

## Corruption and the Nigeria Public Service: Implication for Good Governance



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**ABSTRACT:** The Nigerian public service is one of the agencies of government saddled with the responsibility of carrying out the policies and programmes of government with the overall aim of providing good governance to the citizenry. Unfortunately, the public service has been shrouded in different forms of corrupt practices; this is in spite of different public service reforms put up by successive governments to reverse the negative trend. Corruption has greatly hindered the public service from enhancing the good standard of living of the citizens which it is supposed to do. This has disrupted public policies; resulted into misuse of resources and public fund meant to provide socio-economic development of the country and has also translated into other social vices bedeviling the country like insurgency, banditry, kidnapping etc. This paper adopted secondary data sourced from articles, conference papers, textbooks, etc. on corruption and good governance. It examines how corruption has hindered the Nigerian public service from enhancing good governance. The study found that, corrupt practices have been perpetuated by government officials in different forms ranging from bribe giving and taking, to inflation of contracts, diversion of public funds, kickbacks, delay in completing tasks and general abuse of office which manifest especially at the stage of policy implementation which account for mis-governance and low level of development in the country. The paper concludes that the scourge of corruption in the Nigerian public service could be addressed by ensuring that accountability and transparency prevails in public transactions by government officials. This can only be achieved with proper enlightenment on why and how the anti-graft agencies fight should become a collective effort; all institutions of the state should be strengthened especially the EFCC, ICPC and the judiciary.

**KEYWORDS:** Corruption, abuse of power, good governance, public service

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The truism that corruption is a surest route that hinders development in any society does not need contention. Though, in some quarters, it is argued that corruption could trigger development (Otite, 1986). However, despite this assertion, there is a widely-held opinion condemning corruption in all ramifications and hence, worldwide outcry and call for eradicating the scourge.

Evidence may abound that corruption could aid development; no such evidence could be claimed to any root most especially developing states (Nigeria inclusive). Compelling evidences across the globe demonstrate that corruption is an anathema to development (Khan, 1996). Furthermore, evidences in Nigeria have shown that corruption does more harm than good. This is evident in the fact that despite Nigeria's abundant natural resources the country is classified among poor countries in the world. Added to this is the fact that about 54% of the population earns less than \$1 per day (Shuaib, 2015:23). As rightly asserted by Salawu (2007), the phenomenon of corruption in Nigeria has made it impossible for Nigerians to enjoy the dividends of democracy and indeed the gifts of nature with which the country is greatly and abundantly endowed. This scenario is an acknowledgement that the state of affair in the country today is a reflection of pervasive corruption, which has eaten deep into every facets of Nigeria life.

With no gain saying, it is a widely-held belief that corruption is a way of life in Nigeria and that it is responsible for broken promises and dashed hopes, which has characterized the lives of most Nigerians. It is not surprising to hear people say that Nigerians are corrupt, making it a fait accompli. More so, Nigeria is a country where corruption has remained endemic and greed for material acquisition and quest for political power have relegated to the background morals preached by various religions. This is because despite our claim to be religious, our quest for relevance has made nonsense of our self-acclaimed religiosity and nothing can be left undone by our elites and non-elites for the realization of their self-desire. The end, it is believed, justifies the means.

To this end, there is now the increasing realization about the ill effects of corruption on the nation's social, political and economic fabrics. However, it is evident that there is no country that is very free from corruption, but the incidences of corruption is on the increase especially in poor and underdeveloped states.

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The fourth republic commenced with the handover of power by the military administration to a democratically elected civilian government on May 29, 1999. However, after two decades of uninterrupted democracy, the country has witnessed a resurgence of corruption, which has undermined good governance in Nigeria. The worrisome trend in the magnitude of financial corruption by politicians prompted the Obasanjo's government to introduce two anti-corruption agencies, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to checkmate the devastating effect of corruption on the Nigerian economy (Ogbeidi 2012).

Despite the structures (reforms) and anti-corrupt agencies put in place to combat the malaise or at least reduce it to its barest minimum, corruption continues to be endemic, particularly in the Nigerian Public Service with its attendant implications for effective service delivery and welfare of the people. Corruption is not only pervasive but also alarming and endemic in current republic with serious consequences on socio-economic and political development such as: obstacle to economic growth and development, poor service delivery, erosion of the moral fabric of society, undermining democracy and good governance, subversion of rule of law, increase poverty, all of which fuels a general atmosphere of insecurity. The paper is divided into seven sections. Section 1 is the introduction, while section 2 bothers on the methodology and section 3 consists of conceptual clarification. Section 4 discusses the theoretical framework, section 5 talks about corruption in the Nigerian public service while section 6 brings to fore some incidents of corruption in the Nigerian public service and section 7 contains the effects of corruption on good governance. Section 8 consists of the conclusion and recommendations.

### **2.0 METHODOLOGY**

This paper adopted the secondary source of data generation. These include the use of text books, articles, magazines, Newspapers, Transparency International (TI) corruption reports, World Bank reports as well as other published and unpublished writings.

### **3.0 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION**

#### **I. Corruption**

Corruption is an anti-social behavior that falls short of acceptable moral standard in any given society and without mincing words, it is anti-development. Corruption can be described as an act that deviates from the formal duty of a public officeholder because of private gain at the expense of the public. It was conceived as any action or inaction of any person, or group(public or private) which is carried out intentionally to get benefits for oneself, a relation, associate or group(s) in a manner which deviate from accepted regulations, morals and/ ethical standard thereby constituting a travesty of justice, equity and fair play (Ofoeze (2004) cited in Awosika, 2020:89). Transparency International also defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain (CLEEN Foundation, 2010). Thus, corruption covers any abuse of power by any person(s) for personal aggrandizement. Moreover, Gboyega (1996) cited in Wenibowei & John 2018:138) viewed corruption as any perverse decision, act or conduct which compromises democratic norms and values, subverts and undermine the integrity and effectiveness of people's authority, or institutions. In the same vein, Khan (1996) viewed corruption as an act which deviates from the formal rules of a public office holder because of private motives such as wealth, power or status.

Corruption takes the form of the following- bribery, extortion, gratification, and absenteeism from work, misappropriation, embezzlement and stealing or looting, falsification of official records, inflation of contract value, diversion of funds and ghost workforce (Markson, 2017 cited in Oluwatusin et al 2020: 13). Corruption takes place not only in public offices but also in the private sector. It even takes place in individual homes where children get inducements before running errands for their parents; husbands got shortchanged by their wives and vice versa. This overtly shows that corruption is particularly about the individual perception of moral depravity and the moral decadence of our societies. This is the reason why an average Nigerian does not see corruption as a moral defect because we all seem to enjoy the proceeds of its vices. Nigerians also expect much from those in the public offices –it is seen as a way of eating their share of the national cake. There had been lots of reports in the dailies about corrupt practices in the public service and nothing has come out of these reports to serve as deterrent to others. OluAgunloye, ex-minister of Power and Steel who was alleged of \$6 billion fraud; BettaEdu, a suspended minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation who was accused of diverting over #585 million of public funds into her personal account.. It seems Nigerians have come to accept these corrupt practices as normal.

There are different views on the types of corruption but mention shall be made of some, viz political corruption, electoral corruption, bureaucratic corruption, judicial corruption, nepotism, favouritism, extortion and fraud. Some of the causes of corruption are personalization of public office, low government wage system, poverty, monopoly of the economy by government, inequality in the distribution of wealth, greediness, inadequate accountability mechanism, weak political institutions, inefficient standard of contract awards (Oluwatusin&Daisi 2022:111).

#### **II. Causes of Corruption in Nigeria**

The CLEEN Foundation (2010) gave some factors, which have catalyzed the culture of weak accountability and corruption in Nigeria inter alia:

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- i. *Bad Leadership*: The mentality of many citizens in Nigeria is that politics serves as a quick means to wealth. Indeed, the highest corruption in Nigeria has been in the corridors of power. The evidence is in the number of state Governors and Local Government Chairmen being investigated for corruption in the past and present. Here, corruption is perfected in over-inflated contracts, which are executed and re-executed many times, whereby funds given to organizations/sectors are either diverted to personal accounts or laundered to foreign accounts.
- ii. *Lack of a comprehensive database*: Nigeria lacks a comprehensive database on its citizens. This cripples investigations and exchange of information on criminals with foreign counterparts. Keeping proper records would naturally deter the culprits.
- iii. *Lack of Reforms*: The public sector, which contributes more than half of the corruption in Nigeria, lacks sustained reforms. Reforms in public institutions such as the Civil Service and the Judiciary will greatly reduce the challenges of corruption in Nigeria.
- iv. *Lack of national integration*: It is common knowledge that Nigerians are divided along many lines such as ethnic, tribal, social, and religious lines. Cases of corruption are interpreted along ethnic, tribal, or even regional lines etc.
- v. *Poverty*: People believe that corruption is heightened by the pervasive and chronic poverty, high level of material deprivation and other structural inequalities. Considering this, corruption is a mechanism adopted by Nigerians to cope with or avert poverty, particularly in the urban centers where the high cost of living may be an inducement for corruption (Omenka 2013).
- vi. *Inability of Government to sanction Corruption*: The seeming reluctance of government to sanction corruption creates the impression of support. Media report show that government is fond of setting investigation panels and commissions of inquiries whose investigations or findings and recommendations are never made public or implemented. For instance, the move by EFCC and ICPC in fighting corruption has not yielded expected fruitful results.
- vii. *Cultural Foundations*: Bedford as cited in Omenka (2013) in an attempt to conceptualize Nigerian corruption identifies tribal loyalties as the foundation of corruption. Therefore, our culture seems to fuel some corrupt practices. The sharing of bribes and favours has become the order of the day; there is hardly the motivation to become honest. This has become a subculture where corruption is accepted to be the normal course of life with the obvious risk of it becoming institutionalized.
- viii. *Weak institutions of government*: Another breeding ground for corruption in Nigeria is our weak institutions of government. Corrupt tendencies are further enhanced when governmental institutions are weak. For example a tax imposes confiscation rates may fuel bribe-taking behaviour, as tax payers will prefer to bribe and pay less tax etc. Also, most of the government institutions responsible for the fight against corruption are suffering from excessive interferences in the performance of their duties and sometimes there is no synergy among them, which paves way for leadership of power tussle. For instance, EFCC, DSS and the office of the Attorney General have not been working together.

### III. Governance

The concept has been around in both political and academic discourse for a long time, referring in a generic sense to the task of running a government or any other appropriate entity for that matter, thus, it has many definitions. World Bank (2000:37) defines governance as how power is exercised in the management of a nation's economic and social resources for developmental purposes. This definition is a pointer to the role of the state in the development process i.e. addressing the way power is exercised in the management of a country's affairs in order to improve the standard of living of the generality of the people. Furthermore, governance refers to a process whereby elements in society wield power, authority and influence and formulate policies and decisions concerning public life and social advancement.

### IV. Good Governance

Good governance is one of the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is aimed at reducing poverty and improving lives. According to Adeosun (2012), good governance encompasses the capacity to manage a country's resources in a transparent, accountable, equitable way, in response to the needs of the people. This includes government, private sector and the civil society. In the same vein, Oluwatusin (2010) viewed good governance as being epitomized by predictability, open and enlightened policy making a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos acting in furtherance of public good, the rule of law, transparent process, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs. Furthermore, good governance is said to imply a high level of organizational effectiveness in relation to policy formulation, especially in the conduct of economic policy and its benefits to development, stability and people's welfare (Nwagbara, 2003). Arowolo & Aluko (2021) also describes governance as good when it is not biased, fair to every member of the society according to the established norms, laws are applied to both the haves and have-nots in the society. Also, good governance is result oriented- creating the enabling environment where every member of the society can use their potentials to get a good standard of living to better their lots and thereafter contribute meaningfully to the economic advancement of the society, and on the overall, the usage of available resources to generate wealth that will stimulate economic development which will benefit all and sundry. Some parameters for measuring good governance are:

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- **Accountability**- leaders being answerable to the people they rule;
- **Participation**- implies that citizens must be involved in the process of governance;
- **Predictability** – is the expectation that the legal environment is made conducive for development;
- **Rule of law**- which is about all citizens being equal before the law, supremacy of the constitution and entrenchment of fundamental human rights; and
- **Transparency** – entails making information available to the general public.

### V. The Public Service

Public service is driven by public officers who are either elected or appointed and is managed by civil servants who are employed through rigorous recruitment exercise. Public service refers not only to service within government departments and ministries but also, in parastatals, police force and armed forces. However, while all civil servants are public servants, not all public servants are civil servants. Civil service in the Nigerian context refers to the service within government ministries and departments charged with the responsibility of implementing public policies.

Imaga, (2003:115) is of the view that civil servants are persons employed in the government civil service and works in any ministry or department of the government. While public service embraces the civil service and other parastatals, commission and agencies of the government which help for the proper provision of goods and services to the people. Therefore, this paper will refer to public service as all those that work under the government (federal, state and local government) whether as elected officials or employed on permanent basis etc. It includes the executive (President, Governors and other executive officials); the legislative (members of both national and state assemblies) and the judiciary, military, para-military, police etc. that contributed in one way or the other in the formulation and implementation of government policies.

### 4.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopted the Principal-Agent Theory. Kayode, Adagba & Anyio (2013) examines organizational relationship as the tension between the “Principal” (citizens) who demand a service and the “Agent” (government) who provides it. The model assumes that actors are motivated by rational self-interest. The issue in connection with this paper is how the Principal (in this case, the Nigerian citizens) can manage the self-interest of those empowered to act on their behalf (i.e. the Agents: government officials, politicians, legislator, bureaucrats etc.) so that it will align with the purposes that they (the principal) wish to achieve based on their respective parties manifestoes but toward service delivery. However, problem arises not just from conflict of interest or values but also from the privilege access of the agents to information (information asymmetrical). The agents (public servants) who have been employed to provide a service will tend to use their superior knowledge to divert benefits in their own direction. Hague (Kayode et al, 2013) argue that Public Administration itself is prone to corruption, since officials exercise a substantial amount of power. There are possibilities for acquiring improper benefits by interpreting or bending rules in favor of certain groups or individual.

In the present democratic dispensation in Nigeria, the ultimate principals are the citizens or electorates who are the consumers of specific service provided by the government or public servants. In the Political-Agent theory, they are Principal in the sense that politicians as Agents seek their mandate from and act as the representatives of the public. The likelihood of the principal effectively controlling the agent depends on how much information the principal has about the performance of the Agent, and how far the principal can structure the relationship so as to control the Agent or give incentives so as to make the Agents interest. From the various definition of corruption, one can see that corruption is a selfish and dishonest act that deprives a vast majority (apart from the perpetrators and their cohorts) of desired benefits i.e. social, economic, political, and other legitimate benefits. It means corruption has emphasis on personal interest as against the public interest. The Nigerian state is characterized by prebendalism. This is a situation where public office is held first, for the interest of the officer and second, for the interest of the public. This situation has greatly encouraged corrupt practices at every level of government in Nigeria. Corruption means absence of accountability, transparent and civic engagement. It means selfish service. Also, Otite (2000) shows that corruption, especially in the case of Nigeria transcends bribery but includes treasury looting and also the deliberate bending of the rules of the system to favour friends or hurt foes. It is clearly an evidence of absence of accountability, law and order. Despite the Anti-corruption campaign (institutional, constitutional, and political) put in place since 1960, corruption has continued unabated because Nigeria’s democracy is built on and sustained by corruption in the form of election rigging and irregularities, vote buying etc. Thus, the political and bureaucratic elites who survive on corruption use it as instrument of manipulation in order to sustain their social, economic and political relevance.

### 5.0 CORRUPTION IN THE NIGERIA PUBLIC SERVICE

In 1994, the Ayida Panel, which was instituted to review past public service reforms in Nigeria with a view to proffering measures of further re-invigorating the service, identified the major ills of the service, which needed to be corrected to improve the dynamism and effectiveness of the civil service as follows:

- i. Politicization of the top hierarchy of the civil service

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- ii. Lack of financial accountability and probity
- iii. Perpetual breakdown of discipline
- iv. Virtual institutionalization of corruption at all levels and segments of the service.
- v. Disregard for rules and regulations
- vi. Loss of direction

Also, corruption in the Nigerian public service has been manifesting in different ways especially as a result of lack of accountability in public procurement. The problems of public procurement in Nigeria were at the root of poor or non-implementation of government projects at the different levels of governance. Contract inflation, inadequate estimation of contract cost, faulty evaluation of contractors' bids, pervasion of contract tendering selection criteria, collusion and connivance with procurement officials, award of contracts to cronies, etc. were some of the problems that necessitated procurement reforms in the fourth republic. It is unfortunate that in spite of procurement reforms, there are still malpractices in the public procurement system in the country's public service. These include contract splitting by the approving authority to beat the approval threshold for contract awards, divulging of sensitive information to bidders, contractors collusion or connivance with procurement officers, inflation of contracts, bid rigging, etc.

Also corruption has been manifesting in the form of rigging of election, bribing to win contract, escalating cost of governance, poor or non-implementation of public contracts, poor public service delivery, bribery of public officials and distortion of due process or procedure in the public sectors, employment of incompetent hands, distortion of judgments, collusion by top officials etc.

There is correlation between public service and good governance, because as stated earlier, good governance refers to the use of legitimate authority in the management of public affairs. The whole essence of good governance is the supremacy of the rule of law, freedom, accountability, transparency, fulfillment of election promises, and the achievement of the greatest good for the greatest number of citizens. As good and important as good governance is to the state, much of the variables have eluded the country due to corruption by both politicians and other government officials. Most of the problems Nigeria is facing today is caused by the sharp practices of past and present leaders. Despite the abundance of human and natural resources that has made the country the toast of many nations, the leaders have not been able to deliver the dividends of democracy, as expectations, hopes and opportunities have been dashed, with governance ingredients still at its elusive stage due to the pervasive corrupt practices that pervaded the public service.

### **6.0 INCIDENCES OF CORRUPTION IN THE NIGERIA PUBLIC SERVICE**

Corruption is a major problem limiting the performance of public bureaucracies in Nigeria. Corrupt practices occur in nearly all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) where virtually all the upper and lower bureaucratic members are involved. The corrupt practices include bribery, extortion, and nepotism which are characterized by the subordination of public interests to private interest, which violate the norms and ethics of public services. These practices can be evidently seen in some instances of the past administration of President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria. The country's foreign reserve was depleted, excess crude account expended and official looting fully entrenched. In the late 2013, former Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) governor informed former President Jonathan that the state oil company, Nigeria National Petroleum Cooperation (NNPC) failed to remit US\$20 billion of oil revenue. Others include the \$250 million BMW purchase by former Aviation minister, Malabu Oil International scandal etc. From the time Buhari assumed the mantle of leadership, some of the exposed corrupt cases include that of the illegal withdrawal of \$2.2 billion from Excess Crude Account (ECA), the missing \$11.6 billion from LNG Company dividend payments (Izeze, 2015) etc.

Other revelations include the most publicized \$2.1 billion (#550 billion) traced to Dasuki in the name of arms purchase, that of former chief of defense staff that stood at \$2.1 billion, amount traced to former special adviser to President Jonathan estimated at \$2.1 billion and just a few to mention. Most of the accused are presently facing trial. Also the present government stated that it has retrieved cash of #78.3 billion; \$185million; 3.5 million pound and 11,250 euro and with anticipated repatriation of \$321million; 7 million pound and 11,826 euro (Daily Trust, July 02, 2016). On 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 the EFCC recovered \$9,772,800 and another 74,000 pound sterling cash from a fire proof safe on a building belonging to a former Group Managing Director of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) (Premium Times, 15 February, 2017). Also, the EFCC in April 2017 recovered \$43 million, £27,000 and #23 million from a building on Osborne Road, Ikoyi Lagos that was claimed by the National Intelligent Agency (NIA) (Vanguard 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2017). However, in a meeting sequel to a paper delivered by Acting chairman of EFCC Ibrahim Magu on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 at state conference of the states' parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in Vienna, Austria, he stated that monetary recoveries from May 2015 to October 20, 2017 was in excess of #738.9 billion which is equivalent to over \$2.9 billion.

### **Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) (2000–2023)**

In the year 2000, Transparency International carried out a survey on the corruption levels of 90 countries, including Kenya, Cameroon, Angola etc. and at the end Nigeria was seen as the most corrupt because it occupied the 90<sup>th</sup> position a year after (2001), Nigeria was ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most corrupt in the world out of 91 countries falling only to Bangladesh and in the year 2002, 2003,

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2004 and 2007, Nigeria was ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 33<sup>rd</sup> respectively. However, the table below shows recent Nigeria's position from 2010 to 2023.

**Table I: Nigeria Cpi (Ti) Ranking 2010 - 2016**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No of Countries	178	182	176	177	174	168	176
CPI Score (Out of 100)	24	24	27	25	27	26	28
Position	45 <sup>th</sup>	37 <sup>th</sup>	35 <sup>th</sup>	33 <sup>rd</sup>	39 <sup>th</sup>	32 <sup>nd</sup>	40 <sup>th</sup>

Source: TI Corruption Perception Index, 2010, 2011,2012,2013,2014, 2015, and 2016.

**Table II: Nigeria Cpi (Ti) Ranking From 2017 - 2023**

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
No of Countries	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
CPI Score (Out of 100)	27	27	26	25	24	24	25
Position	148 <sup>th</sup>	144 <sup>th</sup>	146 <sup>th</sup>	149 <sup>th</sup>	154 <sup>th</sup>	150 <sup>th</sup>	145 <sup>th</sup>

Source: TI Corruption Perception Index, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The table above shows the trend of the position of Nigeria over the years from the Global Economic Watchdog TI CPI ranking that covers surveys on expert assessment and of business people. It should be noted that, a country is scored between 0 and 100, where 0 connotes a perception of highly corrupt while 100 is perceived to be least corrupt. In the table, the row for position represents Nigeria's situation, where in this case, the country occupying the first or least position is seen as the most corrupt in that order with the one occupying the highest position seeing as the least corrupt in the same order.

In 2010, Nigeria occupied 45<sup>th</sup> position of highly corrupt out of 178 countries; in 2011, the country occupied position no 37<sup>th</sup> out of 182 countries; in 2012, and Nigeria scored 27 marks to occupy the 35<sup>th</sup> position of most corrupt out of 176 countries. This position was shared with countries like Kenya, Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Nepal and within the same period countries like Mali, Niger and Benin fared better than Nigeria. In 2013, Nigeria was ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> of the highly corrupt out of 177 countries by scoring 25 points; in 2014, Nigeria rose by 2 points, that is scoring 27 as against the previous 25 points in 2013 and ranked as 39<sup>th</sup> most corrupt out of 174 countries. Denmark came first in 2014 with a score of 92 with North Korea and Somalia sharing the last position by scoring only 8 and Botswana maintained the position of the least corrupt country in Africa. In 2015, the country fared poorly by maintaining the 32<sup>nd</sup> position while in 2016 it occupied the 40<sup>th</sup> position out of 176 countries. In 2017, however, Nigeria rose astronomically ranking 148<sup>th</sup> most corrupt country alongside Comoros, and Guinea. In 2018, it ranked 144 out of 180 countries; scoring 27 points with the likes of Kenya and Mauritania; in the same manner, it scored 26 points to rank 146 out of 180 countries to occupy same spot with countries like Uganda, Angola, Bangladesh, Guatemala, Honduras, Iran and Mozambique in 2019. The country however appeared to have sunk deeper into corruption with abysmal score of 25 points to rank 149 in 2020, 24 point to rank 154 in 2021, maintaining the same score of 24 points to rank 150 in 2022 was a slight improvement. Currently, the country ranks 145<sup>th</sup> most corrupt country out of 180 countries with a score of 25 points.

Finally, it stated that the lower ranked countries are plagued by untrustworthy and badly functioning public institutions like the police and judiciary as for the highest ranked countries like Denmark and New Zealand which score 90% are free of corruption, there have been press freedom, information about public expenditure, strong standard integrity about public officials, and independent judicial system

### 7.0 EFFECTS OF CORRUPTION ON GOOD GOVERNANCE

The effects of corruption on good governance in the Nigeria public service cannot be overemphasized. However, Bello-Imam (2004) has outlined the negative consequences of corruption to include:

- Retardation of Economic Growth as corruption lowers investment and retards economic growth;
- Misallocation of talents where rent seeking proves more lucrative than productive work, talent will be misallocated;
- Adverse Budgetary Consequences as when corruption is rampant budgeted amounts will not deliver the required services;
- Negative impacts on quality of infrastructure and public services. This is because when public contracts are procured through a corrupt system, it results in lower quality of infrastructure and public services
- Negative composition of government expenditure. Corruption often tempts government officials to choose government projects less on the basis of public welfare than on the opportunity they provided for extorting bribes. Under such situation

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large projects, whose exact value and benefit are difficult to monitor, usually present lucrative opportunities for corruption while returns on teachers' salaries and textbooks could be zero for the same set of officials.

The above explanations are few examples of the effects of financial recklessness in the Nigerian public service. Thus, the general consequence is an emasculating deprivation of basic amenities and a dangerous disconnection and disenchantment of the people with the government; while the officials celebrate their ill-gotten wealth. On the overall, public service in Nigeria has been found to have performed below expectation in the following areas:

- Neglect or failure to embark on sufficient capital projects which can positively impact on the lives of majority of the citizens especially the masses in areas such as provision of potable water, employment, street light, modern markets, toilets etc..
- Embarking on white elephant projects that do not see the light of the day and projects abandonment. .
- Failure to ensure enduring empowerment programmes especially for local citizens as measure to curb unemployment and by extension poverty that has become pervasive, especially in the rural areas.
- Poor culture of maintaining existing infrastructural facilities which lead to complete decay of those facilities. .
- Information asymmetric between the political leaders or agents at the helm of affairs at the local level and the citizenry or the principals that are represented etc.

### 8.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, corruption is a symptom of bad governance. Therefore, corruption causes massive economic and social harm. Money disappears into the wrong pockets or foreign bank accounts, the credibility of the authorities is undermined, investment falls away or is misdirected, and the poorest groups (the masses) end up paying the price. There has been problem of weak government institutions which is a major setback in the fight against corruption in Nigeria as stated by the Transparency Institution (TI). In order to ensure good governance in Nigeria, the following recommendations are brought forward:

1. The anti-graft agencies (EFCC and ICPC) should hold the government officials, both political and career liable or accountable for any breach of existing government's rules and regulations in the conduct of the affairs. Thus, the existing instruments or mechanisms should be strengthened to reprimand any government official that flouts the laid down rules and regulations as contained in the Financial Memoranda especially those relating to expenditure control as well as on contract, purchases, payments, and personal advances procedures, etc.
2. As a corollary to that, Igbuzor (2008), itemized six questions that should test the seriousness of any anti-corruption crusade. First, is it systematic? Second, is it comprehensive? Third, is it consistent? Fourth, does it have focus? Fifth, is it well published? Sixth, does it carry people along? Thus, the present government should make sure that the anti-corruption crusade is anchored on the afore-mentioned questions.
3. In addition, a competent, professional, development-oriented, public spirited and customer-friendly civil service capable of responding effectively and speedily to the needs of the society is desired, a civil service with the core values of political neutrality, impartiality, integrity, loyalty, transparency, professionalism and accountability; a civil service that is guided by equity where things are done in the right way based on extant rules and regulations but with room for distractions, which should be exercised in the public interest.
4. There is need for the creation of suitable environment where civil servants are assured of protection and job security in the faithful discharge of their duties and responsibilities; a competitively, well remunerated and innovative civil service (Adegoroye, 2005).
5. Moreover, measures should be put in place by all the stakeholders: politicians (executive and legislatures), mass media and civil society organization in ensuring that accountability and transparency prevail in the public service system by creating more awareness among the general public especially those at the rural areas, on the financial transactions of their respective governments. They should be aware of the monthly transactions in relations to service delivery and whistle-blow suspicious transactions.
6. The fight against corruption must be firmly incorporated into a coherent and realistic development strategy domestically and internationally. Civil society and the media must clamor for and demand anti-corruption performance, measurable result, a better quality of life, especially for the most marginalized and disadvantaged, and most particularly women and children. Civil societies and NGOs have an important role to play especially as whistle-blowers and monitors.
7. The judiciary should wake up from its slumber in giving all the necessary support in the fight against corruption, therefore, the effort in creating special court with the primary responsibility of entertaining corrupt related cases is a welcome development that will do away with the delay tactics of the ordinary courts. Thus, all government institutions should be strengthened for the fight against corruption to be a reality not a myth.

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