THE NEED TO INCORPORATE TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION AT LOCAL LEVEL IN NIGERIA

Suleiman Danladi Hamza*
School of Social Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia
Malaysia
Department of Political Science and Administration
Yobe State University, Damaturu Nigeria.
Nigeria

Sivamurugan Pandian
School of Social Sciences
Universiti Sains Malaysia
Malaysia

*Corresponding author’s Email: suleimandanladi@yahoo.com
Research Highlights
This study examined the need to incorporate traditional leaders in the fight against corruption at local levels in Nigeria. The study proved the extent to which corruption has reached at local level and Nigeria at large. For example, shreds of evidence showed how local government chairmen have squandered and mismanaged local government fund. However, the study indicated that traditional leaders as the custodians of culture, norms, traditions, and moral values of the people can help in reducing the excesses of corruption being perpetrated at the local level and Nigeria at large.

Research Objectives
This study examined how traditional leaders can be incorporated in the fight against corruption at local level in Nigeria

Methodology
The study used secondary sources of data like journal articles, Newspapers, Magazines, government and non-governmental reports, among others. For the journals indexed journals such as Scopus/ISI and other non-indexed peer-reviewed were considered. With regards to analysis content analysis was used.

Results
The results of this study indicated that corruption at all levels in Nigeria has been institutionalized to the extent that it has become part and parcel of our system. Moreover, evidence shows that people nowadays struggle for the leadership positions at the local levels in Nigeria to enrich themselves at the detriment of the masses. For example, Akinselure (2017) narrates that 33 Ex-local government Caretaker Chairmen of Oyo State are under probe by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission of Nigeria (EFCC) for allegedly mismanaging over N300 Million (821,917 USD) allocated to their respective local governments to fight the invasion of Boko Haram during 2015 election in their LGs. More recently, the Chairman of Potiskum local government in Yobe State was suspended over misappropriation of N38.9 Million (106,575.342 USD). Furthermore, Akpu (2017) reports that the suspension of Potiskum LG Chairman came after having confirmed by the committee set up the Yobe State House of Assembly to investigate the matter. Similarly, the then Chairman of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) reveals that from 1999-2007, 774 local governments in Nigeria received the sum of N3.3 billion from the Federation Account for the provision of services to the people across the local governments in the country (Adeyemi, 2012). Unfortunately, the services provided with this huge amount of money did not correlate the actual amount received by the local governments.

In view of this increasing level of corruption, government is urging the traditional leaders to support the fight against corruption. For example, in his address to the traditional leaders on the complexity of the fight against corruption in Nigeria, President Buhari urges them to help in the fight against corruption in Nigeria by providing with the appropriate agency (EFCC) information that could be useful in dealing with the excess of corruption in the country. He added that one of the issues that delay fight against corruption is intelligent information gathering which traditional rulers who are close to the people at grassroot can contribute a lot in this regard (Businessday, 2019). In similar vein, the Director General of the National
Orientation Agency, stated that the fight against corruption in Nigeria requires concerted efforts whereby all must be inclusive particularly the traditional leaders as who wield powers and command respect and loyalty from their people (Idoko, 2018).

Findings
Based on the literature review the findings traditional leaders as the custodians of norms, culture, traditions, and moral values of the people can contribute in reducing the incidence of corruption prevailed and perpetrated by the local government officials by a way of addressing them (Chizea & Osumah, 2015). Moreover, the findings reveal that traditional leaders being closer to the people at the local level can provide with the agencies like Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) responsible for the fight against corruption useful information that can help in curbing the menace in the country. This shows that the traditional leaders have the potentials with which corruption could be fought and mitigated or eradicated but the only stumbling block is that traditional leaders have no formal role in Nigeria.

In conclusion, it is obvious that traditional leaders have the potentials with which government can use in curbing the long-aged menace of corruption at local level and the country at large. Therefore, there is a need to assign formal roles to traditional leaders to enable them to contribute much in addressing the social issues and problems like that of corruption in Nigeria.

References