

CORRUPTION AND THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION IN NIGERIA (1999 to 2014)

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ABSTRACT

'Corruption and the challenges of sustainable transformation in Nigeria' is a holistic view of the damages that corruption has done especially in ensuring sustainable transformation of the present administration's transformation agenda. Secondary source of data collection was employed. The paper argued that corruption has become both systemic and endemic, so much that the average Nigerian until very recently, came to accept it as the normal way of life. The challenge of meeting both human needs and human aspirations within the planet's carrying capacity makes the overall ambition complex. A number of countries have attained a high level of human development, but this has often been at the expense of the global natural resource base, this development path is not sustainable in the long run. The paper revealed that corruption is one of the most severe impediments to sustainable transformation. Other factors identified were gender inequality, ethnic and religious crisis, marginalization, lack of human capital development, lack of conducive environment, haphazard execution of state budget, over ambitious development plan etc. The paper recommended that

corruption and its associated social vices like armed robbery, kidnapping, bribery, prostitution etc .should be reduced to the barest minimum, the economy should be diversified away from oil and gas, human capital needs to be developed, equal gender representation in government, proper implementation of budget and creating an enabling environment for all towards attaining the vision of a sustainable world. The paper concluded that a sustainable world cannot be realized until there are structural measures and stronger policy action to influence both production and consumption patterns.

Keywords: *Corruption, Sustainable transformation, Challenges, Holistic, Endemic.*

INTRODUCTION

Within the last one decade, the issue of corruption and good governance has taken the center stage in development worldwide. In 1999, the World Bank Institute budgeted a whopping U.S. \$7.5 million to fund the subject (Polzer, 2001 : 2; Tesh, 1999:1). The 1996 Study of Corruption by Transparency International and Goettington University ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation, among 54 nations listed in the study, with Pakistan as the second most corrupt. As though, this was not bad enough, in the 1998 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of 85 countries, Nigeria was 81 out of the 85 countries pooled. And in the 2001 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), the image of Nigeria slipped further down (ranked 90, out of the 91 countries pooled), as the second most corrupt

nation, with Bangladesh coming first. The position remained the same in 2003 (Familoni, 2005). The structural changes in Nigeria by the past governments aimed at transforming and improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of the country. In 1998, the administration of Abacha introduced the Vision 2010. The aim was to develop a blueprint that will transform the country and place it firmly on the route to becoming a developed nation by the year 2010 (Vision 2010 Report, 1998). The general objective was to transform the country into "a united, industrious, caring and God-fearing democratic society, committed to making the basic needs of life affordable for everyone, and creating Africa's leading economy". The policy projected that by 2010, the Nigerian people would re-discover themselves and revert to being God-conscious and God-fearing, caring, sincere, honest, accountable in their dealing with public trust and proud of their country and heritage (Osisiona, 2012).

The regime of Olusegun Obasanjo in the Fourth Republic introduced National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). The four key strategies of the reform are: Reforming government and institutions, implementing a social charter, growing the private sector and value re-orientation (Osisiona, 2012). In an attempt to realize the above objectives, there were reforms in the major sectors of the economy like Pension, Energy and Power. This reform led to the privatization of Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Banking reform that allowed for merger and acquisition, the setting up of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Related Offences

Commission, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission etc. With the inauguration of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission, Obasanjo graphically summed it all up when he said:

With corruption there can be no sustainable development, nor political Stability. By breeding and feeding on inefficiency, corruption invariably strangles the system of social organization. In fact, corruption is literally antithesis of development and progress.

Speaking in the same vein, Professor Obadan of the University of Ibadan said:

One major implication of our entrenched system of illegal payoff is the enthronement of bad and corrupt political leadership, poor governance, ineffective administration and pauperization of the people.

The Learned Professor went further to say:

Systemic corruption distorts incentive, undermines institutions and redistributes wealth and power to the undeserving. Those who pay and receive bribes are expropriating a nation's wealth, leaving little for its poor citizens. When corruption undermines property, rights, the rule of law and incentive to investment, economic and political development are crippled (Klitgaard, 2000: 2).

The administration of Yar 'Adua in 2007 drew up a seven point Agenda for national development: Energy, Education, Agriculture, Infrastructure, Wealth Creation and Poverty Alleviation, Land Reforms and Security. These reforms would catapult Nigeria to the rank of the twenty (20) most developed countries of the world by the year 2020 (Shehu, 2006). This was the legacy the Yar'Adua administration transferred to Goodluck Jonathan administration when Jonathan took over. The key imprint of the transformation agenda heralded at the onset of the 2011 presidential election campaign was that Nigeria would be transformed into a new nation in various aspects of endeavor (Shehu, 2006). President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan Transformational Agenda Final Report defines the goal of the reform exercise in these words:

During 2011-2015, the policies and programmes directed at addressing governance will focus on the public service, security, law and order, the legislature, anticorruption measure and institutions, the judiciary, economic coordination, and support for private investment. These will be addressed through the implementation of the recommendations in the areas of public service reforms, judicial reform, anticorruption initiative, electoral reform, land use reform, fiscal management reforms, power sector reforms, infrastructural development reform, and information and communication technology. (Asobia, 2012:15).

From the above, it is obvious that both the past and present

governments have made efforts towards ensuring sustainable development i.e. development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (The World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). However, the question that arises is: Will the transformation agenda of the present administration be allowed to get to a sustainable level to make Nigeria one of the world top twenty economies in 2015 in spite of high level of corruption? Corruption has constituted social obstacle to the execution of government projects and it is undoubtedly a principal affliction, which causes public resentment and may lead to social upheaval in any country (Oyebode, 1990).

The resultant effect of corruption is the diversion of public resources from public ends thereby leading to the shortage of goods and services. On a large scale, it poses a threat to democracy and good governance (Olurode, 2005). The corrupt ridden nature of Nigerian society has made it impossible to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Vision 2020 which Nigeria is working towards. Therefore, for meaningful development to take place and for that development to be sustained in the long run there is the need to curb corruption at all levels, if not, the post-independence drive for development and sustainability will be a mirage. The objective of this paper therefore, is to X-ray the corrupt ridden nature of Nigerian society and how it has affected the transformation agenda of the present administration. This paper is structured

into seven sections starting with this introductory part. This is followed by the background of the study. Section three focuses on the conceptual framework. Theoretical orientation is contained in section four. The fifth section examines transformation agenda of President Goodluck Jonathan administration as well as the assessment of the transformational agenda. The challenges of sustainable transformation are discussed in the sixth section while recommendations and conclusion are found in section seven.

Background of the study

The First Republic was particularly notorious for corrupt practices where government contracts, purchases and loans were systematically manipulated to enrich political office holders and their cronies. The downfall of the republic could be partly traced to the cankerworm of corruption (Berdhan, 1997). In the Second Republic (1979-1983), Corruption took a different dimension. The massive financial corruption of the Shagari regime took the country into an unprecedented era of debt bondage and economic depression in which it is still deeply mired. The political corruption of that era led to an in glorious exit on the last day of 1983. Imagine being welcomed into a new year by a military coup d'état! (Familoni, 2005). The Third Republic was aborted by the annulment of June 12 1993 election by Babangida administration. His political corruption was met with fierce resistance both within and outside the country; which made him to step aside and installed an interim government.

The Fourth Republic which started in May, 1999, is full of corruptive activities as political office holders use their position to mismanage the economy. In 2001, the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranked Nigeria as the second most corrupt nation .Out of 91 countries with Bangladesh coming first. The position remained the same in 2003. In 2011, Nigeria was ranked 143 out of 182 countries in the world. Being 143 on the list makes Nigeria only better than 39 other countries. In 1999, Nigeria was rated 1.6; 1.2 in 2006, 2.2 in 2006, 2.2 in 2007; and 2.7 in 2008. The 2.7 in 2008 was actually 27 percent, which was not a pass mark but it was regarded as a "significant" improvement "in terms of her previous scores" (Daily Trust, September 23, 2008).

In the recent time, the National Assembly workers disrupted legislative activities over alleged corruption. The workers alleged sundry levels of corruption against the Clerk, Alhaji Salisu Maikasuwa, who is the chief Accounting Officer of the National Assembly, and diversion of all the appropriate funds as well as other unpaid "welfare" and fringe benefits meant for them by the management (The Guardian, May 8, 2013). Also, National Assembly workers accused the management and Chairman of Parliamentary Staff Association of Nigeria (PASAN), Comrade Rawlings Agada and the former Chairman of the National Assembly Service Commission of connivance and diversion of all the deductions from their "meagre" salaries, including pensions and taxes among others. The workers also alleged that the management connived to defraud them of ten thousand in the guise of owner occupier Housing scheme since 2009, diversion of

lands allocated for staff quarters and intimidation within the Assembly complex by the security agents attached to the premises (The Guardian, May 8, 2013).

Conceptual Framework

There are two basic concepts that are central to this paper. These are corruption and sustainable transformation.

Corruption

The concept of corruption is so wide that it has become very difficult to give a single definition to the concept. Corruption is ubiquitous in human society. This caused Roy (1970: 87), to ask the question 'Why is corruption a universal phenomenon despite its universal abhorrence? In an attempt to answer this question, Roy (1970: 109), arguing from the functionalist perspective attributes the prevalence of corruption in all societies and at all times to its culturally integrative role. To him, corruption plays the role of maintaining systemic stability and continuity in the society. Reasoning from this vein, Otite (1986: 16), sees corruption as performing some positive role in the society. For instance, an elaborate and inefficient bureaucracy can lead to redtapism but where graft and bribes are introduced to act as incentives, this can be reduced and removed. He also contends that corruption provides a chance for groups other than political parties to articulate their interests, maintain a channel, and get represented in the political process.

Corruption has become both systemic and endemic, so much that

the average Nigerian until very recently came to accept it as the normal way of life. Thus, corruption is Nigeria's lingua franca, understood by all and spoken with varying degrees of fluency by a large percentage of the population. It is the transactional language of engagement in nearly every encounter and interaction among Nigerians and has evolved to become the normative syntax of our society, modulating everything from our private thoughts and personal behaviour to the theory and practice of our public policies (Lardner, 2013). Corruption is a complex phenomenon and its root lies deep in bureaucratic and political institutions, and its effect on development varies with country conditions. Corruption is widespread in many developing and transition economies, not because their people are different from people elsewhere, but because conditions are ripe for it (Bannon, 1999). Aluko (2009) described corruption as any organized, independent system in which part of the system is either not performing duties it was originally intended to; or performing them in an improper manner, to the detriment of the system's original purposes. Obasanjo (1994) defined it as the misuse of public power for private and personal benefit. Corruption manifests itself in various forms such as outright misappropriation of public resources for purely private or dishonest use, nepotism, or disregard for accountability in the exercise of discretion in a matter in which a public officer is vested with monopolistic or entrusted power (Akanbi, 2005).

According to Harsh (1993), corruption is a practical problem involving the outright theft, embezzlement of funds or other

appropriation of state property, nepotism, and granting of favors to personal acquaintance. It has been argued that corruption involves behavior which deviates from the moral and constitutional requirements. Odey (2002) contextualizes corruption in Nigeria as the air which every living person breathes in and out. According to him, nobody makes any effort to breathe in the air, it comes naturally. Corruption, in Nigeria, has become so naturalized that many of us simply become corrupt without making any effort and often even without knowing it. The Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) Act 2000, and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act 2004 have now broadened the definitions of corruption. The sum total of these definitions is that corruption is the process in which an individual uses socially unapproved or unacceptable means to secure for himself or herself advantages or opportunities or principles he or she does not deserve or is not due for at a particular point in time. The synonyms of corruption therefore include bribery, crookedness, deviousness, unethical practices, unscrupulousness, double-dealing, debasement and depravity (Omoluabi, 2005).

Effects of Corruption

Tanzi (1998) provides a useful summary of the adverse effects of corruption quantified in recent studies. These include:

*Reducing investment and hence growth, by increasing costs and uncertainty.

- *Reducing spending on health and education, because these expenditures do not lend themselves easily to corrupt practices on the part of those who control the budget strings.
- *Reducing spending on operations and maintenance for reasons similar to the point above.
- *Increasing public investment because public projects are easier to manipulate by public officials and private bidders.
- *Reducing the productivity of public investment and infrastructure.
- *Reducing tax revenues due to corrupt tax and customs administration; and
- *Reducing direct foreign investment because corruption acts as a tax, the less predictable the level of corruption, the greater its impact on foreign investment.

Sustainable Transformation

Sustainability is a dynamic equilibrium in the processes of interaction between a population and the carrying capacity of an environment such that the population develops to express its full potential without adversely and irreversibly affecting the carrying capacity of the environment upon which it depends. Sustainable transformation aims to achieve universal human well-being and environmental sustainability at global, national and local levels. The vision assumes that by 2020, all people have access to food, safe drinking water, improved sanitation and modern sources of energy. A sustainable world cannot be realized until it is widely and actively envisioned. Of the

available tools to address the challenges ahead, visioning is critical to crafting profound and change. Vision statements have a specific form: they describe the future, yet they are phrased in the present tense as if the desired change had already occurred (Nwaobi, 2003).

Transforming the society and the world's economy to a sustainable basis presents the most significant challenge to the 21st Century. This challenge is unprecedented in scope. Its content is the planet as a whole. It calls for a fresh vision, a new dream and a new approach for shaping an evolving new reality. The ultimate objective of establishing the concept of sustainability, as an organizing principle is to foster a well-functioning alignment between individuals, society, the economy and the regenerative capacity of the planet's life-supporting ecosystems (Ben-Eli, 2006). Transformation requires a high degree of consensus and coordination between societal actors with diverse interests and working environments.

Theoretical Orientation

In this paper, two theories are examined. These are rational choice theory and organizational culture theory.

Rational Choice Theory: This theory was popularized by Rose-Ackerman in 1978. According to Rose-Ackerman, the causal chain is that of an individual making a (bounded) rational decision that leads to a predetermined outcome. Central to the rational choice literature is the individual corrupt official who

tries to maximize his or her utility. The individual (usually male) is portrayed as a rationally calculating person who decides to become corrupt when its expected advantages outweigh its expected disadvantages (a combination of possible penalty and the chance of being caught). The theory claims that public officials are corrupt for a simple reason that the potential benefits of corruption exceed the potential costs (Graaf, 2003). Or as Klitgaard (1988: 70) states, if the benefits of corruption minus the probability of being caught times its penalties are greater than the benefits of not being caught, then an individual will rationally choose to be corrupt. Of course, the theory can be expanded when conditions that influence the cost-benefit calculations are taken into account. For example, trust can play an important role. When the state cannot be trusted to manage private property transfers, corruption might become more appealing (Gambetta, 1993). Also, trust within close personal relationships increases the chance of getting the benefits from the delivered corrupt 'services' or reduces the chance of getting caught. In this kind of theory, actions of corrupt officials are caused by a rational, conscious and deliberate weighing process of an individual. In its purest form, autonomous agents are assumed to make more or less rational means-end calculations. This contrasts with other theories where behavior is explained by causes beyond individual control.

The advantage of rational choice theory is that it has relatively close focus (Schinkel, 2004: 11). Instead of looking for general determining factors, it concentrates on a specific situation of an

agent (a corrupt official) who calculates pros and cons. In that sense however, it is insensitive to the larger social context (which is something public choice in general has often been criticized for). It cannot account for triggering causes within the situation. The theory starts from the moment an official calculates whether to become corrupt or not. The question then becomes: why are some officials corrupt in many Western countries while most are not? If some calculate that corruption is a good deal, are the others, by not becoming corrupt, making 'bad' calculations? Thus, rational choice theories lead to a discourse on corruption control that maximizes the costs of corruption and minimizes the benefits. Since the benefits of corruption are much harder to influence, most of the focus is on the costs of corruption. These costs can be made higher by improving the chances of getting caught and imposing steeper penalties. This can easily lead to a discourse asking for a comprehensive system of control based on surveillance, massive information gathering, auditing, and aggressive enforcement of a wide array of criminal and administrative sanctions (Anechiarico & Jacobs, 1996).

Organizational Culture Theory: This theory was expounded by Rose-Ackerman in 1978. The emphasis is on the culture and structure of the organization within which the agent is working. The underlying assumption seems to be that a causal path from a certain culture – a certain group culture – leads to a certain mental state and that mental state leads to corrupt behavior. Failure in the “proper machinery” of government, not faulty character, leads public officials to act corruptly. Therefore, it

accounts for the context corrupt acts occur in. For example, Punch claims (2000: 304) (when talking about corruption within police departments around the world): “If we scan these activities then it is plain that we are no longer dealing with individuals seeking solely personal gain but with group behavior rooted in established arrangements and/or extreme practices that have to be located within the structures and culture of police work and the police organization.” Punch concludes (2000: 317): “The implication is that in tackling corruption and other forms of police deviance, it is vital to focus on group dynamics, the escalation from minor to serious deviance, and on the negative elements in the police culture.

Once again, in this theory there is a causal path from a certain culture, a certain group culture, that leads to a mental state and that mental state leads to corrupt behavior. At best, we could say that this theory describes certain conditions under which corruption occurs. But that, too, is probably saying too much. It is more a matter of describing ‘facilitating factors’ which, in some cases (not all people in the organization become corrupt), strengthen a causal chain. This type of theory is not so much interested in the corrupt official, but in the contextual features that make for the setting of corruption. Of course, many good arguments involving economic, natural or social forces, for instance, show that institutions (not in the sense of organizations or buildings, more in a sense of collective ways of thinking, feeling and doing) determine, in large part, the decisions and behavior of people. There are dynamics that transcend

individuals. In that sense, this group of research distances itself from methodological individualism (Graaf, 2003).

The advantage of this theory is that it describes certain conditions under which corruption occurs. Also, it establishes the fact that corruption is rooted in group behavior that have to be located within the structures and culture of organization. There is a causal path from a certain culture that leads to a mental state and this exhibits corruptive behavior. However, this theory is questionable because it is not all people in the described organization that are corrupt. The theory is not so much interested in the corrupt official but in the contextual features that make for the setting of corruption. This paper adopts organizational culture theory because institutions of government in Nigeria are faulty, weak and porous. Hence, corruption occurs in every facet of life.

Transformation Agenda of Goodluck Jonathan Administration

The key imprint of the transformation agenda eralded at the onset of the 2011 presidential election campaign was that Nigeria would be transformed into a new nation in various aspects of endeavour (Vanguard, May 29, 2013). The following are the transformational agenda of the present regime:

Infrastructural Development: The President promised to revive the rail system in the country, complete Lagos to Jebba rail project, intervene and revitalize the moribund Nigeria Machine Tools and other infrastructure owned by the federal government,

modernize the ports, complete the second River Niger bridge before the expiration of the tenure, make the Minister of Works to immediately start repairs of the road leading to Murtala Mohammed International Airport, and assist in resuscitating all the collapsed industries in Kano state.

Power: The nation promised constant supply of electricity, stable power supply by the year 2015 so that small and medium scale industries can thrive again, exploration of the coal deposits in Benue and Kogi states, construction of more dams, building of more hydro-power stations. The electorate was also assured that Nigerians would not use generators more than two times in a month to set up production factories in the country.

Energy and Gas: The President pledged to make Nigeria go beyond producing and exporting crude oil to exporting refined petroleum products, create 600,000 new jobs in the gas industry, boost gas supply from 1.0 billion cubic feet per day to 10 billion cubic feet by the year 2020, facilitate the enactment of the Petroleum Industry Law with emphasis on local content such that jobs are created for Nigerians.

Education: The President promised a holistic review of the nation' education policy. He also pledged to establish at least one Federal University in each state by the end of 2012, improve an hostel facilities across the nation, revamp Almajiri system of education, work towards improving the education sector as a prelude to transforming economy and as means of empowering

the people. He also promised to improve on teaching and learning environment in schools and to make every Nigerian of school age to have access to education.

Security: Following the general insecurity in the country, Jonathan promised to make anyone caught breaching the public peace to face the full wrath of the law, make sure that no part of the country is allowed to be a sanctuary for criminals, confront headlong ethno-religious violence in the country, ensure there is no sacred cow in the fight against corruption, strengthen EFCC and ICPC to fight crime, eradicate kidnappings, impeding entrepreneurship in Eastern Zone, pursue all bombers and terrorists among others.

Agriculture: Jonathan promised to boost agriculture through irrigation and maximizing vast mineral resources in the country, revive the marketing boards to ensure that farmers are no longer cheated on the sales of farm produce while more silos would be built to help farmers preserve their products, provide farmers with information on agricultural production and move towards mechanized agriculture and make each state to specialize in two crops: cash and local crops.

Economy: The President pledged to work with the private sector and all the relevant agencies to stimulate industrial growth, introduce 5-year term budgeting, diversify the economy, to revive the Ajaokuta Steel complex and Itakpe from Ore Company, address the issues of unemployment through

diversification of the nation's economy to that of sustainable agricultural development across the 36 states of federation, reduce production cost by inviting manufacturers of high demand commodities in the country to set up production factories in the country.

An Assessment of the Transformational Agenda of Goodluck Jonathan administration

Kumolu (2013) gave a vivid assessment of transformation agenda of President Goodluck administration as follows:

Infrastructural Development: Although, there had been remarkable achievements on road construction, no new sea ports have been proposed while many of the country's major airports have been rebuilt. Remarkably, the contract for the construction of the 2nd Niger bridge was recently awarded to Julius Berger Nigeria Plc.

Power: Power supply has remained unreliable. Further investigations revealed that the current challenge in the sector is that most transmission infrastructures are obsolete. Also, power generation companies that emerged successful in the bidding process of the privatization of the sector received their certificates on April 22nd this year. But all these are yet to translate to relative stability in power supply, thereby leading to doubts on the possibility of a stable power supply by 2015.

Energy and Gas: Actualisation of the promises has been largely unfulfilled. The Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB) is still stagnating in

the National Assembly. Nigeria is largely dependent on imported fuel while a large amount of money is spent on refineries that are not producing at capacity. The administration has been dogged by its failure to fully address the corruption emitting from the payment of petroleum subsidy to importers and the continued insinuation of the sector as a nest of corruption.

Education: The administration initiated a programme to provide 400 schools for itinerant scholars in Northern Nigeria known as Almajiri. There is also a reported 15 percent increase in pass rates in school leaving examinations in Nigeria in 2012. The number of Federal universities in Nigeria was increased by 12 as well, just as blocks of classrooms in 15 states were completed as part of efforts to meet Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). However, the increase in the number of federal universities has been met with criticisms over the administration's failure to improve on the standard of the existing universities all of which have fallen out of global reckoning. The condemnation is buttressed by the allocation of #426.53billion to the sector, which is at about 10% below the UNESCO recommendation of 26 percent.

Security: Despite the declaration of state of emergency in the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, observers still argued that enough is not being done to curb insecurity. This is one area that seems to be a general consensus that the President had not done

well. Similarly, the administration's war against graft has been generally described as weak and unproductive.

Agriculture: The administration's strides in the agriculture sector have been largely commended and the sector is after many years of stagnation again looking up, while the country's agriculture experts are now the toast of their peers around the continent.

Economy: While the administration is claiming economic growth of 6.5 per cent in the first quarter of 2013 with inflation down to single digit, fiscal deficit of 1.8 of GDP and foreign reserves of \$48 billion, others have argued that the reality is to the contrary. An estimated 70% of the nation's budget is spent on servicing paraphernalia of government, while foreign debts are accumulating.

Challenges of Sustainable Transformation in Nigeria

Corruption: This is one of the most severe impediments to development and growth in emerging and transition economies. Corruption is widespread in many developing and transition economies, not because their people are different from people elsewhere, but because conditions are ripe for it. The motivation to earn income through corrupt practices is extremely strong, exacerbated by poverty and by low and declining civil service salaries (Bannon, 1999).

Gender Inequality: This is a situation where women do not have the same rights and enlightenments as men to human, social,

economic and cultural development and where women do not have equal voice in civil and political life (Evans, 2001). It is a situation of uneven distribution of income, lack of access to productive inputs, such as credit and education, lack of command over property or control over earned income as well as gender biases in labour market and social exclusion between men and women (Cagatay, 1998; Harris-White & Saith, 1997; Ravari, 1998).

In Nigeria, gender inequality which is not in favour of women features prominently in access to and control of land, credit facilities, technologies, education and health and as a result, women are more vulnerable to poverty than men.(Adedire, 2013).

Marginalization: It is pertinent to know that sustainable transformation requires the efforts of all and sundry. In Nigeria, marginalization of people in socioeconomic and political spheres has seriously hampered sustainable transformation. The heterogeneous nature of the society has shortchanged some groups in the sharing of political positions. For example, women in Calabar protested against political marginalization and shortchange in the sharing of political positions, appointments and access to public decision making, contrary to the constitutional provision of 35% affirmative action on gender equality. The group stressed that the policy on women's rights to occupy legislative positions has remained on paper, the group

then called for proportional representation as done in Rwanda and South Africa (The Guardian, July 12, 2013).

Lack of Human Capital Development: Development is people-oriented because human beings are the end objectives of development. Growth and development capacity would be hampered where human resources are not fully utilized. The transition agenda of the government would suffer serious setback when people lack the skill and knowledge to execute the various developmental programmes.

Over-Ambitious of Development Plan: The seven point Agenda of Yar Adua administration in 2007 was over-ambitious. The need for successive governments to develop and transform many sectors of the economy at the same time ended in futility.

Lack of Conducive Environment: The prevailing situation in Nigeria environment which ranges from insecurity to inflation, devaluation of currency, hardship economic situation, strikes, trade unionism etc. has not allowed the various developmental programmes to be sustained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is the need for government to curb corruption. The various anticorruption Acts which was signed into law on 13th June 2000 should be properly enforced. Corruption as an antidote to sustainable transformation should be nibbed in the bud. Public enlightenment should be used to educate the public on or against

bribery, corruption and related offences and also foster public support in combating corruption. Government should collaborate with civil society and non-governmental organizations with a view to build human capital that would help to fight corruption to a logical conclusion. Poverty alleviation programme must be intensified as the dividends of democratic governance. Successful war on corruption is indirectly a war on poverty as corruption promotes inequality in the distribution of wealth (Anifowose, 2002).

There is also the need to alter the environment of corruption. As Johnson (1997) argues that it is possible for countries with entrenched corruption to move towards low corruption equilibrium when the environment of corruption is altered to create incentives for officials to reduce corruption and for groups in society to combat it. Nigeria's economy needs to be diversified. Diversification of the economy away from oil and gas is required for real sustainable growth. We need to invest in other sectors of the economy rather than crude oil. Nigeria as agrarian society should adopt technology that is based on indigeneous knowledge and skills. Government needs to protect human rights and promote people's participation in all aspects of state governance. In addition, equal gender representation in government is necessary. The constitutional provision of 35% affirmative action on gender equality needs to be enforced. Women in Calabar in showing their grievances stressed that the policy on women's rights to occupy legislative positions has remained on paper, the group called for proportional

representation as done in Rwanda and South Africa (The Guardian, July 12, 2013). Finally, conducive and an enabling environment is required for sustainable transformation. It is therefore important to provide resources build capacity and create an enabling environment for all in a way that is consistent with the vision of a sustainable world. Such a transition requires a high degree of consensus and coordination between societal actors with diverse interests and working environments (UNEP, 2011).

CONCLUSION

The paper affirmed that corruption and sustainable transformation is a daunting challenge in most developing countries of the world and especially in Nigeria. It recognized the fact that corruption is an antidote to sustainable transformation, therefore, efforts of all and sundry is needed to nib it in the bud. We have submitted that the various transformational agenda of the government are good on paper but have suffered setback due to lack of proper execution by the policy formulators. Factors like gender inequality, ethnic and religious crisis, marginalization, lack of human capital development, haphazard execution of state budget, over-ambitious of development plan and lack of conducive environment are the major challenges of sustainable transformation in Nigeria. The paper suggested that Nigeria's economy needs to be diversified, government needs to protect human rights, there must be equal representation in government and an enabling environment must be created by government for

sustainable transformation. Above all, corruption which is the most severe impediment to development and growth must be properly addressed by the government.

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