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Dear Madams,

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

I hereby convey the decision of the Ogun Editorial Board of the Ogun State Bar and Bench Journal to you that your Article titled 'The Nigeria Legal Profession Then, Now and Future; the Changing Nature and Character of a Profession' submitted for publication in the Ogun State Bar and Bench Journal has been accepted for publication as chapter 5 in Volume number 2 of the Journal. (2017) 2OGSBBJ . The Journal will be out from the press shortly.

Please accept our congratulations.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,

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The Nigeria Legal Profession Then, Now and Future; the Changing Nature and Character of a Profession

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Abstract

Recently there has been a growing concern over the unsavory conduct of some members of the legal profession and the falling standards of ethics. In Nigeria and in many more jurisdictions the toga of integrity is being stripped from members of the profession, lawyers and judges alike.

This paper examines the falling of ethical and professional standards in the Nigerian legal profession. The paper gives a brief expose on the history and development of the legal profession, the present decadence and corruptness, the negative impact and imminent threat to the future of the profession in Nigeria.

The paper posits that the falling standards and moral decadence is attributable to the long years of non- foundational teaching of legal ethics in the law faculties.

This paper recommends the teaching of ethics in the foundational years of legal training, and a thorough review of the current curriculum and course content on the teaching of legal ethics using clinical legal education

Keywords: Corruption, Nigeria legal profession, Legal ethics, Clinical legal education

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'If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do' Psalm

11:3; Holy Bible KJV

1.0. Introduction

The legal profession, our own noble profession, a primus inter pares amongst other professions have enjoyed this pride of place sui generis. From the early days of acquiring the status as a profession with rules, ethical codes and moral standards set out to guide members and entrants into the profession. Over the centuries and decades following the development of law, modern legal profession and societies, the role of legal professionals has been a pervasive and positive one, straddling the political, economic and social life of the society. It has been said that lawyers are instrumental to whatever situation any country may find itself. In Africa, lawyers played a historic role in leading the fight for independence³ and the reassertion of sovereignty by the African People over their national wealth and natural resources.⁴ Lawyers are guardian of the law and servants of justice. As judges, in private or corporate practice, in the academics or in government, they have shaped the society and the lives of their fellow human beings⁵

In recent years however, there has been a growing concern over the unsavory conduct of some members of the legal profession and the falling standards of ethics. Recently, in Nigeria and in many more jurisdictions the toga of integrity has been stripped from members of the profession, lawyers and judges alike.⁶ It is a sad truth that our profession has been on a steady decline by casting aside established traditions and canons of professional ethics that has evolved over centuries.⁷ This disturbing trend therefore, calls for a need to re-visit and revamp the battered image of the legal profession for better and sustainable development of our society.

It is in the light of the fore-going that this paper examines the pertinent issue of ethics and falling standards in the Nigerian legal profession. The paper gives a brief exposition on the history and development of the legal profession from its glorious and prestigious days to the present decadence and corruptness, the negative impact of this on the development of the Nigerian society and imminent threat to the future of the profession in Nigeria.

The paper posits that the falling standards and moral decadence is attributable to the long years of non-teaching of legal ethics in the law faculties and 'epileptic' teaching of legal ethics as a stand-alone taught course in the curriculum of Nigerian Law School until recently.

This paper recommends the teaching of ethics in the foundational years of legal training, and a thorough review of the current curriculum and course content on the teaching of legal ethics. There is

³ Wikipedia Christopher Alexander Sapara Retrieved in https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Sapara_Williams Accessed 8 July 2016

⁴The Code of Ethics on Anti-Corruption and Professional Compliance Standards for African Lawyers.Retrieved in <http://lawyersofafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/PDF-ENGLISH-VERSION-DRAFT-1-PAN-AFRICAN-CODE-OF-ETHICS-10-AUGUST-2015.pdf>. Accessed on 6 July 2016;

⁵ M Ladan, 'Future of legal Education in Nigeria' Daily Trust, May 30 2016 <http://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/law/future-of-legal-education-in-nigeria/> accessed 30th May 2016

⁶ Joe- KyariGadzama (SAN) '50 Years of legal Education in Nigeria; A Critique' A lectured delivered at the 50th Anniversary of the Nigerian Law School, published in 'The Nation' of Feb 18 2014, <http://thenationonlineng.net/50-years-of-legal-education-in-nigeria-a-critique-2/> accessed on 30th May 2016

⁷ P. MacFarlane 'The importance of Ethics and the Application of Ethical Principles to the Legal Profession' 2002, vol 6(2) Jour.of South Pacific Law, <http://www.paclii.org/journals/fjspl/vol06/8.shtml> accessed 18th May, 2016

the urgent need to re-establish the old rules of honesty, fidelity loyalty, diligence, competence and dispassion in our service to clients and society, above self-interest, greed and commercial self-advantage.⁸ Clinical legal education and legal ethics teaching remain veritable tools for the training and re-orientation of legal professionals and budding students to the morals and traditional values that have defined our legal profession.

2.0. Nigerian Legal Environment before the Advent of British Colonization

Prior to colonization, the geographical expression, Nigeria was formerly a vast territory filled with diverse cultures- a heterogeneous community. But it was one who understood its boundaries and the different cultures maintained their boundaries; Like every other society, the people, had their own indigenous methods of governance and legal institutions for the administration of justice.⁹ These institutions existed to maintain law, order and the rule of law as perceived and preserved by and through the varied cultures and societal values, which includes the notions of what the society determines as good or bad.¹⁰ The more powerful members of the society such as family heads, village chiefs and overlords who were seen as the custodians of the varied customary laws, rendered adjudicatory services as an obligation without the payment of fees to parties in dispute.¹¹ The British adversarial system of adjudication and professional advocacy was unknown to these traditional legal institutions which main aim is to reconcile parties and maintain a brotherly community.¹² The present Nigerian legal system is a relic of the old British imperialism that brought about the imposition of alien English legal system on the Nigerian traditional legal structures and institutions:

Although the legal profession in its present form comprising practitioners of the English type of law came into being in 1861, when English law and English type of courts were imposed on the Colony of Lagos by virtue of Ordinance No 3 of 1863, it is apt to state that the foundation of the legal profession in Nigeria dates back to the period before the advent of the British in Nigeria. The need to sustain European interest's in trade, commerce and medicine informed the introduction of western education and the emergence of the orthodox medical and legal professions in Nigeria.¹³ The establishment of the orthodox English type of courts in 1863 invariably called for a more organized legal profession that was capable of handling the English law and procedure.¹⁴ This development led to the desire of members of the society to acquire western education and imbibe western culture. These people formed the literate people in the society, taking up the role of acting as "attorneys" and agents or local representatives of their foreign principals.¹⁵

The introduction of the new and unfamiliar system of adjudication gradually gained the confidence of the indigenous people since it afforded them the opportunity of presenting their cases before the English Courts just as they did in the traditional courts.¹⁶ There were the semi-illiterate local

⁸ *Ibid*

⁹ BamgboseOluyemisi "Dispute Settlement under the Yoruba Culture: Lessons for the Criminal Justice System". In ToyinFalola and Ann Genova. *The Yoruba in Transition. History, Values and Modernity*. NC: Carolina Academic Press 126

¹⁰ *Ibid*

¹¹ O Adewoye, *The legal Profession in Nigeria, 1865-1962* (Lagos, Longman, 1977) p.3

¹² BamgboseOluyemisi "Dispute Settlement under the Yoruba Culture: Lessons for the Criminal Justice System. Note 8: 139

¹³ J. Asein, *Introduction to Nigerian Legal System, 2nded* (Lagos, Ababa Press Ltd) ; O Adewoye, *The Legal Profession in Nigeria, 1865-1962 Op cit*

¹⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵ J. Asein, *Introduction to Nigerian Legal System, 2nded* . p.246

¹⁶ *Ibid*

interpreters between the early Europeans magistrates and the illiterate litigants.¹⁷ The interpreters played a significant role in the early developments of the courts and the legal profession in Nigeria by bridging the communication barrier in cases involving the locals.¹⁸ However, with the subsequent increasing growth of commercial and political activities, there was a dire need for professionals who were learned in the rudiments of English law. Following these developments, young and aspiring youths travelled to Great Britain and Ireland to acquire formal legal training. During these years of metamorphosis, the practice of law in Nigeria, consists of three categories of 'legal professionals; those who have acquired formal legal training, persons who have not gone through formal legal training but who by association and close contact have served continuously for a prescribed number of years in the office of a formally trained professional, having sufficient knowledge of the law, and the third category being "self-taught local attorneys" who were deemed and found to be 'fit and proper persons to appear and act in the capacity of barristers, solicitors and proctors as may appear necessary' and who had passed the qualifying examination set by the Chief Justice.¹⁹ The first Nigerian lawyer is Mr. Christopher Alexandra Sapara-Williams, was one of the foremost formally trained legal professional from the Inner Temple, London, United Kingdom.²⁰

Mr Sapara Williams, the first indigenous Nigerian lawyer, called to the English bar on 17 November 1879. He stamped his name in the annals of history as the first Nigerian lawyer when he was called to the English Bar on the 17th of November, 1879.²¹ After graduation, he came back to Nigeria and started his practice on the 13th of January, 1888 in Lagos State.²² On the 30th of January 1888, became a member of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and on the 30th of August 1888, he enrolled at the Supreme Court, Lagos as the first Nigerian barrister.²³ It should however be noted and as stated above²⁴, that Mr Sapara Williams was not the only one to practice the law. Due to the shortage of qualified lawyers, until 1913 it was common for non-lawyers with basic education and some knowledge of English law to be appointed to practice as attorneys.²⁵ In the years following, more and more aspiring youths and young men joined the 'league of professionals' Then, in Nigeria, the legal profession was the envy of many, eyed as a noble, prestigious and highly revered profession and its members were the *crème de la crème* of the society and political class. The small class of semi-literate, literate and influential members of the society encouraged and sponsored their children and wards to become lawyers. The earliest legal practitioners trained in England and only children of royal birth –the direct descendants of the Obas, Emirs, Ezes or Obi's and other aristocrats and few

¹⁷ This was well illustrated by "Ichioku" a television comedy series featured in the 70's and 80's

¹⁸ J. Asein, Introduction to Nigerian Legal System, *Op cit*

¹⁹ *Ibid* see also Supreme Court Ordinance. No. 4 of 1876

²⁰ Wikipedia Christopher Alexander Sapara Retrieved in

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Sapara_Williams Accessed 8 July 2016

²¹ Oladipo Jimilehin "The legal profession and role of lawyers in Nigerian politics". Nigerian Tribune. 27 April 2010. Retrieved 8 July 2016

²² Taiwo Akinlami (13 September 2001). "The State of The Legal Profession In Nigeria: Education And Information". Lagos State University. Retrieved 8 July 2016

²³ Ike Uko). "Who Was NBA's First President?". The Daily Independent (Lagos) 4 May 2011. Retrieved 8 July 2016.

²⁴ Note 18

²⁵ Fidelis Oditah QC, SAN. "Legal Practice And Economic Prosperity" Keynote Address At The Maiden Seminar Of The Section On Legal Practice Of The Nigerian Bar Association with the theme "Legal Practice and Economic Prosperity. Nigerian Bar Association. Retrieved

<http://www.nigerianlawguru.com/articles/general/LEGAL%20PRACTICE%20AND%20ECONOMIC%20PROSPERITY.pdf> Accessed on 8 July 2016

bright and intellectually sound children qualified for selection into universities overseas in pursuit of legal education.²⁶

There were also cases where communities contributed money to sponsor their brilliant and illustrious sons on studies overseas to train and qualify as lawyers. The Supreme Court Ordinance, 1876²⁷ is the first significant regulatory statute relating to the practice of the legal profession in Nigeria. The Ordinance provided that "The Chief justice shall have power to approve, admit and enrol to practice as barristers and solicitors in the court such persons as shall have been admitted as solicitors... in any of the courts of London, Dublin and Edinburgh"²⁸ The Ordinance also provided for the three categories of persons that can practice as legal professionals in Nigeria.²⁹

3.0. Corruption and the Nigerian Legal Profession

This discourse is a bi-dimensional study of the concept of corruption, as it relates to the Nigerian Legal profession and the moral decadence of the legal professionals today. The Nigerian legal profession as a proud legacy of colonial rule metamorphosed over the years, developing, affecting and shaping the legal environment in Nigeria.³⁰ The post-independence period witnessed the establishment of a Law School. This period marked a turbulent phase in the political history of Nigeria. Civilian and Military transitions to power through coups and successive coup d'état was to later greatly impact the development of Nigerian legal profession and practice.³¹ Other factors responsible for ethical and moral decadence of members of the profession include factors such as the nation's economic downturn, corrupt leadership and misuse and abuse of information and cyber technology. The legal profession in Nigeria is experiencing negative developments in the practice of the profession; practice is no longer as lucrative or prestigious.³² In a bid to wade through these myriad challenges, persons in the legal profession are now adopting untoward strategies for survival and societal relevance, and are desecrating the revered legacy and violating the ethics of the profession.³³ Within the last few years, lawyers ranging from the bar, bench and legal academia have been linked with spearheading, aiding or playing prominent roles in high profile cases of forgery, bribery, money laundering and other economic crimes.³⁴

²⁶History of Nigerian Legal Profession <http://www.legalnigeria.com/2015/01/history-of-nigerian-legal-profession.html> accessed May 30th 2016

²⁷Ordinance No. 4 of 1876

²⁸ History of the Nigerian Legal Profession, *op cit*

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰Oluyemisi Bamgbose and Folake Tafita, "The Nigerian Legal Profession, Then, Now and Future: The Changing Nature and Character of a Profession", Corruption and Ethical Challenges to Legal Profession, Fordham University, 2016.

³¹ Military Intervention between 1966-1979 and 1983-1999 also greatly impacted the Nigerian Legal Profession. Successive military regimes made changes in the system of courts, The regimes conferred upon themselves power to appoint and dismiss justices of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court

³² Ibid

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Op cit note 3 p 223

3.1. Defining Corruption

The legal profession is fundamentally fueled by the ideals of the creation of law. That is to say, what determines the growth, development and sustainability of the legal profession is the reason by which it was created in the first place. This leads us into why laws were made in the first place- to have rules to guide and sustain a well-balanced society, free from harm at least to the barest minimum. It is when this good morally-oriented ideal and rationale behind law is warped, that we find decadence and a "Corrupted Legal Profession".

One of the key hindrances to sustainable development and economic growth in Nigeria is the problem of corruption. Most alarming is the geometric rise in instances of corruption in our higher institutions of learning; corruption, nepotism and indiscipline have equally taken over prominent places in the Nigerian legal profession, ranging from the bar to the bench and legal academia.³⁵ Stemming from the background above, corruption of the legal profession basically comes into play when there is a diversion in following the ideals that law was created to establish and sustain. Where there is a maneuver from the right path of the law, there is the creation of a new warped system tagged 'corruption of the legal profession'. This comes in different ways and cuts across all branches and sub-divisions of the legal profession. The legal profession has diverse sub-divisions, which grows or develops at the pace of technological and socio-political development/advancement of different countries. These includes; The court system which includes the judiciary, the legislature, legal documentation/records, societally compliant legal infrastructure, legal personnel recruitment and management, legal garb, rules of professional conduct- these are all different aspects that make up the legal profession.

Corruption is a multi-faceted phenomenon cutting across most if not all world systems. Corruption takes different outlooks and forms. But before we delve further into the specific details of the concept of corruption, the definition of corruption is briefly looked into.

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary,³⁶ Corruption is inter alia;

- Impairment of integrity, virtue or moral principle: Depravity
- Inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means (as bribery)
- A departure from the original or from what is pure or correct.

In like manner, several scholars across different fields have attempted what they deem as a sufficient definition of legal or judicial corruption. Comrade IssaAremumni, the former Vice President, Nigeria Labour Congress³⁷ defined judicial corruption as '*the abuse of entrusted power for private gain*'-this means that judicial corruption includes any inappropriate financial or material gain and non-material gain aimed at influencing the impartiality of the judicial process by any actor within the court system.³⁸ Herbert A. Igbanugo also defined judicial corruption as acts or omissions that constitute the

³⁵ Ibrahim Tanko Muhammed "That this Profession may not die: The Need to Flush out Miscreants from the Nigerian Legal Profession" AfeBabalola University: Journal of Sustainable Development Law and Policy Vol. 5 ISS. 1 (2015) P 219

³⁶ Merriam Webster Dictionary

³⁷ IssaAremu, "Notes on Corruption and Judicial Administration in Nigeria"

³⁸ Ibid

use of public authority for the private benefit of judges, court personnel and other justice sector personnel that result in improper and unfair delivery of judicial decisions.³⁹

These writers agree more with the definition of corruption by Daniel Kaufmann of the World Bank, who defines corruption as an avenue by which power is abused within the confines of the law-as those with power often have the ability to make laws for their protection,⁴⁰ particularly where they are able to perpetuate and sustain their abuse through the aid or connivance of legal professionals who are supposed to be the protectors of the law and the custodians of the values and ideals which the law seeks to uphold for the sustainability of society.

In simple terms corruption emerges where there is a breakdown of good morals, particularly those which uphold the sanctity of our society. In modern parlance, there are different ways in which corruption takes place-in the legal profession and the socio-political entities too. These include for example fraud,⁴¹ fraudulent misrepresentation, deceit, stealing and forgery, rigging of elections, embezzlement, and bribery to mention a few.

In a survey carried out by the International Bar Association in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), it was discovered that in many countries in the world, corruption is perceived to be an issue in the legal profession in both their home and neighbouring jurisdictions. Africa, Nigeria particularly had 75% of its respondents affirming this fact.⁴²

Similar surveys were carried out on the risks of bribery and corruption internationally, and it was observed that international corruption negatively affects the ability to compete for business in the legal profession.⁴³

In 2003, Chief Justice J.E. Gicheru of Kenya found that corruption in the judiciary had reached pandemic proportions- the maxim "why pay a lawyer when you can buy a judge" had achieved notoriety and the majority of Kenyan judges had become the "best judges money can buy".⁴⁴

The Ugandan Law Society found that prisoner's files were often 'misplaced' when they were taken before magistrates in attempts to extract bribes from the prisoners.⁴⁵

The above shows that corruption within the legal profession is one of common occurrence in the legal world of Africa as a whole.

³⁹Herbert A. Igbanugo, "The Rule of Law, Judicial Corruption and the Need for Drastic Judicial Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa's Nation" International Law News, American Bar Association, Vol. 42 No. 3, 2013.

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Op cit note 4

⁴² Anti-corruption Strategy for the Legal Profession OECD, IBA, UNODC "Risks And Threats of Corruption and the Legal Profession: Survey 2010", p 12.

⁴³ Ibid p 16

⁴⁴ Herbert A. Igbanugo, "The Rule of Law, Judicial Corruption and the Need for Drastic Judicial Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa's Nation" International Law News, American Bar Association, Vol. 42 No. 3, 2013

⁴⁵ U.N. Economic Communication for Africa, Governance and Public Administration Division, "Deepening the Judiciary's Effectiveness in Combating Corruption" Addis Ababa (DEC 14-15 2006), P. 10

3.2. Corruption in the Legal profession: Legal Education; Practice and Judiciary

Corruption in Legal Education

A major primary problem the legal profession faces in relation to corruption is the Quality of Legal Education. It has been noted that in reality, the objectives of the National Universities Commission (NUC) are laudable but have not been met because of its actual content and the teaching methods adopted.⁴⁶ Many faculties in Nigeria until about 2004⁴⁷ have continued to function with strict traditional and conservative attitudes towards training programmes. More so, the Nigerian law school where it is assumed that students will learn the practical approach only until 2008⁴⁸ taught what can be referred to as “theory of the practical”-thus leaving the young practitioner less equipped for the work ahead.⁴⁹ Majority of law aspirants read to pass and not practice; the realities of these issues always come to limelight at the onset of a practicing career.⁵⁰ On a happy note, the Nigerian law school has adopted new methods of teaching in line with international best practice. There are also periodic reviews of the law school curriculum. In February 2014, the Council of Legal Education met at a round table to review the curriculum of the Law School. The Director-General of the school, Olanrewaju Onadeko, said “that the review was in line with prevailing international best practice”⁵¹ “to enable law graduates to cope with challenges in the profession”⁵²

A second major problem is the haphazard tie of the Nigerian legal profession to the legacy of British colonialism. Although over the years, Nigeria has been able to expand on laws and statutes and has been able to stream in quite a number of qualified legal practitioners in its own right-ideal legal practitioners having some sound formal training in law, acquiring thereby the necessary skill and nuances of that trade⁵³, however, there comes the problem of the sustainable quality of these young practitioners as time wears on the legal profession. Many employers, clients and senior practitioners have expressed great alarm over the deteriorating standard of lawyers that are being churned out of law faculties today-many are ill equipped mentally and otherwise, some lack even the rudimentary grasp of basic principles; if the public faith in the legal profession is to be sustained, something has to be done to salvage the state of legal education in particular.⁵⁴ In recent times, the leaders of the profession have repeatedly pointed out the falling standards in the performance of new wigs and some want the law school programme to be extended from one year to two.⁵⁵

⁴⁶ Op cit note 3, p 224

⁴⁷ Bangbose Oluyemisi Access to Justice through Clinical Legal Education: A Way Forward for Good Governance and Development. (2015) *15 African Human Rights Law Journal* 378-396

⁴⁸ Segun Adebawale Council Of Legal Education Reviews Nigerian Law School Curriculum The eagle online February 25, 2014 Retrieved in <http://theeagleonline.com.ng/council-legal-education-reviews-nigerian-law-school-curriculum/> Accessed June 20 2016

⁴⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰ Lokulo Sodipe and O Omolola “Appropriate Curriculum for Training 21st Century Lawyers (43rd Conference of NALT, Kogi State University, 17th- 20th May, 2010.

⁵¹ Segun Adebawale Council Of Legal Education Reviews Nigerian Law School Curriculum The eagle online February 25, 2014 Retrieved in <http://theeagleonline.com.ng/council-legal-education-reviews-nigerian-law-school-curriculum/> Accessed June 20 2016

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ G.U. Oputa, “Belgore’s Judicial Pronouncements and the Nigerian Legal Profession (Justice Watch Publication, Lagos) p 80

⁵⁴ I.A. Ayua “Nigerian Legal Profession: Problems and Prospects” Essays in honour of Hon. Justice Mohammed Bello (1995) NIALS 18.

⁵⁵ Op cit note 12

Apart from the above concerns in the standard of legal education, a disturbing trend in the legal education system is the scourge of corruption. Calista Ezeaku in a report quoted the NUC Executive Secretary, Professor Julius Okojie where he said,

...corruption is not just embezzling funds as most people will often think. For us in the university system, any act overtly or covertly that against the delivery of quality education and production of globally competitive graduates should come under corruption. As the conscience of the society, the Nigerian university system must at all times live above broad so as to reprimand others of their misbehaviour in the society.⁵⁶

Unfortunately this has not been the case. Cases of plagiarism, which Professor Ayo Bamgbose refers to as 'this is a cardinal sin,'⁵⁷ academic dishonesty and fraud, sexual harassment, victimization fraud, bribery, have permeated the ivory tower, which is supposed to be the citadel of training and learning.

The writers agree with Professor Ayo Bamgbose who defines academic corruption as "any action that erodes academic standards in an institution"⁵⁸ The incessant acts of corruption in the citadel of learning is alarming and a cause for concern. A report titled "'UNICAL Prof suspended over alleged rape of student'"⁵⁹ where a Dean of Law in a Nigerian university was suspended for raping a student in the faculty is not only a shame to the don who was to stand *in locus parentis* to the students, but also an utter disgrace to the legal profession. In another report, a panel was set up to probe a professor of law, who was appointed Vice Chancellor of a University in the south eastern part of Nigeria for allegations of sexual assault and forgery against him.⁶⁰ Happily, this corrupt act of harassment, which the writers believe is a grievous breach of ethical values in the profession, has been frowned at the national level⁶¹. To forestall this exploitative act, sanitize institutions of higher learning against harassment and provide statutory protection for students against sexual hostility and all forms of sexual harassment, there is a bill before the Nigerian senate to criminalize lecturer student sexual relationship. The Bill which has passed the first reading provides for a 5 year jail term for erring lecturers. Heads of institutions who fail to take action within a specified period of a report by a student will also be liable to sanction.

Corruption in the Bar and Practice

⁵⁶ "Fighting Corruption In Universities, UNICAL's Example" *The Tide*. March 22 2013 Retrieved in <http://www.thetidewsonline.com/2013/03/22/fighting-corruption-in-universities-unical%E2%80%99s-example/>. Accessed 10 July 2016

⁵⁷ Saheed Ahmad Rufai *The Guardian* 01 January 2016 "NNOM, Bamgbose and institutionalisation of academic corruption in Nigeria" Retrieved in <http://guardian.ng/features/nnom-bamgbose-and-institutionalisation-of-academic-corruption-in-nigeria/>. Accessed 10 July 2016

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ EmaUna/Vanguard September 11 2015 Retrieved in <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/09/unical-prof-suspended-over-alleged-rape-of-student/> Accessed 10 July 2016

⁶⁰ Cletus Upong/Premium Times Dec 16, 2015 Nigeria raises panel to probe vice-chancellor indicted for sexual assault forgery Retrieved in <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/195257-nigeria-raises-panel-to-probe-vice-chancellor-indicted-for-sexual-assault-forgery.html> Accessed 10 July 2016

⁶¹ Dambazau, Ihejirika, Minimah/Premium Times May 4 2016 Retrieved in <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/202898-nigerian-senate-moves-criminalize-lecturers-students-sexual-relations-plans-5-year-jail-term.html> Accessed 10 July 2016

As earlier as 1962, there have been disciplinary cases against legal practitioners in Nigeria. The case of *R versus Abuah*⁶² is one of the earliest cases where the name of a legal practitioner was struck off the roll. Recently, the president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari noted this and decried the fact that corrupt acts of judges and legal practitioners were sabotaging his anti-corruption efforts to recover stolen assets.⁶³ This pathetic statement against members of a profession known to be noble was made at the Opening of the 2015 All Nigeria Judges' Conference in Abuja.⁶⁴

In the wave of corruption and financial difficulty in Nigeria, there has been an upsurge of degradation of work values and ethics by lawyers: vigorous advertising.⁶⁵ Different forms of corruption have emerged in the legal profession, lawyers now have online advertising, visual media, sending of letters to clients-things not compliant with the rules of professional conduct.⁶⁶ Legal ethics entails appropriate conduct within the ambit of the legal profession including duties owed to clients by lawyers.

Similarly, it has been noted that over the years in choosing leaders who will be custodians of the Bar (The Nigerian Bar Association) we have always conducted the elections with some degree of decorum worthy of emulation by other professional bodies- In recent times any delegate can agree that this hallowed system is condescending to a war, not of superior reasoning but *bello ad hominem*-war against persons; this to the mind of these writers is evidence showing loss and degradation of ethical values.⁶⁷

This new trend leads legal practitioners to be obsessed about winning cases at all cost, with dire consequences to the bar and the bench-with this, not only will the sanctity of the legal profession be defiled, but also the average Nigerian citizen who looks up to legal practitioners with the potentials to repositioning the justice system will be disappointed.⁶⁸ In 2013, four lawyers were barred from either practicing the legal profession in Nigeria or ever identifying themselves as lawyers again.⁶⁹ The lawyers were said to have engaged in sundry acts of corruption; breach of Rules 47, 50 and 51 of the Rules of Professional Conduct in the Legal Profession 2007 and Section 12 of the Legal Practitioners Act as amended, giving unsolicited service to the ex-managing director of Niger Delta Development Corporation, engaging as a debt collector to recover N9.2 Million from Edo State Ministry of Justice, and conversion of client's fund meant for incorporating a company, resulting in duping the client.⁷⁰ The legal practitioners namely Dominic Ntiero, Timipa Okponipere, G.C. Monye and J.A. Agwuncha were held per Chief Joseph B. Dauda, the then Chairman of Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Committee, as ignoble both in conduct and character.⁷¹ Consequently, their names were

⁶²R.v.Abuah (1962) 1 All NLR 279

⁶³Wale Odunsi "Buhari blasts judges, lawyers frustrating his anti-corruption war" *Daily Post* November 24, 2015 Retrieved in <http://dailypost.ng/2015/11/24/buhari-blasts-judges-lawyers-frustrating-his-anti-corruption-war/> Accessed on 10 July 2015

⁶⁴ *ibid*

⁶⁵Ikechukwu Onuoma and Joshua Nwachukwu "Ethical Frontiers in Legal Practice: The Duty of the New Executives of the Nigerian Bar Association", Nigerian Bar Association Conference 2012. Accessed online at www.feathersproject.com Tuesday 31st May, 2016

⁶⁶ *Ibid*

⁶⁷ *Ibid*

⁶⁸ *Ibid*

⁶⁹Ikechukwu Inochiri "LPDC Barred Four Lawyers for Life" 2013 Vanguard online Newspaper. Accessed online July 8, 2016.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*

⁷¹ *Ibid*

struck off the Apex's court's scroll. In another case of corruption, a five year suspension term was meted out to one Olawole Ojoge Daniel on grounds of judicial misconduct.⁷²

In another related report by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission,(EFCC), a Lagos business woman and legal practitioner, Stella Achebe was arraigned on Tuesday, December 16, 2014 before a Lagos State High Court, sitting in Ikeja on one-count charge bordering on issuance of dud cheque.⁷³

Cases of corruption span over all class of lawyers. A senior Nigerian lawyer, Kunle Kalejaiye SAN, the counsel to the Osun State gubernatorial aspirant in 2015, Olagunsoye Oyinlola, was stripped of his rank as a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) by Nigeria's Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee. He was also barred from legal practice.⁷⁴ This was as a result of professional misconduct for exchanging text messages with an election tribunal judge, in a case he was involved in. His act violated the provisions of sections 1, 15, 30, 31, 34 and 55 of the Rules of Professional Conduct for Legal Practitioners (2007). The Judge involved has also been compulsorily retired having been found guilty of professional misconduct by the National Judicial Council (NJC).⁷⁵ Another Senior Advocate of Nigeria and a renowned legal practitioner, Ricky Tarfa, is facing alleged charge of corruption and was arraigned by EFCC on 27 counts bordering on alleged willful obstruction of authorised officers of the EFCC, refusal to declare asset, making false information and offering gratification to a judge who has been queried by the National Judicial Council.⁷⁶

It is pertinent for a lawyer to take into cognizance the need to protect the integrity of the judicial system and the legal profession as a whole.

Corruption and the Nigerian Judiciary

Another angle from which corruption affects the legal profession is the loose standards of the Judiciary or the Courts. It is sad to note that the dynamics of political interests and self-centered egocentric tendencies have infiltrated and polluted the 'integrity' of the Nigerian judiciary and its key players.⁷⁷ A recent report from the Global Corruption Barometer states that the judiciary in Nigeria is widely viewed as one of the most corrupt institutions, where it is "normal" for judicial officers to request for bribes so as to hasten the process of law.⁷⁸

Justices Aloysius Katsina Kalu and Ayo-Salami have similarly noted that "the judiciary is not the defender of equity and justice, at least not for those without the means to procure judgments that reverse the ills of the society."⁷⁹

⁷² *ibid*

⁷³ Economic and Financial Crimes Commission 16 December 2014 "EFCC arraigns lagos lawyer for N2m Dud Cheque" Retrieved in <http://efccnigeria.org/efcc/index.php/news/1128-efcc-arraigns-lagos-lawyer-for-n2m-dud-cheque> Accessed July 11 2016

⁷⁴ "Kalejaiye loses SAN rank, barred from legal practice" *The News* May 22 2015 Retrieved in <http://thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2015/05/kalejaiye-loses-san-rank-barred-from-legal-practice/> Accessed July 11 2016

⁷⁵ *ibid*

⁷⁶ Yinka Hassan "Rickey Tarfa fails to stay proceedings as bank confirms transaction" *Today* May 21 2016 retrieved in <https://www.today.ng/news/national/125297/rickey-tarfa-fails-stay-proceedings-bank-confirms-transaction> Accessed July 11 2016

⁷⁷ *Op cit* note 15

⁷⁸ www.antigrafter.org accessed online Tuesday 31st May, 2016.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*

The immediate past Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Maryam Aloma Mukhtar, was stated to have lamented that there are real cases of massive corruption in the judiciary which have impugned its integrity.⁸⁰ Justice Mukhtar had earlier made the statement when she admitted the presence of bad eggs at the top echelon of the judicial arm of government during her screening before the Senate before her appointment as Chief Justice in 2012.⁸¹ She reiterated this fact in 2014 at the opening of a national workshop organised by the National Judicial Institute (NJI).⁸² Justice Maryam Aloma Mukhtar in a vanguard report titled on her last day in office as the Chief Justice of Nigeria, had no regrets over her actions in weeding the bad eggs from the bench.⁸³ John Oloyede, a legal practitioner stated on a live Channel Television Sunrise Daily programme that “corrupt practices in the Nigerian judicial system should no longer surprise Nigerians as it is part and parcel of that arm of government”⁸⁴ He went further to state that “*there are high level corrupt practices going on and there are low level corrupt practices going on within the judiciary and known to everybody*”⁸⁵ Clarifying his assertion above, Oloyede said “*about 90 per cent of them are actually clean. It is just that the few ones that are bad tarnish the image of the very good ones who are more; they are the silent majority*”⁸⁶. While the writers agree with Oloyede’s assertion, that Nigerian Judges are corrupt, we believe that there are more corrupt judges in Nigeria than his assertion.

The National Judicial Council barred Justice Rita Ofili-Ajumogobia from being elevated to the court of appeal or any other judicial body till her retirement.⁸⁷ She was placed on a watch list for four years starting from February 25, 2016 on grounds of misconduct and injustice by way of failure to deliver judgment over a pre-election case after adjourning the same repeatedly.⁸⁸

Chief Justice of Nigeria, Mahmud Mohammed noted in June, 2015, that in a period ranging from 2010, about 64 out of 1020 superior court judges had been sanctioned on corruption charges. Examples of these judges are Justice Gladys Olotu of the Federal High court who breached judicial procedure by delivering a judgment in a case, 18 months after the final address had been given by all counsel in the suit, contrary to the 90 days stipulation stated by the law, was sanctioned by the National Judicial Council for compulsory retirement.⁸⁹ Again, Justice U. A. Inyang of the Federal Territory High Court was compulsorily retired on grounds of misconduct- he included in his judgment, references to the garnishee proceedings, which came after the judgment had been delivered on December 20, 2011, in conjunction with Chief Chukwuma Ekomaru SAN, who recklessly signed a writ of execution a day after the delivery of the judgment above.⁹⁰ Hon. Justice Abubakar Talba of FCT High Court sitting on a high profile Police Pension case sentenced the accused to two-year jail after pleading guilty to three count charge in the N32.8 billion police pension fraud. The jail term was

⁸⁰ John Oloyede “Corruption Is Part And Parcel Of Nigerian Judiciary – John Oloyede” *Channels Television September 24, 2014* Retrieved in <http://www.channelstv.com/2014/09/24/corruption-part-parcel-nigerian-judiciary-john-oloyede/> Accessed 11 July 2016

⁸¹ Ikechukwu Nnochiri “CJN: No regrets over my actions —Mukhtar” *Vanguard November 20 2014* Retrieved in <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/11/cjn-regrets-actions-mukhtar/> Accessed 11 July 2016

⁸² John Oloyede “Corruption Is Part And Parcel Of Nigerian Judiciary – John Oloyede” note 75 supra

⁸³ Ikechukwu Nnochiri “CJN: No regrets over my actions —Mukhtar” note 76 supra

⁸⁴ *ibid*

⁸⁵ *ibid*

⁸⁶ *Ibid*

⁸⁷ Ade Adesomoju, “Misconduct: NJC bars judge from elevation to higher court” *Punch March 2, 2016*

Retrieved in <http://punchng.com/misconduct-njc-bars-judge-elevation-higher-court/> Accessed on 11 July 2016

⁸⁸ *Ibid*

⁸⁹ *The Nation*, 2015, accessed online July 8, 2016

⁹⁰ *Ibid*

to run concurrently. The Judge also gave the convict an option of N250,000 fine for each of the three counts. This sentence sparked negative criticisms of the Judge throughout the nation. Justice Abubakar Talba was thereafter given a suspension by the National Judicial Council.⁹¹ This sanction was faulted by lawyers who considered it too light.⁹²

Justice Charles Archibong was compulsorily retired on grounds that he dismissed a grievous charge against an accused without taking his plea and refused to release the true certified copy of his ruling to lawyers.⁹³ The National Judicial Council (NJC) found Justice T D Naron of the High Court of Justice Plateau State guilty of professional misconduct and was compulsorily retired⁹⁴ for his part in the case where Kunle Kalejaiye SAN was stripped of his rank as a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) by Nigeria's Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee.⁹⁵ Justice Musa Anka of the Zamfara State High Court was immediately sacked having been found guilty of gross misconduct-bribery and corruption, receiving bribe from a certain Zubairu Abdulmalik to gain judgment in his favour.⁹⁶

In spite of efforts taken to combat the menace of corruption within the legal profession, some rotten eggs do not fail to spring up heinous acts to water down development or progress in the legal profession. However, steps are being taken by the Chief Justice of Nigeria in conjunction with the Nigerian Judicial Council and the EFCC to quell or mitigate to the barest minimum, corruption in our legal system.

Sir Granville Abibo, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria in his paper titled "The Nigerian Legal System and Endemic Corruption" said eradicating corruption completely may be a herculean task⁹⁷ but could be achieved if the legal system adheres to high standards of independence, impartiality, integrity and accountability. He further stated that troubling menaces of corruption, executive control and manipulation of the judiciary continues to undermine the ability of the courts effectively secure truth and justice- these legacies create major obstacles to a fair trial in Nigeria.⁹⁸ As such, honest and impartial decision making, which is vital to the credibility of the judiciary, is relatively on the decline.⁹⁹ He noted that a corrupt judge is worse than an armed robber.¹⁰⁰ Rosemary Inda-Dokubo classified judicial corruption as relating to misconduct of judges and magistrates, through receiving or giving bribes, improper sentencing of convicted criminals, bias in hearing and judgments of arguments and other such misconduct.¹⁰¹ Judicial corruption emanates from the system of

⁹¹<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/131921-lawyers-fault-njcs-one-year-suspension-of-justice-talba.html>, accessed July 10, 2016

⁹² *ibid*

⁹³ Kamarudeen Ogundele, "NJC recommends retirement of Justices Naron, Archibong" *The Nation* February 21, 2013 Retrieved in <http://thenationonlineng.net/njc-suspends-justices-naron-archibong/> " accessed online July 8, 2016

⁹⁴ *ibid*

⁹⁵ "Kalejaiye loses SAN rank, barred from legal practice" *The News* May 22 2015 Retrieved in <http://thenewsnigeria.com.ng/2015/05/kalejaiye-loses-san-rank-barred-from-legal-practice/> Accessed July 11 2016

⁹⁶ Ikechukwu Nnochiri, "Bribery: NJC sacks Zamfara High Court Judge" *Vanguard* May 28 2011 Retrieved in <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2011/05/bribery-njc-sacks-zamfara-high-court-judge/> Accessed June 20 2016

⁹⁷ The TIDE "Nigeria's Legal System and its Challenges" November 9, 2015, accessed at www.thetide.com Tuesday 31st May, 2016

⁹⁸ *Ibid*

⁹⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*

appointment of judges by governors or the president, which leaves the judge to act according to the whims of their "benefactors" as he who pays the piper dictates the tune.¹⁰²

Acknowledging the severe effects of corruption on legal education and professionalism (Bar and Bench) in Nigeria, It becomes pertinent for legal academia as custodians and minders of the legal education 'cradle' to rise up these challenges and the need to protect the integrity of the legal profession through remodelling and re-orientation of budding legal professionals from the 'cradle' of legal education. There is the need to redeem the lost glory of the legal professional in Nigeria through the teaching of legal education ethics.

4.0. Ethics and Clinical Legal Education as the Vehicle of Transformation

Ethics Teaching and Nigeria Legal Education

In the past, before the establishment of present curriculum for legal education in Nigeria, persons who have gone through formal training or adjudged qualified to practice as lawyer in Nigeria are required to go through some form of apprenticeship or pupillage training where they are expected to acquire the needed skills and also learn the culture and ethical rules of behaviour as legal professionals.¹⁰³ Early chambers and lawyers during those years were known for their forthrightness, hard work and professionalism for which they commanded the respect of the society in general and in particular the community where they set up their practice. However, recently, and for a long time before now, there has been a lot of complaints before the Nigerian Bar Association on the misconduct of many members of the profession; allegations of crime, forgery, financial impropriety and other shameful acts are very common.¹⁰⁴ The sudden upsurge of new entrants into the profession has left in its entrails worrisome anti-climax by way of declining standards, dishonest and sharp practices and poor performance.¹⁰⁵

The loss or downplay of ethical guidance for legal professionals over the years is significantly responsible for the corruption cum moral decadence which has successfully permeated every facet of our national life and more particularly our previously revered legal profession. There is therefore the need to place greater emphasis on the teaching of legal ethics.

Ethics legal profession teaching in Nigeria is very weak if not a farce.¹⁰⁶ In the recent decades of legal education in Nigeria, the importance of teaching legal professional ethics as a core subject has not been emphasized going by the curriculum of legal education fashioning the courses and content of nearly all the law faculties of the various universities.

The only semblance or exposure to the teaching of professional ethics is the Nigerian Law School, where students are introduced to the course for the first time after graduating from a law faculty. The teaching of legal ethics even with the Nigerian Law School has been epileptic, until recently when the

¹⁰² Ibid

¹⁰³ J. Asein Introduction to Nigerian Legal System 2nd ed. Op cit. R. Williams, Key note Address on Challenges of Legal Practice in the 21st century Nigeria
<http://www.frawilliams.com/media/challenges%20of%20legal%20practice.pdf> Accessed 10 November 2016

¹⁰⁴ E. Ojukwu, Legal Education in Nigeria; A Chronicle of Reforms and Transformation under TAHIR MAMMAN, op cit.

¹⁰⁵ P. Akubo "Setting Standards of Best Practice in the Legal Profession" in Contemporary Issues in the Nigerian Legal Landscape, eds. A. Onigbinde, S. Ajayi, A Compendium in Honour of Prince Lateef Fagbemi, SAN. 2010 LexVision, p. 104

¹⁰⁶ Morlitterno James 'An Analysis of Ethics Teachings in Law Schools: Replacing Lost Benefits of the Apprenticeship System in the Academic Atmosphere' 60 Univ. of Cincinnati Law Review (1991)

curriculum and delivery of legal education by the Nigerian Law School was reviewed after 45 years since its establishment.¹⁰⁷ Criticizing the old curriculum of the Nigeria Law School, Professor Yadudu in his lecture as far back as 1997 stated:

If the truth must be told...I am afraid the Nigerian law School, the Premier and only professional training ground for legal practitioners has not fared any better... It is now close to two decades since I passed out of the Law School, I can without fear or contradiction, assert that nothing substantial has changed... with its curriculum... it would need to be a bit more creative...¹⁰⁸

Following many observations and discontent from many quarters with the timeworn curriculum of the Nigerian Law School, in 2006, the Legal Education Review Committee was set up to look into the curriculum and make necessary recommendations to improve the curriculum and align it with contemporary legal education and best practices. The Committee submitted its report in 2007 proposing amendments to the curriculum and subjects taught of which professional ethics was one.¹⁰⁹

One notable finding of the Committee amongst other findings and which these writers also rightly observe is that the teachings of subjects were lumped together, professional ethics and legal practice skills, legal practitioners accounts and law office management were all taught as one course, with insufficient time allotted to professional ethics.¹¹⁰ The Committee recommended in its report that professional ethics should be taught as a course on its own, proposing a model course content on professional ethics. While agreeing with the Committee on the need to review the teaching of professional ethics, we disagree with the paucity of issues in proposed course content. Under the new curriculum for the first time legal ethics is taught under the title "Professional Ethics and Skills" as a core credit course of 20 weeks, but the content of the course does not contain contemporary issues in legal ethics to which law students may be exposed to in real practice. We hold firmly that there is more to the teaching of legal ethics than a 20 weeks exposure to the course, which is the foundation and fulcrum for legal professionalism and practice.

It is pertinent therefore, that the teaching of ethics as a stand-alone credit course should be introduced into early legal education, thus there is a need for incorporation of the teaching of legal ethics into the current curriculum of all faculties of law in the various universities in Nigeria. The teaching of legal ethics as a stand-alone course should have a robust content with topics such as malpractice, corruption, professionalism and other contemporary issues in legal practice. Teaching of ethics to young and budding law students from the onset of their exposure to legal education can be likened to 'a catch them young' initiative. This position of the writers was affirmed during an informal interview with a senior academic of the Nigerian Law School.¹¹¹ The position taken is that since the undergraduate training for law students spans over a period of between 4 to 5 years depending on the programme as compared to the 9 months of exposure to teaching at the Law School, professional habit will be better imbibed in the early longer years as professional habit would have been formed right from foundation. This position taken by the writers concurs with Mr Onadeko, the Director General of the Nigerian Law Schools view in reaction to general complaints about the

¹⁰⁷ E. Ojukwu, *Legal Education in Nigeria; A Chronicle of Reforms and Transformation under TAHIR MAMMAN*, op cit.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p.5, See the lecture "The Nigerian Legal Profession towards 2010" Institute of Advanced Legal Studies 1997, p.10

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p.30

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Informal telephone interview on Monday 4th July 2016 at 3pm

competence of new lawyers. He said "that the law school should not be solely blamed because law graduates spend more years in universities before being admitted for a one-year programme in the law school"¹¹². The teaching of ethics at the University level, combined with acquisition of skills and exposure to rudiments of professional practice adopting clinical legal education will no doubt guarantee a well baked and thoroughly bred professional in our law students.

Other initiatives that can be explored in teaching and impartation of good ethics include role model building through seminars, workshops and day training for law students, an example of such initiatives are student centered programmes organized by the Faculty of Law, University of Ibadan. These programmes which include career talks and guidance, discourse on contemporary issues affecting professionalism and professional practice in Nigeria amongst other issues are arranged in collaboration with the Law Students Society (LSS). The programme attracts the invitation of reputable and outstanding members of the Nigerian legal profession from different and diverse fields of practice, giving the students the opportunity to learn and share from their experiences in practice and other social aspects of life. One of such programmes is the 'What Next Programme' a passing out initiative programme for final year outgoing students of the Faculty of Law, University of Ibadan.¹¹³

The 'What Next' programme has been a success story for the Faculty of Law, University of Ibadan and the students who had graduated in the successive years. Today, many of them are excelling in their various chosen aspects of the legal profession acting as ambassadors of change to their contemporaries.

Clinical Legal Education and Transformation

Prior to the introduction of clinical legal education into the curriculum of legal education in Nigeria, the only semblance of formal introduction and exposure of Nigeria law students to the rudiments of legal practice and procedures is the Nigerian Law School.¹¹⁴ Although other informal streams such as chamber visits and private arrangements for pupillage or some form of internship and chamber attachments exists, but these streams do not present the law student with the hands on skills required to prepare a law graduate for real life legal practice.

Clinical legal education which had existed in American schools for over four decades, was introduced into the curriculum of legal education in Nigeria in the wake of the year 2006 and 2007,¹¹⁵ upon the realization that there is the need for a holistic approach to the training process of law students by exposure to live cases and practical situations in order to produce a well-rounded professional.¹¹⁶ The crusade for the establishment of in-house clinics as 'practical rooms' and 'laboratories' for the training of law students was championed by the Network of University Legal

¹¹²Segun Adebowale Council Of Legal Education Reviews Nigerian Law School Curriculum The eagle online February 25, 2014 Retrieved in <http://theeagleonline.com.ng/council-legal-education-reviews-nigerian-law-school-curriculum/> Accessed June 20 2016

¹¹³ The 'What Next' programme was the initiative of the Faculty of Law, University of Ibadan during the tenure of Professor Oluyemisi Bamgbose as Dean. The programme which was first launched in 2010 has become an annual event benefiting our law students each year.

¹¹⁴ See 'Taking Practical Legal Training into the 21st Century: Proposal for the Reform of the Nigerian Law School Programme', *op. cit*

¹¹⁵E. Ojukwu et al, Under the Goals of legal education and Characteristic of Clinical Legal Education in CLE Curriculum, Lessons and Materials, NULAI, Abuja. www.cleaweb.org/ accessed 14th November 2016

¹¹⁶ See 'Community Lawyering : An Intervention of the University of Ibadan Women's Law Clinic in the case of stray bullet killings at Arulogun-Idi-Omo Community: a Case Study' *op. cit.* at 40

Aid Institutions(NULAI). A curriculum on clinical legal education was developed alongside series of training workshops and manuals for teachers.

Today, through the effort of NULAI and collaboration with other institutions; national, regional and international, clinical legal education has been adopted by nearly- percent of Nigerian University law schools, and each establishing an in-house clinic for the training of law students.¹¹⁷ The various law schools in-house clinics provided practical training to law students through rendering legal services according to their chosen focus area(s) or preferred scope of the law clinic. Some of these law clinics are generalized in terms of focus areas of practice, while some are specialized.¹¹⁸

Clinical legal education includes both formal and informal the acquisition of skills and ethics needed to practice as a legal professional. Relation skills are taught through the handling practical life cases by student clinicians under the tutelage of staff clinicians. During the clinic sessions ethical issues arising from cases are discussed freely, giving student clinicians the atmosphere to ask questions on their conduct and performance.

5.0. CONCLUSION

This paper is a perusal of the Nigerian Legal Profession, the historical development pre and post-independence and also a reflection on the legal profession as it stands today. The paper advocates the need for new measures of improvement of the legal profession of Nigeria through the teaching of professional (legal) ethics and clinical legal education.

It is an outcry to all professionals, legal academia and legal education policy makers involved in the administration and running of the legal profession and to members of the society at large. The ultimate task is to stop the cankerworm of corruption which has eaten so deeply into our fabric and instead embrace the ideals on which law is premised, and in unity work towards reforming and grooming a well-balanced and sustainable society where law can be ethically and safely practiced.

The writer cannot but agree with Yusuf Alli SAN, who stated that "*I have come to see the urgency of a thorough and comprehensive sanitisation of our profession,*"¹¹⁹ This statement is germane at this point, considering the perverted state of the legal profession.

As hydra-headed as the corruption malaise may be in Nigeria, with a well taught league of ethically sound law students, budding professionals and an independent and incorruptible judiciary, justice can still be achieved 'where there is a will, there is a way'. The foundation of our legal profession needs to be revisited for rebuilding and reconstruction in order to redeem the past and lost glory of our noble profession. The legal profession being an honourable profession demands practitioners who must be men and women of great integrity, honesty and candour¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ E. Ojukwu Clinical Legal Education in : For Nigerian Universities Law Faculties/Clinics NULAI Nigeria, October, 2006 pp. 8-9

¹¹⁸ An example of a specialized in-house clinic is the Women's Law Clinic, Faculty of Law, University of Ibadan. The focus of the clinic is to ensure access to justice for women

¹¹⁹The Tide December 11, 2013 A Case For Corruption-Free Nigerian Judiciary <http://www.thetidenewsonline.com/2013/12/11/a-case-for-corruption-free-nigerian-judiciary/> Accessed July 11, 2016

¹²⁰ P. Akubo "Setting Standards of Best Practice in the Legal Profession" in Contemporary Issues in the Nigerian Legal Landscape, op cit. Quoted from the speech of the Honourable Justice M.M.A Akanbi, delivered on 23rd August , 1999 at the Conference of the Nigerian Bar Association.