

Effects of Leadership and Political Corruption on Achieving Sustainable Development: Evidence from Nigeria

Abah, E.O (Ph.D)

Department of Public Administration, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, P.M.B 053 Abakaliki

Nwoba, M.O.E (Ph.D)

Department of Public Administration, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki

Abstract

The Federal Republic of Nigeria, one of the countries in sub-Sahara Africa is richly endowed with natural resources and high quality human capital, but still struggling with the issue of sustainable development. One factor responsible for that ugly trend is attributed to the phenomenon of corruption. The study "Leadership and political corruption on achieving sustainable development in Nigeria" is aimed at identifying as well as espousing the factors hindering leaders from achieving sustainable development. This study examines what is most important to average Nigerian leaders and the value system obtainable in the country. The study also investigated the pre and post assessment of Nigerian leaders in relation to the obtainable value system. The study employed descriptive and content analytical method in its analysis, where data collected on issue were descriptively analyzed. The study utilized Karl Mark dialectical materialism theory as its theoretical framework. Therefore, the study revealed that an average Nigerian leader is mired in the pursuit of selfish and personal goals than integrity which is the hallmark of achieving sustainable development. And that the available value system is significantly linked to the problem of inefficient management of human and material resources in the country. It is therefore, the position of the paper that the issue of achieving sustainable development in Nigeria remains a mirage with dire consequences on the economy, the citizenry and on our collective image globally, until our leaders develop the spirit of patriotism in their dealing with masses and ensure total rehabilitations of all the various subsystem in Nigeria. The paper therefore concluded that without efficient and pragmatic public leadership, there will be nothing like sustainable development.

Keywords: Leadership, Political leadership, Political Corruption, Sustainable Development, Dialectical Materialism, Administration.

INTRODUCTION

It is a known fact that corruption has been the cause of Nigeria's underdevelopment. Regrettably, corruption has ravaged the country and destroyed most of what is held as cherished national values. Unfortunately, our leaders in different levels of government, who have the responsibility of directing the affairs of the country have been the major suspect in corruption scandals.

Corruption is the intentional and selfish deviation from an acceptable standard. It is an action which shows the lower level of spiritual, philosophical, political or moral state of a person. Political corruption manifests in electoral rigging, fraud, illegitimate use of power etc. Bedford (2000:1), posited that "corruption kills, and it kills in a large numbers. And that any society that encourages embezzlement of public funds, capital flight, abuse or miss-use of public property in its midst is guilty of mass murder". Accordingly, the punishment given to those who commit direct murder (e.g by Guns) should be the same with those who commit murder by other means.

Corruption is endemic in all countries and governments, especially in sub-Sahara Africa that has remained lockstep with both political and economic instability since their independence from 1950s to 1960s, mainly due to the failure of leaders to manage our resources efficiently. Decades after decolonization in Africa, especially from 1990, many sub-Sahara African states were engaged in seeming intractable leadership crisis. The benefit of peaceful co-existence and harmony which include stability and socio-economic development have remained largely illusive in the region due to the cases of corruption. The period spanning from 1990 to the present christened the post-cold war era witnessed an upswing of development failure in developing countries. For instance in Liberia, Samuel Doe, Prince Yarmie Johnson and Charles Taylor were then the nightmares of Liberia as they struggled for seizure of state power consecutively inflicted economic hardship on the people of Liberia. In Sierra Leone Paul Koroma, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, John Karafa Smart were interlocked in intensive crisis for the capture of the state power. (Hassan, 2002).

Indeed, it is a bad scenario that Nigeria, the world's eighth largest exporter of crude oil, a country endowed with many natural resources, still has more than 70 percent of its population living below the poverty line as a result of bad leadership. Pathetically, the logic of the Nigerian political leadership class has been that of self service as some of the leaders choose personal aggrandizement and self-glorification with the result that corruption has become a euphemism for explaining political leadership in Nigeria.

Evidence has shown that no nation of the world would enjoy sustainable development in virtually all spheres of its life without experiencing good and selfless leadership. This is based on the fact that qualitative growth and development has always been an outcome of good governance. Achebe (1984) argued that the root cause of Nigerian predicament should be laid squarely at the foot of bad leadership. Achebe (1984:1) posited that “the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing wrong with Nigerian land or climate or water or air or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility and to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmark of true”.

Leadership is described as a dynamic process in a group whereby one individual influences others to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of a group task in a given situation. In a related development, leadership is generally defined simply as influences, the act or process of influencing people towards the achievement of group goals. It is obvious that those corrupt Nigerian government officials are already corrupt and inept prior to assuming office. Corruption in Nigeria predates the country’s independence but assumed alarming proportion to the past four decades (Duru, 2011). The Malaise could be traced to using the phrase of Okorie (2003:7) who stated that:

Nigerian political leaders were reared to the shadow of wealth and power of the local British community. The psychological attraction of the western world to Nigerian politician meant that their intension was distracted from the difficult goal of national development to the rewards of foreign contracts.

More so, the wealth found from oil, particularly to the 1970’s engendered in Nigerians a false scene of economic security that gave rise to frivolous spending by individuals and government. The oil boom succeeded in entrenching materialistic philosophy of life among Nigerians whose sense of well being was anchored in the display of acquired foreign made goods. In the process, the craze for personal aggrandizement and frivolous display of wealth by the rich in the society led to increased incidence of corruption (Okorie, 2003). Sowunmi (2010) opined that the history of corruption in Nigeria is strongly rooted in the over 29 years of the military rule, out of 46 years of her statehood since 1960. Ribadu (2006) claimed that successive military regimes subdued the rule of law, facilitated the wanton looting of the public treasury, decapitated public institutions and free speech and instituted a Secret culture in the administration of the state. Bedford (2000) “narrated that during the Shagari administration, Nigeria foreign reserve decreased from 8 billion in 1979 to 1 billion Dollars in 1983. External debts increased from 12 billion to 15 billion Dollars. Also Shagari’s ministers, governors and other officials awarded illegal contract and import licenses, while senators traveled on vocations overseas with public fund, and in many cases the politicians transferred public funds from Nigeria to their private bank account abroad. In fact, at the time the military took power, huge sums of cash seized from the homes of lending politicians and those who were connected to them. In a related development Bedford (2007) continued that, “the family of Nigerian late Head of State, Sani Abacha has returned to the government more than 750 million Dollars, funds illegally amassed by the former leader”. Others in Abacha’s government also siphoned money from the state to amass personnel fortunes. Nigeria’s former finance minister Anthony Ani charged Abacha’s national security Adviser, Ismail Gwarzo with channeling about 1.3 billion Dollars in foreign reserves into private account. It was estimated that the embezzlement of public funds and corruption proceeds of General Abacha and his family amounted to 4 billion Dollars (International Centre for Assets Recovery, 2009). In April 2012, the independent corrupt practices commission (ICPC) re arraigned Farouk Lawan, erstwhile chairman of House of Representatives Ad hoc committee on fuel subsidy before a federal high court in Abuja. The chairman of an oil company under investigation allegedly gave Lawan USA60,000 in cash as bribe so as to throw away his house committee report and to remove the name of his company from the list of those found to have been involved in the cause of defrauding the Federal Government of Nigeria of billions of Naria (Sun daily, Feb 11, 2016).

In May 2015 seemingly rattled by a cynical feeling of distrust that it is not doing much to fight corruption, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) swung into action, declared culpable 10 former governors who are standing trial for plundering the treasury of their states while serving. Also, EFCC recovered N65bn, \$245, €693,000, 62,000 Euros from corrupt public officials, (vanguard, May 20, 2015). In June 2015, eight Central bank of Nigeria and first bank officials were arraigned by a high court arising from N12 billion mutilated currency scam (Nation June, 2015)

In 2016, \$2.1b arms scandal: Dasuki Badeh, Amosu face separate trials for corruption. Former National security Adviser (NSA) Col Dasuki Sambo (rtd) former chief of Defence Staff, AVM Alex Badah, Former Chief of Air staff A. M. Adeshola Amosu and others are facing charges of corruption involving 2.1b arms scandal. (47 million dollars). Also, former Aide de camp (ADC) to President Goodluck Jonathan charged for 10 billion withdrawal from oil bloc account in Central Bank of Nigeria (Nation Feb 14, 2016). What a massive loss, that could have been meaningfully utilized for development of our GDP, now used to develop foreign economy to the disadvantage of our local produced goods. Corruption has consumed our democracy, promotes mediocrity and gingered winner take all syndrome. These translate to compromise of good governance and extol criminal

enterprise in our society as well as being responsible for failed projects for which Nigeria is associated with.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In Nigeria, it is evident that corruption have increased the rate of poverty, reduced the gross domestic product, retard investment and decrease in our foreign reserve and earnings. Are we really committed to the ideal of productive service and sustainable development? Do Nigerians care about integrity and hard work in government services or money and power? Nigeria's dwindling economy: shame on the political leaders. Ravening authority looting by highly placed rise government officials has crippled Nigeria and has thrown the nation into economic woos.

Nigerians are working for money and power and not for integrity that favour sustainable development. In the process, the craze for personal aggrandizement and frivolous display of wealth by the rich in the society lead to increase incidence of corruption (Okorie, 2003). To acquire wealth, the leaders in the 1970 are engaged in gigantic capital projects and huge amounts of money were committed to prestigious but non-productive projects. This resulted in the injection of a lot of money into the economy and exposition of contractors who relished contract inflation. All these further fuelled corruption and sharp practices within the system in form of bribery, over-invoicing, fraud and embezzlement of public fund, which threatened sustainable development in the country.

A substantial number of Nigerian exploit every loophole that will guarantee them personal benefits after all, the prevailing system has taught them to succeed and cheating is the indispensable means of accomplishing their goal. In a related development, Nwaobi (2004) posits "Nigeria are among the countries in the world where a man's source of wealth is of no concern to his neighbours, the public or the government". Wealthy people who are known to be corrupt are regularly courted and honoured by communities, religious bodies, social clubs and other private organization. Accordingly, a sizable number of public employees often submit overtime claims for work they did not do. Similarly, some workers submit false doctor's prescription bills asking for refunds when in fact they did not fall sick. To no one's astonishment, supervisors and managers approve those claim, the leaders want to keep intact the well established relationship in the context of Nigeria, in which supervisor and managers protect ordinary workers when they engage in fraudulent act and ordinary workers, in turn protect the managers and supervisors especially where the accept bribes from big businessmen who want preferential treatment (eg speedy and better services). And the average Nigerian leader takes pride in breaking laws because, among other reasons, disobedience to laws is one of the fastest means employed to enrich oneself. It is an established truth that laws passed in Nigeria will definitely enrich most of the people entrusted with its enforcement. The controversies surrounding the fuel subsidy fund, politics surrounding the privatization of public owned companies and distribution of the excess crude account were one of the cases in which the leaders employed to enrich themselves. It is, therefore of little surprise that a change in government personnel or regime has been especially incapable of eliminating corruption in the public sector. Similarly, there appears an intensifying economic hardship in the country which seems to account for the declining legitimacy to make authoritative decision for the majority of the citizenry at all levels of governance. In the absence of peace, sustainable economic growth and development, Nigeria may be described as a failed state.

This study seeks to explore the inter links between leadership and political corruption and crises of sustainable development noticed in Nigeria. This study will answer the most fundamental questions as to why new leaders (Administrators) in Nigeria (whether civilian or military) tends to be very corrupt just as its predecessors. In view of the fact that most regimes in Nigeria are inept, obviously something more fundamental more systematic, is responsible for that. It must be explored so that a more comprehensive explanation of the causes of the current problems can be reached.

THEORETICAL EXPLICATION

A failed state theory is used for the analysis of leadership, political corruption on achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. The concept of failed states in its contemporary form emerged as a humanitarian concern in the early 1990's shortly after the collapse of the soviet alliance (Reinold, 2004). Stohl and Smith (1999) conceptualizing failed states assert that "a failed or failing state is one in which the rulers either break the underlying concept by neglecting or ignoring the fundamental freedom due to the people". Reinold (2004) identified the 'characteristics of a failed state as one that has lost it ability to provide positive political goods to it citizen. She highlighted the following rank order of political goods'. Human security which invariably is the most important rank order of political goods. The second ranked political goods is what they describe as provision of an independent judicial system to adjudicate disputes to enforce the rule of law and to protect the most fundamental civil and political right to compete for office, freedom of speech etc.

A very popular definition of failed state is that enunciated by the Australian strategic policy institute (ASPI). A failed state is one in which the following condition are prevalent. Weak institutions, corrupt governments, criminalization of politics, poor law and order, insufficient revenue, economic stagnation, social

dislocation, disaffected and alienated youth, a growing culture of violence, international neglect, collapse of government services, disillusioned and passive population and a plentiful supply of gun (Syman and Pha: 2003). But Nigeria cannot be described as a failed state. Following the identified weakness in a failed states theory, these studies adopt Marxian political economy as expounded in a contribution to the critique of political Economy (Karl Marx 1968). Karl Marx critically reviewed the Hegelian Philosophy of right which appeared in 1844 and found that material well being determine the social political and intellectual well being as well. In the words of Marx

It is the consciousness of Men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being determine their consciousness. Hence the main theme of dialectical materialism is as follows

- A. Dynamic character of social reality
- B. Inter-relatedness of different levels of structure: and
- C. Primacy of material condition

In adopting the Marxist political economy as the analytical guide on this research, we emphasize such objects of analysis like the relations of production of goods and services, distribution of natural resources and the attendance crisis arising from both the relations of production and the distribution of natural resources. Furthermore, these economics had always generated conflict and crises of which leaders struggle for a position of dominance to control them. At this juncture, states are seen as the most potent and coercive instrument or structure with which to achieve dominance in the society, and thereby making politics to take predominance over economy. Hence production and power goes together.

In the related development, the analysis of the relationship between the economic power and political power was best handled by Ekekwe (1986:12) when he remarked that “in the periphery of capitalism, factors which have to do with the level of development of the productive forces makes the state, through its several institutions and apparatuses, an instrument for accumulation for the dominant class or its elements”. Therefore, as observed by Miliband (1969), the state becomes the source of economic power as well as an instrument of it; the state is a major means of production. Therefore, this paradigm tends to analyze the interlink of leadership and political corruption on achieving sustainable development in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL ELUCIDATION

For the purpose of conceptualization, it is important to examine some of the concepts used. **LEADERSHIP**: John Gardener (Quoted in Reed, 2001) describes leadership as a potent combination of strategy and character, and strongly narrated that, of the two elements character is the most preferred for leadership. John Gardener, on his part, explains leadership as the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader a shared by the leader and his or her followers (Weekly Trust, 2004:11). Consequently, “leadership is a process of social influence by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent” (Chemers, 2002).

Political leadership can be described as the ruling class that bears the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of a political entity by setting and influencing policy priorities affecting the territory through different decision making structures and institutions created for the orderly development of the country. This includes people who hold decision making positions in government, and people who seek those positions, whether by means of election coup d'état, appointment, electoral fraud conquest, right inheritance or other means (Wikipedia, 2009). It includes the totality of the ruling class that has the capacity to manipulate the machineries of government at their disposal.

Political corruption is seen as the ruling class misuse of public power or position for personal advantage. A simple dictionary definition of political corruption refers to it as “an impairment of virtue and moral principles by a class of people” (Tewis, 2006). World Bank and Transparency International (TI), a leading Global anti-corruption Watchdog, described corruption as “the abuse of public office for private gains for the benefit of the holder of the office or some third party. Based on the above analysis, political corruption can be broadly understood as unethical behavior, which violates the norms of the system of political order”. Johnston, (1993) posited that political corruption usually encompasses abuse by government officials such as embezzlement and cronyism as well as abuses linking public and private actors such as bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud, etc. The Asian Development Bank understood political corruption as involving the behavior on the part of officials in the public and private sectors in which they improperly and unlawfully enrich themselves or those closely related to them, and or induce other to do so, by misusing the position in which they are placed.

Sustainable Development is a kind of development strategy that allows the present generation to develop without distorting the future generation from developing. It is a development model that will encourage both the present and future generation from developing without any of them posing difficult to each other. Seer (1977), states that “sustainable development involves not only capital accumulation and economic growth, but the condition in which people in a country have adequate food, job and income inequality among them is reduced”.

Dialectical Materialism is described as a kind of consciousness of man determined by social existence. The

degree of participation in production in material life determines the type of relationship existing in the state and which effect the social, political and spiritual processes of life. Dialectical materialisms by Karl Max assumed that it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary, the social existence determines their consciousness.

Administration is the utilization of human and material capital for the actualization of organization objectives both in the short and long run.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts the analytical, historical and descriptive approaches. This implies that most of the work was done through library research. In doing this, the historical development of leaders and potential corruption in Nigeria were analyzed. The data were obtained basically from secondary source. Such data were descriptively analyzed with the content of sub-Sahara African states with particular interest to Nigeria. The reliability of a test instruments concerns its ability to produce similar result when respected measurement are made under identical condition. Here, the reliability coefficient in more than 80%, then the research instrument is reliable. The result of the reliability test for the work is 84.1% which is higher than 80%.

Corruption and Corrupt Practices Nigeria

The independent corrupt practices commission (ICPC) defines corruption as “the abuse of public office for private gains. This definition does not capture the whole tenets of corruption. Osoba (1996) posited that “corruption is an anti-social behavior conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms and which undermines the authorities”. Ofite (1986) narrates that corruption is the pervasion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour or moral depravity. When at least two parties have interacted to change the structure or the processes of society or the behavior of functionaries in order to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situation or seat tight tendency among African leaders, we say that corruption has taken place.

Anim (2009:50) remarked that;

Omar Bongo of Gabon died after 42 years in power; muammar Gadafi of Libya stayed 39 years in the saddle; Teodaro Obiang Mbasong of equatorial guinea has held on for 30 years; Hot on his heels is Mugabe at 29 in Zimbabwe Hosim Mubarak of Egypt for 27 years, Paul Biya of Cameroon for 26 years, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda for 23 years; king mswat III of Burkina Faso for 21 years and host of other.

The ugly side of the story is that these rulers lack the ability, experience and knowledge to achieve the much desired need of their people, yet they remain in power for selfish reasons. This is followed by the controversies surrounding the annulment of June 12, 1993 general Election in Nigeria, and the great inequality in the distribution of wealth, hence, the less favored or the disadvantaged will use every possible means to survive. The Transparency International (2005) defined it as “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain”. Corruption also includes bribery, smuggling, fraud, illegal payment, money laundering, drug trafficking, falsification of documents and records, window dressing, false declaration, evasion, under payment, deceit, forgery, concealment, aiding and abetting of any kind to the detriment of another person, community, society or nation (Khan, 1996).

Windser and Getz (2000) broadly defined corruption as “socially impermissible deviance from some public duty or more generally some ideal standard of conduct”. Corruption also could be youth based in forms of cybercrime, thuggery, permutation, pilfering, drug peddling, paid assassins, kidnapping, prostitution, militancy, book-haram and 419 syndromes. Konie (2003) identified vertical (involves manager and decision makers) and horizontal (involves entire officials, informed, laymen groups in the country) as the only types of corruption.

Based on this paper the most accepted definition of corruption is the one given by Rose-Ackerman (1999:9), “political corruption is a symptom that something has gone wrong in the management of the state (and or society)”. And that institutions designed to govern the interrelationship between the citizen and the states are used for personal enrichment and the provision of benefits to the corrupt” because of the weakness of social and governmental enforcement mechanisms. (Tamuno & Sorle, 2008)

Cases of Corrupt Practices in Nigeria

In 1956, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was indicted by the foster Sutton Tribunal of inquiry for his relationship with the African Continental bank, while in office as premier of the Eastern Region. As part of the report, the bank loaned 160,000 pounds to the Zik’s group of companies at a lowest interest rate and over an extended period.

In May 1962, Chief Obafemi Awolowo was found guilty of corruption by the coker commission over his transaction with Western Region Marketing board.

Between 1979 and 1983, when Shehu Shagari was the president of the country, many state governors

who were found guilty of corruption by the Buhari and Idiagbon military regime were sentenced to different jail term of a minimum of 100 years and a maximum of 340 years depending on the amount involved. But Ibrahim Babangida military coup of August 27, 1985 pardoned and released the corrupt governors.

In 1994, Okigbo panel Report on the Re-organization and Reform of CBN indicted General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, late General Sani Abacha, and former Governor of CBN, late Alhaji Abdulkadir Almed, for mismanaging about 12.4 billion Dollars oil windfall between 1988 and 1994. When former president Olusegun Obasanjo was incharge of the petroleum Ministry as the head of state, there were high level of corrupt practices that took place in the Ministry. As an illustration, over 400 million dollars invested on the turn-around maintenance and repair of refineries failed to yield any positive result. In a related development, Ibrahim Salisu Buhari who served as speaker under former president Olusegun Obasanjo was found guilty of forgery and perjury, and fined ₦2,500 naira, but was pardoned the next year. By July, 2000, the then senate president (Chuka Okadigbo) and his deputy (Haruna Abubakar) were implicated in procurement deals that caused them their job, but were later forgiven. In 2001, Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Company (NSPMC) was denied National Identity Card project by the Obasanjo Administration in favour of SAGEMS because of the interest of the major stakeholder. Asaju (2003) posits that “the 214 million dollars released for the contract was divided among the then minister of labour and productivity, and the then minister of Internal affairs which made the work not to be fully executed”.

Between January and July 2002, Revenue mobilization and fiscal commission (RMAFC) report indicated that 445,000 barrels of crude oil sold by the government was unaccounted for in its financial report. The request by Haman Tukur, chairman of RMAFC to the presidency to compel Jackson Qaius-Obaseki, former managing Director of NNPC, to refund the money into governments purse was never headed (Shetima, 2009).

August, 2002, former president Olusegun Obasanjo was accused of disregard to rule of law and corruption by the then National Assembly.

Nov. 2003 A government report detailed the systematic looting of the once prosperous Nigerian Airways and implicated 90 people in its downfall. The report recommended prosecution of several individuals and pursuing 51 billion naira (400million Dollars) looked by companies and government officials. In 2005, the then Minister of Education, Fabian Osuji bribed the National Assembly to allocate more fund to his ministry.

April, 2005 President Obasanjo sacked Housing Minister Alice Mobolaji Osomo after it was discovered that hundred of properties were sold below market value to top officials instead of going on public sale.

Nov. 2005 Former Inspector General of Police, Tafa Balogun was convicted and sentenced to six months in jail for extorting more than 16 billion naira.

Dec. 2005 Iyorcha Ayu resigned as a minister after law makers raised alarm about various procurement deals he handled.

Dec. 2005 Diepreye Alamieyesigha, Governor of the then Bayelsa State was arrested on 40 counts of corruption, and money laundering. In July, 2006 British authorities returned about 1 million pounds of the alleged illicit gains that he kept in British, banks.

Also the EFCC in its three years of operation arrested and investigated more than 5000 people secured 82 convictions and recorded 641 billion naira in looted assets. And that Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, head of the EFCC said that more than 400 billion Dollars of oil revenue had been stolen.

April 2007 Umaru Yar'Adua, of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) won the controversial presidential election by a landslide. He gained 70 percent of the votes, but European Union observers claimed the election did not meet international standard and not credible.

Dec. 2007 James Ibori, Former Governor of Delta State and others were arrested by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) on charges of Abuse of office, corruption and money laundering. He was believed to have stolen billions of naira during his eight year tenure as governor of the state. The above explain the extent to which corruption has been institutionalized in Nigeria.

CAUSES OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA

Political corruption in Nigeria is caused by weak institutions, leadership style and cultural decay. Political corruption thrive very well in a community where the legal and political institution are weak and government policies generate economic advantage to those in position of authority. Nwaobi (2010) opined that a weak enforcement mechanism (e.g lack of judicial independence, weak sectorial institution) is one of the major causes of corruption in Nigeria. The forces which deter corruption, are often weak as most of the law enforcement agencies are themselves corrupt. In addition, leaders, politician and civil servants are highly corrupt and professional organization may be incapable of sanctioning their members. The administrative and legal institutions that leave public officials with wide unrestricted authority and power to create avenues for unjust enrichment or use the discretionary powers at their disposal to manipulate the system is bound to be corrupt.

Secondly, role of formal rules and the criminal justice system has increased the rate of corruption in the country. There is hardly any country where corruption is legalized and ethicized like Nigeria not minding rules

and procedure. However, in a political economy that is laced with corruption, such formal rules are usually replaced with decayed ethnic norms, values and customs that allow corruption to flourish. Corruption is supported by some or few cultures if not why should a convicted corrupt individual be offered a chieftaincy title by traditional rulers or institutions? Why do governors, some of whom have been fingered in corruption be given award or be elected into the office of a Senate as a senator of the FRN. Why should a governor who cannot pay his worker's salary as at when due, be looking for a second term in office. There are also other instances where religious institutions have ordained in the church corrupt public officials and sometimes organized thanksgiving services for corrupt-ex-convicts. Nye (1967) posited that corruption is a times caused by motivational behavior which is a response to social pressures but which violate the set goals and objective of a social system.

In addition to the above ugly scenario, the rent based system and poverty are also identified as among the causes of corruption in Nigeria. Ades and Difella (2003) argued that "in a country where economic condition is poor, there is tendency for such country to experience high level of corrupt practices which further worsen the growth rates". Johnsten (1997) identified "weak political competition as a strong factor that helps to sustain corrupt practices". He opined that this has generally played a role in sustaining the most serious cases of entrenched political and bureaucratic corruption. The reward system in Nigeria is, perhaps, the poorest in the world and cannot take you to next pay. Some states in the federation owed workers between two to six months salaries, yet the governor are seeking for second tenure. These members of the society are expected to be honest, productive and train their children in a most honourable manner without getting their salaries.

Effects of Corruption

In point of fact, a major problem confronting development in Nigeria is the effect of corruption. Corruption has had negative impact on Nigerians economy and sent signals that there is no gain in being honest, patriotic, hardworking and law-abiding. Many political office holders by dubious means acquire stupendous wealth and properties in and outside Nigeria; and many live in affluence, presenting their wealth, but the society does not wink. Today politics is seen as a big business/investment in Nigeria, because any amount of resources used to secure a political office is termed as a political investment, which begins to yield dividends as soon as one gets into office (The Guardian, July 14, 2002).

Corruption cripples government investment: The resultant role of embezzlement and fraudulent sharp malpractice often lead to the collapse of the organization, disabling the investment made by government such as finance, equipment and manpower especially skill acquisition, in-service, training, conferences and workshops had been highly skilled. Eleonu (2003) stated "it is argued that corruption is economically wasteful, politically destabilizing and mentally destructive of government capacity in economic development involving capital outflow which means economic waste. Economic waste leads to investment distortion because investments are channeled into unprofitable areas". What is stressed here is the harm that corruption unleash on public institutions.

Unemployment and concomitant restiveness: a painful result of failure of the public agencies and companies as stated above is unemployment and its side effects. Osai (2004) stated, "cyclical unemployment is a situation of oscillation period of boom and depression. The effect of the economic depression is mass lay off or retrenchment of workers".

Mass poverty: Hornby (1974 cited in Ozioma 2007), "poverty is a state of being poor" and to be poor is "not having and not able to get the necessaries of life". When opportunities for work to earn a healthy living are unavailable and those that are available collapses, the workers dismissed, the end is mass poverty.

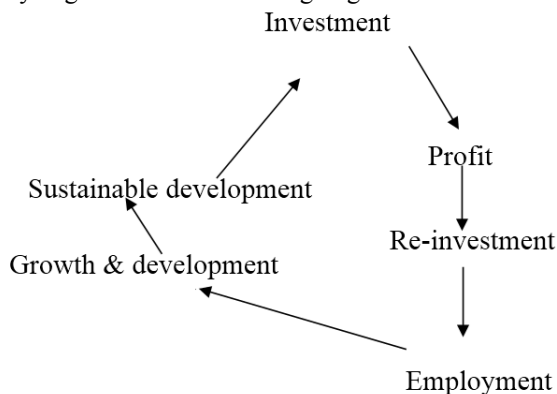
Absence of development: A situation arises where corruption is allowed in the management of public organizations leading to non-realization of the aim for which they were established, economic development is stifled, foreign investors are scared due to fears of conflict hence may not invest in a corrupt economic environment nor deal with corrupt government institutions.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated effects of leadership and political corruption on achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. Using "leadership and political corruption" as its independent variable and "achieving sustainable development" as its dependent variable, the study showed that sustainable development cannot be achieved in Nigeria due to the fact that our leaders are working for money and power and not for integrity. Virtually in all human endeavours such as corporate, religious and natural setting, leadership is a pilot. Every leader has a primary responsibility with the people he is leading. To the family head, it is his immediate environment. To the politician, it is to those who voted him into office after unfolding to the people his manifesto of what he would do. And for corporate leaders, it is shareholders of his corporate enterprises, people that repose their trust in him with their life savings. For the clergy, it is his parishioners that look up to him for moral and spiritual guidance.

To do otherwise, as obtained in Nigeria is against the law of contract between the leader and the people. Nigeria's problem of sustainable development should be attributed to the prevailing value system and collective ignorance among most of the Nigerian leaders, elite and the public.

To address the problem of sustainable development in Nigeria, the prevailing value system must be replaced with a positive way of life that emphasis, among others, merit system and good citizenship. Above all, Nigerian leaders must rise above collective ignorance and mental slavery by investing resources in Nigeria. This is based on the fact that charity begins at home. Investing Nigerian resources at home has a vicious circle of:



Investment- Profit-Re- Investment – employment – growth and development = sustainable development.

These are bounded and expected duties of truly educated, patriotic Nigerian leaders and elites etc. Indeed, true educated Nigerian is the ultimate panacea of problems of sustainable development of the country. No matter how depressing the present state of affairs in Nigeria may look, a concerned Nigeria must think of what needs to be done to right the wrong. A concerned Nigerian leader, elite and the general public must provide answer to the above question.

- (a) What went wrong with Nigeria achieving sustainable development?
- (b) When will the problem of achieving sustainable development be corrected?
- (c) What will it take Nigerian to sustain her development?
- (d) Who will bring that increase in sustainable development?
- (e) What will be may own contributions to sustain development in Nigeria?

Thus, leadership in Nigeria is seen as a means of exploitation, personal enrichment, fulfilling parochial interest and selfish ambition, which is not the agreement between the leader and his people.

In conclusion, corrupt practices within and outside the leadership class have undermined the growth and stability of the nations trading and financial relations within and outside the country. Since independence in 1960, our balance of trade and payment have been deficit not minding our natural resources. As a country, we need good leaders or government that is fair, just and caring enough to evoke spontaneous patriotism from the citizenry. What we have since independence as leaders is an uncharitable display of material arrogance and a distasteful reminder of group exploitation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) The level of corruption in the country will be reduce if the political leadership class exhibit the political will to fight corruption and enforce the rule of law.
- (2) In fighting corruption, multi-sectoral approach should be adopted. This include private-Anti-corruption initiatives, public Anti-corruption initiatives and public education programme. Corruption should be seen as a virus which must be fought with public and private resources at our disposal.
- (3) Nigerian government and leaders should shift away from fighting the effect of corruption and tackle the causes of corruption. The issue of poverty, unemployment, reward system, pension and gratuity and other social security services should be seriously tackled.
- (4) Prosecution of erring individuals or people found to be involved in any corrupt practice and if found capable should be punished. This goes with forfeiture of assets and property acquired illegally. If deemed expedient by the court, anybody convicted must be also be given long term imprisonment to serve as deterrent to others. This may require strengthening and tightening of prosecution technique.
- (5) Value re-orientation which de-emphasize the use of money or wealth for recognition and relevance should be introduced. The influence of money as factor in politics must be curtailed and discouraged.

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