

GOVERNANCE, CORRUPTIONS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: AN APPRAISAL.

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ABSTRACT

Corruption remains one of the fastest growing social problems in Nigeria. It is virtually becoming a way of life that permeates both private and public sectors of the economy. Over the years, this pervasive behavioural proclivity has earned the country the notorious status of one of the most corrupt nations in the world. Despite seemingly concerted efforts of past and present administrations to combat corruption, the problem remains persistently endemic with disastrous consequences for the Nigerian society. It is against this backdrop, that this work specifically explores the upsurge of corruption and its implications for sustainable development in Nigeria. Within the Principal-Agent theory the work maintains that people indulge in pervasive corrupt behaviour as a result of how corruption is perceived and valued. The work maintains that corruption, especially in the public sector,

Introduction:

Corruption is universal and not a problem restricted to any region. In advanced countries like Belgium, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan, Italy, Russia, Spain allegations of corruption also play a central role in their politics (Klitgaard, 2018). As such corruption permeates all levels of government, the federal, state and local governments. According to Transparency International (TI)'s Corruption Perception Index (CPI), between 1995 and 2009, no country has a score of 10/10 on a 10-point scale, indicating that there is one level of corruption or the other in all countries

breeds infrastructural decay, high cost of governance, insecurity and distorted development priorities thus making the hope of achieving sustainable development a mirage. This, no doubt, explains why sustainable development has continued to elude Nigeria despite its abundant natural endowment and robust development initiatives. In order to translate its abundant natural resources into sustainable development, the work recommends among others, that as a matter of urgent necessity, Nigeria must adopt a trado-religious social control measure in its anti-corruption reforms.

Keywords: *Governance, Corruptions, Development, Sustainable Development, Nigeria.*

Worldwide (Mogue, 2010). It has on the socio-economic and political setting of a country can hardly be over emphasized. There has been a global cry and coordinated efforts to tackle this social evil through the creation and implementation of anti-graft laws and policies across nations. Some nations have been successful in their quest to reduce the level of corruption while others are still lagging behind. In this light, Nigeria seems to be an example of a state that failed in combating corruption.

Grand corruption is a cancer that has eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian polity. The general global perception about graft in Nigeria is that it is a pervasive phenomenon. It is generally acknowledged that corruption and corrupt practices are endemic and systemic in both public and private sectors of Nigeria (Eme&Okoh, 2011). While corruption in the form of distortion of the government expenditures, pillaging of the State assets and bribery is widespread in the higher level of public offices, the grand corruption in politics such as sale of party tickets, office posts and public contracts remain a critical concern because politics has become the most remunerative career. Furthermore, in Nigeria, corruption exceedsthe political arena and evidences shows that it abounds in several private and official conducts of even ordinary citizens. As such, corruption is a serious

problem affecting the whole sphere of Nigeria. It has also constituted an impediment to the development of the country as leadership corruption has been one of the greatest concerns to all observers of the country's socio political and economic development (Anazodo, Okoye&Ezenwile, 2012). Corruption has caused so many defects to the Nigerian society in terms of human capital development, unemployment, infrastructure and economic growth and development in general. Furthermore, corruption has caused other defects in the in Nigeria such as increase in crime rate, unemployment rate and social unrest. Von Hauff and Kruse (2014) highlighted two major consequences of leadership corruption in urban areas in developing countries. He noted that there are consequences for the national economies of countries affected arising through the formation of slums in urban areas, a worsening of environmental sustainability problems particularly as a result of predatory exploitation in the agricultural sector, the manufacturing sector and the oil and gas sector. He further noted that there are also consequences for the political and social development of the countries affected.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, the agenda of sustainable development has become of paramount importance in Nigeria. However, the state of affairs is that Nigeria remains an underdeveloped country with majority of the citizens experiencing poverty and poor living conditions (Lawal, 2014). Furthermore, Lawal (2014) noted that more than 100 million Nigerians do not have access to electricity, and less than 40% of the population have access to safe drinking water. Similarly, Sehinde (2008) noted that roads in many areas in Nigeria are impassable and these infrastructural challenges hamper the prospects of development, small business development, employment and ultimately Nigeria's economic progress. Ugwuja (2014:1) noted that the major function of the government is to solve these problems and ensure the sustainability of development in Nigeria through the provision of pathways to poverty eradication. However, the reality remains that the government in Nigeria have been

hampered from performing their duties and functions due to the prevalence and widespread nature of corruption in the country (Aguilar, 2014). This has led to a society where sustainable development increasingly looks distant.

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of corruption in Nigeria?
2. What are the factors influencing the sustainable development in Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between governance, corruption and sustainable development in Nigeria?

Research Objectives

1. To determine the causes of corruption in Nigeria.
2. To determine the factors influencing sustainable development in Nigeria.
3. To determine the relationship between governance, corruption and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: There are no significant causes of corruption in Nigeria.

H0₂: There are no significant factors influencing sustainable development in Nigeria.

H0₃: There is no significant relationship between governance, corruption and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

This study will prove to be significant to policy makers and public officers in Nigeria in guiding their policy decisions concerning the eradication of corruption and sustainable development in Nigeria. This study will also prove to be significant to International Organisations and Non-Governmental Agencies in recommending ways through which corruption can be eradicated in developing countries.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on corruption and sustainable development in Nigeria's fourth republic. The scope of the study is current Nigeria's fourth republic and cover the period from 2015-2021.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Concept of Corruption

Corruption is a social phenomenon that is difficult to define, and it does not have a universally accepted definition. The definition varies depending on the inclination of the scholar and perception of the concept. Andrig and Fjelstad (2013) are of the opinion that corruption is a "complex and multifaceted phenomenon with multiple causes and effects, as it takes on various forms and contexts" (p. 120). Similarly, Tanzi (2008) is of the view that while it is hard to define corruption, the crisis that is linked to corruption is not difficult to identify.

The United Nations Global Programme Against Corruption (GPAC) defines political corruption as the "abuse of power for private gain." In a similar vein, TI also put forward a lucid definition of the concept as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain." Waziri (2010) views corruption as a pervasion or a change from the generally accepted law or rules for personal benefit.

Given the above definitions, corruption or political corruption implies any action that violates electoral rules/the formal duties of any public role, rules, or norms with regard to public trust.

Forms of Corruption in Nigerian Public Sector

Although political corruption is perceived differently from one territory and geographical location to another, the following behaviors are regarded as forms of political corruption in Nigeria: acceptance of gratification; succumbing to inducement and undue influence; embezzlement; conflict of interests, for example, the award of contracts by public office holders to cronies, family members, and personally held companies; bribery; fraud; nepotism and tribalism in recruitment/appointment, promotion; kickback on contract; rigging of elections; misappropriation and conversion of

public funds for personal gains; procurement scam; leaking tender information to friends and relations; diversion and misappropriation of funds through manipulation or falsification of financial records; payment for favorable judicial decisions, and so on (Azelama, 2002; Ijewereme, 2013; Waziri, 2010).

Effects of Corruption in Nigeria

The effects of corruption in Nigeria are outrageous. The effects range from under development, absence of basic infrastructure such as potable water, good road networks, misappropriation of national resources leading to massive poverty, mediocrity in leadership and cluelessness in professionalism, deficient leadership outputs, high unemployment and youth hopelessness, continuous widening gap between the rich and poor, and falling standard of education leading to production of low-quality graduates (Waziri, 2010). Corruption has made students and products of the tertiary institutions suffer from loss of self-confidence, hopelessness, and loss of confidence in handwork and societal value. It has lowered the image of academic and non-academic members, as well as governing councils of most public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Corruption denies access to basic education and health services, fuels political violence, generates popular anger that threatens to further destabilize societies, and exacerbates violent conflict (TI, 2012). It distorts public expenditure, increases cost of running businesses as well as cost of governance, and diverts resources from poor to rich nations. It has frustrated research efforts, derailed administrative goals, instigated organizational goals displacement, and it has also drastically reduced the image of Nigeria in the international communities to mention just a few (Azelama, 2005; Waziri, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of analysis adopted in this work is the **Principal -Agent theory**. The Principal-Agent theory adopted from Batley (2004:38) examines organizational relationships as a tension between the

“Principal” who demands a service and the “Agent” who provides it. The model assumes that actors are motivated by rational self-interest. The issue in connection with this paper is how the Principal (in this case, the Nigerian citizens) can manage the self-interest of those empowered to act on their behalf (i.e. the Agents: government officials, politicians, legislators, bureaucrats etc) so that it is aligned with the purposes that they (the Principal) wish to achieve. The problem arises not just from conflict of interest but also from the privileged access of the agents to information—the problem of asymmetric information. The agents who have been employed to provide a service will tend to use their superior knowledge to divert benefits in their own direction.

Methodology

Area of the study

Nigeria is a Federal Republic comprising of thirty- Six states and a Federal Capital Territory, Abuja with an estimated population figure of 154.7million people (UNDP, 2009). The country is located in the West of Africa and shares land borders with four countries including the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean. Nigeria has three major ethnic groups called Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. In terms of religion the country has two dominant religions – Islam and Christianity.

Research Design

Asika (2004), define research design as structuring of investigation aimed at identifying variables and their relationship to one another. It is simply the blue print used as guide in collecting and analyzing research question (Asika, 2004). The research design to be used for this study was the survey research design to generate the necessary information needed for research.

Population of the Study

The study population for this paper is made up of people who have general and specialized knowledge on governance, corruption and sustainable development in the six geo-political zone of Nigeria. This includes technocrats, politicians, civil servants, students, traders, market women and so on. The study population was randomly sampled and their views ascertained. Four hundred people were sampled and studied using the questionnaire method, this cuts across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. Lagos (South West), Imo state (South East), Kano state (North West), Nassarawa (North Central), Borno state (North East) and Cross River state (South South). Fifty five other selected persons were interviewed orally. The forty five persons were among others, serving and past official of government..

Analysis

Number of Questionnaires administered	Number of Questionnaire received	Response Rate
240	196	81.9%

Source: Online Survey 2021

In carrying out this research, a total of 240 questionnaires were distributed, however 196 questionnaires were returned giving remarkable response rate of 81.67%.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.799	12

The reliability coefficient for the scale items is 0.799 hence seeing they are above 0.7 it can be concluded that the internal consistency of the scales is good and the research instrument is reliable.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	61	31.1	31.1	31.1
	Male	135	68.9	68.9	100.0
	Total	196	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows that majority of the respondents were male with a percentage of 68.9% while females were 31.1%.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<18	5	2.6	2.6	2.6
	18-21	68	34.7	34.7	37.2
	22-25	40	20.4	20.4	57.7
	26-30	18	9.2	9.2	66.8
	31-35	6	3.1	3.1	69.9
	36-40 years	17	8.7	8.7	78.6
	41-45 years	8	4.1	4.1	82.7
	46-50 years	17	8.7	8.7	91.3
	50 years and above	17	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	196	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows the responses of the respondents to the hypothetical statement "Poor moral ethics in Nigerian society creates a culture of corruption among citizens". From the table above it can be seen that 48.5 percent of the respondents strongly

Discussions

Statements	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Poor moral Ethics	80.6%	4.10	1.696
Poor Parental Guidance	89.9%	3.99	1.660
Lack of Accountability	56.1%	4.05	1.647

Poor system of checks and balances	82.1%	4.63	1.376
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Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.786	5	1.757	31.898	.000(a)
	Residual	3.801	188	.055		
	Total	12.587	189			

The F-test statistics provides the test of the overall significance of the regression model. A test of the overall significance of the model shows (F (5, 188) = 31.898, $p < 0.05$). This implies that the model is statistically significant and can be used to predict the response variable.

Coefficients(a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.594	.121		4.920	.000
	Functioning Government	.431	.110	.917	3.938	.000
	Improved Infrastructure	.637	.691	.684	.405	.007
	Inclusive Government	.264	.100	.709	2.637	.010
	Sustained Economic Growth	.324	.100	.347	1.240	.019

			Corruption	Sustainable Development
Spearman's rho	Corruption	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.890**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000

		N	196	196
Sustainable Development	Correlation Coefficient		-.890**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.
	N		196	196

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation

The relationship between corruption and sustainable development in Nigeria was investigated using Spearman rank correlation coefficient. There was a strong significant positive relationship between the two variables, $r=.890$, $n= 196$, $p <.05$ at significant level of (.000) with corruption and sustainable developments significantly associated with one another. Furthermore, the correlation coefficient value is negative which indicates an inverse relationship between corruption and sustainable development. Thus the results indicates that an increase in corruption will lead to a decrease in the pace of sustainable development. This suggests that the presence of corruption is likely to slow down sustainable development in Nigeria. Therefore we can conclude that corruption is a significant hindrance to sustainable development in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Corruption is no doubt a menace that disrupt the progress of society and the nation as a whole. The findings of the study show that major causes of corruption in Nigeria are poor moral ethics, poor parental guidance, a lack of accountability and a poor system of checks and balances. The study also found that an increase in corruption will lead to a decrease in the pace of sustainable development. Therefore, based on the findings of the study it was concluded that corruption is a significant hindrance to sustainable development in Nigeria.

Recommendations

- i. The legislative arm of the Nigerian government should institute a proper system of checks and balance to ensure that

administrators and the executive branch of government is held accountable for their actions.

- ii. The powers and authority of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission should be broadened to deal with corrupt acts of governmental administrators and those in positions of power.
- iii. There should be a sensitization program led by the government and educational institutions to teach Nigerian youths regarding the dangers of corruption and the essence of integrity in day to day life.

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