

## Political Corruption and Human Security in Nigeria

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### Abstract

Corruption straddles every segment of any society in its spread, audacity and depth. It is a catalyst for those desperate to have an enduring presence on influence and power and it is universal. It borders on issues like fraud, turpitude, selfishness, moral degeneration, covetousness and insatiability. Unfortunately, looted wealth is hardly ever invested in Nigeria rather it is stashed abroad in foreign financial institutions or businesses with little or no profits accruing to the nation. Thus, despite Nigeria's potentials, Nigeria has not been able to achieve the required development that would put her in the league of advanced economies not because the resources are not available but because some covetous politicians decide to empty the state treasury for parochial motives. Hence, the objective of this paper is to examine how corruption exacerbates poverty in Nigeria. Qualitative technique was adopted and the findings from this paper revealed that corruption has created a volatile, uncondusive and crisis-ridden environment where the achievement of developmental objectives remains an illusion. It therefore concludes and recommends that the culture and value system that believes corruption and exploitation is synonymous to intelligence needs to be completely eradicated from the elementary level by educational, religious and cultural leaders at various levels. In addition, exposing corrupt public officials is an unserious way of curbing uncontrollable looting, there should be governance structures in place that make it impossible for public officials to siphon public funds.

**Keywords:** Corruption, Fraud, Grand Theft, Poverty, Unethical Practices

### Introduction

Corruption is a plague which is international in scope, monstrous in nature, crudely rampant in developing economies and obstructively devastating and pervasive in virtually all less developed countries of the world. Proverbially, corruption is any action undertaken by man with a view to reaping where he has not sown. This suggests that corruption is any induced behaviour with the primary aim of falsifying the outcome of the behaviour to the benefit of the inducer (Imam, 2015). Corruption straddles every segment of any society in its spread, audacity and depth. It is a catalyst for those desperate to have an enduring presence on influence and power and it is universal (Onadeko, 2020). It borders on issues like fraud, turpitude, selfishness, moral degeneration, covetousness and insatiability (Ugwu, 2010). However, not a few Nigerians believe that any day their country is able to make up her mind to end her obscene and injurious romance with corruption; she will witness the kind of development no one had ever thought was possible (Ejinkeonye, 2019).

Sadly, since political independence from Britain, this quagmire has continued unabated due to the existence of weak institutions and processes (Ugwu, 2010). This vice has become so entrenched that the perceived process of taming this monster is in itself fraught with corrupt practices that exacerbates poverty. This assertion is premised on the fact that less than a significant number of public officials found guilty of corruption by the court of law are adequately punished and in some cases they are only asked to return a minute portion of the loots to the state (Joda, 2011).

Disturbingly, these recovered loots are again consumed by corruption (Aremu, 2017). Hence, a vicious cycle of wastefulness and irresponsible misplacement of Nigeria's wealth has continued unchecked by unscrupulous political leaders. Thus, in spite of Nigeria's superfluously furnished wealth, Nigeria is still being confronted by extreme poverty and developmental retrogression as a result of unpatriotic practices, unaccountable leadership and unfriendly economic policies. Thus, in spite of her enormous potentials, Nigeria has not been able to achieve the required development that would put her in the league of advanced economies not because the

resources are not available but because some covetous leaders whether politicians or military heads of state decide to empty the state treasury for their private uses.

Unfortunately, looted wealth is hardly ever invested in Nigeria rather it is stashed abroad in foreign bank accounts and foreign financial institutions or businesses with little or no profits accruing to the nation. This dismal state of corruption has become a norm and practice of politics among the present political class. Beyond the political class, the private and corporate sectors of the society have also been involved in it with brazen impunity such that there seems to be no safe haven anymore (Osah, Ireunmi, Eti and Amakihe, 2015). Nigeria therefore presents a typical case of a country in Africa whose development is being undermined and frustrated by corruption. A culture of corruption has been entrenched in the country over the years that have unfortunately resulted in the frustration of all forces that propels socio-economic development (Olojede, 2020). Nonetheless, it is pertinent to understand that corruption is as old as man as a result of its antiquarian foundation.

### **Concept of Poverty**

Poverty can be described as a threat to human survival and development. Poverty occurs when individuals do not have access to adequate shelter, water, food, amenities and services that could enable them to live and work effectively and to conform to ethical behaviours in the society (Olojede, 2019). Poverty is a situation where majority of the population lives at or below income levels sufficient to meet their basic needs and the available resources even when equally distributed are barely sufficient to meet the basic needs of the population. This suggests that poverty is a condition of life degraded by diseases, deprivation and squalor (Oshelowo, 2010). Similarly, poverty is seen as the inability to obtain a minimum standard of living. However, there are some indices based on a minimum level of consumption that shows the practical aspect of poverty. These include- lack of access to resources, lack of shelter, poor access to water and sanitation, vulnerability to shocks, violence and crime, political discrimination and marginalization (Iwuoha and Obi, 2012).

Furthermore, Udofia and Mkpa (2016) reiterate that poverty is the absence of certain capabilities which include largely been able to participate in one's society with dignity. It is a condition of lack of the necessary resources that is needed to get those material things that make for good living, which may include good food, sound health, shelter and a host of others. From the foregoing, it is clear that poverty is the deficiency or inadequate supply of the basic necessities of life needed for an acceptable standard of living such as food, clothing, shelter and access to health care (Olojede, 2019). In addition, Aboki (2009) averred that poverty refers to lack of command over basic consumption needs.

From the foregoing, it is obvious poverty covers economic, human, political and socio-cultural vulnerabilities. Oni and Olojede (2019) so corroborate this position by emphasizing that poverty is a condition where persons or groups of persons are unable to have access to basic elementary requirements for human survival in terms of food, clothing, shelter, health care, transportation, education and recreation.

Therefore, the poor are those who are deprived of basic necessities that will enable them achieve the inherent potentials of their capabilities which determine their present and future existence and survival (Nwaodike, Oni and Olojede, 2019). Regrettably the phenomenon of corruption has become a lifestyle of the Nigerian society (Osah and Alao, 2020).

### **Types of Poverty**

To understand the phenomenon of poverty, the four types of poverty will be addressed:

1. **Absolute poverty or Extreme Poverty:** According to Said, Abubakar and Muhammad (2014) absolute poverty arises when the consumption of an individual or household is below a minimum acceptable level which has been fixed overtime as a global standard for meaningful human existence known as poverty line. In other words, it refers to a state whereby an individual does not have enough to survive. It is a situation where the average family is unable to afford three good meals per day, decent housing facilities and health care services.

2. **Relative Poverty:** Relative poverty refers to a situation where individuals or families are in command of resources which overtime fall short of resources seriously commanded by the average persons or families as the case may be. In essence, it is poverty from a comparative point of view that is poverty is not absolute but relative to the position of households or individuals compared. Relative poverty is common in advanced nations, where although families are rated as poor in terms of the standard of living in their society, they still can afford human enjoyment that can be considered luxury by their absolute poor counterpart in developing nations. In addition, relative poverty can be seen in relation to the economic status of other members of the society. This implies that people are poor if they fall below prevailing standards of living in a given societal context (Chioma, 2014).
3. **Chronic/Structural Poverty:** The chronic poor are those who experience significant deprivations for a period of five years or more. A lot of persons in this group are disillusioned and have accepted their conditions. Basically, this type of poverty refers to poverty that is recurrent or long term and its causes are more permanent and depend on a lot of vicious cycled factors such as limited productive resources, lack of skills for gainful employment, vocational disadvantage or endemic socio-political and cultural factors among others (Dauda, 2016).
4. **Spatial/Location Poverty:** This is a type of poverty which depends on geographical or regional spread and incidence .It involves urban squalor/poverty typified by the existence of ghettos ,slums and shanties in metropolitan cities and characterized by environmental degradation, pollution and abuse ,inadequate infrastructures, welfare services and social deprivation ,low per-capital income, overcrowded accommodation, engagement in informal business, rural poverty characterized by poor conditions of living (Chioma, 2014).

### **Concept of Corruption**

Corruption is a form of fraudulent or unethical conduct by a person entrusted with a position of authority for the purpose of amassing personal benefits. This suggests that corruption can be grand, petty or political depending on the amount of human, financial or material resources lost and the sector where it occurred (Abegunde and Ogunlade, 2020).

Similarly, corruption is any illegitimate behaviour contrary to the ethics and norm that guide an official holding a public position in trust for the citizens. This implies that corruption is basically the absence of integrity and abuse of public trust for obscene accumulation of wealth with the intent to gain an advantage that is in variance with one's official duty. Thus, it is a betrayal of public trust perpetrated by an individual or cohort either by proxy or real with the sole aim of advancing selfish interests (Aremu, 2017).

Furthermore, it is the act of turning power and authority into ready cash and the diversion of resources from the betterment of the community to the gain of the individuals at the expense of the society. Therefore, taking a general cue from these phenomenon, the summation here is that corruption is any form of behaviour that is not in the interest of the public which involves bribery, sharp practices, grand theft, money laundering, siphoning of public funds, giving or acceptance of gratification, misuse of office, connivance to scam, impropriety in office, inducement, tax evasion, lodgment of public funds without due process, currency violations, extortion, nepotism, influence peddling, abuse of public property, forgery, false accounting, real estate swindles and land speculation, abuse of public grants, environmental damage, smuggling, violation of labor regulations, over invoicing, over pricing, illegitimate monopolization and restraint of trade, hoarding, illegal flight of capital, exploitation of labor, fraudulent sales, sale of defective or adulterated goods like hazardous drugs and food, constraints or distortion of development, vote selling and buying, electoral rigging, manipulations, political gerrymandering, leaking of official government secrets, giving and receiving sexual favours and falsification of statements or grades. The plethora of behaviour that constitutes corruption is limitless and so any behaviour that

negates public trust and leads to perversion of developmental processes is classified as corruption (Aluko, 2006; Aremu, 2017; Anyebe, 2017).

Essentially, corruption is any act of wickedness and treachery to the people an individual has been appointed or elected to serve through unethical actions by a privileged few to rob or cheat the public for the achievement of personal ends or self-aggrandizement (Imam, 2015). In a wrap, corruption is an unethical behaviour that deviates from the formal duties of a public role (elective or appointive) because of parochial motives relating to family, friends, relations or associates. This implies that where political opportunities are scarce, corruption occurs as people use wealth to buy power and where economic opportunities are few, corruption occurs because political power is used to pursue wealth (Onadeko, 2020).

Anyebe (2017) identified three main types of corruption. These are endemic corruption, public and corporate corruption. Endemic corruption according to him is the one that is everywhere, public corruption is one perpetrated by state officials while corporate corruption is one organized and facilitated by institutions like bank and might have international connections.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper adopted the Modernization Theory as its theoretical construct. In the light of this, Modernization Theory is an economic theory rooted in capitalism which evolved in the 1950s and 1960s. Modernization Theory is an all-encapsulating theory which deals with the process a nation encounters in its attempt of transforming from a primitive, poor and corrupt society to a modernized society (Benyin and Ugochukwu, 2015). Principally, the Modernization Theory incorporates the full spectrum of the transition and systemic transformation that a poor society has to undergo in order to become developed and modern. It is fundamentally about Africa following the developmental footsteps of the developed countries. For instance, the Modernization Theory consists of raising the standard of living of the poor through efficient policies that enhance development (Matunhu, 2011).

In this regard, it is a phased process that entails the following five stages: traditional and poor society, pre-conditions for takeoff, take-off process, the drive to maturity and high mass consumption society. Thus, it is an evolutionary process that takes a long time to accomplish. This implies that it takes generations or even centuries to accomplish or complete, while its impact is felt only through time (Ayokhai and Naankiel, 2016). Therefore, this school of thought is derived from Max Weber who was the proponent of the modernization theory and it was emphasized that this theory is seen as a transition process wherein the state of poverty in developing societies is identified by the wide and conspicuous gaps between the rich and poor countries. Thus, this theory emphasizes that the only way poor nations can escape poverty is by making intentional actions that can eradicate corruption. This will enable them gradually achieve the qualities of the industrialized nations.

Furthermore, Modernization theorists observed the differences between the North (developed) and South (developing) countries is that the present state of poor countries is an original state through which the industrialized nations passed through and so for poor countries to develop, we must move away from the pattern of corruption and follow the path of modernity. This implies that they should adopt policies and patterns of development to look like the west. In the light of this therefore, modernization would be seen as the Europeanization or an Americanization process. Since the western European nations and America are the most economically and politically advanced, their institutions provide model for all other nations which desire to grow along these lines (Anikeze, 2011).

Therefore, the theory is best suitable for this paper because it shed light on how Nigeria can escape the poverty trap. It emphasized that since Nigeria is in the evolutionary process, it is only wise it adopts the ways, modes and systems of governance and policy making of the west in order to achieve the kind of development and economic prosperity the west enjoys today. Since it was advocated that corruption is the reason Nigeria cannot

achieve development or escape poverty, then it is suggested that the only way Nigeria can maximize its potentials is for her to adopt economic and political policies that worked for the west so as to enjoy prosperity.

### **Methodology**

This paper adopted the qualitative method in eliciting information relevant for this study and this included local, national and international journal publications, text books, and inaugural lectures and published internet articles.

### **Corruption: An Amplifier of Generational Poverty in Nigeria**

More than anything else, corruption has aggravated the complexity of poverty and lack of development in Nigeria. It is responsible in large measure for the long antecedence of squalor, anarchy and civil unrest that has characterized the existence of Nigeria in the last few decades (Imam, 2015). The long years of fraud, waste, deceit and abuse by the military and political elite (Bamgbose, 1998). This was substantiated by Ndoh (2002) when he noted that since Nigeria acquired her political independence, she has had a truncated development due to an unlimited chain of military coups that have been guilty of discontinuities in developmental policies, worsened by brazen impunity and corruption that further accentuated poverty. Sadly, military intervention in politics is an anomaly in any democratic process that retrogress the economic development and discourages both local and foreign investors (Osah and Alao, 2020). Worst still, corruption creates a politically lawless environment that makes development impossible. The consequence of this is that mass penury is heightened.

Corruption is a plague that has been infused into the traditional attitudes and customs of Nigeria at every level. Usually, societal culture often influences organizational culture. Hence, this culture of corruption has become part of the social base and structure in almost all strata of the society. Unfortunately, this has constituted barriers that make the eradication of poverty in Nigeria impossible (Ndoh, 2002). Thus, this juggernaut has taken an irritating dimension such that no age group, sector or social environment is excluded. In fact, it has become an acceptable lifestyle and work culture. More worrisome is the fact that this menace has contributed to making Nigeria become the poverty capital in the world. This is based on the damaging impact of corruption on human and economic development.

The resultant effect is that it has destroyed every atom of trust and respect the international community has for Nigeria due to the fact that the global community views Nigeria as a highly dangerous and volatile country to engage in any investment thereby accentuating higher levels of unemployment and poverty (Olojede, 2019). This was reiterated by Olojede (2020) when she noted that a pervasive culture of corruption has been institutionalized in Nigeria such that it destroys all forces that make for a peaceful and prosperous nation. This reveals itself in the policy making processes. For example, despite consistent huge resources invested towards developmental objectives, there is most times nothing substantial to show for it. In fact, the more money invested into developmental projects, the less effective they become.

Thus, this triggers an uncondusive and crisis ridden environment to all and sundry and under this condition, the achievement of economic progress becomes an illusion. This is so because corruption triggers an unsafe and unstable environment which constitutes a great threat to the society such as communal tension, social division and the emergence of ethnic and sectarian militias. Thus, in societies filled with the reign of mayhem, domestic terrorism, pipe line vandalism and anarchy, mass penury becomes inevitable.

Ultimately, corruption is an enabler of poverty which reveals why despite Nigeria's size and wealth, there is a continuous and speedy deterioration of the structures that triggers development. This suggests that no society that treats public funds and property with utter disregard and cares only for personal aggrandizement on the principles of steal and go can ever escape the poverty trap. What this implies is that corruption generates economic distortions in the public sector by diverting investments away from social welfare programmes such as education, agriculture and health into capital projects where the prospects of bribes and kickbacks are higher. Government officials may increase the technical complexity of public sector projects to conceal shady dealings,

consequently distorting investments. Corruption is not only a disincentive to investment because of immediate cost but also because it entangles business in wasteful and unproductive relations, which discourage prospective investors (Ugwu, 2015).

The Nigerian government recognizing this dangerous development has initiated a host of programmes to simulate ethical revolution. Since 1966 not less than 22 anti-graft laws and agencies were established including: The public Officer (Investigation of Assets) Decree No. 5 of 1966; The Corrupt Practices Decree in 1975; the Code of Conduct Bureau and the Code of Conduct Tribunal in 1979; Public Complaints Commission in 1975; The Public Officer Investigation of Assets Decree in 1976; The Ethical Revolution; War Against Indiscipline in 1984; Mass Mobilization for Social Justice and Economic Recovering (MAMSER) in 1985; Corrupt Practices Decree and Economic Crime Decree of 1990; Banks and other Financial Institutions Act in 1991; National Orientation Agency in 1992; War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC) in 1994; Indiscipline, Corrupt Practices and Economic Crime (Prohibition) Decree of 1994; Advance Fee Fraud and other Related Offences Decree in 1995; Foreign exchange Decree in 1995; Money laundering Decree in 1995; Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) in 2000; Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2004; Advance Fee Fraud, Corrupt, Practices and Money Laundering Act in 2004; Advance Free Fraud and Other Related Offence Act in 2006; Fiscal Responsibility Act in 2010 Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative in 2010; and the Money Laundering Prohibition Act in 2011 (Osah and Alao, 2020). The present administration of President Muhamadu Buhari has been contemplating setting up another anti-corruption body. One reality is that these efforts have amounted to nothing as they are mere institutions to victimize political opponents. But until we kill corruption, corruption may kill us all, because it is dangerous monster.

### **Poverty and Conflict Nexus**

A host of studies exist to link poverty and conflict in Africa (Atwood, 2005; Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Draman, 2003; Berdal and Malone, 2000; Willett, 2001; Goodhand, 2001). Even though poverty and conflict are different phenomena which plague different societies, the effect of one on the other has been the subject of much research. Poverty remains the major course of conflict. According to Luckham, Ahmed, Muggah and White (2001) conflicts produce new forms of vulnerabilities and inequality because conflicts negatively impact on all levels of society from the micro assets and livelihoods to the macro on increased debt, shrinking of civil society and undermining the capacities of the state. This is similar to Adekanye (2007) postulations about rising poverty rising conflict hypothesis. He noted that structural adjustment, democratization and rising ethnic tensions characterize the current situation in much of Africa today. He links Africa's growing debt (combined with defence) burden, the nature of the structural adjustment programme (SAP), particularly its pressures and contradictions, and the increasingly authoritarian responses generated by these to conflict witnessed in the continent.

Collier (1995) avers that wars and conflict may well produce substantial income losses, but if they do not result in a serious decline in the country's capital stock, the effects of conflict will be less profound and should be easier to reverse. Conflict occasioned by corruption is capable of disrupting peace, development and stability in any nation or system. Draman (2003) ardently belief that poverty is both a cause and a consequence of conflict, as poverty leads to conflict and vice versa, though Nelson (1998) dismiss the link between poverty and conflict, arguing that poverty may lead to conflict when other factors are present.

### **Escaping the Poverty Trap: The Human Security Dimension**

One way the world community has engineered a poverty escape plan is through human security. Human security is concerned with feeling safe, such as freedom from fear and freedom from want. Thus is intricately linked with citizens' security. The idea about human security is based on a multi-sectoral understanding of insecurities occasioned by hunger, poverty and lack of basic social amenities. Many scholar have soft sustainable solutions for human security and anti-corruption (Tavanti, and Stachowicz-Stanusch, 2013).

The Concept of Human Security as defined by the Commission on Human Security (2009) is:

...to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity (CHS, 2003, p. 4).

In the view of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) (2001) human security means the security of people-their physical safety, their economic and social well-being, respect for their dignity and worth as human beings, and the protection of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is all about liberating humans from physical and artificial hindrances such as war, poverty or political oppression, which prevent people from choosing freely and acting freely on what they have chosen. This emerging pattern of poverty consideration understands global vulnerabilities. Of course these defy the age long notion of national security gotten through militaristic approach. A hungry man by no means will think about national security first.

Linking corruption to security crisis, former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted that

Corruption undermines democracy and the rule of law. It leads to violations of human rights. It erodes public trust in government. It can even kill - for example, when corrupt officials allow medicines to be tampered with, or when they accept bribes that enable terrorist acts to take place. [...] It has adverse effects on the delivery of basic social services. It has a particularly harmful impact on the poor. And it is a major obstacle to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Given that insecurity is multi-faceted human security seven dimensions are, and intended to address a host of security concerns including: economic security (persistent poverty, unemployment); food security (hunger, famine); health security (deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care); environmental security (environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution); personal security (physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor); community security (inter-ethnic, religious and other identity based tensions) and political security (political repression, human rights abuses) (UNDP, 1994, pp.22-40). The UNDP Report of 1994 was the first major effort attempt to define the concept of human security. It emphasized that human security is not concerned with weaponry but about human life and dignity. Thus, Mr. Kofi Annan, former Former UN Secretary-General noted that “freedom from want, freedom from fear and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment – these are the interrelated building blocks of human and therefore national security.”

Elbaradei (2006) identifies some of the drivers of insecurity despite the decline of civil wars and other forms of armed conflicts globally since the early 1990s to include:

1. Poverty and poverty related insecurities- lack of reliable food supplies, safe drinking water, and adequate health care, modern energy supplies (all these constitute immediate forms of insecurity).
2. Lack of good governance- characterized by corruption, human right abuses, and
3. High sense of injustice- resulting from the gap between the 'haves' and 'have nots'

The focus is that despite the efforts to reduce insecurity at the national and global levels, the number of poor and venerable is high. More people are plunged into poverty and many are now internally displaced (Osah and Ogu, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

Acts of brazen corruption has grounded the economy to a standstill so much that it has diminished the capacity of governance and development. In fact, corruption is a devourer that destroys lives, truncates national vision and impoverishes a nation. Interestingly, the Holy Bible states that “righteousness exalts a nation but corruption is a reproach”. This explains why Nigeria has become the world's poverty capital. Unfortunately, the structure

of the Nigerian system is conditioned to be corrupt and corruption is a facilitator of poverty and so as long as there is the presence of corruption in every facet of Nigeria's existence, poverty will remain a recurring factor. Therefore, corruption will end until Nigerians want corruption to end. This implies that no matter the institutions set up to curb corruption, nothing will be achievable until every Nigerian in position of trust takes collective responsibility by making integrity a priority over anything.

### **Recommendations**

This paper recommends that:

The prosperity or penury of a nation is determined by leadership. Hence, policy frameworks should be established such that people with negative antecedents that have involved themselves in pilfering, fraud or falsification should be blackballed and not allowed to contest or appointed for any political leadership post for the protection of the country's development, instead individuals who have a pedigree and excelled in any private leadership position should be given priority as opposed to questionable money bags or candidates selected by notorious godfathers because people desperate to serve a country by engaging in vote buying are bound to be corrupt and invariably impoverish the nation.

The youths need to be taught about their cultural history and heritage right from the elementary level so that they will realize that for every act of corruption they engage in or enable, they are making themselves and future generations more vulnerable to poverty.

The culture and mindset that believes exploitation, fraud or corruption is synonymous to smartness and intelligence needs to be completely eradicated right from the elementary level to the tertiary levels through religious, cultural and educational leaders by organizing public lectures, symposiums and seminars reminding the youths of the implications of corruption in our society

Elections are an important part of a nation's political life that affects all spheres or sectors of a nation's life. Hence, the electorate should be politically educated so that they are able to make informed decisions by voting based on ideological principles instead of ethnic or religious affiliations. Thus, by doing this, they have a chance of having credible leaders in public offices.

Uncovering or exposing corrupt public officials is an unserious way of curbing corruption and uncontrollable looting. Thus policy frameworks should be established so that capital punishment will be given to those who have been found guilty of corruption and that includes compromised institutions that tackles corruption so that the notorious pattern of re-looting recovered assets and stolen funds will come to an end.

Even though Nigeria keeps losing several opportunities of escaping the poverty trap, there is still opportunity for Nigeria to prosper and she can achieve this by sowing seeds of meritocracy, efficiency, integrity and honesty. This implies that the administrative, educational, health care and security system needs to be put in the best hands. This will ensure competence that propels prosperity and development that makes poverty fizzle away.

Lastly, as long as there is a culture that encourages a cycle of poverty-the almajari system, poverty might never leave Nigeria. Hence, the almajari system needs to be abolished in all its ramifications.

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