

CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA: A SOLUTION THROUGH APPLICATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE.

Bernard, C. Chine, & Obiajulu, A.U. Nnedum Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences,

NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

Instances of corruption in Nigeria since independence in 1960 up to 2015 were examined. A significant number of elected and unelected leaders or political appointees to important offices have been accused and prosecuted for misappropriation/diversion of public fund to personal pocket, graft and bribery. Setting up judicial panel of inquiry and subsequent prosecution in the law of court of competent jurisdiction is frequently adopted by the government through its concerned agents. A psychological approach through organizational development (OD) perspective is suggested as appropriate panacea to corruption problem in Nigeria. The following OD strategies are therefore recommended; (1) Determination of the readiness and capability of Nigerians for change; (2) changing Nigeria public perception of government treasures as belonging to nobody; (3) to make elective posts and offices less attractive in terms of emolument and privileges; and (4) Encourage an organization-wide confrontation meeting in order to bring together a variety of political and non-political strata that make up Nigeria.

Keywords: Corruption, Scorch, Organizational development.

Introduction

The concept of organizational development (OD) is used to explain the ways organizations can develop, grow and change for effectiveness and of course better job performance. Organization development, according to French (1969) started around late 1950s or early 1960s. The purpose of OD grew out of the understanding that organizations face turbulent environment because of dynamic nature, and therefore

have to acquire problem solving skills and ability to cope with such changing environment. Bradford and Burke (2005), French (1969) defined organizational development thus; Organizational development refers to a long-range effort to improve an organizations problem, solving capabilities and its ability to cope with changes in its external environment with the help of external or internal behavioral scientists', or change agents. American Society for training and development (1975) as cited in Bob (2015), Muchinsky (1990) sees OD as an effort planned organization-wide, managed from the top, to increase organization effectiveness and health through planned intervention in the organization using behavioral science knowledge. There are many relevant and interesting definitions of OD but suffice it to depend on these three definitions for a guide. The definition above tends to agree on the need to improve the effectiveness of organization and believe that the constituent parts must function harmoniously together. Furthermore, the management of such organizations should demonstrate serious concern for OD through design intervention strategies which could be carried out by behavioral scientist either internally or externally who are engaged for that purpose. When we talk about organizations in this context, it includes not only organized private and public sectors but also societies, communities, states or even countries. In the present context, Nigeria as a country, is the principal thrust of this study and may be referred to as an organization. The rest of the discussion about organizational development dove-tails into Nigeria with the objective of applying it to proffer solution to the corruption problems that have eaten deep into our economic social and political fabrics. As a matter of fact, corruption is a national plague in Federal, State and local government levels in Nigeria. Those in the hem of affairs pay lip service

to the scorch and are often selective in identifying and prosecuting the culprits. This theoretical study examines the onset of corruption in Nigeria since independence and suggests adopting psychological approach such as organizational development perspective to solve this natural plague.

Corruption: This is a commonly abused word or concept in Nigeria, yet the precise meaning of the concept remains unambiguous and unchangeable. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary explains corruption as dishonest or illegal behavior, especially of people in authority. Ijewerem (2015) defines corruption as misuse of entrusted power or a dishonest use of one's office/position for personal or selfish gain. This ultimately results in misappropriation, kickback, over invoicing, bribery, embezzlement, tribalism, nepotism, money laundering, outright looting of the treasury etc. The definition even though it appears to be lop sided because it overlooked an important segment of the society, the private sector (organized and unorganized) is meaningful Some of the wellknown social and economic agencies established decades ago were intended to checkmate unwholesome activities of some of the unpatriotic operators in this sector. For instance, Nigeria Standard Organization (NSO), National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) were such social and economic agencies established to checkmate the activities of the unpatriotic operators in this sector. Some marketing companies and individuals import and sell to unsuspecting members of the public substandard products. These products include drugs, chemicals, electrical parts, building materials, beverages etc. All these practices no matter the way and manner we consider them border on corruption. Unfortunately, all efforts to curb or stamp out corruption in Nigeria

are focused more on the public sector than on the private sector. The private sector, as a matter of fact, is neck-deep in corruption.

However, this work shall focus on corruption in the public sector from the outset of the First Republic to the Fourth Republic current era. There are many forms of corruption in Nigeria an public section. For examples, acceptance of gratification, succumbing to inducement and undue influences, contract by public office holders to cronies, family members and personally held companies, bribery, fraud, nepotism/tribalism in recruitment/appointment, promotion, kick back on contract, rigging of elections misappropriation and conversion of funds for personal gains, procurement scan, leaking tender information to friends and relations, diversion and misappropriation of funds through manipulation or falsification of financial records, payment for favorable judicial decisions" (Azelama, 2002, Ijewereme, 2013 & Waziri, 2010). Other forms of corruption include electoral corruption (buying votes with money and intimidation of agents of other or opposing parties at the polling station and violent removal of ballot box) (Idada & Uhunmwvangho, 2012),. Nepotism (deliberate manipulation of distribution of the country's resources when a public office holder prefers his/her relatives and members of his/her family in approving contracts, job, promotion, and appointment to public office, utter disregard for lay down rule or policy for merit. Ghost-workers phenomenon according to Azeloma (2005), is a practice whereby management of a public establishment/organization selfishly/deliberately falsifies the payroll by including fictions names of supposed individuals in order to attract more funds for salary. The net or excess is shared by the members of the management in collaboration with some members of governing councils/boards. Forms of corruption in Nigeria are inexhaustible

and require separate discussion. However it is considered relevant to highlight briefly incidents of corruption right from the First Republic up to the era of ex-president Jonathan administration; and also to present table of TransparencyInternational ranking of Nigeria on corruption from 1996 to 2014.

Ijewereme and Duamade (2014) observed that in the first Republic under the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa, that public treasury was looted with impunity and that the prime minister did nothing to avert the menace. They observed further, that 1961 and 1965 elections suffered major rigging by the then Northern People's Congress (NPC) which was the party in power in the center and in the then northern Nigeria. The result of the election was totally rejected by all the opposing political parties and this led to a widespread destruction of lives and per parties especially in the western regional (Ogundiya & Baba, 2005) following the social and political unrest, characterized arson, avarice, internal strips and apparent drifting apart of the country, some middle- ranked army officers removed political actors and gladiator of first republic from office through a loop of detail on January 13, 1966 (Tjewereme & Dunmade, 2014).

General Gowon's regime (1966-1975) saw corruption in to its apogee. According to Lawaland Tobi (2006) "Gowon's government was unashamedly corrupt to the macro-level and corruption was hid to the public" Nigerian Tribune of August 1st, 1975 as cited in Lawal and Tobi (2006), said that his promise to enact anti-corruption decree characteristic of his other promises was never redeemed. When General Murtala Mohammed overthrew him in 1975, he set up asset investigation panel to investigate both governors and public officers that served under General Gowon's regime. The panel indicted 10 of the 12 military governors and this led to the forfeiture of their ill-

gotten assets. Also many indicted career public servants were either retired compulsorily of dismissed with ignominy. They were more than 10,000 public servants so dismissed nationwide (Anazodo, Okoye & Chukwuemeka, 2012).

During the second Republic (1979-1984) under Shehu Shagari, all the efforts pursued by General Murtala regime's brief period were thrown to the wind. According to Lawal and Tobi (2006), Shagari's regime was characterized by wanton abuse of office by political appointees and career public servants. They used their positions to misappropriate and steal public fund under different guise. Major General Buhari took over power from Shagari through a coup d'état; he indicated his determination to eradicate corruption in Nigeria. His regime establishedWar Against Indiscipline (WAI) crusade in addition to various tribunals set up at Federal, and state levels to probe alleged cases of corrupt practices by public servants. One of such tribunals was the Paul Omu led tribunal which found most of the alleged corrupt public servants especially political appointees brought to his tribunal guilty and sentenced them to a long term in prison (Lawal & Tobi, 2006).

General Babangida took over power from Buhari through coup d'état in August 27, 1985 and Babangida's regime aphorically heightened corruption in Nigeria public sector. Maduagwu cited in Lawal and Tobi (2006) stated some of the highlights of Babangida corrupt practices thus:

- 1. US\$2 billion Gulfwar proceeds in 1991.
- 2. 30% of oil revenue channeled to irresponsible/meaningless uses throughout the period.

- 3. Huge extra -budgetary spending; 1989=N15.3 billion; 1990 = N23.4billion; 1992 = N44.2billion; 1993 (by August) = 59 billion.
- 4. US\$200 million siphoned from the Aluminum Smelter project.
- 5. N400 million lavished/wasted on the Better Life project.
- 6. Huge corruption at the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) for example, US\$ 101 million for the purchase of strategic storage facilities.

When General Sani Abacha took over from Babagida, he set up a panel headed by Okigbo who found Babangida's regime and governor of central bank of Nigeria (CBN) guilty of looting space and clandestine spending (Anazodo, Okoye & Chukuemeke, 2012; Ijewereme & Dunmade, 2014).

Having taken over from the interim National Government by Abacha regime, he looted the government treasure. A total sum of N63.25 billion was reported to have been recovered as part of his stolen money; and more are still being recovered from his family till date (ljewereme & Dunmade, 2014).

Abdusalam being Abacha's successor continued in the established tradition of looting public treasury entrusted to their care. For instance, Christopher Kolade's panel set up to examine contracts, licenses and appointment made under Abdusalam regime made surprising and shocking revelation. According to Anazodo, Okoye and Chukwuemeke (2012) Lawal and Tobi (2014)" the panel found beyond imaginable doubt that though Nigeria was already neck deep in corrupt practices, Abdusalam's regime made a mockery of any sense of discipline and probity and at a scale that practically made saints of his predecessors. For example, 4,072 contracts, 576 licenses, 807

appointments, 768 awards, and 111 approvals made within a space of 5 months were revealed to the panel. The panel reported that the 4,072 contracts cost N635.62 billion, over the N88 billion budgeted for that year 1998, accounting for a deficit of N551 billion. The panel also found that the foreignreserve at the end of 1995 which gave US\$ 7.6 billion dwindled to US\$ 3.8 billion as at May, 1999.

When Chief Obasanjo won the presidential election in 1999 (Fourth Republic), he accented to anti-corruption bill. By this law, two agencies to arrest and prosecute corrupt officers were established: Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), (Ijewereme, 2013). Some western diplomats believed that Nigeria lost between US\$ 4 billion and US\$ 8 billion to corruption in the 8 years of Chief Obasanjo administration (Human Rights Watch, 2007). Obasanjo's administration was clearly described by Oluwasanmi (2007) thus: corruption became all pervading; electoral fraud compliance, personal insecurity and unresolved assassinations characterized his regime just as much of disobedience of court rulings. Many infrastructures were left to decay while he pursued an attempt to stay longer in office by trying to amend the constitution".

Yar'Adua succeeded Chief Obasanjo. He made very little efforts to stamp out corruption in Nigeria. Human Rights Watch (2011), rightly observed that president Yar'Adua forced Ribadu (EFCC chairman) out of the office just two weeks after he tried to prosecute powerful former Delta state Governor, James Ibori.

Finally, it was believed that President Jonathan administration could not summon courage to tackle many allegations of corruption committed and reported time without

number about public officials. For instance, there were instances of ghost workers uncovered in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service and many states of the country.

The audit report from both an internal tax agency and an audit firm, KPMG, reveal a large-scale corruption and absolute absence of transparency among NNPC, Petroleum Product Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) and the ministry of petroleum workers. Following this report, Melaye (2013) observed thus: The Farouk Lawal Report of the House of Representative Investigative committee" spoke elaborately of unprecedented corruption between high ranking petroleum workers and the marketers of petroleum product. These theoretical perspectives on corruption will help us to decide on what strategy to adopt in curbing corruption in Nigeria.

Idealistic theory

The theory believes that it is people's perceptions/ ideas that determine or influence their culture, way of life and organization of their society. According to Nkom (1982), corruption grew out of the nature and moral values existing in the society. The theory believes that corruption emanates from selfish ideas existing in the value system of the society (Anazodo, Okoye & Ezenwile, 2012); similarly, the traditionalists holds that corruption and unethical practices in Nigeria are symptoms of perversion of traditional values, beliefs, norms, ethics etc (Azelama, 2012). They argued that corruption is the outcome of invasion of African culture by the Europeans. They employed the strategy of indirect rule or principle of assimilation to evolve aggressive cultural transformation in such areas as education, religion, value system, governance, politics, language, administrative and legal system.

Theory of Resources curse

Some of the exponents of this theory, Aunty (2004) and Ross (2001) hold that since 1960s, the resource poor countries have performed far better and out-grown higher than resource-rich countries. Ancient but still relevant work shows that oil dependence leads to tilt of political operational forces. It leads to concentration of revenue from the sources to geographic enclaves and power to the control of few people or elites. It has been found that oil-dependent countries particularly developing African countries obtain at least 25% of their exports from natural resources and are more likely to be involved in conflict (Bamiduro, 2012). Bamiduro (2012) observed further that resources and conflict are likely to be caused by poor governance, greed and corruption. Again Bamiduro (2012, holds that oil-dependent -rich states often lack basic ethics, transparency and accountability, and are also characterized with people

Theory of two publics

The theory was proposed by Ekeh (1975). He identified two publics in Nigeria; namely primordial public and civil public. The former is associated with kinship, tribe/ethnic group. The latter speak of society beyond kinship whether in the public sector or privatesector where Individuals are employed. The person working in the public sector sees himself/herself morally bound and obligated to his primordial group to make them benefit from his work and must be loyal to them especially from the loot he got from the civil public. In event of conflicting interest between the primordial public and the civil public, he /she must stand in favor of the primordial` public regardless of the fate of civil

public (Azelama, 2002). For these reasons, involvement on ethical behavior and corruption practices all intended to fetch great benefits to their primordial public.

Low Risk-High Benefit theory

This theory is of the view that sanction or punishment for unethical and corrupt practices is high or very minimal perhaps founded on plea-ingraining, people are unlikely to be discouraged from involving in corruption (Ijewereme, 2013). However, if the punishment is heavy, public officers will avoid engaging in corruption and unethical practice (Azelama, 2002).

The Anomie Theory

The theory assumes that pressures that society exerts on its members are many of the causes that push individuals to engage in anti-social and often times, illegal behavior. The theory believes that because people are under societal pressure, they are compelled by this circumstance to manifest corrupt behaviors. This theory is associated with Merton (1957) and Chiney (1967). They argue that society sets goals for groups and individuals and the same society provided or directs the means of attaining these goals. There may be individuals whose capability or means of getting to the goals set for them by the society are not enough; this will ultimately lead to hatching corrupt practices of unethical behaviors.

The above theoretical perceptions of corruption by proponents of those theories explain why by such societal abnormalities exist, but unfortunately never proffer solution to curb corruption.

Below is the Table of ranking of Nigeria on corruption in the world from 1996 to 2014 by Transparency International:

| Year | Ranking | |
|------|--------------|--|
| | _ | |
| 1996 | 54 of 54 | |
| 1997 | 52 of 52 | |
| 1998 | 81 of 85 | |
| 1999 | 98 of 99 | |
| 2000 | 90 of 90 | |
| 2001 | 90 of 91 | |
| 2002 | 101 of 102 | |
| 2003 | 132 of 133 | |
| 2004 | 144 of 146 | |
| 2005 | 152 of 158 | |
| 2006 | 150 of 163 | |
| 2007 | 32 of 147 | |
| 2008 | 121 of 150 | |
| 2009 | 130 of 150 | |
| 2010 | 134 of 178 | |
| 2011 | 143 of 183 | |
| 2012 | 139 of 176 | |
| 2013 | 144 of 175 | |
| 2014 | 136 of 175 | |

Source: Adapted from, Eme and Okoh (2011pp 57-58)

The above table indicates that Nigeria clearly is about the most corrupt country in the world. The analysis further shows that corruption in Nigeria deserves serious and committed attention not only by the government but also by the populace.

The corruption malaise in Nigeria is no longer in doubt, what may be in doubt is the best approach to adopt to clear this garbage heap of corruption. Some tools of organizational development model such as change and intervention approach are considered relevant and important. To a large extent change and intervention is used inter changeably in this paper because they have overlapping meaning: The focus of this organizational development (OD) approach is public sector, made of elected people/individuals political appointees, and government employees/career civil servants. However, elected office holders and political appointees are considered as a group or stratum; these are people that determine and control the political climate, power and economy of Nigeria and unfortunately all the corruption cases are associated and perpetrated by this special class of heartless actors. They are therefore the target population for this paper or study. The first OD approach is to determine the readiness and capability for change according to Beckhard (1969). This condition hasbeen metby Nigerians through their wide-spreadcry for change, apprehension and trial of corrupt political office holders and their cronies in the court of law and confiscation of their illgotten assets. Gleicher formula for readiness for change cited in Beckhard (1969) may be used to demonstrate the readiness for change by Nigeria put in mathematical form, C = (abd) > x; C = change, a = level of dissatisfaction with the status quo, <math>b = clear orunderstood desired state, d = practical first steps toward a desired state, and x = cost of changing. This formula mirrors the practical condition today in Nigeria on the desire to do everything possible to stop corruption. Buhari's administration is using various jingles on the radio and television to create wonderful awareness in the country, of the havoc corruption has caused and the need to shun all forms of corrupt practices. The EFCC and the ICPC are doing no less an impressive job of arresting and persecuting suspected corrupt office holders.

Another important variable in the OD intervention or change is to change the average Nigerian culture of perception of government treasures, financeand property as

belonging to nobody. Every political aspirant for elected or appointed office has the intention of looting/misappropriation of government fund entrusted to his/her office. The emphasis of OD is changing the culture of an organization in the case, changing the Nigerian culture and the culture of the political actors of misguided concern for converting public fund and property to personal use orgain. This misperception lends credence to Ekeh (1975) theory of two publics. For instance, the primordial public determines and influences those in authority to please their kins people, tribe, ethnic group, friends and political godfathers. By reversing this primordial public culture, corruption and do or die struggle for elective office or political appointment will significantly reduce. Another relevant approach to curbing corruption through OD perspective is to make elective posts/office and appointment to offices less attractive in terms of unattractive emolument and privileges to the president, vice-president, ministers, commissioners and advisers. The idea of seeing their selves morally bound and obligated to their primordial group, tribe /ethnic group to make them benefit from his financial misdemeanor will greatly reduce.

Beckhard (1969) suggested a number of choices on where to intervene. One of such interventions relevant to our situation is what he regarded as "An organization-wide confrontation meeting, bringing together a variety of parts of the organization, to examine the state of affairs and to make first plans for improvement".

Extending this suggestion to Nigeria's predicament, regular meetings with these political actors in the leadership positions and their appointees with the various state electorates /representatives at federal and state levels will give the electorates the opportunity to give them the outcome of their assessment about their work, their attitudes toward

public fund and whether they live up to their expectation about them or not. The electorates will ensure that whatever projects the leaders are embarking upon must be relevant to them or the society.

Besides this OD methodof curbing corruption in Nigeria, raising the average income of Nigerians will go a long way to reduce corruption. People see politics as the easiest way to wriggle out of poverty and graduate to nouveau riche of the society.

As a creditable intervention approach to forestall corruption, organizational learning is considered very appropriate. Organizational learning as posited by Lien, Hung and Mclean (2007), means the intelligence and capability of an organization to effect a change and improve always or regularly on it. It furthermore enables the organization to control their existing situation or condition by profferingsolutions to their current problems and eventually bring absolute or reliably permanent alteration in the operations of the organization. Although there are divergent views and contentions about organizational learning, this study is concerned with its relevance to Nigeria situation. If Nigerians learn about their common and central values of the country, know about their political leaders and those in corridors of power in terms of their emoluments, privileges, immunity and their rights as free citizens of the country, corruption and unethical practices and abuses will be brought under permanent check and control.

Implementing these OD change and intervention approaches to bring down corruption in Nigeria, will not only lead to new political, economic and social era but also will create enabling psychological climate that accords regard and respect to every

Nigerian, differences in tribe and ethnicity notwithstanding. Furthermore, providing equal opportunity for employment, education, distribution of health care facilities and freedom to live and vie for political office in any part of the country will equally bring down corruption in Nigeria.

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