

Corruption and National Development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic

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Abstracts

Developmental failure in Nigeria's Fourth Republic is attributed to corruption degeneration among Nigerians. In spite of different developmental strategies put in place by successive government, Nigeria is still in search for development in her fifty – seven years of independence. Thus, the study analyses the concept of corruption and development; examines governmental efforts at tackling corruption and why it has not yielded positive result. The study relied on secondary source of data and established the effects of corruption on Nigeria development which include; high rate of unemployment, insecurity of lives and properties, inadequate infrastructural facilities, privatization of public enterprises, relocation of industries i.e Dunlop Nigeria Plc and Michelin, among others. Therefore, the study concluded that for national development to be realized, good governance must be institutionalized, culture of discontinuing a policy once there is a change of government should be discouraged and the leaders to build trust among the people in their governance.

Keywords: Corruption, National Development, EFCC, ICPC

Introduction and Problem in Context

Corruption constitutes a major challenge in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic. It can be seen as a cancerous disease that has eaten up the society, and consequently hindered stages of national development. The menace of corruption is experienced at every sector of the society such as political, judicial, educational and religious cycle among others. This has tremendously affected the developmental goals of the country as well as affecting the nation's image internationally. To Lawal (2011), national development is a vital necessity for the growth and sustenance of any vibrant nation. For development to be ensured,

social – political and economic stability must be guaranteed at all levels of government. This will go a long way, to promote citizen's natural attachment to the governing process, especially that the pride of any responsible and responsive government lies in the attainment of higher value of development, viz political and economic stability.

Successive administrations in Nigeria, be it civilian or military regime had in the time past, put in place institutions to curtail corrupt practices in the country, some of the institutions are; Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, Code of Conduct Bureau, Code of Conduct Tribunal, Public Complaints Commission, Public Accounts Committee and Quasi – Judicial bodies. In the Fourth Republic, which is the focus of this study, two major institutions have been established with the sole aim of combating corruption in the country. These institutions are Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Crimes (ICPC). With the establishment of this anti – corruption institutions, corruption has not reduced, but has continued to thrive. It was due to the foregoing that the study analyses issues of corruption and development, governmental efforts and the effects on national development.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

National Development Strategy in Nigeria

National development planning is the main strategy used by governments and organizations to set their visions, missions, goals and effective means of realizing development. Over the years, national development planning has been a consistent phenomenon in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has aspired to achieve development through the use of various types of plans, beginning with the colonial development plan (1945 -1956). Immediately, after attainment of independence in 1960, the First National Development Plan (1962-1968) was launched. Followed by the Second Development Plan (1970 – 74), Third (1975 – 80), Fourth (1981 – 1985). Due to poor implementation of the Fourth National Development Plan, machinery was put in place for preparation of the Fifth National Development Plan. It was in the Fifth National Development plan that Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was incorporated. With the returned to democratic governance in Nigeria, the new administration started development planning in 1999 with the initiation of four years medium term plan document, the

National Economic Direction (1999 – 2003). Other strategic initiative plans are, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (2003 – 2007), strategy for attaining Millennium Development Goals, Seven Point Agenda and Transformation Agenda (Andrew, 2013).

The objective of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), was to facilitate the achievement of national goals like: creation of wealth for the country, reduction of poverty and re – orientation of values. Thereby, state and local government also initiated their development strategy to compliment the federal government plans i.e. State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and the Local Government Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) respectively. The “Seven Point Agenda” include; power and energy, food security, wealth creation and empowerment, mass transportation, land reforms, security and functional education. And the “Transformation Agenda”, it’s aimed at transforming the life of an individual’s, organizations and the nation at large (Marcellus 2009).

In spite of all these national development plans, at all levels by successive government, Nigeria is still in search for development after its fifty – seven years of independence. Comparably, Nigeria seems to be one of the countries where virtually all models of development have not worked. There has been discontinuity in development plans by successive government from the era of fixed – term planning (1962 – 1985), the era of rolling plan (1990 – 1998), and the democratic dispensation from 1999 till date (Aremu 2003). Majorly, objectives of all these plans are geared towards development opportunities in health, poverty reduction, education and employment. But each of these developmental plans in Nigeria has failed to achieve the peculiarity of its objectives. The failure of these plans is traceable to high rate of corruption between the rulers, lack of focus for the economy situation and indiscipline among the governance.

Trends in Corruption Activities in Nigeria

Corruption is an evil, which when perpetrated by men, tend to affect future generations if cognizance measures are not taken. The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission has over 43 high-profile corruption cases filed between 2007 and 2017 that are still pending in various courts. 16 of these cases involved ex-governors of State, while others relate to the oil subsidy scandal, money

laundering and violation of the Public Procurement Act. President Muhammadu Buhari, while campaigning in the year 2015 promised among other things, to free the country of corruption and exposes financial atrocities in government. The sum of money discovered or reportedly stolen has left most Nigerians in daze how political leaders and bureaucratic officials has acquired public fund for private gains. The misuse of the entrusted public treasury for their own personal gain has frustrated national development of the nation (www.thescoopng.com/2016/10/02/efcc-corruption-cases/) (Feb., 10th, 2016).

Among the corruption cases that made headlines in 2016 till date are; (Diezani Alison Madueke, Patrick Akpobolo kemi, Sambo Dasuki, Olisa Metuh, Musiliu Obanikoro, Alhaji Abdullahi Inde Dikko, Alex Badeh, Femi Fani – Kayode, Alhaji Murtala Nyako, Maikanti Baruand others).The former Minister of Petroleum Resources Diezani Alison Madueke, who served from 6th April 2010 – 28th May 2015, was alleged to have looted over \$20b, which was part of the proceeds from Nigeria's main income source (crude oil). Moreover, Patrick Akpobolo kemi, the former Director – General of Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) also made his mark as one of the most reported former government officials for fraud cases in Nigeria. Patrick Akpobolo kemi reportedly looted over ₦12billion from NIMASA, using various companies to perfect his trade (www.pulse.ng). Similarly, Sambo Dasuki; the former National Security Adviser (NSA) was said to have diverted and supervised the disbursement of over \$2.1b to various individuals accounts (www.pulse.ng December 13, 2016).

The release of funds meant for the purchase of ammunitions for the Nigerian Army, to prosecute the war against Boko Haram in the North East of the country was allegedly misappropriated, with poorarms available for the infantry to combat the insurgency. Abdullahi Inde Dikko, the former Comptroller – General of Nigerian Customs Service who served from August 2009 to August 2015 was alleged to have embezzledover ₦40b from the coffers of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS). Report has it that ₦1b of the money has been returned to the Federal Government and he wasaccordingly grantedbailed. The former Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Alex Badeh, allegedly bought a ₦320m house for his 28 years old son and another ₦260m for his first son in the highbrow area of Wuse in Abuja. The houses are just part of the many properties Badeh used the over

₦800m which he acquired for personal gains from the military coffers www.pulse.ng (December 13, 2016).

The former governor of Adamawa state, Alhaji Murtala Nyako and his son, Abdulraziz Nyako, now a senator representing Adamawa Central on the platform of APC were re – arraigned of ₦29 billion money laundering trial. The charges against the defendants include criminal conspiracy, abuse of office, opening of multiple bank accounts and stealing to the tune ₦29 billion. The defendants, who were arraigned by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), allegedly opened over 30 different accounts with Zenith Bank Plc with money between 2011 and 2013 www.dailytrust.com (January 1, 2017).

If all these looted money were injected into the economy and properly monitored, the story of Nigeria would have been different in terms of national development today. The question is who appoint who and who approves what? An assertion to this is the case of the acting Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) chairman Ibrahim Magu. The Department of State Services (DSS), sparking a verbal backlash from supporters of Ibrahim Magu as the Chairman of the EFCC. The 14 – paragraph confidential report said that Magu has failed the integrity test and that if confirmed, he could eventually constitute a liability to the anti – corruption drive of the administration. Moreover, the DSS security report, among others alleged that Magu is occupying a ₦20 million per year accommodation, allegedly rented for him by someone under EFCC investigation; lives a flamboyant lifestyle and flouted the President’s order against public officers flying first class when he went to pilgrimage for lesser hajj” www.Vanguardngr.com (March 15, 2017).

In the light of preceded chairmen of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nuhu Ribadu being the pioneer executive from 2003 – 2007. Succeeded by Ribadu, is Farida Mzamber Waziri from May, 2008 – November 2011 was dismissed from office. Her dismissal has been related to accusations that, the EFCC had been selective in its investigation, or to her falling out with the Attorney – General and Minister of Justice, Mohammed Bello Adoke over the prosecution of cases that were brought before the court. Furthermore, the investigation of the former governor of Bayelsa State Timipreye Sylva was compromised for financial misappropriation. In some cases, like that of the former Edo State governor Lucky Igbinedion, the court imposed negligible

penalties. However, the EFCC may have opened the door by accepting a plea bargained to Farida dismissal (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farida>).

After the dismissal of Farida Waziri, Ibrahim Lamorde was appointed on 23rd November, 2011 but confirmed as chairman by the senate on 15th of February, 2012. On 9th of November, 2015 President Buhari sacked Ibrahim Lamorde, with immediate effect was replaced by the current acting EFCC Ibrahim Magu. There have been different allegations of corruption against him, “one George Uboh had petitioned the senate, alleging that Lamorde failed to remit more than ₦2.05 trillion, being funds recovered from corrupt leaders”. He was also accused of diverting over ₦1 trillion recovered from the sale of confiscated properties belonging to convicted officials including the late Diepreye Alamieyesiegha, former governor of Bayelsa state, and Tafa Balogun, former inspector – general of police www.thecable.ng (Nov.09 2015).

More so, considering the ongoing controversy in the NNPC, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project, SERAP, has called on anti-corruption agencies to investigate the alleged of \$25 billion oil contract scam in the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. The Minister of State for Petroleum, Ibe Kachikwu, had petitioned President Muhammadu Buhari, accusing the Group Managing Director of the NNPC, Maikanti Baru, of \$25 billion contract scam. The minister also alleged that Baru makes unilateral decisions, side-lining him and other key members of the NNPC board. Reacting to the allegations, Baru had said he is not legally mandated to discuss contracts with Kachikwu being the Minister of State for Petroleum. Executive Director of SERAP, Adetokunbo Mumuni, said the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, and Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission, ICPC, should uncover what really transpired in contracts process in the NNPC. According to the Executive Director of SERAP, said the EFCC and the ICPC would be able to determine if such contracts existed or if the contracts followed due process. Was the process of awarding the contracts free of corruption? It is only when this has been determined that this government can prove that its anti-graft war is real. www.vanguard.com (October 12, 2017).

Conceptual Framework: Corruption and Development

The word ‘corruption’ has no universally accepted definition. But learned authors have posited that the term includes “all forms of improper or selfish exercise of power and influence attached to public, as well as private offices” (Nnamdi, 2013). Obuah (2010), is of the view that corruption is the misuse of entrusted power or dishonest use of one’s office or position for personal gain. It is a cancerous global phenomenon which has continued to cripple the developmental efforts of many countries. Therefore, corruption in Nigeria manifests in form of misappropriation, over invoicing, and giving or receiving things of value to influence an official act. It also includes willful giving and receipt of gratification, making false returns, fraudulent acquisition of properties, embezzlement, tribalism, nepotism, money laundering, advance fee fraud and outright looting of the treasury etc.

World Bank Independent Evaluation Group (2006) sees corruption, as “the abuse of office for private gains.” Public office is abused for private gain when an official accepts, solicits, or extorts bribe. Agbu (2003) cited in Ogbewere (2015), observes that public office can be abused without bribery taking place. This implies that corruption may include any form of patronage, election rigging, and voters register manipulation, favoritism, procurement scam, tribalism and nepotism and unfair punishment/sanctions for public officials.

Flowing from the above, corruption implies any unethical action such as: acceptance of gratification, embezzlement, conflict of interests, succumbing to inducement and undue influence. For instance, award of contracts to friends, associates, family members, and personal companies; are examples of corrupt practices by public officeholders.

Development

The term development is very broad, it includes all aspects of life of individuals and the nation. It is also a process of reconstruction and development in various dimensions of a nation, which includes full growth of individuals, industries, agriculture, educational, social, religious and cultural institutions. Thus, development can be best defined as all – round and balanced improvement of different aspects and facets of the nation viz political, economic, social, cultural, scientific and material of the nation. To Uji (2015), development is the overall

betterment of socio – economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be seen as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government.

Accordingly, development is the ability of a country or countries to improve on social welfare of its people vis – a – vis provision of quality education, potable water, transportation, good roads, medical care etc with the aim of achieving increase in real per capital income (Toluet *al* 2011). Rodney (1972) sees development from different dimensions. At the level of individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, self discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing. Seers (1979) define development by asking certain questions; what has been happening to poverty, unemployment and inequality? To him, if these three indices (poverty, unemployment and inequality) are at relatively high rate, there is absence of development, and vice versa. However, he opined that for a country to be classified as developed, there are parameters to look out for, these are; the state of poverty in the country, rate of unemployment among the youth and inequality between the have and have – not.

Adamolekun (2007), also stressed that development has to do with improving the living condition of people. He highlighted some indicators of development, which includes; a high quality of life, high income, better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, less poverty in society, equal opportunities for all, greater individual freedom and richer cultural life amongst citizens of a given state. From the various meanings of development outlined, (Rodney, 1972; Seers, 1979; Adamolekun 2007; Toluet *al*, 2011; and Uji 2015) it can be deduced that development is not limited to economic growth or per capital income alone, but is a concept that is all encompassing that analyses the economic, administrative, political, social, cultural, religious, and living standard of the people in a given society. Moreover, taking a cue from each scholar submission, development can be defined as the capacity of nation state to pull all its resources both human and material together to achieve set objectives for the good of the state and citizenry. This requires total commitment on the part of the rulers and the ruled. Rulers are to create enabling environment for the citizens to actualize their dreams without any hindrance.

Methodology

The Paper used secondary (documentary) data of such publications as journals, books, newspapers reporting, anti-graft agencies reports, World Bank Reports, etc for analyses, discussion and conclusion.

Data Presentation and Discussions

Corruption and Nigeria Development

No doubt, government has made remarkable efforts and still making efforts to address the issue of corruption in Nigeria. Despite of all the anti – graft agencies put in place, corruption has not reduced from the society. The reasons for these are:

Bad Governance: The issue of bad governance is a key factor to why government efforts at tackling corruption have not yielded positive result. In the 38th Kaduna International Trade Fairs seminar held in February, 2017. The former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo said that bad governance is responsible for the nation's woes. Hence, present generation leaders had failed the country because they lacked focus, commitment, continuity and proper knowledge about the economic and developmental issues of the country and from 1999 till date there is no meaningful development to show up. Obasanjo states further that;

God in His mercy has given us all the needed resources, both human and natural, but we have not been able to put them together and manage them effectively. The countries that have developed and performing better are not better than Nigeria in terms of resources. The present generation has nothing to offer rather than looting the public funds (Obasanjo, 2017).

Lack of Leadership Trust: During political campaign activities, the leaders make fantastic promise to get peoples' mandate into offices. After getting into power, there is always a disconnection between the leaders and the followers. According to Dino Melaye, while speaking at the Osasu show symposium in Abuja on 26th of August 2017, "politics being played by the Nigerian's elite is responsible for poverty, unemployment, kidnapping and underdevelopment of the country" Melaye further assert thus:

There is no trust between the governed and those governing. Once there is no trust, between the followers and the leaders, it will definitely have a negative concomitant effect on the economy, developmental process, and every other facet of our national life. There is no true democracy since the inception of the democratic dispensation rather, what we have is greedocracy; government of the greedy by the greedy and for the greedy. The bone of contention is, the leaders want to win elections at all cost, by spending money to win, the followers is also greedy, they accept money to vote [https://www.thecable.ng/failed-nation-says-melaye\(August26th,2017\)](https://www.thecable.ng/failed-nation-says-melaye(August26th,2017)).

- Lack of Political Will: Political will is a precondition for success in the fight against corruption. In the case of Nigeria, it is recognized that there has been progress in establishing the legal and institutional framework to tackle corruption, but there has been a continuous absence of a clear demonstration of political will to fight corruption. In some respects, there has been resistance to and obstructions of the anti – corruption process, in order to nail corruption perpetrators or prosecute the case further.
- Excessive Desire for Wealth: In Nigeria, struggle for political power has been one of the ways to access quick wealth, while being in politics perpetually is always to acquire more. That accounts for do – or – die type of politics being played in Nigeria, whereby all means are used to gain political power.

Analysis of Findings

Effect of corruption on national development in Nigeria is outrageous. The effects are seriously felt on social service delivery such as; education, health, power supply and road networks. More so, corruption has crippled other segments of the economy. The huge annual budgetary allocations given to all sectors of the economy are being mismanaged or diverted for personal uses. The consequence of corruption in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic has led to the following; high rate of unemployment especially among the youth, falling standard of education, dilapidated buildings in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions, incessant strike of worker, relocation of industries case of Dunlop and Michelin,

privatization of key public enterprise e.g NEPA, downsizing of able workforce, deficient in leaders outputs, political apathy, poor health facilities, lost of innocent lives through violence, great inequality in distribution of wealth between the rich and the poor, and high cost of running government administrations without yielding any positive objectives. Similarly, the major impingements of corruption on national development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic are discussed further.

- **Relocation of Industries:** The chain effects of corruption in the country have forced industries like Dunlop Nigeria plc and Michelin to relocate to Ghana. Dunlop had to close its ₦8 billion tyre plant due to the persistent power break that has tripled the cost of production and reduced the company's ability to make profit. This was duly informed as a result of corruption in Power Holding Authority grossly affected its services. Thus, relocation of these industries had made Nigeria to lost billions of naira that should have been realized inform of taxes, it has caused the laying off of staff, thereby increase the rate of unemployment and poverty among the people.
- **Unequipped Hospitals:** Corruption has also hindered quality health services. For instance, allocations meant for drugs, health equipments and other services are either mismanaged, diverted or embezzled without caring about peoples' health. Thus, unequipped hospitals and delay of payment of health workers salaries and allowances always inform incessant strike, thereby leaving emergency patients in pains, while some even lost their lives. It is not surprising, therefore, that most of Nigeria's leaders regularly travel overseas for treatment. From January 19th to March 2017, President Buhari went on medical treatment abroad. On May 8 2017, he embarked on another medical vacation and returned on August 19, 2017 after spending 103 days in London. If Nigeria had good health care facilities, why would the President and Commander in – Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria go that far to seek medical attention? Some years ago, the former President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida had to travel to Germany to treat “radiculopathy”, a disease, which could be treated in Nigeria if there were necessary facilities available to the doctors (Makinde, 2017).
- **Insecurity:** The accumulation of corrupt practices over the years brings forth insecurity of lives and properties. The leaders make use of the masses to acquire wealth and ignoring them at the end of the day.

Therefore, insecurity can be seen as a reaction against inequality and unequal distribution of nation's wealth in order to survive. In order to bridge unequal distribution of wealth, some of the masses engaged in kidnapping to demand ransom from victims, militant action to earn a living in the Niger Delta, insurgency in the North East, robbery on high ways/banks and other forms of insecurity in the societies.

- **Mismanagement of Public Enterprises:** The gross mismanagement of public operations and enterprises are the reason for the poor performance of the following corporations; NITEL, NEPA, RAILWAY and Water Board etc. Nigerian telecommunication (NITEL) and Mobile telecommunication (MTEL). The National Electrical Power Authority (NEPA) changed its nomenclature to Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) under the notion of privatization. Meanwhile, Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) has been incapacitated prior to the advent of democratic dispensation, and Water Board is operating at a chameleon style due to corrupt practices by those who are entrusted to handle them for effective service delivery.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Paper concluded that for national development to be realized in Nigeria, proactive measures should be taken to curb the menace of corruption. On this premise, the following recommendations are made;

- If Nigeria must get it right, the problem of poor leadership/ governance must be addressed. With leaders that have focus on developmental issues and commitment to move the nation forward rather than selfish leaders.
- Another way to fight corruption and reduce poverty rate in the country is for the leaders to build trust among the people. Policies made should cut across all Nigerian citizens in respective of their status.
- The culture of discontinuing a policy once there is a change of government should be discouraged because, government comes and goes but administration continues.
- Any official found guilty of embezzlement, should be made to forfeit all his/her ill – gotten wealth to the government, and such persons being put behind bars for at least 25 – 30 years if not life imprisonment.
- In addition, attitudinal change of the ruled and the rulers towards corruption is vital. Eradication of corruption in Nigeria should involve everybody and not only the government, as corruption is experienced in every society (political, judicial, commercial businesses,

education and religion institutions etc). For Nigeriatio move forward and for the citizens to benefit in returns bribe giving or receiving should be curtailed for any services rendered or to be rendered.

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