

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF IMPACT OF PUBLIC SECTOR
CORRUPTION ON THE NIGERIAN CHILD CULTURAL,
INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGISLATIVE ROADMAP
NECESSARY TO FREEING THE NEXT GENERATION
FROM THE SCOURGE OF CORRUPTION.

A PAPER PRESENTED

BY

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Background.

Corruption is the misuse of entrusted power or a 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 Nigeria. Corruption in Nigeria manifests in the form of misappropriation, kickback, over invoicing, bribery, embezzlement, tribalism, nepotism, money laundering, outright looting of the treasury, and so on. In Nigeria, most of the elected and appointed public office holders and top bureaucrats use their position of authority to actively engage in corrupt practices.

Therefore, Corruption is the cankerworm at the heart of so many of our problems in the world today. It destroys jobs and holds back economic growth, costing the world economy billions of pounds every year.

Forms of Corruption in the Nigerian Public Sector:

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

information to friends and relations; diversion and misappropriation of funds through manipulation or falsification of financial records; payment for favorable judicial decisions, and so on .

Effects of Corruption in Nigeria

The effects of corruption in Nigeria are outrageous. The effects range from under development, absence of basic infrastructure such as potable water, good road networks, misappropriation of national resources leading to massive poverty, mediocrity in leadership and cluelessness in professionalism, deficient leadership outputs, high unemployment and youth hopelessness, continuous widening gap between the rich and poor, and falling standard of education leading to production of low-quality graduates.

Corruption has made students and products of the tertiary institutions suffer from loss of self-confidence, hopelessness, and loss of confidence in hard work and societal value. It has lowered the image of academic and non-academic members, as well as governing councils of most public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Corruption denies access to basic education and health services, fuels political violence, generates popular anger that threatens to further destabilize societies, and exacerbates violent conflicts.

It distorts public expenditure, increases cost of running businesses as well as cost of governance, and diverts resources

from poor to rich nations. It has frustrated research efforts, derailed administrative goals, instigated organizational goals displacement, and it has also drastically reduced the image of Nigeria in the international communities to mention just a few

Corruption in the Nigerian Public Sector:

All the foregoing shows the enormity of corruption and unethical practices in the Nigerian state. The issue is, "What are the major causes of these corrupt practices in Nigeria?" Different arguments have been put forward to explain the pervasiveness of corruption in the Nigerian state. These include poverty, personalization of public office, political culture, and inability of leaders to overcome their colonial mentality in respect of their perception of public office .

Moreover, the magnitude of corruption in Nigeria since Gowon's regime to Goodluck Jonathan's administration has been attributed to political economy growth of Nigeria by some scholars, that is, the movement from dependence on agriculture in the 1960s to total dependence on oil and oil revenue (which became the major source of Nigerian wealth) from the 1970s, among other factors..

SUGGESTIONS:

- The need for reforms in all sectors of Nigerian public service; the public institutions must be characterized by meritocracy and professionalism, a high morale cum reform-minded public servants, with a sense of patriotism and

commitment to fighting corruption, as well as ensuring transparent management and instituting more effective corruption-reporting mechanism.

- The anti-corruption agencies must not only be made to function independently of government apparatus but must also have the capacity to institute and effectively execute sanctions, without recourse to the personality involved.
- Anti-corruption institutions should be strengthened with good funding and appropriate legislation. Punishment on corruption should be severe to act as deterrence.
- That is, our laws should be amended to relate the magnitude of offences with punishments/imprisonments and fines. Rule of law should be deeply entrenched.
- The democratic ethos and rule of law are well established and risk of involving in corruption is high and punishment attached to corrupt practices increased, nepotism and tribalism, which are the trust of the two public theories, will be drastically reduced, oil money will become a blessing, and public servants will not bow to societal pressure as explained by anomie theory.
- Besides, there should be a reform on criminal procedure and evident rules to remove archaic laws and incorporate electronic evidences. Special court should be established and designated for corruption cases, and judges working on high-profile corruption cases should be provided with adequate security and financial incentive.

- Emphasis should be placed on age-long value of hard work, honesty, and integrity as well as due process, accountability, and transparency in the public service. The public should frequently demand accountability from public servants through the utilization of Nigerian Freedom of Information Act.
- Finally, there should be a constitutional amendment that will take the power to appoint the chairmen of the anti-graft agencies to the National Judicial Council (NJC).

In conclusion Corruption traps the poorest in the most desperate poverty as corrupt governments around the world syphon off funds and prevent hard-working people from getting the revenues and benefits of growth that are rightfully theirs. It steals vital resources from our schools and hospitals as corrupt individuals and companies evade the taxes they owe. It can even undermine our security networking.