

CORRUPTION AS A CATALYST OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIAN

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Abstract

Corruption as a catalyst of insecurity in Nigeria examined the nexus between corruption and insecurity using Nigerian experience. The paper established that in spite of the efforts made by government to reduce the increasing incidence of corruption and insecurity, little or no achievement have been made. The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between the level of corruption and insecurity in Nigeria. The study adopted public choice theory and frustration aggression theory to explain the high incidence of corruption and insecurity in Nigeria. The research design was content analysis of secondary data from transparency international for data on corruption and Mo Ibrahim Foundation for data on insecurity. These were presented in tables and analyzed using percentage and average. The Pearson Correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. The study confirmed a high incidence of corruption and high incidence of insecurity in Nigeria and found out that light punishment, delay in dispensation of justice and poor public sector wages were among the causes of high incidence of corruption in Nigeria. The hypothesis tested revealed a negative and insignificant relationship between corruption and insecurity in Nigeria (-.206) and with 56.9% level of significance which is greater than 5%. The study concludes that the high level of corruption is not responsible for the high incidence of insecurity in Nigeria. However, since corruption is known to have negative multiplier effect, there is need to reform the judicial system in order to guarantee speedy dispensation of justice, increase public sector wages and salaries among other things. In addition, since the study could not established that corruption is one of the factors responsible for insecurity, there is need for government at various level to be responsible and responsive to the needs of the citizens. There is need for government to intensify efforts to eliminate poverty and unemployment which is another known cause of insecurity in Nigeria by improving the quality of governance.

Keywords: Corruption, catalyst, Insecurity, Nigeria

1.1 Introduction

Corruption has become a threat to humanity and it does not seem to spare any part of the world. This menace has negative multiplier effect on every aspect of society such as schools, offices, markets, political institutions, businesses and more surprisingly, the judiciary that supposed to sanctify the society and be the hope of the common man is not also spared. This ugly incident painted is more endemic and institutionalized in African continents. The primary purpose of government is to provide security and welfare for her citizens. The chapter II of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, pertaining to the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy in Section 14 (2) (b) declared that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". However, in the last eight years, the security sector has received serious attention in terms of budgetary

allocation. It was reported that "Nigeria spends N4.62 trillion on National Security in 5 years, yet widespread in security remains" (The Premium Times 18 June, 2015). In addition to the aforementioned section, section 15 (5) of the constitution also provides that "the state shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power." In line with this declaration, successive governments have made frantic efforts to eliminate this hydra-headed monster called 'corruption'. To achieve this, laws have been enacted and institutions established to fight corruption. Some of these institutions are Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) established through the ICPC Act, 2000, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) via the EFCC Act, 2004, the Fiscal Responsibility Commission established through Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2007, Freedom of Information Act via FOI Act of 2011, Code of Conduct Bureau established by section 153 (1)(b) of the 1999 constitution and many more.

In spite of all these efforts, corruption still remain pervasive in different sectors in Nigeria. From the 2017 record released by Transparency International (TI), a globally acclaimed international non-governmental anti-corruption watch-dog that was established in 1995, has Nigeria in the 148th position out of 180 countries. The country, according to the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), scored 28 out of 100. The organization uses Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) to reflect the perceived levels of corruption in the public sector. The CPI ranks countries on a scale from 100 (very clean) to 0 (highly corrupt). Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for Nigeria varies from the lowest of 22 in 2007 to the highest of 28 out of 100 in 2016. The average score of corruption in Nigeria for the period 2007 – 2016 is 74.5% as compared to 25.5% CPI (transparency). Nigeria CPI was 27% in 2012, 25% in 2013, 27% in 2014, 26% in 2015 and 28% in 2016. There have not been significant improvements. This is pathetic considering the fact that the figure has not improved even under Buhari led administration that declared zero tolerance against corruption. It is against this backdrop the research raise the following questions.

Why is the rate of corruption and insecurity high in Nigeria in spite of the efforts made to fight them? Is there any significant relationship between corruption and insecurity in Nigeria? How can the incidence of corruption and insecurity be reduced in Nigeria?

1.2 Objectives, Hypothesis and Significance of the Study

The major objective of the paper is to find out the relationship between corruption and insecurity in Nigeria. The specific objective is to find out factors responsible for high rate of corruption and insecurity in Nigeria and proffer solution. In order to achieve the major objective, the hypothesis guiding this study is stated in null form as thus; there is no significant relationship between corruption and insecurity in Nigeria.

Adebanjoko & Okorie (2014) in their study corruption and challenges of insecurity in Nigeria revealed that corruption is a major cause of insecurity in the country. In the same vein, Duke, Agbaji & Bassey (2017) in their study corruption and challenges of Boko Haram also found out that corruption relates to insecurity. However, all these studies were not empirical in nature. The studies were theoretical rather than empirical. It is this knowledge gap that this study attempts to cover by determining whether or not an empirical relationship exists between corruption

and insecurity in Nigeria by using data from Transparency International and Mo Ibrahim foundation for 2007-2016. This is what makes this work significant and unique

1.3 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The time scope of the study covers a decade (2007 – 2016). The choice of this scope is justified based on the availability of secondary data derived from Transparency International and Mo Ibrahim Foundation. The geographical scope of this study is the whole of Nigeria. This national outlook as against state or regional outlook makes the study to have maximum utility. The contextual scope of this study centered on corruption and insecurity in the public domain. The major limitation of the study just like every other study of this nature is that, data used for the study are not collected specifically for the purpose of this research. For example, data on security as obtained from the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance is captured as “safety and rule of law.” In addition to that, the data is usually presented to cover a decade (10years) it is usually presented in averages. This is however, not enough to invalidate the findings of the study.

2.0 Conceptual Clarification, Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 The Concept of Corruption

Idris (2013) observed that corruption as a concept is difficult to define with precision. He stated further that scholars and organisations alike therefore, advanced different definitions based on their orientation. Svensson (2005), Phillips (2013), Adebajoko & Okorie (2014) and Transparency International (2017) see corruption as the abuse or misuse of public office or power for private gain or benefit. In reacting to the definition provided by the authors of this intellectual persuasion, Idris (2013) stated that the authors define corruption as it relates to the public sector alone as if it does not occur in the private sector. He stressed that, it is worthy to note that corruption is not only undertaken for personal or self-gain, as it can also be undertaken for the benefit of a third party or both. Even though it was acknowledged earlier that the concept is difficult to define with precision, one thing seems to be common, 'personal gain'. Considering the intellectual disagreement above, it will be more fruitful to acknowledge the operational definition of corruption. Akinyemi (2010) argues that corruption can be better understood by identifying its constituent elements. These elements are bribery, trading in influence, graft and patronage. Others are nepotism and cronyism, electoral and vote fraud, embezzlement, kickbacks and involvement in organized crimes (as cited in Idris, 2013, p.60).

From the foregoing, corruption can be defined as any attempt to circumvent law either by public officers or private individuals. These include stealing, favoritism, falsification of documents, diversion of resources, cheating, bribery and even disobeying traffic rules. Since law prohibits all the aforementioned, any violation of it is an act of corruption. However, for the purpose of this study, we will view corruption as it relates to public office holders.

2.2 Causes of corruption

Some empirical studies by different authors across the globe have revealed some of the causes of corruption especially as it relates to developing countries. Poor salary and wages has been acknowledged as some of the causes of corruption. Sweden, which ranks among the least corrupt countries on all current cross-country rankings, was considered as one of the most

corrupt countries in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Increased remuneration of civil servants combined with deregulation have been put forward as important explanations for the emergence of an honest and competent public administration in Sweden in the late nineteenth century (Lindbeck, 1975; Svensson, 2005, p.32). Unfortunately, in Nigerian, some state governments owe 15 months backlog of unpaid salaries coupled with poor salary administration.

Another reason that can be advanced for high rate of corruption in Nigeria is light punishment or lack of severe punishment that can serve as deterrent. The case of one Yakubu a public servant who embezzled about 32 billion naira pension fund meant for the Police pension fund was given a light sentence of 750,000 naira fine with an option of six months imprisonment (Idris and Salisu, 2016, p.39).

As it is usually said that justice delayed is justice denied. There is delay in prosecution of public office holders in Nigeria. This can be pointed out in the case of Joshua Dariye, the former governor of Plateau state from 1999-2007. He was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment for diverting 1.126 billion naira ecological fund meant for reclamation and rechannelisation of Plateau state. The said fund was diverted on July 12, 2001 but only to get justice on June 12, 2018 (The Vanguard 12 June, 2018). In addition, as of the time of his prosecution, he was a senator representing Plateau Central.

From the literature reviewed, the causes of public sector corruption include government excessive regulation of the economy, extra budgetary accounts, poor public sector wages, mild penalty system to deter corruption and delay in prosecution of public office holders.

2.3 The concept of insecurity

It is worthy to note that it is best to approach the idea of insecurity from the point of unveiling what security constitutes. Adegami (2013) stated that security could be aptly viewed as "freedom from threat or violence which could lead to the loss of lives and properties" (p.8). He further declared that security is a situation in which citizens are free from any threats to their life and means of livelihood, safe from bodily harm, diseases, unemployment, and human rights violations wherever they may find themselves within a sovereign nation. Nkemdili, Bonaventure & Kingsley (2013) stated that security encompass all the necessary conditions that guarantee peace, Justice and good health. They stated further that the feelings of fear, anxiety, uncertainty, poverty, injustice, unemployment are all symptomatic of insecurity. From the foregoing, it is obvious that insecurity is better defined operationally by considering what constitutes insecurity and security. It is no doubt that insecurity is more defined operationally.

2.4 Causes of Insecurity

The causes of insecurity in Nigeria are numerous and the list is unending. They include and not limited to unemployment, bad leadership, proliferation of arms and ammunition and above all corruption.

Bujra (2004) identified that the multi-ethnic character of most African states makes conflict more likely often leading to politicization of ethnicity, the distortion in the political economy of Africa and the activities of international arms merchants (as cited in Idris, 2013, p.62). He

stated further that competition for scarce resources such as the extraction of oil in the Niger Delta and the resultant environmental degradation. The large quantity of sophisticated arms and ammunition surrendered by Niger Delta Militants in the amnesty programme indicates the alarming rate of these weapons in the country and its security implications for the country (Tell Magazine, 2009; Idris, 2013). Chris, Amujiri & Indibe (2015) declared that;

Insecurity challenges can be traced to the early years of military rule when large quantities of arms were imported into the country for the use of the military during and after the Nigerian civil war, some of which got into the hand of the civilians. (p.29).

In trying to proffer solution to the pervasive case of insecurity in the country, Duke, Agbaji & Bassey (2017) maintained that the fight against Boko Haram through the theft of defence appropriations, the purchase of substandard weaponry, the creation of fake defence contracts, and the unavailability of logistical supports for and desertion of soldiers on the frontline can be held responsible for insecurity in the North Eastern part of Nigeria.

It can be deduced that there are many factors that hinder the country from winning the fight against insecurity and there is need to step up action so as to have a secured nation that will attract foreign investors and guarantee safety of the citizens.

2.5 Review of Related Literature

Duke, Agbaji & Bassey (2017) examined the extent to which corruption in the Nigerian armed forces has been able to undermine the fight against Boko Haram terrorism in Nigeria. The study relied on the qualitative content analysis of secondary sources of data, and the theory of structural functionalism was adopted as the tool of analysis for the study. The paper revealed that corruption has eaten deep into the Nigerian armed forces and has undermined the fight against Boko Haram through the theft of defence appropriations, the purchase of substandard weaponry among others. The paper recommended the adoption of genuine political will in the anti-graft war and the strengthening of existing anti-graft agencies.

Philip (2013) examined effect of corruption on under development in Nigeria using data from secondary source. Corruption is widespread in most government in Nigeria not because the people are different from people from other part of the World, but because the society is conducive for it. The study revealed that laws and principles of ethics in government are poorly developed and the legal institutions charged with enforcing them (ICPC and EFCC) are ill-prepared. He recommended among other things that there is need to ensure independence of law enforcement agencies.

Ladan-Baki (2014) examined corruption and security challenges in developing countries. The study combines both qualitative and analytical approaches in the explanation and analysis of the variables. The study revealed that corruption persists in developing countries due to weak justice systems and their inability to punish corruption and deter future corrupt practices. The study recommended among others that for developing countries to reduce corruption, there is a need for governments to be transparent and to apply stiff penalties on defaulters.

Adebanjoko & Okorie (2014) in their study corruption and the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria: Political economy implications. The study used qualitative approach and relied on secondary data. The study revealed that corruption is a major cause of conflicts and insecurity which continue to pose a challenge to development in the country. The study recommended among others that the Nigerian government should find lasting solutions to the crises while giving top priority to eradication of corruption in its transformation agenda. =

All these studies were theoretical rather than empirical. Therefore, the current study uses both descriptive and inferential statistical tools of analysis. It is this knowledge gap that this study attempts to cover by determining whether or not an empirical relationship exists between corruption and insecurity in Nigeria.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The study has been anchored on the following theories for better understanding.

Public choice Theory

Duncan Black (1948) is often referred to as the founder of the Modern Public Choice Theory. James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock (1962) are the leading figures on Public Choice Theory. Others include Kenneth Arrow (1951) Antony Dawns (1957), Williams Niskanen (1971), George Stigler (1971) and Mansur Olson (1971) (Buttler, 2012, p.32-38; Idris & Salisu, 2016, p. 140-141). According to Shaw (n.d) "Public choice takes the same principles that economists use to analyze people's actions in the market place and applies them to people's actions in collective decision making" (Public Choice Theory, para 2). It is important to note that economists who study behavior in the private market place assume that people are motivated mainly by self-interest. Although most people base some of their actions on their concern for others, the dominant motive in people's actions in the market place whether they are employers, employees, or consumers is a concern for themselves and their interest. Public choice economists make the same assumption that although people acting in the political market place have some concern for others, their main motive, whether they are voters, politicians, lobbyists, or bureaucrats, is self-interest. To this ends, it is wrong to assume that a public servant will turn an angel overnight just by virtue of being a public servant and ignoring the fact he is not in any way different from individual in the market place. It is worthy to note that, this self-interest bring about desired result in the market place but when exhibited in the public setting, the result is usually undesirable. Buchanan and Tullock observed, government is also a means of by which rational, self-interested individuals combine to promote their personal interests through collective action (Buttler, 2012, p.24-41; Idris & Salisu, 2013, p.141). To streamline bureaucracies, Tullock and Niskanen have recommended allowing several bureaus to supply the same service on the grounds that the resulting competition will improve efficiency (Shaw, nd; Public Choice Theory, para 2).

In relation to this study, the increasing incidence of corruption in Nigeria can be attributed to the self-interest of the public servant who only make laws that benefit them without considering the people they are supposed to represent and protect. The desire for personal interest by public servants rather than the general interest has increased the incidence of corruption which has adversely affected the national security in Nigeria. Public choice theory is not without

criticisms. Olaopa (2008, 47) "faults the theory for using the language and tools of economics to explain purely political and bureaucratic processes and activities"(as cited in Idris & Salisu, 2013, p.141). This theory also undermine the existence of government and her official by assuming that bureaucrat seek for self interest and not public interest without exception. In spite of these shortcomings, the public choice theory would be of relevance in explaining the high incidence of corruption in the Nigerian public service.

Frustration-Aggression Theory

This theory is put forward to explain the consequences of high rate of corruption in Nigeria. This theory was propounded in 1939 by John Dollard, Dodo, Miller, Mowrer and Sears (Dennen, n.d, Frustration Aggression Theory, para.1). Dollard et al. (1939) posited that "the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always lead to some form of aggression" (ibid). The theory stipulates that aggression is the result of frustration which results from an individual's inability to attain their goals. Accordingly, insecurity is the product of aggressive behavior which results from issues such as poverty and unemployment among others.

In relation to this study, corruption in the country has resulted in abject poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, injustice, absence of infrastructure, ethnic conflicts, militancy which in turn have resulted in insecurity.

4. Methodology

The research design for this study is content analyses of data obtained from Transparency International (TI) and Mo Ibrahim Foundation. Transparency International is an international non-governmental anti-corruption watch-dog. The organization uses Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) to reflect the perceived levels of corruption in the public sector. The CPI usually gather data for a decade (10years) and presented in averages between 100 (highly clean) and zero (highly corrupt). This implies that, the closer a country's CPI is to hundred (100) the more transparent the country is. Conversely, the closer a country's CPI is to zero (0), the more corrupt the country is. Transparency International uses the perception of knowledgeable respondents, local and expatriate residents, business elites, scholars and country analysis in arriving at the CPI. The CPI is a better measure of the level of corruption than the country's ranking. The ranking only shows a country's position among others and not the level of (TI 2002; Idris,2013). The Mo Ibrahim Foundation is a reputable non-governmental and African-Centered concerned with promoting and rewarding good governance in Africa. The organization's Ibrahim Index of African Governance is relevant, up to date and one of the most reliable index of African Governance. One of the components used by the foundation is safety and rule of law which is measured in percentages. The data obtained from the three organizations will be presented in tables and analyzed using averages and percentages. Pearson Correlation Coefficient is used in testing the hypothesis formulated in section one with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 at 95% level of significance that is 5% (0.05%) margin of error.

5. Result and Discussions

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Table 1 Transparency International CPI and Nigeria's scores in insecurity 2007 – 2016

Year	Score on security (%)	Score on insecurity (%)	CPI (%)	Corruption (%)
2007	48	52	22	78
2008	45	55	27	73
2009	47	53	25	75
2010	46	54	24	76
2011	45	55	24	76
2012	45	55	27	73
2013	46	54	25	75
2014	47	53	27	73
2015	48	52	26	74
2016	47	53	28	72

Source: Adapted from Mo Ibrahim Foundation Index of African Governance Summaries for 2007-2016 and Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (2007-2016).

The data in table 1 presents Nigeria scores in corruption and insecurity from 2007 to 2016. The CPI measures the level of transparency in a country. The figures for corruption were obtained by subtracting the CPIs from 100%. The score for insecurity is also obtained by subtracting score security score from 100%. Therefore, all the score were presented in percentages. The independent and dependent variables for the study are corruption and insecurity respectively. The data on these variables were obtained from Transparency International and Mo Ibrahim Foundation for the period 2007-2016.

5.1 Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis postulated for the study states that; there is no significant relationship between the level of corruption and insecurity in Nigeria. The independent and dependent variables for the study are corruption and insecurity respectively. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used in testing the hypothesis at 5% (0.05) margin of error. This was computed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. The SPSS product of the data in Table 1 is presented in Table 2.

Correlations

		CORRUPTION	INSECURITY
CORRUPTION	Pearson Correlation	1	-.206
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.569
	N	10	10
INSECURITY	Pearson Correlation	-.206	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.569	
	N	10	10

Source: SPSS version 16.0

5.2 Interpretation of Result

The Pearson Correlation was -0.206 indicating a negative relationship between the two variables. In other words, as the rate of corruption increases, insecurity decreases and vice versa. This means that an increase in rate of corruption cannot make insecurity to increase rather. However, the result also show that there is no significant relationship between corruption and insecurity, this is because the level of significance from the Pearson correlation is greater than 0.05 . Since the level of significance which is 56.9% is greater than 5% , the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between corruption and insecurity is accepted. This means that the high rate of insecurity in the country can be linked to other factors such as poverty, unemployment, porous border, increase in proliferation of arms etc.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The data in tables 1 and 2 indicate that both the rate of corruption and insecurity were high in Nigeria between 2007-2016. From the hypothesis tested, it has been revealed that there exist a negative relationship between corruption and insecurity in Nigeria. In addition to that, the Pearson correlation also shows that there is no significant relationship between the two variables. In other words, it has not been established by our study that the high level of corruption in Nigeria is one of the factors responsible for the high level of insecurity in the country. However, in relation to the theoretical framework, frustration that arises from the individuals' inability to attain their goals can be used to explain why insecurity is at increase. In addition to that, the inability of individuals to attain their goals is not connected with selfish nature of the leaders who amass the wealth of nation for their selfish interest as argued by public choice theory. Therefore, insecurity is the product of aggressive behavior which results from issues such as poverty and unemployment among others. Though, this has not been proved empirically.

Even though this study could not establish that corruption is responsible for insecurity in Nigeria, it is worthy to note that it was stated in the introductory part of this paper that corruption is a hydra-headed monster and this means that it give birth to many problems like poverty and unemployment which can also be linked to insecurity. Therefore, there is still need to tackle corruption so as to address poverty and unemployment because corruption has negative multiplier effect. In order to address these problems, the root causes of corruption in Nigeria as identified in the literature need to be addressed. In summary, the causes of corruption include delay in dispensation of justice, light punishment for offenders, excessive involvement of government, poor public sector wages and non-enforcement of penalties for corruption offences.

Therefore, there is need to reform the judicial system in order to guarantee speedy dispensation of justice as it is usually said that justice delayed is justice denied. There is need to also increase salaries and review minimum wage upward. There is the need for political actors to have the political will to strengthen the civil society for more transparency in governance. The same political will is also required in enforcing penalties that can serve as deterrent. In addition, since the study could not established that corruption is one of the factors responsible for insecurity, there is need for government at various level to be responsible and responsive to

the needs of the citizens. Idris (2013) maintained that corruption and insecurity in Nigeria can be blamed on government failure to comply with the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy as contained in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999. Therefore, efforts should be made to comply with the provision of this chapter of the constitution. The aforementioned recommendations are expected to improve the quality of governance, give better opportunity to Nigerians, and reduce poverty, unemployment thereby reducing the rate of insecurity and corruption in Nigeria. However, since the study could not established that corruption is responsible for the state of insecurity in Nigeria, further empirical research is suggested on the effect of poverty and unemployment on insecurity in Nigeria using regression analysis as a statistical tools.

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