



Leadership, Corruption and Governance: The Nigerian Experience

Ikechukwu Dialoke¹; Ukah, Finian O.²& Kanu Pamela Ada³

**Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Nigeria**

¹drikechukwudialoke@yahoo.com

²Finejoe86@yahoo.com; (08038814765)

³pammykay93@yahoo.com; (08030576886)

ABSTRACT

Nigeria, a country richly endowed with human and material resources critical for national development is yet to find its rightful place among the comity of nations. The level of development of a country sometimes does not depend solely on the abundance of human and material resources that are available in the country. Development goes beyond human and natural endowment. It is generally acknowledged that Nigeria is blessed with human and natural resources. It is also a truism that Nigeria is among the least developed countries in the world. The major reason for her socio-economic development stagnation is leadership crisis, corruption among other factors. Therefore, the main thrust of this paper is to explore the absurdity of leadership crisis and the challenges of good governance in Nigeria in the midst of abundant human and material resources. It examined the concept of leadership, corruption and governance in the context of Nigeria; the causes of corruption and the effects of corruption on Nigeria's democratic stability and sustainable development. It adopted extractive corruption theory which posits that all power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. The paper recommended the strengthening and creation of more anti-corruption institutions, avoidance of the emergence of accidental leadership and considering of good governance as a right to be demanded and enjoyed by the citizens.

Keywords: Corruption, Governance, Leadership, Transformation and Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION

The concepts of "corruption", "leadership" and "governance" have attained important usage in the lexicon of third world countries of the world situated mainly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. These concepts have become imperative to explain how some countries of the world, through established authorities, are utilizing the resources at their disposal to attain their desired societal ends and support the capacity of citizens, while also attempting to overcome structural obstacles to such desirable ends. It is not debatable that Africa is the poorest continent in the world, and the richest in terms of natural resources. At present the image of this blessed continent is battered by corruption, leadership crisis and bad governance. Corruption has disastrously shattered African nations and made millions of people impoverished. Crucial to this crisis of corruption engulfing the African continent is the problem of purposeful leadership that could engineer progressive change and development.

In Nigeria, following the attainment of political independence in October 1960 with her vast endowment of human and material resources, the country exuded bright prospects of development potentials that could lead Africa, (the newly decolonized nations), on the path of socio-economic development and material wellbeing of the citizenry. Notwithstanding the long years of independence, the country is still scuffling with the problem of good governance. Thus the leadership has been characterized by lack of vision; political wrangling and above all, have been enmeshed in gross corruption, which has become a great threat to the nation's survival (Kuffuor, 2009). According to Ogundiya (2009), corruption has eaten

deep into every segment of the Nigerian society. 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.

One of the major challenges facing Nigeria and other developing nations of the world is how to create a context of stable political and socio-economic environment for policies and programmes to be implemented. The issue of getting the right leadership to fight corruption and propel good governance has been a recurring decimal in Nigeria and Africa in general. Once this enabling environment is created, it becomes easy for the people to confront and resolve challenges facing them by using resources within their environment to create a condition of life where each stage is progressively better than the preceding one. However, this is not the case in Nigeria due to corruption and bad governance. Good governance encapsulates transparency, accountability, freedom of choice and liberty for the people to pursue their individual and corporate interest. Indeed, at the core of Africa's underdeveloped status are corruption and leadership deficit.

Since the inception of political independence in 1960, some Nigerian leaders and their regimes have been deeply involved in some acts of economic problems, poor leadership and governance. In fact, Agbor (2012) argues that the success or failure of any society depends largely on the mannerism of its leadership. He adds that the result of poor leadership in Nigeria is embodied as poor governance is manifested in consistent political crisis, insecurity, high rate of unemployment, increase in crime, inflation, mass poverty, a widening unequal distribution of wealth, decline in standard of education, dearth of infrastructures such as health services, transportation, accommodation, communication, medication, brain drain and political instability. National integration has been elusive, yet it is needed to achieve the universal goal of development, that is, the pursuit of people's material welfare and wellbeing. A society that is unjust and devoid of equity and equality will intrinsically be unstable.

Simply put, the country is in great ruin. Worse still, no administration (whether military or civilian) seems to have found a better way to solve these problems; instead, the country continues to experience, as never before, a deep regression in all phases of development (Umez, 2000).

Mohammed (2013) asserts that since the return to civil rule in 1999, the Nigerian government took a number of measures to address the problems of corruption and bad governance in the country. These measures include public service reform such as monetization to reduce waste and reduction of over bloated personnel, reform of public procurement(Due Process); the sanitization of the financial service sector by the Central Bank, which revealed some mind bulging levels of barefaced theft by the management of several banks in Nigeria; establishment of anti-corruption enforcement agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Independent Corruption and other Practices Commission (ICPC); the Code of Conduct Bureau(CCB) and introduction of the Treasury Single Account(TSA), aimed at promoting financial accountability and transparency among governmental organs. Despite the few successes achieved by 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). Indeed, corruption and bad leadership 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, is analytically aimed at exploring the concepts of corruption, leadership and governance and the effects of bad leadership and corruption on good governance and sustainable development in Nigeria, with the intension of proffering some workable solutions to the problem.

Statement of the Problem

The state of corruption in Nigeria has been categorized as endemic. Corruption has also been identified as one major obstacle to national growth and development of the Nigerian economy. Research has shown that corrupt practices have been perpetrated in governance, public and private places since the pre-colonial era to the colonial period and through independence to present.

Achebe wrote that

“the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders

to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmark of true leadership” (Achebe, 1984)

More worrisome is that in spite of popular anger against corruption and bad leadership, which have robbed the collective wellbeing of the people, there remains a lack of national consensus on repulsion against the perpetrators irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, class and gender. While the ranks of unemployment and its attendant poverty increases at one extreme, the number of private jet owners grows in arithmetic progression at the other end. Excruciating poverty exists side by side with obscene opulence. For instance, according to National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS), the maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity rate in Nigeria is one of the highest in the world; with an estimated 545 maternal deaths for every 100,000 live births. 158 of every 1,000 children fewer than five years of age die of preventable diseases yearly (The Nigerian Tribune, 2013; Orude, 2014). Almost 70 percent of the population lives on less than \$170 per day while life expectancy stands at 54 years (National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2017). Insecurity is a problem despite the trillions of naira claimed to have been spent on security. The current wave of insecurity can partly be traced to the army of jobless youths. For example, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2017) recently alerted that 54 percent of Nigerian youths are unemployed. There is lack of critical mass of men and women of integrity willing to harness and unleash the various resources in the country for the common good or public interest. The paper therefore, seeks to unravel the forces which provoke these states of affairs by interrogating the devastating problems of leadership failures and the enigmatic nature of corruption which have arrested socio-economic and political development in Nigeria over the years.

The main objective of the study is to examine the impact of corruption and leadership on good governance and sustainable development. The study will provide answers to the following questions: (i) What are the causes of corruption? (ii) Do the effects of corruption and leadership on governance have any effect on developmental programmes/projects? (iii) How can corruption be curbed in the Nigerian society?

METHODOLOGY

The paper adopted qualitative research design. In other words, it is an ex-post facto research design which Ibietan, Abasilim and Ebhohimen (2017) explain to essentially mean the textual analysis of secondary data before the conclusion and recommendations of a paper. The work made use of descriptive analysis to examine the issues of leadership, corruption and governance in Nigeria. The paper which is theoretical in nature draws its argument basically from secondary data which include journal publications, newspapers, textbooks and internet sources. Statistical data were also used where necessary as empirical evidence. To improve on the reliability and validity of the paper, multiple secondary sources were used to minimize risk of error.

For ease of analysis, the paper is divided into the following five sections: The first section chronicled introduction and methodology. The second section examined conceptual and theoretical issues central to the discourse. The third discussed the causes of corruption in Nigeria. The fourth x-rayed the effects of bad leadership and corruption on governance and development in Nigeria. The fifth proffers the way forward in the context of the identified problems and conclusion.

CORRUPTION, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

Some concepts in social and management sciences do not easily lend themselves to universally agreed definitions. This makes every definition perhaps only relevant within the parameters set for a given investigation.

Corruption

The term corruption belongs to the ‘group’ of disputed concepts as social and political analysts strive to explore its variegated nature and meaning. Etymologically, the word “corruption” originates from the Greek word “*corruptus*” meaning an aberration or a misnomer. However, Waziri (2010) citing the United Nations Global Programme against Corruption (GPAC) defines corruption as “abuse of power for

private gain". Transparency International (2013) has chosen a clear and focused definition of the term as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain". It can also be defined simply as a perversion or change from the general accepted rules or laws for selfish gain. In the same vein, World Bank (2009) defines 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. 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. 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.

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

- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ 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
- ❖ Bribery: which includes kickbacks, rubbing of palms, and pay offs.
- ❖ Fraud: This could be reflected as trickery, swindling and deceit, counterfeiting, racketing, smuggling and forgery.
- ❖ 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. Perhaps, like any other developing country in Africa, the embezzlement of public fund is one of the most common ways of wealth accumulation, and this maybe due to lack of strict regulatory systems.
- ❖ Extortion: This is reflected as the use of coercion, violence, or threats to acquire resources.
- ❖ Favouritism: This is a mechanism of power abuse implying a highly biased distribution of state resources based on connection,
- ❖ 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.

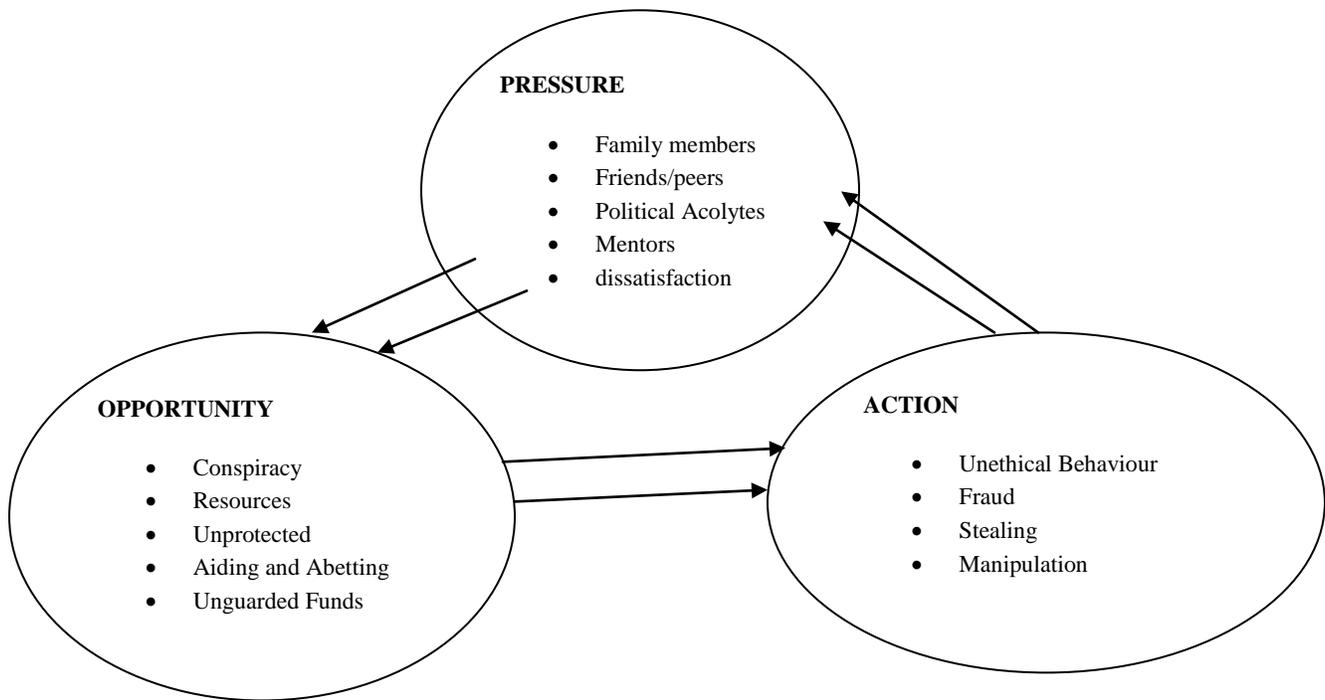


Fig 1: Conceptual Model
Source: Dialoke and Ukah (2019)

Leadership

The concept of leadership evokes several meanings and studies elaborating different dimensions of it abound. Leadership is both the adhesive and catalyst which bind citizens of a given country together and triggers their motivation towards the achievement of individual and group objectives. Leadership development has emerged as an important theoretical and practical stream of administration (Tshiyoyo, 2015). Though it is basically the process of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts towards target achievement, Drucker as cited in Sharma and Sadama (2007) says it is lifting of people’s vision to a higher sight, and the raising of their personality beyond its normal limitations. Yukl (2002) in his view asserts that leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.

Thus, leadership is a critical factor in achieving good governance by any nation. However, as Umez (2000) citing Achebe (1983) notes, it is obvious that Nigerian leaders have generally failed to rise to the responsibility and challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership. Suffice to say that leadership is not everything, but it is an extremely important factor (Tshiyoyo, 2015). If Nigeria is to have sustainable development and succeed in nation-building, it must have a leadership that is committed to the rule of law, and has a demonstrable sense of fair play and democratic tolerance; a leadership with ability and integrity, and above all, it must have a leadership that can see beyond the ostentatious pomp of office.

Governance

The term ‘governance’ cannot be pinned down to a universally acceptable definition. This is because it has fallen into semantic predicament to the extent that the literature on it replete with so many definitions of the term by various scholars with different variant and subtype. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2011) governance is defined as “the exercise of economic, political and administrative authorities to manage a country’s affairs at all levels”. Similarly, the World Governance Survey Report conceptualized governance as “the formulation and stewardship of the formal

and informal rules that regulates the public realm, the arena in which state as well as economic and social actors interact to make decisions (in Hyden & Court, 2002). Tihamiyu and Olaleye (2011) defined governance as general adherence to rule of law, transparency, productivity and accountability in government decision making that constantly achieve effective and efficient outcome for society. In the realm of public affairs, governance is seen as the range of policies public officials make and means they employ to manage the affairs of society (Ukaegbu, 2010). Governance is all about how the yearning and the aspirations of the people of a state are met. If, for instance, the resources of a state are managed for the benefits of all or the majority, we can talk of good governance. But if it is the few that enjoy the benefits thereof, or if the state is unable to harness her human and material resources to the fullest, as in the case of any country, we have bad 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. The need for good governance has been emphasized as an ingredient of progress. It is essentially necessary in developed, underdeveloped and developing nations. This is because of its ability to propel positive changes.

Good governance has some characteristics which include: participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making (Akhakpe, 2014).

All these factors in the view of Akhakpe (2014) determine the level of development in a given society. The term development has endured conceptual and methodological shift over the years. In the 70s, development was associated with issues of growth in the economy, rise in per capita income and increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). However, Todaro (1982) provides a parameter for interrogating the issues of development. For him, objectives of development should include: ability to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, health and protection, achievement of self-esteem and human freedom. Todaro went further to argue that society deserves human freedom in form of emancipation from alienating material conditions of life and freedom from the social servitude of man and ignorance of nature, misery, institutional and dogmatic beliefs. Corroborating the above view, Eberlee (2001) argued that in contemporary times, the concept of development has moved from the fetishism of growth and development to the ability of a people to recover their resources and use same according to its cultural values to solve their individual and collective problems in order to bring about new frame of life where each stage is an improvement on the preceding one.

Theoretical Framework

The subject matter of the paper could be predicated on several theoretical platforms, especially in the social and management sciences where perspectives often differ based on a scholar's orientation and worldview. When issues of leadership, corruption and governance are mentioned in contemporary times, theory of traits, crisis or cause theory, the dynastic theory of leadership, elite theory, and the extractive corruption theory come to mind. This paper is anchored on the Extractive Corruption Theory. This theory posits that the state is the stronger part in the state-society relationship. The state is symbolized by the ruling class/elite while the ruled represents the society. Significantly, the ruling elite is the strongest force in society. Put differently, the theory posits that the state is not only the strongest force in society, but also many centers of powers (Okechukwu & Inya 2011). In addition, Osaghae (1994) stresses that the material perception of the state has made the political elite to seek for power mainly to enrich themselves and members of their groups. The reason why people seek power is not to further the ends of the people and community but that of self, and themselves.

The theory also emphasizes the well-known expression that all power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. That is, the reason political power is concentrated exclusively in the hands of few individuals, the greater the temptation for power abuse, selfish wealth-seeking and primitive accumulation (Okechukwu & Inya 2011). According to the theory, the ruling elites use and misuse the power of the state primarily to safeguard their own selfish interests, to the detriment of the majority. They

use violence, intimidation and persuasion to command respect. They may use sophisticated institutional arrangements like presidentialism, dominant / ruling party system, and the co-option of rivals in order to restrict participation and power sharing. This is not seen however as corruption in as much, as the person involved is seen as contributing such ill-gotten wealth to the welfare and development of his or her community (Osaghae, 2011).

The relevance of the theory to this paper is that it has provided a framework for understanding the wide gap between the (state) elites/leaders/politicians and the (society) citizens/the led. These disconnect between the leaders and the citizens are evident. The leaders did not emerge from among the people; rather they were imposed on them by godfathers and political parties. Since the elected officials are not accountable to the people, the leaders engage in corrupt acts and bad leadership with impunity at the expense of the ordinary citizens. On the other hand, due to the nature of the society, a corrupt official remains a good man as long as he channels part of the money he or she stole to satisfy ephemeral yearnings of a few, jettisoning developmental programmes and projects that will improve the life of the people.

Causes of Corruption

Generally, the major causes of corruption can be linked to the nature of the economy of a particular society. This means that, it is the economic situation of a society that determines the behavioural pattern predominately found in such society. The nature of the Nigerian economy and the way it has been managed largely account for the mode of economic behaviour of the various actors in Nigeria. Strictly speaking, the following are the causes of corruption in Nigeria:

Economic Factor: The phenomenon of corruption is strongly influenced by the economy of the nation. The more the economic activity in the country is regulated and limited, the higher the authority and the power of officials in decision making and the greater the possibility of corruption, since individuals are willing to pay or offer payment in order to avoid restrictions. Corruption is also strongly influenced by inadequate wages and non-payment of salaries of employees, who are therefore trying to improve their financial position by receiving bribes, and consequently, corruption provides a means of augmenting one's legitimate income. The reward system in Nigeria is, perhaps, the poorest in the world. Workers are being owed salaries in some states. Yet, these members of the society are expected to be honest, productive and train their children in a most honourable manner without getting their salaries. Corrupt acts become the alternative means to achieve their objectives and make ends meet because they cannot depend solely on their meagre salaries for a decent living (Obuah, 2010).

Professional Ethics and Legislation: Lack of professional ethics and deficient laws regulating corruption as a criminal offense, and the prosecution and sanctioning of it are also an important cause for the emergence and spread of corruption. A great influence comes also from the ineffective sanctioning of corruption, which only increases the possibility of continuing the corruptive actions of those involved, creating at the same time a strong likelihood that others will join in the corruption due to this inefficient sanctioning. Shamija (2006) observed that, the seeming reluctance of government to sanction corruption creates the impression of support. Media reports showed that government is fond of setting investigation panels and commissions of inquiries whose investigations, findings and recommendations are neither made public nor implemented. Another breeding ground for corruption in some African state is weak institutions of government. It also generates a lack of transparency and a lack of control by supervisory institutions. Therefore, where there is insufficient legal basis or sufficient political will to control, which enables a non-transparent functioning of both politics and the economy, corruption flourishes.

Cultural Factor: Bedford (2000) in an attempt to contextualize Nigerian corruption identifies tribal loyalties as the factor that promotes corruption. Therefore, our culture seems to fuel some corrupt practices. The sharing of bribes and favours has become the order of the day; there is hardly the motivation to become honest. This has become a subculture where corruption is accepted to be the normal way of life with the obvious risk of it becoming institutionalized. There is also the culture of affluent and get rich syndrome which has become part and parcel of public officials coupled with pressure from

extended families, friends and kinsmen and, unbridled competition between and among the ethnic groups and a dysfunctional legal system.

Bureaucratic Bottlenecks: Some people, individuals or organizations engage in corruption usually caused by bureaucratic bottlenecks. This tends to aid the officers that are handling useful positions, hence the bureaucratic tendency.

Lack of Exemplary Leadership: this is one of the aspects of corruption. Thus, according to Achebe (1984)“ the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership... This assertion reveals that, there is problem of leadership in Nigeria. The successive leaders that have ruled this country lack the will of fighting corruption rather they indulged in corrupt practices to better their living at the expense of the poor.

Other causes of corruption perhaps include poverty, quest for power, illiteracy, inequality in the distribution of wealth, unemployment and low level of patriotism.

Effects of Corruption and Leadership on Governance and Development

Nigeria is plugging deeper into the bog of corruption with each passing year; she is one of the most dishonest countries, not just on African continent but on the face of the earth. Asserting this, the corruption perception index released by Transparency International (2019) reports that, Nigeria failed to achieve an improvement over last six years. Nigeria was the 144th least corrupt country out of 180 countries that were assessed, in 2018. Nigeria scored 27 points out of 100 on the 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index reported by Transparency International. (A country or territory’s score indicates the perceived level of public sector corruption on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean)). Table 1 captures Nigeria’s ranking from 2009 to 2018.

Table 1: Corruption Perception Index Ranking (2009 – 2018).

Year	Ranking
2009	130 out of 180
2010	134 out of 178
2011	143 out of 183
2012	139 out of 176
2013	144 out of 177
2014	136 out of 175
2015	136 out of 167
2016	136 out of 176
2017	148 out of 180
2018	144 out of 180

Source: Transparency international (2019)

NB: The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks countries and territories based on how corrupt their public sector is perceived to be. A country or territory's rank indicates its position relative to the other countries and territories in the index.

Economically, corruption leads to the depletion of national wealth and resources. Some African countries perhaps Nigeria sits on some of the largest oil reserve in the world. According to Ibraheem, Umar and Ajoke (2016), corruption has various implications for both the developed and developing economies. It hampers development and thus raises the level of poverty in any economy that finds itself entrenched in corrupt practices. Corruption exacerbates mass poverty as poor people on the average pay higher proportion of their incomes in bribes. This, in economic parlance, impedes economic growth. The misappropriation and mismanagement of public resources have rendered millions of people poor, unemployed and uneducated (Aluko, 2009). Therefore, it contributes to uncertainty and risk in the growth process and development potentials of any economy.

Corrupt economic practices tend to increase the cost of doing business. For instance, the bribes that sometimes has to be paid to public officials to move their files and the percentage mark-up, which corrupt

officials take when awarding contracts, etc add up to the total cost of carrying out a given investment, it is clear that the final costs and prices will correspondingly increase both for investors and consumers alike. This cost element can positively discourage potential investors from undertaking business/investments.

Public expenditure from sectors that are beneficial to the poor, to the sectors and projects constitute corruption. Oghi (2013) asserted that funds, which have been budgeted for facilities such as; refineries, power generation, hospitals, roads, water supply, schools etc are diverted to private bank accounts, through either direct embezzlement or the award of spurious contracts to cronies

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 boko haram challenge, and herders/farmers clash. For instance, corruption has pervaded the law enforcement agencies. In this case, there is proliferation of crimes and social vices, which in turn, reduces the volume of economic activities and national development. A typical example is the drop in production by most multi- national companies around the Niger Delta region (Umoh, 2003). Evidences prove that monies meant for security equipments and personnel training are 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 decay in the security sector cannot be overemphasized.

Corruption and bad leadership also impact negatively on efficient mobilization and management of human and material resources. It can also alienate modernity oriented civil servants and cause them to reduce (or withdraw) their service and to leave the country for greener pasture (the “brain-drain” episode is tied to corruption) as many Nigerians believe it is profitable to work outside Nigeria’s shore.

Corruption and bad leadership have negative effect on governance in that they both lead to instability. The various military regimes in the country can be attributed to this issue of discussion. It is however pertinent to note that the military, instead of being a solution to bad leadership and corruption, is the major cause of poor leadership and corruption in Nigeria. According to Suberu (2010) economic and electoral corruptions are the “most basic source of federal democratic instability in Nigeria.” Some ambitious soldiers take over power not because they have solutions to these problems but because they simply want to rule (Alex, 2010).

Bad leadership and corruption have a negative impact on human rights of the citizenry. A country with a corrupt government will have no regard for people’s fundamental human rights as guaranteed in the constitution. Hence, it violates the rule of law and alters the entire decision-making process, undermining the credibility and legitimacy of government. Even, those who tried to expose corrupt activities (whistle blowers) find themselves to blame as they can be dealt with and the culprits walk away without being punished. This has encouraged the acceptance of the axiom “join them if you cannot beat them”.

Corruption and bad leadership have the effect of discouraging people of good intention from taking active part in politics. For many people in Nigeria, politics is a dirty game and those who are involved in it are often viewed as liars and dishonest people (Ajayi & Ogoma; 2012). People of high integrity fear to be viewed in this manner and politics is left for the immoral, debauched and corrupt politicians who are not bothered about integrity. The implication of this on governance is maladministration and poor management.

The power sector is another harbour of highly corrupt public officials in Nigeria. Epileptic power outage has more or less become a second nature of the sector. Nigeria’s developmental efforts have been hampered by poor power supply. Most industries rely on generating plants as source of power to run their day to day operations. This situation constitutes a major setback to both local and foreign investors who do not see profitable returns on their investment. 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. Muttiullah (2010) notes that instead of the money going into the power sector, it became loot for various officers charged with executing the energy project. The ailing power sector has been the bane of meaningful development in Nigeria. Less than one third of Nigerian population is connected to electricity supply, which is even erratic and almost non-existent. According to World Bank Report (2005) an

estimated \$10 billion was needed to ensure that at least 75% of Nigeria's population had access to electricity. This meant that the \$16 billion mismanaged by Obasanjo's government, if judiciously spent should have largely eased the monumental electricity crisis in Nigeria.

Bad leadership and corruption have led to increased social crimes. Prostitution, unemployment, drug trafficking, hostage taking, child trafficking, are on the increase in Nigeria because, the money that could have been used to provide job opportunities to the teeming populace is being diverted to private use. The Boko Haram, the Fulani/ herders clashes, the crises in the Niger Delta and other violent acts in the country are avoidable where there is good leadership. Suberu (2010) opines that; the control of government by corruptly imposed and politically unacceptable politicians has obstructed the alleviation of inter-regional inequalities and mass poverty that fuel violent ethno-religious crises.

There is no gain saying that corruption has indeed robbed Nigerians of the benefits of good governance. This reckless drainage of the common wealth has been responsible for the socio-economic stagnation and bad governance witnessed in both public and private sectors in Nigeria.

Based on the foregoing, it is clear why the issues of leadership, corruption and governance will for long remain an issue of discourse in developing countries of the world, perhaps Nigeria inclusive. Here lie the imperatives of transformational leadership. Transformational leaders are reputed for their strong value and moral ideals; they are patriotic and ready to serve and not to be served among others. Such leaders are concerned about liberty, justice and equality. They bring about social change in all aspects of the societal life.

The Way Forward

The following recommendations are some of the probable solutions to the scourge of corruption and bad leadership:

The various anti-corruption and related bodies such as EFCC, ICPC, Code of Conduct Bureau, Public Complaints Commission, change begins with me/whistle blower policy and the police should be repositioned and overhauled in structure and resources to be truly anti-corruption agencies that fight the malaise to the satisfaction of all and sundry. The current arrangement whereby EFCC is loaded with three functions of investigation, prosecution and recovery of looted assets, calls for a review. The EFCC and ICPC should be merged and their functions merged too and it should be granted full autonomy.

Anti-corruption and transparent monitoring units should be established in all public institutions, empowered and made functional in such a way as to detect and report corrupt officials for prosecution.

The constitution should be amended to expunge the issue of immunity for all elected government officials. Stiffer punishments to the tune of death or life imprisonment as practiced in China, Malaysia and some other countries, should be meted out to offenders. This will serve as deterrent to others.

Cancellation of election results obtained based on rigging and fraudulent acts; disqualification of public officers implicated in election and allied mal-practices. Prosecution of erring individuals and confiscation of properties of public officials found to be involved in wrongful corrupt acts among others.

Corruption is a social problem; thus, citizens must be properly educated on the negative impacts and the need to eradicate corruption in all facets of public life, 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.

The government must introduce an equitable wages and incentive system and improve other conditions of work so that the level of poverty could be reduced and the quality of life improved. This will inexorably reduce civil servants' vulnerability and susceptibility to corruption. This must be in consonant with prompt payment of the workers monthly wages and salaries, though it should not be an excuse.

Lastly, the federal character principle should be applied with less rigidity, but with fairness among ethnic groups, to avoid creating divisions. The appointment of persons to various positions should be made from the best available in any ethnic group or section in the country.

Above all, the country needs transformational leaders, a re-oriented public service, a vibrant judiciary and an organized and vibrant civil society. Transformational leaders have great potentials to promote performance beyond expectations and to effect enormous changes within any organization or nation. This

no doubt appears to be a form of leadership well suited to these current times characterized by uncertainty, global turbulence and socio-economic instability. Its suitability is based on fundamentalism of the much desired good governance at this moment of nation building hinged on such kind of leadership.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this study has been a critical examination of corruption, leadership and governance in Nigeria. In addition, the study adopted a theoretical framework for a better understanding of the concepts. Thus the issue of corruption, leadership and good governance were also examined and the effects of corruption and leadership on governance viz a viz development. Leadership of the poor circumstance and corruption have been an endemic disease, which affects the growth and survival of any sovereign state. Therefore, good leadership maybe attainable with the transformational leadership that is founded on encouragement, inspiration and motivation to innovate and create change that will help grow and shape the future success of any nation (Nigeria inclusive).

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