

LEADERSHIP, CORRUPTION AND NATION BUILDING IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper tried to check the link between leadership, corruption and nation building. The paper addressed how the leadership style and the corrupt practices in Nigeria have led to a poor socio-economic development and the nation building in Nigeria. The paper relied on documentary method for its data gathering and qualitative descriptive analysis for its data analysis. The paper used the idealist theory of the state for its theoretical framework. The study recommended the following : the citizens should play their own role in seeing that they perform their civic duties efficiently by electing those that are credible not out of religious or ethnic affiliations, the leader must be a patriotic one, willing to deliver, self denial, there should be a strong anti graft law which must be independent from either the judiciary, executive and the legislature, any administration that must lead must come in through a credible free and fair elections, a reform should be created and targeted towards stimulating economic growth, reduce unemployment, reduce poverty, improve government accountability and transparency, re-orienting values and rebuilding national integrity.

Keywords: Leadership, Corruption, Nation Building, Leadership Style and Socio-economic Development.

Introduction

After five (5) decades, of developmental efforts and management, Nigeria is still being classified as underdeveloped, poor country of the third world countries despite being the one of the richest countries in the world in terms of both natural and human resources and the seventh largest oil reserves of crude oil, the country is being below poverty line with a gross national product per capital of N 1,220 (Akindele 2015). Nigeria has generated approximately \$ 360million from oil revenue yet she remains poor, (UNDP 2005). Nigeria's maternal mortality rate remains one of the highest in the African continent standing at 100 for every 100,000 births. Life expectancy remains 52years at average, in 2008, less than 67% of Nigerians have access to good health services, (UNDP report 2008). The 2005 UNDP human development index ranks Nigeria 158th out of 159 countries of the third world nations in terms of underdevelopment. Akande (2005) has attributed the underdevelopment situations despite its endowment in both human and natural resources to high level of

corruption. He noted that, where there is corruption, even a highly endowed nation in terms of natural and human resources may fail to develop in a beneficial way to a great majority of the citizens.

Corruption in Nigeria is a phenomenon which increases in quantity, intensity and in a geometric formation. Corruption has a diver stating consequence on both the economy and the citizens. Corruption constitutes a huge problem to the standard of living of citizens. In the Nigeria society, corruption has rendered millions of Nigerians uneducated, reduced the standard of living, and increased the cost of living, (Abbas 2012). This is due to mismanagement, embezzlement, misappropriation of public funds. Nigeria has been consistent in among the 10th most corrupt nations of 10 year report of Transparency International for ten years. Due to the corrupt nature of the Nigeria state, some international business men find it difficult to establish their business in Nigeria.

Smith (1976), described Nigeria as a Nation

Where human society is plunging compulsively into ever greater depths of corruption and decay. Thus the grater the development plans, the larger the scale of corruption which their implementation encourages by diverting efforts that are being made for the benefit of the community to private gain at the community's' expenses.

Despite the abundance of natural mineral resources (solid and liquid), Nigeria is ranked among the 25th poorest countries in the world, (Atoyebi and Mobolaji 2004). Corruption retards the growth of the economy and development. Corruption encourages political instability, impedes economic growth, encourages social unrest, and crime infested environment. it breeds inefficiency, incompetence, mediocrity, unethical values and other base instincts in man such as greed, avarice, and rapacity (Akanbi 2011).

Nigeria lost \$ 140 billion to corruption which is at the official price of 197/dollar exchange rate. The major of the military intervention in the Nigeria government is as a result of corruption and indiscipline, (Ali 2012). Corruption is a cankerworm that has eaten deeply into the polity of Nigeria state. This has affected the leadership style in Nigeria. This is because, leaders or those who rule do not come into power through a credible democratic process.

Leadership style in Nigeria can be classified as imposition. This is because, the manner at which leaders emerge in Nigeria is being characterized by widespread of electoral malpractices, such as rigging, thuggrey, snatching of ballot boxes, intimidation of voters etc. This has made the choices of the electorates to be defeated because those they voted for do not emerge the winners. This has led to a poor representation and bad leadership thereby causing lot impediments in the nation building. This is because once there is a bad leadership, there is a tendency that the policies the leader will be making will not be that of the populace but for that of the

personal aggrandizement of those that made them to seize the power, (George-Genyi 2013).

The effect of corruption and poor leadership is being felt in all the aspects of the Nigerian polity. The variables have led to a poor infrastructural facilities, poor representation, poor health care facilities, decay in the economy , constant devaluation of the Nigeria currency. Nigeria's socio-politico-economic history has revealed that many of its leaders over the years have been using the iron law of oligarchy which states that

all forms of organizations , regardless of how democratic they may be at the start will eventually and inevitably develop oligarchic tendencies, thus making true democracy practically and theoretically impossible especially in large groups and complex organizations, (Mitchells 1911).

The iron law of oligarchy explains in the Nigeria context, the triumph of the leaders' ambitions for office over the membership's revolutionary goals.

Many of the leaders have tended to plunder, defraud, embezzle, mismanage and in the process envy one another with impunity and relish, (Bamidele 2012). He went further to state that the leaders have also been possessive, egoistic, selfish, individualistic, callous, greedy and secretive. The leaders and their regimes/administrations/governments were deeply engrossed in excessive acts of corruption, impropriety, mismanagement and squanderism. Hence, this paper seeks to address corruption, leadership and nation building in the Nigeria polity.

Conceptual Clarifications

Under this section, the paper will conceptualize the following:

- Corruption
- Leadership
- Nation Building

Corruption

This paper provides a conceptual framework web, conceptual clarification corruption as a term is uncertain and indeed devoid of any strait jacket definition. It depends on who is defining and from what perspective. What is corruption? If you are a typical Nigerian, you would define it as government officials looting our treasury. One could view; everything starts and ends in government offices. It will surprise you that almost everybody is campaigning against corruption in Nigeria? We are all waging a war against corruption. The main reason Nigeria is not making progress we say authoritatively is that those in government are just stealing public money. Corruption in Nigeria is not the exclusive preserve of politicians, civil servants, and captains of industry. Among the "common people" there is an instinctive honing of stealing skills. One should stop thinking people suddenly become corrupt when they join the government. However having been tutored and mentored on petty stealing

from probably the age of five, Nigerians naturally explode when they occupy positions of authority at any level either in private or public sector. They join the bandwagon of selfish leaders after suddenly finding themselves in the corridor of power. Rather than use their positions to repair its ills; they conform to the enrichment craze.

For (Agbese, 1982), “corruption is a phenomenon so difficult to define, yet it percolates every structure of the society. It affects the military as well as it soils the hands of the civilians”. He went further to define corruption as follows ...

“When we use our position in society to secure certain advantages jumping a queue, being waved off at the checkpoint or making others bend the rules to accommodate our demands ... by whatever means even if it is just ‘thank you’ our action however innocent, however well-intentional, however unthreatening to others, has corrupted a system or a convention or some rules and regulations in application.”

He went further to state that in this regard, even whatever form of seasonal gifts, free air tickets, lunch or dinner – “kola” is no longer exempted, since these are likely to influence future courses of action and transactions the giver or receiver is thus corrupting protocol or breaching some rules and regulations in the society (Nigeria) etc.

Abdullahi (2013) for instance saw “corruption as the diversion of resources from the betterment of the community to the gain of individuals at the expense of the community. Mumullan (1961) point out that a public official is corrupt if he accepts money or money’s worth for doing something that he is under a duty to do or to exercise a legitimate discretion for improper reason.

Adamu (2014) corruption is “the deliberate binding of the system to favour friends or hurt foes, any misbehaviour deviation from or perversion of the system, or misleading Nigerians or giving them wrong or distorted information about things they ought to know.” Thus, any act or behaviour or omission, committed, internationally or not to influence the actions of another, the influential and the influenced, respectively has corrupted a system which is detrimental to the entire society.

In another perspective, the political science school sees “corruption” as “an optimal means of bypassing the queues and bureaucratic inertia and hence conducive to economic growth”. While the economics school like (Krueger 1974), saw “corruption” as “an external manifestation of rent seeking behaviour on the part of individuals” But the Edward C. Bandfield definition of corruption which we subscribe to for its elaborate and precise nature, defines corruption as the process of obtaining material enrichment or opportunities for oneself and or for others, through the use of public office (or influence) in ways other than those publicly acknowledge through rules and procedures of what Salisu, (2000), the simple definition of corruption is that it is the misapplication of public resources to private ends. For

example, public Officials may collect bribes for issuing Passports or Visa, for providing goods at sea/airport for awarding contracts or artificial scarcity.

Konie, (2003) identified two types of corruption, these are, Vertical corruption, which involves managers and decision makers. This is common in less developed countries and; Horizontal corruption, which involves the entire Officials, informed and laymen groups in the countries. The two types of corruption should be seriously addressed and eradicated if any meaningful economic or political progress is to be made.

Corruption also reduces economic growth, enhances inequalities and reduces the government's capacity to respond to people's needs. All these swerve down to create poverty in the society". Corruption distorts economic and social developments, by engendering wrong choices and by encouraging competition in bribery rather than in the quality and price of goods and services and, all too often, it means that the world's poorest must pay for the corruption of their own officials and of multinationals" agents. Corruption leads to a grooving gap between the rich and the poor and deepens poverty by enriching a few at the expense of fellow citizens. Under a corrupt system, there is a concentration of wealth in the hands of a tiny minority of the population. Resultantly income distribution becomes highly skewed.

Alan Doig and Robin Theobald aver that the diverse manifestations of corrupt transactions have been identified as ranging from:

Acceptance of money or other rewards for awarding contracts, violations of procedures to advance personal interest, including kickbacks from development programmes or multinational corporations; pay-offs for legislative support; and the diversion of public resources for private use, to overlook illegal activities or intervening in the justice process. Forms of corruption also include nepotism, common theft, overpricing, establishing non-existing projects, payroll padding, tax collection and tax assessment frauds (Doig and Theobald, 1997).

Corruption like most concepts in the social science does not have a single agreeable definition. Corruption according to Lipset and Lenz (2000:112), is the effort to secure wealth, or power through illegal means, private gain at public expense or misuse of public power for private benefit. Ofoeze (2004:20), sees corruption as referring to "any action or inaction of any person or group (public and private) deliberately perpetuated to secure advantages for oneself, a relation, associate or group(s) in a manner that detract from the accepted regulations, morals and or ethical standard or code and hence constituting a travesty of justice, equity and fair play". The systematic study of corruption is hampered by the lack of an adequate definition

It is axiomatic to posit that there is no single, comprehensive and universally accepted definition of corruption. It would be a long and cumbersome process to come up with a universally shared definition. To come up with such a definition one

would in any event require a functional democracy that involves consultation and consensus by relevant stakeholders. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the Global programme against corruption – UN Anti-Corruption. Tool kit (2007) succinctly posits that the difficulties encountered in formulating a common definition are due to legal, criminological and political problems (UN Anti-corruption Tool kit, 2007).

Corruption is any transaction between private and public sector actors through which collective goods are illegitimately converted into private-regarding pay offs (Heidenheimer, et; al, 1996:6). This definition does not, however, distinguish clearly between political and bureaucratic corruption. It establishes the necessary involvement of the state and state agents in corruption, without any notion as to the level of authority where corruption takes place (Amundsen, 1999:3).

Amundsen (1999) goes on to posit that in a more strict definition, political corruption involves political decision-makers. Political or grand corruption takes place at the high levels of its political system. It is when the politicians and state agents, who are entitled to make and enforce the law in the name of the people, are themselves corrupt. Political corruption is when political decision-makers use the political power they are armed with, to sustain their power, status and wealth. Thus, political corruption can be distinguished from bureaucratic or petty corruption, which is corruption in the public administration, at the implementation end of politics.

In a broad term, political corruption is the misuse of government officials of their governmental powers for illegitimate private gain. Misuse of government power for other purposes, like repression of political opponents and general police brutality, is not considered political corruption. Illegal acts by private persons or corporations not directly involved with government are not considered as political corruption either (Boyle, 2008). The International Monetary Fund Manual on Fiscal Transparency (2007) defines political corruption as the misuse by government or political officials of their governmental powers and resources for illegitimate, usually secret, private gain.

Chinhamo and Shumba (2007) on the other hand define the term as the abuse of public power; or resources by government officials or employees for personnel gain. For example, extortion, soliciting or offering bribes. As indicated earlier, even when the distinction between political or bureaucratic corruption is rather ambiguous as it depends on the separation of politics from administration (which is unclear in most political systems), the distinction is vital in analytical and in practical terms.

The Southern African Development Community in the protocol against corruption defines corruption as “any act referred to in Article 3 and includes bribery, or any other behaviour in relation to persons entrusted with responsibilities in the public and private sectors which violates their duties as public officials, private employees, independent agents or other relationships of that kind and aimed at obtaining undue advantage of any kind for themselves or others” (SADC, 2007:1).

Chinhamo and Shumba (2007) posits that the above definition is more detailed as compared to Johnston (1996) Nye (1967); Friedrich, 1966, Van Klaveren, 1989, Heidenheimer, 1989 since it recognizes that corruption also takes place in the

private sector and other settings. What is also important about the SADC definition is that it gives the leeway to include acts of corruption that are hidden in the contemporary democratic processes. For instance, cases of rigging elections, putting in place biased electoral institutions and processes, abusing national resources for political gains, hijacking of law enforcement agents, and vote buying. There is however, need for such acts to be clearly spelt out in the list of acts of corruption, which the SADC did not do (Chinhamo and Shumba, 2007:3). A working definition of corruption is also provided as follows in Article 3 of The Civil Law Convention on Corruption (ETS174),

Corruption means requesting, offering, giving or accepting, directly or indirectly, a bribe or any other undue advantage or prospect thereof, which distorts the proper performance of any duty or behaviour required of the recipient of the bribe, the undue advantage or the prospect thereof. One response to this is to distinguish public corruption from private corruption, and to argue that the above definition is a definition only of public corruption. But if ordinary citizens lie when they give testimony in court, this is corruption; it is corruption of the criminal justice system. However, it does not involve abuse of a public office by a public official. And when police fabricate evidence out of a misplaced sense of justice, this is corruption of a public office, but not for private gain. In the light of the failure of such analytical-style definitions it is tempting to try to sidestep the problem of providing a theoretical account of the concept of corruption by simply identifying corruption with specific legal and/or moral offences. Secondly, corruption is not necessarily economic in character. An academic who plagiarises the work of others is not committing an economic crime or misdemeanour; and she might be committing plagiarism simply in order to increase her academic status. There might not be any financial benefit sought or gained. Academics are more strongly motivated by status, rather than by wealth. A police officer who fabricates evidence against a person he believes to be guilty of paedophilia is not committing an economic crime; and he might do so because he believes the accused to be guilty, and does not want him to go unpunished. Economics is not necessarily involved as an element of the officer's crime or as a motivation. When police do wrong they are often motivated by a misplaced sense of justice, rather than by financial reward. Again, a person in authority motivated by sadistic pleasure who abuses her power by meting out cruel and unjust treatment to those subject to her authority is not engaging in an economic crime; and she is not motivated by economic considerations. Many of those who occupy positions of authority are motivated by a desire to exercise power for its own sake, rather than by a desire for financial reward.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Third world countries are a product of colonialism. For the purpose of this paper the framework adopted is the Idealist theory by Hegel. Nkom 1982, this theory therefore explains corruption in terms of some selfish ideas, which are prevalent in the value system of the society, this approach according to Metiboba (2002:158) is sometimes subdivided into the traditionalist and the modernist. To him, the adoption of western social value and attitude is the determining factor of corruption in Nigeria; the traditionalist idealist advocates a return to the social values of the traditional society. On the other hand, the modernist idealists associate corruption with certain acts of traditional practices such as gift-giving, ethnic loyalty and other parochial tendencies which tend to encourage corrupt behavior and which may be overcome by modern rationalist values. The second approach, which is the anomie theory, sees corruption (deviant behaviour) as emanating from the social structure of the society, which exerts a definite pressure upon certain individuals in the society to engage in non-conforming or conforming conduct. As a matter of fact, the Nigerian society tends to over-emphasize the individual goal attainment at the expense of the legitimate means of achieving these set goals. In Nigeria, material acquisition has virtually become the ultimate goal and the society does not appear to be concerned with how one "makes" it. All that is important is that one has "arrived". The marked discrepancy between the goals and means in our society invariably leads to various forms of corruption such as embezzlement of public fund, offering and acceptance of bribe, electoral rigging, examination malpractice, which in all marred development in Nigeria.

Assessment of Leadership and Governance in Nigeria in the Last Fifty One (51) Years

According to World Bank study of sub Sahara Africa (SSA), "The problem of Africa's Development is a crisis of governance; the study affirmed that because of the selfish interest of some state officials, who have served in one capacity or the other and have deliberately refused to give account of their activities while in office. Such office become personalized and politicised, thus paving ways for unnecessary patronage, which consequently undermine the authority of the leadership. It thus becomes difficult for a sustainable and dynamic economy to grow in such environment (World Bank, 1989).

Basically, fifty one year independence is worth celebrating. But there is absolutely nothing to show for this fifty-one year of existence. Nigeria of today cannot compete favourably with its counterpart in the march to development, especially in the areas of quality of life, infrastructural facilities, basic needs of life and technological development. This development problem was traced to inadequate and qualified personnel, lack of enough fund and low technology to drive the vehicle of development immediately after independence. But this is fifty-one years after independence now, why is Nigeria still lagging behind? Should we still continue to hinge our underdevelopment on personnel and finance problem? Of course No, the major constraint to Nigeria's development is lack of transformational leadership.

According to Onigbude (2007) “regrettably poor leadership performance has remained with us despite years of complaints and grumbling. We have acquiesced in our own progressive destruction by submitting ourselves to the leadership of political misfits”. It is surprising that the so much expected dividends of democracy eluded the mass of the people, while the leadership has remained unaccountable to them.

According to Odekunle (2007) most of the problems Nigeria is facing today particularly, in term of development are caused by the sharp practices of our past and present leaders. In terms of accountability, transparency and service delivery, despite the abundance of human and natural resources that make the country the toast of many nations, our leaders have not been at their best as people’s expectations of a better hope and opportunities have long be dashed, with governance ingredients still at its elusive stage to Nigerians. The leadership problem that has confronted Nigeria since independence is making the polity deteriorating. Few of the leaders if any, work for the development of the country more often than not, their policies are hastily put together and poorly executed. As a matter of fact, going by all the development parameters and performance indices, Nigerians leaders have failed, economically, macroeconomic stability, fiscal discipline, economic reforms, due process and relatively low inflation rates that the state could claim to have achieved sit alongside weak business confidence, low growth, massive unemployment, and rising inequality between the rich and the poor. Nigerians per capita GDP is nothing to reckon with, poverty is widespread and about 54 percent of the population is living on less than One US dollar Per Day. Nigeria ranks low on Human Development indices (HDI), ranked by the United Nations in 2007 as 157th out of 177 countries, down from 148th out of a total of 173 in 2003. The country’s human development index of 0.453 in 2005 was lower than the average index for sub-Saharan Africa (0.515) and thereafter was rated as 13th least viable countries of the World. While corruption, which every government has always promised to eradicate at its inauguration continued unabated (Azeez, 2010). Perhaps the most profound definition of leadership thus far comes from Arnold and Feldman (1986), who have stated that leadership is an influence process. They opined that leadership is the exercise of influence on the part of the leader over the behaviour of one or more persons. In other words, leadership involves one person trying to get others do something that he wants them to do. Stogdill (1950) agreeing with Anald and Feldman (1986) added the concept of goal attainment, when he contended that “leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group towards goal setting and goal achievement”. This implies that a leader must be able to influence the followers towards setting appropriate goals and towards their effective achievement. In this regard, how much do Nigerian leaders influence their followers to set and achieve appropriate goals? Mullins (1999) defines leadership as the relationship through which one person influences the behaviour of other people. This explains that the process of leadership cannot be separated from the activities of groups. In the words of Schien (1980), leadership is a function of the relationship between the leader, the followers and the task-situation. From the aforementioned literatures we deduce that leadership is a process of influencing, directing and co-ordinating the activities of organized group

towards goal setting, goal achievement and problem solving, that it necessarily involves taking initiative or initiating new structures and new procedures and that is imperatively a function of the leader and the situational variable. Development according to Rodney (1972) is a phenomenon which is inherent in all societies. Olewo (1995), says that development means growth or change or planned change. The term development has diverse perspectives such as social development, economic development, political development. Gbenga Lawal (2007), expressed that development is the process by which a type of (social) change is introduced into a system in order to produce a better production method and improved social arrangement. It involves a structural transformation of the economy society, polity and culture of a country. The level and rate of development of a particular society are influenced by so many variables such as the political culture, leadership style and corruption. Development in human society is not a one sided process rather multi-sided issues; some scholars perceive development as an increase in the skill and ability. It is viewed as maximum freedom, and the ability to create responsibly. Seer (1977), states that sustainable development does not involve capital accumulation and economic growth only but the condition in which people in a country have adequate food, job and income inequality. It is the process of bringing fundamental and sustainable changes in the society.

The Dimensions of Corruption with their tables in 1996- 2010 Nigeria

YEAR	PERCEPTION INDEX	NO OF COUNTRY EVALUATED	RATING
1996	1.20	54	54
1997	1.30	52	52
1998	1.90	85	81
1999	1.90	99	98
2000	1.90	90	90
2001	1.60	102	100
2002	1.70	91	90
2003	1.40	133	132
2004	1.60	145	144
2005	1.90	158	154
2006	2.20	163	142
2007	2.20	183	127
2008	2.20	183	127
2009	2.70	180	130
2010	2.40	178	134

Source: Transparency International 2010

Table 2: Top Corrupt Organisations in Nigeria 2005-2007

Organization	Year 2005 %	Year 2007 %
The police	96	99
Power holding company nig. (PHCN)	83	87
Ministry of education (university/ poly/ college of education)	63	74
Custom & excise dept.	65	61
Federal road safety corp.(FRSC)	42	51
Immigration/ passport office	56	48
Jamb	41	47
Local Govt. Authorities	47	46
Independent National Electorate commission (INEC)	-	38
Tax official/ Federal inland Revenue service (FIRES)	36	36
Health Ministry/ primary Health / Teaching Hospital	30	32
Ministry of Justice	27	31
The Presidency	24	29
Nigeria National petroleum commission (NNPC)	27	28
Federal Housing Authority	26	28
Nigeria Ports Authority/ Nigeria Marine Authority	33	24

Source: Nigeria Corruption Index 2007.

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2010	2.40	178	134

Source: Transparency International Group 2010

The Profile of Corruption in Nigeria

The issue of corruption which became obvious since 1992 is arguably the bane of Nigeria's economic progress and development. Since it has entered the system, Nigeria's administrative and social lexicon regressed unto an era of ethical breakdown. Although corruption is a universal phenomenon, its magnitude and effects are more severe and deep-seated in Nigeria. Thus, international agencies such as the World Bank and international perception agency have begun to show great concern over the level of corruption in Nigeria and its destabilizing effects. Table 1 below shows Nigeria's corruption perception index, between 1996 and 2010 published by the transparency international agency. Looking at table 1; in 1996, 54 countries were evaluated and Nigeria was found to be the most corrupt. Nigeria was equally ranked 52nd among the 52 countries that were examined in 1997 and dropped in 1998 to 81st among 85 Countries that were evaluated. Notwithstanding, Nigeria regressed to the 98th position out of 99 countries examined in 1999. Despite the crusades of anti-corruption of Obasanjo, the magnitude of corruption remains on the high side. Nigeria ranked 90th out of 90 countries in year 2000, dropped marginally to 90th position out of 91 countries evaluated in 2001. It remained stable at 100th position out of 102 countries evaluated in 2002; by 2003, Nigeria was 132nd out of 133 countries Nations that were examined and 144th in 2004 out of 145 countries evaluated. Nigeria ranked 142nd out of 163 countries in year 2006, and stood at 134th position out of 178 countries in year 2010. It is in this connection that doubts have been expressed about the authenticity of the recent crusade and campaign against corruption. Such campaigns are recently tainted as political instruments to fight the political opponents. Some commentators have observed that the problem appeared to have increased in intensity and so to uproot it will require more concerted efforts than sanctimonious statements from politicians, clergies and other venders.

As observed by Osunyinkanmi (2007), a number of institutions established to fight against corruption, such as WAI Brigade ICPC, EFCC and NATPIP, have failed to achieve their set goals. The problem has not been abated. One wonders if this is not the kind of situation that Mazmi (1984) describes in respect of Tanzania as a cause of heroic failure.

Summary

Specifically, this study examined the crowding-out effects of corruption on the Nigerian economy. From the previous arguments in this paper and from the empirical investigations, it is clear that corruption is a cankerworm that has eaten into the fabric of the Nigerian economy. Since it has entered the system, Nigeria's administrative and social lexicon regressed unto an era of ethical breakdown. It is found that although corruption is a universal phenomenon, its magnitude and effects are more severe and deep-seated in Nigeria. This paper equally found that all forms of corruption manifested in bribery, frauds, embezzlement, election rigging, examination malpractice etc are noticeable in Nigeria. It was discovered that corruption has caused decay and dereliction within the infrastructure of government and the society in physical, social and human terms. It is opined that corruption has

been responsible for the instability of successive governments, since the First Republic and it has contributed immensely to unbridle looting most especially in public offices. Again, this has virtually turned Nigeria into the land of starvation and a debtor nation in spite of the nation's enormous resources. It shows that corruption is literally the anti-thesis of development and progress.

Conclusion

The central opinion of this paper is that corruption has been completely institutionalized into the contemporary Nigerian economic and socio-political systems and this is now reflecting in the growth and development of the nation. This paper discovered that all forms of corruption manifested in bribery, frauds, embezzlement, election rigging, examination malpractice etc are noticeable in Nigeria. The conclusion however, is that no matter the magnitude of natural resources present, the size of the foreign exchange earnings, technological know-how, the efficiency of labour and the availability of basic infrastructure, development cannot be sustained in Nigeria except corruption is eradicated.

Recommendations

The study recommended the following:

- the citizens should play their own role in seeing that they perform their civic duties efficiently by electing those that are credible not out of religious or ethnic affiliations, the leader must be a patriotic one, willing to deliver, self denial,
- there should be a strong anti graft law which must be independent from either the judiciary, executive and the legislature, any administration that must lead must come in through a credible free and fair elections,
- a reform should be created and targeted towards stimulating economic growth, reduce unemployment, reduce poverty, improve government accountability and transparency, re-orienting values and rebuilding national integrity.

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