INTERROGATING THE CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION ON NIGERIA’S DEVELOPMENT: THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract
This paper is interrogating the consequences of political corruption on Nigeria’s Development; the way forward. Corruption is any form or act of dishonesty perpetuated by individual(s) to weaken a legitimate institution or process and this has a direct consequence(s) against development as development is both quantitative and qualitative transformation. Political Corruption which are those act of dishonesty perpetuated by Politicians either elected, selected and or appointed is inimical to the growth and development of Nigeria. The method of Data Collection employ in this paper strictly concerns to the design and the method of Data Collection. The explanatory design was used in this paper for the purpose of relying on document evidence to prove the injury caused by political corruption and the secondary method of data collection was used. The choice of this is to reduce the temptation of respondents not willing to give information due to the sensitive nature of the topic under review, no doubt political corruption has been proven that it has a very dangerous consequence against Nigeria’s and development base on this the paper by a way forward suggested among others that the Nigerian people need to be educated because it is only education that can provide literacy on the corrupt activities of Nigeria politicians.

Keywords: Political Corruption, Development, Nation-Building, Good Governance.

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1. Introduction

Countries all over the world tries to put measure to eliminate or reduce corruption to the bearest minimum because of the dangers associated with corruption, especially political corruption. Africa is not left out in having their own dose of the consequences of political corruption and this is perceived to be the reason(s) for the underdevelopment of the continent of Africa, as it is often said that no continent or nations can develop with the presence of corruption, especially with Political Corruption, which many perceived as a “killer” of Development.

Corruption over years have been “fingered” as that ten letter words that has been the “spanner in the wheel of Nigeria’s progress and development and that development of Nigeria is tied to how well corruption can be dealt with especially political corruption especially as affect Nigeria’s fourth Republic which began in May 29th 1999, and it is still mining. Nigeria may not be able to achieve Development with the prevalence of corruption especially political corruption, that is not to say that there are no other forms of corruption as there exist grand corruption, Bureaucratic corruption, economic corruption and political corruption but this study is particularly interested in studying political corruption due to the enormity of it presence in Nigeria’s fourth Republic and the weight it has against development in Nigeria societies. Poor policy, plans and programmes largely fail due to the prevalence of hire mined corruption encouraged by docile followership, instigated by dishonest bureaucrats and executed by corrupt politicians that sees politics as a means to an end.

Politics everywhere in the world is a call to service but in Nigeria reverse is the case, because politics in Nigeria is seen as the surest way of achieving fame, power, and money even if it is at the detriment of development, the larger society of Nigeria does not care provided those elected, selected and or appointed are able to “butter their bread” or “Sugar their tea” at the expense of quantitative and qualitative transformation hence, the consideration of the paper topic.

- Motivation for the paper

The perplex problem associated with this work are;

a. Whether there are negative implications of political corruption
b. Whether political corruption has hindered development in Nigeria
c. Whether there are way forward against political corruption

- Objectives of the Paper

The purpose for embarking on this paper is among others; to,

i. Examine the negative implications of political corruption
ii. Examine how political corruption has negatively affected Nigeria’s Development
iii. Examine suggestions that will help deal with political corruption in Nigeria

2. Methodology

The methodology is in terms of the design and the method of data collection. The explanatory design was used in this paper, the choice of choosing the design is to provide explanation that will aid assimilation. The secondary method of data collection was used by this paper with textbooks, well researched papers, published and unpublished evidence(s) about the topic the secondary method was chosen.

3. Conceptual Review and Analysis

The concept to be reviewed in this paper are;

i. Corruption: Corruption simply put is any act of dishonesty. Corruption again is an “Illegitimate exchange of resources involving the use or abuse of public or collective responsibility for private end (Luo, 2005). According to the Transparency Intervention (1997), corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. In the words of (Adeniyi, 2022), Corruption is like a cancerous cell that threatens the life effect of Nigeria and Nigerians. According to the presenter corruption is a bankruptcy of character and indiscipline that suppress honesty for the purpose of achieving selfish and greedy end.

ii. Political Corruption: Political Corruption can be seen as all those transaction between private and public sector actor through which collective goods are illegitimately converted into private regarding payoff (Inge, 2003). Political Corruption on the other hand is the use of power by government officials and or public servants and their network and contacts to undermine the system for personal or family gain. In Nigeria, Political corruption is the abuse of power to achieve in other to achieve private illegitimate advantage at the detriment of the Nigerian system and this often manifest in trying underdevelopment of Nigeria where basics social amenities elude the general public due to corruption.
iii. **Development:** Development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process involving re-organisation and re-orientation of the entire economic and socio-political system. However, development is the process of improving the quality of human lives for the purpose of creating better lives. (Nishan, 2020). In the words of Todaro, development should achieve three objectives which are; (i) Raising peoples living standard or level (ii) Creating conditions conducive to the growth of the peoples’ self esteem and (iii) Increasing peoples freedom to choose from variety of goods and services in the view of the presenter development is the creation of happiness through the upliftment of human dignity through availability of social goods and services to the people.

iv. **Nations Building:** This is a process through which the boundaries of the modern state and those of the national community become congruent, the desired outcome is to achieve national integrity Mylonas (2020;2): It is also a structural process intermingled with industrialization, urbanization and social mobilization in order to achieve good life to the people.

v. **Good Governance:** This is the opposite of Bad governance, so good governance is a leadership that is anchored on servant – masters relationship with the presence of transparency, accountability, prudence, dedication and responsibility for the purpose of reducing and or eliminating the suffering of the poor with necessarily reducing the quantity and quality of service to the people, (Alli, 2011).

4. **Causes of Political Corruption in Nigeria**

The causes or reasons for political corruption are numerous but in Nigeria these causes are streamlined into seven and they are;

a. Radical changes in the breakdown in societal norms
b. The problem of ethnicity and religion
c. Strong men And weak institution
d. Socio-cultural bias
e. Poor reward system and absence of socio-economic environment
f. Poor reprimand system
g. Cabalization of the system

a. **Radical Changes in the Breakdown in Societal norms:** Most elected, selected and appointed officials of the government begins to do thing contrary to the norms, principle, rules
and the constitution and these deviant behaviours against the system is to undermine the system to the extent that development becomes elusive, for example the President, Vice President, Governor e.t.c are collecting security volts with insecurity pervading Nigeria it is unconstitutional to do that yet that is the norm Otaki, (2006:60).

b. The Problem of Ethnicity and Religion in Contemporary Nigeria, Rules and the constitution are circumvented on the basis of primordial sentiments of ethnicity and religion, recruitment and selection into leadership positions are not base on excellence, efficiency and know-how rather on the basis of parochial interest of ethnicity and religion, that is why most of our officials are made up of “round peg” in a “square hole” Okonjo-Iweala et al (2003:51).

c. Strong men and weak Institution; The interplay between politics, politician and the system has “arouse” the issue of impunity and this is one of the greatest causes by political corruption in the 21st century Nigeria. Thereby creating men who are regarded as being above the law, supervising institutions that they swore to protect and thereby corrupting legitimate institutions to enrich themselves at the expense of development of Nigeria Alade, 2004)

d. Socio-cultural Basis; pressure arising from family, friend and relations on the one hand and the traditional and customary belief of “Kolanut”as incentive and appreciating have finally gained entrance into the political life of most Nigerians, as they see corrupt as norm if you fail to be corrupt no chieftaincy title and other award for you and this propel political corrupt individuals to be corrupt (Achebe, 1998).

e. Poor Reprimand System: When acts of corruption are not punished through legitimate provision, corruptions is encouraged to thrive and seen as a way of life and this encourage corruption in the political arena Ikando (2011:106)

f. Cabalization of the System: Corruption in Nigeria have been promoted through clique formation these cliques are mostly formed by the elite not for the interest of the country development, rather for the paraclonal selfish and greedy interest of the few to promote dishonestly in stealing of public funds at the detriment of the nations development, Frank and Okoli (2008:29).

5. Theoretical Framework

This paper adopted the Behavioural Theory, the behavioural theory was a theory that was developed by American Political Scientists as an alternative to the traditional theory in 1940s and 1950s. Behavioural Theory concentrates carefully by observing individuals behavior in the political process and less on state political institutions, (Multiullah, 2015).
Behavioural Theory was borrowed from the sociological Theory and the psychological theory and the choice of the borrowing was to allow for the development of and application of psychological which corruption fall within especially political corruption. Behavioural theory study the behavior of an individual in relations to politics and other socio-psychological issues. Although, it is difficult to pre-empt the character and behavior of man as both a social and political animal, but the behavioural theory has indeed help in providing a tool for studying political corruption within the content and context of interrogating the consequences of political corruption as it affects the development of Nigerians, because with political corruption it is impossible to achieve development especially in a plurality country like Nigeria.

Political Corruption; Is within the context of behavioural and it talks about bringing the issue under discussion within the realm of political science and behaviuorial theory has helped in providing explanation to political corruption and allow this paper to say that political corruption is an attitude of a deviance and the consequence of this behavior has provided an assistance in predicting the dangers of political corruption to Nigeria’s national development.

6. Body of Work

Manifestation of Political Corruption

In the 21st century Nigeria, political corruption that have been legitimized and institutionalized manifest in several ways and such ways are captured in the Political Bureau established in 1987, outline the manifestation of corruption to include the inflation of government contracts in return for kickbacks, frauds, and falsification of account in the public service, malpractices, impersonation, forgery e.t.c, Ilorah (2004:6) but from 1987 till date corruption in addition to the above as now included (Abdullahi, 2011).

Firstly, the solicitation or acceptance directly or indirectly from public officials or any other person any goods of monetary value, or other benefit such as gift, favours, item, promise or advantage for himself or herself for another person or entity, in exchange for any act or omission in the performance of his or her legitimate activity(ies) (Bahal, 2000).

In the secondary place, political corruption manifest in the offering or granting directly or indirectly monetary value to public official or other favour for the purpose of achieving from such public official any act of dishonesty omission or compromise in the discharge of his official duty, (Fawole, 2020).
Again is the dimension of public fund by a public official or any other persons elected, appointed or selected for purposes unrelated to those for which it is intended, for his or her own benefit or that of the third party of any property belonging to the state or its agencies to an independent agency, or to an individual that such official has received by virtue of his or her elected, appointed or elected position, Orngu (2006:15).

Moreso, the offering or giving, promising, solicitation or acceptance, directly or indirectly, of any undue advantage to by any person, elected, selected or and appointed, directly or indirectly of any undue advantages to or by any person who directs or works for in any capacity, a private business entity, for himself in a breach of his duty (Achebe, 1998).

However, corruption manifest in the political cycle through the offering, giving, solicitation or acceptance of “Kickbacks” directly and or indirectly, or promising of any undue advantage to or by any persons who asserts or confirm that he is able to exert any improper influence to circumvent due process, (Mylona, 2020).

**Implications of Political Corruption to Nigeria’s Development**

“My Frank and honest opinion is that anybody who can say that corruption in Nigeria has not yet become alarming is either a fool, a crook or else does not live in this country” Achebe (1998:46).

Corruption have no positive implication in Nigeria, especially political corruption is responsible for the under development of Nigeria that is why, (Achebe, 1998). Posited.

“Corruption in Nigeria has passed the alarming and entered the fatal stage; and Nigeria will die if we keep pretending that she is only slightly indisposed Achebe (1998:46).

The Implication of political corruption to Nigeria’s development is one that have made Nigeria a Third world or fourth world country and the whys for these are;

a. Political corruption undermine structural and institutional efficiency
b. Political corruption amplifies mediocrity and incompetence
c. Political corruption increase poverty and unemployment
d. Political corruption destroys productivity and creativity
e. Political corruption erode good governance (Quantitative and Qualitative transformation)
a. **Political Corruption Undermine Structural and Institutional Efficiency:** This is one of the deadliest consequences of political corruption as perpetrator destroy the fabric of the morality that guide doing government business on the one hand and the institutions on the other hands, the will of these institutions are illegally bent to favour a particular Government official(s)

b. **Political Corruption Amplifies Mediocrity and Incompetent:** This is one of the trauma Nigerians have to go through either due to tribalism, nepotism and religion, competence and expertise are sacrifice on the alter of political corruption, no wonder in Nigeria a lot of Nigeria Politicians have to resort to forgery and falsification of document(s) to make them remain in the system even when they are “bankrupt” of capacity and capability Achebe (2011:1).

c. **Political Corruption Increase Poverty and Unemployment:** This is one of those negatives implication of political corruption, as employment is base on godfatherism in Nigeria, and the when unemployment is on the increase the level of poverty will also increase and this also has a tricking effect to insecurity on the one hand and underdevelopment on the other hand.

d. **Political Corruption Destroys Productivity and Creativity:** Due to the hiring of those who are not qualified or less qualified into public offices due to the issue of quota, catchment area and national spread, those who are qualified and creative are left out by those politicians who are elected into public offices to push this narrative through and the after effect of this is that it negatively affect national development as productivity is affected (Iguzor, 2008).

e. **Political Corruption Erod Good Governance:** The hall mark for leadership at various level in the Nigerian political system is to achieve quantitative and qualitative transformation and good governance is a catalyst for this, but due to the presence of corruption good governance is eroded and development becomes a mirage, no wonder the public perception that Nigeria’s Democracy is too expensive to manage aside that is public corruption where the executives both elected, and selected always want to be part of procurement contract in Nigeria, this singular action has made nonsense of good governance because accountability and transparency are lost which is injurious to good governance, (Baha, 2020).
7. Conclusion and Suggestions

Countries with the prevalence of political corruption tends to develop meaning that Political Corruption is a “Killer” of development, no doubt as discovered by this paper that Nigeria is one of those countries battling with Political Corruption no wonder Nigeria is battling with survival, it can no longer pay salaries, social amenities are in comatos situation, yet Nigeria Politician smile to the bank at the expense of good governance, nation building and national development, can anything be done to save the already bad situation propel this paper to say that there are way forward out of the consequences created by Political Corruption especially in the contemporary Nigeria, and the way forward by way of suggestions are;

1. There should an act of National Assembly creating the National Tribunal on Political Corruption (NATRIPOC) to deal with offences boarding on Political corruption such as vote buying, corrupting the General public, involvement in public procurements and other issues that boarded on political corruption defined by National Assembly through public hearing.

2. There should be massive drive to educate the people as literacy is a potent weapon in the fight against all form of corruption, ignorance on the part of the citizens is one that tend to fertilize political corruption, it is only with education that the people can be exposed against the activities of politicians

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