

The Dialectics of Corruption, Governance and Sustainable Economic Development: The Case of Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study focuses on the conflicts and tensions associated with governance, corruption and sustainable economic development in a resources abundant economy, Nigeria. The expository study has shown that corruption in Nigeria gradually rise to the level it is due to the peoples' ugly and egocentric perception about governance, which gave rise to leaders and public office holders usurping entrusted position of power and authority to siphon local, state and national resources at the expense and abysmal situation of the populace. Hence a continuous impoverishing of the people in spite of relatively enough resources. This oppressive tendency has been realised to originate from corruption which is interwoven with governance and extended to private sectors. Among the way out articulated by the authors are as follows: governance in Nigeria should not be made a lucrative business as it has been; electoral system reform is needed at the moment involving education and re-education of the electoral officers and the people on transparent electoral process; government institutions must be strengthened and reformed to ensure efficient resources allocation; Nigeria needs honest restructuring in view of tribal and ethnicity sentiments.*

Keywords: *corruption, dialectics, development, economic, governance, sustainable*

I. INTRODUCTION

Since gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria has aspired to improve the economy with respect to manpower and environmental restructuring, through the use of policies, strategies and programmes. This intention is obvious considering the various National Development Plan of 1962-68, 1970-75, 1975-80, 1981-85, the Rolling Plan of 1990-92, the recent National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), the State Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS), the Local Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (LEEDS) amongst others which focused on balanced development, united and self-sufficiency, improved harnessing of societal resources, real income increase, unemployment reduction, establishment of industries and infrastructure, building a great African democratic country that is politically united with stable economic wealth and socially structured for equal opportunities and so on (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1962, 1970, 1980; National Planning Commission, 2004).

On evaluation of the early plan efforts after a period of time showed a remarkable achievement which brought about many established projects such as Oil refinery in Port Harcourt, Nigeria Security Printing and Minting Plant, Niger Dam, the Niger Bridge, Air Ports, Schools, Hospitals, many roads and industries. This implies the attainment of a reasonable growth in some sectors. Although, prominent changes were seen, but Scholars have pointed that economic development is needed to take place since the fruit of economic prosperity have not touched a large proportion of the masses. The distribution of income has not been equitable. Besides, unemployment and inflation are on a high scale and so it can be stated that Nigeria has really witnessed economic growth given its plan efforts but yet to have reasonable economic development (Osuka, 2006).

In the spirit of revamping the economy, various macroeconomic policies were articulated by different governments that have managed the country's resources. In spite of all their actions, reactions and activities the country remain in the grip of the vicious circle of poverty. Disgustingly, a large proportion of the populace were exposed to annual floods; more than ninety per cent of the rural population relied on forests for livelihood and source of domestic energy cum the difficulty of the rural people walking a very long distance to fetch water and fire wood for cooking. Nevertheless, budgetary allocation has been made every year with respect to most of the issues which could not reach the targeted. Consequently, poverty persisted with infant mortality being 77 per 1000 and maternal mortality stood at 704 per 100, 000 birth in 1999 which was the highest all over the world. The ugly trend in the economy gave rise to insufficient access to food, poor and untidy environment/living condition, high indebtedness, lack of basic needs of life, lack of credit facilities, inadequate freedom amongst others (Onwumere, 2005). Diversion of societal developmental resources was obvious from the situation of the country. Momoh (2015) points out that one of the military rulers General Sani Abacha was accused of looting billions of dollars which the successive head of state General Abdulsalami Abubakar recovered about US\$ 750

million and more was recovered by President Obasanjo there-after. It can be inferred that the major aspect of corruption which have the greatest adverse effect in the country is attributed to leadership.

Undoubtedly, the success or failure of a country to have steady and sustainable development is a function of governance. Nigeria has experienced various types of leadership that was dominated by military rule which later changed to civilian rule in 1999. In some cases, leadership is not determined by the peoples' choice but by who the incumbent considered the best among others. Governance in Nigeria has witnessed inconsistency pursuant of goals that has unable to lead to effective improvement of the living standard of the people. Instead happening-stance posed great obstacle to balanced development.

Nigeria is richly endowed with natural and human resources which is sufficient to make the economy a self-sufficient but poor governance which gradually metamorphosed to high grade corruption devoid of repositioning the environment and the people for sustainable economic development, have adversely placed the economy in a precarious situation. Suffice it to note that the problem of Nigeria is not lack of resources but the management of the God given inputs of production. It is our conviction that some leaders over the years created a situation that gave rise to the problem of corruption in Nigeria. How do you expect a society devoid of satisfactory social security and efficient pension scheme to leave government fund while at office knowing what to face after retirement? How do you expect the federal, state and local governments' staff to survive when these governments have caused the prices of goods and services to rise while the income of the workers remaining the same? For instance, in Nigeria today we have high unemployment and high level of poverty; there is a severe increase in fuel price from ₦145 the official rate to ₦250 as sold by Independent Marketers which has triggered off rise in price of virtually every commodity in the country. This has persisted for over four weeks and yet the government has not completely resolve the problem. But some people are enjoying from the sorrowful situation of the masses who are prone to ugly outcome of government inefficiency. The corrupt actions of workers originated from insensitivity of the leaders. It can be inferred that the genesis of corruption stemmed from the government. Undoubtedly, stream cleanses from the source to the bottom. When the stream-head is untidy, it is reflected in the stream's body. Sanitisation of the country must start from leadership.

The development of Nigeria is not commensurate with her abundance resources. The problem of 'growthlessness' emanated from the actions of the leaders and the people. Countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea are not better than Nigeria in early 1970s but the bane of corruption, the inability to allow the flow of resources to various nook and cranny due to diversion of allocated resources has impacted adversely on the economy. Consequently, Nigeria can only experience economic growth but yet to have sufficient and desirable development.

Succinctly, among the numerous obstacle to Nigerians' economic development is corruption, this is because the large proportion of the societal resources are now appropriated and possessed by few individuals who have had access to managing the public resources and those close with the leaders. The high degree of corruption led a world body like Transparency International to rate Nigeria as one of the first class corrupt countries (Ribadu, 2003; Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), 2006.) In a related issue, Obayelu (2007) posits that Transparency International ranked Nigeria 81 in corruption index, 90 in 2001 and 132 in 2003. In 2009, 2010 and 2011, the corruption perception indices for Nigeria were respectively 2.5, 2.4 and 2.4. This implies persistent corrupt practices in spite of the existence of regulatory and controlling bodies. Unfortunately, and shamefully, most corrupt issues are related to governance and resource managers who control societal resources and the high tendency to appropriate public fund for private use.

Dike (2004) observed that corruption happens in many different ways in Nigeria and has contributed greatly to the poverty and misery of a large chunk of Nigerians. This is plausible in view of how poverty has been rising in Nigeria. For instance, NBS (2005); Ogwumike (2002) posit that the number of those in poverty in Nigeria rose from 27% in 1980 to 46% in 1985; it decreased slightly to 42% in 1992, and increased sharply to 67% in 1996. By 2004, it stood at 54% and as at 2017 the estimated poverty was more than 70%. All these were happening when expenditure was yearly made for poverty alleviation which could not reach or influence the poor.

To all intents and purposes corruption which is conspicuous and known by all Nigerians has eaten deep in the country and unless it is properly handled by a selected selfless, honest and transparent group of Nigerians who may be allowed to take the position of resources management, Nigeria will not be able to rise and achieve the positive intention of well-designed and articulated plans, policies and strategies. In view of the aforementioned, this paper intends to examine to a great extent on the tensions or conflicts of corruption, government and economic development in Nigeria with a view to show the extent of corruption, its influence by governance and the effects on economic development over the years. So, the study is designed thus: section two dwells on an overview of corruption in Nigeria; section three focuses on good governance as a panacea for change, corruption and economic development is the section four while the last section is the way forward.

An Overview of Corruption in Nigeria

Corruption in Nigeria starts in a very small way due to insatiability of man, the multiethnic nature of the country, the action of leaders and absence of sincere love in the hearts of resource managers and so it

gradually rose to crescendo. Corruption has been viewed in different ways by diverse writers, bodies and organizations. In the World Bank perspective, corruption “is the abuse of public power for private benefit” (Gray and Kaufmann, 1988). Corruption involves going contrary to the instituted rules of a society or a body for personal gain and profit (Sen 1999). In the view of Lipset and Lenz (2000) corruption is an exertion of efforts or actions aimed at securing wealth or power illegally for personal gain at public cost. Actually, corruption is detrimental to societal progress and create high degree of inequality. It is an activity that is contrary to the formal established roles of achieving organizational or societal goals because of selfish interest of the perpetrator. But for the purpose of this paper, we see corruption as any form of action and activity aimed at exploiting economic agents, the social-economic-political environments and circumstances put in place that are exclusively for personal gain.

The happening in Nigeria over the years implies the regular exploitation of situations and socio-economic-political milieu by people entrusted with certain responsibilities in government, in schools, hospitals, churches, markets among others. For instance, a late renowned Professor Achebe over two decades ago in his well-written book titled, “The Trouble with Nigeria” pinpointed that anyone who is bold to affirm that corruption in Nigeria has not become upsetting and disgusting is either a fool, a crook or else does not live in this country. In a related view, the one-time military president and a two-terms former civilian president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo states, “Corruption is the greatest single bane of our society today”. The intensity is so high that children and adults practice it in different ways. The prevailing situation of corruption in Nigeria made Waziri (2010) to assert that corruption is now an acceptable pattern of life of Nigerians as it permeates every facet of the economy such as homes, offices, churches, corporate organization, ministries, institutions, banking sector and so on.

Given this scenario, it becomes extremely difficult to control the cankerworm or cancer referred to as corruption. Those who supposed to be the custodian of moral standard, etiquette and role model have been infected and inflicted by the contagious malaise of corruption. The youths and everybody have now see corruption as a way of life. Sincerity, honesty of purpose, hard-work to succeed in examination and earn a living are now seen by many as not being smart. Some parents now encourage their children to cheat in order to pass examination through institutionalized miracle examination centres. Disgustingly, Oloja (2002) points out that it is difficult to go into an office in Nigeria and get your file treated except you give kickback. The security persons at the gate are not exonerated as they expect bribe from an applicant. As a result, corruption leads to poor handling of files or applications to the superior officer’s desk for treatment. Files may get loss if the desk officer is not given bribe. There is a lot of unnecessary bureaucracy and difficulty in the process of solving official issues in most public offices. Such anomaly compelled Gire(1999), Ajie and Wokekoro (2012); Uma and Eboh (2013) to posit that developing country like Nigeria, with limited resources that are initially allocated for industries, hospitals, road construction, schools and other capital overheads are either out rightly taken away, misused, stolen, or otherwise seriously diminished through kickbacks and over invoicing by government officials. Corruption is one of the paramount impediment to the development of the Nigerian economy as it has brought about high level egocentrism, misallocation, digression and indecorous distribution of scarce resources. Dike (2004) categorised corruption thus political, bureaucratic and electoral. He sees political corruption as the highest form because of its involvement of politicians and decision makers who is empowered to formulate, build requisite machineries and implement laws. It equally involves policy articulation in such a way as to benefit self as it is conspicuous in Nigeria. For instance, the salaries of the members of the National House of Assembly is the highest all over the world while those who work every day are paid a paltry insignificant proportion of the wall-drop allowance of the legislators as their annual salary in Nigeria. Bureaucratic corruption is witnessed in public administration which is encountered every day in places like schools, hospitals, local licensing offices amongst others while electoral corruption which involves regular malpractices, abnormal processes perpetuated by politicians. It includes purchase of votes, promise of offices, intimidation and interference with freedom of election, disguised payments with gifts, legal fees, mobilization, employment and other exploitation for personal success that are practiced in Nigeria.

Other forms of corruption are bribery which involves offering of money or other item with the intention to get something. Fraud which includes the use of tricks or deceit of any kind to take away money or material from another person. It also includes smuggling, counterfeiting, forgery and so on.

Embezzlement which includes stealing of public funds entrusted to public office-holders. It is a common avenue for quick wealth accumulation and one of the reasons why over 200 candidates will aspire for one public office, doing all sorts of things to dominate and succeed due to poor or ineffective regulatory systems.

Extortion is a frequent form of corruption in Nigeria. It involves getting money or material from someone either with the use of threat of force or violence. Bayart et al (1997) point out that the Police and Custom officers are well known in this form of corruption.

Favoritism also uncontrollable in Nigeria. It involves abuse of power in distributing resources in favour of those related or close to the power-holder. It is in Nigeria you see someone who is good in agriculture being a

financial officer because of favoritism or business man being a chairman of Board of Educational Institution. The next is nepotism which is never hidden by resource managers in Nigeria. It is a situation where strategic positions are given to the relations and family members of the power-holder without consideration of competence.

In a related classification of corruption, Waziri (2010) expounded varieties of notorious behaviors captured as corruption in Nigeria thus: (a) conflicts of interest such as in the award of contracts by government officials to their personal companies, cronies, bribery, fraud; (b) political corruption such as favoritism, nepotism, ethnicity, rigging of election, misappropriation and seizure of public funds for personal use and benefits; (c) bureaucratic corruption such as extortion, manipulation of procurement processes such as over-inflating of contracts, leaking tender information to friends and relations and (d) corporate corruption such as diversion and misappropriation of funds through manipulation and false alteration of financial records

In spite of how corruption has been looked at, it has greatly rendered the country inability to develop with the trillions and billions of allocations for capital and recurrent expenditure with a large proportion of it ending up in the office-holders private bank account within and outside the country. The practice of corruption in Nigeria and its contagious effects have entered virtually into primary schools, secondary schools, tertiary institutions and all the sector of the economy. Every Nigeria believes that corruption is a normal aspect of life. The knowledge of the universal immutable law of *karma*, law of compensation, whatever a man sow, he shall reap is yet to be propagated or internalize in Nigeria. Consequently, some pastors, priest, teachers, lecturers, doctors, surveyors, lawyers among other professions consciously and unconsciously exercise corruption.

In Nigeria, corruption is the hub and pillar of most crisis in the area of governance and justice since it has influence on sustainable democracy, rule of law, economic development and the welfare of the populace. Unequivocally, it is the main reason for the existing, impending and unresolvable problems of poverty, hunger, illnesses and lack of development. Disgustingly, corruption has been a serious obstacle for economic progress and efficient use of available societal resources. Consequently, Nigeria endowed with fertile soil, abundant mineral resources and human capital has unable to realise positive developmental change due to high level corruption (Odeh, 2015; Ogundiya, 2009).

Sadly, corruption has turned things upside down. It is in Nigeria where an incompetent and unexperienced officer is placed to head his superiors for no any justification beside favoritism which is the daughter of corruption. In the local government areas of Nigeria, harboring a large proportion of the populace that is supposed to play significant role in enhancing service delivery to the citizen but are always deserted by the majority of workers at the secretariat. The workers only show up at the end of the month to collect salaries. Even some administrators of local government operate from state capital or federal capital territory (ThinkAfrica, 2012). This means due to corruption, many Nigerians earn income from government purse without doing anything referred to as 'ghost workers'. Good governance is far from attainment in Nigeria due to corruption. Hence, Ogundiya (2008) posits that Nigeria has lost a large sum of US \$ 380 billion resulting from corruption since 1960 to 1999. In a related view, Human Right Watch (2007) estimated the average loss of \$4-\$8 billion per year to corruption within the tenure of President Obasanjo administration of 1999-2007. This accounts for the poverty status of Nigeria with associated economic hardship of the masses.

II. GOOD GOVERNANCE AS A PANACEA FOR CHANGE

The level of change required to revive a depressed economy or corruption-ridden state brought about by bouts of cyclical fluctuation or human egocentrism leading to poor trend in an economy can effectively be handled by the government if and only if there is sincerity of purpose in the desire for change. Good governance presupposes effective and efficient management of societal resources, guarding against digression of allocated resources through the establishment of efficient and reliable institutions and putting in place enough regulations and regulatory bodies who can be sufficiently monitored, regularly checked and made to face the wrath of the law if deviated from the guide no matter how highly placed.

Transparency International (2009) in its Corruption Perception Index rated Nigeria 130th position out of 180 economies assessed. The World Bank (2012), stated that the poverty headcount of Nigeria is 62.6% while it is currently estimated at over 70%. Poverty has really been raised by the actions of governance with respect to myopic perception and corruption. The enormous effect of corruption and poor governance has given rise to high level inequality, lack of basic capital overheads such as good road network, inadequate power and water supply; fuel scarcity in a country richly endowed with crude oil, lack of educational equipment, lack of industries and poor environment resulting to high degree of unemployment and thereby compelling many Nigerians to migrate through legal and illegal means to Europe, Asia and other African countries with associated hazards.

For instance, the International Organization for Migration (2013) exhibits that the number of Nigerian migrants living outside Nigeria rose from 1.9 million in 2004 to 3.4 million in 2012. In related view, the UNHCR (2009) points out that the total number of Nigerians who sought for asylum in different foreign countries were respectively 19,407 in 2003, 10,464 in 2005, 10,148 in 2007 and 15,022 in 2008. It is disgusting

to see Nigerian running away from Nigeria when there is no war due to lack of good governance, corruption and harsh economy.

EarthTrend (2003) notes that the population of Nigeria surviving on less than \$1 per day is 70.2% while those living on less than \$2 each day are 90.8%. This was when the exchange rate was about one hundred naira per dollar and the official price of a litre of fuel was ₦65. Presently, a dollar is over ₦370 in the parallel market and the official pump price of a litre of fuel is ₦145 but mainly sold by Independent Marketers at over ₦180 per litre. The average Nigerians are seriously suffering and cannot afford three square meals a day. The multiplier effects of corruption and poor governance has put Nigeria in a state that we have become a laughing stock to other economies devoid of relative abundance resources like us. The purchasing power has drastically reduced by the prevailing economic dilemma and consequently, many abnormalities arose such as hunger, malnutrition, malnourishment and other poor health conditions unheard of in the past which adversely retard over-all development and impedes living one's life span completely.

In spite of corruption regulatory agencies of the country, you still hear of looted public fund remitted in private foreign account creating paucity of capital in the country. Waziri (2010) referenced a former British Secretary for International Development, Hilary Benn who intimated that it is specifically less developed economies that can be governed by their own people and government who has the ability and capability to eventually make a reliable change necessary for combating corruption. And that corruption is the derivation and outcome of poor and complete bad governance. This is because development of a nation can never be imposed on or be transferred from advanced country to poor developing economies. This implies that the change desired by Nigerians must emanate from Nigeria through those assigned or elected to govern the country. Unfortunately, the elected politician, empowered to make things easy for the people device all strategies mainly to make things easy for themselves at the expense of the people. Thereby creating high degree of inequality and live ostentatious life which often compel the poor to opt for robbery, kidnapping cum other vices as a source of livelihood and so compounding the societal problem.

He further enumerated the bodies instituted by various leaders of Nigeria in the bid to combat corruption which include the following: (i) The "Corrupt Practices Decree" of 1975 promulgated by the regime of Murtala/Obasanjo; (ii) War against Indiscipline by Buhari/Idiagbon regime. (iii) Code of Conduct Bureau of 1990; (v) Advance Fee Fraud & Other Related Offences Decree of 1995 by the Abacha regime which was later re-enacted as the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, 2006 by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo administration; (v) Corrupt Practices: the Money Laundering Act, 2004 (vi) The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, 2004; (vii) The Procurement Act, 2007 which lead to the establishment of Anti-corrupt Agencies for attacking corruption: (i) The Nigerian Extractive Industrial Transparency Initiative (NEIT) (ii) The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); (iii) The Technical Unit on Governance & Anti-Corruption Reforms (TUGAR) (iv) The Economic & Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and (v) Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU) which later transformed into Bureau for Public Procurement (Waziri, 2010).

Notwithstanding of all these anti-corruption bodies, looting of public treasury in Nigeria has never stop. The power holders often seem to be above the law besides their immunities while in the office. They appear and behave as 'sacred cows'. The cohorts and cronies usually join their master who uses his powerful tentacle to protect them. A typical example is the disheartening case of James Ibori, former governor of Delta state who was discharged and acquitted in a Nigerian court for over 170 count charges in December 2009 in cases filed against him by Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, but was later found guilty and jailed for 13 years in a British court on April 17, 2012 for fraud, money-laundering and for embezzling ₦12.6 billion. The outcome exposed the defects of our entire judiciary system. Undoubtedly, there are many institutional weaknesses in Nigeria - political, legislative and judicial systems; economic, social, and bureaucratic red tape, which need real and genuine reform (Uma and Eboh, 2013; Egbu, 2012).

In his remarks on corruption Sanusi (2010) asserted that evidence has been shown in the global community that an economy with high incidence of corruption is always confronted with poverty due to the weak corporate governance which does not promote sustainable development. This implies a strong positive relationship between corruption, poor governance and high incidence of poverty. Hence fighting corruption should not be a one dimensional providing of financial assistance to the poor but repositioning the institutions for transparency, accountability and protection of citizens' right. Disinterestingly, he noted the adverse socio-political and economic development resulting from evils of corruption and poor governance.

This implies that virtually all crisis in an economy is associated with poor governance as it is witnessed in the country today. From the foregoing, suffice it to mention that in order to change the socio-political and economic environments of Nigerian economy necessitates the power holders to change their attitudes.

III. CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development encompasses positive changes in various sector of the economy which gives rise to increase in income, output and employment, thereby leading to peoples' ability to take care of

physiological needs amongst other needs. It also involves environment restructuring and institutional arrangement capable of efficient allocation and distribution of the wealth of the society in such a way as to avoid widening the gap between the rich and the poor. In his perspective about development, Meier (1980) points out that economic development is the process whereby the real per capita income of a country increases over a long period of time-subject to the stipulations that the number of people below an "absolute poverty line" does not increase, and that the distribution of income does not become more unequal. The growth in real per capita income is a function of policies put in place to encourage investment in both physical and human capitals.

The level of investment and saving in Nigeria given the rising population and the selfish pursuit of interest by government and high degree of corruption may not give room for sufficient investment in infrastructure and interdependent industries capable of repositioning the economy for desirable and sustainable development. Real per capita income is difficult to be sustained in view of how the government has hit up the polity with high degree of nepotism, a child of corruption. The closing of the gap between the rich and the poor is very difficult as the leaders are becoming wealthy every day while the majority of the peoples' living standard worsening at a very high rate. Diversion of allocated resources for infrastructural repositioning has greatly retarded both domestic and foreign investments in Nigeria. The body language of power holders and utterances can change the economy positively or negatively. Poor governance and corruption are major key for lack of national development.

Corruption and bad governance has made the socio-political and economic milieu so devastating and discomfiting, thereby compelling many Nigerians to seek for greener pasture outside the country. Many Nigerian that are dissatisfied with the situation of the country over the years have become migrants. They leave the poorly developed rural areas to urban areas and also leave urban areas due to inability to secure jobs to travel outside the country without required travel documents. The migrants lack means of befitting transportation to Europe and other countries and have resorted to walking through deserts and using unsuitable means to sail across Africa. Unfortunately, many Nigerians have lost their lives in that process. All this situation would not have arisen if the power holders have sincerely, honestly and judiciously utilized the budgeted resources for poverty alleviation and economic transformation.

Infrastructural investment which is government important roles is essential and foundation for other aspect of investment in an economy. The private investors need a conducive environment with sufficient social overhead capital to thrive. Many researchers have asserted the effect of infrastructural investment in development and growth of a country and such effect on machinery and equipment is seen as a main determinant of growth (De Long and Summers, 1993). The stunted economic growth prevailing in Nigeria is obvious that governance in Nigeria has not been able to address the issue of raising the living standard. Annoyingly, every year, budgets are made and allocation of resources distributed for such developmental infrastructure but corruption does not allow it to be allocated at the required place as it should be and so the country is continuously obsessed by the vicious circle of poverty.

Stealing public fund is not hidden in some cases. As noted by ACID (2013), it pointed the revelation of United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime about the stolen of US \$400 billion by past leaders before 1999. Uremadu (2004) points out that in 2001 survey of public procurement process in Nigeria, it was realised that Nigeria lost billions of naira in the past few decades due to crude and improper process devoid of transparency and accountability in award of contracts in the public sector. In spite of contracts offer, at unimaginable cost due to corruption practices, many contractors would not conclude the work leading to many uncompleted and abandoned projects. The benefit of awarding contract not realised and the sunk capital is irreversible. This is one of the ways of colossal waste of scarce resources of the country and one of the reasons why some roads remain very poor and not motor-able notwithstanding that it has been contracted. The masses are left to suffer economic hardship. In a related activity, in 2006, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission exposed the past leaders of Nigeria who carted away about ₦64 trillion from public purse. Few individual siphoning the present and future generation resources and denying the country of the required development that is capable of transforming the economy from agrarian to industrialized economy. From all these happening, it is difficult to have economic development and growth capable of revamping the economy and make the country decent for change.

Snail speed economic development in Nigeria hinges on poor governance and high degree of corruption. From the various events regarding selfish use of public funds which are now in private hands, it is obvious that for Nigeria to develop socially, politically and economically requires total annihilation of corruption. But unfortunate issue is that any government who set out to handle corruption in the short and long-run become enmeshed with a higher degree of corruption as it is witnessed in Nigeria today. In actual fact, the major obstacle to poor infrastructure, low school standard, inability to develop and poverty has its foundation on corruption.

Way Forward

Life is not static in this world of duality. A change is always constant which can be positive or negative. Negative change is usually a source of lessons of life while positive change is more desirable by a larger group of people. But both must often happen as designed by the owner of the universes. Every padlock

has a special key and so do poor governance, corruption and lack of sustainable development have requisite actions and activities capable of changing and repositioning the problem of 'growthlessness' and harsh situation inherent in Nigeria. On this note, it is our sincere wish that the following points will go a long way to eradicate corruption in Nigeria:

- i). Governance in Nigeria should not be made a lucrative business as it has been. Those that must govern the country must have been known to have integrity, achievers in their field of endeavor, people with decent and clean records right from birth and without any malice for anybody irrespective of gender, tribe, religion, ethnicity amongst others.
- ii). Electoral system reform is needed at the moment involving education and re-education of the electoral officers and the people on electoral process. The votes of the people must be meant to count in electing people with good and edifying character into public offices. The ways it has been need be reversed. Electoral system redesign will give confidence to the masses with respect to their votes and all forms of intimidation, buying of votes, harassment during election must be eliminated.
- iii). Government institutions must be strengthened and reformed to ensure efficient resources allocation. Civil service reform should include training and retraining of workers. Etiquette, honesty, sincerity, hard work must be enshrined and enforced. Regular payment of salaries and allowances that can withstand shocks of macroeconomic economic disequilibrium or instability such as inflation, recession and depression is essential. Social securities and befitting incentives must be provided to sustain the workers while in active service and when retired.
- iv). Nigeria needs honest restructuring in view of tribal and ethnicity sentiments. The regional system should be re-introduced. In other words, confederation will help reduce excess powers and convergence of all at the centre. This will reduce the mentality of going to share the national cake and curtail nepotism and favoritism. Good governance is easy when the region or scope of administration is relatively manageable. For instance, the governance in America with fifty states gives a lot of powers to the states.
- v). It is essential to introduce the teaching of immutable laws of *karma* and reincarnation in schools and colleges. This will help to enlighten the ignorant public officers who believe that they will go free after using societal resources selfishly.

IV. CONCLUSION

In this study, we have been able to examine governance, corruption and economic development in Nigeria. It is obvious that the major constraint to revamping Nigeria economy for sustainable development in spite of beautiful policies and programmes put in place since after independence and unable to shine like its contemporaries is due to high degree of corruption which emanated from poor governance. It is undoubtedly that efforts made to curtail corruption has not achieved desirable results due to the fact that the electoral process is not transparent and our type of democracy is unlike that of United States of America and governance in Nigeria is intertwined and interwoven with corruption. The tendency and aspiration of becoming a millionaire or a billionaire overnight in Nigeria is by mere entering into public position in any way possible which has perpetuated corruption. The chain actions of all sponsors of political office aspirants are targeted on maneuvering and siphoning public resources and not necessarily to serve the people. But it is our hope that if the articulated suggestions are adapted to a great extent in Nigeria, corruption will be put down to an insignificant level or absolutely is eradicated.

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