



Research Paper

Judiciary and Corruption in Nigeria: A Study of Bayelsa State, 2012-2022

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigated corruption in Bayelsa State judiciary system from 2012 to 2022. Theoretically, the study adopted hedonism theory. The study adopted the survey research design as its methodology with 380 visible questionnaire utilized. The paper analyzed its data using simple percentage methods while the research hypotheses were tested using chi-square method. The key research findings were that there is a discernible nexus between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State, through comprehensive analysis, it was observed that corruption has penetrated various levels of the Judiciary, influencing the perception of justice and the integrity of legal processes. Also, the paper identified several underlying factors contributing to corruption in the Bayelsa State Judiciary. These factors includes institutional weaknesses, inadequate accountability mechanisms, and socio-economic conditions, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of corruption within the legal system. Therefore, the paper recommended that there is need to implement stringent anti-corruption measures within the Bayelsa State Judiciary. This includes establishing clear protocols for reporting and investigating corruption cases, and imposing severe penalties for those found guilty of engaging in corrupt practices. Also, to enhance judicial integrity, and counteract the nexus between the judiciary and corruption, efforts should be directed towards enhancing the independence and integrity of the judicial system in Bayelsa State and Nigeria at large.

Key Words: Anti-corruption, Corruption, Democracy, Judiciary, independence

Received 02 Apr., 2024; Revised 09 Apr., 2024; Accepted 11 Apr., 2024 © The author(s) 2024.
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I. INTRODUCTION:

Corruption is one of the major problems which is limiting the development of the third world nations especially Africa. The continent has been backward due to the corrupt nature of her leaders and public office holders. This is why recently the continent of Africa has been faced with the challenges of military coup across some parts of the continent which common justification is centered on public servant corruption which cut across the executive, legislative and the judiciary arms of government. In Nigeria, the impacts of corruption cannot be overemphasized, this is because corruption has eaten deep into every sector and every aspect of the society. Corruption in Nigeria has become systemic, endemic and institutionalized. The socio-economic impact of corruption on Nigeria has been staggering. It has undermined effective service delivery, perpetuated poverty, hindered infrastructural development, and eroded public trust in government institutions. The misallocation of resources due to corrupt practices has stifled economic growth and limited opportunities for equitable development (Aye, 2013).

The judiciary's role is to uphold the rule of law, provide impartial and fair judgments, and safeguard citizens' rights. However, when this institution becomes tainted by corruption, the consequences are far-reaching. Biased decisions, undue influence, compromised due process, and the creation of an environment where justice is for sale become disturbingly common occurrences (Gupta, 2017). This, in turn corrodes public trust in the judicial system, fostering a sense of disillusionment and skepticism among citizens. The relationship between judiciary and corruption therein is intricate. For instance, bribery or favoritism can compromise the independence of the judiciary, leading to decisions that prioritize personal or political interests over justice and fairness (UNDP, 2021). This interplay between corruption and the judiciary underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to tackling corruption that addresses the systemic vulnerabilities within the legal system. The most recent example is the 2023 presidential election petition tribunal in Nigeria where the judgement made by Honourable Justice Haruna Tsammani which was delivered on 6th of September, 2023 on behalf of the 5 men panel which consists of Justice Stephen Adah, Justice Monsurat Bolaji-Yusuf, Justice Moses

Ugo and Justice Abba Mohammed of the court as regards to the 2023 presidential election in Nigeria. The above judgement which is still subjected to the final rulings of the supreme court was under strong criticism and tension from the public, while some are of the view that the judgement was just and fair. Corroborating this, Mr Wahad Abdul of Wahab Olawale and Co chambers who said that the Justices did a thorough job to the extent that some senior lawyers representing parties were chided for inadequacies in their research to build their clients' cases (Vanguard, 2023).

Contrarily, others are of the view that the judgment was influenced by government to the favour of APC and Bola Tinubu who is currently the president of the federal republic of Nigeria. Therefore, to those who felt that the judgement was influenced and bias they will lose faith and trust in the judiciary of Nigeria due to the singular act of corruption and inconsistencies of judiciary proceedings. Corruption within the Nigerian judiciary is a significant concern that has drawn both national and international attentions. As one of the essential pillars of governance, the judiciary's role in upholding the rule of law, ensuring justice, and safeguarding citizens' rights cannot be overstated. However, instances of corruption within the judiciary undermine these critical functions, erode public trust, and hinder the overall progress of the legal system. The Nigerian judiciary, like its counterparts in many other countries, faces the persistent challenge of corruption.

Corruption within the judiciary encompasses a range of unethical practices that compromise the integrity, fairness, and effectiveness of the legal system. This issue extends beyond mere financial malfeasance, encompassing acts such as bribery, nepotism, political interference, and abuse of power (Uzochukwu, 2018). Bayelsa State, situated in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, has not been immune to the issue of corruption within its judicial system. Various forms and types of corruption have been documented. One of the most prevalent forms of corruption in the judiciary involves the solicitation and acceptance of bribes in exchange for favorable judgments or decisions. This undermines the impartiality of the legal process and erodes public confidence in the judiciary (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Nepotism and Cronyism instances of judicial appointments or promotions being influenced by personal connections rather than merit contribute to a perception of bias and unfairness within the legal system (Okeke, 2015).

Deliberate delays in legal proceedings can be used to extort money from litigants seeking a faster resolution. This not only undermines the efficiency of the judiciary but also perpetuates corruption (Transparency International, 2017). External influences from political figures on judicial decisions compromises the independence of the judiciary and weakens the separation of powers (Oyekanmi & Aminu, 2020). The consequences of corruption within Bayelsa State judiciary are far-reaching. Beyond eroding public trust, it obstructs access to justice, perpetuates impunity, and undermines the legitimacy of the legal system. Additionally, corruption within the judiciary adversely affects the overall investment climate, economic growth, and social stability of the state (Ugwumike, 2017).

The issue of corruption within the judiciary in Bayelsa State, presents a multifaceted challenge that requires comprehensive and concerted efforts to address. By understanding the various forms and types of corruption that exist within the judicial system, stakeholders can better strategize and implement effective measures to restore the integrity, fairness, and credibility of the legal process. Addressing corruption within the judiciary is not only a matter of legal reform but also a critical step toward strengthening governance, upholding the rule of law, and advancing social progress. The ramifications of corruption within Bayelsa State's judiciary extend beyond the legal realm and permeate society as a whole. Impediments to justice resulting from corrupt practices disproportionately affect marginalized populations, hindering their ability to access legal recourse and perpetuating a cycle of inequality (Transparency International, 2017). Nigeria, as a signatory to various international conventions and agreements, is obligated to combat corruption within its judiciary. The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) emphasizes the importance of an independent and impartial judiciary as a cornerstone of a fair and just society (UNODC, 2021). Failure to address corruption within the judiciary not only violates international commitments but also tarnishes Nigeria's global reputation. Civil society organizations and the media play a crucial role in exposing corruption within Bayelsa State judiciary.

By holding the judicial system accountable and shedding light on corrupt practices, these entities act as watchdogs, promoting transparency and public awareness (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2018). The fight against corruption within the judiciary necessitates a collective effort involving government institutions, legal practitioners, civil society, and citizens. Strengthening internal mechanisms for accountability and transparency, such as robust complaint and investigation procedures, is essential to restoring public trust and ensuring the credibility of the legal system (Global Judicial Integrity Network, 2021). Addressing corruption within the judiciary in Bayelsa State is not merely a legal obligation but a moral imperative. By confronting the various forms and types of corruption head-on, Bayelsa State can pave the way for a more equitable, just, and prosperous future. Through comprehensive reforms, heightened awareness, and a commitment to upholding the rule of law, the state can rebuild public trust, promote accountability, and foster an environment where justice prevails.

In light of these challenges, this paper will delve into the intricate relationship corruption and the judiciary in Bayelsa State, exploring the underlying factors, consequences, and potential remedies in the state. By drawing upon a range of scholarly research, empirical evidences, and expert opinions, this study seeks to shed light on the complexities of corruption within the public service, with a specific focus on the judiciary's role as both a partaker and a potential solution to this pervasive issue. Based on this backdrop, the aim of the study is to investigate the impacts of corruption within the judiciary system in Bayelsa State from 2012- 2022. While other specific objectives include to:

- i. assess the nexus between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State.
- ii. investigate the underlying factors that contribute to corruption in Bayelsa state Judiciary

The study seeks to provide empirical and verifiable answers to the stated problems based on the ensuing research questions:

- i. Is there a nexus between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State?
- ii. what are the cause of corruption in Bayelsa State judiciary?

In view of the above objectives the following research questions are relevant:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the underlying factors such as insufficient checks and balances within the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State judiciary.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Hedonism Theory

Aristippus of Cyrene (c. 435 – c. 356 BCE) was a prominent figure in ancient Greek philosophy and a key representative of the school of thought known as hedonism. Born in Cyrene, a Greek colony in North Africa (modern-day Libya), Aristippus was a disciple of Socrates and is often referred to as the founder of the Cyrenaic school of philosophy (Mill, 1960). The historical background of Aristippus is situated within the larger context of the classical Greek philosophical tradition. He was born into a wealthy and influential family in Cyrene, which allowed him to receive a first-rate education. As a young man, he traveled to Athens, the center of intellectual and philosophical activity, to study under Socrates, one of the most renowned philosophers of his time. While Aristippus was a student of Socrates, he is often associated with the later school of hedonism, which focused on pleasure as the ultimate goal of human life (Tim O'Keefe, 2014).

After Socrates' death, Aristippus returned to Cyrene and established his own philosophical school, where he developed and propagated his ideas. His philosophy revolved around the pursuit of pleasure and the belief that the highest good lies in attaining immediate and physical pleasures. However, Aristippus' conception of pleasure was not merely indulgence in sensual or material desires; he emphasized the importance of cultivating intellectual pleasures and maintaining a certain degree of self-control in order to maximize happiness (Michael, 2013). Aristippus' philosophy stood in contrast to some of the other major schools of thought in ancient Greece, such as the more ascetic teachings of the Cynics and the more abstract and metaphysical ideas of the Platonists and Aristotelians. His focus on the present moment and the immediate experiences of pleasure led him to advocate for a philosophy that emphasized practical wisdom and adaptability in various situations. Aristippus' teachings also had a significant influence on the development of later hedonistic schools, such as the Epicureans, who refined and modified his ideas to create their own distinctive approach to pleasure and happiness (Michael, 2013). Hedonism is a philosophical theory that posits pleasure as the ultimate or highest good and the primary goal of human life. It suggests that the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain are fundamental aspects of human nature and the foundation for making ethical and life choices. The term "hedonism" is derived from the Greek word "hedone," which translates to "pleasure" or "delight." (Lionel, 2012).

There are different variations of hedonism, each with its own nuances and interpretations. The two main branches of hedonism are ethical hedonism and psychological hedonism:

Ethical Hedonism This form of hedonism asserts that pleasure is not only a natural human desire but also the sole intrinsic good. Ethical hedonists argue that actions are morally right or wrong based on their ability to produce pleasure or avoid pain. The guiding principle is to maximize pleasure and minimize pain in one's own life and, potentially, in the lives of others (Michael, 2013).

Psychological Hedonism: This form of hedonism focuses on describing human behavior rather than prescribing moral values. Psychological hedonists claim that all human actions are driven by the pursuit of pleasure or the avoidance of pain. According to this view, people are inherently motivated to seek pleasure and avoid discomfort (Feldman, 1997).

There is a popular Nigerian saying that goes “*na where man they work na there him they chop*”. This means that man should be able to gain and sponsor his desire for pleasure from where he or she works. In analyzing this system and endemic corruption in the judiciary system in Nigeria. The theory posits that the judge in Nigeria internationally chooses to act in a corrupted manner so as have pleasure in place of pains.

Notwithstanding, these theories give explanation for a crime: those that are engaged in criminal activities (the corrupt) engaged in this because they benefit more than the loss. The theory assumes that basically everybody is capable of committing a certain kind of crime. That is, there are many cases or reports of judicial corruption in Nigeria because of the weak judiciary system we have in the country. Thus, this study will adopt this theory because of its consistency in posting investigation or explaining the quest of judges as they safeguard the highest for themselves while they afford undesired pains through the act of corruption.

III. METHODOLOGY

This paper adopted the survey research design. The primary purpose of survey research is to gather information, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors from respondents, often using questionnaire or interviews. Researchers can gather data from hundreds or even thousands of participants in a relatively short period, which can be especially useful for studying trends or opinions on a wide range of topics.

The projected total population of Bayelsa State for 2022 according to the 2006 national population census which is 2,537,400 constituted the population for this study. The study population of 400 for the study was selected through Taro Yamane formula. This paper adopted the judgemental or purposive sampling technique.

The tool for data collection is questionnaire which was distributed to the respondents. Information gathered from the respondents were analyzed using simple percentages as the analytical tool in tabular form for hypothesis testing.

This paper utilized the simple percentage methods of data analysis. and the hypothesis were tested using chi-square. The simple percentage method is a basic quantitative technique that enables researchers to analyze categorical data by calculating proportions or percentages and present them in the context of examining corruption and the judiciary in Nigeria.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Data Presentation/ Analysis

This chapter presents and analyses the data that was collected through primary and secondary sources in order to achieve the objectives of this study. The data collected through questionnaires, and relevant literature are presented in tables and analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages.

Table 1: The total number of questionnaires administered for the study was 400, while the total number of questionnaires retrieved is 380

TOTAL NUMBER ADMINISTERED	TOTAL NUMBER RETRIEVED
400	380

Source: The Researcher

Table 1 above indicates that 400 questionnaire were administered and only 380 was retrieved

- i. Assessing the Nexus Between the Judiciary and Corruption in Bayelsa State

Table 2: Showing the nexus between judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State

Items	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
SA	60	16
A	40	11
SD	150	39
D	130	34
TOTAL	380	100%

Source: Field work (2023)

Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State, as 40 which is 11% agrees and 60 which is 16% strongly agrees that there is no significant relationship between judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State. While on the other hand 130 which is 34% disagrees and 150 which is 39% strongly disagrees to the above statement

Table 3: Showing the respondents opinion on the overall outcome of legal case in Bayelsa State

Items	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE 100%
SA	20	6
A	40	10
SD	160	42
D	160	42
TOTAL	380	100%

Source: Field work (2023)

Table 3 above indicates that majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the outcome of legal cases in Bayelsa State. This is because only 10% of the study respondents agreed and 6% strongly agrees that they were satisfied with the overall outcome of legal case in the state. While 42% disagrees.

Table 4: Showing the respondents response whether there are visible corrupt practices during legal proceedings in Bayelsa State within the period under review

Items	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE 100%
SA	225	59
A	120	31
SD	25	7
D	10	3
TOTAL	380	100%

Source: Field work (2023)

Table 4 above indicates the responses of litigants that constitutes the respondents whether they perceive some corrupt practices in legal proceedings in Bayelsa State Judiciary. This was ascertained with 380 respondents 225 which represent 59% strongly agrees while 120 which represented 31% agrees as only 7 and 5% disagrees and strongly disagrees to the above statements.

Table 5: Showing the respondents responses on bribery or extortion within the judiciary during in legal case

Items	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE 100%
SA	160	42
A	150	38
SD	40	11
D	30	9
TOTAL	380	100%

Source: Field work (2023)

Table 5 above indicated responses of respondents on bribery or extortion within the judiciary as 38% agrees and 42% strongly agrees to the above question while only 9% of our respondents disagrees and 11% that strongly disagrees

2. The Underlying Factors that Contribute To Corruption in Bayelsa State Judiciary

Table 6: Showing the respondents response on whether political influence is one of the factors that contribute to corruption in Bayelsa State between 2012 and 2022

Items	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE 100%
SA	163	43
A	160	42
SD	35	9
D	22	6
TOTAL	380	100%

Source: Field work (2023)

Table 6 above reveals the respondents response on whether political influences contribute to corruption in Bayelsa State Judiciary. The Table indicates that there is high level of political influence and this has made the Judiciary impartiality and corruption in Bayelsa State between 2012 and 2022. This reflects in the table as 160 which represent 42% agrees and 163 which make up 43% strongly agreed, while on the other hand only 35

which represented 9% disagrees and only 22 which is 6% strongly disagrees to the question that political influence has affected the impartiality of the judiciary in Bayelsa State between 2012 and 2022.

Table 7: Showing the respondents response on whether weak judiciary institutions contributed to corruption in Bayelsa State

Items	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE 100%
SA	21	5
A	33	9
SD	209	55
D	117	31
TOTAL	380	100%

Source: Field work (2023)

Table 7 above interrogates whether weak judiciary institutions in Bayelsa State which indicates that the judiciary institutions in Bayelsa State is very weak. This is seen as 33 respondents which is 9% disagrees and 21 which is 5% strongly disagrees to the above to the above statement while on the other hand 117 which is 31% agrees and 209 which is 55% strongly agrees to the above statement.

Test of Hypotheses

For the reason of this study some research hypotheses were raised which were tested here following the data gotten from the sampling size. The chi-square statistical tools is used.

COMPUTATION OF EXPECTED VALUE FOR

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
Male	49	41	21	57	168
Female	101	89	19	3	212
Total	150	130	40	60	380

Computing for Expected Value (E):

Given as;

(Row total)(Column total) ÷ Grand Total;

$(150 \times 168) \div 380 = 66.32$

$(150 \times 212) \div 380 = 83.68$

$(130 \times 168) \div 380 = 57.47$

$(130 \times 212) \div 380 = 72.53$

$(40 \times 168) \div 380 = 17.68$

$(40 \times 212) \div 380 = 22.32$

$(60 \times 168) \div 380 = 26.53$

$(60 \times 212) \div 380 = 33.47$

O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	Σ(O-E) ² /E
49	66.32	-17.32	299.98	4.52
101	83.68	17.32	299.98	3.58
41	57.47	-16.47	271.26	4.72
89	72.53	16.47	271.26	3.74
21	17.68	3.32	11.02	0.62
19	22.32	-3.32	11.02	0.49
57	26.53	30.47	928.42	35.00
3	33.47	-30.47	928.42	27.74

$X^2 = 80.41$

Based on the results of the hypothesis computation above:

Chi-square value (X^2) = 80.41

Degrees of freedom (df) = 3

Critical value at a significance level of 5% (0.05) with df = 3 is 7.815.

Since the calculated chi-square value of 80.41 is significantly greater than the critical value of 7.815 at a significance level of 5% and 3 degrees of freedom, we can reject the null hypothesis H₀₂. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State, based on the data provided. The high chi-square value indicates a substantial and statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, supporting the conclusion that a relationship exists between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State.

COMPUTATION OF EXPECTED VALUE FOR

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the underlying factors such as insufficient checks and balances within the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State judiciary.

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
Male	28	51	22	67	168
Female	112	78	14	8	212
Total	140	129	36	75	380

Computing for Expected Value (E):

Given as;

(Row total)(Column total) ÷ Grand Total;

$(140 \times 168) \div 380 = 61.89$

$(140 \times 212) \div 380 = 78.11$

$(129 \times 168) \div 380 = 57.03$

$(129 \times 212) \div 380 = 71.97$

$(36 \times 168) \div 380 = 15.92$

$(36 \times 212) \div 380 = 20.08$

$(75 \times 168) \div 380 = 33.16$

$(75 \times 212) \div 380 = 41.84$

O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	Σ(O-E)÷E
28	61.89	-33.89	1148.53	18.56
112	78.11	33.89	1148.53	14.70
51	57.03	-6.03	36.36	0.64
78	71.97	6.03	36.36	0.51
22	15.92	6.08	36.97	2.32
14	20.98	-6.08	36.97	1.84
67	33.16	33.84	1145.15	34.53
8	41.84	-33.84	1145.15	27.37

$X^2 = 100.47$

Based on the results of the hypothesis computation provided:

Chi-square value (X^2) = 100.47

Degrees of freedom (df) = 3

Critical value at a significance level of 5% (0.05) with df = 3 is 7.815.

Since the calculated chi-square value of 100.47 is significantly greater than the critical value of 7.815 at a significance level of 5% and 3 degrees of freedom, we can reject the null hypothesis H₀₂. This suggests that there is indeed a significant relationship between the underlying factors and corruption in the Bayelsa State judiciary, based on the data provided.

The high chi-square value indicates a substantial and statistically significant difference between the observed and expected values, supporting the conclusion that a relationship exists between the underlying factors and corruption in the Bayelsa State judiciary.

COMPUTATION OF EXPECTED VALUE FOR H 3:

Variables	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
Male	43	34	41	50	168
Female	73	60	56	23	212
Total	116	94	97	73	380

Computing for Expected Value (E):

Given as;

(Row Total)(Column total) ÷ Grand Total;

$(116 \times 168) \div 380 = 51.28$

$(116 \times 212) \div 380 = 64.72$

$(94 \times 168) \div 380 = 41.56$

$(94 \times 212) \div 380 = 52.44$

$(97 \times 168) \div 380 = 42.88$

$(97 \times 212) \div 380 = 54.12$

$(73 \times 168) \div 380 = 32.27$

$(73 \times 212) \div 380 = 40.73$

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The paper in Table 2 interrogated the relationship between Bayelsa State judiciary and corruption between 2012 and 2022. This was ascertained with 130 respondents which is 34% agrees and 150 which is 39% strongly agrees. Meanwhile, 40 respondents out of the 380 respondents which is 11% disagrees and 60 respondents which is 16% strongly disagrees that there is significant relationship between judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State. This is in line with Bazuaye & Oriakhogba (2013) opinion that there is a rife between the malfeasance in Nigerian judiciary and corruption.

Table 3 indicates that majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the judgement they received. This is because only 10% of the study respondents agreed and 6% strongly agrees that they were satisfied with the overall outcome of the legal case. While 42% disagrees and strongly disagrees. This agrees with the findings of scholars like (Tyler, 2006) who argues that when litigants perceive corruption or unfair practices in legal proceedings, it can lead to a sense of injustice and dissatisfaction with the final judgments.

Table 4 outlined the respondent responses of litigants that expressed corrupt practices in legal proceedings in Bayelsa State Judiciary. This was ascertained with 380 respondents 225 which represent 59% strongly agrees while 120 which represented 31% agrees as only 7 and 5% disagrees and strongly disagrees. Table 5 elucidated the responses of respondents on bribery or extortion within the judiciary as 38% agrees and 42% strongly agrees while only 9% of our respondents disagrees and 11% that strongly disagrees. This is also in line with the findings of (Alemika, 2005) who sheds light on the prevalence of bribery and extortion within the Nigerian judiciary, illustrating how these practices corrode the principles of justice and undermine public trust (Transparency International, 2019). This emphasizes on the detrimental impact of corruption on public perception, eroding the foundation of the rule of law.

Table 6 which is to test the level of political influences in the Bayelsa State Judiciary and how it may affect the administration of justices in Bayelsa State. The table indicates that there is high level of political influence which has affected the impartiality of the judiciary in Bayelsa State between 2012 and 2022. This reflects in the Table as 160 which represent 42% agrees and 163 which 43% strongly agreed, while on the other hand only 35 which represented 9% disagrees and only 22 which is 6% strongly disagrees to the question. This agrees with the findings of (Genn, 1999) who posits that lack of transparency and limited access to information about legal proceedings can contribute to litigants' dissatisfaction. Scholars stress the importance of making legal processes more transparent to address these concerns (Genn, 1999).

Table 7 interrogated whether unethical practices is a contributory factor to the inimical corruption in Bayelsa State. The Table indicates that there is high level of unethical practice among judges in Bayelsa State Judiciary is an underlying factor that contribute to corruption, as 140 which is 37% agrees and 184 which is 49% strongly agrees which only 36 which is 9% disagrees and 20 which represent 5% strongly disagree to the question that they witness instances of lawyers engaging in unethical practices or collusion with judges. Okey (2012) unequivocally stated that advocate for the cause of their guests within the dimension of the law and the Rules of Professional conduct of the legal profession. In discharging these sacred duties to his customer, a counsel must do so with utmost respect to the Court, because every counsel is seen to be an officer of the court.

Regrettably, in utmost corruption cases involving members of the bench, attorneys are also intertwined one way or the other, either by their involvement in outright buying or converting the judicial officer handing their customer's case as seen in the case of (Kalejaiye, 2016) where the court held therefore:

We thus find that the Respondent while involved in the election petition before the Election Petition Tribunal sitting in Osogbo, Osun State eventually in the time 2008 was engaged in constant private and nonpublic telephone communication with Justice Thomas Naron who was the president of the Election Petition Tribunal and who has now been removed from office by the National Judicial Council as a result of those telephone call exchanges with the Respondent.

Some attorneys employ gratuitous detention tactics to master the ends of justice against the rules of professional conduct. Some attorneys indeed condescended so lower to the point of collecting plutocrat from their guests to frustrate the cause of justice by buying court bailiff to file evidence of service of court process in the court train when similar haven't been served. Some attorneys buy court Clerks to steal and destroy shows and documents that are against their customer's case, some give fiscal persuading to court clerks to delay the process of collecting Records of Proceedings to frustrate licit sweats of the opposing counsel to appeal the Judgement or Ruling the Court gave in their customer's favour. Some attorneys also buy Court Clerks to help such a Clerk from drawing up Orders of Court, Processing of Bail bond papers etc :

Ecodrill, Nigeria limited, where a legal guru one A. K. Osawota represented not only the complainant but also the 1st and 2nd Repliers. The supreme Court in the below case held that attorneys who misuse their knowledge of the law and legal procedure to stultify the process of administration of Justice are disappointing and a disgrace to legal profession he described the lawyer as pitiable and a disgrace to what the judiciary stands for. eventually analysis the supreme court dismiss the appeal and order the complainant's counsel to tête-à-tête

pay cost of N 500,000.00(Five Hundred Thousand Naira). This corrupt conduct has led to attorney having their names drop off in the supreme Court (Wali, SAN 2012).

The findings of the paper indicate that:

1. A discernible nexus between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State. Through comprehensive analysis, it was observed that corruption has penetrated various levels of the judiciary, influencing the perception of justice and the integrity of legal processes.
2. The research identified several underlying factors contributing to corruption in the Bayelsa State Judiciary. These factors encompassed institutional weaknesses, inadequate accountability mechanisms, and socio-economic conditions, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of corruption within the legal system.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

In conclusion, the study on "The Judiciary and Corruption in Bayelsa State, 2012-2022" sheds light on the complex interplay between the judiciary and corruption within the specified time frame. The study presents a comprehensive examination of the intricate relationship between the judiciary and corruption in Bayelsa State. The findings underscore the urgency of addressing systemic issues, implementing reforms, and fortifying the judiciary to ensure the fair and impartial delivery of justice in the region. In view of the above, the following recommendations are advanced:

1. Implement Stringent Anti-Corruption Measures: Given the identified modes of judicial corruption, it is crucial to implement and enforce stringent anti-corruption measures within the Bayelsa State judiciary. This includes establishing clear protocols for reporting and investigating corruption cases, and imposing severe penalties for those found guilty of engaging in corrupt practices.
2. Address Underlying Socio-Economic Factors: Recognizing the influence of socio-economic conditions on corruption, there is a need for targeted interventions to address these underlying factors. Initiatives aimed at improving living standards, reducing poverty, and ensuring equitable access to opportunities can contribute to minimizing the temptations that may lead to corruption within the judiciary.

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