

Corruption And Democratic Governance in Nigeria: An Incompatible Marriage For National Development

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Abstract

Transparency is one of the cardinal principles driving democracy. The major emphasis of democratic governance, therefore, is popular sovereignty through public participation in governance process, in decision-making and fidelity of officeholders. In Nigeria, there is glaring perversion of democratic governance and transparency. Opaque and widespread corruption looms large in the system. The phenomena present contradiction of best practices in a democratic system. It poses challenge to academic dialogue and generates serious debates that do not proffer any common ground for resolving the impasse. It also creates both theoretical and practical haze in scholarly dilemma over the fate they present to Nigeria. This study interrogates the correlation of corruption and democratic governance in Nigeria; it explores how they are trite problems plaguing good governance in Nigeria and further evaluates their general implications for development. It adopts post-colonial state theory as explanatory framework, content analysis for discussion of the contextual issues, and documentary method for the data collected. The findings show that lack of transparency breeds corruption. It retards institutional capacity and stalls infrastructural development in Nigeria. It recommends serious transformation of the political system to deepen the values of good governance provided by democracy, to entrench the culture of fidelity in public trust and invoke precepts of sound value orientation, to eradicate corruption in the system.

Key Words: Corruption; Democratic Governance; Incompatible Marriage; National Development

1. Introduction

There has been a consistent debate about the scorecards of leaderships in Nigeria, in the practice of democracy. The debate is sequel to visible indifference to the task of honouring a system of governance that reflects our national aspirations, despite the frequent streak of infatuated claim of practicing true democracy in the country. The neglect of national development has taken long historical dimension and observers always attribute the root cause to predilection for corruption, which regardless of whether civilian or military regime remains the common language boldly written in the dictionary of leadership in Nigeria. In fact, corruption is a generalized global phenomenon that affects every politically organized human society and not peculiar to democratic governance in Nigeria. The prevalence of corrupt practices in democracy derails good governance, fidelity of public officeholders and national development. It is a virulent political disease and according to Olarewaju, (2018), corruption is the bane of many societies; usually involving public officials abusing their position for the sake of personal gain, corruption damages the legitimacy of government in the eyes of citizens and weakens the social fabric of society.

In earnest, a major scourge confronting democratic experiment in Africa is the issue of corruption, which predominantly emanates from greed, aside the mischievously entrenched culture of infidelity in governance. The failure of democratic institutions to mitigate corruption and corrupt tendencies in a democracy is an indication of the failure of democracy

in a society, (Mudasiru, 2015). Since Nigeria attained political independence in 1960, it appears evident that its development profile has remained a national malady. Regime after regime has continued to grapple with the problem and despite billions of petro-dollar revenue that accrues to the country, there is conspicuous disconnect with the level of human and infrastructural developments recorded in the country. Ironically, contemporary Nigerian politicians still front basic infrastructures that remain in abysmal deficit since 1960, as major alluring issues in their party manifestos and campaign programs. Virtually all their political jingoism, craftily keyed into this self-delusion, comes with the accompanying disguised echo of naked failure in democratic governance, national leadership and development.

It smacks logic at the national debates, to reinvent frequently, these absolute lacks of or insufficient provision of crucial facilities such as electricity, water, good roads, health facilities, quality education, public welfare and efficient transport infrastructure that picketed colonial administration and significantly formed the key indicators of nationalist struggle for independence. The indication is that hybrid of bad leadership and corruption cannot midwife a democracy that is inclined towards national development. The absurd scenario has persisted, thus debunking the integrity of development plans, which since 1960 contain these projects among the priority items listed annually for implementation. Most worrisome is the fact that each successive government laments the level of infrastructural decay or its dearth and poverty in many instances, with corruption as the scapegoat or defence mechanism. It thereby designates corruption as a branch of government that is responsible for warehousing and spending public funds in Nigeria public sector and the pillage is quite pervasive.

Corruption has been a recurring negative phenomenon in the political, economic and in the over-all national development of the Nigerian state. The organizers of the first military coup of 1966 mentioned it as the main reason for the coup. Before then, in the First Republic (1960–1966), it was the stock-in-trade of the political elites. From the First Republic to the Second Republic, (1979-1983), through the Third Republic (1999 to date), many politicians have been indicted and found guilty of different levels of corruption. A good number were sentenced to some outrageous prison terms and their properties confiscated, (Nzeribe, 2017:1).

Questions on corruption are rife; it is asked across national boundaries and in different systems of leadership but the impacts on curbing the scourge is not significant. This is more so as corruption continues to burn like a wildfire, especially in the developing world, thereby, devastating and consuming the fabric of national life and stunting development in greater magnitude. Apparently, Nigerian leaders attribute failures in measurable infrastructural development in every facet of the economy to massive corruption in the system. This is amidst the consensus that lack of development scales down national competitiveness in a world driven by science and technology. The result is that corruption exposes the vulnerability of the backward nations to exploitation of their mineral resources and dependency syndrome. It also subjects their economy to discreetly negotiated terms of survival and sustenance in the global space, which are usually in their disadvantage.

In Nigeria, despite the acknowledgements that lack of leadership and persistent financial leakages abound in the public sector and system of governance, the effects of corruption seemed to be downplayed, as the national infamy continues unabated at all levels of public service. The system is not only thickly porous for predetermined financial thefts but loss of public funds occasionally turns to national accolade, celebrated with stunning fanfare. It explained why it graduated to a level whereby ‘Snake Swallowed N36 Million from JAMB Office’, (Ebirim & Adesoji, 2018), ‘Monkey Carted Away N70 Million in Senators’ Farm House’, (Busari, 2018), and ‘Gorilla Swallowed N6.8 Million in Kano Zoo’, (Olowolagba, 2019). The hype on animal related stealing of public fund in Nigeria tends to promote the

consequent horror on our national image. It is astonishing to observe that some public officeholders in Nigeria have suddenly resorted to making animals the scapegoat for their corrupt practices without constraining their predisposition for stealing public funds.

The dangerous trend in this attributive mechanism points at the weighty burden of corruption among public officeholders in Nigeria, which is one of the central lapses in democratic governance. The associated fillip in pilfering culture in the public sector stems from the chaotic moral and ethnic orientations in the system that breeds a horde of corrupt behaviour. The development correspondingly culminates in a weakened integrity of leadership, national values, and equally relegates the imperative for engaging in sincere development efforts. The public concern about this drift in national objectives, which emphasize directing energies and resources towards national development, makes the study to re-examine the trends in corrupt practices in Nigeria. The essence is to identify the dynamics of democratic governance within the matrix of modern leadership. It is also to relate the disjuncture between democracy and leadership in Nigeria to failure of governance in catalyzing prudent management of public wealth and the consequent repercussion on national development in Nigeria.

2. Conceptual Clarification and Review of Related Literature

2.1. Corruption

Corruption remains a ubiquitous concept that qualifies for negative behaviour despite the inability of scholars to fathom a consensus definition. The ubiquity makes constructing a definition for corruption to present several difficulties, because like many other forms of behaviour, it is an elusive and complex phenomenon, (Khan, 1996). Therefore, defining what is corruption depends upon personal gain, breaking the rules, how often it happens and the value of the gifts, (Lawton, 1998:26). In most social science discussions, scholars define corruption in terms of deviations from legal norms themselves, but this norm-based definition has tended, however, to allow discussion to take place at the cost of ruling out some important activities, which in everyday sense would be considered corrupt, (Edevbaro, 1998:27). In administrative studies, corruption is mostly referred to as the act of diverting public interest or public good for personal gain and the diversion conforms to this discourse.

Similarly, corruption is also an act of giving, promising or offering wrongful satisfaction or compensation, (Salminen & Olli-Pekka, 2006). It is like an iceberg, in which only the tip can be seen and only known facts can be taken into consideration, because of its complex nature, (Huberts, Lasthuizen & Peeters, 2006). Corruption can represent different interests and it is not only necessary to talk about corruption, but also the attitude and performance of the political system or state agencies toward corruption, (Lou, 2005:122). This study views corruption as involving behaviours that deviate from set rules, sabotage of accountability for ulterior motive, and any sinister act that is aimed at compromising the system for pecuniary interests against established standard permissible by law and morality.

This is more so in view of the disaggregated perceptions formed around national values and leadership creed. For example, what constitutes corruption and what are isolated from it vary from one system or culture to the other. Of course, while some cultures and political systems consider corruption as normal ways of life, the reverse is the case in other climes. This is where the peculiar case of Nigeria comes in; to buttress the fact that corruption is relative to norms and predominant political culture in each environment. But despite the mosaic meanings ascribed to corruption to reflect geographical characteristics, the practice of democracy has unveiled the obscure nature of corruption. It is now easier to spot how corruption manifests, its impact on development and the global concerns about it.

2.2. Democracy, Democratic Governance and Democratic Practice

The word democracy is conceptualized in different ways. In other words, there is a lot of controversy around it. From the etymological roots, democracy is derived from two Greek

words, *demos* – meaning people and *kratos* – meaning rule, (Ludwig, 2002). To be concise, the word democracy means “rule by the people”, sometimes called “popular sovereignty” and can refer to direct, participatory and representative forms of rule by the people. The foregoing perspective lends credence to Abraham Lincoln’s definition, “Democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people”, (Cincotta, 2015); hence, it is a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and either exercised directly by the people in small communities or through their elected agents in large societies.

Apparently, the notion of democracy by the International IDEA, (Bekaj, 2017), corroborates the preceding orientation, whereby democracy is a political system based on popular control and political equality. It is popular control over public decision-making and decision-makers, and political equality between citizens in the exercise of that control, (Behrend & Whitehead, 2016). The real meaning of democracy gains its essence from the ways routine elections are conducted to install leaders legitimately, how the process permits electorates to exercise liberal choice of leaders, how the system strategically institutionalize structures that guarantee unhindered socialization across party divisions and how the institutions ensure inclusiveness in participation in all the electoral and decision-making processes. In addition, democratic governance measures the level of compliance with fundamental rights, government’s responsiveness to public plight, transparency and accountability, separation of power, checks and balances, and rule of law.

The foregoing features of democratic practice makes the categorization of democracy assume such forms as electoral democracy, (Behrend & Whitehead, 2016), liberal democracy, (Chou, Pan & Poole, 2017), social democracy and participatory democracy, (Skaaning & Jiménez, 2017). Democracy, therefore, is a historic system that ensures recourse to good governance and devoid of dictatorial culture. Differences in scholarly perception and conceptualization of democracy convey an important understanding that democracy and democratic practice is not synonymous and/or applied interchangeably. It is a hybrid of dichotomy. Although democracy is widely acknowledged as consisting in the varied definitions proffered by scholars and practitioners, however, the practice of democracy across political boundaries is a fluid system that rarely submits to any uniformity or accord, even among the developed countries that nurtured the political tradition to its present status.

The major underlining factor in democracy derives from how each political system and the ruling class institutionalize, domesticate, internalize and sustain the fundamental principles of democracy and then, synthesize them with democratic practice. In consonance, Rustow, (1970), Dahl (1989), Bratton & Walle, (1997), and Osabu-Kle, (2000), argued that other definitions of democracy arise precisely because there is a difference between the real or essential meaning of democracy and the actual practice of democracy that leads to nominal and operational definitions. While the real, philosophical, ideal or essential meaning of democracy remains the same, the actual practice of democracy may be said to be in the eye of the beholder. Hence, democracy is a system of government that operates on a representative structural framework, while democratic practice involves the engagement of principles of democracy in the practical context of administration. The aim of democratic governance, therefore, is to engage majority of the citizenry in national projects, which involve policymaking, rule enforcement, rule adjudication and collaborative efforts at development.

2.3. Development and National Development

The concept of development is almost as old as civilization, (Jair & Quintella, 2008). From its inception, scholars differ greatly in their conceptualization of development. The divides reflect different ideas of what development represents in different situations. While some scholars see it strictly in economic term and define it within the context of economic indices, others see it as omnibus concept that illustrates series of diversified transformation that occurs in human society, which could be economic, socio-cultural, political, technological, etc. Reflecting on a similar notion, Naomi, (1995), in Lawal & Oluwatoyin,

(2011:238), buttressed the perspective and maintained that development involves not only economic growth, but also some notion of equitable distribution, provision of healthcare, education, housing and other essential services all with a view to improving the individual and collective quality of life.

From its ancient conception, Jair & Quintella, (2008:105), identified that its extensive use in western societies from Greco-Roman civilizations to the late 19th century as a generic construct that designates the most varied aspects related to humanity's well-being, however, made the concept come closer to that of a doctrine. In the context of its complexity, development is both a physical reality and a state of mind in which society has secured the means for obtaining a better life, (Todaro & Smith, 2003:22). From strictly economic view, it involves the application of certain economic growth and technical measures to utilize available resources to instigate economic growth and improve people's quality of life, (Rabie, 2016). It also involves an improvement – qualitative, quantitative or both – in the use of available resources, (Pearson, 2000, in Abuiyada, 2018:115).

Viewed from the foregoing perspective, Ribeiro, (2005:11), in Jair & Quintella, (2008:105), defined development as a state, process, well-being, progress, economic and human growth or ecological balance. For the United Nations Development Programme, (UNDP, 1991:77), development implies “expanding the range of choices for the population that allows development to become more democratic and participative...access to income...participation in decisions and enjoyment of human, economic and political liberties”. In fact, what is particularly important in assessing the nature of development is the freedom to choose, (Sen, 1988:16). In same vein, this study subscribes to the definition of development, which conceived development as encompassing:

A process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations, (Korten, 1990:57).

Specificity in conceptualization of ‘development’ illustrates facts more clearly and diminishes ambiguity in discourses. It is more so because of its diverse nature and affinity with national development that attracts differing interpretations and expression, crisscrossing human, behavioural, social-cultural, political, economic, physical, scientific, technological, infrastructural, institutional; organizational and a whole lot more typologies. Against this backdrop, national development is described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation, (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011:238). In fact, Nosiri, (2019), applied similar variegated description, which captured all forms of improvement and advancement in human society, involving serious positive changes in life, and transformation in the political, economic and social spheres. Fundamentally, they constitute the potent parameters for measuring functionality of a system.

However, national development refers to many variables that measure transformation in the state of humanity and the environment, with discerning indicators to show where, how and when it occurred. By the totality of its nature and differentiated indicators, national development, as applied in this study, emphasizes definite infrastructural projects, human empowerment and capacity building, which government deploys the national resources under its control, to achieve for the nation. The areas of concern, though, include education, healthcare, employment, security, welfare and essential services like electricity and water supply, which are said to be grossly inadequate in Nigeria despite the annual budget portfolio that evidently provides for these sectors' transformation. Any government policies and actions that target and respond to these national imperatives by positively eradicating subsisting stagnation in the system, are viewed as catalyzing national development. The reverse is the

case when the system lags in policies and actions that address these essential necessities for socio-economic and political existence.

2.4. Review of Literature

Dahlberg, Axelsson & Holmberg, (2017), opened discourse on the notion of democratic regime with the usually neglected apprehensions about the system. Despite the euphoria about the innate potential of democracy and democratic practice to satisfy popular demands for good governance, they contended that democratic governance has never been less suspicious in any society because of the inherent challenges associated with regime behaviour. It is evident that some leaders disguise autocratic system as democracy. The attendant insensitivities of regime behaviour to democratic principles qualify the governments as undemocratic, and Africa, including many other developing countries, feature prominently in this category. Apparently, while public support has remained crucial requirements for the legitimacy of a democratic regime, citizens are most times critical of the incumbent democratic regime or show dissatisfaction with certain political institutions while still supporting democracy as the ideal form of government.

The foregoing perspective has played out in Nigeria where people opposed abuse in many democratic institutions, particularly in the activities of law enforcement agencies and the agency fighting corruption, (Onwuazombe, 2017). In U.S under President Donald Trump, many citizens expressed abuse of rights and the brutal murder of George Floyd and black life matters demonstration, (Shifferaw, 2020), resonated their weariness with democracy. Ugwu-Odo (2015:2), posited that democracy provides rights to groups and individuals in a country. The rights are usually espoused in the law books and in the case of Nigeria, the 1999 constitution (as amended), presented them under the "Fundamental Rights". When these rights form pillars of democracy, the government becomes more accountable to the people as of right and people can insist on transparency in government business. With such provisions, leaders in government can no longer violate citizen's fundamental rights with impunity.

In essence, the dissension to democratic practice is mostly rife where democratic governance shows abysmal disconnect with the principles of democracy. The practice of democracy in developing countries rarely demonstrates these principles to assuage the fears of regime's misbehaviour or promotion of sectional interests. Yio, (2011), reiterated this concerns by noting that "in Nigeria, politics were not driven by nationalistic and class consciousness but by primordial sentiments of ethnicity, religion, regionalism, etc with the consequent deepening of poverty and under-development in the country". Thus, democracy sacrifices fidelity for syndicated pillage and wanton disregard for accountability, and where this scenario is dominant in a system, it typifies behavioural and institutional distinctions among countries that subscribe to democracy and on a similar note, contradicts the ageless universal prescriptions for the practice of democracy, (Okibe, 2017^a). It also midwife plethora of perspectives to democracy, both in the context of theory and practice.

The universal principle of democracy underscores the notion of checks and balances, which the ultimate goal is to mitigate or eradicate incidences of corruption in public policy implementation. The reason is that 'corruption as *modus operandi* has been observed throughout the world; corruption is universal', (Werner, 1983:195). Aside being a worldwide phenomenon, it is prominent in countries of the third world, particularly in Africa, (Aluko, 2009), which Nigeria ranks high in every index study, scoring 26/100 and ranked 146/180 in 2019 study, (Transparency International Reports, 2019). Expectedly, selective adherence to the rule of law and corruption in political parties were some of the reasons for the poor ranking, (Rafsanjani, 2020). Meanwhile, these are part of established indicators for measuring adherence to democratic governance.

Nwanegbo & Odigbo, (2015:24), reiterated the bizarre situation, noting that corruption seems to have become a major challenge to governance and development especially in Africa. Hence, widespread corruption is a symptom of a poorly functioning

state, and a poorly functioning state can undermine economic growth, (Johnson, 1997). It often spills-over to affecting every infrastructural and human capital development efforts in the system and thereby, relegates the essence of constituting a government to serve public interests. The phenomenon is prevalent in Nigeria where every leadership position is an opportunity for corrupt enrichment; fertilized by the oil wealth, which the ruling class wastes with ignominy, without showing an atom of penchant for accountability amid persistent failures to provide infrastructure for public wellbeing. Thus, political corruption usually encompasses abuses by government officials such as embezzlement and cronyism, as well as abuses linking public and private actors such as bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud, to mention but a few, (Ogbeidi, 2012).

Accordingly, Edewor & Sokefun, (2002), Johnston & Rose-Ackerman, (1997), contended that where corruption is situated in the structural nature of any society, countries with extensive natural resources might fail to develop in a way that benefits ordinary citizens. Nigeria is not an exception in this slug but a trend that traverses all the nooks and crannies of African leadership. It is such expansive in complexity, to prompt Patricia Moreira, Managing Director of Transparency International, to admit in a Global Corruption Barometer (GCB), that foreign bribery and money laundering divert critical resources away from public services and ordinary citizens suffer most, (TransparencyInternationalReports,2019). The report further noted that out of the 47,000 citizens interviewed in 35 countries, the results showed that more than 1 in 4 people who accessed public services, such as health care and education, paid a bribe in the previous year. This is equivalent to approximately 130 million people, (Transparency International Reports, 2019). The likelihood of such report, according to Mulinge & Lesetedi, (2002:51), is the fact that the problem of corruption is both an endemic and a universal one, which affects all world nations but in varying degrees and forms.

In narrowing down the emphasis on corruption in Nigeria, attention focuses on the diffuse nature of corruption in all spheres of public service and governance in the country. Salminen, Olli-Pekka & Rinna, (2007), posited that there is no doubt that corruption is a multi-faced phenomenon, linking multiple issues together, such as abuse of entrusted power for private gains; low integrity; taking bribes; maladministration, fraud, and nepotism. Olu-Adeyemi, (2004), corroborated the foregoing assertion and stated that in Nigeria, an understanding of what constitutes corruption transcends officialdom and discussing corruption broadly as a perversion or a change from good to bad will not be inappropriate. There is a belief that corruption is seen as a particular problem in Africa and emerging economies in general, and in Nigeria specifically, the Boko Haram insurgency, feed off corruption, (Olawaju, 2018). The foregoing examples portray how undemocratic governance and lack of accountability portend danger for development. In Nigeria, bad leadership has created apoplexy of corrupt oligarchy in the system that roundly and perpetually under-develop the society with the connivance of avalanche of other accomplices in the public sector. It is in view of the ugly development and collapse of patriotism that Kazeem, (2013), shared exemplary indisputable insights, which clearly show that,

Corruption thrives in Nigeria because of active connivance of administrative officers and corporative executives to undermine social progress by diverting public funds for their personal use. The net effect is that the state is converted to personal estate of some people. They disburse financial resources with little or no restriction or obligations of accountability and with utter disregard of laid down financial regulations or budgetary controls).

According to Transparency International Reports, (2010), the practice of corruption cuts across both the public and private sectors. In fact, Etim-Udo, Udo,

Abner & Ibekwe, (2018), mentioned some corruption charges among political officeholders during the fourth republic, and it shows that corruption threatens good governance, sustainable development, democratic process, and fair business practices. It is rather a major cog in the wheel of development in Nigeria and always credited with the enormity of institutional incapacities and leadership failures. Perhaps, the failures manifest more in lack of development in the system and affliction of the public with the consequences.

Although development is a multifaceted concept, scholars discuss it differently, with varying emphases on the economic, socio-cultural and political dimensions, etc., (Rashid, 2016). The concept means different interrelated things across scholarly orientations and dominant intellectual tradition, such as progress, modernization or liberation, and advancement. In the view of Shah, (2017), development encompasses improvement in country's economic and social conditions. Accordingly, it also refers to improvements in way of managing an area's natural and human resources, in order to create wealth and improve people's lives. Based on its composite reference, Shah, (2017), listed the conditions that can make for achievement of the aim of development in a country or nation, thus:

- a. The capacity to obtain physical necessities, particularly food;
- b. A job (not necessarily paid employment) but including other vocations;
- c. Equality, which should be considered an objective in its own right;
- d. Participation in government;
- e. Belonging to a nation that is truly independent, both economically and politically; and
- f. Adequate educational levels (especially literacy).

The results of these conditions invariably constitute the practical evidence and or embodiment of national development. It lends credence to the view of Todaro, (1977), that development, (including the official tag of national development, which the study focused on) is a process of improving the quality of all human lives with three equally important aspects:

- i. Increase in availability and improvements in the distribution of food, shelter, education, health, protection, etc. through relevant growth process,
- ii. Improvements in levels of living, including income, jobs, education, etc., by creating conditions conducive to the growth through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity and respect,
- iii. Expansions in the range of economic and social choices available to individuals and nations e.g. varieties of goods and services,

The essence, according to Todaro & Smith, (2003:22), is to evolve a rational use of natural resources as imperative in resolving social and economic growth problem. It implies that the absence, lack of or inadequacy of development indicators in Nigeria relates to relapse in democratic governance and prevalence of deep-seated corruption in the public sector. The two incompatible components usually midwife forces that combine to stall development in Nigeria. Aside the mentioned several isolated catalysts in corruption chain, this hybrid of democracy, corruption and national development, including the inherent intersectional causative elements, are not visible in the reviewed literature; hence, the need to fill the noticed gap in knowledge. The new advances in the area showed how the personnel in administrative institutions are immersed in corruption under democratic governance due to lack of accountability and how it consequently derails national development. For this purpose and the need to give unambiguous case illustrations, the analyses focused on the economic sector, power sector, petroleum sector, health sector and education sector. The essence,

perhaps, is to prove that democratic governance in Nigeria drives corruption across sectors in the system and in furtherance, frustrates national development.

3. Theoretical Roots of the Study

The study borrowed a leaf from the synthesis of post-colonial thesis-antithesis premises in inference on how Africa, as a continent, sprang from colonial creations and infested with corrupt legacies of colonial administrations. The countries that make up the continent of Africa evolved from amalgam of visibly incompatible ethno-cultural groups that had previously lived separately and administered themselves, independent of their new partners. Given the mixture, colonial regime was concerned about its economic interests, and governed with the ulterior motive of using whatever means possible, in exploiting the local economy and repatriating the proceeds without commitment to the host's development. It was authoritarian regime, non-inclusive in decision-making, and devoid of true democracy preached and practiced globally. Government activities in each colonial territory were bereft of transparency and accountability, thus culminating in corruption and other vices to creep into the system through their mischievous policies that sidelined the concerns of natives while promoting colonial interests. The unhealthy development, as Page, (2017) posited, laid foundation for corruption and sabotage in the system.

Stealing started as means of resistance to the British colonial masters; it was patriotic to sabotage the white man who would not leave Nigerians alone! Government employees found it fashionable to steal small office items, demand under the table handout or handovers, or even run off with significant government fund, hide away in a remote area until the white man went home. Unfortunately, when the white man, went home, the stealing tendencies of many British colonized people in Africa did not stop, (Page, 2017).

In addition to nurturing corrupt environment, the colonial administration also created separatist mindset among African people, by setting them against each other in the struggle for bestial political largesse and further used the ploy of divide and rule to deepen social cultural subjugation and economic depredation in every parts of the continent. The teleguided exclusivity in access to political power and the fortunes arising therefrom, permeated colonial African system and at full speed, paddled the cacophonous groupings that not only suffered colonial exploitation but also internalized the unholy practice into independence under the same territory, country and government. It produced many countries in Africa, which though are independent, but lack necessities for internal unity to forge a coherent contiguous nation that would be committed to promoting national values, encouraging patriotism and leveraging on their diversity to showcase strength of their prosperity and national development. The divides still undermine African unity, political stability, loyalty to their countries, obedience to law, tolerance of one another and national development.

The post-colonial states in Africa, therefore, imbibed the absurd practices and could easily replicate the colonial systems of governance in modern day administration. The primary concern of leaders in Africa, who hail from different backgrounds, is competition for national wealth, appropriation of national assets among themselves, using the fireworks of ethno-religious propaganda. These resources are criminally converted into personal wealth at the expense of the generality, and thereby relegate the imperatives for national development. Exposure to these vices and assimilation of the originating colonial autocratic system, hinged on repression as mechanism for keeping the public in silence, made post-colonial leaderships in Africa to exercise no restraint or limits in actions that typify undemocratic governance and opacity. The major underlying factor is a stream of corruption that seriously affects socio-economic, political, human empowerment and infrastructural developments in virtually every post-colonial state in Africa.

Since Nigeria gained independence in 1960, the struggle for political power, control of national institutions and appropriation of the wealth of the nation has been intense among the different ethno-religious groups. In fact, the uniting symbol of the nation has rarely exceeded mere convergence of governing class for sharing of the commonwealth, most times disproportionately, with the attendant clamour for restructuring. It provides a background to the economic oriented motives that explain the rationale for persistent agitations for state and local government creations in the country. Perhaps, the administrative structures serve as conduit pipes by which public officials siphon or divert, unremorsefully, the monies provided in annual budgets and meant for development projects and human empowerment.

The post-colonial theory emphasizes these transferred colonial legacies of individualism via materialism driven by capitalism, autocracy promoted by exclusion in decision-making, insensitivity to public plights and ruthless disregard for national integration or harnessing unity in diversity to curd corruption and achieve national development. The colonial factors have sustained the regime of misplaced priorities in African leadership and makes undemocratic governance, opaque; corruption and decline in national development to remain the hallmarks. The foregoing background explains and justifies the adoption of post-colonial state nexus for the study.

4. Unveiling the Farce about Democratic Governance in Nigeria

Although democratic governance in Nigeria provokes mixed reactions, praises and condemnation by different groups at a streak, the reactions reflect the fact that in all spheres of life, the laws of opposites reign supreme, and conditionally teleguided human behaviour and action. In the case of Nigeria, the governing class vociferously extols a system that feeds them fat and protects their vested selfish interests, no matter however it undermines public good. Conversely, the pauperized publics, who suffer bad leadership and pains of misplaced priorities in governance, mostly condemn the system, based on recurrence of system-induced violence, abuse of fundamental rights and dearth of basic necessities of life. In summation, the latter group routinely appears vulnerable to the impacts of decayed infrastructure, and become circumstantial victims of every negative consequence of system failure and corruption in the country.

The implication is that transparency, accountability, respect for human rights and observance of rule of law are desiderata for good governance in democratic system but they appear largely scarce in Nigeria context. In fact, when there is unconstrained adherence to basic democracy principles, it serves as a proof of genuine subscription to democratic practice, (Okibe, (2017^a). In this context, different studies and publications by both scholars and practitioners of democracy have shown that democracy has attributes and then sub-attributes of democratic practice. The identified attributes include representative government, fundamental rights, and checks on government, impartial administration and participatory engagement, (Behrend & Whitehead 2016; Chou, Pan & Poole, 2017; Okibe, 2017^b; Skaaning & Jiménez, 2017). Each of the attributes emphasizes actions that qualify for democratic practice and these are presented in the table below for clarity in denoting a democratic system.

Table 1: Attributes and Sub-attributes of Strands of Democracy

Attribute Nos.	Major Emphasis	Corresponding Sub-attribute – Indicators
1	Representative Government	Clean Elections, Inclusive Suffrage, Free Political Parties, Elected Government
2	Fundamental Rights	Access to Justice, Civil Liberties, Social Rights and Equality
3	Checks on Government	Effective Parliament, Judicial Independence, Media Integrity
4	Impartial Administration	Absence of Corruption, Predictable Enforcement
5	Participatory Engagement	Civil Society Participation, Electoral Participation, Direct Democracy, Sub-national Elections

Sources: Excerpts from the works of the authors mentioned hereinbefore.

The attributes of democracy and sub-attributes of democratic practice, show glaring disconnect with African system but Nigeria in particular, where experiences in democratic practice most strikingly vary with the standard principles of democracy. Their interdependence ensures good governance in a political system, although in developing political systems, democratic governance is taken for a given simply because the system bears democracy label. The results are wide margins of lags in true democratic practice, either by deliberate relegation of democratic principles or complex background based on the dissonant cultural diversity of the people exposed to the system, (Okibe, 2017^a). The aspect of deliberate relegation of democratic principles occurs when the ruling class circumvents rule of engagements by conspiring and corruptly enriching themselves without accountability and in the process, promoting obnoxious policies that negate justice, fairness, transparency and rule of law. The complex background based on the dissonant cultural diversity component engenders primordial considerations, nepotism, mediocrity, cronyism, opacity, ethnicity and religious sentiment in democratic governance, (Okibe, 2017^a). These are visible contradictions in African model of democratic practice that receive undeserving hypocritical veneration, particularly in Nigeria where the aforesaid factors are part of decisive instruments in the hands of political leaders and which skews governance towards ethno-religious and corrupt orientation.

Although scholars place much emphases on these attributes and situate definitions of democracy around them, (Skaaning & Jiménez, (2017), ‘it is only by means of the sub-attributes that the practice of democracy is better understood other than the concept of democracy itself’. The reason, as common in Nigeria, is that the attributes of democracy constitute the structures of organically linked democratic theoretical framework, which shield the political hypocrisy of the ruling class, embedded in their political manifesto that lack in concrete democratic action. For example, adherence to the aforementioned sub-attributes is ascertained “where it is required that the administration or executive is checked by being held accountable to an organ of government distinct from it”, especially when leaders exercise political power in a constitutional democracy, (Corder, Jagwanth & Soltau, 1999). From the perspective of the sub-attributes, the deluge of absurdities in democratic practice in places where there is lack of the universally acknowledged principles and culture of participatory governance, and where opaque in public sector is open valve for pumping corruption, are exposed.

In many developed political systems in the western world where there are highly integrated democratic institutions and adaptive culture of adherence to democratic norms in governance, the sub-attributes significantly reflect in democratic practice. This is unlike the third world countries, as already highlighted, where all the distinguishing indicators in the sub-attributes appear as the direct opposites of the rule. It is a disturbing development in Nigerian system where leaders pay little attention to democratic principles, and in democratic practice. Against the backdrop of the basic principles of democracy that Nigeria voluntarily subscribes to, for branding the system democratic governance, the practice conspicuously lacks in the indicators or characteristics listed in the UNDP Report, (2007), which include *participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and strategic vision*. The indicators are sometimes espoused in the legal statutes of a country, especially the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, (as amended), and more explicitly delineated in Chapter 11 – that discussed Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy and Chapter IV – on Fundamental Rights, etc. obviously, the provisions set criteria for good governance:

Good governance is, among other things, participatory, transparent and accountable, effective and equitable, and it promotes the rule of law. It ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad

consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources, (Olu-Adeyemi, 2012:167).

It implies that lack of universal characteristics of democratic practice, demonstrates classic examples of derailment from good governance that democracy ought to promote in a system. Leadership in Nigeria relegates and beclouds the roadmaps for true democratic system. It attaches no significant meaning to the supremacy of the constitution, respect for rule of law and human rights, or provision of infrastructural facilities (referred to as democracy dividend in Nigeria parlance). There are also loose concerns for accountability in management of public affairs, inclusiveness in decision-making and public policy issues, equality of access to opportunities, justice and fairness in governance and selfless service to the nation. The country was ranked lowest based on all the governance indicators of *political stability/no violence, government effectiveness, rule of law, regulatory quality, voice and accountability and control of corruption*, when compared to Ghana, its neighbour in West Africa, and South Africa, a reasonable comparator country, (Pallavi, 2017:4). It is a departure from the professed goals of democratic governance in Nigeria. In a study on democracy and good governance, challenges and prospects, Ugwu-Odo, (2015:4), contended that,

In Nigeria, the exhilaration generated by widespread dehumanizing poverty and under development; insecurity; corruption; mass illiteracy; unemployment; amongst others has created mixed feelings about the desirability or otherwise of democracy. Democracy in Nigeria is going through difficult times as viable democratic institutions such as credible electoral system; independent judiciary, rule of law, etc are yet to take root in the country in the face of such flaws like massive corruption in every facet of the nation's public life.

Despite this glowing disillusion, the governing class is extremely indifferent and insensitive to the damaging implications of the protracted drifting, thereby catalyzing undemocratic tendency in governance that emboldens many government and public officials to undermine fidelity in public office and in the management of public funds. They,thereby, immerse themselves and the system in humongous corruption, with the adverse effects on all facets of the society. There are ample evidences to show that the ugly trends have rendered all sectors of the economy comatose, because corruption as it were, remains the most effective conduit pipe through which billions of dollars budgeted annually for infrastructural development and human empowerment across sectoral divides disappear into private accounts. In fact, there is no sector of the economy where corruption has not permeated. It is highly infectious to cause serious concern; hence, the records are rife in the system.

5. Overview of Corruption and National Development in Nigeria

The development of any nation is predicated on infrastructure. Akinwale, (2010), in Ukanwah, (2018), stated that infrastructure is usually classified in the following categories:

- Energy/Power Infrastructure: electricity, gas and petroleum pipelines.
- Transport Infrastructure: surface roads, rail system, aviation, and ports.
- Water and Sanitation Infrastructure: piped water and irrigation.
- Communication Infrastructure: mass media, internet, phones, and postal services.
- Health Infrastructure: primary, secondary and tertiary health, care services.
- Education Infrastructure: all categories of schools and higher institutions

The Nigerian politicians and leaders, who promise these infrastructures almost every year of election, relapse immediately thereafter. Although each government in power

(military or civilian) implemented the projects since 1960, as sparsely noticeable in the system, failure in accountability is a clear indication of abuse of democratic rule in Nigeria. It incubates and domesticates corruption that manifests in different forms. Among the dominant cases in focus, the occurrence is rampant in the economy generally, the power sector, the petroleum industry, federal and state establishments, various ministries, departments and agencies at national and state levels, personnel in government appointments, public servants, contractors and suppliers in government circle and everything that relates to public life. Its pervasive nature compels analysts and observers from local and foreign media to regard the phenomenon as national symbols of decay and retrogression. Cases cited here dwelt on the economy, power, petroleum, health and education for illustration of how corruption has hindered national development in key sectors of the economy.

5.1. Economic Sector

The economy is the mainstay of the polity, and as substructure, it guarantees the efficacy of other superstructures in the system. Indices from economic performance always formed the cornerstone for valuation of a country's wellbeing. Concepts like Gross Domestic Products (GDP) and Gross National Products (GNP) derive their essences from these valuations. In other words, it emphasizes per capita income, level of infrastructure for sustainability in micro-economic growth, the entrenched capacity for self-reliance in area that generates revenue, the industrial capacity, wellbeing based on the prevailing agricultural production capacity in terms of food security, the formula for distribution of commonwealth to reduce structural poverty, and satisfaction derived from government policies and action.

Budget performance is very critical in this process. It means that the goals of the budget must be pursued vigorously, achievements measured at intervals and strategies reviewed based on the outcome of accounts given by policy implementers. The striking experience in Nigeria are situations whereby each national annual budget rises in monetary quantum without corresponding rise in the general conditions of life in the economy. Improvements in the economy, sketched in graph to highlight shifts in mere curve, displace measure of economic growth and living standard based on wellbeing. Poverty continues to climb and corruption soars so high in budget implementation, to water-down developments. Every administration suffers the dangerous cross roads but appears to be worse in recent time.

In every aspects of the economy, deficit in infrastructure and general conditions of life often create doubts about budget's integrity and sincerity of government in development programmes. More so, with the billions and trillions of naira budgeted for same purpose without significant impacts. For example, in 2018, a budget of N9.12 trillion was passed, comprising N3.5 trillion recurrent and N2.9 trillion capital expenditures, excluding derivations and other charges. Also in 2019, a budget of N8.83 trillion was passed with a component of N4.5 trillion recurrent and N2.9 trillion capital expenditures, excluding derivations and other sundry charges, (Energy Mix, 2019). However, rampant cases of corruption among leaders in government and the public sector drained much of the funds and scaled down emphases on aggressive provision of the needed human empowerment and infrastructures in the transport, power, health and education and communication sectors. The slide in the economy sometimes comes with fancy twist in the performance of the budget. It portrays ambivalent and contradictory data that are unreliable and misleading. For example, in 2018, the Reports of National Bureau of Statistics released in 2019, stated that the economy grew by 1.81 percent in the third quarter of 2018, (Okoi, 2019). This growth coincided with a report that poverty in Nigeria was awesome. It also coincided with unrestrained government's borrowing spree without impact on the masses. When there are queries on the increasing government debts due to needless loans, Adesina chided Nigerians with evasive logic thus:

Don't forget that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) came out to say that Nigeria's economy has the capacity to absorb more loans and that Nigeria is taking below what its GDP can afford. IMF said it and it is on record. Nigeria's GDP can service more loans than it is taking. That is a vote of confidence in Nigeria's ability to repay the loans it is taking, (Temidayo & Oladele, 2020).

This parsimonious argument lends credence to the fact that amidst the oil wealth, in each year, Nigeria borrows to meet its obligatory spending (interest payments, transfers and payroll) projected at about N5.4 trillion with a revenue of about N4 trillion in 2019 alone, (Agusto, 2019). There is no any positive and concrete impact to justify the figures juggled to sanctify the trillions borrowed to boost the economy. In effects, oil seems to produce wealth that is largely a subject of public sector corruption especially since the return to democratic leadership. The opaque in the management of public resources in Nigeria is the province of highly networked accomplices that act as syndicates in all parts of the system.

Apart from the hullabaloo about the sound health of the economy and blistering diversification jingles, “the growth in the non-oil sector has not translated to improvements in the living standard of Nigerians due to high unemployment rates”, (Okoi, 2019). Further insights suffice. The total number of Nigerians classified as unemployed, meaning they have no job at all or worked less than 20 hours a week, increased from 17.6 million in the fourth quarter of 2017 to 20.9 million in the third quarter of 2018. On the other hand, the national unemployment rate rose from 18.8 percent in the third quarter of 2017 to 23.1 percent in the third quarter of 2018. When compared against the 87 million Nigerians living on less than \$1.90 a day according to ‘The Brookings Institution's Report’, (Okoi, 2019), the evidence is overwhelming that millions of Nigerians are living in extreme poverty.

Furthermore, corruption made the Nigeria's five-year average of capital expenditure as a percentage of nominal GDP drop to a meager 2.1%, which pales in comparison to Angola, 7% and Kenya, 7.6%, (Agusto, 2019). Public money does not go towards much needed facilities like education and healthcare, yet corruption increases the cost of doing business and reduces investment. It leads to less satisfaction with the government, lower levels of social and institutional trust, and a greater willingness to break rules; and this might, in turn, create a vicious circle of even more corruption, inefficiency and lower economic growth, (Olawajaju, 2018). The disparity between annual budget outlay and dwindled investment in national development betrays the government's annual borrowing, to fund the provisions of infrastructures and development of institutional capacities. It reflects in the scary incomprehensible tale by Patricia Moreira in a GCB Survey, that corruption is hindering Africa's economic, political and social development, and it is a major barrier to economic growth, good governance and basic freedoms, like freedom of speech or citizen's right to hold governments to account, (TI Survey Reports, 2019).

The implication for national development is that in the circumstance where national objective is not followed strictly, no significant development is feasible. Thus, corruption foists triple tragedies on the public sector. Firstly, to siphon funds earmarked and sometimes borrowed for capital projects, by inadequate provision of projects budgeted for or reduction in their quantity and quality; secondly, to evade liability when called upon to account for stewardship and thirdly, to fraudulently negotiate foreign loan to restock the treasury for further embezzlement when available funds are meager. The systemic absurdity encourages disregard for accountability and rejigging of democratic governance for misplaced purposes.

It added to the reasons that Second Niger Bridge served as conduit pipe by draining public funds for decades without physical evidence of work done. By merely cutting tape to flag off the commencement of the project valued at N130 billion, government subsequently declared “*We have spent N10bn on 2nd Niger Bridge so far – Jonathan*”, (Premium Times, January 17, 2015). The same applies to repeated failures in rehabilitation of Ajaokuta Steel

Company Lokoja due to corruption, (Ani, 2020). It is symbolic in the oil refineries that remained moribund after FG expended about \$25bn for past 25 years, (Ayade, 2020). It manifests in glaring failures in roads infrastructure (Gabriel, 2014), and rail system where trillion naira was sunk in failed contracts, (Rasheed, 2016). There are failed diversification of the economy, (Obi, 2019), and empty national grain reserve project (Nnabuife, 2017). The latter was exposed by the quest for palliative following the burden of lockdown as preventive measure towards containing coronavirus. Corruption is also the reason there is weak response to social welfare package, resulting in poverty, commission of crime in the forms of terrorism, banditry, cattle rustling, kidnapping, ritual and robbery and intractable drift in the cause of nation building projects in Nigeria. These are reflexes of bad leadership and very alarming for transformation of a nation that is choked in disarray.

5.2. Power Sector

Essentially, the power sector, globally, is regarded as the engine for transformation in society. It facilitates sustainable growth in the economy, particularly the micro-economy with the value chain. In Nigeria, there is insignificant improvement in the sector, despite that government has spent \$14 billion since 1999 to develop a modern power sector to serve Nigeria's 183 million people, (Page, 2017), now estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 200 million people. Growth in the national electricity supply has been sporadic, since Nigeria can generate enough power to meet the needs of a population of just half a million – similar to that of the city of Edinburgh.

The sector has witnessed wide ranges of corrupt allegations during the administrations of Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo, Alhaji Musa Yar'adua, Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari. Each administration implemented power sector reforms that ironically degenerated to unimaginable deterioration in power infrastructure. It birthed fluctuating output in megawatts, epileptic supply and unmetered billing, which cast serious doubts about the claims for the upgraded infrastructure in the sector. Across the regimes, it was estimated that Presidents Obasanjo spent US\$16 billion, Yar'adua US\$5.375 billion and Jonathan US\$8.26 billion respectively in the power sector, (Ogunleye, 2016:19). Each phase culminated in appalling constant drops in power generation capacity, distribution and supply. There was allegation of misappropriation of US\$88 billion pension fund of the erstwhile staff of PHCN that accrued from the 7.5 percent deductions from their salaries, and claims that the "US\$16 billion invested in the National Integrated Power Project (NIPP) during Obasanjo era was largely mismanaged", (Ogunleye, 2016:18-19). Public protestation against some of these stealing and lack of accountability met deafening silence from the government officials.

Apart from the indicative investment of US\$35 billion over ten years for the sector, not much data was available regarding the breakdown of cost and quantifiable expected benefits of the reform, (Ogunleye, 2016:16). It triggered and has continued to cause demands for probe of the projects, recovery of the looted funds and measured punishments for any convicted culprits. Nonetheless, it was estimated that President Muhammadu Buhari has also sunk several billion dollars into the power sector without significant impact and the blame has always resided in the corridor of corruption, which is perceived as enemy without border.

The implication for national development is that given the trends in power drop due to decayed infrastructure, it has impacted negatively on sustainable growth in the economy. Lack of meaningful infrastructure in the power sector might have accounted for 85 percent decline in the capacity of industrial production, cost of doing business and services, relocation of many companies to neighbouring countries, e.g. Ghana and the consequent drop in employment – direct and indirect, with the increased effects on poverty and deaths. Nigerians rely on generator for virtually everything – domestic and commercial activities and micro-economic performance has reversed irretrievably to almost zero point. With sustained democracy mired in lack of accountability, corruption has become an easy footpath to trek.

5.3. Petroleum Sector

Nigeria is the sixth in the world and second largest producer of oil in Africa. With proven crude oil reserve estimates of about 37 billion barrels as at 2015, Nigeria boasts of about 29% of the continent's crude reserves (2nd in Africa) and producing over 1.5 million bpd (as at January 2017)– (Adeosun & Oluleye, 2017:4). The crude production capacity raised to 2.1 million bpd, in 2019 and as at April 2019, oil revenue constituted about 60 per cent of total revenue to the government”, (Energy Mix, 2019). Despite having a nameplate refining capacity that exceeds demand, Nigeria ranks as the 3rd highest importer of petroleum products in Africa, importing over 80% of products consumed, (Adeosun & Oluleye, 2017:3). These might be conservative estimates because real figures are top secrets.

The dearth of oil and gas infrastructure is visible in pipeline networks in the country, which because of deterioration, leaks while vandalism has led to the use of tankers to convey petroleum products, thereby putting pressure on roads across the country, (Energy Mix Report, 2019). Damaged pipelines, shallow channels and the absence of an effective logistics backbone are major infrastructural impediments, which have constrained growth within the refining sector and the broader oil and gas industry, (Adeosun & Oluleye, 2017:11). Corruption is closely associated with the oil and gas sector in the country and ranked as the most pervasive constraint for doing business across sectors. It was second only to ‘inadequate supply of infrastructure’ and closely followed by ‘access to financing’, all of which are factors closely related to inefficiencies due to corruption and rent capture, (Pallavi, 2017:4).

Global Risk Insights Report, (2016), observed that in NNPC, the country’s official audit revealed that around \$19 billion of oil revenues went missing through corruption and oil theft in 2014 alone. This is followed by some estimates that around \$400 billion has vanished in a similar fashion since the country gained independence in 1960, making oil industry crime the second largest industry in the country, right after the oil industry itself. There is unbridled oil bunkering activities and local refining of illegally sourced crude, to cheat on government. Example of synergy in oil theft is where sophisticated networks of former warlords, local businesspersons and corrupt officials steal an estimated 200,000 barrels a day.

It buttresses a report by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) that the federal government lost US\$740 million to crude oil theft in 2019, (Adegboyega, 2020), and US\$42 billion to crude oil theft in nine years, (Udo, 2019). These are besides the well-entrenched corruptions in the repairs or turnaround maintenance of oil refineries by the NNPC. In effect, the Nigeria’s moribund refineries purportedly gulped \$396.33 million in the professed efforts by successive governments to fix them for optimal production, (Punch Newspaper - Editorial, April 3, 2020). The repairs failed to meet the projected local refining production capacities of the refineries after every phase, and corruption marred each efforts.

Several controversies trail the operations of NNPC, for non-remittance of billions of naira to the coffers of government and the reasons are related to corruption. The former CBN Governor, Mr. Lamido Sanusi, accused former Minister of Petroleum Resources, Diezani Alison-Madueke of mismanagement of \$3.5 billion (N577 billion) of Nigeria’s money without budgetary approval, (Omitaomu, 2014). For all crude oil sales within the period of 2012 and July 2013, the NNPC paid only 24 per cent proceeds into the federation account, and diverted the remaining 76 per cent, which could not be accounted for. The final findings showed that the unremitted misappropriated fund was \$20 billion (N3.3 trillion) – (Omitaomu, 2014; Donwa, Mgbame & Ogbeide, 2015:36).

The controversy remained in public domain until Diezani Alison-Madueke fled Nigeria to the United Kingdom, (Nwachukwu, 2019), where she faced investigation for financial impropriety, (Olafusi, 2019). In 2017, a federal high court in Lagos ordered the forfeiture of N7.6 billion allegedly linked to her to the federal government, (Olafusi, 2019), and EFCC later secured another interim forfeiture of hundreds of jewellery valued at \$40 million, (Ezeamalu, 2019). The Halliburton scandal unfolded another epic corruption in the sector. The corrupt practices of the cartel busted when Halliburton pleaded guilty to paying

around US\$180 million in bribes to the top Nigerian government officials, in order to secure four contracts, worth over US\$6 billion, to build Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) facilities in Nigeria, (Donwa, Mgbame & Ogbeide, 2015:36). Meanwhile, agents of democratic governance diverted these monies to blacklist the regime of President Goodluck Jonathan for not investing enough money in infrastructure relating to institutional capacity building in the system, and especially, in the petroleum industry itself.

These are manifest evidences of lack of accountability in leadership and public sector management, which attest to the fact that the Nigerian oil industry is plagued by endemic corruption, (Global Risk Insights, 2016). Accordingly, corruptions in the Nigerian petroleum sector alone were classified into four levels that comprise policy corruption, administrative corruption, commercial corruption and grand corruption, (Obioma, 2012). The typologies of these corruptions are deliberate ploys invented by public sector managers for the sole purpose of cheating on the system by compromising policies that regulate the operations of the sector. The rationale for devising these corrupt strategies in public office is to collapse stringent administrative measures that guarantee due process and accountability in contract awards, (Okibe, 2017^a:413); to perpetuate inaccuracy of data on production, sales and revenues from crude, and to create structures that sustain massive theft of money by those who superintend the sector. It is perpetrated in connivance or collaboration with political leaders who taint democratic governance in Nigeria with senseless corruption as reflections of skewed leadership orientation, with little regards for accountability.

The implication is that it derails national development in every ramification. There is no meaningful human empowerment even in the immediate communities of Niger Delta. There are also no significant physical infrastructural developments in the sector, compared to the trillions of dollars generated from sale of crude oil annually. Rather, the classic swarm of corruption occurs in pipeline vandalism, oil spillage and organized cross-sectional plots to circumvent due diligence in procurement, contract awards, allocation of oil blocs, license for lifting petroleum products, surveillance of oil fields and appointment into headship in the industry. They virtually paralyze the sector for lack of transparency and accountability.

For instance, Nigeria cannot boast of any functional refinery and nearly 85 per cent of its locally consumed petroleum products are refined outside the country. Nigerian leaders and public sector managers steal public funds and invest them outside the country. The investments benefit the host country's economy and stretch the gap in local productive capacities of Nigerian economy. It under-develops the system, with the multiplier effects on the public. It remains visible and breeds corruption where there is lack of firm control over oil exploration, drilling, crude oil production, diligent calibrations of oil for export and the politics of marketing products at the international oil markets. Depraved democratic governance and corruption does not allow for inward looking and fixing critical problems that characterize the administration of Nigerian oil wealth. The manipulation of the system and viral exploitation of the nation's oil resources create opportunities whereby internal saboteur and foreign rogues form cartel that steal in pretense of foreign loan and technology.

5.4. Health Sector

In all societies but especially in the third world, healthcare inextricably links to a nation's political and economic systems. Nigeria has sustained a health system that rarely addresses its health crisis because of poor funding and corruption, which are responsible for dearth of basic infrastructure in the sector. Take for example the percentage of the nation's budget allocated to the sector over some years. In 2010, it was a meager 3.58 percent; in 2011, it rose to 5.58 percent; then 5.95 percent in 2012; it dropped to 5.66 percent in 2013; 5.63 percent in 2014; 5.78 percent in 2015; 4.14 percent in 2016, and 5.17 percent in 2017, representing N377.4 billion allocated to the health sector, (Ojo, 2020). Similarly in 2018, N71.11 billion was allocated for capital expenditure in the health sector, N47 billion in 2019 and N46 billion in 2020, (Obokoh, 2019, Adepoju, 2020).

Ironically, the same 2020 budget allocated N27 billion for the renovation of the National Assembly, including several billions budgeted for purchasing cars for the president and other political officeholders, and for the travels and feeding of the president and vice president. In fact, the N27 billion for the renovation of the National Assembly and other allocations aforementioned could not be far from targets of corruption. It was for similar suspicion that Atiku Abubakar advised government to scrap the wasteful allocations and channel them to other priority projects, (Awojulgbe, 2020). Budgetary provisions for health sector show a lopsided figure when compared to an estimated N359.2 billion that Nigerians spend on medical tourism annually”, (Adepoju, 2020). These frivolous allocations are bayonet for corruption. The state of the sector in terms of manpower, quality service delivery and access, including infrastructure and motivation has always been a source of concern.

The World Health Organization rated Nigeria 187th out of 191 countries in terms of healthcare delivery. It stated that one-third of more than 700 health facilities have been destroyed in the country and about 3.7 million people are in need of health assistance. It placed Nigeria at third highest in infant mortality rate in the world, (Adepoju, 2018). This did not come as a surprise if only it would be recalled that based on the World Health Organization’s data, between 2005 and 2015, it was estimated that over 600,000 maternal deaths and no less than 900,000 maternal near-miss cases occurred in the country. Thus, the maternal mortality rate was approximately 800 per 1000 live births and 58,000 maternal deaths in 2015, (Olufemi, 2019). Health financing, which democratic governance often promises has remained abysmally poor, thereby, manifesting in dearth of basic infrastructure.

In Nigeria, government appears oblivious of the fact that medical underdevelopment is a necessary feature of economic underdevelopment, (Waitzkin, 1983; Waitzkin & Model, 1974:175), and some problems in the sector are explained as internal factors, i.e., inadequate hospitals, clinics, equipment, and materials, and a lack of the necessary personnel, (Alubo, 1985, 2010). Corruption in the health system manifests in four essential elements that drive the major fall-outs in Nigeria’s healthcare transformation: poor universal health coverage, inadequate infrastructure, poor human resources planning, and management practices and structures causing brain drain and low budgetary of government commitments, (Obokoh, 2020). In addition, Maduke, (2013:132), presented an elaborate perspective of corruption in the health sector and the adverse consequences.

Principally, corruption makes it impossible to make judicious use of the available funds meant for infrastructure to achieve any significant results. The Executive Director of Project PINK BLUE - Runice Chidebe, cited a grim picture whereby in Nigeria, we have one doctor per 5,000 people, only 3,000 doctor’s graduate annually and 88 percent of these doctors consider traveling abroad for work, (Obokoh, 2020). Similarly, Ojo, (2020), cited interview reports of Dr Aliyu Sokomba, where it showed that government was not interested in the health sector and that is why they seek healthcare outside this country. They know that all the fundamentals of a functional health system are lacking in this country, so the health system cannot function. Amazingly, Nigerians quickly come to terms with the reality that they are doomed and they do not have a functional government to cater for the sector. Sadly, public safeties become vulnerable to heightening health challenges in the society with the allied risk factors and frustration, leading to despondency.

The emergence of coronavirus pandemic with the challenging demands on innovative response to addressing the health crisis in both medical manpower and equipments further brought the decayed infrastructure in Nigeria to the fore. Prior to the pandemic, the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Health, Abdullahi Mashi hinted the deficit in infrastructure, during the First Quarter Consultative Forum of Public Private Partnership (PPP) in 2019 in Abuja. It was acknowledged that the country’s health sector has an annual deficit running into about \$10 billion (N3.06 trillion), in infrastructure gap, (Premium Times, March 14, 2019). Though the observation is as white as snow, there was no explanation on the reason behind the gap. It is never a problem to mention billions and trillions in Nigeria;

the real problem is corruption that characterizes the management of the billions and trillions without tangible proofs of how it is spent, what projects it provided and the location of the projects.

In most public or teaching hospitals in Nigeria, there is absolute lack of basic equipments – oxygen, ventilator, Personal Protective Equipments (PPE), even the least, which is facemask, test kits, diagnosing machines, and minute surgery equipments. In fact, the Intensive Care Units (ICU) in most of these hospitals look empty and represent “**end of discussion**” for most patients whose health conditions are critical. While those who superintend over the health departments mismanage budgetary allocations to the sector for capital projects, the multiplier effects steadily trickle down to other layers of personnel in the sector, thereby circulating corruption. A study that focused on the complexity of corruption in the health sector reported that participants identified 49 corrupt practices from the literature review and their own experience in the Nigerian health system. Topmost in the list are absenteeism, procurement-related corruption, under-the-counter payments, health financing-related corruption, and employment-related corruption, (Onwujekwe, et al, 2019). Lack of accountability and bad leadership catalyzes these multitudes of corruptions to grow in scope. It has left the health sector in a state of disrepair, with great danger to public health and safety. The fragile condition only gains lip service, fire brigade attention and cosmetic redress when necessity and emergency beckons.

5.5. Education Sector

Education is among the items listed in Chapter II, Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy of the 1999 Constitution, as amended, particularly Section 18(1-3). Recognizing the inalienable rights derivable from democracy, it states that,

1. Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels.
2. Government shall promote science and technology
3. Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end Government shall as and when practicable provide:
 - a. free, compulsory and universal primary education;
 - b. free secondary education;
 - c. free university education; and
 - d. free adult literacy programme.

The foregoing provisions are just to draw attention to the obligation of political leadership in Nigeria to education of the citizens, to capacity building and provision of the ancillary infrastructures. As nations make stride in development, education plays pivotal role in such strides because it has a direct impact on every other sector of the economy, (Ewuzie, 2019). However, corruption is identified as an obstacle to the set objectives of the sector in the attainment of the nation’s desire for manpower and national development, especially in the nascent period of global competition, (Dawood, 2012). In further illustration of the foregoing assertion, the UNESCO’s report portrayed Nigeria as having the highest number of children out of school and one of world’s worst education systems, (Nigerian Observer, 2016). Corruption, among other factors, is the reason for the increase in the number of out-of-school children, (Samuel, 2018). In addition to the fact that budgetary allocation to the education sector, just like the illustration in the health sector, has defeated the realization of the professed lofty national objectives, overwhelming evidences also show that the Nigerian education system is fraught with many challenges.

Democratic governance is necessary conditions for development and capital-intensive investments, and education cannot fair well in any society that celebrates corruption or where

corruption is a norm, (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017:9). The decadence in education sector includes inadequate funding, infrastructure deficit and poor remuneration among others, which have reduced schools to mere establishments rather than centres to build minds, (Olatunji, 2018). Corruption in the educational system has made it easy for some scholars to describe schools as no longer institutions of learning but instead as money exchange department to help students pass examination and gain admission into higher institutions, (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017:9). Perhaps, the dynamics are relatively complex. Academic activities in Nigeria school system have become commercial ventures and reduced to higher bidder businesses. The ubiquity of the malpractice in the system takes different forms, money for grades/marks, sex for grades, exam malpractice, compromise on standard and all kinds of associated impunity. Government insensitivity accounts for the frequent national strikes in the school system, at both tertiary and other categories of education system in the country. The labour related actions usually predicate on infrastructure deficits, poor welfare scheme and massive corruption. It shows how democratic government in Nigeria has not lived up to its constitutional responsibility and mandate to be accountable.

6. The Illusion of Development in Nigeria

The foregoing analyses show that despite democratic governance, national development is more of a mirage than reality in Nigeria and the blame go to intersections of bad leadership, opaque in the management of public resources and the concomitant corruption. The 1999 Constitution, as amended, in Section 16, subsections (1a-d) and (2a-d) clearly stated that,

1. The State shall, within the context of the ideals and objectives for which provisions are made in this Constitution:
 - a) harness the resources of the nation and promote national prosperity and an efficient, a dynamic and self-reliant economy;
 - b) control the national economy in such manner as to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity;
 - c) without prejudice to its right to operate or participate in areas of the economy, other than the major sectors of the economy, manage and operate the major sectors of the economy;
 - d) without prejudice to the right of any person to participate in areas of the economy within the major sector of the economy, protect the right of every citizen to engage in any economic activities outside the major sectors of the economy.
- (2) The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring:
 - a) the promotion of a planned and balanced economic development;
 - b) that the material resources of the nation are harnessed and distributed as best as possible to serve the common good;
 - c) that the economic system is not operated in such a manner as to permit the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group; and

- d) that suitable and adequate shelter, suitable and adequate food, reasonable national minimum living wage, old age care and pensions, and unemployment, sick benefits and welfare of the disabled are provided for all citizens.

The breach or relegation of these declarations has become a norm in Nigeria despite the fact that the 1999 Constitution, as amended, in Section 13 provided that,

It shall be the duty and responsibility of all organs of government, and of all authorities and persons, exercising legislative, executive or judicial powers, to conform to, observe and apply the provisions of this Chapter of this Constitution.

However, decades of neglects in the provision of public infrastructure in Nigeria by successive government have put the nation's development and economic prospect in jeopardy, (Ukanwah, 2018). Based on the recent world poverty projections, the signs of Nigeria's leadership failures are now even more glaring as nearly one hundred million Nigerians are in danger of falling into extreme poverty by 2022. This startling revelation implies that despite being the largest oil producer in Africa, Nigeria is unable to translate its oil wealth into rising living standards for its growing population, (Okoi, 2019). Underdevelopment in Nigeria, further manifests in high rate of unemployment, lack in egalitarian distribution of income and wealth, high level of insecurity, increase in level of absolute poverty, low level of social and political consciousness, increase in illiteracy rate, poor health services, housing condition and government services to mention but a few, (Jebbin & Good, 2011:1). The phenomena present daunting challenge to national leadership and development.

In fact, the critical infrastructure gap cuts across all segments of the economy and the environment, with the most glaring including transport, power, education, agriculture and telecommunication, (Anaeto, 2018). Government has always predicated most of her loans on the need to provide these infrastructures but consistently mismanaged them without any visible project to show. Accordingly, the Special Adviser to President Muhammadu Buhari on Media – Femi Adesina, corroborated the assertion and argued that the outgone governments took loans and pocketed the money and we did not see what they did with the loans, (Temidayo & Oladele, 2020). The statement came on the heel of public reactions to the Nigerian National Assembly's further approval of a loan of \$22.7 billion dollars (N850b) and \$5.513 billion dollars for President Buhari's administration. The public outrage was waved away with Adesina's simplistic logic that,

Taking loans to use for development is not a crime, but taking loans to steal and pocket as we used to have it in this country is what is criminal. You will find out that even the profile of the loan Nigerians do not know it, but Nigeria is now taking loans and Nigerians can see what the government is doing with the loans, (Temidayo & Oladele, 2020).

The argument of exception is normal for every incumbent administration in Nigeria but suspect for the citizenry based on the contagious influence of corruption in the system. Nigeria is always in the habit of taking loans (internal and external), which often disguised as package for capital projects or stimulus for boosting the economy but diverted to consumables, if not entirely channeled to private pockets. There is not yet any clear roadmap for application of loan funds (derived from the domestic and foreign sources) in Nigeria to reflect the original intendment and media hype to justify loan requests is usually a smokescreen in the familiar. During the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan, the issue of infrastructural deficit was rife in the system. The Central Bank Governor - Mr. Lamido Sanusi admitted that it affected the diversification of the economy. Although the

apex bank pushed about N850 billion in long-term low-interest fund into the economy under various intervention scheme in the power, aviation and agriculture sectors, (Premium Times, January 29, 2014), how the stimulus fared in a corrupt regime and affected operations of the economy, appeared dim and inexplicable.

Some of the schemes included the N300billion Power and Airline Intervention Fund, PAIF; the N200billion intervention fund for re-financing and restructuring of banks' loans to the manufacturing sector, RRE, and the N200billion Commercial Agriculture Credit Scheme, including N220billion earmarked for the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, (Premium Times, January 29, 2014). Noteworthy is the fact that the 2018 budget that allocated N2.87 trillion to capital expenditure, albeit infrastructure development was far from implementation. It underscores the factors creating and sustaining the infrastructure gap, which Nigeria and the citizens have had to grapple with over the years, (Anaeto, 2018). The irony of general corruption indices in Nigeria, according to Page, (2017), gives rise to situations whereby:

In Nigeria, billions of dollars each year flow illegally from public coffers into private hands. Nigeria's kleptocracy undermines the regime's ability to combat Boko Haram, a deadly terrorist movement that has displaced two million people in the country's war-ravaged northeast.

Chronicles of corruption require book of volumes; hence, there is never a dull moment with corruption cases in Nigeria. In fact, it is a daily news item in the media and overwhelming in scope. It is regarded and treated like incurable disease. For example, on May 11, 2020, FG queried a Perm Sec – Dr. Mohammed Bello for buying uncompleted building for N7bn, and misappropriation of nearly N170bn, though he denied wrongdoing, (Adetayo, 2020). The Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC) is under probe by the Nigerian Senate for misappropriation of N40 billion within three months, (Iroanusi, 2020). It is almost same thing across other sectors and therefore not surprise that corruption affects foreign aid and creates complex policy bottlenecks. In fact, corruption, as reported by Page, (2017), is a potent threat to Washington's efforts to support socioeconomic development, tackle security issues and improve governance in Nigeria. The implication for national development is obvious and it is worse in education sector. Evidently, corruption in the political life of a nation is a tragedy while corruption in the educational sector is a double tragedy, (Onwuka, 2009). The reason is that the educational sector has tremendous capacity to set in motion an uncontrollable reproductive process of corruption in the larger society, (Nwaokugha & Ezeugwu, 2017:9).

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Many countries subscribe to democracy but find it difficult to practice democracy and adhere to its stipulated principles. Bearing the title of democratic government or nation involves a higher task of ensuring that the conduct of the government and all the affiliate institutions are practical evidence of what democracy represents. Democratic governance denotes a process of unlocking decision-making process in governance by providing window of opportunity for inclusiveness of both the interests of stakeholders and public opinion in the public policy outcome. In other words, the essence of democracy is to ensure that leadership is a product of majority's consent, amid minority's dissents and to make leaders govern in line with the rules, to facilitate development in the system.

Every democratic political leadership aspires to achieve good governance and infrastructural development. Popular participation in governance and accountability of leadership sustains morale for effective planning, conscientious deployment of resources to mapped projects, and prudent management of the resources to achieve the set purposes. This has been elusive in Nigeria, where orientations in public service show no regard for account of stewardship but promotion of opacity and questionable opulence. In essence, corruption,

significantly water-down the factuality of the lofty objectives in the absence of accountability on service delivery. Accountability, therefore, entails committing people entrusted with the responsibility of breathing life into the aspirations of a nation to transform its policies into concrete development projects. It addresses institutional weaknesses for elasticity in demand chain and drives capacity building in the system. The connectivity suggests that good governance is basic in ensuring fidelity of people that implement public policy in a democratic system. It prevents or reduces incidences of corruption at all levels of service delivery in the system.

Findings of the study show that the interplay of undemocratic governance and poor accountability degenerate into corrupt practices that affect national development. Some cited reference cases include few examples drawn from experiences in some sectors of the economy, to portray how perversion of democracy in Nigeria presents corruption as systemic ailments that hinder national development. It triangulates to reluctance or outright refusal to follow due process in the management of public office, which primarily aims at availing the perpetrators the benefits accruing from unchecked corrupt behaviours. It supports the allusion that systemic corruption threatens democracy and good governance in Nigeria, (Page, 2017). It also lends credence to the fact that the challenges in the practice of democracy in Nigeria revolve around critical governance problems: leadership challenges, corruption, lack of transparency, constitutional and electoral reforms, rising civil strife, poverty, unemployment, godfatherism, lack of human security and human rights, (Olu-Adeyemi, 2012).

Against the foregoing backdrops, the study recommends that democratic process in Nigeria should reflect constitutional democratic practice. It should focus on the rule of law, accountability, commitment to national objectives and justice, fairness and good conscience that are the hallmarks of good governance. There is need to articulate development plans – showing short, medium and long-term projects, and justifying their relevance in the economy. The leaders needed to make each budget portfolio to be consistent with the plans and in addition, make sure the responsible officials accounted for every dime spent. To that extent, corruption deserves capital penalty, to reinvigorate the capacity of the resources of the nation to generate national development and address inclusive wellbeing of the citizens.

The sure ways of entrenching democratic principles is to revolutionize the system by entrenching good governance and promoting the culture of accountability. In other words, rewarding honesty in public office and punishing inclination towards inordinate ambition for materialism in the system will cause officeholders to eschew public sector corruption and with sincerity of purpose, commit leaders to manifest efforts towards national development. No country develops where there are intersections of undemocratic governance, opaque in the management of public resources and wide ranges of corruption in national life. Reorientation will de-escalate the notoriety of corruption in Nigeria and reduce the devastating effects on national development.

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