

Corruption As Enemy Of Peace In The Society: Impacts On Socio-Political And Economic Development Of Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper examines corruption as enemy of peace in the society which has become undesirable omen to socio-political and economic development in Africa especially Nigeria. Regrettably, efforts at ensuring peace and harmony which are the hallmarks of societal development have been impaired by the ravaging storm of corruption. The more the mechanism put in place to abate the consequential effects of corruption, the higher the perpetration of the syndrome in the society. Indeed, it appears as if every Nigerian is imbued with the culture of corruption. As a corollary, corruption is nothing but a rape on good governance and societal development. It is noteworthy that once any process is corrupted, the resultant effect would be non-performance and retrogression characterized with underdevelopment. Hence, attaining peace and harmony becomes utopia in the real sense of it. Thus, it is not uncommon for masses to start scouting for the avenue to engage in corruption since it has become the order of the day as far as our society is concerned. The work relies on both primary and secondary sources of data collection. The data sources are complemented with the administration of questionnaires and oral interview with relevant stakeholders and members of the public to elicit more information about the consequential impact of corruption. The study raises fundamental question about the place of corruption in politics and socio-economic development of Nigeria with a view to providing lasting solutions to it.

Keywords: Corruption, Electoral Fraud, Under-development and Bad Governance.

Introduction

The culture of corruption is a culture that affects every sphere of life ranging from politics, economy, sociology to religion and of course democracy has suffered heavily from corruption to the extent that the electorates are now engaged in the discourse of vote-buying and selling, bribing the electoral umpire to work in the favor of certain political aspirants which now becomes recurring decimal in the world politics especially in Nigeria. It is regrettable to note that indicators of good governance such as, service delivery, transparency, accountability, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness, popular participation have always been slugged consequent upon the culture of corruption. (Adigun, Larry and Ebere2004). As a corollary, corruption is nothing but a heavy slap and a rape on democratic institutions and governance. As such, societal development is impaired due to corrupt tendency of the individuals (The Punch,2018). In view of the above, corruption therefore becomes a virus that has infected nearly all sundry which has posed self as an enemy of peace in the society. It has many different shapes as well as many various effects, both on the economy and the society at large (The Punch,2019). In order to foster peace and development, urgent attention is required to bring the menaces of corruption under perfect control. This can only be attained if all hands are the same desk. However, the issue of corruption is as old as the country itself(Transparency

International,2013).It appears as if corruption and its antics have become inseparable due to the societal perspective and the culture we are accustomed to. The concept of corruption has therefore become debatable issue worthy of discourse in academic world. The impression is to expect that nothing goes for nothing as everybody is imbued with culture of corruption all over. In government circle, before contract is awarded, a lot of kickback arrangements would have been perfected. Likewise in non-government circle corruption has deep tap-rooted strength for instance, during the last general elections in the country, the electorates were corrupted to the level of seeing and buying of vote. It becomes a perturbing bane in that how can somebody be paid for exercising his/her civic and constitutional rights? (Babatola, 2018).This paper examines the impacts of corruption on socio-political and economic development of Nigeria as it offers workable solutions that will end menace. In spite of the prevalent and pervasive criticisms leveled against corruption, my study aims at providing answers to the following questions: What is corruption? How has corruption become an enemy of peace in the society impacts ? What are the of corruption on socio-political and economic development of Nigeria .

Conceptual and Theoretical Discourse

Theory adopted for this study Systems theory which is the interdisciplinary study of systems. A system is a cohesive

conglomeration of interrelated and interdependent parts that is either natural or man-made (The Punch, 2019) Every system is delineated by its spatial and temporal boundaries, surrounded and influenced by its environment, described by its structure and purpose or nature and expressed in its functioning. In terms of its effects, a system can be more than the sum of its parts if it expresses synergy or emergent behavior. Changing in one part of the system usually affects other parts and the whole system, with predictable patterns of behavior. For systems that are self-learning and self-adapting, the positive growth and adaptation depend upon how well the system is adjusted with its environment. Some systems function mainly to support other systems by aiding in the maintenance of the other system to prevent failure. The goal of systems theory is systematically discovering a system's dynamics, constraints, conditions and elucidating principles (purpose, measure, methods, tools, etc.) that can be discerned and applied to systems at every level of nesting, and in every field for achieving optimized goal. General systems theory is about broadly applicable concepts and principles, as opposed to concepts and principles applicable to one domain of knowledge. It distinguishes dynamic or active systems from static or passive systems. Active systems are activity structures or components that interact in behaviours and processes. Passive systems are structures and components that are being processed. Applying this theory to the study, since a system can be more than the sum of its parts if it expresses synergy or emergent behavior therefore whatever affects its parts invariably affects its whole. In furtherance, as earlier argued in this study that changing in one part of the system usually affects other parts and the whole system, with predictable patterns of behavior so also is the menace of corruption produces poor/bad governance which in turn has telling consequences on all the aspects of society.

Corruption in Perspective

The issue of corruption is a veritable one in our contemporary society (nowadays). The study of this nature is justified to the extent that it will enhance deep knowledge on its impact to human, societal development and citizens' awareness about the menace of corruption in Nigeria. Apart from this, the study will be beneficial to scholars and researchers in areas of Peace and Strategic Studies, good governance, democratic studies, human and societal development as it will enhance their understanding and broaden their knowledge on the evils of corruption which is normally characterized with bad governance and lack of integrity. Policy makers, scholars, and the citizens will find the work useful as it will provide impetus and new insights towards corruption in our society.

Contending Issues of Corruption In Nigerian Society and Development

Corruption is a biggest challenge to our society. It is apparent that the level of corruption in the society is high. It is found in every segment of the society. There is the possibility of observing corrupt practices in virtually all organizations of Nigeria if critically examined whether small or big. Socio-political and economic development tend to suffer in the hand of corruption; this because

corruption is a very dangerous virus spreading fast due to the masses' perception on it. This section therefore examines the issues revolving corruption and how contentious those issues are. It is interesting to note that Corruption affects us all. It threatens sustainable economic development, ethical values and justice; it destabilizes our society and endangers the rule of law. It undermines the institutions and values of our democracy. <https://www.mindcontroversy.com/impact-effects-corruption-public-life/>

The impact of corruption is too unbearable on the masses. This is because various types of corruption exist, it is hardly easy to escape the corruption effects. However, it appears as if corruption is ever rising and unstoppable. Further, the people involved in corruption seem to be hiding by blaming others. Even they are proud of themselves as they made more money in a short time. <https://www.mindcontroversy.com/impact-effects-corruption-public-life/> Another contending issues of societal development with respect to corruption is that there is no quality of service. Indeed, to demand quality one might need to pay for it. This is evident in many areas of life such as water corporation, NEPA, distribution of relief funds from LEMA, SEMA and FEMA, for those that are victims of either natural disasters or man made. Hospitals- be it state or federal If a person has to buy certificate in courses like medicine, due to corruption in education then the candidate after completion of his course will not like to provide quality health service if there is not enough remuneration for his service. Further candidates who do not have the ability can also get into the same seat by purchasing it. So though he becomes a medical practitioner, he may not be competent enough. Transparency International and other notable organizations that usually monitor corrupt practices around the world have submitted that Nigeria which carries the mark of the most populated country in Africa, yet is ranked high in corruption. High corruption rankings affect almost all Nigerians who migrate to foreign countries, as foreigners have the perception that since Nigeria is corrupt, so are all Nigerians. To further explicate the submission of these notable organizations using their assessment about Nigeria, the following are the outcomes. In the year 2000, Transparency International carried out a survey on the corruption levels of 90 countries, including Kenya, Cameroon, Angola, Nigeria, Côte-d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Ghana, Senegal, Zambia, India, Venezuela, Moldova, and others. At the end of the ranking, Nigeria was seen as the most corrupt in that ranking because the country occupied the 90th position in terms of transparency. Nigeria was the most corrupt country in the year 2000. In 2001, Nigeria was ranked the second-most corrupt nation in the world out of 91 countries, falling only to Bangladesh. This shows that corruption in Nigeria improved by one step when compared with that of 2000. (Prisión, 2016). Similarly, in the year 2002, Nigeria was again ranked the second-most corrupt country in the world, consequent upon the survey of 102 countries by Transparency International (TI) and Nigeria was at the 101st position in terms of Confidence Interval (CI). In 2003, Nigeria maintained the same position by making no improvements from 2002. However, 2004's ranking showed a little improvement when compared to the past four years

(Transparency International,2013) Nigeria was ranked the third most corrupt country in the world in that year, performing better than Bangladesh and Haiti. That year, 146 nations were surveyed.(Transparency International,2013) The record on the corruption showed Nigeria really improved in 2005. The number of countries surveyed by the Transparency International was 158. Nigeria was ranked eighth most corrupt country(Prisión 2016).More countries were surveyed by Transparency International in 2006. 163 countries were surveyed that year. The results showed some improvement, and Nigeria was ranked the 21st most corrupt country in the world. Haiti was the world's most corrupt nation that year. Among the 180 countries surveyed in 2007, Nigeria ranked 147 on the table along side with Angola and Guinea-Bissau. This result shows that Nigeria was 33rd most corrupt country in the world. An analysis of the anti-graft/anti-corruption laws in Nigeria shows that corruption will continue in spite of the law because the perpetrators do not fear any consequences (Oyinola 2011).The following are the analysis: In 2012, Transparency International again deemed Nigeria one of the most corrupt nations in the world again (Uzochukwu 2013). In that year, the country ranked 139th out of the 176 surveyed countries, making Nigeria the 37th most corrupt nation.(Transparency International,2013) In 2013, Nigeria ranked 144 out of 177 surveyed countries in terms of transparency. The score made Nigeria 33rd most corrupt country in the world that year. The result published by the organization also showed that Nigeria scored 25% out of 100 in terms of transparency.(Prisión 2016).In the 2014 ranking, Nigeria is ranked 136 out 174 surveyed countries (Transparency International 2014). The result shows that there is an improvement, though things are still bad. Nigeria was the 38th most corrupt country in the world in 2014 (BBC News, 21 November 2017) With the emergence of a new government in the year 2015, many Nigerians were having great faith that corruption in the country will be minimized. In that year, power left the hands of People's Democratic Party (PDP) to All Progressive Congress (APC). One of the campaign promises made by the present President Muhammadu Buhari was the massive eradication of corruption in the country. Irrespective of the campaign promises, Nigeria ranked low in transparency and high in corruption in that year. In the year 2015, out of the 168 countries surveyed, Nigeria was seen at the bottom of the table in the category of number 136. This implies that Nigeria was the 32nd most corrupt country in the world in 2015. Over two-thirds of the 176 countries and territories surveyed in the 2016 year index fall below the midpoint of Transparency International scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). In that year's survey, Nigeria sat at number 136 on the table with Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Myanmar, and Papua New Guinea. From calculation, it shows that Nigeria and the mentioned countries were ranked 40th most corrupt in 2016. In the year 2017, there was no remarkable improvement in transparency in the country. Irrespective of the promise made by the current president to fight corruption, it appears that the former President Goodluck Jonathan did quit better than him when compared with his result of 2014 before he left the presidential seat. It is very disappointing that in the latest Corruption Perception Index released by Transparency

International today, Nigeria has relapsed deeper into corruption and has moved 12 steps backwards from 136 to 148 (Vanguard news 2018) in respect to 2014 result. Corruption in Nigeria wears many kinds of unattractive and dirty clothes. The situation has made so many people feel a lot of pains as the money which would have been used to reduce poverty in the country are being channeled into the pockets of a small group of persons. What can we say about the \$2.1 billion arms deal? The money which was budgeted for the purchase of arms in the fight against BokoHaram insurgency group in the country all of a sudden disappeared. Whether the fund developed legs and ran away is what the Federal Government of Nigeria could not explain to the citizenry. The stain of corruption did not spare anti-graft agencies as former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Ibrahim Lamorde, was accused of fraudulently diverting over N1tn proceeds from corruption recovered by the agency (Adeyemi 2016). This is incredible as those who were appointed to fight corruption in the country are also found as the victim of the same problem they fight. That is to say, that trust is difficult in the country. Corruption is not only experienced among the Presidents of the country because many governors have been found guilty of it. It is like a disease that spreads from mother to children. The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Nyako, the former governor of Adamawa and seven others, including companies, are standing trial before Justice OkonAbang on a 37-count charge bordering on money laundering. The news was published on December 1, 2016 (Pulse 2016). The governor opened 30 different accounts in Zenith bank of Nigeria using different names whose aim is to siphon funds. Among the offenses tendered against the ex-governor are a criminal conspiracy, abuse of office, an opening of multiple bank accounts and stealing to the tune of N29 billion (twenty-nine billion naira). The former president of the country, OlusegunObasanjo, on November 24, 2016, while speaking at the first Akintola Williams Annual Lecture in Lagos, reacted negatively on the level of corruption going on among the members of the House of Assembly and House of Representatives. Quoting from the writings of Jola Sotubo "Former President, Olusegun Obasanjo has described the National Assembly as a den of corruption ". thus: "Members of the National Assembly pay themselves allowances for staff and offices they do not have or maintain. Once you are a member, you are co-opted and your mouth is stuffed with rot and corruption that you cannot opt out as you go home with not less than N15 million a month for a senator and N10 million a month for a member of the House of Representatives"(Jola 2016).

CORRUPTION AS ENEMY OF PEACE IN THE SOCIETY:

LESSON FOR ONCOMING GENERATIONS.

The lessons to be learnt are discussed as followed: Disregard for officials: People start disregarding the official involved in corruption by talking negatively about him. But when they have work with him or her, they again approach them by a thought that the work is done if some monetary benefits are provided. Disregard towards officials will also build distrust. Even lower grade officer will be disrespectful to higher grade officer. So even he

may not obey his orders. There were even incidents where a lower grade police officer kidnapped higher grade officer for not offering him leave when asked. Lack of respect for rulers: Rulers of the nation like the president or prime ministers lose respect among the public. Respect is the main criteria in social life. People go for voting during the election not only with the desire to improve their living standards by the election winner but also with respect for the leader. If the politicians are involved in corruption, people knowing this will lose respect for them and will not like to cast their vote for such politicians. Lack of faith and trust in the governments: People vote to a ruler based on their faith in him/ her. But if found to be involved in corruption people lose faith in them and may not vote next time. Aversion for joining the posts linked to corruption: Sincere, honest and hardworking people develop an aversion for the post though they like to as they believe that they also need to be involved in corruption if they get into the post.

Effects of corruption on Economy

A decrease in foreign investment: There are many incidents wherein foreign investments which were willing to come to developing countries have gone back owing to heavy corruption in the government bodies. Delay in growth: Due to a desire to mint money and other unlawful benefits, the official who needs to pass the clearances for projects or industries delay the process. A work which can be done in a few days may be done in a month's time. This leads to delay in investments, starting of industries and also growth. Even if started, company growth hinders as every work linked to officials get delayed due to need to provide bribes or other benefits. Lack of development: Many new industries willing to get started in particular region change their plans if the region is unsuitable. If there are no proper roads, water, and electricity, the companies do not wish to start up there. This hinders the economic progress of that region.

Concluding Remarks

The truth of the matter is that the discourse on corruption has been an on-going issue that apt panaceas have not been actually provided while the advanced Economies which are expected to partner with the developing ones have been sharked in their responsibilities. Rather, Some countries have inefficient standard control institutes. Hence one can imagine countries manufacturing cheap products and dump them in big markets. These countries can manufacture cheap quality products but cannot dump products in countries where strict standard control institutes exists. They can do so only in countries with chances of corrupt officials in standard control. One best example are products which cannot be just dumped into Europe and US markets are dumped into other countries' markets with poor import regulations and quality checks. So there arises trade deficit that these countries cannot manufacture their own products at a cheaper price than those exporting to them. So if corruption is minimized then these countries will have fewer trade deficits in-terms of exports and imports with other countries and their economies can prosper. Given all these conditions therefore, finding solutions to corruption still remains abstract in the real sense of it.

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- [11] To: noahsarkplc@yahoo.com Bcc: indiantonny@yahoo.com Dear Sir/Ma,
- [12] On behalf of the Director, Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ilorin, Prof. Noah Yusuf, I hereby look forward to receiving you in Ilorin for the 6th International Biennial conference holding between Sunday, 24 - Wednesday, 27 November 2019 at the University of Ilorin. Wishing you journey mercies.

[13]NOTE: Kindly be informed that participants interested in hotel reservations at a discounted rate should contact Mr. Abdullateef Dasola Hussian 08032249449 hussain.ad@unilorin.edu.ng

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