corruption (Nur-tegin & Jakee, 2020). However, scandals involving holders of high political and administrative positions come up frequently also in Europe and Northern America.

Simply put, but not in a simplistic manner, corruption can be said to be the use of public office for private gains. By public in this circumstance, reference is not only made to government

offices, parastatals and civil service in general, but also to private business and international institutions. The inclusion of all sectors of social life is important and a step in the right direction because in any corrupt transaction there are always at least two parties involved. Thus, the public sector alone cannot be blamed for corruption. To say the least, the money or other rewards come from private sources. Viewing it ethically, the word 'corrupt' itself refers to morally devolved, altered and/or unsound moral principles and values (Apata, 2019). Other scholars have built their definitions around the effect of corruption. A corrupt act violates responsibility toward at least one system of public or civic order and is in fact incompatible with any such system (Dion, 2017). A system of public or civic order exalts common interest over special violations of the common interest for special advantage is corrupt. Thus, corruption exists if the public trust or good is betrayed whether not a violation of legislated standards transpires.

Generally, in the history of social philosophy, corruption has been considered as a vice that appears in a form of dishonesty and personal self-centeredness regarding to the requirements of the public good and the values of impartial social justice (Igbari & Ekiti, 2016). Moreover, corruption includes inducements to unethical behavior by bribery or other unlawful means in a situation in which at least one of the parties knows that the transaction they engage themselves in is unscheduled, illegal, and/or unsanctioned (Nyongesa, 2019).

The study and prevention of corruption tends to be difficult because the term corruption itself has suffered inflation. Even as the term corruption traditionally meant the direct misuse of one's public-endowed power for his or her private gain, it is now often used in reference also to other types of abuses in power such as for favoritism or election matters. What makes it even more confusing is that sometimes the term is also used, on the one hand, to refer to obviously criminal activities such as fraud and embezzlement and on the other hand, to point to various technical inefficiencies and irregularities in either public service or even in conducting private business.

Corruption in Africa

It is quite unfortunate that funds allocated for the attainment of then MDGs and now Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by international donor agencies like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department for International Development (DFID), have been, and are still being looted by Africa's leaders, leaving the continent decades behind the rest of the world in terms of development (Hoffmann, 2017). Moreover, Africa is blessed with abundant human and mineral resources, yet it is at the very lowest rung of the ladder of sustainable development. For example, 50% of Africa is still largely rural with no access to electricity (a basic prerequisite to technological advancement), yet the same continent produces 49% of the world's diamonds, and is a major producer of many other high-income yielding minerals (Ojo, 2016). Challenges facing Africa stem from precolonial to the colonial period, where the scramble for colonies led to the sub-division of Africa into several portions among European imperialist governments.

To oversee these territories, the supreme leaders of these colonizing powers appointed an administrator from their own

respective countries, these in turn appointed a local stooge. This stooge is protected by law, given legal powers to represent the locals, thereby making him extremely rich and very powerful (Karekwaivanane, 2017). As a result, Africa's woes became compounded. Persons who hitherto were just ordinary people suddenly became empowered with exalted positions, great wealth and legal powers to do the bidding of the colonial masters (Apata, 2019). Leaders in Africa and a few cabals called the ruling class hijacked not only power, but trampled on the welfare of the average person on the street. They, in league with their cronies amassed great wealth (through looting public funds and illegal business deals), resources originally meant for infrastructural and technological development, and stashed them in foreign bank accounts. This trend has continued unabated for about 50 years now (Lachmann, 2018). It has unfortunately, taken deep roots in the very fabric of the society. One should not be surprised to see almost everybody in Africa involved in one form of corruption or the other.

Corruption, African Ethics, Morals and Values: The People's Response

Predominantly in the so-called third world countries, the response of the public has a fundamental role in the fight and triumph against corruption (Akanii, 2017). This reaction is coupled to the general cultural appreciation of the term in relation to what is considered as unethical and improper conducts by a people. A different method to try to explain corruption is to investigate and understand what it is that a people condemns as corrupt and as a contravention of public interests. However, categorizing corruption according to the public attitude and concept of ethical behavior is, however, problematic. Yet, it appears that what is considered corrupt under the above terms in one society might be widely accepted in another, depending on social norms, values, moral outlooks, traditions, existing laws, and other legal arrangements as well as the social and economic resources. Chiefly in disadvantaged societies, people's attitudes towards prevention of corruption tend to be two-faced (Alvarez et al., 2017). Even as people in most cases denounce political and grand corruption as a theft from a nation's common good, they may see grassroots' petty corruption as a part of facilitating expenses needed to 'grease' the wheels of the slow-moving state machinery. In this case, it can also be considered as a recompense of the wealth stolen from the state by those involved in high-level political corruption.

While being able to pay extra may make some inconvenient, it might make life easier for others – either in form of faster or undeserved services or as a compliment to strikingly low salaries. For example, Audu (2016) suggests that in many African societies with insufficient resources the gravy train and palm-tickling are usually seen as a part of one's survival modus operandi. Put differently, if the leaders, decision-makers and high administrators of our societies are caught taking bribes and/or otherwise engaging in corrupt practices, there is usually a wide public outcry and demand for punishment and preventive sanctions. The subsistence of lower level petty corruption, for its part, is easily accepted as a compensation for bad economics or unprofessional and unethical political leadership.

Foremost, there are no generally established standards on what is the most suitable level of income in any given society. As

the standard of living raises, the wants, aspirations, and expectations of people rise, it is inevitable. Also, as the wide reality of high-level political corruption becomes increasingly obvious, many people with high salaries and distinguished positions appear to be at least as susceptible – if not even more so, to corruption than those who have less to gain. On the whole, the result is usually the widening of the gap between ‘the haves’ and ‘have-nots’ in a society, that is, those who can have enough money to pay the required extra and receive the services they need and want while those who do not have money cannot receive even the services they would be entitled to without any extra cost.

The first stage of failure: A distorted value system

The thought that an individual vice of selfishness can be viewed as the core unit in accumulation of the communal good confuses the collective ethics particularly in those developing societies which have gone through swift and radical changes in their political and economic systems, while trying to still maintain their traditional ethical outlooks and cultural values (Wraith and Simpkins, 2010). For instance, many African countries that have experienced radical social transitions in a relatively short period of time, present good examples of how new political ideologies and economic policies force people to try to fit together the requirements of traditional morality, the demands of new economic systems and the requirements of the globalized value hierarchies based on individualized human rights. These societies have gone through radical social transformation with each new government introducing new and different policies from the former.

Just after the imperialists’ occupation of Africa, the tribal social hierarchies and traditional communalist values were forced to comply with colonial authoritarianism (van der Walt, 2019). People were taught to pass personal responsibility to those higher up in the social and professional hierarchy. On the other hand, distinctive individual moral judgment from the part of the colonized was neither assumed nor welcomed by the colonial rulers. After de-colonization the new independence of many African nations started with an African formulation of socialist doctrine that, at least in principle, was returning to the traditional African values of solidarity and egalitarianism. In practice, however, the one-party politics remained authoritarian and individual citizens’ rights were subordinated to the common good of the nation as it happened in Ghana and Tanzania.

The state authoritarianism that emphasized people’s social duties were towards the nation failed in awakening the desired traditional solidarity. Instead, it led into black markets and weak public economies (Verhoef, 2020). Thus, the failing African economies and the constant request from the international community as well as from the global markets pressured newly independent African countries to move on from centralized economy towards capitalist liberalization of markets and to multi-party democracy. The transformation in the economic system from centralized (socialist) economy to privatized (capitalist) markets in many cases may be a precondition for building a democratic political order (O’Neill, 2020). Conversely, the core values of democracy and rationalist economic values do not always go side by side. In its place, the sudden rise of market-economy with its capitalist values tends to

promote the sanctity of private property, rational maximization of personal profits, and the cult of the market forces led by the invisible hand as presented by Adam Smith (world-acclaimed capitalism economist).

What adds to the confusion of the values of the society is the less moderate liberal demand for tolerance that promotes pluralism (van Waarden, 2017). Thus, in originally communitarian societies the importation of individualist values of market economy creates a moral atmosphere with conflicting and competing moral requirements. At first the individualist value system may appear to contradict the traditional values of social obligation and family loyalty, but in the end the promotion of an individual’s autonomy and non-interference is supporting the enforcement of one’s original cultural identity in the name of freedom of choice. The traditional values themselves include wide range of social duties; community and family-based solidarity, both of which ask individuals to care for those close to them (Nyerere, 1968). In the new social context which mixes the imported individualist values (democracy, or free market state) with the traditionally more collectivist values (African socialist or communitarian way of life), the societal ethics are turned around: one’s traditional social duties become part of the scope of one’s private morality and the individualist requirement of impartiality and autonomy are to be the basis of the public ethics.

The ongoing modification on the point of emphasis between public purpose and private interest in public policies escalates people’s confusion on the requirements of public morality (Coffee, 2017). Simultaneously, this shift tends to also have an impact on people’s personal values and ethical outlooks. First, there is the everlasting clash between socialist and capitalist value systems as such. Second, both the socialist as well as the capitalist systems themselves in some respect conflict with the democratic value of equality and agent autonomy that are based on the principle of impartiality.

Since state cannot be trusted, a civil society as the collection of communities with internal and reciprocal loyalties adopts its own code of ethics, which reverses the requirements between the public and private moralities (Trnka & Trundle, 2017). This is not merely a conflict of interest between public and private interest, it is also a competition between very different moral systems themselves – as well as understanding what realizing their core values really means in our social and economic practice. As soon as the common understanding of the core meaning of moral is lost, public ethics weakens inevitably in equal measure. In a situation in which the private moral commitments have priority over the public goodness there might still be a certain level of predictability, but predictability is based on what we can call negative trust.

African Leaders and Corruption, the West African Experience

Historically all over Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, there is barely any country that can be exonerated when the count is made. From the arid desert in Mali to the sky-reaching hills of Kenya, from mineral rich Congo to the coast of South Africa, there seem to be one form of corruption bedeviling these countries. West and Central Africa harbors some of the poorest countries in the world (Igboin, 2016). According to UNDP as cited in Hickel (2020), of the 20 lowest ranking

sovereign nations in the United Nations' (UN) Human development Index, ten emerge from this region, in fact, of the 10 lowest ranked, 7 are from this region (UNDP, 2001). Several factors can be attributed to the persistence of untold poverty and backwardness of this region, corruption is certainly one of them. The discovery, exploitation, and exportation of oil and gas have brought great wealth to a tiny majority in Nigeria while the vast majority languishes in poverty and destitution (Orokpo & Mutong, 2018). Interestingly, Chad and Equatorial Guinea are on the threshold of a similar windfall. Paradoxically, the oil industry has historically ushered in opportunities for corruption on the widest scale imaginable.

Ever since nations in the region gained independence from colonial rule in the 1960's, periods of military rule have alternated with self-styled dictatorships and one-party regime, all of which have entrenched corruption into the very core of political and economic systems (Ubi & Iboye, 2019). Even though most countries have also seen years of democracy, and very recent times have witnessed quite a handful of transitions to multi-party-political systems, often, at the behest of international aid agencies. Interestingly, transitions of that nature have unmasked such governments. This instability can be traced to the longings of rival groups and opposition who believe, for example, in the Kenyan experience, that they have not been giving a piece of the national cake. The Burkina Faso aborted coup comes just after the successful coup in Guinea Bissau; failed one in Mauritania; rumor of coup in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana; and rumor of coup in some countries in West Africa in a space of about six months covering that period (Araoye, 2018). This is not in the least surprising in a region that leads the rest of Africa in political instability, coup, civil wars and political paralysis.

Tracing it back to the beginning of 2003, it is only in West Africa that there has been visibly, a coup (Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, and Guinea Bissau), aborted coup (Ghana, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea), rebel activities (Liberia and Ivory Coast), and coup leading to political paralysis (Guinea Bissau, Niger and Mauritania). These have further reduced the much-needed funds hitherto earmarked for infrastructural development and technological advancement. In Senegal, the 40-year rule of the Socialist party came to an end following the victory of Abdoulaye Wade in 2000 and the overwhelming victory of his *Sopi* coalition in the legislature. Evidence available now reveals different levels of corruption links between major state-owned enterprises and the many years of administration of former president Abdou Diouf. In March 2001, the former manager of the Senegalese Railway Company – who is also a prominent opposition politician – was arrested and accused of mismanagement of public funds.

Former president of Mali, Moussa Traore and several of his lieutenants recently stood trial for economic crimes against the state. Traore was accused of misappropriating 2 billion CFA francs (\$2.6 million) (Harsch, 2017). In Ghana, intervention by the media played a key role in ensuring that the presidential election that marked the end of 19 years of Jerry Rawlings' dictatorship and brought in John Kuffor was relatively free and fair for the first time in that country (Taylor, 2020). Burkina Faso suffered significant damage to its international standing following UN accusations in December 2000 that it was involved

in smuggling weapons to rebels in Sierra Leone and Angola and exporting conflict diamonds, collected by the Revolutionary United Front (Carisch, Rickard-Martin, & Meister, 2017).

Increasingly under pressure over alleged human rights abuses, President Paul Biya of Cameroon announced that he would prioritize the fight against corruption. A national Anti-Corruption Observatory was established in January 2000, and the government went on to establish Observatories within specific ministries. Cases have been uncovered – including fraud within the Education Ministry – but some questioned how far-reaching the Observatories will be (TI, 2018).

Equatorial Guinea has enjoyed remarkable financial advantages since oil production commenced in 1996, but the extent of corruption was such that President Teodoro Obiang Nguema forced the Prime Minister and his cabinet to resign in February 2001 (Yates, 2017). The President of the Supreme Court and the President of the Constitutional Court were also dismissed after a special anti-corruption commission exposed the embezzlement of funds in the judiciary.

Underdevelopment in Africa: Corruption the Cause or the Symptom?

In Africa, crime is both a cause and a symptom of chronic underdevelopment. The increasing disproportions between the wealthy and the poor in Africa, as well as the continent's booming cities and large youth population have made the situation particularly volatile (Nyongesa, 2019). This can be attributed to a widely perceived police corruption level and inefficiency - according to the UNODC report, only 11% of homicide cases in Africa end with a conviction and jail term, versus 63% in Asia and 69% in Europe (Rousseau, 2017).

Quite apart from poverty, another contributing factor is the continent's civil wars - in 2000, an alarming 50% of global war deaths occurred in Africa (Kikuta, 2020). The instability caused by armed conflict also creates openings for large-scale organized crime, which profit from the smuggling of drugs, persons and weapons. Although drug use in Africa consists primarily of locally produced cannabis, relatively sloppy customs services have made the continent an increasingly attractive transit point for narcotics en route to European and American markets (Carrier & Klantschnig, 2020). Dandurand (2017) asserted that human trafficking has become an issue of increasing concern among African police and politicians, but there must be greater cooperation by police forces in developed countries, as roughly half of all trafficked humans are destined for Europe.

In relation to arms trafficking, Africa has relatively few light arms overall, although an accurate estimate is nearly impossible (Falode, 2020). However, the smuggling and recycling of weapons between conflict zones, the large percentage of light arms in private hands, and the "disappearance" of military and police weapons mean that firearms are readily available, and give Africa one of the highest rates of gun violence. Additionally, while much weaponry is imported from developed countries in the West and former Soviet countries, several African countries could produce firearms and ammunition domestically; also, illicit handgun industries have been reported in Ghana, South Africa and elsewhere (Ibid).

It is sad to note that corruption is at the root of many of Africa's problems - if governments can uproot corruption in their police and civil service, the improved efficiency will go a long way towards ending killings, robberies and other crimes that are now carried out with impunity (Ilarious, 2020). What is more, many of Africa's civil wars have been caused by gangsters and rebels parading as freedom fighting benefactors wishing to control the state to get rich through the readily available corrupt system. Corruption and a poor civil service have desecrated Africa's image in the world, and been the cause of much of the continent's predicament.

This paper portends that donors must begin to be acquainted with the fact that crime fighting is a good investment, and must work with the police and security forces to combat the alarming crime rates. However, they must also recognize that by acknowledging the need for better enforcement, they are also acknowledging that they are failing in other ways – though enforcement is crucial, but it is still a secondary solution. The economic causes of crime must be addressed *ab initio* to reduce the demand for enforcement techniques. A probable way to solving this problem, at least temporarily, could include improving rural opportunities to stem the tide of uncontrolled urbanization, promoting micro-enterprise in order to provide young entrepreneurs legal money-making opportunities, and greater regional integration via the African Union, whose anti-crime office is currently well-intentioned but under-resourced.

Development aid to South Africa prior to 1994 provides an interesting case study on how bilateral donors, which traditionally interact and are often more comfortable with government-to-government arrangements, played a different role (Ojo, 2019). While supporting and engaging key civil society actors over many years, the donor community played an important role in bringing down one of the most malicious systems of racial oppression, apartheid. Donor support channeled millions of dollars, guilders, or to organizations opposed to apartheid. These contributions played a key role in ensuring that basic services were delivered to people on the ground whose right to citizenship was denied. Amundsen (2019) suggests that whereas aid was almost exclusively channeled into the NGO sector for anti-apartheid activities prior to 1994, foreign assistance was increasingly diverted to the South African government after 1994. Before 1994, the donor community appeared much more focused than is currently the case, actively gathering with a common agenda to clamp down on apartheid. In the period since 1994, the South African government requested donors to allow it to lead the process, which meant that donors largely relinquished coordination.

Anti-Corruption Agencies, Toothless Bulldogs or Witch-Hunt Machineries

Facts abound that Africa is about the most corrupt place in the world, this among other factors is seen as contributing to the stunted development and widespread impoverishment of many African states (Enweremadu, 2019). Six of the ten most corrupt countries considered by Transparency International are in sub-Saharan Africa. Besides, the fight against corruption have shown mixed results in recent years, and many fears that major international donors and partners are unwilling to exert leverage over African governments. For instance, an initiative to conform

to the rules in the extractive industries shows promise but is mostly untested to its fullest capacity. Some experts suggest that African interest in attracting foreign investments will serve to stimulate more substantive efforts to fight corrupt practices.

African Initiative in Fighting Corruption

Corruption in Africa can be viewed from many different angles: from high-level political graft on the scale of millions of dollars to low-level bribes collected by university lecturers, police officers (Enweremadu, 2019). Undoubtedly, political graft imposes the largest direct financial cost on a country; petty bribes have a terrible effect on basic societal institutions and undermine public trust in the government. An interesting example: The East African Bribery Index of 2009 as cited in Baez-Camargo et al. (2020) reports that of all the East Africans polled, over half paid bribes to access public services that should have been freely accessed *ab initio*. Academic research proves that graft also increases the cost of doing business. It shows that a point improvement in a country's Transparency International Corruption Score translates to a Productivity Increase equal to four percent of Gross National Product (GDP) (Transparency International report, 2018.).

The increasing unrest in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger-Delta is primarily fueled by genuine agitations that all the communities in the area do not see tangible benefit from oil extraction and exploration on their land (Orokpo & Mutong, 2018). Much of the oil revenue meant for the region's citizens and infrastructural development is continually siphoned off. The pervasiveness of corruption also distorts the political process. Experts say many public officials in Africa seek re-election because holding political office gives them access to the state's treasury, and importantly, immunity from prosecution. When the stakes for remaining in office are so high, candidates are more likely to buy votes or rig an election,

In the past ten years, African governments have made some efforts to fight corruption. In many cases, they have been spurred by international donors pushing for transparency and good governance as well as domestic pressure to fulfill promises of reform made on the campaign trail. Experts say countries such as Liberia, Rwanda, and Tanzania have made substantive progress on reducing corruption (Ilarious, 2020). But many countries, including Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa, have made meager progress on fighting graft. All three countries have established anti-corruption agencies that seek to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption. But a 2008 paper from the UN Economic Commission for Africa says such commissions have been largely inefficient and ineffective due to their uncertain political footing. Often funded and overseen by the executive branch, anti-corruption agencies can be eliminated (as in South Africa, where the Scorpions investigating unit was disbanded in 2009), and their leaders can be sidelined or forced out of the country (as in Nigeria and Kenya).

The Kenyan Experience

The experience of Kenya demonstrates how corruption can tip a seemingly stable country into political crisis. Kenyan analysts widely agree that the violence following the December 2007 elections, where the zero-sum nature of Kenyan politics played out (Nyongesa, 2019). In other words, unless one's ethnic

group was in office, there were no possibilities for economic or political advancement for that region. Michela Wrong in her book *It is Our Turn to Eat*: "What greater corruption could there be than stealing an election?". Statistics show that political patronage in Kenya's public spending has exacerbated economic and regional inequalities (Wrong, 2010). Nyanza Province, for instance, which is majority Luo, is the poorest province in Kenya. One can begin to understand why political graft and financial corruption has created a new type of politics in Africa – 'do or die politics as popularly preached by Nigeria's former president, Olusegun Obasanjo.

Interestingly, Kenya has a range of legislation on the books that should prevent corruption. A Prevention of Corruption Act has been established in the country since 1956, and procurement laws have been revised to increase transparency. Since 2002, an anti-corruption commission has been charged with the prevention and investigation (though not the prosecution) of corruption cases. Most of these efforts, however, have fallen victim to the overwhelming power of the executive branch as is the case with almost all African nations where enormous power is vested in the executive arm of government. Forty-five constitutional amendments have strengthened the executive's power since independence in 1963; the judiciary is effectively controlled by the president. Kenya's 4th estate regularly investigates and break corruption stories, but the exposure of graft rarely results in legal proceedings. The anti-corruption commission's work has also languished.

In 2004, its former head, John Githongo, uncovered evidence that a nonexistent company called Anglo Leasing was awarded several huge government contracts (Bachelard, 2010). The scandal reached the highest levels of the Kenyan cabinet and cost the country as much as \$1 billion. The Attorney-General must approve any prosecutions (as is the case in many African states) however, and he declined to prosecute the case. The United Kingdom wanted to investigate Anglo Leasing itself, but the Attorney-General prevented its fraud office from moving forward. Kenyan lawyers and civil society members who advocate for good governance agree that judicial reform is imperative and argue that the public must step up as well.

The Role of the International Community in Stamping Out Corruption in Africa

There are mixed views on how much influence outside actors can exert over African governments. Some analysts believe the United States and other Western governments have the power to force greater transparency, particularly in countries that receive significant levels of foreign aid (Tumbo, 2018). For instance, Kenya established its anti-corruption commission in part to unfreeze \$1 billion in aid. But international watchdogs say Western governments and multilateral institutions are often hesitant to use the power they have. For example, when the World Bank agreed to finance the controversial Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline, it claimed it would ensure the subsequent revenues were used for poverty reduction in both countries (Sovacool, 2017). It suspended lending in 2006, but when the Chadian government threatened to cut off oil production, it resumed lending and then relaxed its restrictions on how the government spent oil revenues. In 2008, it withdrew from the pipeline project altogether; the project continues to have private-sector funding.

The United States has attempted to discourage corruption through aid tied to performance on a series of governance indicators (Cardoni, Kiseleva, & Lombardi, 2020). As African governments continue to court foreign investors, including U.S. companies, some experts believe they will make improvements in governance that reduce corruption. The Kenyan government, for instance, is beginning to realize that its reputation for high levels of corruption is discouraging foreign investment. Foreign investment was \$2.54 billion in 2008, according to the CIA World Fact book, but financial analysts say the country underperforms in attracting foreign investors. Some Western donors express concern about the rise in Chinese investment in Africa, suggesting that China's no-strings-attached approach to aid is undermining anti-corruption efforts. But Chinese academics and some U.S. analysts say China is a relatively new presence in Africa and it will learn that corruption negatively affects its investments. Critics suggest that China will continue to make deals with corrupt governments, such as its multibillion-dollar agreement with the Democratic Republic of Congo, if it obtains access to prized natural resources.

Conclusions and Recommendation

In curbing corruption in Africa, experts suggest a variety of methods for African governments to battle corruption, with a special emphasis on transparency and accountability. The war against corruption can be fought through the creation of anti-corruption agencies. Importantly, there should be efforts to increase the utility/effectiveness of anti-corruption agencies. This is supported by the fact only two countries, Namibia and Malawi, had watchdog groups that are deemed to have effective anti-corruption agencies by experts. Moreover, this paper underscores the need to strengthen existing institutions since institutional weakness facilitates corruption, particularly imbalances between a strong executive branch and weak legislature and judiciary. Rather than dreaming up extravagant short cuts, donors should be pouring their money into the boring old institutions African regimes have deliberately starved of cash over the years: the police force, the judicial system and civil service.

Government ministries must overhaul their method of disbursing funds. African governments must consciously separate policymaking; allocation of money to specific development activities, whether health services, road building, or schooling; and the supply of such activities. This paper underscores the need for African countries to reduce dependence on foreign aid. This suggests that by encouraging accountability to donors instead of citizens, foreign aid encourages graft and breaks the fundamental relationship between a state and its people, she argues. For instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, and Sierra Leone, which are on Transparency International's top ten corruption list, receive hundreds of millions of dollars in aid. Some say reducing non-humanitarian aid would force African governments to up tax revenues, increasing accountability at the local level. Leaders such as Rwandan President Paul Kagame have stated their interest in ending dependency on foreign aid.

One way to tackle institutionalized corruption is to promote professionalism by encouraging people to do their jobs according to ethical standards while simultaneously convincing

them that professionalism does not mean that they would have to leave their ethical beliefs and social commitments aside. Teaching the codes of ethics of various professions is one step in enforcing the personal responsibility of individuals as professionals and as citizens. There is consensus that the various reasons and the motivational basis that lead to the institutionalization of corruption we may find different ways to break the vicious circle between corruption and poverty. One of the ways may be to invest in teaching professional ethics and respect for professionals. Encouraging people to be proud of what they do and make them want to do it as well as possible, might turn out to be a more effective cure than preaching moral 'betterment' and 'social rehabilitation' from individual vice to virtue or the progress from corrupted culture into a 'civilized' one, or even the present approach of donor aids and donor control.

For democracy to work in every different type of societies, the citizens must recognize their personal rights and responsibilities as political and moral actors: their right to demand upright and corruption-free governance and their responsibilities in building a corruption free society based on professionalism. Thus, particularly in countries in which corruption is institutionalized, civic education should go hand in hand with the teaching of professional ethics. Above all, Africa cannot be secure and free until the people's human rights are respected and protected by the government. And more importantly, the world cannot be considered secure if many a people lack the elementary condition for life worthy of man. Similarly, Africa cannot be considered secure if millions of people go hungry, do not have a roof over their heads and are jobless and sick indefinitely, with the most basic human right, the right to life disregarded. Over and above, good governance, transparency, accountability, and the rule of law are the keys to tackling corruption in the society, as history has proven repeatedly that corrupt leaders cannot wage any effective war against corruption.

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