Corruption and Unethical Behavior in Public Sector Organizations: A Specific Test of Social Learning Theory

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Abstract:
Corruption is one single drawback on development and growth of developing countries and sub-Saharan Africa is no exception. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has seen improvement in governance but this has limited influence on the level of corruption. United Nations report indicates corruption is still on the rise in public sector organizations in SSA despite improvements in democratic governance. This study is a model that explains why corrupt practices and malfeasant behaviors are prevalent among bureaucrats in sub-Saharan Africa. Drawing on social learning theory, this study posits that the propensity to engage in corruption is motivated by rationalization, socialization, and institutionalization of corrupt practices. On that basis, this study develops ten propositions based on social learning theory to explain the motivation behind corruption in public sector organizations in SSA. This study offers the concept for understanding corruption in public sector organizations in SSA while providing direction for future studies.
Keywords: Corruption, social learning theory, Sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana

INTRODUCTION:

Several studies have examined corruption from different perspectives with different solutions; however, these approaches have done little to erase the cancer. A majority of these studies have examined corruption from organizational level. The underlying reasons for this level of analysis are that organizations are seen as the basic unit of corrupt practices and as such, the window through which corruption climate of a nation can be examined (Luo, 2004). Proponents of organizational level of corruption believe that corruption is difficult to eradicate because organizations are not prepared to resist the practices. This study takes different stand, deviating from the focus on the organizational level and examines corruption from the individual employee (transaction-level) who is part of the organization.

Research on corruption has offered several insights into organizational environments, organizational behaviors, and organizational infrastructure as the root causes of corruption. However, these studies have been less successful because theyhave neglected the individual who is at the center of the corrupt practices and the organization itself. Corruption is a collective activity of individuals that in sum make the organizational behavior. This means a better understanding of corruption may not be achieved without examining the role of individuals in organizations. Of course, this is not to suggest that the studies on the organization levels are irrelevant. Rather, the position of this study is that understanding the individual behavior will give credence to comprehend the organizational behavior and corruption within organizations.

Corruption distinctions in the literature include political versus bureaucratic (the public official involved), bribery versus extortion (the direction of influence), grand versus petty (the size and frequency of transaction) (Luo, 2004). Importantly, the efforts to examine these different types of corruption have neglected the motivation behind them, leading to the difficulty in addressing corruption within organizations. This study is focused on the motives for corrupt practices and malfeasant behaviors among individual employees. Central to this study is the underlying motive for an individual to engage in corruption. This study explores the research question: what motivates individual employees to engage in corruption in SSA Africa? While there are different aspects of organizations including, public, private, and non-profits, organization in this study is referred to public or government institutions. Hence, the focus of individual employees is the bureaucrats that work

for public sector organizations.The rest of the study is as follows. The first section defines corruption in public sector organizations. Next, the study examines corruption in SSA. Relevant literature is reviewed on causes and motivation for corruption followed by specific testable propositions. The paper concludes with a discussion, the limitations, and a proposed agenda for future research.

WHAT IS CORRUPTION?

Corruption is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon which has different forms and functions in different contexts. Corruption is generally regarded as the abuse of public office for private or material gain (Frimpong & Jacques, 1999; Robinson, 1998). Following Transparency International (2005), this article defines corruption as the misuse of entrusted power by public official for private gain. Corruption, in the narrow sense of this study, relates to a deviant bureaucratic behavior motivated by private gain. Among corrupt practices include bribery, extortion, fraud, and favoritism (Luo, 2004). Bribery is the most prevalent corrupt practices in public sector organizations and it involves the payment either in cash or kind for a service or reward. Bribery has different terminologies, including, 'kickbacks', 'red envelopes', 'gratuities', 'baksheesh', 'grease money', 'facilitation payment' and 'expediting fees' (Luo, 2004, p. 122). Bribes are offered by the citizen outside the organization. Extortion on the other hand, is directly opposite bribery which is demanded by the public official before or after services are rendered. These officials extort money because they have power to do so. Fraud on the other hand, is an "economic crime that involves some kind of trickery, swindle or deceit" (Luo, 2004, p. 122). Favoritism has to do with offering favor to friends, family members, and colleagues at the expense of public interest or public good.

Favoritism is a corrupt distribution of public resources by a public official without regard to public interest.
Corruption varies across cultures and geographic areas but its market is available in every corners of the world, particularly, areas with lack of transparency (Luo, 2004). Luo (2004) identified various natures of corruption and suggested that corruption is context based, norm-deviated, power-related, virtually covert, intentional, and perceptional (Luo, 2004). Corruption has different meaning; hence, it is based on ideology and culture. These contextual differences make corruption universal corruption enforcement difficult. For example, the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act 1977

(FCPA) defines bribery as "the offer, promise or gift of undue pecuniary or other advantage, whether made directly or through intermediaries, to a person holding public office for that person to commit an act or refrain from acting in relation to the performance of official duties". This definition iseffective neither outside the USA nor with non-US companies. This is because it is not universally accepted. Simply, corruption can mean different things to different people based on the culture and the ideology of the people living within a geographical area. What may be referred as bribe in a particular place can be regarded as gift in another place. This means corruption is norm-deviated because it is always illegal and unauthorized. The context may vary but it is illegal and against the status quo, be it in kind or in cash. For example, there are situations where a corrupt act has no legal base. Meaning, there is no law forbidding the act. In this instance, morality take precedence over legality, resulting in the use of laws based on norms.

Corruption is power related. The public official extorting money or receiving the bribe is always at the position of power. According to Luo (2004), the power of this public official is created by market imperfections or institutional positions. This kind of power is referred to as discretionary authority. Corruption is completely covert, hidden, secretive, underground, and usually, informal. For this reason, corrupt practices have no written or documented contract. It is usually made through contact through oral communication which has no documentation. This makes prosecution very difficult and finding people guilty of corrupt practices very hard because identities are concealed through maneuvering. As Luo (2004) posits, corruption is informal, made possible by the incompleteness of the formal system. Unfortunately, scholars have failed to differentiate between corruption and maladministration. Maladministration results from unintentional act or practices of a public official. Corruption on the other hand is intentional, motivated by personal gain. An illegal misconduct without personal gain may not necessarily be an act of corruption. That is why corruption is treated by economists as profit maximization using discretionary power. Because corruption is a behavior perceived and perpetrated by public officials, it is a dynamic concept that is subject to change based on the perception.

Luo (2004) in his model has identified four different types of malfeasance behaviors that characterized organizations. These include system malfeasance, procedural malfeasance, categorical malfeasance, and structural malfeasance. The

system malfeasance is the situation where the entire organizational system is characterized by corporate corrupt practices, hence, very corrupt. Most countries in SSA are at the verge of this situation. Corruption has permeated every public institution. It has become the norm, to pay bribe for services; be it at the educational sector or at the trade agency. System malfeasance according to Luo (2004) is a system-wide fraud, with extensive corrupt activities at the entire hierarchy of the organization. The society begins to believe that corrupt practices outweigh the costs, hence, necessary to engage in corruption. At this point, senior managers engage in corruption, and junior officers are permitted to engage in this deviant behavior.

The procedural malfeasance according to Luo (2004) is the deviation from the ethics of the organization by a few employees or sub-unit of the organization. This kind of corruption prevails in some aspect of the organization. However, when appropriate measures are not taken, this can spread to the entire organization, leading to system malfeasance which becomes difficult to eradicate. Categorical malfeasance exists in certain levels of the organization. Just like the procedural malfeasance, the categorical malfeasance affects few individuals but in a specific level of the organization. This could be the functional or departmental level. This can also spread to the entire system when it is not appropriately addressed. Individual employees within the entire organization who become aware of the practices develop the interest in joining that department or that functional level where the practices is prevalent. For example, the Motor Traffic and Transport Unit (MTTU) of the Ghana police service is widely regarded as the hub of corruption since theirdaily interaction with the drivers and motorists result in bribery and extortion. For this reason, other officers in other departments may develop the interest of receiving additional training in order to join the unit.

The structural malfeasance according to Luo (2004) exists in organizations where centralization is highly practiced. This type of malfeasance may involve both top and bottom hierarchies but this may not be system malfeasance. However, it could develop into system malfeasance when it is not addressed. For example, in approving a permit for building where the permit has to move through the ranks to the top hierarchy, bribe is offered at every hierarchy before the permit is approved. A situation in which managers at different levels must sign the same permit will result in bribery and extortion at all levels. This becomes the

structural malfeasance and suggests that individual employees with low moral are more likely to engage in corrupt practices for the benefit of their personal gains.

In summary and as already stated above, corruption is found everywhere across all cultures. However, it is more prevalent in societies with limited transparency and good governance. The most transparent or less corrupt societies are found in western world or developed world whilst the most corrupt societies are located in developing countries in Africa and Asia (Transparency International, 2013). This study is focused on corruption in developing countries with transitional economies, particularly, sub-Saharan African.

CORRUPTION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The problem of corruption has gained considerable interest due primarily to the notion that democratic system do impact on the level of corruption. This has not been the case in Africa. As cited by the World Development Report, "corruption is one of the single greatest obstacles to economic development and social development in Africa" (UNODC 2005, p. 15). There are many problems that confront Africa; however, corruption is one of the root causes of social and economic underdevelopment, the most challenging, and perhaps the hardest to overcome. Although several scholars posit that democracy is a panacea for corruption eradication, this position has not been proven to be true in Africa as more than half of countries in Africa have now had various forms of democratic system of government yet that has not affected the level or tide of corruption.

Corruption is a development issue in Africa, because it affects every soul. Jonathan Lucas, the Southern Africa Representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2009 labelled corruption as "a crime against development, democracy, education, prosperity, public health and justice - what many would consider the pillars of social well-being" (UNODC 2005, 13). Africa is well known as the most corrupt continent on the planet by Transparency International's (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). Whilst sub-Saharan Africa is one of the most corrupt regions in the world, it is equally the most under-developed in the world. Several countries in SSA commits various sums of money into the fight against corruption only to realize corruption keep accelerating higher than it was previously. At the core of every development program in SSA is the anti-corruption agenda to ensure that developmental projects are successfully implemented.

The pervasive form of corruption in SSA is the one characterized in public service and this is the kind of corruption citizens encounter daily. Places of such corruption include schools, hospitals, local licensing offices, and police check points. A more higher form of corruption where citizens have to offer higher sums of money as a bribe in order to receive services take place in ports and harbors, perpetrated by custom officials and passport office perpetrated by immigration officials. The current and more advanced form of corruption that is very damaging to the public service is the issue of "ghost names" on government payroll. For example, the problem is very devastating in Ghana to the extent that the World Bank and IMF had to intervene to ensure that "ghost names" are removed from government payroll.

Corruption in SSA always takes different twists and always very complicated to tackle. This kind of corruption described above is proliferated among bureaucrats who interact with citizens on daily bases. Politicians and elected public officials are noted for grand corruption which is popularly referred to as "kickbacks". "Kickbacks" are huge sums of monies received in exchange for various government contracts from private contractors. In Ghana, "kickbacks" are regularly pegged at 10% of the total cost of the contract and has been something that has been going on through various governments since the return to democratic system of government in 1992. The return to democratic system of government in many SSA countries has resulted in different forms of corruption. Popular among them is the electoral corruption which includes the purchase of votes with money and other forms of gifts and kind favors during elections. Elections are characterized by various forms of corruption, including special favors, promises of jobs in political offices, special favors. All these forms of corruption have been widely reported in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Togo.

The achievements of democratic governance could have given credence to transparency and good governance in SSA. However, this has not been the issue with corruption. The ranking of countries in SSA by the corruption watchdog Transparency International does not speak well for the widespread of democratic system of government across the continent. The corruption perception index by Transparency International is based on interviews with 114,270 people in 107 countries. The barometer uses a public opinion survey to estimate the prevalence of corruption across national institutions across the globe. Many countries in SSA have

corruption high on government's radar to tackle corruption and eradicate it from public sector organizations. However, these efforts come short of the real solutions. The opposition political parties mount criticism on the government for failing to address the corruption menace. However, when they win elections and form government, the situation is no different from the previous government. Recently, religious institutions have also joined the debate on the issues of corruption, calling on the government to go the extra mile on addressing the problem. For example, in Ghana, the issue of corruption does not fall at the door step of the government alone. Corruption is a behavior and is gradually becoming societal norm in Ghana.

Most public sector organizations in SSA are regarded as very corrupt. A recent report on corruption among the rank and file of the Kenyan Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission is alarming. The rumbling of corruption in the commission which is expected to live above the normal standard has become a subject of debate among public opinion. In Ghana, a report by Institute of Economic Affairs,Ghana (IEA) ranked Ghana Police Service as the most corrupt institution in Ghana. This was followed by the Office of the President, the Parliament of Ghana (Legislators), and the Judicial Service (Judges and Magistrates) (IEA, 2014). There is nothing entirely surprising in these reports. What is most alarming in these reports is that the very institutions that are supposed to enforce the laws and punish violators arethe same that are at the center of corrupt practices.

While the literature on corruption indicates that education has major role to play in reducing corruption in a country, this has not been the case in SSA countries. There is no doubt that the position of Feoktistova (2014) is legitimate, that the quality of human resources in a country is predetermined by education. From the literature, education is the most important human resources management. If the quality of the human resources depends on education, then a critical examination of education is necessary to understand corruption that has become societal norm in countries across SSA. Aside from the quality, higher education is considered as the moral enterprise, because education is guided by commitments to things that are morally right and fundamentally good (Long, 1992). Long (1992) in his study acknowledged that education has intellectual and financial benefits, however, for these intellectual and financial benefits to actually materialized, morality as a predetermined factor cannot be overlooked. More

importantly, studies show a direct relationship between enrolment in tertiary education and corruption (Hofstede, 2001). For example, teacher absenteeism is very high in many SSA countries even at the tertiary level. This is because a majority of teachers are engaged in private tutoring for their personal gain, neglecting their official duties at the public sector. This undermines teaching and learning in tertiary institutions as well as research and academic development. In a study by Transparency International (2013) on teacher absenteeism, Ghana is ranked fourth country behind Kenya, Uganda, and India with countries with most teacher absenteeism between 2004 and 2011. Unfortunately, this situation of teacher absenteeism in SSA is regarded as normal and anything normal becomes a norm that society sees as appropriate.

Payment of bribe to enter educational system is not a hidden truth in Africa. The increase in population across the SSA region with the limited number of quality public schools and the high cost of private education have heightened the appetite for teachers and heads of schools to take more bribesto admit students. On corruption perception in education, Transparency International (2013) ranked Ghana and Cameroon are ranked behind Bosnia and Herzegovina. This report is consistent with a 2008 survey of 1,020 households in Ghana which found that 48 per cent of Ghanaians were paying additional fees for private tutoring in primary education.

The most alarming about the level of corruption in SSA countries is the mass media (major media houses). An ethnographic study by Hasty (2005) indicates the high level of informal exchanges of money, favors, and food between journalists and their sources are essential to news gathering in Ghana. Specifically, Hasty (2005) found that journalists and editors are more interested in selling newspapers than interrogating the desires of the reading public.A case in point is the informal exchange of monies between the political party in power and journalists in which journalists turn blind eye to reporting any serious corrupt activities within government is very prevalent in Ghana (Hasty, 2005). The common term for bribery among journalists in Ghana is termed as "Soli" Which means solidarity—a solidarity with those in powerful position and government institutions. The problem is devastating because every program organized and where the media houses are invited, money in the form of transportation and food must be provided to all the journalists present in order for the program to be aired or reported in the print media.

Africa in particular has some unwritten rules which are highly in practice in countries across SSA. The first unwritten rule about corruption is that the 'culture' allows and encourages corruption. There is no honor in honesty when it comes to daily life and in particular, working for a state organization. When you work in a government agency or state own organization, the expectation is that you must make money. The "must" of making money is not about your legitimate remuneration, but rather to use your position to make more money and fast. The expectation from family and friends is high, such that you are regarded as a fool if you failed to use your position in a public sector organization to make money. In fact, those who amass wealth illegally are those who turn to gain respect in the society, including from the churches; they are people that are worshiped. Those who have money are those who sit in high places in public gathering. How you got the wealth is not the question but how much you accumulate. In the churches and religious institutions, those who have the wealth are those who sit on high tables, they are adored and are called all kinds of names. They support the church with ill-gotten monies without a question of the source. Even if everybody is aware of it, it is accepted, once there is gain out there. Politicians come to the churches with their ill-gotten wealth and sit on the high seats in the churches. This means the aim of serving the people is no longer the primary target for politicians who run for office; it is about how much money one can accumulate within the shortest time possible before leaving public office (Adam, 2015).

Public office holders twist and bend the rules to meet their own expectations, friends, and family members. Employment is not a matter of merit but a matter of affiliations, including church, political party, family, and friendship. There are many people employed in public offices that donot merit the position. This has resulted in rampant corruption as the officers are there to serve the interest of those affiliations through which the job was secured. There are occasionally when one will hear of corruption investigations. These investigations are only to appear as if the government is zero tolerance for corruption. However, in many cases, the government or the bodies entrusted to fight corruption in SSA never investigate corruption or attempt to address it in a meaningful way.

Causes of Corruption

There are several studies on corruption causes, consequences and solution. In a survey by Transparency

International between 1990 and 2000 found that there are over 4000 books and research articles published on corruption (Global Corruption Report, 2001). Majority of these publications (74%) focused on issues on politics and public administration while 10% was on the historical perspective of corruption. Of the 4000 published books and journal articles, 9% focused on law and judiciary, 4% on economics, 2% on culture and 1% on business ethics and morality (Global Corruption Report, 2001).

Various disciplines have different perspective on the causes of corruption and the remedy to the challenge also varies (Luo, 2004). However, as old as the problem of corruption confronts the world, the solution to the menace remains a misery in all the disciplines. For example, political scientists believe that lack of transparency in institutions, inadequate remuneration to public sector employees are the causes of wide-spread corruption in governments. Economists hold the view that corruption is attributed to weak economic institutions that are not transparent. Legal luminaries hold the strong view that the laws and its enforcements are the root causes of corruption. Sociologists traces corruption to social and cultural factors.

According to Luo (2004), all the various disciplines have not been able to address corruption from a behavior perspective. Perhaps, this is because measuring corruption has always been a major challenge for researchers. Because corruption is covet, undocumented, unofficial and illegal, studies rely on perception measurements from the World Bank (WB) and Transparency International (TI). This explains why cross-country regression or macro effects of corruption have dominated the empirical literature (Lee and Guven, 2013) as opposed to micro effects.

MACRO-LEVEL DETERMINANTS OF CORRUPTION

Among the determinants of corruption across countries include size of government, economic factors (GDP), level of human resources (human development index), geography, history, the size of the informal sector, and the centralization of government. As previously stated, studies examining corruption at micro level is limited. Further, the empirical studies on the causes or determinants of corruption use perception of corruption to measure the level of corruption. This explains why the use of economic and political factors has dominated the literature on the causes of corruption. In a

meta-analysis of 42 empirical studies on corruption, Judge, McNatt and Xu (2011) examine the determinants of corruption using economic, political/legal and socio-cultural variables. They found support for all the antecedents examined with correlation between .40 and .45.. All the determinants were associated with corruption with political/legal effects highly correlated with corruption. Similarly, Pieroni and d'Agostino (2013) examine the relationship between economic freedom and corruption. The authors used firm data in a cross-country survey, modeling the cross-country variations of economic freedom and corruption. Their results showed that there is a relationship between economic freedom and corruption. The authors concluded that limited competitive policies and regulations are likely to result in corruption. Finally, in their study on the determinants of corruption in Italy, Del Monte and Papagni (2007) examined statistics on crimes in public administration. They found support for economic variables and political and cultural influences. For example, their results suggested that government consumption, level of development, party concentration, presence of voluntary organizations, and absenteeism at national elections all significantly have impact on the level of corruption

The size of the informal sector in a country has also been found to determine the level of corruption in a country. Some of have also suggested that income inequality and the size of the informal sector may have marginal association with corruption, implying that large informal sector play significant role in increasing corruption in a country (Dobsona and Ramlogan-Dobson, 2012). Dutta, Kar, and Roy (2013) investigated the association between higher corruption and higher levels of employment in the informal sector. The found that where there are higher levels of employment in the informal sector, corruption is likely to be higher. The informal sector in developing countries in Africa is very large. In Ghana, for example, the informal sector contributes more than 60% of the labor force. This is similar in other developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa where economic activities are mostly at the informal sector.

Dong and Torgler (2013) in their study examined the causes of corruption in China using fixed effects and instrumental variables. The authors foundthat higher educational attainment, greater openness, access to media, higher wages of public servants and a higher representation of women in the national assembly influences the level of corruption. Similar to education is human development index. Sims, Gong, and Ruppel (2012) measured human development

index of 68 countries that accounted for 80% of the world population. The authors found support for their hypothesis that power distance and human development index have relationship with corruption. In examining the causes of corruption, Goel and Nelson (2010) examined history, geography and government of over 100 countries across the globe. The authors found that both the size and scope of government determines the level of corruption in a country. They also found that countries with institutions with the history of corruption have persistent rent-seeking. Societies with centralized systems of governments are also likely to be breeding ground for corrupt activities, because the structure of the government has been reported to have an impact on the level of corruption in a country (Iwasaki and Suzuki, 2012). A study based on 24 former communist countries found that the payments of bribe are higher in a centralized bureaucratic structure, particularly, in dealing with taxes and custom levies (Diaby and Sylwester, 2014). Until the introduction of the structural adjustment program in developing countries in Africa which was the turning point from autocratic system of government to democratic system of government, power in many African countries were highly centralized. Ghana, for example, adopted the structural adjustment program in the mid-1980s and subsequently, democratic system of government in early 1990s. Unfortunately, although Ghana has had over 20 years of democratic system of governance with decentralization of administrative structures, these efforts have not been smooth, suggesting that it is not just the system of government, but rather the people in those systems as well.

THEORY AND PROPOSITIONS

This paper draws from the theoretical framework proposed by Ashforth and Anand (2003) to develop tested propositions regarding the motivation behind corruption in public sector organizations in SSA. Ashforth and Anand (2003) posit that the perpetuation of corruption in organizations could be attributed to three main mechanisms: rationalization, socialization, and institutionalization. Rationalization is the first step by which a society becomes very corrupt beyond imagination. Once individuals rationalize their behaviors and see nothing wrong with it, it grows and becomes an institutional cancer. Ashforth and Anand (2003) use the term rationalizing ideologies to depict the ongoing corruption within an organization which become self-sealing belief system that at the long run neutralizes the stigma that corruption is evil. The ideology

of making corruption a justifiable act becomes ingrained in the institution and is perceived as not a bad behavior. Deviant behaviors among groups become sub-culture that also neutralizes corrupt behaviors.

One of the lee-way for corruption to take place within organizations has to do with legality. There are rules and regulations in every organization. However, these rules cannot in anyway cover the entire life within the organization. More importantly, some of the rules may become outdated, due to many circumstances, including technology, introduction of new systems or even new regulations. According to Ashforth and Anand (2003) the "slippage between behavior and rules provides latitude" for individuals to engage in corrupt practices (p. 20). Laws and regulations within an organization are meant to regulate the behavior of individuals and groups. However, laws can also be created to legitimatimize unethical behavior, particularly, when the law is silent on certain kinds of unethical activities. This could result in the law, "paving the way for individuals to legitimate" their corrupt behaviors (Ashforth and Anand, 2003, p. 18).

Proposition1: Public sector employees will rationalize their corrupt behavior on the grounds that the laws and regulations of the organization do not specifically forbidthe unethical behavior.

Employees and individuals are also likely to engage in corruptiondue to certain unique circumstances. These circumstances may include peer-pressure, financial difficulties, being deceived by subordinates, peers and superiors, or existing precedents. In this case, these individuals will justify their behavior based on the notion that "everyone else does it, that they only play a small part" (Ashforth and Anand, 2003, p. 18). As the behavior is repeated over and over, the behavior becomes a standard practice. The study proposes the following:

Proposition2: Public sector employees will rationalize their corrupt behavior on the grounds that it is a standard practices within the organization.

Proposition 3: Public sector employees will rationalize their corrupt behavior on the grounds that their superior does it.

Proposition 4: Public sector employees will rationalize their corrupt behavior on the grounds that their peers do it.

Employees may justify their corrupt behavior as a form of revenge on the employer (Ashforth and Anand, 2003). Seeing corruption as a form of revenge can also be attributed to the individual who needs the service. Ashforth

and Anand (2003) refer to this type of rationalization of corruption as "denial of victim" (p. 19). Employees perceive the corruption to be good and nobody is hurt through their corrupt behavior because it is only a form of pay-back. Similarly, employees may justify theft within their organization as a fair treatment of their employers (Ashforth and Anand, 2003). Employees feel that they are unfairly treated; hence, their act of corrupt behavior is justified due to the unfair treatment from employer. Therefore, employees in public sector organizations will perceive taking bribe and extorting monies from citizens as a way to commensurate their pay. The rationalization is that, the pay they receive is inadequate; hence the bribe will supplement their low pay.

Proposition5:Public sector employees will rationalize their corrupt behavior on the grounds that the pay they receive is small and the bribe is a way to supplement their dire financial needs.

Social influence is a major mechanism by which newly hired employees or entrants are taught and trained informally into an organization. Socialization is the process by which new employees or newcomers are taught the values, norms, beliefs, and skills that are needed for these newcomers or new employees to perform their roles and functions effectively and efficiently within the organization (Anand, Ashforth and Joshi, 2004; Ashforth and Anand, 2003). These values, norms, beliefs, and skills can be corrupt or non-corrupt. Thus, socialization is the process by which new employees or entrants into an organization are introduced into the corrupt practices and are induced to accept the ongoing practices as normal and regular behavior. The values and beliefs are also learned through close associates, such as peers at the workplace, superiors, and subordinates.

Ashforth and colleagues (2003, 2004) have identified "cooptation" as one of the mechanism by which individuals are socialized into corruption. Cooptation is the process by which newcomers are induced, assimilated, or subsumes into a new system. Cooptation in short is a recruitment process of new entrants into a group. Studies show that cooptation is very successful when there is financial incentives or rewards for the new entrants (Anand, Ashforth and Joshi, 2004; Ashforth and Anand, 2003). Newcomers are induced to change their attitude to meet the expectation of the group. Applying the cooptation to corrupt behavior, new employees may be induced through financial incentives to accept the behavior of the group that engages in corruption. Since there is reward and financial incentives are

appealing, this becomes an easy example to practice without necessarily knowing changes in attitude. Honest and genuine newly hired employees are likely to change their ways when the financial incentives are appealing to them. In this case, conscience is lost in the presence of financial incentive.

Proposition6: Public sector employees will be socialized into corrupt behavior when there is financial incentive or reward system for their corrupt behavior.
Incrementalism has also been identified by Anand, Ashforth and Joshi (2004) and Ashforth and Anand (2003) as socialization mechanism. Incrementalism is a continual bit by bit process by which small acts are increased into bigger acts. In terms of bribe, new employees can be convinced to engage in small corrupt act that may be harmless and can be rationalized. As correctly suggested by Ashforth and Anand (2003), the "incremental escalation of corruption (behavior), buoyed by a rationalizing ideology and the desire for acceptance (cognition), reduced the identity threat" (p. 30). It is proposed that

Proposition7: Public sector employees will be socialized into corrupt behavior through incremental process of committing corruption at smaller scale.

Scholars have also suggested that coercion is the driver of socialization into corruption (Svensson, 2003; Tanzi, 1998; Treisman, 2000). Because of the fear of negative consequences for not complying with corrupt orders, employees will engage in corruption. Coercion, at the extreme, can also lead to transfer to another location, possibly, remotest places, ostracism, and demotion (Ashforth and Anand, 2003). Ashforth and Anand (2003) pointed out that an outright coercion "facilitates the denial of responsibility and thereby compliance with corrupt directives" (p. 32). It is proposed that

Proposition8: Public sector employees will be socialized into corrupt behavior through coercion because of fear of negative consequences for not complying with corrupt orders.

The final mechanism discussed by Anand and colleagues(2003, 2004) that may motivate employees to engage in corruption is institutionalization. The institutionalization mechanism is the result of the successful adoption of rationalization and socialization mechanisms. When rationalization and socializations have fully matured within the organization, corruption becomes institutionalized. According to Ashforth and Anand (2003), "corruption is a property of the collective" (p. 4).An institutionalized organizational behavior is defined as

"stable, repetitiveand enduring activities that are enacted by multiple organization members withoutsignificant thought about the propriety, utility, or nature of the behavior" (Ashforth and Anand, 2003, p. 4). Institutionalized corruption has three phases, including the "initial decision or act; the embedding corruption in structures and processes; and routinizing corruption" (Ashforth and Anand, 2003, p. 4). The motivation to engage in corrupt activities is the results of environmental factors (such as loosed legal and regulatory system), organizational factors (such as poor institutional structures that will check and eradicate corruption), and individual factors (such as cognitive moral conduct and fear) (Ashforth and Anand, 2003). This paper argues that leadership,structure and process of the organization contribute to the institutionalization of corruption in public sector organizations. It is proposed that

Proposition9:Public sector employees will institutionalize corrupt behavior when leaders ignore unethical behavior perpetrated by individuals.

The structure and the process prevailing within the organization do encourage corruption within organizations. Sometimes, leaders exclude themselves from the blame by condoning corruption due to the structure and the organizational processes. Organizations with unethical processes will inevitably encourage corrupt behaviors. Structures that are laxed due to legal and regulatory factors will also serve as a supporting framework for corrupt behaviors. When a process within an organization is corrupt, it will definitely become the norm and individuals will adopt it in future practices. This leads to individuals taking advantage of the structure and the process, and act corruptibly.

Structural problems have been part of the ongoing debate in sub-Saharan Africa. Proponents of structural reforms believe that the organizational structure of public sector organizations is designed to support corrupt practices. For example, a receptionist that misconduct himself/herself can only be reported to her superior. The protocol to meet or see the superior is through the receptionist who misconducted himself/herself. The receptionist can use the structure and process of meeting with the superior to prevent report reaching the superior. Even putting the complaint into writing will pass through the desk of the receptionist who can equally determine what the superior sees and read.

Proposition10:Public sector employees will institutionalize corrupt behavior when the structure and the process within the organization are not transparent.

DISCUSSION

Several scholars have proposed different toolkits to address corruption in SSA. Although divergent, these approaches have not been successful. Consequently, corruption has remained a serious concern that continues to affect every aspect of development in Africa, from education through health to agriculture and trade. Indeed, corruption is regarded as Africa's hard road and the greatest impediment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) programs initiated by the United Nations and carried out in all the 54 countries in Africa. It is no surprise that corruption is the number one promise from every political party when canvasing for votes but solution to corruption remains a misery.

Corruption is a multifaceted problem that cannot be addressed through a single methodology or solution. Unfortunately, there is substantial lack of integration in the literature regarding how to address corruption. This has led to ambiguity in the literature as well as finding potential solutions to the corruption menace. The approach in this study integrates corruption at micro level (individual employee) and macro level (public sector organization). A majority of studies have examine corruption from the macro level, leading to proposals and reforms for institutional change through various forms of policies, including changes in infrastructure, training of employees, resources for organizations, and organizational structure. Some literature even blames corruption in SSA at the door step of colonialism, that SSA is corrupt because of our history of colonialism (Mulinge and Lesetedi, 2002). But this misses the point because Africa is not the only continent that was once colonized. Malaysia and Singapore had independence from United Kingdom the same period Ghana had her independence from the United Kingdom. Today, ranking on corruption perception indicates Ghana is nowhere near the level of transparency in Malaysia or Singapore.

The current wave of research focuses on the use of technology to reduce corruption. Studies have proposed the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which is termed as "e-government' to reduce corruption and promote efficiency in public service. Although theuses of these technologies have been successful in industrialized economies, they have been less successful in Africa. For example, in Ghana, computerized system was introduced into the Ministry of Education as a way to automate the

selection of junior school graduates into senior high schools. The report on this is sobering. Corruption has reduced the computerized program to nothing. Unqualified pupils are selected to go to highly ranked schools whilst well qualified pupils were not selected to top ranked schools. The selection is a matter of how much money you can offer for your child to be sent to the school of your choice. Similar measures were taken at the Ports and Harbor in Ghana to automate clearing of goods. This was done to limit human interaction which facilitates bribery and corruption. These electronics were abandoned; some spoiled within few weeks of operation and were not reported. This saw the return to manual system of operation which was preferred by custom employees because of bribery and corruption.

Corruption in sub-Saharan Africa is a vital topic to public policy makers, politicians, and public administration scholars. This is exemplified by the several debates at various world forums on how to reduce poverty through corruption eradication to promote development in sub-Saharan Africa. In examining previous literature, the integration of micro and macro levels of analyses in this study is not only a unique approach but also the approach that would likely yield the greatest contribution to the growing body of literature on how to reduce corruption and promote development in Africa. This is not to suggest that the macro level analysis is not important in corruption eradication. Rather, the paper argues that system level factors alone may not be sufficient to understand the causes of corruption in SSA and calls for an integration of both macro and micro-level factors in understanding causes of corruption in developing world.

The propositions in this study have several implications. Examination of rationalization of corruption suggests laws and regulations of the organization, the standard practices within the organization, the behavior of the superiors and peers, and issues pertaining to remunerations are likely the justification for individuals (employees) to engage in corrupt behavior. These issues ran daily in public service in sub-Saharan Africa. Literatures on corruption have neglected these issues as some of the causes of corruption in sub-Saharan Africa.Five propositions are found to emanate from rationalization of corruption. Rationalization of individual behavior leads to socialization, where individuals who share the factors identified in the propositions. These individuals come together and try to establish hegemony within the institution by influencing their fellow colleagues, particularly, newly recruited employees. Regarding

socialization of corruption in public service in sub-Saharan Africa, the analysis in this study suggests that availability of financial incentive or reward system for corrupt behavior, the incremental process of committing corruption at smaller scale, and the fear of negative consequences for not complying with corrupt orders are the likely influences of socialization of corruption in public service in sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, this study found three propositions to emanate from socialization of corruption. A further examination of the rationalization and socialization lead to the institutionalization of corruption. Institutionalization is the advanced stages of rationalization and socialization. Institutionalization comes as a result of when the leadership ignores the unethical behavior perpetrated by group of individuals in the organization as well as when the structure and the process within the organization are not transparent. Here, the behavior spread across the organization and gradually become the norm of the organization. It takes leadership intervention to address and eradicate the socialized behavior. It becomes difficult for the leadership to even identity the corruption behavior as a bad and unacceptable behavior. This is because the entire organization sees it as a norm and acceptable. Stiff oppositions are faced whenever leaders try to address corruption at this level. It takes external intervention, through change in leadership and stiff regulations to address organizations that have institutionalized corruption. This study proposes two propositions that explain institutionalization of corruption in public service in sub-Saharan Africa. Corruption is institutionalized in public service in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa and has been the major impediment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Thus, socialization of corruption leads to institutionalization of corruption when the structure and the process within the organization are not transparent and leaders ignore unethical behavior perpetrated by individuals.

To buttress the propositions raised in this study, the study examines why the MDGs have had a hard road in SSA than other regions in the world. The Millennium Development Goals is one of the world's anti-poverty initiatives from the United Nations in developing countries across the globe between 1990 and 2015. Despite tremendous improvements, the road to achieving these goals is hard for many African countries. The United Nations and World Bank have attributed these on corruption in public service (UN, 2014). World Bank's projections indicate sub-Saharan Africa is not on track to reduce the rate of extreme poverty benchmarked at $1.25 a day (UN, 2014). Corruption and unemployment

rate remains high. Sub-Saharan Africa also lags behind other continents on the progress on making basic education accessible to all (UN, 2014). Reports indicate 69 million children were out of school worldwide in 2008 and 31 million of them were in sub- Saharan Africa (UN, 2014). Gender disparity remains very high in education in sub-Saharan Africa. In SSA, the number of boys in colleges and universities outweigh that of girls (UN, 2014). The ramifications of corruption in public service in Africa can be seen in major interventions which were successful in other regions except Africa. The highest rates of child mortality can be located in SSA in which over 4 million deaths (half of the world's death) took place in Africa. There are 36 countries with the worst record of under-five child mortality and SSA dominated the list with 34 countries (UN, 2014). HIV infections remain very high, with sub-Saharan Africa leading the record high of 72% of all new infections (UN, 2014). This brief analysis of the challenges of the MDGs clearly speaks to the need to reduce corruption in public service in Africa. The focus of this study regarding reducing corruption in public service is change in individual attitude and behavior. This is will be a giant step towards poverty eradication and the achievement of the MDGs. Without changes in attitude and behavior, Africa will continue to lag and the fight against corruption will remain unresolved misery.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study is not without limitations although the highest levels of accuracy, objectivity, and validity were taken into consideration. The social learning theory is widely used in the study of crime that emphasizes the "reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental determinants" of human behavior and is used to explain different arrays of criminal behaviors (Bandura, 1977: vii). The theory posits that "the same learning process in a context of social structure, interaction, and situation produces both conforming and deviant behavior" (Akers and Sellers, 2004: 85). The use of social learning theory to explain deviant behaviors is documented in several studies. However, even though, the theory provides robust framework for viewing behavior of individuals, it is not without criticism. Even though the theory synthesis economic rationale with structural deficiencies in organizations, social learning theory is sometimes criticized that the theory ignores indivisual biological state (Jeffery, 1990). Thus, social learning theory

does not take into consideration the differences between individuals due to their genetic compositions, including brain and learning differences (Jeffery, 1990).In relating this criticism to the study of corruption in SSA, all employees or individuals in public sector organizations cannot be easily influenced by those factors proposed in this study. By personally observing others, not all employees will engage in corrupt behavior under the circumstances outlined in the

propositions. This is a heavy drawback on this study. This study acknowledges that different employees or individuals have different range of tolerance towards corrupt behaviors depicted by fellow employees. In sum, despite the limitations outlined on social learning theory and this study in particular, this study is hopeful that the propositions outlined not only sheds light on how complex and difficult corruption is in SSA, but also gives some hope regarding a different direction on how to examine corruption and reduce it in developing countries in Africa.

This study has resulted in ten propositions for further study into corruption in public sector organizations in SSA using social learning theory. Although a great number of studies exist on corruption in SSA, social learning theory has not been used to examine the phenomenon. This study shed light on the different dimensions of how individual behavior spread into an organization and becomes organizational norm. For future studies, this study recommends quantitative empirical studies to empirically test these propositions. The quantitative study could be examined using cross-sectional data collected across different countries in SSA or cross-sectional data collected in one national government. The use of public sector agencies (government departments and ministries) in SSA would improve the understanding of how the individual behavior develops into group behavior and then to organizational behavior as suggested by the ten propositions in this study. At the institutional level, this paper recommends that future studies should control for variables such as the composition of the board of the agency, the gender of the agency head and the structure of the organization. These variables have been found to influence attitudes of employees. This study also recommends that the external environment should be controlled, such as the general health of the economy in the country and general rules and regulations that guide public sector organizations. Organizational characteristics and external environments will moderate the attitude of individual employees. In conclusion, an examination of a

single organization across multiple countries might isolate the macro factors that are sources of differences in organizational behavior that may also influence the individual behavior.

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