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The Effect of Corruption on Economic Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examines the effects of corruption on economic development and growth in Nigeria. Corruption is conduct that deviates from the normal duties of public trust due mainly to the expectation of private pecuniary reward. The study purposes that corruption is the bane of economic development and growth in Nigeria. The study adopted the historical/descriptive method and sourced materials primarily from secondary sources. The study also adopted the prebendal theoretical framework. Findings from the study show that corruption retards economic development and growth, promotes bad governance, poor service delivery, uncoordinated policies and programmes decayed infrastructures, impunity by officials of government, brain drain, moral decadence and encourages leadership ineptitude. The study, therefore, recommends massive attitudinal re-orientation and public enlightenment, compulsory declaration of assets and liabilities of government officials before and after office, plugging of leakages, greater operational autonomy to anti-corruption agencies, the establishment of a special court to handle corruption cases and the development of the strong institution and people-oriented and visionary leadership as the panacea for tackling corruption frontally in the country.

Index terms—

1 Introduction

Corruption, a social menace that has eaten into the fabric of the nation, has become a common denominator in Nigeria. Its prevalence has become so pronounced that no day passes without a case of corruption against a highly placed Nigerian being reported (Uji, 2015). In other words, generally, the global perception about graft in Nigeria is that of a pervasive phenomenon. It has been acknowledged that corruption is endemic and systematic in both public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy and its debilitating effects on the country are enormous. It affects the routine processes of governance both in public and private sectors and pollutes the business environment generally. It also undermines the integrity of government and public institutions. Corruption in Nigeria has been responsible for the political instability of successive governments since the First Republic. Former Nigeria's president Obasanjo (2006) identified corruption as the number one enemy of development and progress that has eaten deep into the fabric of our society at all levels, maintaining further that it has caused decay and dereliction of the infrastructure of government and the society in physical, social and human terms. The President also said with corruption there can be no sustainable development nor political stability. By breeding and feeding on inefficiency, corruption invariably strangles the systems of social organization. Corruption is the antithesis of development and progress. Every coup since then has been in the name of stamping out the disease called corruption. Unfortunately, the cure turned out to be worse than the disease and Nigeria has been worse for it.

It has been asserted that Nigeria's external image has taken a serious bashing over time, as the country is a permanent feature on every corruption index, depicting the commonality of corruption in Nigeria which has permeated all the sectors of the economy, or aspects of the society. The family, the church and even the traditional institutions are not left out of this contagious disease. For instance, beyond the mere enjoyment of public funds,

1 INTRODUCTION

44 the amassing of wealth by illegal means does not seem to trouble Nigerians. Today, Nigerians applaud and
45 celebrate ill-gotten wealth which in reality is money stolen from public coffers. This is a pointer to the fact that
46 corruption is endemic in Nigeria, culminating in the non-completion of projects and programmes that would have
47 helped in alleviating the sufferings of Nigerians.

48 The return of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999, more than ever before, aroused citizens' quest to combat
49 corruption and instil accountability and transparency. According to this, the Independent Corrupt Practices
50 and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), and
51 Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) were established. These are in addition to existing institutions such as
52 the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) and its Tribunal, but despite the establishment of these impressive arrays
53 of institutional mechanisms aimed at combating corruption, the Vice is still rife.

54 The nation is indeed turned into a pariah state. In the comity of nations, Nigerians are treated with suspicion
55 and embarrassment, and foreigners are wary of making Nigeria their investment destination (Iorhemen 2008).
56 Amujiri (2002) remarks that public accountability is never a priority in Nigeria. Despite the brave letters of
57 the Constitution and the expansive noise of the anticorruption crusade, it has been observed that the more
58 government devise complex and ambitious ways of combating corruption and plans for the socio-economic and
59 political development of this country, the more their implementation is frustrated by the evolution of an ever
60 more effective and sophisticated method of corruption so that in the end the only development we see is the
61 development of corruption" ??Smith 1976).

62 Ogunidiya ??2009) observes that corruption is a huge challenge in public administration in Nigeria. It is at
63 the core of the crisis of governance and legitimacy, the establishment of stable democratic order, rule of law,
64 development and the welfare of citizens. Of all forms of corruption, political corruption has posed a major
65 obstacle to national progress in Nigeria. Indeed, the current crisis of development in Nigeria can be attributed
66 to a history of poor governance characterized by corruption, social injustice and political instability.

67 Corruption also promotes economic decay and social and political instability, perverts the ability of a state to
68 foster rule of law and eventually corrodes trust and undermines legitimacy ??CDD, 2001). In Nigeria, the impacts
69 of corruption on national development are bad governance, poor service delivery, inadequate infrastructural
70 amenities, poor management of the public enterprise, brain drain of professional skilled manpower, lack of
71 respect for rule of law, impunity, lack of critical infrastructure, ineffective leadership, moral decadence and
72 general underdevelopment.

73 It has also been observed that corruption naturally weakens or perpetuates the weakness of government
74 bureaucracy. In this respect, it is incompatible with political and economic development. It is also believed to
75 be counter-productive because corrupt practices by public office holders such as embezzlement of public funds,
76 the offer of bribes for legitimate activities, falsification of documents, nepotism perversion of justice, shielding
77 of certain people from paying taxes and prosecution from a criminal misdemeanour, inflation of government
78 contract, tend to slow down progress, attainment of the goals of government in terms of social service delivery
79 and act as a cog in the wheel of economic development of the country (Adam, 2001).

80 It also inhibits the operation of strict market factors in the economic sphere, causes bureaucratic opportunities
81 to slow down and pervert planning objectives, introduces irrational elements into development programmes, leads
82 to honest officials shirking of responsibilities, and wastes resources by distorting government policies against the
83 interest of the majority and away from its proper goals. It directs energies and efforts of public officials and
84 citizens towards easy money instead of productive activities, hampers the growth of competitiveness, frustrates
85 effort to alleviate poverty, general apathy and cynicism, makes structures and individuals less rigid and threatens
86 system capacity to function effectively.

87 Generally, corruption diverts financial resources from building roads, hospitals, schools and investing in
88 infrastructures that would serve business, attract foreign investment and create jobs. It serves to promote
89 criminal and extremist activity by creating barriers to legitimate economic endeavours. Corruption often
90 involves government officials ignoring their responsibility or acting in violation of them for personal and material
91 gains, bribe-taking whereby government officials and others (including those in the private sector) are bribed to
92 encourage or facilitate their action to arrive at a speedier or more favourable outcome to the agent or individual
93 offering the bribe. For instance, an increase in militant attacks and stalling of the passage of a bill that will
94 change the way the oil industry is regulated led to a 45% slump in FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) to N393
95 billion in the 1 st half of 2012 compared with 2011 ??Adam, 2011).

96 Much of money stolen through bribery, massive capital flight arising from the sharp practices of multinational
97 corporations and their local collaborators, paddling of annual budgets which are long in figures but short in actual
98 delivery, immunity clause which shields the president, Vice President, Governors and Deputy from prosecution
99 as well as the nebulous security vote provide the cover to fleece public resources and foster the process of under-
100 development, over-invoicing, dealing below the table, the pervasion of institutional processes and other variants
101 of corruption. The implication is that the money that ought to be used to build schools, hospitals homes, roads,
102 water schemes and to provide adequate transportation systems, propel industrialization and ensure a good life
103 for the people has been systematically stolen by the elites.

104 Unlike the South Korean elite who stole funds and reinvested the same in the country thereby enhancing
105 its massive industrialization programme, the Nigerian elite is said to be scornful of their country and prefer to
106 invest the looted funds abroad, leaving the country in double jeopardy. The fact that these corrupt officials

found willing accomplices in the private sector and corporate organizations to transfer scourge and the complex linkages between the public and private sectors in the matter of corruption and decadence of national values.

The ultimate negative import of corruption is that it provides public and private workers with the opportunity to reuse their emoluments or benefits above what the law prescribes, promote monopoly of the economy, politicians who serve as wealth brokers obtain the resources with which they purchase security and influence legislative processes, allows inefficient producers to remain in business, encourages the government to pursue perverse economic policies, provides opportunities to enrich people through extorting money from those seeking favour, distorts economic incentives, discourages entrepreneurship and slow down economic growth (Iyare, 2008) Given the narrative above, what is corruption? Does corruption affect national development? How effective are institutional and legal frameworks put in place by governments to check the incidence of corruption; what are the ways forward;

This study which seeks to critically assess the effects of corruption on socio-economic development in Nigeria, will provide invaluable input for policy-making and research and contribute to the body of literature on the fight against corruption.

The work adopts the theory of prebendalism as postulated by Richard Joseph (1996). According to the theory, state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by an officeholder who use them to generate material benefit for themselves and relations to the detriment of the general society. In Nigeria, prebendal politics by political office holders are the order of the day as they perpetrate corruption with impunity, with the society at the receiving end. Inevitably, the prebendal nature of the Nigerian system allows corruption to thrive, which undermines and stagnates development. The theory argues that people engage in crime to amass wealth. In other words, people's consciousness determine their well-being; i.e the way that the society organizes its production, distribution and exchange of goods and services determine their material condition.

Although clientelism and prebendalism might be mutually reinforcing, these concepts have separate meanings. Clientelism defines the nature of individual and group relationships within the broader social and political space, but prebendalism essentially is a function of the competition for, and appropriation of the offices of the state (Seteolu 2005). Clientelism assists to understand the mechanism of how a few privileged individuals' control and legitimize the lopsided distribution of resources in the society. Consequently, Nigerian political culture is hinged on clientelism and prebendal politics. The pursuit of politics is intended to appropriate the political space and resources among fractions of the political elite (Seteolu 2005) Corruption also manifests in patrimonial and neo-patrimonial character which makes the distinction between the public and the private domains blurred and power, which is a major source of wealth, has become personalized. Within this framework of analysis, the behaviour of the political elite in Africa is linked to a traditional value system. The African society is patriarchal where political power is personalized, and leadership is permanent in the context of self-recruited oligarchy. According to Seteolu, these socially imbibed values are replicated in the political terrain and expand fellowship in the context of power politics. The fierce struggle in the public space is linked to conflicts that characterized leadership succession in traditional political systems and the attraction of political control where party politics guarantees access to wealth and economic power. Therefore, the political elite uses social identities such as ethnicity for particularistic purposes. The ethnic identity becomes a mobilizing mechanism to access political power and consolidate dominance and economic control (Dudley 1973; Osaghae 1995). Consequently, power can be used for personal or group aggrandizements. In patrimonial societies, corruption seems to be intrinsically part and parcel of the political culture.

Neopatrimonialism, a related term to prebendalism is used to describe and explain state failures in Africa. It is used to describe patrons using state resources to secure the loyalty of clients in the general population and is indicative of informal patron-client relationships that can reach from the very high up in state structures down to individuals in the lower levels. As a result of that kind of patron-client or identity politics, Nigeria has regularly been one of the lowest-ranked nations for political transparency by Transparency International (TI) in its corruption perception index.

With the politicization of primordial rivalries, the political class and opportunistic bureaucrats found a safe sanctuary to embezzle and squander state resources. The problem of corruption, therefore, is inextricably tied to the problem of identity and citizenship. It is rooted in the psycho-political perception of Nigeria by an average Nigerian, and history.

2 II.

3 Conceptual Clarifications

Corruption: As real and pervasive as corruption is, it defies precise definition and Scholars and Practitioners have therefore advanced different definitions of the concept based on their orientation. Transparency International (TI) (1999:1, 2002:6), the world most reputable non-governmental anti-corruption watchdog, defines corruption "as the abuse of public office for private gain".

Amujiri (2002:69) defines corruption as a term commonly applied to self-benefiting conduct by public officials and others who are expected to be dedicated to public service. Werner (1983:27) categorized the definition of corruption into three groups; the public office-centred definition, which involves deviation from legal and public duty norms for the sake of private benefits, be it for pecuniary or state gains or influence. The second group,

168 according to this scholar, is the marked-centred definition, which views corruption as maximizing pecuniary gain
169 according to supply and demand and exists in the marketplace of their official domains. The third group in the
170 opinion of this scholar is the public-centred definition, which emphasizes the betrayal of public interest by the
171 preference of particular or private interest.

172 Corruption, therefore, is a social phenomenon that manifests in various human actions, such as dishonesty,
173 wickedness, selfishness, embezzlement, moral degeneration, bribery, insatiability, covetousness, and so on. Hence
174 Momoh (1991) stated that a corrupt act can be characterized by immoral but non-violent action on the stronger
175 party (the person in a position of authority) to accept or on the part of the weaker party (the person in want of
176 favour) to give extra-official gratification in cash or in-kind to induce wrong or right action. The scholar explains
177 that there are low grades, medium grade and high-grade levels. These three levels of corruption correspond to
178 the three classes in society, the low class, the middle class and the high class. However, these classifications of
179 corruption are also reflected in the way and manner in which people carry out their official duties.

180 Corruption, according to Nye (1967), is a behaviour that deviates from the normal duties of a public role
181 because of private pecuniary or status gains; or it violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private
182 influence. This includes such behaviour as bribery (use of reward to pervert the judgment of a person in the
183 position of trust); nepotism (bestow of patronage because of inscriptive relationship rather than merit); and
184 misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private use). In ??ohnston's (1991) view; it "is a
185 behaviour that abuses societal legal or social standards as well as public interest or recourse for private benefit".
186 Corruption exists where there is a diversion of government revenues and national income flow to augment the
187 currently entitled government officials private wealth when the latter is not legally entitled to do so. It involves
188 giving undue favour to other people with whom government officials have a clientele relationship. In a related
189 definition, Idris (2008) defines corruption as an act that deviates from the rules of conduct governing the action
190 of someone in a position of public authority because of private motives such as wealth.

191 The African Development Bank Group (ADB 2006) defines corruption as the misappropriation of public
192 assets or public office/trust for private gain. Goyegfa (2000) identifies two variant definitions of corruption,
193 traditional and political. The traditional connotations of corruption involve the giving and taking of bribes or
194 illegal acquisition of wealth using the resource of a public office including the exercise of discretion. The political
195 definition is any decision, act or conduct that can subvert the integrity of people in authority or institution charged
196 with promoting, defending or sustaining the democratization process thereby undermining its effectiveness in
197 performing its assigned role. Economic Development: Development means different things to many countries. In
198 many nations, it means attainment of self-governance, to others, it signifies the provision of essential infrastructure
199 that create a healthy atmosphere, provision of quality education, communication and the ability to evolve an
200 amicable business environment for the citizenry while some see it as an achievement of technological advancement.
201 (Akanji and Akosile, 2001).

202 Gboyega (2003) captures development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of
203 human existence in all ramifications. Naomi (1995) explains that development involves not only economic
204 growth but also some notion of equitable distribution, provision of health care, education, housing and other
205 essential services, all intending to improve the quality of life of individuals and collectivities. Charisma (1984)
206 believes that development is a process of societal advancement where improvement in the wellbeing of people is
207 generated through a strong partnership between all sectors, corporate bodies and other groups in the society.
208 It is, therefore, true that development seeks to achieve improvement in the material well-being of all citizens,
209 provide a sustainable way to ensure that today's consumption does not imperil the future, demand that poverty
210 and inequality of access to good things of life be removed or drastically reduced and seeks to improve personal,
211 physical, security and livelihood as well as life expectancy (Lawal and Abe, 2011). Inferring from the above
212 definitions, national development means concrete improvement in socioeconomic, political, technological levels
213 of a society and its citizens and these are best achieved through strategies mapped out by the government
214 as contained in the nation's development plans. Despite these series of development strategies earmarked by
215 successive governments with good intentions to generate and create meaningful development, the current state
216 of development in the country is far from being realised. This is because of the high level of corruption and
217 indiscipline exhibited by the leadership of the country. There is no leadership commitment to stirring plan from
218 formulation to full implementation coupled with the monolithic economy which makes the government depend on
219 a single product (crude oil) for survival to the detriment of agriculture and solid mineral development. Mimiko
220 (1998) avers that a very good development plan supervised by a thoroughly corrupt state can hardly do a good
221 job. However, the fact remains that development is contingent upon leadership i.e leadership plays a significant
222 role in national development.

223 The concept of development is the efforts aimed at improving the socio-economic and ecological status,
224 exploiting and processing the environmental or natural resources to improve the quality of human life in such a
225 way that the needs of future generations are not jeopardized.

226 4 Mohammed (2002) looks at development as;

227 i. Increasing the availability and widening the distribution of basic life sustenance, such as food, shelter and
228 protection; ii. Raising the level of living in addition to higher income, provision of jobs, better education and
229 greater attention to cultural and humanitarian values, all of which serve to enhance material wellbeing, but also

230 to generate greater individual and national self-esteem, and iii. Expanding the range of economic and social
231 choice to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence. According to the scholar,
232 development means an improved standard of living in terms of availability of decent accommodation, improved
233 nutritional standards, qualitative health care and educational services to the majority, life expectancy which is
234 mainly influenced by the standard of living, literacy level and income of people. Seers (2006) defines economic
235 development in terms of what has been happening to poverty, unemployment, inequality and concluded that it
236 is only when there is a decline in poverty, unemployment, inequality, that development can take place.

237 This implies that economic development has to be redefined in terms of the reduction or elimination of
238 poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy (Brinkman, 1996, Goulet,
239 1971 and Amargya, 1999). Components or core values serve as a conceptual basis and practical guidelines
240 for understanding the inner meaning of development. These core values, sustenance; self-esteem and freedom,
241 represent common goals sought by all individuals and societies. Sustenance -the ability to meet basic Needs:
242 All people have certain needs without which life would be impossible. These life-sustaining basic human needs
243 include food, shelter, health and protection ??Ghosh, 2009). When any of these is absent or is critically in short
244 supply, a condition of absolute underdevelopment exists. A basic function of all economic activity, therefore, is to
245 provide as many people as possible with the means of overcoming the helplessness and misery arising from lack
246 of food, shelter, health and protection. Without sustained and continuous economic progress at the individual as
247 well as the societal level, the realization of human potential would not be possible; one has to have enough to be
248 more effective (Goulet, 1971). Rising per capita income, the elimination of absolute poverty, greater employment
249 opportunities, and lessening income inequalities, therefore, constitute the necessary but not sufficient indicators
250 for development (United Nations 1994).

251 5 Self-Esteem (To be a person):

252 A second universal component of the good life is self-esteem, a sense of worth and self-respect, of not being used
253 as a tool by others for their ends. All people and societies seek some basic form of self-esteem, although they
254 may call it authenticity, identity, dignity, respect, honour, or recognition. The nature and form of this self-esteem
255 may vary from society to society and from culture to culture. Esteem is conferred only on countries that possess
256 economic wealth and technological power. This is because development is an indispensable way of gaining esteem.
257 Freedom From Servitude (To be able to Choose): A third and final universal value that analysts suggest should
258 constitute the meaning of development is the concept of human freedom. Freedom here is to be understood in
259 the sense of emancipation from the alienation of material conditions of life and from social servitude to nature,
260 other people, misery, oppression, institutions and dogmatic beliefs especially that poverty is predestination.

261 6 III.

262 7 Types of Corruption

263 Five major types of corruption society have been identified and these include political, economic, bureaucratic,
264 judicial and moral corruption (Otite, 1986): The two areas in which political corruption is manifest are the
265 activities connected with election and succession, the manipulation of people and institutions to retain power
266 and office. Political positions are scarce and the prices of offices are high. Hence the competition for such a
267 resourceful position involves every possible and extra-legal means -through corruption-to overcome obstacles and
268 opposition. Ugwu (2002) has pointed out that the principal attraction in politics is to have access to power. For
269 Ngwuoke (2001) in Nigeria, emphasis is self-centeredness, egoistic tendencies, corruption and bribery.

270 This lends credence to Achebe's (1983) assertion that "the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely the
271 problems of endemic corruption and failure of leadership, the unwillingness of our leadership and personal
272 example".

273 Generally, economic indiscipline and social drift have always been the reason for the takeover of government
274 by the military in Nigeria. This was the reason advanced by General Babangida and General Sani Abacha at the
275 in-house coup of November 18, 1993, which took over from Chief Ernest Shonekan that they came to "redeem
276 the image of Nigeria" and "Savage" her from economic mismanagement.

277 In the banking sector, bank officials have been known to use their position to manipulate customers' accounts,
278 suppress cheques and steal foreign currency. They also defraud customers in cash lodgment, forge transfer, grant
279 unauthorized credit and dry post friction credits using the computer. The bank credit reports that 723 cases of
280 fraud and forgeries were identified ??Essien 2000).

281 Generally, corruption manifests in the forms of forgery of some trade names to make the product look similar
282 to the original products, for example, Borunvita or Bonita in the place of Bournvita. The unsuspecting buyer
283 hardly looks at the difference.

284 Bureaucratic corruption involves buying favour from bureaucrats who formulate and administer government
285 economic and political policies. Politically in the area of acquisition of foreign exchange, tax evasion (Otite 1986)
286 and payment of bribes to officials thus tempting them away from the path of probity". In some cases, officials
287 expect to be bribed for almost everything, they use delaying tactics to force people to bribe them.

288 Salaries are deliberately delayed and at times denied, night allowances, hospital bills, mileage claims, approved
289 salary scale, leave allowances are withheld. Sometimes they are fixed in banks for it to yield interest to individuals.

8 IV. CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION ON NIGERIA'S DEVELOPMENT

290 Also commonplace in the civil service is victimization such as punitive transfers "sitting on one's file, sex scandal,
291 favouritism such as employment of a brother or village member, peer group, classmate, society or church members,
292 in-laws, etc.

293 Allegations of corruption are rife against enforcement agencies and the courts. According to Amujiri (2002:76),
294 corruption is equally rampant in the judiciary. Money is used to secure police attention and bails and even to
295 pervert the administration of justice. A shameful revelation showed that there have been the incident of judges
296 refusing to give ex parte order or interlocutory orders in a matter of grave urgency unless gratified" (Ezeme, 2002).

297 Existing orders have been wantonly vacated under highly questionable judicial authorities; some judges are
298 more pro-executive than dispensing impartial justice. Every step in filing, processing and assessing an application
299 or in getting a court order executed or obtaining a copy of a ruling involves money that is always paid for. (Amujiri,
300 2002) There is also long-scale corruption among the electoral tribunals adjudicating over a series of electoral
301 disputes and this has dented the image of the Nigerian judiciary. Many have often doubted the objectivity and
302 neutrality of most Nigerian Judges who are perceived as corrupt and often subvert justice (Alabi and Fashagba
303 2010). By this, court rulings are occasionally believed to go the way of the highest bidder.

304 Religious organizations are also involved. Acknowledging the existence of corruption within the religious
305 organization, the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) in a communiqué issued at the end of their
306 assembly in 2000, remarks that; corruption has passed for official policy in both the public and private sector of
307 our national life. The socio-economic and political system itself appears to be built on corruption and thrives in
308 it. Even the church and other religious organizations are themselves not completely free from corruption (Ezeme
309 2002: 266).

310 Corruption in contemporary societies, particularly in urban and cosmopolitan centres, has worsened, or in
311 some cases created, conditions that favour moral depravity. The desire for employment, the wish to show wealth
312 through the acquisition of women, the flamboyant demonstration of individual materialistic possession amid
313 social poverty, and the exploitation of man by man -the powerless poor by the powerful rich, are all indices of
314 corruption. Lust, incest, avarice, covetousness are now rampant in churches.

315 8 IV. Causes and Effects of Corruption on Nigeria's Develop- 316 ment

317 Many reasons have been adduced as probable causes of the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria. This range from
318 non-conformity to religious tenets, impaired values and ideas alien to our culture, ethnicity which encourages
319 favouritism and nepotism, a weak legal system which is honoured in the breach than the observance.

320 The quest for excessive materialism inherent like the present-day society which emphasizes personal wealth
321 without regard to the sources of such wealth collective interest and welfare of the larger society, poverty, illiteracy,
322 get-rich syndrome, statism, wrong attitude to public property, absence of welfare scheme to cushion effects of
323 unemployment, retirement, large families, the struggle for power, double standards and low level of patriotism.
324 It does appear that poverty is not the only factor that promotes the widespread of giving and taking bribes i.e
325 illegal financial inducement in the country. This is attested to by the fact that in Nigeria rich people are more
326 corrupt than poor persons.

327 According to Maduegbuna (2005), the benefits of corruption are greater than the consequences of being
328 caught and disciplined. However, generally, a high incidence of poverty which, according to the National Bureau
329 of Statistics (2005), is put at 54.1% contributed in no small measure to the desperate to acquisition or wealth
330 through any means. In Nigeria, the unemployed are mostly the youths who engaged in antisocial activities such as
331 cyber-crime, drug peddling, prostitution, political thuggery, paid assassins, oil bunkering, kidnapping, militancy
332 among others, all to eke a living.

333 Jimo (2001) attributes corruption within Africa's public administration to over-centralization of power, lack of
334 media freedom to expose scandals, the impunity of well-connected officials and absence of transparency in public
335 management, clienteles and low salaries. Danago (2008) observes that the poor salary levels of most public
336 servants have not kept pace with inflation, which has eroded their purchasing power. It is also clear that the
337 process of gaining power in Nigeria is either through force or the influence of money.

338 Chobal and Daloz (1999) reason that in Africa, such factors as the obligations of mutual support, the
339 imperatives of reciprocity, the importance of gift exchange, the payment of tribute, the need to redistribute
340 cattle rustling or, more generally, plundering others, all have a negative bearing on the continent today. Some
341 believe that modern bribery may not be seen as cognate with traditional gift-giving since it takes place outside
342 the context of a patron-client relationship. Ethnically, the poor man's bribe to the faceless power broker he will
343 never meet again is completely distinct from his traditional gift to a patron.

344 Ogundiya (2009) observes that corruption is a huge challenge in public administration in Nigeria. It is at
345 the core of the crisis of governance and legitimacy, the establishment of stable democratic order, rule of law,
346 economic development, growth and the welfare of citizens. Of all forms of corruption, political corruption has
347 posed a major obstacle to national development in Nigeria. Indeed, the current crisis of development in Nigeria
348 can be attributed to a history of power governance characterized by corruption, social injustice and political
349 instability.

350 Corruption promotes economic decay, social and political instability, perverts the ability of the state to foster

351 rule of law and eventually corrodes trust and undermines legitimacy. In Nigeria, the major impacts of corruption
352 on national development are bad governance, poor service delivery, inadequate infrastructural amenities, poor
353 management of the public enterprise, brain drain of professional/skilled manpower, lack of respect for lawful
354 orders and rule of law, impunity moral decadence and general underdevelopment, unemployment. These impacts
355 are further elucidated below a. Bad Governance: The World Bank (1992) What probably approximated as
356 models of development in Nigeria were programmes or packages many of which were bogus in scope, illconceived,
357 uncoordinated and haphazard in nature entrusted to certain individuals, the majority of which were chosen based
358 on ethnic and primordial sentiments. That is not to say that Nigeria lacked quality human resources, not at
359 all, rather the point being made is that those who were given the responsibility of implementing government
360 policies were chosen by those who had political power and therefore extended such privileges to the individual
361 they favoured.

362 It is necessary to point out at this juncture that packages or reforms designed for implementation did not
363 reflect the will of the people/neither did they lead to a destination that is in any way close or near the collective
364 aspiration of a nation struggling to be united as one indivisible entity, a people who on several occasions have
365 been battered by the forces of imposed destiny. In concrete terms, one can concede the fact that Nigeria's efforts
366 at accomplishing the desired level of socio-economic and welfare changes have been salutary. What probably
367 have been lacking is accomplishing the desired changes. e. Decayed Infrastructures: Vision 20:2020 represents
368 our aspiration to be among the top 20 economies in the world by the year 2020. The Blueprint was built
369 upon the key principles and thrusts of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the National Economic
370 Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), thereby providing a common reference for efforts targeted at
371 achieving Nigeria's development objectives over the next 10 years. The broad objectives of the National; Vision
372 20:2020 are articulated in four dimensions, institutional, economic, social and environmental dimensions. The
373 institutional dimension seeks to promote responsible leadership, deepen transparency, accountability and rule
374 of law and guarantee adequate security of lives and property of Nigerians. The economic dimension aims at
375 enhancing productivity, diversification of the economy and a competitive business environment that will open
376 new business opportunities for Nigerians. The social dimension, on the other hand, seeks to improve the nation's
377 prospects for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and expand opportunities for sustainable
378 employment generation and Environmental dimension is intended to halt environmental degradation, promote
379 the use of renewable energy and enforce regulations on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Nigeria has
380 critical development challenges. Overcoming these challenges are undaunted tasks. It is however hoped that the
381 Vision 20:2020 will address death of critical infrastructures such as power and transportation network to support
382 rapid economic development, outdated educational curriculum that does not equip Nigerians to be job creators,
383 overdependence on oil as a major source of national income, which is a political threat to sustainable development,
384 poor accountability in government which impacts the value Nigerians get for money spent by government agencies,
385 uncoordinated approaches to addressing the development needs of the people, which accounts for the gap between
386 planned and actual project outcomes, sub-optimal value creation in productive activities such as agriculture, oil
387 and gas and manufacturing, relatively high cost of production for manufactured goods partly due to the absence
388 of a robust import substitution programme to support local sourcing of manufacturing input, and weak research
389 for development and innovation culture across public and private institutions. Most Nigerians have expressed
390 reservations on the feasibility of vision 20:2020. According to Obadan, (2013), the vision cannot be achieved
391 because of poverty, poor implementation of agriculture and manufacturing policies, and the circumstances of
392 the blueprint which came amid a deep economic recession. According to him, poverty has increased from 54.4%
393 in 2012 meaning that 112,518,507 Nigerians now live in poverty and noted that Nigeria's Human Development
394 Index was 0.471 in 2012, placing the country as a low human development nation with the rank of 153 rd
395 out of 186 countries. The relatively strong growth has not translated into broad-based economic and social
396 development needed to lift millions of people out of poverty and reduce inequality. Also, unemployment is high
397 and the increasing inequality Index is high and worsening while human development is low. f. Maladministration:
398 Nigeria has since independent been engulfed in gross mismanagement of the natural resources which gave rise to
399 ethnic and religious rivalries, coup and counter-coup, policy inconsistencies (Nebo, 2012) Governance in Nigeria
400 has always been leadership concerned mainly with the promotion of self-enrichment, marred by converting the
401 commonwealth, manipulating ethnic diversity and institutions with little or no respect for due process, rule
402 of law, accountability and transparency. The welfare and well-being of the citizens are of no essence. Good
403 governance, according to Onyishi (2009) strives on respect for the rule of law, fundamental rights, transparency
404 and accountability, quality and effective institutional performance, participation in the political and decision-
405 making process by the citizens and cooperative action as well as environmental sustainability. Maladministration
406 results where these attributes are lacking and corrupt society is the antithesis of good governance, where public
407 resources are stolen by public officials, justice is for the highest bidders, impunity reigns supreme, the public
408 treasures are looted, life touching projects are abandoned and service delivery is only on pages of paper. g.
409 Impunity: Due process is fundamental to quality service delivery and where this is lacking, impunity reigns
410 supreme. Generally, in Nigeria, there is that culture of impunity where mainly politicians who are power-drunk
411 and want to remain in office for life, treat state issues as personal issues and show little or no regret to due
412 process. This explains the position of political competitions in which people seek political power by all means.
413 Most officials of government and politicians leave in the habit of disobeying lawful courts orders and judgment. In

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414 the electoral process, wealthy individuals who do not hold public office control the political process by installing
415 their protégés in office and have the power personally to determine who gets nominated to contest and win in all
416 elections. ?? (Ahmed, 2007). These institutions could not do much, as they instead institutionalized corruption.
417 The nation is indeed turned into a pariah state. In the comity of nations, Nigerians are treated with suspicion
418 and embarrassment, and foreigners are wary of making Nigeria their investment destination (Iorhemen 2008).
419 Amujiri (2002:68) remarks that public accountability is never a priority in Nigeria. Despite the brave letters
420 of the constitution and the expansive noise of the anticorruption crusade? It has been observed that the more
421 government devise complex and ambitious ways of combating corruption and plans for the socioeconomic and
422 political development of this country, the more their implementation is frustrated by the evolution of the ever
423 more effective and sophisticated method of corruption so that in the end the only development we see is the
424 development of corruption” (Smith 1976).

425 1999 marked a turning point in the history of Nigeria’s anti-corruption campaigns. Specifically, following
426 his election in 1999, former President Olusegun Obasanjo initiated certain policy reforms that were specifically
427 targeted at tackling corruption. Two major anti-corruption bodies were established, the Independent Corrupt
428 Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
429 (EFCC) in 2000 and 2003 respectively. While the ICPC appeared to be more deliberate in its approach to
430 fighting corruption, the EFCC was more aggressive and proactive and thus gained as much popularity as
431 notoriety (Adebanwi and Obadare 2011). The establishment of the EFCC in 2003 was a response to the perceived
432 inefficiencies of the ICPC, although in many ways their responsibility appears to be the same.

433 Over the years since then, for virtually the first time in Nigerian history, these anti-corruption agencies
434 have successfully prosecuted corrupt powerful government officials. They have identified and recovered ill-gotten
435 wealth from prominent Nigerian officials and have prosecuted and removed about five former ministers and former
436 governors from office.

437 The power of the EFCC is to: prevent, investigate, prosecute and penalize economic and financial crimes and
438 it is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the provisions of other laws and regulations relating to economic
439 and financial crimes. Consequently, the major laws that deal with corruption in Nigerian are:

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441 In Nigeria, the source of a man’s wealth is of no concern to his neighbour, the public, or the government. Wealthy
442 people who are known to be corrupt are regularly courted and honoured by communities, religious bodies, social
443 clubs and other private organizations. This implies that people who benefit from the largesse of these corrupt
444 people rarely ask questions. Studies have also shown that traditional chieftaincy titles and membership of boards
445 of directors of government-owned corporations are only for the “influential” individual in the society who have
446 “made it” economically or politically. Most of these people “made it” through enriching themselves fraudulently,
447 but enjoy public respect and accolades. Honest and dedicated public servants, who have not accumulated dirty
448 wealth, do not command much respect from society. These attitudes serve to encourage a new breed of public
449 servants to engage in corrupt practices.

450 Corruption in Nigeria is greatly influenced by a high degree of poverty, greed, unemployment, ostentatious
451 lifestyle, weak government institutions, lack of morals, poor pay and lack of incentives.

452 Corruption has inadvertently affected development efforts at both the state level and the national level as it
453 is responsible for the lack of social infrastructure such as electricity, water, medical facilities, roads, housing etc.
454 in a nutshell. It has affected the wellbeing of Nigerians.

455 Even though successive governments have made the fight against the hydra-headed monster a priority, they
456 have however failed in showing genuine commitment towards exterminating corruption in the country. The
457 government through its anti-corruption agencies (EFCC, ICPC, CCB, NEITI), rather than being dogged and
458 unyielding is biased as it is allegedly used by the executive to either witch-hunt or victimize political opponents
459 and political allies.

460 Corruption is now a universal disease that afflicts not only developing nations but also the developed world.
461 European Union recently expressed great concern over the alarming rate of corruption in Europe, the EU
462 countries. It was asserted that EU countries lose \$120bn annually due to corruption. The EU commissioner Cecilia
463 Maimstron has therefore advised EU countries to do everything humanly possible to tackle the monster corruption,
464 saying it was undermining confidence, trust and democracy (BBC TV News 8.15 pm Monday, ??ebruary 3, 2014).

465 According to the commissioner, corruption in 28 EU countries was costing European taxpayers about \$ 120bn
466 (? 100bn) a year, the equivalent of the union annual budget, that there is no corruption-free zones in Europe,
467 that declared intentions to combat corruption in EU Countries had not produced concrete results and that the
468 political will to eradicate it was lacking, that EU does not provide sanctions at all against corruption in the
469 Region (Dare, 2014). That Europe, fond of questioning developing Countries and teaching them to religiously
470 adhere to the principles of accountability, transparency and good governance, exhibits double standard in the face
471 of such monumental corruption in EU countries. Corruption is also one of the scourges ravaging the developed
472 world including the USA, the EU and even the eastern world (Dare, 2014).

473 Recommendations: Given the research findings, the following recommendations are made as measures to
474 enhance the fight against corruption.

475 1. There should be a massive orientation exercise for all Nigerians through various enlightenment programmes

476 by the National Orientation Agency and other related institutions to intimate them on the need to shun all forms
477 of corruption and to treat corrupt government officials as common thieves, rather than revere and bestow them
478 with chieftaincy titles and awards. 2. The church and other institutions should be involved in the advocacy
479 against corruption by querying and rejecting huge financial donations by corrupt public servants and politicians,
480 instead of turning a blind eye to the source of their funds. 3. There should be an explicit compulsory public
481 declaration of assets and liabilities of public office holders, including civil servants in the Code of Conduct of
482 Bureau as a way of checkmating illgotten wealth while they are in office and after they leave. Consequently, this
483 calls for a review of the law establishing the CCB and the 1999 Constitution as amended. 4. The government
484 should ensure that financial leakages in ministries, departments and agencies are blocked by making sure that
485 public office holders are more accountable and transparent in the discharge of their duties. 5. Anti-corruption
486 agencies (e.g EFCC, ICPC, CCB, NEITI etc) need greater operational autonomy to be set loose from the undue
487 control and interference of the executive. This will enable them to discharge their duties more effectively and also
488 prevent them from being used as a tool to witch hunt political opponents. 6. Similarly, the provision that the
489 Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) makes rules and regulations in respect to the functions and duties of
490 the agencies should be revisited. All corruption cases should be investigated and prosecuted by anti-corruption
491 agencies without recourse to the AGF as an individual. 7. The government should set up specialized courts
492 to try corruption cases, as there are usually unnecessary delays in the conventional courts due to a plethora of
493 litigations. 8. Furthermore, the judiciary should be reformed to make it more effective and vibrant by ridding
494 judges that have put its integrity into jeopardy, as it is no longer seen by Nigerians as the last hope of the
495 common man, but the last hope of the highest bidder. 9. The public Procurement Act also needs to be amended
496 to extend its cope to other levels of government (state and local governments). This will make the fight against
497 corruption more encompassing. 10. There should be reforms of civil society organizations and the mass media.
498 Timely enforcement of the Freedom of Information Law is needed to make these organizations more effective as
499 potent weapons of the anti-corruption war. 11. There should also be strong political leadership at all levels that
500 are committed to fighting corruption. Strong legislature and judiciary are needed to enforce sanctions. Strict
501 rules and funding of political parties and electoral campaigns should be put in place so that money cannot buy
502 power any longer in Nigeria. 12. The fight against corruption should be sustained since the positive result can
503 only be achieved with continuous effort.¹

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