

## **Bureaucratic Corruption, Good Governance and Development: The Challenges and Prospects of Institution Building in Nigeria**

Gbenga Lawal and Ariyo Tobi

Department of Political Science, Olabisi Onabanjo University,  
P.M.B 2002 Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. Nigeria.

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**Abstract:** The role of the public bureaucracy in achieving good governance cannot be under estimated. This can be gleaned from the central role it plays in the formulation and implementation of policies designed for the development of the society. In Nigerian, the role of the state bureaucracy has come under severe criticisms within the context of that gap that exists between its anticipated role and its actual output in guiding the society along the course leading to the desired goal - development. The failure of the public bureaucracy to deliver the expected output to the society informed the series of reforms that have come to form the policy thrust of successive Nigerian governments since the 1980's. Suffice it to say that the hallmark of such reform has been on the need to have efficient and responsive public sector that has the capacity to meet the challenges posed by the domestic and external environments. The efforts of the Nigerian government have not yielded the much expected results due to the problem of corruption that has eaten deep to the fabric of the Nigerian society - the public bureaucracy not spared. Thus the gains of good governance have been eluding the average Nigerian citizen. This paper argues that good governance encompasses three different but not unrelated dimensions. These are political dimension which centers on the establishment of good objectives and the exercise of good leadership. Second, technical dimension which relates to the constraints which are imposed by natural resources, level of education manpower etc and thirdly, institutional dimension which relates to the ability to get things done or precisely efficiency in public management. In view of this, any effort geared toward promoting development in the society must take the three dimensions into consideration. It further posits that the bane of Nigerian public administration is that of corruption which has not allowed the interrelationships that exist among the three variables to provide built - in- mechanism that has the capacity of engendering good governance. It therefore submits that corruption must be positively addressed and reduced in the public bureaucracy for it to be able to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Key words:** Corruption, prospects, Nigeria

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### **INTRODUCTION**

There is a linkage between the transparency and probity of the political leaders as well as bureaucrats of a nation and its level of development. Thus, any effort aimed at accelerating the pace of development in any country must take into consideration the actors of the system.

Nigeria presents a typical case of a country in Africa whose development has been undermined and retarded by the menace of corrupt practices.

To say that corruption has eaten deep into every aspect of the Nigerian Society is to affirm the obvious. This can be inferred from the revelations of probe panels that have been set up at different times by different regimes.

In Nigeria, since independence, series of reforms have been carried out in the Public service so as to make the

Public bureaucracy more efficient and result oriented. However, the anticipated gains of such reforms have not been visible due to series of factors which include that of corruption.

Without doubt, Corruption has permeated the Nigerian society and in the words of Achebe<sup>[1]</sup> anyone 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.

In those days when Nigerians still believed in the messianic role of the military, one of the convincing arguments normally put forward to justify their intervention in Nigerian politics was the need to curb corrupt practices and their damaging effects. Corruption has so permeated the Nigerian society that in the Transparency International Corruption Perception Index of 1995 – 1997, Nigeria was named as the most corruption - ridden country in the world. In 1999, Nigeria was equally

named as being the second most corruption – ridden nation in the world<sup>[14]</sup>.

The real import of the information coming from Transparency International and similar sources according to Kolade cited in Ojaide<sup>[14]</sup> is that our nation's position in the corruption perception index makes Nigeria a sort of persona non grata. The situation has become so bad to the extent that far back 1993, Achebe remarked that 'keeping an average Nigerian from being corrupt is like keeping a goat from eating yam.'<sup>[1]</sup>

Whichever way one views corruption, particularly bureaucratic corruption, it involves a violation of public duty or deviation from high moral standards in exchange for (or in anticipation of) personal pecuniary gains). It is connected with moral and dishonest acts. D J Gould cited in<sup>[3]</sup> identified more than twenty categories of corrupt practices in developing nations which are very much visible in the Nigerian state. These include bribery, fraudulent use of official stationary, payment for office visit, payment for letter of recommendation, kickback for hiring, phoney travel documents and travel related peccadilloes, misuse of official housing, two salaries, neglect of public service for personal business, salary computation fraud, embezzlement in its various form among others.

Within the context of the Nigerian state, it is not as if successive Nigerian governments have not realized the problem posed by corruption to the socio – economic and political development of the country. Without doubt, successive government at one point or the other have been making series of attempts at combating corruption through series of anti – corruption campaigns. What is in doubt however is what the impact of this anti – corruption campaign is?

This paper argues that the gains of good governance and development have been eluding Nigerians due to bureaucratic corruption. Corrupt practices of different shades continue to exist as normal way of life in Nigeria due to the attitudes and commitment of the governments which have not transcended the real in of sloganeering and rhetoric.

In discussing these issues, this paper is divided into five sections. The first section focuses on conceptual clarification of the concepts of corruption, development and good governance. The second segment discusses bureaucratic corruption in Nigeria while the third segment delves into the enormity and effects of bureaucratic corruption on good governance and development in Nigeria.

Section four of this paper discusses the attempts made so far by successive Nigerian governments to curb corrupt practices, while the fifth section gives the concluding remarks.

### **Conceptual Clarification:**

**(i)Corruption:** Corruption is a term that has been perceived in various ways by various scholars. Its conceptualization has attracted in recent past, competing and numerous views and approaches. It is therefore seen as a worldwide phenomenon which has long been with every society in the world. Incidentally, it has been identified as the bane of most political and economic problems in societies.

Corruption according to Khan<sup>[8]</sup> is an act which deviates from the formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in a position of public authority because of private - regarding motive such as wealth, power or status”.

*Onigu Otite<sup>[16]</sup> in his own attempt at defining corruption, states that “corruption is the perversion of integrity or state of affairs through bribery, favour or moral depravity”. He further states that corruption takes place when at least two parties have interacted to change the structure or processes of society or the behaviour of functionaries in order to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situations”.*

A careful study of the presentation of Otite shows that corruption transcends bribery but includes “treasury looting and also the deliberate bending of rules of the system to favour friends or hurt foes. It is clearly an evidence of absence of accountability, law and order.

Kalu and Yemi (1999.) in their presentation assert that corruption refers to the conscious and well planned act by a person or group of persons to appropriate by unlawful means the wealth of another person. The view presented by<sup>[14]</sup> is not at variance with the above conception of corruption. Ojaide asserts that corruption is

*“any systemic vice in an individual, society or a nation which reflects favoritism, nepotism, tribalism-sectionalism, undue enrichment, amassing of wealth, abuse of office, power, position and derivation of undue gains and benefits – it also includes bribery, smuggling fraud, illegal payments, money laundering, drug trafficking, falsification of document and records, window dressing, false declaration, evasion, underdevelopment, deceit, forgery, concealment, aiding and abetting of any kind to the detriment of another person, community, society or nation”<sup>[14]</sup>*

Following from the above, corruption can be described or referred to as the conscious attempt or deliberate diversion of resources from the satisfaction of the general interest to that of selfish (personal or particular) interest. The disdain for corruption is clearly felt mainly on ground of morality<sup>[15]</sup>. There is no doubt that it inflicts some sorts of adverse effects on any society where it exists and persists until such society is purged of its immorality.

**(ii) Good Governance:** It is the hope and the ultimate desire of every person, tribe and people to enjoy a level of good/quality life wherever such a people find themselves particularly in his home country. Democracy, good governance and protection of human rights/interests have therefore become the sole means of actualizing the basic hope of man.

Governance has been defined as the sum total of ways common and general affairs are being managed. "It is a continuing process through which conflicting and diverse interests and needs may be accommodated and where cooperative actions are taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangement that people and institution either have agreed to or perceived to be in their interest"<sup>[6]</sup>. It is also essentially a political process whereby decision and policies are taken for the benefit of the citizenry. Webster specifically defines governance as the act or process of governing, the manner or method of governing see<sup>[6]</sup>. In short, governance refers to tradition and institution that determine how authority is exercised in a particular country. This includes

- The process by which governments are selected, held accountable, monitored and replaced;
- The capacity of government to manage resources efficiently and formulate implement and enforce sound policies and regulations; and
- The respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them. (Daniel Kanfmann et al 2000 in Finance and Development by IMF)

Viewed in this context, governance could be good or bad depending on the manner and method of governing. Essentially good governance is that method of governing which is focused as the welfare of the citizenry.

**(iii) Development:** One of the most ambiguous terms in social sciences today is 'Development'. It has always and perhaps continued to generate debate among various scholars. Development in human society is not a one-sided process but rather multi-sided issue. Individuals perceive development as increase in the skill and ability, they view it as maximum freedom, the ability to create responsibility etc<sup>[9]</sup>.

In the view of (Seer 1977), development involves not only capital accumulation and economic growth but also the condition in which people in a country have adequate food and job and the income inequality among them is greatly reduced.

It is the process of bringing about fundamental and sustainable changes in the society. It encompasses growth and embraces such aspects of the quality of life as social

justice, equality of opportunity for all citizens, equitable distribution of income and the democratization of the development process.

It is all about "the capacity of members of the society to actualize themselves by participating actively in the social engineering of their life and destiny. It entails the ability of the individuals to influence and manipulate the forces of nature for their betterment and that of humanity"<sup>[12]</sup>.

Beyond the conception of development at the level of individual or people's enhancement, it is important to note that development (economic, political or social) implies both more output and changes in the technical and institutional arrangement by which it is produced,<sup>[17]</sup>.

From the above discussion, it is imperative to mention that development is a multi-dimensional concept and in spite of the various conceptions, development is basically about the process of changes which lies around the spheres of societal life.

**Bureaucratic Corruption, Good Governance and Development:**

Bureaucratic practices have existed as work systems at least since the Chinese and Assyrian cultures of some five thousand years ago. Notwithstanding the long existence of bureaucratic administration, the growth of bureaucracy can only be explained within the context of the emergence of the modern state. Bureaucracy as the notion of rationality derives its prominence, interpretation and conceptual usefulness from the works of Max Weber who presents bureaucracy as a better and efficient way by which the society can be improved see<sup>[20]</sup>. Weber made an emphatic statement or conclusion that "bureaucracy is by far the most efficient known method for the performance of complicated tasks of administration". (Ibid ;). Taiwo<sup>[20]</sup> specifically describes Weber's definition as an expression of the "ideal type" bureaucracy. And that with the emergence of modern nation states in the ordinary business life of citizens, it has assumed not only an omnibus character but also a ubiquitous status.

In the view of Konjoulas<sup>[9]</sup>, bureaucracy is a form of organization which is indispensable to the efficient operation of any complex structure while Hague *et al.*<sup>[5]</sup> described bureaucracy as "the" institution that carries out the functions and responsibilities of the state: It is the engine room of the state".

Bureaucracy notwithstanding its qualities and differences is an administrative body of "appointed officials". The term has been primarily used to denote the apparatus consisting of professional, full time officials subject to hierarchical supervision and carrying out their functions in a well ordered way based on rules, regulations and orders coming from above. The bureaucrats are therefore seen as actors within the form and content of bureaucratic system.

Bureaucratic corruption is linked with the activities of bureaucrats. Traditionally, the concept was used to denote the practice of buying favour from bureaucrats who formulate and implement governments' economic and political policies. The concept however transcends the buying of favour; it refers to the violation of public duty by bureaucrats or public officials.

Various explanations have been given for the pervasiveness of bureaucratic corruption. One school of thought holds that bureaucratic corruption can be explained within the context of the nature and character of the bureaucratic institution itself. This school holds the view that a times bureaucracy outgrows its organizational structure and as such becomes dehumanized and monolithic, hence due to undefined structure, lack of social values, integration of selfish interest over and above that of the organization, the absence of rules and procedures, corruption has the likelihood of evolving, persisting and spreading.

If bureaucratic corruption can be viewed in this way, then it can be argued that, since bureaucracy is the engine of growth of state, the pervasiveness of corruption in the institution has the capacity of undermining development. More so, if corruption has already permeated the bureaucracy, for any development to take place the institution must as a matter of fact be purged of all corrupt practices.

Similarly, if good governance is conceived to include the capacity of a government to manage resources efficiently to improve the well being of the citizens, then bureaucratic corruption can thus be regarded as one of the main obstacles to good governance and development in Nigeria.

Corruption has assumed a normal pattern of life in Nigeria. A way of getting "everything" done. A norm in the land. Consequently, the situation has rendered the Nigerian state (Governance) – a non – delivery state. Corruption has denied the Nigerian people the beauty of good governance. Bureaucracy and other institutions have been dishonest, ineffective and highly centralized. This as a matter of fact, has already been identified with all administrations in Nigeria since independence in 1960. Each succeeding administration | regime has always accused the other of corrupt practices particularly under the various military regimes. It has been observed that systemic corruption distorts incentives, undermines institutions and redistribute wealth and power to the undeserving. When corruption undermines property rights, the rule of law and incentive to invest, economic and political development are crippled (Klitgaard 2000). These have been the pattern of things in the Nigerian State; hence the gains of good governance and development have been eluding Nigerians. It is within this understanding and threat which bureaucratic corruption poses to good governance and development that, the present civilian

administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo initiated the Anti- Corruption Bill which had since been passed by the National Assembly into law to fight corruption in the country at various levels among many other measures against corrupt practices. The entire clamour about transparency and accountability is therefore seen as the necessary step towards development.

**Corruption in the Nigerian State:** Viewing the pattern of governance of the Nigerian State since the attainment of independence in 1960, one can rightly say that corruption has been the bane of Nigerian public administration. The cry against corrupt practices in Nigeria became disturbing under the Gowon administration as a result of the alarming rate of different forms of scandals resulting from the importation and exportation of goods particularly in relation to port congestion. Assessing the Gowon administration, The Nigerian Tribune asserted inter alia:

*Gowon's regime was unashamedly corrupt to the macro. Everyone knew it. They did not hide it from public gaze. His pledge to enact an anticorruption decree like other promises was never fulfilled. And when an attempt was made to expose these evils, he suppressed the attempts with the very weight of his high office.* (Nigerian Tribune August 1 1975, cited by<sup>[10]</sup>).

The level of corruption under the Gowon's regime came under public scrutiny when Muritala Mohammed became the head of state and set up Assets Investigation panel to probe the Governors that served under Gowon.

The panel indicted ten (10) of the twelve (12) governors and subsequently had their assets confiscated. The total value of assets confiscated from the governor was over =N=10 million (in 1976)<sup>[10]</sup>.

The anticorruption crusade of Muritala also spread to the entire public service. The purge of the public service led to the retirement/dismissal of over 10,000 public servants nationwide.

One would have expected that going by the efforts and energy dissipated on the cause to address corruption under the Murtala administration and ignominious ways the indicted governors that served under Gowon were treated, the politicians of the second republic would distance themselves from corrupt practices but the reverse was the case.

The politicians of the second Republic engaged in different corrupt practices of different shades. The era was marked by gross abuse of power by virtually all public officers – career and political officeholders. The political office holders used their offices to siphon and misappropriate public fund. Lamenting the scourge of corruption in the second Republic Maduagwu asserts that:

*Ministers, Governors, party officials, supporters of all the political parties, business associates, all rallied round to share the booty. Shagari's NPN ruling party, having more access to the national resources, excelled of course,*

*in this rape of public wealth. But the other four parties were also involved in the scramble for the national cake. The parties made sure that in the states where they were in charge public funds were diverted to the parties and private accounts as subsequently revealed by panels of enquires after the overthrow of the politicians<sup>[10]</sup>.*

The level of corruption under the Shagari's administration got to an alarming rate that the administration could not just wait but created the Ministry of National Guidance to carry out ethical revolution.

The military government led by Major – General Muhammed Buhari which succeeded the Shagari's administration was determined to wipe out corruption from Nigeria through the War Against Indiscipline crusade. Various Tribunals both at the Federal and state levels were set up to probe the political actors of the second Republic. The Paul Omu led Tribunal found most of the politicians guilty and sentenced them to jail of various terms.

The Babangida administration that terminated the Buhari's administration via the palace coup of on August 27, 1985 it did not show any commitment to the anti – corruption drive of its predecessor rather launched the Nigerian society to eight years of kleptocratic rule characterised by corrupt practices of different shades.

Maduagwu<sup>[10]</sup> citing *The News* December 20, 1993 listed the following as some of the highlights of Babangida corrupt practices.

- \$ 2 billion Gulf war wind fall in 1991
- 30% of oil revenue diverted to frivolous uses throughout the time.
- Huge extra-budgetary spending: 1989 = = N=15.3b, 1990=N23.4b, 1991=N35b, 1992=N44.2b, 1993 (by August) = N59billion.
- \$200 million siphoned from the Aluminum Smelter project.
- =N= 400million wasted on Better life project
- Colossal Corruption at the NNPC, e.g. \$101 million for the purchase of strategic Storage facilitation.

The Okigbo panel set up by the Abacha led administration to look into the Babangida administration indicted General Babangida and the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) of frivolous and clandestine spending.

The Abacha administration that took over from the interim National Government followed the pace set by the Babangida administration in looting the government treasury. A total sum of N63.25billion was said to have been recovered from the Abacha family<sup>[21]</sup>. Infact up till now cases of money recovered from the Abacha's family and his cronies still occupy the headlines of many Nigerian newspapers.

The Abdusalam administration can not be absolved from the mass looting of the public treasury. The Christopher Kolade panel set up to review contracts, licenses and appointment made under the Abdusalam administration came out with shocking revelation. The panel found beyond imaginable proportions that, though Nigeria was already neck deep in corrupt practices, the Abdusalam administration made mockery of any sense of discipline and probity and at a scale that practically made saints of his predecessors.

The panel specifically in its final reports reviewed 4072 contracts 576 licenses, 807 appointment, 768 awards and 111 approved all made within five months. The panel submitted that the 4072 contracts cost Nigeria N635.62billion as against the N88billion budgeted for in 1998 budget. This representing a deficit of N551billion. The panel also revealed the depletion of the foreign reserve which as at the end of 1998 stood at \$7.6billion but shrank to a \$3.8billion by May 1999 (*The News* 30 April 2000).

The various military administrators that served under Abdusalam also did a lot of havoc to the states where they served. On assumption of office in May 1999, many state governors started lamenting the state of their treasury already looted by the military administrators. For instance James Ibori of Delta State claimed that he inherited a debt of N300million, Achike Udenwa of Imo State claimed he inherited a debt N10billion, Akume of Benue claimed he inherited N12million, Governor Osoba claimed that he inherited a debt of N687, 824, 729 salaries and allowance, N754, 187, 825.52 leave allowance, N26, 635.407, 71 pension, N7, 118.000.08 up paid gratuities N46, 826, 815.90. Governor Tinubu of Lagos State claimed that he inherited a total debt of N1billion from Governor Marwa. The list is inexhaustible<sup>[11]</sup>.

Even in the ongoing political dispensation in spite of the anticorruption crusade of the administration, cases of sharp corrupt practices involving key political officers have been revealed. Cases of falsification of age and academic records by Salisu Buhari and Enwerem, contract scandal of Chuba Okadigbo, NEPA Fund involving Bola Ige and Agugu to mention but a few.

All the foregoing shows the enormity of corrupt practices in the Nigerian state. The issues are; what are the major causes and effects of these corrupt practices on Nigeria and Nigerians.

Different arguments have been put forward to explain the pervasiveness of corruption in the Nigeria state. These include poverty, the personalisation of public office, the political culture and the inability of leaders to overcome their colonial mentality in respect of their perception of public office. To these the following can be added

- Monopoly of the economy by the government.
- Inefficient contract awards standard.
- Inadequate enforcement of existing laws

- Nepotism and tribalism in the administration of justice.
- Reckless expenditure of public fund including unnecessary foreign trips by political office holders
- Inadequate regulation of access to public fund by public officers
- Inadequate accountability mechanism
- Inadequate and inefficient means of verifying the personal integrity of those appointed into public office
- Absence of civic education.
- Non or late payment of contractors by the government
- Mass invasion of tax by citizen and business
- Poor remuneration.

The next issue to discussion at this juncture is that one which centers on the effects of these corrupts practices on good governance and development in Nigeria.

The effects of corruption can be analyzed from three perspectives, i.e., political, economic and socio – cultural.

From economic perspectives, corruption is no doubt an enemy of economic development. In the international scene, it gives the nation and her people a poor image in interpersonal and business relationships<sup>[14]</sup>.

Moreso, a nation that condones corruption is often besieged with a lot of economic and social vices. Economic and social infrastructural facilities are vandalized to create room for unnecessary replacement and purchases or conversion to personal use. Trade and commerce cannot thrive, as investors will be unwilling to invest in any trade or business in the country. Entrepreneur will suffer due to high costs of doing business.

Contracts and projects will be indiscriminately awarded knowing fully well that they will be poorly executed or not executed at all. The overall resulting effects of all these malpractices will be increase in the rate of inflation, unemployment, decline in output, foreign reserves and deterioration in the standard of living of the people<sup>[14]</sup>.

The foregoing is a true picture of the lot of the Nigerian state that is characterized by breakdown or and liquidation of government business, breakdown of national infrastructure and psyche, devaluation of the naira, dwindling foreign investment, ineffective government and economy.

Viewed from the political perspective corruption has the capacity of engendering political instability, breakdown of law and order, brain drain inefficiency of the public service among others.

In the socio-cultural context, corruption apart from engendering poverty has the capacity of changing the social values of a good and progressive society dramatically to nothing else than the crazy pursuit of wealth, affluences, power and societal recognition. People no longer appreciate the virtues of good morale, conduct and practices. They believe in the reverse order, that the

means justify the end. Without doubt these have been the scheme of things in the Nigerian state. Infact corruption has been the bane of the Nigerian society.

**Efforts at Curbing Corrupt Practices in Nigeria:** The problem of corruption in Nigeria has become an endemic and successive Nigerian governments have come to realize the problem posed by corrupt practices to the nation's economic and political development and have at different time devised various means to curb its menace.

Reference has been made to the anticorruption crusade of the Murtala administration and the purge of the public service in a bid to curb corrupt practices. The Crusade did not end there. Following the fall of the second Republic, the Buhari administration that took over the reign of governance was determined to inject sanity into the Nigerian polity via its War Against Indiscipline campaign.

The anticorruption crusade of the Buhari administration however suffered a set back following the palace coup of August 27, 1985 which ushered in the Babangida administration. General Babangida did not officially declare a war against corruption rather his policy thrust encouraged corruption<sup>[2]</sup>.

- This was visible in the following ways
- The review of the cases of jailed politicians
- The release of detained and jailed politicians convicted under the Buhari administration describing Buhari action as excessive exhibition of zealotry.
- The revisit of the cases of dismissed military governors who served under General Yakubu Gowon and the promulgation of a decree which not only restored their ranks but also returned their seized assets.

The Abacha administration at its inception declared war against corruption through the war Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAI-C). Ironically, revelations made after the death of Abacha and the amount recovered so far from his family and cronies aptly showed that the Abacha administration war against corruption was a matter of rhetoric.

The most recent of the attempts made by the Nigerian state to curb corruption is the Anti-corruption law that was passed few months ago by the National Assembly. The debate and the time it took the National Assembly to pass the bill to law raise fundamental issue as to whether the law makers were and are still committed to the anticorruption crusade.

Besides, the above measures taken by successive Nigerian governments, there are different constitutional provisions that ought to guide the conduct of public officers. These provisions include the Code of Conduct Bureau, the requirements that certain categories of public officers must declare their assets among others.

The main problem with the constitutional provisions is the implementation and compliance by public officers. The foregoing shows the attempt made so far to combat the menace of corruption in the Nigerian State. One thing is not however clear in respect of the anti corruption campaign of successive Nigerian governments. That is, it is not uncommon to read on the headlines of Newspapers about public officers being indicted in scandals involving millions of naira, but one hardly hears anything about what actually comes out after such revelations have been made.

It is in the light of this a comment can be passed on the news regarding the huge amount of money recovered from the family of Late General Sanni Abacha. Many Nigerians are of the view that it is because the General is dead after all there are past Heads of state indicted of corrupt practices yet, nothing has been done to make such people to face the wrath of law. Invariably the attitude of successive Nigerian leaders (apart from the anti corruption campaign of Murtala and Buhari administration) to those already found guilty of corruption practices to a great extent has not helped in the war against corruption.

**Concluding Remarks:** Without doubt, there is a linkage between transparency and probity of the political leaders and bureaucrats of a nation and its level of development. Corruption however has been the bane of development of many third world nations, Nigeria inclusive. Lamenting the effect of corruption in Nigeria M.A Tokunbo asserts that;

*It is not an exaggeration of the tragic events of the country since independence, to say that all efforts to establish a just and efficient administration have been frustrated by corruption. The evil exists in every facet of our society. You bribe to get your child into a school, you pay to secure a job and you also continue to pay in some cases to retain it. You pay 10 percent of any contract obtained, you dash the tax officer to avoid paying taxes, you pay the hospital doctor and nurse to get proper attention, you pay the policemen to evade arrest. This catalogue of shame can continue without an end.<sup>[22]</sup>*

Indeed according to a study carried out on bureaucratic corruption by the World Bank (cited in<sup>[13]</sup>), it was observed that

- Measures to improve administrative performance may prove – ineffective should corruption be permitted to run rampant. Administrative productivity effectiveness and efficiency may be undermined by corruption.
- Improved administrative performance provides an opportunity for the more efficient mobilization of scarce resources. Corruption may subvert locative and regulatory mechanisms in the absence of adequate controls and increased accountability.

From the above, it can be deduced that any reforms geared towards improving the performance of the bureaucracy must as a matter of fact in the first instance address the problem of corruption else such efforts will be truncated by corrupt practices. Incidentally, the Obasanjo administration has on its agenda, the crusade against corrupt practices.

However, following attempts made in the past to curb corrupt practices, one may be tempted to doubt what would be the effects of the anti corruption crusade. In Nigeria, it is always easier to dismiss a policeman who collects N10.00 at the check point than to bring to book a political officer holder involved in shady transaction involving millions of naira.

Nonetheless to curb corrupt practices in Nigeria, the following measures must be adopted.

- The anti-corruption crusade of the Obasanjo administration must be total in its entire ramification.
- There should be public enlightenment on the ills of corruption.
- Accountability and transparency should be the articles of faith in the nation.
- In Nigeria, we rarely follow scandals to the end. People that perpetuate corruption always go free due to their position in the society as we witnessed in cases involving key officers of the National Assembly. This has continued to encourage corruption. Appropriate punitive measures should be meted to corrupt officers.
- The Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Issues Commission should be made effective.
- The code of conduct Bureau should be made effective.
- Assets declaration should be a must for all public officers.
- Government must seriously address the issues pertaining to the salaries, wages, pensions and gratuities of public officers. These should be paid appropriately to make citizens resist corrupt practices.
- All allegations of corrupt practices of the past should be duly investigated and affected public officers must be made to face the wrath of the law, else the average Nigerian will just think the ongoing crusade against corruption is a continuation of the rhetoric and sloganeering of the past.

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