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Edited By:
Professor Kamal Bello

Introduction:

One of the major factors that have hindered development in Nigeria is corruption. Its implications on the Nigerian economy has become so devastating that it becomes a topical issue almost on daily basis among intellectual pundit, businessmen, patriots, students among others. However, before delving into the nitty gritty of corruption, there is the need to examine the meaning of corruption. The idea is to enable us know the objective of this chapter and possibly to know its causes and proffer solutions borne out of altruistic motives on the way out of it. What then is corruption? Many scholars have conceptualized corruption from different perspectives. For instance, Dike (2001) sees corruption as a perversion or a change from good to bad". Corruption can also be defined as the perversion of public office for private advantage (Akpotor, 1998: 145). We can go ahead without stop to give scholarly definition and interpretation of corruption. One thing is sure. Corruption is aimed at seeking favour in an attempt to part with something either in cash or kind. In other words, corruption when a seeker of a particular favour bribes the giver in order to get that favour.

The favour could be job or money. A job seeker could go to either buy an item or give an envelope that could lure the giver to compromise. Bafort (1993) and Ekeh (1998) corroborated this fact when they opined that this kind of wealth is used to feed social support networks to take care of the needs of close relations and interest groups no matter how bizarre. Thomson (1994) regarded the phenomenon as an act of embezzlement, diversion, expropriation and use of public funds for selfish interest other than the purpose for which they were allocated. Similarly, Bray (1999), asserts that corruption is the abuse of public position for private or sectional gain. For Odekunle (1986), corruption is behaviour. So, the problem of corruption has been a threat to national development. Ukah (2010) noted that instead of using such income for developmental purpose, it is circulated among the political office holders and their families, leaving the interest of the people to wallow in poverty.

There is hardly any administration in Nigeria from independence in 1960 till date that does not have the problem of corruption. As a matter of fact, it was one of the reasons why the military took over power from the civilian on the January, 1966. According to Ademoyega (1981) in "why we struck", "Corruption was rife and nepotism was the order of the day. The safety values of the nation were reposed in such institutions as the courts, the census commission, the electoral commission, the police and finally the Armed forces. But the sanctity of those institutions was being politically assailed, assaulted and dragged into the mud so that they were fast losing their credibility". So, it becomes crystal clear to acknowledge that the problem of corruption hindering the growth and development of the country did not start today. It has been a mind boggling issue that has consistently destroyed the psyche of the people of this country. The level of corruption and other related crimes in Nigeria attracts between 4million and 8million loss on daily basis and a loss of about \$70.58 million to the national economy annually (Ogbonnaya, Omoju and Udefum, 2012). It is estimated that by 1999 past Nigeria leaders embezzled or misused \$407 or 225billion pounds (Ike, 2010, cited in Ugiagbe and Eweka, 2015). The looting of funds and squandered by the various rulers alone and laundered in various western banks over the past decades stood at US\$400 million (Ribadu, 2005, cited in Anegbode and Alonge, 2004).

This chapter therefore aims at interrogating the causes of this social malady and explore why genuine and concerted effort has not been made to put the problem to rest. These are possible seeming efforts that the chapter hopes to examine in order to proffer solutions borne of altruistic motive that will help deal with the problem of corruption.

Causes of Corruption in Nigeria

The destructive tendencies of corruption in our national policy have exposed it to many causes. Below are some of its causes in Nigeria:

Poverty: Poverty is one of the endemic causes of corruption in Nigeria. The failure of the elite vis-a-viz the political class has terribly affected the living condition of the masses. This is because the condition of the average Nigeria has been dehumanized. A good number of them can hardly reason well because of the unhealthy condition they have been exposed to. More often than not the greed of the political class in connivance with the elite has done more harm than good to the society. Hence out of the corrupting influence for fear of primitive reprisals or simply out of malicious acquiescence those under them hardly report them (Odekunle, 2002). Akpotor (1998) lamented that corruption and its form of destruction in Nigeria have been an elite affair.

Political Instability: Political instability is another cause of poverty in Nigeria. Crisis of different magnitude has exposed some of the citizens of the country to same terrible agony of misplaced confidence. The unending political quagmire that is usually borne out of ethnic and relative disagreements has brought untold hardship on the people. This is because such crisis prevents people from going out to work, go about their businesses, farm and other means of livelihood. The reason is that they are afraid of being attacked or killed. When such terrible mishap confronts you on daily basis, the end result is poverty and hunger. Consequently, poverty and hunger could lead to frustration that might be triggered by political instability of different magnitude. Thus, according to Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, (1990) frustration leads to aggressive behaviour which in most cases results in conflict. Barker, Dembo and Lewin (1941) supported this when they said that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration.

Ethnic Politics: This is another terrible and provoking cause of corruption in Nigeria. As a matter of fact, it is the most terrible and dangerous of all existing ones. It has consistently fanned the embers of disunity and disagreements amongst all whom by national and geographical factors should live as one. Ethnic politics in Nigeria has resulted in corruption as people are being seen giving bribes even against their own ethnic brothers and sisters during elections. The implication of this is that it causes disaffection and disharmony among all. In the words of Mordi (2005), political parties use structure of ethnic unions as obvious channels of communication to urban voters as well as recruitment of membership for political parties. Most times manifestoes are regionally designed at the altar of ethnicism. Waiterstein (2000) cited in Osinubi and Osinubi (2006) maintained that ethnic consciousness and conflict occur when groups feel threatened with loss of previously acquired privileges or conversely feel that it is an opportune moment politically to overcome a longstanding denial of privilege.

Unemployment: The problem of unemployment is anchored on corrupt practices by some of our leaders. Consequently, it has led to youth restiveness, dishonesty and desperation to do all manners of things to survive. Youths are now restlessly and unguardedly involved in rapacious means to earn a living. Some of the video clips in the social media are evidences of the misdemeanor act by some of these youths. Some feed on human excreta, while others are involved in ritualistic ventures to earn a living.

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The desperation is borne out of the fact that having bribed to get jobs and it did not work, there is the available
backward means to earn a living either through "Yahooism" or kidnapping. According to Egbuna (2001) and
Nwagwu (2003), the negative consequences of youth unemployment include poverty, psychological problems
frustration, depression, hostility, abduction, murder, armed robbery,

and all manners of criminal behaviours causing general insecurity of life and property. Similarly, Depo
Odeokun, the chairman of the House committee on Youth and Social Development revealed that of the over
40 million unemployed youths in the country, 23 million are unemployable and therefore susceptible to crime
(Emen, 2012). The point to note here is that with the increase in unemployment corruption will equally go
unchecked. This is because a man without job is recklessly exposed to the challenges and problems of society.
Quite frankly society will be faced with serious problem given the unending challenge of unemployment or
poverty. Youth unemployment has serious security implications since desperation often leads young
people to fall prey to warlords, criminal gangs or illegal migration syndicates (Anegbode and Alorge, 2015).

Terrorism: In recent times, this has become the most disturbing and worried crime. People can hardly go about
their legitimate businesses without the intervention of these blood-thirsting groups of people. Different
interpretations have been given to the emergence of this group. Some have said its emergence is born out of
protest against unjust and exploitative system while others have argued that it is religion based: a group of
Muslim fundamentalist fighting for the protection of Islam. The basis though of the latter's argument is that
"education is a scam" wherever direction any free thinker would want to look at it there is no smoke without fire.
The overwhelming interpretation is that poor governance has given rise to the emergence of this deadly group.
When money and resources meant for the development of a society is cornered by a privilege few, the end
result is catastrophic. Akinoya (2009) noted that leaders mismanage the economy and this result in the
continuing manifestation of a dog-eat-dog ethos which has become a common feature of the society. In Nigeria,
most of the problems facing the economy are a reflection of the poor quality of human development and
management because education which plays a critical role in human development and economic health of the
nation has been neglected for decades (Krueger and Lindhal, 2001; Dike, 2002).

Similar to the above mention fact is the position of Albert (2005) cited in Fagbado (2007) who described the
opprobrious and fearful activities of the insurgents as a threat to national security and as a diversionary tactics to
steal the public sympathy on government, whereas corruption is going on unnoticed. In his words "The bomb
attacks also became a veritable vehicle by which the government diverted the attention of the people from
substantive issues in politics. Each blast reported and discussed in the NTA and Radio Nigeria news for several
weeks ... all these were aimed at attracting sympathy for the government and ... through this kind of
diversionary tactics Nigerians were led to forget about the fundamental issues in their nation's development
while 'sympathizing' with the head of state "whose genuine efforts towards lasting democracy" were being
derailed by "subversive elements".

Issue of the Reward System: Many people in the country are disillusioned about the way and manner that the
national cake is shared. For those who are privileged to occupy the corridor of power do not care about others
who, perhaps, are comparatively more qualified. The reckless acquisition of wealth and property by this class of
people leaves much to be desired. More often than not it is this reckless acquisition of this wealth by the few that
gives "birth" to this unbridled and fight-for-all pursuit of wealth in Nigeria where caution is thrown to the wind and
anything goes. Despite the abundant resources endowment, past and present leaders have been incapable of
ensuring basic security, maintaining rule of law and justice, or providing basic services and economic
opportunities for the people (Harde, 1990).

This may not be unconnected to getting into power by some hook or crook means. A good number of them do not even know what to do with the power they have violently seized courtesy of our poor electoral system. More appalling is the fact that a university professor is poorly rated whereas an ordinary school dropout who is a councilor earns an outrageous amount for no job done. Just being a representative. This is very absurd and unacceptable.

Religious Interference: Another cause of corruption is religion. Religion that ordinarily should reflect an approach to seek God's intervention in one's life and over issues (spiritual) that affects one's life has rather become a weapon of destruction and dehumanization. It has in recent time become a major source of conflict between Christians and Muslims. It has become a tactics in political warfare given the role in period of elections. According to Abubkar (1988), it is clear to even the casual observer of the Nigeria political arena that religion is rapidly overtaking ethnicity and regionalism as a major factor in the struggle for control of political power in the nation. He further acknowledged that:

Real issues are being observed by the jihadist and evangelical zeal, by mob mentality that is creeping into politics in the name of religion. Also obscured is the opportunism of a growing number of unscrupulous individuals and interest groups who are gleefully exploiting religious sentiments for selfish gain (Abubaka, (1988).

Crisis of unending magnitude has polarized the Nigerian state as a result of its corrupt tendencies. True religion is completely absent in our national polity in which ever perspective you want to assess it. Be it from the Christian and Muslim. Relationship between them is strongly anchored on corruption when positions are contested for. Human beings are slaughtered like cows when superiority between the two religions arises. There is strong betrayal among all once it involves money and status. The bond that apparently seems to keep us is very temporary and ephemeral. Bearing his mind on the recklessness and emptiness of religionist in Nigerian, Adah (2002) mentioned that:

Religion is the intoxicant that generates storm in a tea cup. It is what can turn meek, harmless individuals into a howling and frenzied mob. This emotional upheaval is more prominent in the less educated society. The poor and illiterate are veritable tools in the hands of the rich and too powerful who use them to achieve fame and cheap popularity. By guarding the emotionally charged adherents to blood-curdling religious violence, the influential are regarded as patriots or devotees.

Corroborating the above, Obi (2017) pointed out that "Religion itself is not bad per se but the use to which it is being put by buccaneers, preachers and Mallams, portrays the worst kind of tomfoolery which is not unacceptable, but very criminal. The rich and powerful as Adah (2002) noted above are indeed the real culprits of the various religious tensions in this country.

Greed: Greed has been identified as another cause of corruption in our national polity. The unhealthy state of the nation today that has been characterized by thuggery, kidnaping, "yahooism" and other social vices is caused by greed. Greed from the perpetrators; greed more especially from the elites and the political class that have been charged with the responsibility of governance. No one cares about the other. It is either the elite/political class or their immediate family. No society grows with such degree of selfishness. Apart from the fact that greed is natural, the elite/politicians poor governance is a compelling factor that has given it a boost. The implication of this action is the lack of trust and dishonesty it has created amongst us. The love for one another has dwindled tremendously.

greed that will make a fellow human being see his fellow human as a victim of ritual. It is greed that will make a man who has been entrusted the power to lead to govern with selfishness, with little or no regard for the led. It is this leadership failure that made Achebe (1983: 13) to assert that the Nigerian state "has been less than fortunate in its leadership".

Implications of Corruption on the Nigerian Economy

Corruption has numerous negative implications on the Nigerian economy. As a matter of fact, it is these implications that have retarded the growth and development of the country. It is against this background that the following implications will be examined in the light of this topic:

Effects on National Development:

When those who are charged with leadership responsibility are carelessly and without conscience begin to steal or embezzle what should be meant for the development of the national economy, it becomes very unfortunate. More often than not, the category of people we have at the helms of affair in recent times is such that will keep making the national economy to wobble to find itself in economic quagmire such as we are currently experiencing.

Accountability Suffers:

Accountability is one of the features of good governance. Unfortunately, the Nigerian situation does not give regard to this wonderful tenet of good governance. In most cases, it is seen as abnormal when a leader is seen giving the account of his stewardship to his subjects. In developed countries of the world, good leaders account for the period of time they have been in office in a neat and well documented paper. Here, citizens are victimized when they dare to ask to know how their money is being spent. The recent outburst of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) where the Acting Managing Director, Professor Pondei was seen collapsing over questions bothered on corruption allegation by the National Assembly is one of the many glaring examples of corruption. Wikipedia (2014) explains accountability as the obligation of an individual or organization to account for its activities, accepts responsibility for them, and to disclose the result in a transparent manner. In recent months the brazenly corrupt went scot free and were extorted for their virtue whilst those who attempted to expose them were ruthlessly suppressed and punished" (Awolowo, 1981).

Corruption Discourages Investment

The Nigerian society has been experiencing some level of retrogression arising from mismanagement of the national resources by those entrusted with the leadership of the country. Those charged with the official responsibility to award contracts have turned the office to family affair. This is because most beneficiaries are members of their families. There have been several cases of such abuse, both by past and present leaders. The former secretary of the federation, Mr. Babachir David Lawal before the appointment of Boss Gidahyelda Mustafa by President Buhari was sacked as a result of such reckless abuse of office, where he was equally a major beneficiary of contracts awarded. As a matter of fact, the alleged accusation was that he owned a particular company which he was awarding contracts to himself even as the Secretary of the federation.

Corruption Kills Personal Initiative

Quite unlike the private sector that is driven by the motive to come up with rational ideas to position the organization on a sound economic pedestal. The reverse is the case in the public sector because a good number of the officials are committed to enriching themselves from the largesse of the office than to think on how well the economy can be sustained. Consequently, many machines, vehicles and other means of labour are abandoned in the ministries because of the absence of personal initiative and greed to pursue personal wealth at the expense of the organization.

Little wonder Okowa (1985) feels that corruption in Nigeria is systemic. According to him, "systemic corruption is "a situation which corruption has been institutionalized and raised to the level of a structural parameter. It has become part of the culture of the society". Akpakpan (1994; 130) noted that the problem of corruption is that "the stealing of public funds in whatever means had the effect of intensifying the society socio-economic problems".

Consequences of Corruption on Nigerian Economy

Corruption has some terrible consequences on the Nigerian economy. Below are some of them.

Underdevelopment of the Economy

The bad result of corruption in an economy like ours that is still developing is that its ugly and unending character brings about underemployment. Money and resources meant for the upliftment of the society goes into the hands of very few who are privileged to occupy offices, not necessarily because they are qualified but end up siphoning such resources/money to the detriment of the generality of the public. According to Obasanjo (1999), for those who think our fight against corruption is utopian, let me remind them that we have no choice in this matter". He went further to say that "corruption is not only illegal; it is bad because it corrupts the very soul of our community. It makes nonsense of all planning and budgeting, and it wastefully depletes our inadequate resources. It breeds cynicism and promotes inequality. It almost renders it impossible for this administration to address the objectives of equality and justice in our society with any seriousness. And finally, it destroys the social fabrics of our society, leaving each individual on his own; to do whatever is best for him/herself. He described corruption further "as a full blown cancer and one of the greatest tragedies of military rule..., it was allowed to grow unchallenged and unchecked during the military regime, it grew on a geometrical dimension. The corruption increased because "in recent months the brazenly corrupt went scot-free and were extorted for their virtue whilst those who attempted to expose them were ruthlessly suppressed and punished", (Awolowo, 1981).

Drives Away Foreign Investors: Corruption drives away foreign investors. No rational businessman will want to invest his hard earned resources in a society or country such as ours, for fear of being duped. The level of corruption in Nigeria has become so pervasive for Nigerians to be mindful of themselves, not to talk of foreigners. No doubt, the attitude of some of us leaves much to be desired in virtually all ramifications of human endeavours. Anyim and Akanwa (2002) see how corruption affects the public service. They further argued that "widespread corruption among Nigerians public servants is due among other things to economic crisis, due process, which is better described in terms of bureaucracy, value system, sociological, civil consciousness and proper reward system for those in service and even after the service years".

Loss of Image Globally: The corrupt attitude of Nigeria has given the country negative image across the world. This is because there is hardly anything we do without some traits of dishonesty and fraudulent act. The establishment of anti-corruption agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) were made to combat corrupt practices have reared its ugly head in several ingenious, notorious ways and forms in Nigeria (Osakwe, 2009) cited in Arubayi (2015). The situation is as bad as painted above. It is even getting worse on daily basis given the poor and reckless behaviour of the so called leaders towards governance. Recently, the 60 years of independence was celebrated. And I asked; what is there to celebrate? Poor infrastructure (bad roads, nonfunctional hospital), insecurity of lives and properties, hunger, inflation amongst many that has made life so miserable.

Social Crime (Yahooism): Corruption has resulted in social crimes such as "yahooism", kidnapping, ritualism among others. These social crimes, before now were not in our culture. It is the desperation for wealth arising from the corrupt practices learnt from foreign countries coupled with its practice on video clips that has exposed our society to this terrible agony of misplaced confidence.

Conclusion

It has become imperative to say that unless more stringent and daring approach is adopted to deal with the perpetrators of this demonic and destructive act of corruption, the Nigerian society will be faced with more serious problem of underdevelopment. This is because, apart from the very few that have been found culpable and punished; a good number of Nigerians (both in public and private establishments) are still recklessly involved in this terrible act. According to Olugbenla (2007), cited in Akinterinwa (2015), "corruption has always been an obstacle to the effective realization of good governance and development". More painful is the fact that our image globally is being destroyed. It is as if it has become the norm in almost all sectors. The general impression people feel about us is that you must have your "share" whenever you have cause to be in power. As a matter of fact, you are a fool when you are in a position to steal and you fail to do that. No society grows with this type of mindset. A society such as ours with this uncontrollable appetite for stealing without stringent and enforceable laws against such perpetrators is gradually on its way to economic and political doom. Therefore, we must be made to deal with anyone found wanting irrespective of one's position. This is the global practice. When anyone is found wanting of any crime in the developed countries of the world the due process of the law is strictly followed without sentiment attached to it. The advantage in it is that it teaches moral lesson and prevent would be actors to desist from such unpleasant and disgraceful act.

Recommendations

There is the need to adopt the following recommendations in order to stop the spate of corruption in Nigeria.

1. Stringent laws must be adopted and strictly followed against people who have been found wanting. Sentiment must be put aside in this regard.
2. Government should as a matter of necessity and urgency give attention to the youths by creating jobs for them. This is because a hungry man can go any length to get food on his table, without being morality guided.
3. Government must de-emphasize foreign videos films. It has destructive effects on our culture. Many of these social crimes are foreign influenced.
4. Nigerians must learn to think out of the "box". Although it is the responsibility of government to provide for the welfare of the citizens, unfortunately, government cannot do everything. Therefore, Nigerians should think of doing something on their own. This will push their minds from stealing and other social vices.
5. Nigerians should cultivate the habit of studying the religious books from time to time. It has a way of moulding an individual spiritually. It inculcates the fear of God. It makes one to know how pitiable one may be if caught committing crime. This is because it will expose one to people who would have been punished spiritually and lawfully in the time past for a similar behaviour.

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