

Political Diversifications, Corruptions and Agricultural Dwindling in Nigeria: A Paradigm Shift in Agricultural Sectors

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Abstract: This paper was born out of fear and anger. Anger over the corruption rate in Africa which brought about economic recession in most of the African countries today, Nigeria inclusive Fear over the lives of our future generation which could one day be mortgaged due to corruption and bad governance. In the light of the above, this paper therefore examined the extent to which agricultural inputs were diverted from the poor to the rich for the sake of self-enrichment by the government officials and its impact on agricultural production. Analytical approach was employed in this research to discuss politics, corruption forms and manifestation of corruption in Nigeria; detrimental effects of corruption and politics on agriculture, and the lasting solution for a foreseen problem. This study therefore recommended that our political system should be restructured and rebuilt for the betterment of the lives of everyone living in the country.

Keywords: Political Diversification, Corruption and Agricultural dwindling.

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture was the pillar sector of the Nigerian economy which accounted for more than 70% of the Cross Domestic Product (GDP) and more than 75% of Nigeria's export earnings before Nigerians' independence in 1960 (Okonkwo, 2015). However, Agriculture accounted for 62.50% of the nation's GDP between 1960-1964 and thereafter its contribution to GDP started decreasing from 1970 to 1975 as a result of oil boom in Nigeria.

The period was an extensive oil exploration and export of petroleum products which compelled Nigerians to relegate their agricultural base in favour of high dependence on oil for more than 97% of export earning and 80% of federal revenue with little effort to diversify the economy. Agricultural sector has evidently suffered from inconsistent and poorly implemented government policy, poor management and lack of basic infrastructure to run agricultural system (Ekundare, 1973 in Okonkwo, 2015). Increased foreign exchange earnings of the country from crude oil since 1970 has great adverse effects on Nigeria's potential earnings from non oil sector such as agriculture.

Consequent upon this, a lot of hazard is recently associated with oil dependent economy. Oil prices are subject to perturbation as a result of international politics. However, from 2013 till date, oil price has depreciated by more than 50%, throwing some countries such as Nigeria that are majorly dependent on oil into economic disarray. Therefore, there is need for Nigerians to return to agriculture as to salvage their people from the shackles of this incessant economic recession.

Corruption is intentional efforts to acquire wealth, properties and power through illegal means for private use at the expense of others. It could be also a misuse of public fund, wealth, properties and power for private benefit. According to

Abiodun (2007), corruption like cockroaches has coexisted within human society for a long time and remains as one of the problems in many of the world's as developing economies with devastating consequences. Agbu (2003) opined that corruption as a topical issue is also a global problem which exists with a varying degree in different countries. Corruption does not only exist in democratic and dictatorial politics, but also in Feudal, capitalist and socialist economies. In view of this, Dike (2005), expressed that Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist cultures are equally bedeviled by corruption. Therefore, corrupt practices are not an emerging issue that just begins today; but the history is as old as the world.

Most international organizations, NGOs and policy makers have now officially endorsed that corruption is undemocratic and a serious threat to economic growth and development. Widespread corruption leads to lower economic growth, trust and may be even less happiness and life satisfaction (Monika and Henrik, 2011). Knowledge about perceptions of corruption is important not only in countries where corruption, is extensive, but also in countries where corruption is not as widespread. Since corruption of a man in the society originated from Adam and Eve, therefore, it is incumbent on us to know that corruption is not an emerging issue therein.

In Nigeria, it is one of the many unsolved problems that have critically hobbled and skewed development (Ayobolu, 2006). It is a long term major political and economic challenge for Nigeria. According to international centre for Economic Growth (1999), corruption is a canker worm that has eaten deep in the fabric of the nation which ranges from petty corruption to political/bureaucratic corruption or systematic corruption. World Bank studies put corruption at over \$1 trillion per year accounting for up to 12% of the Gross Domestic Product of nations like Nigeria, Kenya and Venezuela (Nwabuzor, 2005). Corruption in Nigeria is not a day old chick, rather it is an old layer that has incubated and hatched as a result of personal aggrandizement. However, this could be the major reasons Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu announced in 1966 before the execution of the coup' d'état "The aim of the revolutionary Council is to establish a strong United and prosperous nation that would be free from corruption and internal strife. My dear country men, no citizen should have anything to fear so long as that citizen is law abiding. Our enemies are the political profiteers, the swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes and demand ten percent". In the same vein, Ken Saro-wiwa, Jr. (1995) expressed that "I submit that we have every reason to be emotional in our struggle for the sanctity of our environment. Environment is man is first right, without a safe environment man cannot exist to claim other right". Since good environment gives man an imperishable peace and fewer pains, it is therefore known that what affects environment indirectly affects us directly and this could be the major reasons the youth's agitations dominated other attentions and that of the politicians in Nigeria today. Corruption is vicious and something that out to be fought.

Nigeria is not all that far in terms of corruption from other countries, but what is unique about Nigeria is her constant practice in corruption. Corruption is not only permeated the government and oil fields of Nigeria but also has attacked the nation in all ramifications (Hadi, 1999). It has become so blatant and widespread that it appears as if it has been legalized in Nigeria. (Gire,1999).

According to Godling (2003), Nigeria was ranked the most corrupt nation three times. 1996, 1997, and 2000 and placed in the bottom five four more times. Fourth from the bottom in 1998 and second in 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003".

The 1996 study of corruption by Transparency international and Goettingen university ranked Nigeria as the most corrupt nation, among 54 nations listed in the study, with Pakistan as the second highest (Moore 1997). The 2004 corruption perception index released by Transparency International (TI), the watch dog on global corruption ranked Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world. Up till June, 2007 to the present, Nigeria has not been removed from the list of the top ten leading countries on corruption.

In view of this, Ribadu (2006) said that, corruption is worse than terrorism because it is responsible for perpetual collapse of infrastructure and institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, incessant corruption can lead to perpetual collapse of agricultural sectors as well as persistent poverty among people in the country.

Politics is a group effort to achieve power and when the aim is achieved can be diverted to personal will of the leader if personal interest is at the forefront. Therefore, politics is a game of interest which can be achieved through group objectives and needs of the people who deserve the change in their political settings. Politically, politics exposes innate behaviours of the leader in power rather than physical appearance of the leader. It is a game which rooted in public efforts and interest for manifestation but can be jeopardized when the personal interest override the public ones.

Corruption pervades many aspects of human endeavors including agricultural extension development and practices in Nigeria. It can cause a serious development challenge to agricultural extension delivery in Nigeria and this by implication to a very large extent limits agricultural production potentials in the country.

Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (2003), affirmed that the main thrust of sustainable agricultural development rests on extension and other related services. However, when the conscious efforts of the extension practitioners are diverted by politicians and top government officials thereby subverting formal processes. Democracy and good governance are undermined by putting a nation into food crisis. According to Otaha (2013), past effort to improve food supply through agricultural production, on has not yielded successful results due to corruption that characterized the minds of our leaders. The programmes that were introduced only to help alienate the peasant farmers who are the major producers of food in Nigeria were more in favour of capital intensive and large commercial farmers who corruptly enrich themselves at the expense of the poor peasant farmers. These programmes were set up by federal government in 1989 to peasant farmers participate directly in food production in order to boost food security of the country. About eleven (11) River Basin Development Authorities were introduced to develop river basins for better agricultural production to make Nigeria self-sufficient in food production. Operation feed the Nation (OFN) and Green Revolution were also launched as to increase food security in Nigeria. Owing to the greediness of our leaders and their inconsistent policies, these programmes became short-lived, abortive and the aims of the innovators were defeated. Putatively, our economy is in a mess today because we lost what it takes to be great than what it takes to be a minority in the social system. Agriculture which is the pillar of all nations and the root of all products on earth has seriously been neglected as a result of oil exploration. For this country to cure her problem and be free from incessant economic recession, agriculture should be prioritized as our major source of income. In the light of the above, it behooves this study to do an analytical review on political diversification, corruption and agricultural dwindling in Nigeria.

2. POLITICS

What usually strikes our mind when we hear the word “politics” are images of government, politicians, their policies and more negatively the idea of corruption and dirty tricks. In order to give a clear definition of politics, a systematic approach is required. To start with, different core concepts which are imperative to a definition of politics will be discussed with a view to understanding the word politics.

The word politics originated from the Greek word “polis” which means “the state or community as a whole”. The concept of the “polis” was an ideal state and also the brainchild of the two political thinkers, Plato and Aristotle. In Plato’s book called “The Republic”, he described the ideal state and the means to achieve it. The word politics originally has connotations in the ways in which to establish the ideal society. Plato and Aristotle saw imperfections in the society in which they lived and these propelled them to write extensively on political philosophies. However, their philosophies provided the first written recognition of politics. According to Aristotle, “man is by nature a political animal”. It lies deep within the instinct of man. Due to his nature man should consider and realize his role within the “polis”. Therefore, politics is not a dreamt up concept, but rather an inherent feature of mankind. Since Plato and Aristotle saw politics as an avenue to create an ideal state, in a society. Politics can as well imply measures which could and should, in the views of their deviser, be implemented with the hope to create a better society, than that which is already present. If politics were to create a better society than the present, then why our past cast aspersion against the present that supposed to be better? According to Miller (1987), “Man is self-preserving by nature. He thinks and acts, whether that as an individual or as a group who share interprets, with best regard to his own interests. Self-perpetuation is the number one rule. He differs to those of his contemporaries. With respects to this, we can deduce that politics consider this view of a man in society and other people whose interest oppose his own and as a result of this can be subject to conflict. He went on and said that “if man were permitted to act on and pursue his own selfish interest, snatching that which he desires, society would quickly be placed under the rule of violence. Therefore, he defined politics as a way of combating the degradation of society into a violated and unstructured mess by reducing it to be governed by the primitive instincts of man in order to resolve conflict. The point here is that, if one were to take this premise of the existence of opposing these opinions as false, conflicts between individuals would have never occur and politics would not be required to resolve problems. But to justify politics on the other way round, the premise must be true by through simply considering the society in which we live today is full of conflict and therefore needs politics to resolve it.

Owing to this, Miller advocates this view, saying that if “people (were to) agree spontaneously on a course of action... they (would) have no need to engage in politics” therefore, politics exists due to the broad spectrum of ideas and opinions within any society. Thus, politics acts as peace maker by offering solution to conflict to the parties involved by means of discussion with their parties.

Leftwich (1984) states in his essay titled “politics; people, resources and power” that politics compromises all the activities of co-operation and conflict, within and between societies, whereby the human species go about organizing the use, production and distribution of human natural and other resources in the production and reproduction of its biological and social life”.

Dahl (1984), in his modern political analysis, says that politics is all about power. He further states that: a political system as any persistent pattern of human relationship that involves, to a significant extent, control, influence, power or authority”. If politics is all about power possessing, it then implies that, the corrupt nature of society today is brought about by politics as power struggle. Power is good to a very large extent, but at a time has to be limited. In furtherance of this, William Pitt spoke before the British House of Lords in 9th January 1770, that “unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it”. However, this was resonated with John Dalberg-Action’s idea over a century later that “power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely (Dalberg-Action, 1770). For politics to exist, certain members of a society must have authority over other members just as to enforce civil discussion within the social system. However, it is also observed from the available literature that for certain individuals to exert more power than others in a society, they must have the support of a large proportion over those which they have authority on and this drag us to the premise that man is at heart a selfish creature and will be persistent to have power until he calls to the glory.

Since politics is all about power, then how can the power be attainable? Power can only be obtained by having the support from as many groups and individuals as possible thereby not compromising their interest and sense of belonging as a member of the social system. Providing solutions to conflicts that already exist in a society, whether this is in honest or dishonest way, providing the members with solution to their problems and promising to act in their interests, groups or individual can gain support and authority over other groups and individuals. In the light of this, politics therefore can be defined as a calculating art of power gain or power retention or more simple as power struggle. Since the ultimate power belong to government. It is within this institution that all power takes roots, because according to Miller (1987) they are the Chief arena of politics in the modern world. However, government is a continuum and is also run by the politicians who form the ideas to settle conflicts in the society they govern. Therefore, politics is the working of government. However, if politics is the working of government, then those communities and societies that do not have a government are they devoid of politics? The total answer is no, because in every community and cooperation where there is hierarchy politics must exist to pilot the affairs of the society/community therein. Therefore, politics is an inevitable nature of mankind, is present in every community and is used to control disagreements that may occur within any co-habitation. Thus, politics occurs in all kinds of communities, societies and human existence (<http://www.123HelpMe.com/view-asp?id=4//44>>). It is good enough to know that without authority, politics would not simply be feasible and the most visible and widely accepted example of politics is the working of the governmental institution. Although people may not be aware of this in the first glance, but what remains true is that, politics in its various forms is present once humans form a colony and community and this resonates with Aristotle’s observation which said that politics is an intrinsic feature of mankind. Hence, politics is the means to create a more organized and peaceful society, by providing methods to resolve conflict that naturally occurs between men, by means of civil discussion and rational compromise.

In a cause to establish the core concepts of this affair named “politics” we found it difficult to call it a concise term, but rather a complicated notion that embraces premises, opinions and qualities of human nature, actions and institutions.

Since politics seems to occur where human lives exist, we therefore attempted the various definitions given by different authors just to keep the readers abreast with what politics seems to be and later confined and customized politics to be defined as an unpredictable game of human nature which unites individuals, people, union, parties, among others with like minds towards achieving a common goal for the benefit of mankind. It is a part of social process that manages, coordinates, restructures, protects and provides solution in the midst of conflicts through the judicious use of the existing laws and initiatives therein. With this, we can come to a premise that politics is a conciliation of interest. If politics is all about a conciliation of interests, it therefore means that a leader who compromises justices is a bad politician while he who preserves justice for the sanctity of human life through conciliating people’s interest is a good politician. Thus,

politics constitutes the fundamentals of justice and needs to be embraced with patriotism and fairness just to achieve ideal states. In Africa today, it takes more or less enough time to have "ideal state" because our mirrors are very sharp, but so blunt to see objects of modernity and development. Our leaders are rapacious, unreliable, too retrogressive and self-opinionated. Therefore, politics could be seen in Africa as an unpredictable game of human nature which furnishes people with different fake stories within one season, what is presented in manifesto seems different from the contemporary service.

3. CORRUPTION

Corruption could be seen in different ways by different scholars but what matters is to justify that what is evil is evil everywhere and what is good is good at all cost. Therefore, an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. In the light of the above, this study gives an operational definition of corruption as defined by different scholars. Eigen (2001) defined corruption as a "daunting obstacle to sustainable development", a constraint on education, health care and poverty alleviation and a great impediment to the Millennium Development Goal of the number of people living in extreme poverty 2015. Asian Development Bank perspective of corruption as cited in Agbu (2003), sees corruption as the behaviour of public and private officers who improperly and unlawfully enrich themselves or those closely related to them, or induce others to do so by misusing the position in which they are placed. Therefore, a person who involves in inducing corruption has automatically committed crime of corruption.

According to World Bank (1997), corruption is seen as the abuse of public office for private gains. However, public office is abused through rent seeking activities for private gain when an officer accepts, solicits or collects a bribe. It is also abused when public agent actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. By logical extension, public office could also be abused for personal profit even if no bribes occur through patronage and nepotism, the stolen of state assets or the diversion of state resources for private gains. A public official is corrupt if he accepts money for discharging his/her official duty of that he/she is under duty not to do. Corruption is a betrayal of trust resulting directly or indirectly from the subordination of public goals to those of the individual. Therefore, a person who engages in nepotism has committed an act of corruption by putting his family interests over those of the larger society.

In view of the above, corruption could be defined as the acceptance or inducement of an act that is repugnant to natural law, justice, equity and good conscience for personal gains. What is good is good for all and what is evil is evil everywhere. Once an act is committed against natural justice, corruption has already been taken place. Therefore, corruption is the act of acquiring properties, wealth, favour, among others at the detriment of others for private gains. Enjoyment at the expense of others is very painful to whom the enjoyment is derived and is very repugnant to natural law.

Forms and Manifestation of Corruption in Nigeria:

Corruption could be formed and manifested in many ways but irrespective of its different forms and manifestations, corruption is a serious threat to economic development.

According to Alatas (1990), corruption is of seven forms: Autogenic, defensive, extortive, investive, nepotistic, supportive and transitive forms of corruption.

Autogenic corruption is self-generating and more so involves only the perpetrator. It is said to be done when a person is intentionally decided to self-enrich him/her self at the expense of other people.

Defensive corruption is said to occur where a person who needs a critical service is forced to bribe in order to prevent unpleasant consequences being inflicted on his interest. For example, a person who wants to travel abroad within a specific time frame needs a passport as required by the journey but may be forced to pay bribes in order to meet up with the time frame, otherwise he/she may forfeit the travel. This type of corruption could be self-defensive because bribe is paid just to achieve the predetermined objective.

Extortive Corruption: This is the behaviour of a person demanding personal compensation in exchange for service. This type of corruption is common today in police service. When you report a case to police, they will tell you to grease their palms before discharging their official duty otherwise you forfeit the matter.

Investive corruption means the offer of goods or service without a direct link to any particular favour at the present, but in anticipation of future situations when the favour may be needed. This type of corruption is committed for future use and not for immediate purposes. Supportive corruption does not require money or immediate gains but involves actions taken to protect or strengthen the existing corruption. A corrupt regime or official just like in African settings may try to prevent the election or appointment of an honest person or government for fear that the person or the regime might be probed by the successor. This could be the major reasons corruption is still in geometrical progressions in Africa today.

Nepostic corruption entails the preferential treatment of, or unjustified appointment of friends or relations to public office in violation of the accepted guidelines. Transactives corruption refers to situations where the two parties are mutually and willingly participate in the corrupt practice to the advantages of both parties. For instance, a corrupt contractors or business person may intentionally bribe a corrupt government official in order to win a tender for a certain contract. On other coins of it, a corrupt government may impose corruption on a person there by mandating the person or contractor to release some percent of his share just as to win the tender for a contracts and this negatively affects most of the contracts in African societies today. However, apart from the above forms aforesaid, corruption could be purposive. It could be purposive in the sense that when a person frames his /her mind for evil things which repugnant to natural law and starts are working towards the achievement of the predetermined objective. This implies that the perpetrator has an intention and purpose of committing crime. For example, a lot of people engage in internet fraud today for the primary purpose of becoming the richest among the rich.

Corruption in Nigeria manifests itself inform of abuse of positions and privileges, low levels of transparency and accountability, bribery/kickbacks, inflation of contracts, diversion of fund, embezzlement of public fund, under and over-invoicing, false declarations, advance fee fraud and other deceptive schemes known as “419”, commodity loading, collection of illegal tolls, illicit smuggling of drugs and arms, human trafficking, child prostitution, illegal oil bunkering, illegal mining, tax evasion, foreign exchange malpractices including counterfeiting of currency, plagiarism cronyism and privacy, among others. Corruption may facilitate criminal enterprise such as drug trafficking, money laundering, and trafficking, it is not restricted to these activities. The activities that constitute illegal corruption differ depending on the country or jurisdiction. For instance, certain political funding practices that are legal in one place may be illegal in another. In some cases, government officials have broad or poorly defined powers, which make it difficult to distinguish between legal and illegal actions. Worldwide, bribery alone is estimated to involve over 1 trillion US dollars annually (*BBC NEWS - Business - African corruption 'on the wane'*). A state of unrestrained political corruption is known as a kleptocracy, literally meaning "rule by thieves"

Detrimental Effects of Corruption and Politics on Agriculture:

Agriculture is the main root of economic building and whatever affects agriculture indirectly, affects economy directly. Therefore, the primary expectation of agriculture is to maintain the economic building of nation's development. However, diversification of Agricultural inputs and budgets made for agricultural production by corrupt government officials and politicians could cause incapacity building of Nigerian economy as well as dwindling in agriculture thereafter. Corruption has not only permeated the government and oil fields of Nigeria but also attacked the entire nation (Hadi, 1999). Corruption and inefficiency are too detrimental to service delivery in Nigeria and this could be the reason why private companies seem to perform more effectively and less corrupt than government enterprises. The major goal of agriculture is to reform and set the economy on a path of sustainable development and to create an economy that can compete with others.

Corruption diverts resources from the poor to the rich, increases the cost of running agriculture, distorts public expenditure and teeters foreign investment (Mauro, 1997; Wei, 1997 and Alesina, and Weder, 1999). It saps a country's economy by hampering agriculture and undermining the enforcement of important laws on agriculture. As regards to this, Murphy *et al.*, (1993) opined that corruption has created loss of tax revenues and monetary problems leading to adverse budgetary consequences and is likely to produce certain composition of capital flows that make a country more vulnerable to shift in internal investor's expectation.

Corruption among citizens has a devastating influence on farmers' welfare and is often linked to increase in rural poverty, huge capital flight, unemployment, malnutrition, among others. Several agricultural programmes have been introduced by different tiers of government in Nigeria just to boost food security. The formation of these programmes stem from the role of agricultural sector and the need to encourage farmers to participate more in agricultural production. Yet, despite all

these roles by the government the aims were still abortive and the target farmers were no longer receiving what they supposed to benefit as a result of corruption that dominated the agenda of Nigerian politicians (Akpan, Udoh and Umoren, 2016).

Most agricultural research still occurs at research stations where scientists experience conditions that are quite different from those faced by the farmers. However, agricultural extension service providers have not been sincere in delivering their services to the expected farmers, most of these extension service providers either divert most of the inputs meant for farmers' use or may make the inputs highly inaccessible to farmers. This to a very large extent would make the practice of agricultural extension and its sustainability a mirage. The control and direction of the programmes of agricultural extension systems from the top without recourse to knowing the prevailing circumstances of the farmers in the most cases would be to satisfy the power that be and this is a fragrant abuse of office and power to the detriment of agricultural extension development and practice. In the light of this, development experts are advocating agricultural programmes that focused on bottom up approaches and view beneficiaries as a partner that utilizes local experience and endeavour to empower target beneficiaries (Kumba, 2003).

In Nigeria today, there has always been failure of inputs suppliers to ensure effective and timely distribution to framers. Agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides among others, rarely get to the target farmers at right time and in the right quantity as a result of corruption. The reasons behind this could be that most of these farm inputs are hijacked by people who have political power and therefore either divert them or sell them at exorbitant prices beyond the reach of many rural farmers. This in the main becomes a very big challenge to agricultural development in Nigeria and also a threat to food security in Africa.

Politics, Corruption and Agricultural Dwindling; A Bane of Nation Building:

The debate on fragile future and the corruption nature about Africa is closely related to the failure of the state in Africa. African State has been generally baptized "the failed state, rogue state, corrupt state and the unreliable state" (Kuka, 2007). To him, the negative contribution of the constituted elements have led many to say that the real debate is over the increasing constriction of the political space which has reduced politics to an endgame.

According to World Bank reports, the coefficient indices for development in Africa remains abysmal as a result of politics and corruption; life expectancy is in the decline, poverty increases daily, death rages on, despair and destruction haunt the continent and infrastructural designs are in decay. In the light of the above adverse effect, Kukah (2007) narrated the message from the world to Africa; "a globalization is almost around the corner and the rest of the world will move with or without you, Africans will find themselves unable to afford the price of a ticket and those who can afford a ticket are not so sure of the destination of the train, nor are they sure of a seat on the train". Wherever we go today, Africans spell failure on all fronts such as political, economic, social and morally otherwise. Ideally, Africans should not be painted black in any political computation because, it is a continent that is humanly populated and naturally blessed with oil and mineral resources at different parts such as crude oil, carbon, diamond, among others.

What could be the cause of our failure? Is it the way we play politics and corruption handlings that placed us on the front lines of corruption rating before the world. In view of these, some experts opined that our failure stems from our inability to carry on the torch of independence and civilization which was handed over to us through the founding fathers of our nations by our civilized colonial masters. The civilization which they left behind for us was the structure of governance and was at a time become inoperative and collapsed. With this, one can resonate with the other points of scholars that our problem is failure of leadership.

On the other hand, some argued that we were on the right path and that needed with a bit of trial and error, our futures would have been bright were it not for the military interventions. Those who hold this view apportioned blame on military and said that it has arrested our national development projects partly due to the corruption of the military itself and their subversion of the institutions of democracy.

As a result of this, it behooves me to believe that democracy is an expensive project, in both human and material resources. It requires discipline, patience, vision and commitment. With reference to the above, it is clear that some of these arguments have run their course, they have provided some respite for us, but we cannot rely on them as a yardstick for the discussion of our political and economic failure. However, time has come for us to grow up and learn to take responsibility, especially given the fact that military, the new colonial masters have proved to be far more profligate,

rapacious and tyrannical than the colonial masters we excoriated. As regards to this, it is palpably clear that politics has changed from the hands of non rapacious elements to the hands of typical rapacious elements and this could be the byproduct of our suffering today. Nigeria, the most populous black nation in the world is presently passing through difficult times, although some people in power due to the allure and paraphernalia of office continue to assume that all is well with the country. However, any attempt by anyone to make a frank assessment of the sorry state of things in Nigeria is often rebuffed and sometimes visited with harassment and victimization of such people who will talk for the benefit of others? Alas! Everybody is afraid of harassment and assassination. The fact remains that any responsible Nigerian citizen who genuinely loves Nigeria knows that the country is in a very danger that calls for urgent and deliberate actions of both the government and her citizens to arrest the drift.

According to Dangana (2011), the present situation in Nigeria can be linked to a building or a structure that is visibly weak. However, for that building to continue to stand, its custodians have a responsibility to take timely steps to discover the cause of the defect and adopt appropriate remedial measures to save the building from imminent collapse. But if they adopt a complacent “I don’t care” or “nothing is wrong” or “nothing will happen” attitude, then with time, the building or structure will definitely crumble with catastrophic consequences. Therefore, it is of very important to cure the cause of a sickness, rather than curing the sickness alone, because curing the sickness itself without the cause of it will help the sickness to relapse in subsequent times.

Nigeria is in a mess, and also in visible ruins. The features of these problems are reflecting in every sphere of its national existence and these are clear to both the citizens and non-citizens. It is only the beneficiaries of these corruptions can see and say otherwise. They alone can say that the country is in the best shape and is developing while opposite is the case. Our leaders often deliberately offer a false image of peace, unity, stability, progress and development in the country through diplomatically deceptive speech as to outshine the eyes of the other nations. As a matter of these, well-packaged falsehood and propaganda of development by this cabal, majority of Nigerian citizens became complacent about the situation in the country until recently when the corruptions are becoming more visible and threaten to even the lives of these facilitators and perpetrators of the “nation” state of stagnancy, decay and backwardness. However, this complacent attitude is risky and even dangerous because it heralds the doom’s day. As a result of the urgency to rebuild Nigeria from the shackles of leadership, Dangana (2011), expressed as follows; The “Doubting Thomas who still do not believe that Nigeria is in ruins and needs urgent rebuilding should ponder the following sad realities that are very visible in the country as at the year 2011. It needs to be stressed that the ruins started several decades back, but since no appropriate measures were taken to address them by the successive governments, the situation degenerated to the present frightening level that is threatening to bring the county to a total collapse”. Corruption has been seen as endemic in Nigeria. One may be tempted to think that corruption is indigenous to Nigeria or Nigeria manufactures corruption and packages it in various forms for utilization within and outside the country. It is in Nigeria that a contract that ought to cost N43m was awarded for N450m and the money was paid upfront to the contractor. It has destroyed every fabric of the Nigeria society. No sector is exempted or immuned from the disease. Infact, corruption has become a norm in the Nigerian society while honesty, probity and accountability have become exceptions. In Nigeria, when a person is not corrupt, he or she is seemed to be strange and abnormal. The reason for this sad reality is that the majority of Nigerian indulges in corruption and with time, it becomes an accepted culture that everyone must practice in order to be accepted by the society as being normal.

Once corruption takes place, it renders the effective working of any established principle inoperative and impossible. The rules get perverted and discarded. The Whims and Caprices of the player in corruption take over public interest, things started falling apart and centre could no longer hold. Therefore, corruption is greatest problems holding Nigeria down as regards to nation building.

According to Ogara (2011), the main trouble with Nigeria is that it is ruled by a breed of rapacious rulers, political ventures who impoverish the country and enrich themselves at the detriment of people. To his extension, there are two leaders in power; leaders driven by commitment to the common good and leaders motivated by ambition and self-seeking. Different leaders behave according to their kind. Leaders in the first group are good and popular while those in the second group are bad and notorious. Despite the obvious setbacks, it is not all gloom and doom for the country, yet Nigeria is not beyond redemption, let’s put hands together and rebuild this country from these ruins.

Agriculture has remained an invaluable contributor to the well-being of a nation. Man and animals feed on food to stay alive and to be healthy. Every nation has the responsibility to feed her citizens and any nation that cannot feed her citizens

adequately is vulnerable to unrest and cannot have peace and stability. Therefore, for a nation to be able to feed her citizens, it must strengthen its agriculture and produce sufficient food. To do this, it requires a lot of inputs which only government has the resources to coordinate and provide.

In Nigeria today, the state of our agriculture and food security is in shambles, in fact it is nothing to cheer about. The country has resorted to the level of importing millions of metric tons of essential food such as rice, wheat, floor, vegetable oil, beefy, chicken, fish, among others from foreign lands, in spite of her great potentials in agriculture. However, the above statement is now contrary to what Alhaji Umaru Diko said during Alhaji Shehu Shagari's administration that Nigerians were not eating from the dust bin. But now Nigeria has got food scavengers that daily monitor dust bin to get their daily food supply (Dangana,2011).

There is no concrete policy of the government on agriculture that can make food production a reality. What the government has been good at doing is mere slogans and lousy statements that is devoid of action. They claim that all is well in the agricultural sector because a lot of money is being injected into it whereas there is potential danger, for instance, fertilizer that farmers use, which up to the early 1980s was a commodity that was readily available to farmers, but since the inception of democracy (1999) to date, the importation and distribution of fertilizers have been so much politicized and bastardized that the product is not imported at the right time and is not given directly to the end users who are the farmers. Instead, the allocations are given to politicians and their cronies who then re-sell them at exorbitant price which most times are unaffordable by the farmers. However, sometimes the sale is restricted to only members of the ruling political party in the state since the commodity is very scarce (Daily Trust Newspaper, July 15, 2011).

The rationale behind the above points is that fertilizers are now imported into Nigeria and not produced locally in Nigeria. With the available literature, it has been observed that the National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria (NAFCON) at Onne in River state had the capacity to supply the quality of fertilizer needed by Nigerian farmers but it was run down because of corruption. Similarity, the federal superphosphate fertilizer company cited in Kaduna was also run aground as a result of corruption. Then, there is one question that left behind for every Nigerian, with poor harvest as a result of lack of fertilizer, how can Nigerian escape food crisis?

The various river basins development authority are not functional and do not produce food. They are more or less exists as bureaucracy where there are workers that receive salary every month, but the production of food is absent. However, River basin farm authority failed in Nigeria because of corruption and lack of agricultural engineers who seldom go to farm but clad in their suits and sit in air conditioned offices sharpening their eyes to see where opportunity exists to divert money into their private pockets.

As far back as 1980s, there were more mechanized agriculture than as it is now. During that time our mechanized farms were a sight to behold, but today it is no more due to politics and corruptions. According to Dangana (2011) Agriculture needs strong support from the government in areas of finance, tax waivers, import duty waivers, allocation of fertilizers, among others to reduce the cost of running the farm, but Nigerian government could not do that, rather they are busy sharing political offices and positions according to quota system and federal character. Farmers need government subsidy and financial support to reduce their losses, but Nigerian government hardly does that, and even if it does, such help does not usually reach to the farmers, but end up in private pocket. These are the reasons our farming systems take abnormal shape today.

In the light of the above, President Goodluck Jonathan has expressed concern over the country's reliance on food importation," saying the decline in food production is causing the nation huge import bill". To him agriculture contributed 40% of GDP and provided 60% of employment in the last five years. He also observed that the outputs have turned the country into a net importer of agricultural produce, including major food products like wheat (N635.5 billion) rice (N356.5 billion), sugar (N217 billion) and fish (N96.9 billion) (The Daily Trust Newspaper, Wednesday July 6, 2011).

Several dams and irrigation facilities were constructed in various parts of Nigeria in the 1970s and 1980s to help farmers plant all year round. As it is now, some of the dams and irrigation have collapsed and no more functioning in their project capacity as a result of corruption.

Agricultural extension services provided by our colonial masters during the period of 1960s and early 1980s have become a thing of history in Nigeria today. These services were made to teach farmers how to adopt best practices for improved crop yield and livelihood. All these have stopped as a result of politics and corruption. Alas! Our country is in shambles,

the centre cannot hold anymore. Look at the good things that were done in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s have become moribund now when they are supposed to be improved upon and now we are paying the price of our bad governance. Extension agents help farmers to improve on their yield, but today farmers occasionally see agricultural extension workers. The little extension workers that were employed were not adequately remunerated as a result of corruption among our leaders. The consequence upon this is shortage of food in the country. However, our government initiated and instituted Agricultural Development Projects (ADPS) to assist farmers but have no practical benefit to farmers and farming system. Whom are we deceiving? It is better we tell ourselves the truth, the more we stop deceiving ourselves the better for us.

Politics and corruption have ruined the economy that survives other nations and this caused dwindling in our agricultural sector today. It is obvious that our agricultural sector is in shambles and food security is presently a mirage.

4. THE WAY OUT

It is generally believed that Nigeria is not a poor nation as we are today, except that it has been wrongly and poorly managed by some set of rapacious elements that enriched themselves at the expense of their fellow Nigerians. Nigeria is rich enough to feed herself and the rest of other African countries, if the personal interest of her leaders could not outshine public one thereby putting corruption in the last least of their profiles. Nigerians, why must you subject the future of our children to grow up under the climate of poverty, ignorance, helplessness and despair? Alas! It is not yet late to redeem, there is nothing wrong in Nigeria that cannot be corrected with what Nigeria has. However, I believe those who capitalize on Nigeria's flaws without acknowledging the singular greatness of our ideals and potentials to inspire a better life, do not truly understand Nigeria. I have a dream that one day; Nigerian will rise out of these shackles of this leadership.

In view of the above, Otaha (2013), prophesized that: "we are going to have a new generation of leaders who will have faith in Nigeria and strongly believed that Nigeria must take responsibility for its own destiny, that Nigeria will uplift herself only by her own efforts in partnership with those who wish her well".

Nigeria remains mired in corruption, crime, poverty and violence despite the promulgation of different laws like in other countries as the tool mechanisms for stopping corruption (Obayelu, 2007). The legal instruments used against corruption in Nigeria include; criminal code, code of conducts Bureau, the recovery of public property Act of 1984 and the recently formed commissions such as EFCC and ICPC. All these legal instruments against corruption in Nigeria fascinated as they are, none of them is discharging its duty up to expectation because they embraced self-enrichment and nepotism in service. However, for this country to curb corruption to an extent, but not in totality, all these legal instruments promulgated to fight corruption should assume that the cooking pot for lizards should as well be the cooking pot for chameleons. They should devoid themselves of nepotism, tribalism and give equal justice to all offenders. There should be no injustice in discharging their duty, because an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We used to say that law does not respect anybody, but in Nigeria it does and that is the reason our country is in shambles.

Our law enforcement agency should handle every offender with stick and carrot approach that might serve as deterrent to others. In Nigeria abuse of judicial process and the rule of law by the law enforcement agencies, especially in matters the government has interest in, is disturbing and condemnable suspects are prosecuted and not really prosecuted by the authorities. If law does not obey anybody as we rightly said, why must we take bribe to discharge our official duty? An injustice occurs when the equal treated unequally and unequal treated equally. Therefore, for us to build a better Nigeria every offender should be treated according to the gravity of the offence committed and we should stop basking in reflected glory. Mr. /Mrs. A's son or daughter should be treated according to the rules of law and not according to the popularity and influence of the parents. Moreso, Mr./Mrs. B should also be prosecuted the way law says and not according to his/her personality and influence in the society. When our laws, our leaders and our government are out of alignment with our ideals, the dissent of ordinary man in the society may prove to be one of the reliable sources of the patriotism. We are in a sorry state today because everything is out of alignment.

In the light of the above, Dangana (2011) *said that Nigeria is gradually turning to a "jungle where all forms of atrocities thrive against the citizens; a jungle where injustice is a past time relished by its perpetrators; a jungle where the diligent are working but the indolent are eating the fruits of labour; a jungle where might or personal strength is gradually replacing the rule of laws in settling dispute; a jungle where rules or laws exist on paper without practical implementation; a jungle where the survival of the fittest is gradually replacing the rule of law and laws or sanctions are*

applied with discrimination where the bearer of the scale and sword of the justice who ought to be blind in dispensing justice is not but has her eyes wide open to see those that are before the supposed temple of justice”.

Nigeria is in a mess today, because our government discharges duty with fear and favour, if not, the country would have been rated second in development after United States of America. It should be so, because we are blessed naturally with what it takes to develop. Therefore, as to resuscitate this country from these ruins, abuse of judicial process and the rules of law should be avoided. The executive arms of government should make agricultural policy on agriculture that can make food production a reality not a mirage. The executive arm of the government in all democratic countries of the world is involved in the daily activities that affect the citizens directly. It is the executive that executes the laws passed by the legislature and also executes the budgets that are appropriated to provide social welfare to the citizens. In Nigeria, the executive arm of government perpetrates greater proportion of corruption than the other two arms. Nigerian government should avoid making lousy statements that lack action.

Agriculture should be subsidized in various forms to make it attractive to farmers and the likes of students. There is no subsidy that agriculture cannot accommodate because every human being whether poor or rich eats food and every citizen is a stakeholder in agriculture. Everybody is a direct beneficiary of any kind of subsidy on agriculture. Therefore, whatever affects agriculture indirectly affects all directly. Agriculture is for all, because it had no class distinction, everybody regardless of social status eats food on daily basis.

Nigerian government at all levels should place importance on human life. The attitude accounts for why we do not use our resources of the nation to care for the citizens. In developed countries, even animals are well taken care of, let alone human beings, but here in Africa, Nigeria to be specific, and the sanctity of the human life are the least consideration in our priority lists. Therefore, it is incumbent on government to wake up to its responsibility and make Nigeria a food security country. In Africa we have people like Julius Nyerere of Tanzania whose leadership remains indelible. Julius Nyerere's leadership of Tanzania commanded international attention and attracted worldwide respect for his consistent emphasis upon ethical principles as the basis of practical policies. Tanzania under Nyerere made great strides in vital areas of social development: infant mortality was reduced from 138 per 1000 live births in 1965 to 110 in 1985; life expectancy at birth rose from 37 in 1960 to 52 in 1984; primary school enrolment was raised from 25% of age group (only 16% of females) in 1960 to 72% (85% of females) in 1985 (despite the rapidly increasing population); the adult literacy rate rose from 17% in 1960 to 63% by 1975 (much higher than in other African countries) and continued to rise. However, Ujamaa (like many other collectivization projects) decreased production, casting serious doubt on the project's ability to offer economic growth (martinplaut,2012).

Our political system should be restructured and rebuilt for the better, politicians should have reflected thinking on the likes of Zik of Africa, Aminu Kano, M.I. Okpala, among others. These politicians did not prioritize their personal interest before the public one. If we can have something to fall upon from aforesaid politicians, what of our upcoming children? Would they rely on what? Nigerians, lets salvage and restructure this country from these shackles of leadership, otherwise our upcoming children's' life will in no distance time be mortgaged. But God forbid!! Our citizens should have unity of purpose and form moral majority that should be capable of salvaging Nigeria from ruins. Having group of people in a society who have strong beliefs and Christian principles that corruption is an impediment to nation building will of cause liberate us from this shambles. In developed countries, corrupt people and politicians are made to peel social stigma by the moral majority, but in Nigeria today, they are glorified and romanticized in social media by their eminent disciples. This is despicable and unspeakable to the hearing of United Nation. Nigeria has made herself to become a country that cannot cater for the basic needs due to economic corruption and embezzlement of public funds that characterized the minds of our leaders. Our present leaders have no sense of patriotism to emulate the lives of great Nigerians who used the virtues of discipline, vision, focus and patriotism to give the country sound development from which they become what they are. Therefore, to liberate Nigerian from this social morass, there must be unity for moral majority. People who can stand that an evil is evil and speak against it, and people who can see morality and embrace it.

Collective effort and public opinion should be highly adopted. Fighting corruption does not need one man effort, it is not one man business but a collective one. Our leaders cannot meet this country's challenges alone, but the citizens cannot meet them without our leaders. However, it is not something that can be fought by one agency alone, rather it needs synchronizations. That is, if you synchronize, I synchronize, another person or agencies synchronize, and then, we synchronize together. Therefore, in fighting corruption, all hands should be on deck.

5. CONCLUSION

The current situation of agriculture in Nigeria is despicable, deplorable, unspeakable, disgraceful, deceptive, tragic, retrogressive and not even befitting a nation that is rich and endowed with natural resources. Nigerian agricultural research institutes that were established to pilot the affairs of agriculture were not fully sophisticated and equipped and this in repercussion subjects Nigerians to food insecurity. A pertinent question is, can Nigerian nationalists and founding fathers like Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, Sir Tafawa Belewa, Sir Ahamadu Bello, among others allow Nigerian agricultural research institute to be in a deplorable state that would compel them to import food abroad if they were still alive? No! they would rather channel the cost of importing such food items to revamp those dilapidated agricultural research institutes.

Politics and corruption have done more harms than good in our social life today, especially in agricultural sector that stands the roots of every nation. Corruption affects everybody in all ramifications, even the perpetrators themselves; therefore, the moment we savage/overhand our country from these adverse effects, the better for our livings. Agricultural economy controls other economies, therefore, whatever profession a person belongs to or practice, such a person should know that everybody is a stakeholder in agriculture and such profession should be prioritized for the benefit of mankind. The decay in the agricultural sector has impacted negatively on Nigeria and an urgent remedy has to be taken to get out of the ruins.

In the light of the above, the writers have researched extensively to discuss on the following issues, politics and corruption, the detrimental effects of corruption and politics on agriculture, forms and manifestation of corruption in Nigeria and also suggested the way out for the ruins. My fellow Nigerians, everything on earth is in a state of flux, one thing is certain and that is "change". I have a dream that one day Nigeria will salvage her citizens out of these ruins because it has the capacity and audacity to rebuild itself to the level of competing with the developed nations of the world, since both natural and human resources are in abundance. But it takes visionary, optimistic, dedicated, selflessness and patriotic political leadership that will stand the test of time to rebuild the country. My dear lovely country, we are beholding!!

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the humble opinion of these authors that the above way out suggested, if well implemented, will bring a lasting panacea to make Nigeria a better place. We therefore, recommend that the aforesaid solutions should be adopted and implemented by every citizen of this country who wishes to liberate it from ruins.

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