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The effects of corruption on good governance in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study was aimed at examining the impact of corruption on good governance in Nigeria. With the use of the secondary source of data, certain indicators derived from the main composites of the concepts of Good Governance were analysed. These are; the legitimacy of the government, the accountability of the public officials, and the capacity/competence of government to formulate policies and deliver services to the citizens, as well as respect for human rights and the rule of law. The study revealed that despite the huge resources put into the implementation of policies geared towards good governance in Nigeria, there have not been visible changes in the living standard of the citizens, due to gross corruption. Corruption is one of the major reasons for the poor economic performance, decaying infrastructures, the rising cost of living and poverty in Nigeria. The fight against corruption is that of the survival of the nation itself. The choice before Nigerians is very clear: they either go to war sincerely against corruption in all its ramifications, or keep the status-quo and be consumed by this hydra-headed dragon. Hence, some recommendations were made to ameliorate the problems.

Keywords: Good governance, Corruption, Accountability, Legitimacy, Service delivery, Development

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1. Introduction

Despite the long years of independence, Nigeria is still battling with the problem of good governance. The leadership in the country has been characterised by lack of vision, political bickering and above all, the leaders have been enmeshed in gross corruption, which has become a great threat to the nation's survival (Kuffuor, 2009). According to Ogundiya (2009), corruption is a huge challenge in the Nigerian public administration. Corruption has eaten deep into every segment of the Nigerian Society is to affirm the obvious. This can be confirmed from the revelations of many probe panels that have been set up at different times by different regimes in the country.

Indeed, Corruption is at the core of the crisis in issues such as governance and legitimacy, the establishment of a sustainable democratic order, rule of law, national development and the welfare of the citizens. Corruption is the major explanation for the seemingly insolvable problems of poverty, diseases, hunger and general acute development tragedy in Nigeria (Ogundiya, 2009). Corruption has seriously impeded the growth and effective utilization of resources in the country. With enormous wealth from oil resources, economic, social, and political strength, Nigeria is supposed to be called the giant of Africa. However, Kew (2006) observed that 20 years of brutal and corrupt military rule, which left a legacy of political corruption in the hands of Nigeria's powerful political elites, who are sitting atop vast patronage networks the nation was subdued to a non-giant status. These elites view governance primarily through the lens of their own personal enrichment and survival rather than national development.

The centralized political and economic structures in Nigeria, tends to make those who control key state posts fabulously wealthy, while 70% of Nigerians fall into abject poverty (Sklar et al, 2006). What these leaders have in common is the brazen disregard for the rule of law, lack of an independent judiciary and legislature. What this has caused is socio-economic stagnation and alienation of the citizenry from the political system (Mayer, 1996). According to Kew (2006), the Nigerian government has not being serving the interest of its people. Politics at the federal, state, and local levels of the Nigerian federation are dominated by powerful elites, who had built many patronage networks during the military days but now use public offices to expand their networks and fortunes. Moreover, many of them have also cultivated personal militias to secure their present positions, which are not serving the national goal of development of Nigeria (Kew, 2006).

Furthermore, the CLEEN Foundation (2010) gave other effects of corruption as lack of development, infrastructural decay, and mediocrity in leadership. Other visible signs are; fuel scarcity in an oil-producing nation, then fallen standards of education and work output, high rates of unemployment and the everwidening gaps between the rich and poor among other factors. At the international level, corruption manifests in tarnishing the image of the country and the caution exercised by foreign nationals in business transactions with Nigerians, thereby weakening the economic sector. Bureaucratic corruption in particular has been responsible for the mismanagement of public resources, economic setback as a national heritage etc (Imokhuede, Lawal and Johnson, 2012). Corruption, which was compounded during the several years of military misrule, has become institutionalized thereby obstructing progress in every facet of the country's political and socio-economic life. The result has been the paradox of mass poverty amidst rich natural resources (CLEEN Foundation, 2010). Indeed, the socio-economic and political development of a country depends on its ability entrench and sustain good governance which is expressed in a committed, patriotic and disciplined leadership with a vision to advance in the quest for national development. Sadly, Nigeria has existed for over fifty years with little or no record of such socio-economic and political development. This ugly trend is connected with the pervasive corruption noted in the country (Lawal and Tobi, 2006). Although there has been various administrative reforms carried out to ensure sustainable good governance, the gains have not been actualised due to corruption among other factors.

At the onset of the fourth republic, in a broadcast to the nation, the President declared that no society could achieve its potentials if corruption is not eradicated. He saw corruption as an enemy to be fought until it retreats. He then assured the citizens that his would be unequivocally committed to transparency and accountability with none to be regarded as sacred cow (Tribune, 1999). However, in spite of several efforts made by that regime to establish Anti-Corruption Agencies (ACAs), the scourge of corruption is still prevalent, with many Nigerians suffering from its devastating effects on good governance in the country. Mohammed (2013) asserted that the Nigerian government took a number of measures to address the problems of corruption and bad governance in the country. These included public service reforms such as the monetization policy, the public procurement standard (Due Process), Anti-Corruption Enforcement Agencies and the sanitization of the financial services sector by the Central Bank, which revealed some mind bulging levels of barefaced theft by the management of several banks in Nigeria. Despite the few successes attributable to these measures, the situation remains unacceptable, as corruption has continued to permeate and pervade every facet of the national life in Nigeria (CLEEN Foundation, 2010).

Corruption has so permeated the Nigerian society that CLEEN Foundation (2010) declared that anyone who says that corruption in Nigeria has not yet become alarming is either a fool; a crook or else does not live in this country. To buttress this fact, Transparency International put Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world in its corruption perception index for 1995 – 1997. In 1999, Nigeria was scored as the second most corrupt nation in the world (Ojaide, 2000). Indeed, corruption has been responsible for Nigeria's socio- economic and political under-development and there is an urgent need to curb the menace, if the nation must advance in its quest for good governance. This paper therefore, tried to highlight the effect of corruption on good governance in Nigeria, with the intension of proffering some workable solutions to the problem.

2. The Concept of Corruption

According to Akindele (1995), the concept of corruption has been elusive in many dimensions, due to the lack of uniform definition. What is regarded as corruption depends on the existing national laws and regulations guiding certain actions. Some countries define corruption in the broadest form, while others legislate on the narrow definition of the term. However, from an etymological dimension, the word corruption comes from the Greek word "corruptus" meaning an aberration or a misnomer (CLEEN Foundation, 2010).

In the same vein, Nye (1967), views corruption is a deviation from the formal duties because of private gains. This includes such behaviour as bribery (use of reward to pervert the judgment of a person in position of trust); nepotism (appointment because of relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private regarding use). This definition will be very difficult to operate, where corruption is widespread and regarded as the norm by majority of the people.

Similarly, Otite (2000) views corruption as the perversion of integrity, which could be presented in acts such as bribery, inordinate favours or moral depravity. It occurs when two or more parties interact to upturn the structure and processes of a society. It is concerned with the behaviour of functionaries which promote dishonest situations. The World Bank (2009) defined corruption as an abuse of public office for private gain, where an official accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe. Corruption is also an abuse, whereby private agents actively offer bribes to upturn public rules and processes for individual/personal advantage and profit. Corruption can also be depicted in acts such as patronage and nepotism, theft of state assets or diversion of state resources. The Vision 2010 Committee views Corruption as inordinate activities geared towards the changing of the normal course of judgments and position of trust (Otite, 2000). The Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000 also define corruption to include bribery, fraud and other related offences (Otite, 2000).

Khan (1996:45) stated that corruption varies from one nation to another. It can thus be defined as "*a perversion or change from the general accepted rules or laws for selfish gain*". The United Nations on its part defines corruption as the abuse of power for private gain, while Transparency International chose a clear and focused definition of the term as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain (CLEEN Foundation, 2010). This is a very wide-ranging definition, which delineates some of the acts of corruption. Otite (1986) defines corruption as the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour, or moral depravity. This definition is broader because it involves the moral aspects of official conducts.

The Transparency International views corruption as the negative behaviour of public officials, either politicians or civil servants, whereby they enrich themselves or their cronies unlawfully, through the misuse of public power which has been entrusted to them (Pope, 1996). The definition Transparency International is quite descriptive, though it focuses only on the public sector. However, there is corruption in the private sector too, which has negative consequences for the whole society.

Furthermore, Ogundiya (2009) gave a very broad picture of the concept, stating that certain behaviours could be used to highlight corruption. These acts were given as embezzlement, conflict of Interests, bribery, fraud, rigging of elections, misappropriation, and conversion of public funds for personal gains, extortion, and manipulation of procurement processes, diversion, and misappropriation of funds through manipulation or falsification of financial records.

Action Aids (2008), on its part views corruption as dishonest acts which should be avoided by the good people of any nation. It suggests that the society should disapproval of anyone who engages in corrupt practices instead of what obtains in Nigeria, whereby corrupt politicians and public officials are indirectly applauded and sometimes celebrated with traditional titles and national Honours. Such abuse should be met

with sanctions in a developing nation like Nigeria, who should be in a hurry to develop and catch up with the rest of the developed world.

According to Ajie and Wokekoro (2012), some researchers have taken a holistic approach on the discussion of corruption by dividing it into several forms. These according to Taylor (2010) include:

- i. *Political corruption:* It occurs when politicians and public decision-makers, who are entitled to formulate, establish, and implement laws on behalf of the people, are corrupt. It also takes place when policy formulation and legislation are tailored to benefit politicians and legislators- as in the case of the controversial huge legislators' wages, and the outrageous pension laws passed by states to favour the Governors and their spouses in Nigeria.
- Bureaucratic corruption: This occurs in public administration in the course of public policy implementation. The citizens encounter this kind of corruption daily in service delivery points such as the hospitals, schools, local licensing offices, police stations, the various government ministries etc. Bureaucratic corruption occurs when public sector procedures becomes illegal/ inappropriate.
- iii. *Electoral corruption:* This category of corruption includes the rigging of elections and other frauds in the electoral process. It includes the promise of an office, special favours, coercion, intimidation, and interference with the freedom of election, buying of votes, disenfranchisement, snatching of ballot boxes, victimizing and maiming, mutilation of election results in favour of losers and votes turn up in area where votes were not cast.
- iv. Bribery: which includes kickbacks and pay offs etc?
- v. *Fraud:* which could be reflected as trickery, swindling and deceit, counterfeiting, racketing, smuggling and forgery?
- vi. *Embezzlement:* This is seen as the theft of public resources by public officials. It is when an official of the state steals from the public institution, where he is gainfully employed. In Nigeria, the embezzlement of public fund is one of the most common ways of wealth accumulation, perhaps, due to lack of strict regulatory systems.
- vii. *Extortion:* This is reflected as the use of coercion, violence, or threats to to acquire resources. Many in the police force are culpable of this in Nigeria.
- viii. *Favouritism:* This is a mechanism of power abuse- implying a highly biased distribution of state resources.
- ix. Nepotism: This is a special kind of favouritism, in which a public office holder prefers his/her kinfolk and family members. Nepotism occurs when there is an unlawful exemption from the application of certain laws or regulations or undue preference given in the allocation of scarce resources (Ajie and Wokekoro, 2012). These types of corrupt practices are very common and widespread, to the extent that it is now seen as an acceptable norms and culture in the Nigeria state.

3. The concept of good governance

The concept of governance has many definitions. To the World Bank (2000: 37), governance refers to how power is exercised in the management of a nation's economic and social resources for developmental purposes. This involves three applications; *"the form of the political regime; the process by which governmental power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources; and government capacity to implement public policies".* Good governance is derived from the concept of governance. According to Adeosun (2012), good governance entails the capacity to manage a country's resources in a transparent, accountable, equitable manner, in response to the needs of the people. A good aspect of this view is the need to recognise and respond adequately to the aspirations of the citizens.

According to UNDP (1997), good governance encompasses the exercise of political, economic, legal, judicial, social, and administrative authority in a manner that meets the aspirations and needs of the citizens. This includes; the government, the private sector and the civil society. It also includes the formulation of policy initiatives that would strengthen institutions and the civil society organisations with the main objective of making government responsible more democratic responsive and accountable.

Furthermore, Olowu and Akinola (1995), provides some parameters for measuring good governance. These, as Adenugba (2013, p. 778) suggested, include "managerial and organizational efficiency, accountability, legitimacy, and responsiveness to the public, transparency in decision-making and pluralism in policy options and choices". This includes issues such as the rule of law, equity, etc. The concept of good governance according to Nwagbara (2003) encompasses general values and basic freedoms, which include accountability, competence, the reign of the rule of law and the absence of human rights abuse. In the view of Tinubu (2008), the concept refers to issues such as rule of law, equity, responsiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, participation, consensus oriented, transparency, and accountability.

Nwagbara (2003) asserted that good governance implies a high level of organizational effectiveness in relation to policy formulation, especially in the conduct of economic policy and its contribution to growth, stability, and public welfare. Other factors in this regard are given as participation, transparency, and accountability, which are similar to the context of the UNDP report.

Potter (2000;35) calls good governance "sound development management", referring to the total sum of public management; accountability; legal framework for development (reforms); information and technology; the acceptance of government by the people; the capacity of governments to initiate appropriate policies, make far-reaching decision; implement them effectively for service delivery. Good governance as a concept can also be linked to the extent in which a government is perceived and accepted as legitimate, leadership commitment to improve the welfare and meet the needs of its citizens (Lawal et al., 2012). It refers to the use of legitimate authority in the management of public affairs. The whole essence of Good governance is the supremacy of the rule of law, freedom, accountability, transparency, fulfilment of election promises, and the achievement of the greatest good for the greatest number of citizens.

As good and important as good governance is to the Nigerian state, much of the variables have eluded the nation due to corruption. According to Tinubu (2008), most of the problems Nigeria is facing today are

caused by the sharp practices of past and present leaders. Despite the abundance of human and natural resources that has made the country the toast of many nations, the leaders have not been able to deliver the dividends of democracy, as expectations, hopes and opportunities have been dashed, with governance ingredients still at its elusive stage to Nigerians, in terms of accountability, transparency and service delivery.

4. The effects of corruption on good governance in Nigeria

Fighting corruption is a necessary foundation for good governance and the rule of law, which are the building blocks of sustainable development in a country (TNV, 2014). In Nigeria, public roles and responsibilities are usually entrusted to the public office holders by the people in a quest for good governance, especially in the current democratic system. Most of the times, this trust has been corrupted whereby these public roles and resources were used for private benefits. Taking a holistic look, the World Bank (2000) has identified three distinct aspects of governance, which are hereby used as indicators in analysing the effects of corruption on good governance in Nigeria. These are;

- i. The form of political regime, which refers to the degree of democratization in the country;
- ii. The degree of accountability in the management of the nation's economic and social resources for national development;
- iii. The capacity of governments to identify, formulate and implement development policies. This relates to the competence of government.

4.1. The legitimacy of government

Nigeria began to witness the era of democratic politics in 1999 after more than 30 years of military rule. Elections were conducted with candidates contesting for the presidency, the national Assembly, State Houses of Assembly, and governorship in the 36 states on different political plat- forms. The hope and zeal with which the country welcomed the democratic rule in 1999 was frustrated as the years went by. Since the fourth republic, the legitimacy of government (at many levels) in Nigeria has been questioned because of electoral corruption involved in the emergence of the declared winners of those elections.

Furthermore, TNV (2014) submitted that Nigeria's political process is always marred by electoral fraud whereby figures and data were manipulated to deny the rightful winners their popular mandates. Electoral fraud could occur at any stage in the democratic process in Nigeria, but were most common during election campaigns, voter registration process and vote-counting. According to Casmir, Omeh and Ike (2013), electoral fraud is the organized strategy or programs of individuals and or political parties to get desired results of an electoral process either by hook (or) crook. In addition, TNV (2014) asserted that electoral corruption is an attempt to compromise the integrity of the electoral process or system wilfully and to ensure that unmerited individual wins for a political party's candidate through the falsification of the electoral figures, numbers, data, or process.

The two main types of electoral fraud being witnessed in Nigeria are; frustrating eligible voters from casting their voting and altering the results by any means possible (Casmir, Omeh and Ike 2013). Casmir, Omeh and Ike (2013) further observed that since the 1999 elections, the degree of electoral violence has increased, whereby political elites would convert poor unemployed youths into readymade tools for the perpetration of electoral violence.

Furthermore, giving the justification for this malaise in the Nigerian electoral process, CLEEN Foundation (2010) asserted that the prolonged periods of exclusion due to 15 unbroken years of military rule under a Constitution that entered into force on 29 May 1999, defines much of the way the country works today. The foundation believes that issue-driven politics is consequently dead or nearly dead in Nigeria because of that history. By the time the country returned to civil rule in 1999, it was as if the people no longer mattered. To make matters worse, CLEEN Foundation (2010) noted that the jurisprudence from Nigerian courts have aggravated this challenge. The courts have been self-serving in their attitude to issues of electoral legitimacy, regarding them as customary neighbourhood disputes.

Political corruption via electoral fraud is the number one threat to democracy and good governance in Nigeria. The bitter but inevitable consequence of electoral fraud is that the wrong people, which have been imposed on the citizenry, would hardly ensure good governance. This challenge has weighed down the legitimacy of Nigeria's leaders for many decades. Democracy and good governance are enhanced when Nigerians are allowed to choose their leaders in free and fair elections. Democracy and elections are inextricably linked. Hence, Nigerians have often made the point that the process by which political office holders attain political power should be transparent and devoid of fraud. When a politician earns an executive office through rigging of elections and through the employment of violence and other fraudulent means, he negates democracy and creates avoidable cracks in the system. Such a crooked fellow can hardly deliver on the issues of good governance. No wonder corruption has become so endemic in many high places in the country.

4.2. Accountability of public officials

Globally, governments in trust for the citizens hold public funds and other resources. Thus, they must comply with high standards of honesty, integrity, propriety, and objectivity to ensure the maximal utilization of these resources for the common good of the nation (Waziri, 2009). Good governance in any part of the globe is a product of accountably. Accountability as a concept is concerned with several meanings and it is often used synonymously with such concepts as responsibility, answerability, blamelessness, worthiness, lack of liability, and other terms associated with the expectation of account-giving. In a recent study, the World Bank found a significant relationship between accountability, good governance, and high level of performance (Word Bank 1997). Accountability stipulates that public expenditures must correspond with the performance of public officials.

In consensus with the World Bank, Waziri (2009) noted that the notion of accountability and good governance are very connected. She emphasised this, asserting that the first evidence of bad governance is the absence of accountability and transparency. Accountability in her view is the public servant's report card

on how public money is utilized on behalf of the people. To recognise an accountable public administration which can ensure good governance in the polity, Waziri (2009) opined that the system be subjected to the following accountability test;

- i. The Fiscal Prudence Test; which relates to how public funds are utilised; the extent of value for money in government expenditure; and how things can be done in a cheaper way neither with an overloaded budgets nor with private attachments and interests.
- ii. Citizen's Accountability Test; which relates to how services are being delivered satisfactorily to the people and their satisfaction with the state of public infrastructure.
- iii. Public Integrity Test; which relates to the extent to how the executive arm is held responsible for charges of abuses of office.
- iv. Public Morality Test; which relates to how the business of government is being run by people with a good public conscience.

In Nigeria, the reality on ground is that there have been many cases depicting the lack of accountability and barefaced corruption in the conduct of public fiscal affairs. Funds meant for development and good governance are diverted to personal accounts via corruption in high places. According to Waziri (2009), revelations in the past, as given by the EFCC in the war against corruption pointed to the fact that Nigeria is faced with a major crisis of transparency and accountability. Sadly, the entrenched culture of corruption is being enhanced by bureaucratic secrecy, which encourages the management of public funds by public officials and cronies that account to no one but himself or herself. Commercial institutions including banks and the capital market are not left out. They are bedevilled by sharp practices that undermine public confidence. To curb the menace of corruption, Waziri (2009) suggested that public officers' psyche should be examined to determine their suitability for public office before engagement. In her view, the extent of aggrandizement and gluttonous accumulation of wealth implies that some people are mentally and psychologically unsuitable for public office.

Furthermore, , a survey carried out in 2001 into the Federal Government public procurement revealed that Nigeria had lost several hundred billions of Naira in the past decades due to the lack of due process, transparency and merit in the award of contracts in the public sector (Uremadu, 2004). To make matters worse, these shady and over bloated contracts are hardly executed. The country's urban cities are littered with abandoned projects, which have not profited the Nigerian state.

Above all the culture of barefaced theft abounds in Nigeria. According to ACID (2013), the United Nations office of Drugs and Crime revealed that about 400 billion USA dollars was stolen from Nigeria by her past leaders before 1999. In 2006, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) also revealed that Nigeria's previous leaders stole about 64 trillion naira (about \$4507 billion) from public coffers. When benchmarked against the 2008 budget of N2,456 trillion naira, this translates into about 26 years budget (ACID, 2013).

Another angle to this problem surfaced in a survey by ThinkAfrica (2012). The issue of ghost workers was discovered, to be one of Nigeria's challenges, whereby, salaries are paid out to fictitious names on

government payrolls. In 2003, 24,000 of such names were discovered on the payroll of the Ministry of Defence. In that same year, a personnel-screening exercise exposed an extra 40,000 names in the government's official records. In states like Niger, Lagos, Bauchi, and Zamfara, the number of exposed ghost workers ranged from 6000 to 20,000 in the fourth quarter of 2011 alone (ThinkAfrica, 2012). The reported case of a month-old child on the government payroll shows the ingenuity with which fraudsters manage to exploit the system (Think Africa, 2012). Ghost workers syndrome is a financial burden on Nigeria's fiscal budget, leading to the loss of about 84 billion naira annually (Think Africa, 2012).

In order to tackle the problem, the government embarked on an audit of the civil service. In some cases, this involved collecting biometric data to identify those extra names and to deter fraudsters. According to ThinkAfrica, (2012), the outcomes of these exercises are not adequate. Indeed corruption is most able to thrive where accountability is poor. Without good governance, no nation can hope to surmount the challenges posed to its development. There cannot be development if the annual budgetary estimates are not backed with adequate funds needed for execution of programmes. Herein lays the nation's nightmare because funds are wasted in a morbid culture of wastes. Policy objectives geared towards the eliminations of poverty and inequality in Nigeria abounds. However, the impact of these policies has been felt due to corruption and poor quality of governance over the years.

4.3. The capacity of governments to discharge functions/services

This has to do with the capacity of governments to design, formulate, and implement policies, discharge functions, deliver services and respect for human rights and rule of law. The realities on ground show that government activities has been characterised by profligacy and mindless dissipation of public funds. Speaking about the numerous cases of diversion of public project funds in this regards, Oghi (2013) stated that public facilities in Nigeria has virtually collapsed, causing serious hardship on the people due to corruption. Funds, which have been budgeted, meant facilities such as; refineries, power generation, hospitals, roads, schools etc are diverted to private bank accounts, through either direct misappropriation or the award of phony contracts to cronies.

In addition, Think Africa (2012) argues that the political class has pushed Nigerians to a very high level of unemployment; lack of social safety nets, which has left the electorates very poor and broken. Recently, the National Assembly discovered that the fuel subsidy fraud had caused Nigeria a colossal loss of \$6.8 billion in three years. However, most concerned Nigerians were taken aback when the fact-finding report suffered an irredeemable political suffocation on arrival. This was possible because the current Nigerian government only pays lip service to the fight against corruption. One can only imagine the kind of massive socio-economic development such money would have added to the lot of the masses if it were not embezzled by high officials.

The power sector is another harbour of highly corrupt public officials in Nigeria. Epileptic power outrage has more or less become a second nature of the sector. According to Oghi (2012) the Federal Government spent N401 billion to settle the PHCN labour liabilities, yet, power supply in the country is still epileptic. Ironically, the same government that has been 'celebrating' constant power supply earmarked \$1.3 million (N218.3 million) for generator fuel at the Aso Villa in the current 2014 annual estimates. This sector would

have serve as an engine of growth in the economy if not for corruption. Furthermore, it is the duty of the Nigerian government to provide security for her citizens. However, that function has not yielded the desired result. Thus, Nigeria is currently bedevilled with cases of kidnapping, armed robbery and recently, the national religious bokoharam challenge. Evidences prove that monies meant for security equipments and personnel training is diverted through corruption. Oghi (2013) revealed in a study that police officers who are supposed to protect the citizens add to the people pains by open extortions. Police officers while armed, shamelessly and openly extort money from motorists in most of the states and local government areas. The rot in the security secure cannot be overemphasised. Recent cases in the senate probe of the police pension board showed how billions of naira, meant for retired police officer was looted by those entrusted with the responsibility of protecting the funds.

The leaders in the security sector have been judged to fail to deliver on their duties effectively, due to corruption. An obvious incidence of corruption was the allegation of abuse of office by the former inspector general of police Mr. Tafa Balogun. The EFCC investigations revealed that he had amassed stupendous wealth running into over one billion naira (Ayittey, 2006).

Due to the lack of basic amenities, civil servants are increasingly pressured into trying to earn more, howbeit fraudulently, while in power, to gather enough resources to last through their old age, before they retire into the rigours of the Nigerian pension administrations. In addition, budgetary allocations to ministries are executed through phoney projects after sizeable chunk has been given to the National Assembly members for inflating the concerned ministry's budget (ThinkAfrica, 2012). Nigeria needs to be more pragmatic in trashing the monster called corruption out of the system, if she desires to entrench good governance.

The local governments areas in Nigeria are not spared the pains of corruption, whereby most of the secretariats; especially in rural areas, are vacated most of the time. ThinkAfrica (2012) stated that the local governments are the embodiment of rural Nigeria. They make up about 70% of the citizens and are therefore supposed to lead in issues of service delivery to the citizens; but unfortunately, the secretariats remain largely empty for long periods, because, most of the workers normally desert the area, only to return at the end of the month, when salaries are due for payment. With local government chairpersons governing their councils from the state capitals or Abuja, only a few of the workers are actually committed to their jobs. There are cases of workers who travel from as far as Lagos to pick up their pay cheques for doing virtually nothing during the month (ThinkAfrica, 2012).

Corruption has indeed robbed Nigerians of the benefits of good governance. Ogundiya, (2008) asserted that Nigeria had lost some US\$380 billion to corruption between independence in 1960 and the end of military rule in 1999. In addition, some western diplomats estimated that Nigeria has lost a minimum average of *"\$4 billion to \$8 billion per year to corruption over the eight years of the Obasanjo administration" That figure would equal between 4.25% and 9.5% of Nigeria's total GDP in 2006* (HRW, 2007: 18). This reckless drainage of the common wealth has been responsible for the socio-economic stagnation and bad governance witnessed in all the sectors of the national life.

The private sector that should spearhead development is also involved in corruption in Nigeria. According to Adejumobi (2011) the former Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Intercontinental Bank Plc, Dr. Erastus Akingbola, was arrested and prosecuted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission over the allegation of diverting to his personal account, the sum of over N2, billion, belonging to the bank. The money was being transferred in pound sterling, totalling, £8,540,134.48, to his domiciliary account in 2009 (Bakare, 2014). Similarly, the removal of the management of former Citizens Bank and All States Trust Bank in 2005 was a result of unethical conduct, which was fraudulent in nature. According to ThisDay (2006), no fewer than 30 former staff of Aso Savings and Loans Bank, including top management and members of the board, was prosecuted for giving out inappropriate loans, mainly to themselves. From the foregone, it is obvious that corruption is a deep-rooted problem in Nigeria. These incidences of corrupt practices in Nigeria have being having devastating consequences for national development.

5. The factors that serve as catalysts for corruption in Nigeria

The CLEEN Foundation (2010) gave some factors, which have catalysed the culture of weak accountability and corruption in Nigeria. These are:

- i. *Bad Leadership Precedents/Impunity*: The mentality for many citizens in Nigeria is that politics serves as a quick means to wealth. Indeed, the highest corruption in Nigeria has been in the corridors of power. The evidence is in the number of state Governors and Local Government Chairmen being investigated for corruption in the past and present. Here, corruption is perfected in over-inflated contracts, which are executed and re-executed many times, whereby funds given to organizations/sectors are either diverted to personal accounts or laundered to foreign accounts. This mentality has trickled down to the common person who seeks every means legal or illegal to make his own wealth.
- ii. *Lack of adequate funding of corruption agencies*: In this era of high-tech crimes, corporate and bureaucratic corruption, fighting the war against corruption without adequate provisions/funding would be tantamount to failure. Nigeria is seriously lagging behind in this area because many of these agencies have cried out about lack of funding to undertake their roles.
- iii. *Lack of a comprehensive database*: Nigeria lacks a comprehensive database on its citizens. This cripples investigations and exchange of information on criminals with foreign counterparts. Keeping proper records would naturally deter the culprits.
- iv. *Lack of Reforms:* The public sector, which contributes more than half of the corruption in Nigeria lacks sustained reforms. Reforms in public institutions such as the Civil Service and the Judiciary will greatly reduce the challenges of corruption in Nigeria.
- v. *Lack of national integration*: It is common knowledge that Nigerians are divided along many lines such as ethnic, tribal, social, and religious lines. Cases of corruption are interpreted along ethnic, tribal, or even regional lines. There is a wrong reasoning that every government appointment is *"our*

turn to eat the national cake". This has prevented a wholesome condemnation of corruption cases. The government must embark on a more productive mass citizens' mobilisation for national integration, which will instil the sense of patriotism in the citizens. This will go a long way to curb the menace of corruption, as all Nigerians will be united in condemning cases of corruption at whatever level. The recent case of the indicted former minister of aviation who was shielded and defended by her eastern Nigerian counterparts is an instance in this regard.

6. Conclusions and recommendation

Indeed, corruption is responsible for the Nigeria's lack of good governance, poor growth and development as well as decay in morals and values. Here, corruption has induced the distortion of the economy through wastes and misallocation of resources; thus, the need for measures to effectively prevent and control corruption in the system. Another implication is that corruption has been known to accelerate capital flight from the country. Foreign bank vaults reportedly hold large sums of Nigerian money deposited by corrupt public officials. The current investment climate in Nigeria is so unattractive that even Nigerian citizens in the Diaspora are unwilling to invest at home, not to talk of prospective foreign investors. In addition, the Nigerian Stock Exchange has remained seriously undercapitalized due to corruption, thus frustrating the process of economic growth and good governance. To ameliorate these problems, the following recommendations are given below;

- i. One of the major explanations for the failure of all development programmes in Nigeria has been the absence of effective accountability and transparency that would ensure good governance. A sustained culture of accountability and transparency will help Nigeria to consolidate its democratic gains and ensure good governance. It will also help to re-integrate Nigeria into the mainstream global economy and position her for other international opportunities. Above all, it will rebuild goodwill, sanitize the domestic investment climate, and encourage international investors for national development.
- ii. A good way to go would be to revamp/strengthen the Nigeria's law enforcement and anticorruption legislation. There is a need to recognize the current high rate of impunity, the lack of political will (on the part of government) to fight corruption and the near-collapse of law and order in the country so as to curb the menace. The current position of the Presidency that "stealing" is not "corruption" will only continue to aggravate an already sore spot in the national life. The change in orientation must start from the top.
- iii. Corruption is a social problem; thus, citizens must be properly informed of its destructive consequences, through mass enlightenment campaigns. Thus, if the various anti-corruption laws are to contribute meaningfully to the eradication of corruption, the people must know their roles and the consequences of failure to play those roles. Impunity in governance must be punished to serve as a deterrent to others.

- iv. Nigerians need a social safety net, which would cater for the vulnerable in the society such as the unemployed, the disabled, the aged, etc. Together, these measures will help these Nigerians to find some dignity in earning a legitimate living.
- v. All provisions that encourage political patronage by senior public officials, such as the constitutional immunity clause, which has continued to shield the currently serving public officials from prosecution even in cases of strong evidence of crime involvement, should be abolished. Uncensored access by state governors and local government administrators into allotted funds should be discouraged.
- vi. The judicial system must be strengthened and the rule of law entrenched. There cannot be progress in the fight against corruption as long as there is so much impunity and injustice in the system, with many seemingly operating above the law.
- vii. There should be reforms in the law enforcement agencies to ensure a highly motivated workforce, who are efficient in managing cases of corruption. Only well educated young men should be recruited into the police force. Nigeria has many unemployed graduates to fill this space.

Nigerians must work hard to eradicate ethnic bigotry, which has boosted the acts of corruption in the country. Corrupt officials hide behind ethnicity to defraud the nation. Unfortunately, this is supported by their kiths and kin who argue that past corruption cases by other tribes be punished before theirs is considered.

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