

CORRUPTION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the various impacts of corruption on Nigeria's socio-economic development. It is based on a comprehensive examination of existing literature, including insights from many scholarly sources. The study relies mainly on secondary data, explores the conceptual and empirical review of the courses, nature, and the impact of corruption on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. It investigates corruption's evolution and its complex relationships with political, economic, and social factors carried out to examine the nature, causes and impacts of corruption on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. Corruption has severe negative consequences on the economic growth and development of Nigeria. Scholars have discovered that, the problems of corruption have penetrated all sectors of the society- political, social, and socio-economic fabric of the Nigerian society. Corruption weaves an insidious pattern through Nigeria's broad economic landscape, leaving a trail of economic disaster. This issue not only depletes public coffers but also undermines the potential for long-term economic progress, prolonging a cycle of poverty and inequality. In order to provide a good base to understanding the problems under study, Marxist theory of dialectical materialism was explored. The study observed that, corruption has been a deterrent to socio-economic development and it is more rampant in developing countries such as Nigeria. Also, corruption has impeded the political stability, and has dented the image and reputation of Nigeria which has adversely affected foreign investment flow into the country. The study recommends that, there should be a fundamental restructuring of the Nigerian budget on the new social-economic order. The budget must reflect the urgent need of the masses rather than concentrating a large part on defence, that, government should strengthen the existing anti-corruption, bodies by making them truly independent, with adequate funding, and the use of modern techniques for dictating corruption. The judiciary should be adequately equipped to fight corrupt cases. Relevant and applicable laws should be put in place to hasten the trial and judgment of corruption cases.

Keywords: Corruption, Development, economic development & socio-economic.

1. INTRODUCTION

Corruption has been the focus of considerable attention and lamentation in and outside Nigeria. It is indeed the bane of any nation and its malady cuts across every organised system like religious, political, economic, social, etc. It contaminates all strata of the socio-political and economic structures of any society. One of the biggest challenges plaguing Nigeria since independence is the issue of corruption. The issue of corruption in Nigeria is endemic and pervasive, with negative impact on all facet of the country. Such negative impact includes, infrastructural problems such as lack of good roads, inadequate electricity and pipe borne water that the nation has had to grapple with due to corruption. Others, include poverty, unemployment of young graduates, without jobs to do even after leaving the universities and higher institution with certificates. This scenario poses a grave danger to the country. (Nwabuzo, 2005). Unfortunately, after years of independence, endemic corruption has become a bane in the sociopolitical life of Nigerians. For instance, at the economic level, the oil boom that the country experienced in the 1970s did not change the economic fortunes of the people. In the 1980s, the economic problems of the country became manifest in increasing unemployment, skyrocketing prices of goods and services, poverty,

decreasing value of the naira, hunger, diseases and penury. To some scholars, this trend contributed immensely to the increasing level of corruption that the country has experienced over the years.

In his widely acclaimed book, "The Trouble with Nigeria", Professor Chinua Achebe boldly proclaimed his frank and honest opinion that anybody who can say that corruption in Nigeria has not become alarming is either a fool, a crook or else does not live in the country. Corruption in Nigeria according to Ikejiani-Clark (2001), takes the form of kickbacks, payoffs, bribery among others. Osoba cited in Jike, (2005) gives a more elaborate definition of corruption as: "A form of anti-social behaviour by an individual or social group which confers unjust or fraudulent benefits on its perpetrators and is inconsistent with the established legal norms and prescribed moral ethos of the land is likely to subvert or diminish the capacity of the legitimate authorities to produce fully for the material and spiritual well-being of all members of society in a just and equitable manner".

It is important to note, Corruption is widely accepted as the cause of social underdevelopment, particularly in third world country like Nigeria. The upsurge of corruption in Nigeria is disturbing and has done a lot of damage to nation building activities. Unfortunately, all of government efforts at fighting corruption over the years have proved unsuccessful. It has defiled all treatments and is increasing and also spreading rapidly like wild fire. This cankerworm has eaten deep into the fabric of the nation and has stunted growth in various sectors of the economy. It has been the primary factor slowing down development in various sectors of the economy (ICPC, 2006). This paper therefore investigates corruption and its effects on socio-economic development of Nigeria. The paper investigates and establishes the link between corruption and socio-economic development in Nigeria.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Corruption in Nigeria is so endemic that it has stifled economic growth and development affecting every sector negatively. Corruption permeates every sector of the Nigerian society from millions of scam e-mail messages sent each year by people claiming to be Nigerian officials seeking help with transferring large sums of money out of the country, to the police officers who routinely set up roadblocks, to extract bribes of money from drivers (Polgreen, 2005). However, the most disturbing and damaging form of corruption is made manifest in the succession of kleptocratic governments, which has produced extremely wealthy generals and political leaders. Similarly, electoral corruption is prevalent. This is a situation that includes the purchase of votes with money, promises of office or special favors, coercion, intimidation, and interference with freedom of election, sale of votes, killing and maiming of people in the name of election, and a situation where losers end up as the winners (Adeyemi, 2012).

Sadly, as a result of corruption in Nigeria, her quest for socio-economic development has remained a mirage, despite its enormous array of resources. The Nigeria economy has witnessed a stagnant economic growth. This ugly development has been partly attributed to corruption and gross mismanagement of the country's vast resources. Corruption has tremendously affected lives, and provoked animosity amongst Nigerians. It has eaten so deep into the fabrics of the Nigerian citizen, the public and private sectors, governmental and non-governmental organisation and has essentially become a way of life and an important source of accumulation of wealth for those who occupied any strategic position in government. (Nwaze, 2012). There are instances, where public officers converted public properties into their own private property in Nigeria. These problems therefore, provoke this study on corruption and its impact on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. It is high time the government tackled this social problem so as to save the nation from dire consequences.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

This study adopts qualitative approach. The main sources of data were from textbooks, published journals, conference and seminar workshop papers, newspapers, magazines and the internet sources etc., which were used to review literatures on corruption and its impact on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. These help in identifying, examining, and narrowing some of its socio-economic impacts in Nigeria.

1.4 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

1.4.1 Concept of Corruption

The term corruption is perhaps one of the most common terms in discussion today. Corruption as Shihata (2000) posits occurs when a function, whether official or private, requires the allocation of benefits or the

provision of a good or service. In all cases, a position of trust is being exploited to realise private gains beyond what the position holder is entitled to. Attempts to influence the position holder, through the payment of bribes or an exchange of benefits or favours, in order to receive a special gain or treatment not available to others is also a form of corruption, even if the gain involved is not illicit under applicable law. The absence of rules facilitates the process as much as the presence of cumbersome or excessive rules does. Corruption in this sense is not confined to the public sector and, in that sector, to administrative bureaucracies. It is not limited to the payment and receipt of bribes. It takes various forms and is practiced under all forms of government, including well-established democracies. It can be found in the legislative, judicial, and executive arms of government, as well as in all forms of private sector activities. It is not exclusively associated with any ethnic, racial, or religious group. However, its level, scope, and impact vary greatly from one country to another and may also vary, at least for a while, within the same country from one place to another.

Alatas (1990) sees corruption as the abuse of trust for the sake of private benefits. To Akinsoye-George (2000:9) corruption refers to all forms of improper or selfish exercise of power and influence attached to a public as well as private office. Nye (1967) sees corruption as behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private (regarding close family, personal, private clique) pecuniary or status gains, or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence. Dukor (2006) attempted to give a Nigerian definition when he said that corruption in Nigeria is the failure of the state to perform or live up to its moral and political status. For him in Nigeria, the state is the sole agent of corruption in all its political, business and economic ramifications. Whatever else might be said, it is evident that corruption involves unlawful and, immoral behaviour, illegal accumulation of wealth, circumvention of established rules with the intention of personal gains and the misuse of public power for personal or private benefits. Lipset and Lenz, (2000) described corruption as efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means for private gain at public expense; or a misuse of public power for private benefit. Transparency International (2008) defines corruption as the misuse of entrusted power (by heritage, education, marriage, election, appointment or whatever else) for private gain. This broader definition covers not only the politician and the public servant, but also the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Executive Officer (CFO) of a company, the notary public, the team leader at a workplace, the administrator or admissions-officer to a private school or hospital, the coach of a football team, etcetera.

1.4.2 Development as a concept

Etuala (2017) defines development as the transformation from one state to another state, which could be economic, social, human and physical. It is also said to be the dynamics of measurable changes in specific or general context of a country or institution or people (Eshimolah, 2016). In this context, development entails economic growth coupled with real changes in infrastructure, social, technological and human advancement. Development means improvement in country's economic and social conditions. More specially, it refers to improvements in way of managing an area's natural and human resources in order to create wealth and improve people's lives. According to Todaro (1995) development is the process of improving the quality of all human lives. Development entails improving in individual condition of living, better infrastructure, and general social economic development.

Development revolves around the people and measured qualitatively. It deals with efforts that seek to improve the wellbeing and quality life of people in a society by creating jobs, resources, growing incomes and tax base of the host society. Dudley Seers while eLabour ating on the meaning of development suggests that while there can be value judgements on what is development and what is not, it should be a universally acceptable aim of development to make for conditions that lead to a realisation of the potentials of human personality. The people are held to be the principal actors in human scale development. Respecting the diversity of the people as well as the autonomy of the spaces in which they must act converts the present day object person to a subject person in the human scale development. Development of the variety that we have experienced has largely been a top-down approach where there is little possibility of popular participation and decision making (Smah, 2015; Shah, 2018). Also, a focus on people and the masses implies that there could be many different roads to development and self-reliance. The slogans "human centred development", "the development of people", "integrated development", all call for a more inclusive and sensitive approach to fundamental social, economic and political changes involved in development such that all aspects of life of a people, their collectivity, their

own history and consciousness, and their relations with others make for a balanced advancement (Shah, 2018).

1.4.3 Economic Development

Economic development can also be referred to as the quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy (Jhinghan, 2008). Such actions can involve multiple areas including development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy, and other initiatives. Economic development is a policy intervention endeavor with aims of economic and social well-being of people (Sen, 1983).

1.4.4 Social and Economic Impact

Social and economic impact is briefly defined according to Bello, 2017 as “The effects of an activity, action, business operations, market trend, programme, policy or project on the economic and social well-being of individuals and families in a society which may be positive or negative”. The particular area of interest here is the corruption and its impact on the socio-economic development of Nigeria.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The foundation of this work is built on Marxist theory of dialectical materialism (1883). The main idea of this theory is importance of matter on determining the happenings within the social system. This theory believes that, the material condition of living of the people tends to influence their behaviour, particularly in a society that encourages unequal access to resources, and domination of one class- Bourgeoisie class over the proletariat class. That, in a capitalist society, private ownership of means of production forced people to be involved in primitive accumulation; this ugly situation breeds corruption in the society, especially Nigeria.

1.6 The Nature and Character of Corruption in Nigeria

To properly discuss the nature and character of corruption in Nigeria, corruption is typified into political and bureaucratic corruption. Political Corruption: This takes place at the highest levels of political authority. It occurs when the politicians and political decision-makers, who are entitled to formulate, established and implement the laws, are themselves corrupt. It also takes place when policy formulation and legislation is tailored to benefit political leadership e.g. “Budget Padding” of the Nigeria National Assembly. Another example is vote purchase; intimidation; political thuggery etc. Electoral victory is no longer determined by popular votes but by vote purchase, intimidation etc. Bureaucratic Corruption: This occurs in the public administration or the implementation of policies. It is the kind of corruption the citizens encounter daily at places like the hospitals, schools, police stations, public offices etc.

In similar vein, Akindele (1990) and Babalola (1995) have made efforts to divide corruption into many forms. These are political, bureaucratic and electoral forms of corruption. While Babalola (1995) argued that corruption in politics occurs at two levels. The first level is at the law making level while the second is the law implementation level. According to his findings at the first level people try to influence law making and policy decisions while at the second level people try to pervert the course of justice and influence judgements. He notes that the perpetration of corruption in politics is done in the following ways; buying of votes and voters cards, conniving of officials with party agents and security officials to manipulate election results. A clear example was the 1983, 1999, 2003, 2007 elections when INEC officials connived with security forces and government officials to falsify election results (Olagunju, 2012). Another form of political corruption is identified as the use of incumbency power. There is an “iron law” of African politics which states that no government in power ever loses an election. Office holders therefore make use of all the available weapons at their disposal to suppress opposition and win elections at all cost. Again, Babalola (1998) and Osaba (2002) have rightly observed that money bag politics which is practiced in Nigeria does not make political aspiration available to everybody because it is available only to the rich and powerful. Hence, credible citizens find it very difficult to contest for political positions because of the high rate of bribery and corruption. It is so unfortunate that elective posts usually go to the highest bidder.

In the same light, Dike (2011) notes that political corruption is sometimes seen as similar to corruption of greed as it affects the manner in which decisions are made and it manipulates political institutions rules of procedure and also distorts government institutions. He categorizes corruption into bribery, fraud, embezzlement, extortion, favouritism and nepotism. Furthermore, Babalola (2008) posits that bureaucratic corruption occurs in the public administration or implementation end of politics and this kind of corruption has been branded low level and street level. It refers to the type of corruption encountered on a daily basis by citizens in public places like hospitals, schools, police stations, tax revenue offices and

many more. Bureaucratic corruption which is also seen as corruption of need occurs when business is obtained from the public sector through inappropriate procedure.

1.7 TYPES OF CORRUPTION

There exist discordant views among scholars in the attempt to delineate different types of corruption. This is due to differences in culture on what constitute corruption. The United Nations office on Drugs and Crime identify the following as types of corruption.

1. Bribery: This involves the promise, offer of any benefit that improperly affects the actions or decision of public official. It may include also private individuals who serve in government committees. A bribe may consist of money, company shares, inside information, sexual favour, gifts etc. Embezzlement, theft and fraud: These offences involve theft or misappropriation of resources entrusted with authority and control over government property. These can include both public officials and private individuals. This can be diversion of public goods or theft of cash by public officials or private individuals.

2. Extortion: According UNODC (2001) is the act of using coercion. It involves coercing a person to pay money or provide other valuables or personal favours in exchange for acting or failing to act. This can be through the threat of physical harm, violence or restraint. Example of extortion for instance, a sick woman needs to see a doctor and at the hospital, the nurse tells her husband that he must pay something extra just to get into the doctor office `.

3. Exploiting a conflict of interest/influence peddling, insider trading. The above, involves, engaging in transactions, "selling" influence, or acquiring a position or commercial interest that is incompatible with one's official role and duties for the purpose of illegal enrichment.

3. Offering or receiving of an unlawful gratuity, favour or illegal commission. This offence is aimed at public officials who received anything of value as extra compensation for the performance of official duties.

4. Favouritism, nepotism and clientelism: - This is the assignment of appointments, services or resources based on family ties, party affiliation, tribe etc.

5. Illegal political contributions: This occurs when political parties or the government in power received money in exchange for non-interference and good will towards the entity or group making the contribution. This is close to bribery.

6. Money laundering: - This is the process or act of channeling the proceeds of corruption to safety through financial institutions. Money laundering produces a corruptive effect on national and international financial systems. It was discovered that the corruptive effect of money laundering is not only affecting private enterprises and their employees but also the entire states. Money laundering is the concealment of the source, nature, existence, location and disposition of money or property obtained illegally or from criminal activities such as embezzlement, drug trafficking, prostitution, 419, corruption and larger scale crime (Ibi 2018). In the Dictionary of Finance and Banking (2008), This term "money laundering" was refers to as a process where money is acquired illegally either through theft, drug dealings etc. is cleaned so that it will appear to have come from a legitimate source.

7. Political corruption: This type of corruption that is perpetrated by politicians, law makers, Governors, etc. Bureaucratic corruption. This type of corruption has to do with betrayal of trust by public officers in ministries, department agencies (MDAs), using one's position for selfish enrichment.

All the aforementioned types of corruption can be found in Nigeria with great consequences on the socio-economic development in the country.

CAUSES OF CORRUPTION

Scholars over the years have been interested in identifying the probable causes of corruption. It is generally agreed that corruption is caused by a combination of several factors. These includes: Pervasive and chronic poverty, extremely high levels of material deprivation and severe inequalities in the distribution of resources are major determinants of corruption in Nigeria (Osoba, 2010, Arowolo, 2011). Clashing moral values: Some identify the cause of corruption to clash in moral values. Graff (2007) argued that corruption is caused by certain values and norms of society that directly influence the values and norms of individuals. These values and norms influence the behaviour of individual officials, making them corrupt. In our society, giving gifts is highly valued. Gifts are often referred to as "kola", this paves way for corruption. Opportunistic factors: One cannot rule out opportunity as a cause of corruption. If

one- a public official is given the authority to perform some sensitive rules; the person can use that opportunity for personal enrichment.

Graff (2007) identifies organisational culture as one of the cause of corruption. Corruption can be caused by the culture of an organisation or group. Corruption in some organisations is in group behaviour rooted in established arrangements. For instance, a newly posted officer with no record of corruption might be socialised into the act by colleagues. Such person with time will come to see the act as an acceptable norm. The Nigerian extended family culture places enormous pressure on public servants forcing them to corrupt practices and nepotism. Lack of or total disregard for ethical standards in both public and private agencies in Nigeria led to corrupt practices. Poor rewarding system and greed. Our rewarding system in Nigeria is one of the poorest in the world. Nigeria is a society where national priorities are misplaced; meritocracy is discouraged, while mediocrity is promoted. Other causes of corruption in Nigeria include the fact that appropriate measures have not been put in place to punish corrupt citizens, great inequality on the distribution of wealth, poverty and low wages, absence of a strong or national community, poor reward system and greed, the attractiveness of political offices as a vehicle for upward social mobility and the lack of ethical standards. It is also argued that corruption or criminality pays in Nigeria and so corruption can thrive. This is because the benefits far outweigh the costs. According to Igbinovia (2003 :) Nigerian society derives benefit from the existence of crime because the Nigerian clime works to maintain rather than to eliminate crime. Because in Nigeria crime seems to pay, because the benefits far outweigh the costs and often there are even no costs at all. Nigeria has become a society inhabited by criminals and their cohorts who breed, recruit and maintain ready and reliable supply of deviants and criminals.

Furthermore, it can be argued that corruption has and still exist in Nigeria on a large scale because of the absence of determined and purposeful political leadership. According to Chinweizu (1995), what allows for crime in Nigeria is the absence of political will to do what is both right and necessary. The point is no doubt very succinct. A look at the political history of Nigeria will reveal that our leaders could not have fought corruption frontally because they have also been involved. This makes them lack the political will and moral right to institute programmes and set up machinery that can help fight corruption.

The Socio-Economic and Political Implications of Corruption in Nigeria

Undoubtedly, the effects of corruption such as under-development, lack of basic infrastructure like good road networks, misuse of natural resources, inadequate power and water supply, mediocrity in professional and leadership positions, defective leadership outputs, fuel scarcity in an oil producing nation, falling standards of education and work output, high unemployment rates and among others have serious impediment on socio-economic development of Nigeria. Corruption implies that the natural wealth that ought to be used for developing the nation would be in few hands to the detriment of the larger majority of the people. Other effects of corruption on socio-economic development of Nigeria are enumerated below:

1. Corruption slows economic growth by reducing productivity and efficiency. Misallocation of resources, along with the erosion of public trust, generates an atmosphere that discourages investment and entrepreneurship. Bureaucratic red tape and rent-seeking behaviour stifle innovation and dynamism in the economy (Kubo, 2019).
2. Another aspect of corruption's economic impact is the distorting of market mechanisms. When bribery and kickbacks drive corporate transactions, resource allocation becomes skewed, favouring those with political ties over merit or efficiency. This distortion stifles competition, discourages entrepreneurship, and undermines free-market principles (Ogbeidi, 2020).
3. Corruption discourages foreign direct investment (FDI), preventing overseas enterprises from entering the Nigerian market. Investors are concerned about the widespread corruption that pervades numerous sectors, seeing it as a substantial risk to their investments (Ayadi & Amoussouga, 2020). This reluctance to spend stifles economic diversification and innovation, limiting Nigeria's ability to compete in the global market.
4. Corruption worsens income disparity, widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Those with authority and influence use their positions for personal benefit, exacerbating the disparity between the wealthy elite and the destitute masses (Ayadi & Amoussouga, 2020). This inequality affects social cohesiveness and perpetuates the poverty cycle by making it difficult for individuals who lack finances to access basic services and opportunities.

5. Corruption, in its various manifestations, such as bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism, has a significant social and political cost. Its implications are broad and diverse. Corruption undermines trust in government institutions. When citizens view individuals in authority to be corrupt, they lose faith in these institutions' ability to serve the public's interests fairly and effectively. This erosion of confidence frequently results in lower civic engagement and compliance with laws and regulations (Rothstein, 2011).
6. Corruption promotes political instability by creating a climate of uncertainty and unpredictability. It encourages rent-seeking behaviour and the establishment of patronage networks, which can destabilise governments and spark power battles between rival factions (Khan, 2016). Furthermore, civilizations plagued by corruption frequently see increased social instability. This unhappiness originates from feelings of injustice and animosity, especially among marginalised groups that bear the brunt of corruption's consequences. People can express their dissatisfaction with corrupt elites through protests, marches, and even violent conflict (Uslaner, 2008).
7. Corruption can increase ethnic and religious tensions. It fosters patterns of discrimination and exclusion, making particular groups feel disproportionately victimised or denied chances as a result of corrupt behaviours. This exacerbates existing societal differences and feeds intergroup conflict (Treisman, 2015). Furthermore, corruption is a major danger to democracy and good governance. It disrupts the election process by allowing affluent individuals and special interest groups to buy influence, threatening political equality and accountability (Persson *et al.*, 2010).
8. Corruption has fundamental implications for democracy in particular and governance in general. It is generally agreed that democracy is not safe in a corruption-ridden polity, and that a corrupt polity can never hold a free and fair election (Okoosi-Simbine, 2006:40). "Democracy is not safe in a country where a large majority of the population are illiterates and poor". Okoosi-Simbine (2006).
9. Corruption promotes the existence of illegal activities in a thriving economy: Bribes are easily greasing many hands and weakening the stance of security systems within the country. In addition, we have many counterfeit, adulterated and substandard products in circulation especially drugs. The problems of fake drug proliferation in Nigeria have affected the credibility of the healthcare system and can exert very harmful effects on the consumer resulting to illness, disability and even death. This has resulted in the loss of useful human resources that would have enhanced economic development in Nigeria.
10. Violation of laws and regulations: In any society there are laws and regulations to serve social objectives and also meant to protect the interest of the public for example, traffic laws, building codes, environmental maintenance laws, etc. Violation of these laws for economic gain through corrupt means can cause serious social harm. For example, corrupt contractor's compromise building standards by using below par building materials which has led to the collapse of many buildings and loss of innocent lives and properties which would have contributed to the economic development of the country.

CONCLUSION

The prevalence of corruption in Nigeria is endemic and cancerous. It has penetrated all fabric of the society. Corruption has impeded the socio-economic advancement of the country, as well as dented the image and reputation of the country among the comity of nations. This development has affected foreign investment flow, currency crisis, infrastructural decay etc. To address the problem of corruption in Nigeria, all hands must be on deck to emancipate our dear country from this malignant cancer called corruption. Corruption, in its various manifestations, such as bribery, embezzlement, and nepotism, has a significant social and political cost. Its implications are broad and diverse. First, corruption undermines trust in government institutions. When citizens view individuals in authority to be corrupt, they lose faith in these institutions' ability to serve the public's interests fairly and effectively. This erosion of confidence frequently results in lower civic engagement and compliance with laws and regulations. Corruption undermines trust in government institutions, contributes to political instability, fuels social discontent, exacerbates ethnic and religious conflicts, and poses severe challenges to democracy and governance. Its insidious effects pervade every part of society, needing coordinated measures to tackle it successfully. It is disheartening to note that the revenue generated from our God given resources have not been used in developing our economy because of the enemy called corruption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The detrimental effects of corruption on Nigeria make it extremely necessary to proffer solutions to this moral, social and economic monstrosity. To curb the excessive rate of corruption in Nigeria, a good number of steps must be taken. The steps could be political, attitudinal and socio-economic. In this light, the following remedies are recommended.

i. It must be admitted that unless productivity is improved, the quest for better life would remain an illusion. It is thus recommended that government should improve the productive base of the country by not only directly embarking on the production of goods and services (e.g. establishing and efficiently managing large firms and industries) but also by assisting individuals (especially the rural poor) in their productive endeavour through the provision of soft loans.

ii. Prompt and adequate remuneration to workers should be enforced by the enforcement agencies. If workers are being paid adequately and timely, the seeds of corruption will not be planted in them. Most corrupt officials aspired for the opportunity to embezzle due to these bottlenecks faced by honest workers.

iii. The fight against corruption is a societal responsibility. For corruption to be fought and tackled effectively, our religious leaders and family heads have a huge responsibility to perform. What are parents and guardians teaching their children? Are they held accountable when they fail? Do parents set a good example at home for their wards? In our religious gatherings is the truth being taught? What are the masses made to believe about the consequences and repercussions of their actions? Generally, there should be public awareness and campaign against corruption.

iv. The judiciary should be adequately equipped to fight corrupt cases. Relevant and applicable laws should be put in place to hasten the trial and judgement of corruption cases.

v. It is recommended that a People's Oriented Committee (POC) should be set up immediately to be made up of representatives from the rural areas where poverty is more disturbing. This committee should be charged with the responsibility of advising the government on programmes best suited for these areas. It must be emphasised at this point that the governments must be prepared to absorb major recommendations from this committee. This recommendation is quite germane if we realise the fact that we stated earlier that poverty is also a major cause of corruption in our society.

vi. There should be a fundamental restructuring of the Nigerian budget on the new social-economic order. The budget must reflect the urgent need of the masses rather than concentrating a large part on defence.

Vii. Nigerian leaders must through actions and attitudes place priority on the welfare of the generality of the populace. They must realise that they are there to serve the populace and until the populace realises that they are doing just that, the country would not make any meaningful progress; if the populace feels cheated by the leaders, then corruption is more likely to be widespread.

viii. It has been recognised clearly that in the Nigerian state, there is great inequality between the rich and poor. If corruption is to be ameliorated if not completely obliterated, there must be a conscious and deliberate effort on the part of government to reduce the gap.

ix. Stricter and enforceable sentences must be placed on those guilty of corruption. A situation in which somebody that stole billions of naira from the state treasury is only jailed six months and given an option of fine of about 3 million naira makes corruption a very attractive enterprise. It is thus recommended that death penalty be placed on public officers found guilty of corruption. An example with one will deter other prospective corrupt officer

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