

Corruption and Poverty Indices: Threats to The Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria.

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Abstract

Corruption hinders a nation from economic prosperity. It gives birth to poverty and it induces deterioration of national development. Since independence, Nigerian political scene has been fraught with enormous corruption cases by the political elites, who have impoverished the nation. Based on these insinuations, this paper examines the level of correlation between corruption and poverty indices as it poses threat to the attainment of sustainable development goals of Nigeria. With regards to the methodology, the paper is qualitative in nature. The researchers also used “Structural Functionalist Theory” as the tool of analysis. Secondary source of data collection, which involves the use of journals, textbooks, periodicals and other relevant materials, was also used for the study. Therefore, this paper attempts to establish a correlation between corruption and poverty indices as it poses threat to the attainment of sustainable development goals in Nigeria. The study highly recommended that, Nigerians should imbibe the culture of nationalism, and to uphold the principles of moral ethics. There is the need from the part of Federal Government of Nigeria to take effective and holistic measures free from undue interference to fight against corruption in Nigeria to the hilt through anti-corruption institutions such as Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (E.F.C.C.) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (I.C.P.C.)

Keywords: *Corruption, National Development, Poverty, sustainable development goals.*

I. Introduction

Corruption is a universal abnormality that generate media and academic debate it has also been since time immemorial a sources of concerns to various regime and administration. It exists basically in every quota of the world. Corruption is the mishap that bedevilling any nation where it occurs. It percolates through religious, political, social and economic life of any nation and emotionally affects both younger and elders in different generation. It is like a tumour that vitiates broad spectrum of the socio-political and economic structure of any society and its toxic nature is difficult to be remedied easily. Corruption is a social infirmity that pervades the fabric of the society. It is socially communicable and is inimical to the sociology of any political system. Once it sets into any part, it axiomatically foists all the societal stratification and the socio-political structure. It has, however, assumed a despicable dimension in Nigeria and its deplorability is so glaring we all feel the presences of corruption for direct assault on development of Nigerian economy. It is largely believed that corruption has become social cancer in Nigeria. The mentality of getting rich quick syndrome has appeared to be so glaring in Nigeria that politicians elected to manage the affairs of people engage in primitive accumulation of wealth without recourse to future needs of the populaces manifestation of corruption are in many forms, and it has contributed immensely to the poverty and anguish of a large segment of the Nigerian population. One of the greatest danger to economic and political development of any nation is corruption. Therefore, the challenges and impediment of corruption remain a major devastating issue facing Nigeria since the colonial period, although, the paradox of corruption has snowballed into cankerworm which in turn has penetrated deep into societal configuration of our system. Nevertheless, its way out and solutions rest in our hands and

cannot be put off to another day. That is why many countries have put in place different tools for approaching the plethora of corruption. In Nigeria for example, the plague of corruption has been discussed at different levels, yet this heinous state of affairs keeps on inhibiting Nigeria as a country at all facets of its endeavours. Since the return of the country to civil rule on May 29, 1999, the Nigerian government has put forward a number of course to address the problems of corruption and bad governance in the country. These courses include public service reform (monetization to reduce waste and reduction of over-bloated personnel, reform of public procurement); establishment of anti-corruption enforcement agencies (such as the Economic and Financial Crime Commission, Independent Corruption and other Practices Commission); and the ongoing reformations of the financial services sector by the apex Bank under Ex-governor Sanusi Lamido Sunasi, which have revealed mind-boggling levels of bare faced theft by the management of several banks in Nigeria.

As quoted by (Mohammed, 2013) in (CLEEN Foundation Monograph Series, 2010) notwithstanding the achievement attained through these proceeding, the situation remains objectionable as corruption continues to cut across and imbue every aspect of national life in Nigeria. Against this background, this paper will strive to expose some practices of corruption in the Fourth Republic and state its dire aftermath on sustainable development in Nigeria. The central theme of the argument is that corruption has been responsible for our economic, social and political underdevelopment in Nigeria. Thereupon, corruption, which has come to survive despite all efforts at eradicating it, is at the centre of our article in this paper.

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II. Literature Review

Conceptualizations of Corruption

(Sciences et al., 2014) Transparency International gave a plausible and illuminative concept of corruption in a vast sense when it refers to corruption as the ill-treatment of entrusted power by heritage, education, marriage, election, appointment or whatever else for personal aggrandizement. Also, (Boyi, 2018) Nigeria is a developing country of the world which is lamentably beset with the scenario of abuse public office. Corruption has become so ubiquitous that the younger generation has adjudged it as a socially approved norm by the majority of Nigerians in the country who blindly and illicitly think of becoming rich overnight. Corruption fundamentally, gushes into the sectors of the country's economy – education, health, industry, legal system, security apparatus, etc. All the three levels of government in Nigeria which consist of the Federal, State and Local Government levels are negatively affected by the corruption syndrome and it is also glaring that corruption is an ill which destructively adulterates the faith and morale of the Nigerian society. This is epitomized by the fact that most of the people in Nigeria greatly emphasizes great value to materialism and financial success whereby a great deal of the Nigerians desperately struggling to succeed in life by hook or by crook so that they can be flattered. The origin of corruption in Nigeria stemmed from the time that the country gained her political independence in the year 1960 but it was not excessively high as it is today. This was because of the fact that the founders of Nigerian leadership were people of celebrated integrity, fidelity and progress who worked assiduously towards the tremendous socio-economic and political development of the country as a nation. In the same vein, (Hoffiani, 2019) Corruption is universal social ill. It exists in almost every part of the universe. Corruption

is an affliction of any country. It affects religious, political and economic life of any social organization and affects all and sundry. It is like a cancer that debase all categories of the socio-political and economic affiliation of any society and its devastating nature is difficult to treat. Corruption is a social problem that permeates all the nerves of any polity. It is contagious and malignant to the physiology of any political system.

As demonstrated by (Omadjohwoefe & Ph, 2014) Corruption remains one of the ever prevailing social problems in Nigeria. It is probably becoming a way of life that touches both private and public sectors of the economy. Over the years, this omnipresent behavioural tendency that has earned the country the infamous status of one of the most corrupt nations in the world. Although, seemingly collective efforts of past and present administrations to contains corruption, the problem remains noticeably endemic with calamitous consequences for the Nigerian society. Nigeria is caught in a web of awkward social conditions and behaviours that are incongruent with her most cherished values. The media and personal observations present a lucid picture of unemployment, banditry, insurgency, kidnapping, political conflicts and other social vices that are of utmost concern to individuals, state and national governments. The most worrisome of all the social problems is corruption. It is most disturbing because it is a primary social problem from which essentially all other societal ills stem from. Corruption in Nigeria is so problematic that everybody seems to be involved either as a culprits or as a prey.

Origin and Trend of Corruption in Nigeria

According to (Omadjohwoefe & Ph, 2014) practically, the exact date that corruption started in Nigeria is not known. This is due to the fact that most behaviours that consist of corruption are camouflaged in secrecy. The practice in most

situation is only known to the individuals or parties involved and it irregularly attracts public attention. There is a defective belief among Nigerians that corruption is a colonial heirship. In pre-colonial period, there were cases of moral vice that found expression in booty of war, perversion of justice, snatching of wives, and the likes. Little was known of monetary corruption because economic transactions were in barter, with little or no zeal for the amassing wealth. In other words, corruption in pre-colonial days was just a departure from what was ethically correct and the rates of such behaviours were too minimal to be significant.

(Mohammed, 2013) has pointed out in his work and is relevant to the topic under study that considerable percent of corruption cases in Nigeria none of the culprits is currently being detained or serving jail term except very few. Giving this synopsis where these culprits are allowed to go prosecution free in what referred to in Nigeria as '**plea bargaining**', this practice is a blatant portrayal that corruption therefore is a lucrative business in the country in Nigerian politics. Also, in a situation where people steal billions of naira and after their arrest and prosecutions such persons are only jailed for three or six months. Hence, the younger will feel attracted towards corruption.

Table 1 Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Profile Cases 2012 – 2022

S/N	Name	Case Status	Amount Involved	Status Suspect(s)
1	Idris Yahaya (Auditor general for local gov't , Yobe State)	Indicted on 1 counts	N19 millions	convicted 2022
2	Akpu Clement Chijioko Anambara State	Indicted on 15 counts	N15 million	On trial 2019-date
3	Dr. Cosmos Chukwudi Nduke & 2 others. Abia State	Indicted on 8 counts	N54.610 million	On trial 2019-date
4	Ohiaeri Stanly Chukwudi Abuja	Indicted on 1 counts	N15,000	Convicted 2019
5	Lucious Mayo. Adamawa State	Indicted on 9 counts	N347,848,220.00	Convicted 2019
6	Festus Enyima Dappa Akwa-Ibom State	Indicted on 2 counts	N7,079,000.00	Convicted 2019
7	Mohammed Uba Wunti Bauchi State	Indicted on 1 state counts	N550,000	On trial 2018
8	Fred Otomba Tariah & 3 others Bayelsa State	Indicted on 18 state counts	N21 millions	On trial 2016

9	Donald Orya Anagende & 1 others Benue State	Indicted on 4 state counts	N97,500,000.00	Convicted 2016
10	Ahmadu Mai Borno State	Indicted on 2 state counts	N5,718,049.28	Convicted 2019
11	Unamba Maxmillan Chukwubueze & 5 others Cross-Rivers State	Indicted on 1 state counts	Cybercrime/fraud	Convicted 2019
12	Leeroy Egebe Delta State	Indicted on 8 state counts	\$18,023.96	On trial 2018-date
12	Temple Emmanuel Ebonyi State	Indicted on 1 state counts	N1.5 billion	Convicted 2018
13	Usifor Ehis Edo State	Indicted on 1 state counts	Cybercrime/fraud	Convicted 2022
14	Oke Omniyi Benjamin Ekiti State	Indicted on 6 state counts	Cybercrime/fraud	On trial 2018-date
15	Nwakanma Charles Chukwudi Enugu	Arraigned on 1 state counts	\$26,520.00	Convicted 2019
16	Umar Ahmed & 1 other Gombe State	Indicted on 2 state counts	N700,000.00	Convicted 2019
17	Igwe Ghukwumeka & 2 others Imo State	Indicted on 3 state counts	N11,66,000.00	On trial 2018-date
18	Theophilus Ehoghcho Opanachi Jigawa	Indicted on 4 state counts	\$8,012.25 & N4,748,802.04	Convicted 2022
19	Joseph Adigizi Anthony Kaduna State	Indicted on 5 state counts	N50 millions	On trial 2019-date
20	Dr. Abubakar Labaran Kano State	Indicted on 46 state counts	N47,800,000	On trial 2018-date
21	Ibrahim Shehu Shema Katsina State	Indicted on 26 count charge	N6,776,552,396	On trial 2018-date
22	Usman Ahmed Kebbi State	Indicted on 4 count charge	N583,000.00	On trial 2017-date

23	Joseph Y, Agbo & 2 others Kogi State	Indicted 4 count charge	N160 millions	Convicted 2012
24	Abubakar Ishiaka & 3 others Kwara State	Indicted 2 count charge	N20.3 millions	On trial 2019-date
25	Okey Justin Eze & 1 other Lagos State	Indicted 6 count charge	N85,500,00.00	On trial 2019-date

Source: Corruption Cases Database 2023

Vicious Cycle of Poverty

(Brain et al., 2022) There are cyclical links known as the 'frightful circles of poverty,' which will centrally often maintain the low level of improvement in less developed countries "It illustrates a roundabout celestial body of forces leaning to act and depend upon each other to maintain an ill-fated country in a state of destitution," The continuous cycle of neediness works on both the interest and inventory levels. Perhaps, on the supply side, a low level of germane pay translates to a low level of funds to saved. The interesting side of the boundless

conduit is that a low level of true pay leads to a low level of interest rate, which leads to a low rate of the investment, which leads to a shortage of capital, poor usefulness, and low pay.

On the supply side, the perpetual cycle of poverty is linked to a slow rate of saving and investment. In under developed countries, the speed of speculation and capital allocation can be increased without minimaxing utilization. The superficial tempo of saved funds should be more prominent than the typical pace of investment funds to achieve this.

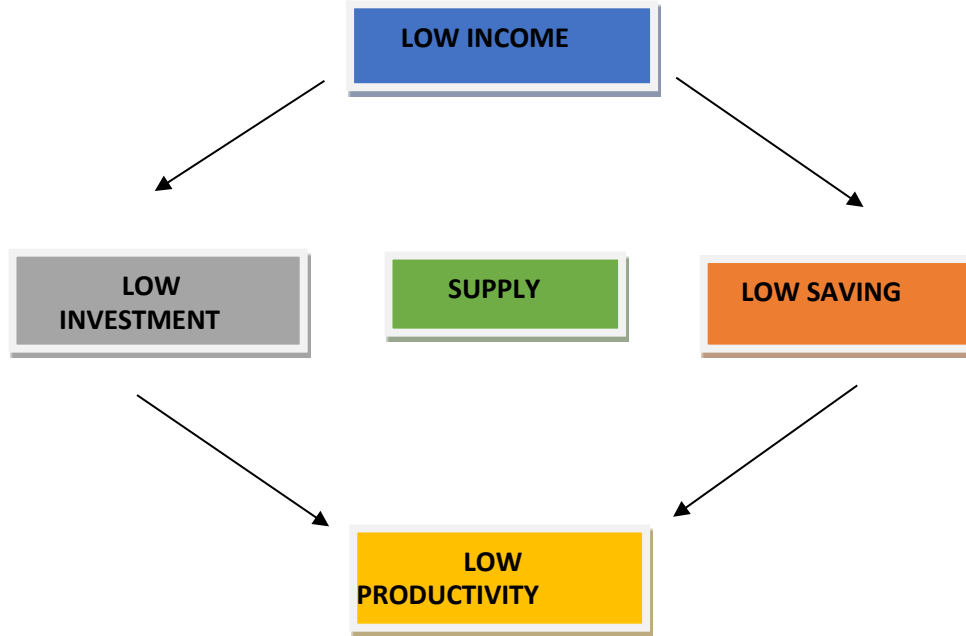


Figure 1 demonstrates: Supply Side of Vicious Circle:

The supply side of the limitless circle implies that in developing countries, usefulness is so low that it is unsatisfactory for capital development. "The regressive countries can't get their heads above water since their creation is so low that they can't save anything for capital development through which their way of living could be raised," Samuelson says.¹

Low Income → Low Saving → Low Investment → Low Production → Low Income

The under developed countries have terrible mirrors. In these countries, poverty refers to a lack of legitimate pay. Exact pay remains low because of lack of purchasing power, and capital is deficient due to a lack of saving. The reason for poor savings is a low level of pay. The main explanation for low levels of neediness and pay, as shown by the previous analysis, is a lack of savings. As a result, speculation is unimaginable through the channels.

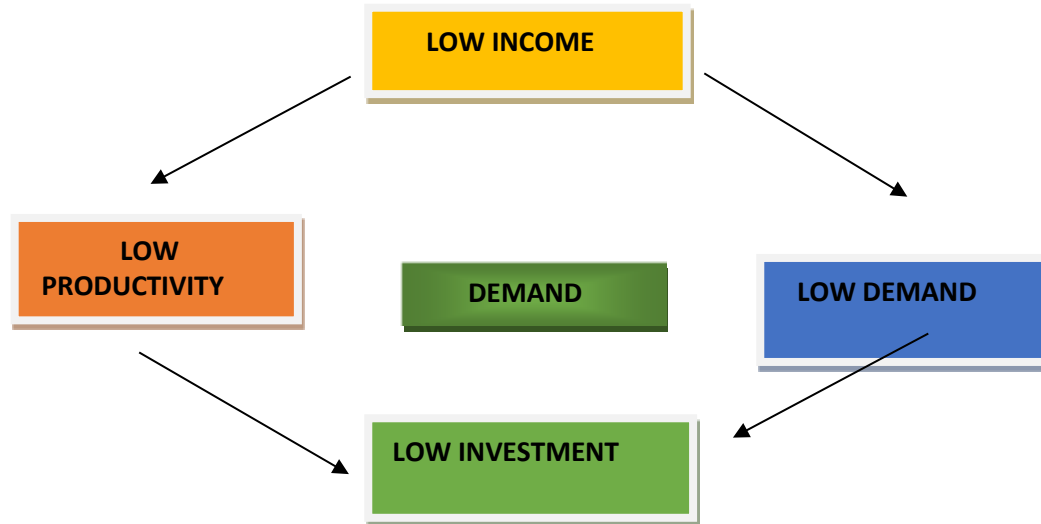


Figure 2 indicates: Demand side of vicious circle

Low-Income → Low Demand Low Investment → Low Productivity → Low Income

Fig. 2 indicates that low pay usher in to poor interest rate, which leads to low investment, which leads to a low degree of capital, which leads to low usefulness and low pay. The low level of interest rate in these countries is the primary cause of poverty. As a result, the market remains insignificant. The small size of the market becomes a bottlenecks to actuation to contribute.

The Nexus of Corruption and Poverty

(Chetwynd, 2003) As pointed out that, corruption is an baneful that induces poverty in any country. Any society where corruption persists cannot drift away from the trap of poverty. The problem of corruption has over the years intertwine with our governance since the days of independence. Corruption gives birth to poor facilities we have and other anomalies eminent in the Nigerian polity. More often than not, whenever public servant saddled with the responsibility of running the affairs of this country become greedy and self-centred. In a situation where money being earmarked for developmental projects are pilfered by a few people, occurrence poverty is unavoidable. It is a situation where few public

office holders amass wealth for themselves against the interest of the larger populace of the country. Corruption is the burning fire that destroys country’s treasuries that would have otherwise been used to ameliorate a lot of people from the pain and anguish of want.

(Chetwynd, 2003) has examined the Relationship between Corruption and Poverty, This review discovered that few studies examine or establish a *direct* correlation between corruption and poverty. Corruption, by itself, does not give birth to poverty. Rather, *corruption has direct repercussion on economic and governance factors, intermediaries that in turn produce poverty*. Thus, the relationship examined by researchers is an *indirect* one. Two perspective emerge from the research literature. The”

economic perspective” presupposes that corruption affects poverty by first inhibiting economic growth factors, which, in turn, brunt poverty levels. In other words, increased corruption reduces economic investment in society, frustrates markets, hampers competition, creates disorganization by increasing the costs of

engaging in investment, and increases income inequalities. By undermining these key economic factors, poverty is exacerbated.

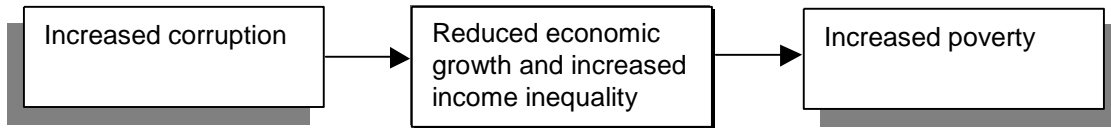


Figure 3 indicates: The economic perspective”

The” governance perspective” postulates that corruption affects poverty by first influencing governance factors, which, in turn, impact poverty levels. So, for example, corruption erodes the administrative capacity of government to reduce quality public services, diverts public investment away from major public needs into

capital projects (where bribes can be sought), lowers conformity with safety and health regulations, and increases budgetary pressures on government. Through these serious challenges to governance practices and outcomes, poverty is affected.

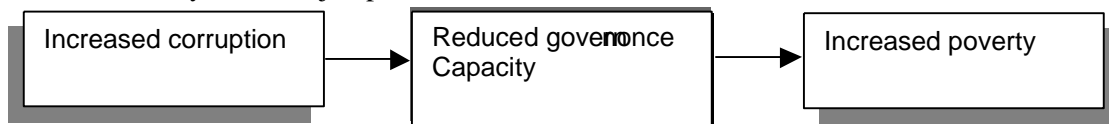


Figure v reveals: The” governance perspective”

The Concept of Sustainable Development

(D, 2006) define sustainable development as type of development that addresses the needs of instant generation without neglecting the needs for the potential generation. Similarly, (Gushibet, 2019.) Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the needs of the current populaces without jeopardising the ability of prospective generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: The concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs. Sustainable development simply means that the needs of the present generation should be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is about

safeguarding the earth's capacity to support life in all its diversity and is based on the principles of democracy, gender equality, solidarity, the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights, including freedom and equal opportunities for all. It aims at the continuous improvement of the quality of life and well-being on earth for present and future generations. To that end it promotes a dynamic economy with full employment and a high level of education, health protection, social and territorial cohesion and environmental protection in a peaceful and secure world, respecting cultural diversity. Also, in his work, (Foreword et al., 1985.)The satisfaction of human hopes and aspirations in the major objective of development. The essential needs of vast numbers of people in developing nations for food, clothing, shelter, employments - are not being fulfilled, and beyond their fundamental needs these people have legitimate aspirations for an improved quality of education, health care service etc. A world in which poverty and inequity are devastating and will always be prone

to ecological and other crises. Sustainable development requires fulfilling the basic demand of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a quality of human life. The concept of sustainable development formed the basis of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The summit marked the first international intended to demarcates action plans and strategies for moving towards a more sustainable pattern of development. It was attended by over 100 Heads of State and representatives from 178 national governments. The Summit was also in attendance representatives from a range of other organisations representing civil society. Sustainable development was the solution to the problems of environmental degradation discussed by the Brundtland Commission in the 1987 report on Our Common Future. **Brundtland Report**, also called *Our Common Future*, publication released in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) that introduced the concept of sustainable development and described how it could be achieved. Sponsored by the United Nations (UN) and chaired by Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, the WCED explored the causes of environmental degradation, attempted to comprehend the inter-relation between social equity, economic growth, and environmental problems, and developed policy solutions that integrated all three areas. The remit of the Brundtland Report was to investigate the enormous concerns that had been brought forth in previous generation, notably, that human activity was having obnoxious and detrimental impacts on the planet, and that trajectories of growth and development would be unsustainable if they continued unbridled. Key works that highlighted this thinking included Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), Garret Hardin's *Tragedy of the Commons* (1968), the

Blueprint for Survival by the Ecologist magazine (1972) and the Club of Rome's *Limits to*.

From the foregoing discussions in the paper, it is crystal clear that corruption is a social ill as it has been indicated by scholars from different perspectives and explanation. The divergent spheres of the economy in Nigeria such as education, health, agriculture, banking industry, the judiciary etc. have also been adversely afflicted in such a manner that there was no any appreciable development. (Personal & Archive, 2011) used Meta-analysis of empirical findings in 72 empirical studies, using fixed-effects and random-effects weighted means and testing for significant though precisions-effects test. His findings suggest that corruption has negative backlash on per capita GDP growth over all and that corruption is comparatively more injurious in mixed countries as opposed to low income nations and the fact is that indirect effects of corruption on growth through the human capital and public finance channels are larger than its directs effects. However, this study is one of the recent studies that provide a synthesis of the existing evidence on the relationship between corruption and economic growth. However, the study of Ugur and Dassgupta (2011) is not free from criticisms, his study was countered on the point of his inability to engage in the bigger debate on historical causality which is almost impossible to established using econometric analysis, instead provides another set of regression exercises that intent to show that underlying argument is correct. The conceptualizations of corruption and sustainable development have been clearly spelt out in the paper and there was also the theoretical framework where the Structural Functionalism was deployed focusing attention on the social control, a concept developed by Parsons. However, the factors responsible for corruption were also discussed in the paper. These include lack of patriotism and nationalism, lack of ethical

standards and transparency in public and private sectors, the dysfunctional institutions of government and conflict between changing moral codes. Lastly, the consequences of corruption on the Nigerian social structure were however discussed about in the paper and they comprised mass poverty, ever collapsing infrastructure, deprived dividends of democracy, poor investment, economic growth and government expenditures as well as tarnishing the image of the country.

Recommendations

Based on the key issues discussed in the paper, the recommendations include:

1. It is highly recommended that, Nigerians should imbibe the culture of nationalism, and to uphold the moral ethics. The fight against corruption is not only the responsibility of the government alone the monarchs and the masses are also required to work as team towards eradicating or minimizing the monster of corruption in the country so that progress and development can be achieved.
2. There is the need from the part of Federal Government of Nigeria to take effective and holistic measures to fight against corruption in Nigeria to the hilt through anti-corruption institutions such as Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (E.F.C.C.) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (I.C.P.C.) in addition these institutions should be independently reinforced by the government and to provide them with formidable legal framework to carry out their crusade uncompromisingly.
3. There is the need and desirability from the government at all levels to provide requisite community welfare facilities

such as the supplying of portable drinking water, shelter, clothing, education, basic health care facilities etc. and the youth should also be provided with employment opportunities after graduation from schools such as the universities, colleges of education and polytechnics. And the enabling environment suitable for vocational and technical skills which are instrumental to help them to be self-reliant and in turn they will contribute their quota towards the development of the country instead of living them to become societal nuisance.

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