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ERADICATION IN NIGERIA.**

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ABSTRACT

Corruption is no doubt endemic in our society, Nigeria. Evidences abound of how successive government's effort at curbing its menace had fizzled out with time. The debilitating socio-economic situations of Nigerians have heightened the potential for corruption and sharp practices in public and private sectors of the economy. Besides, leaders and followers get entrenched in corruption because they lack independent economic base; hence they rely on the state of survival. It is on this note that this study examines employee's perception of the possibility of corruption eradication. To consummate this study, Edo and Delta states were made the case study to which questionnaires were administered. Further determinants and control of corruption was explored. Frequency distribution and the analyses of Variance were used in the analysis. The findings confirmed that age and educational attainment does have no significant impact on employees' views on corruption eradication. It was also confirmed that total eradication of corruption is not significantly feasible.

Key Words: Corruption eradication, Rationalization, Transparency

INTRODUCTION

The current trend in Nigeria's governance has shown a high degree of lack of transparency and accountability. Corruption as a phenomenon is as old as society itself. Successive military administrations hinged their incursion into politics on this malaise, Obasanjo (2000). At least, daily events as recorded at the local government, state and federal levels as recorded in the press vindicates this position. Mention must however; be made of some specified cases to show that the malaise is yet to abate. For example, "The Newswatch", a Lagos based weekly magazine, of July 17, 2004 contains facts about the National Assembly Report by the Accountant General of the Federation's Inspectors stating that:

- i. The National Assembly was indebted to some banks to the tune of N550m.
- ii. It has overspent its account by N420 million as at May 2000. Physical asset worth about 1.5 billion was bought but not properly recorded in the books.
- iii. Furniture allowance of N1.3 billion granted the members was not retired.

The N214 billion National Identity Card scam involving an ex-minister, the recent financial scam involving the senate committee on health and some other disturbing development in our body polity are very fresh. Nigeria incidentally commenced the prosecution in 2004 of the syndicate that pulled off the world's single biggest scams. The rip-off involved defrauding Banco Noroestes, a Brazillian bank about N242 million by some Nigerians, Tell (2004). Former Finance Minister and his Power and Steel counterpart Anthony Ani and Dalhatu were implicated in the Ajaokuta Steel Rolling Mill Project Debt buy-back in which they were alleged to have enriched themselves. They claimed that the sum involved was a gift from General Abacha, Akintola (2000). This is a tip of the iceberg when compared with the figures reeled out by the Kuta Report on the Senate alone, which actually shows the degree of profligacy and lack of accountability of the National Assembly. Salisu (2006) in his study of Corruption in Nigeria, opined that "with a per capital income of \$340, Nigeria ranks amongst the least developed countries in the World Bank league tables. The Nigerian Higher education system, once regarded as the best in sub-Saharan Africa, is in deep crisis. Health services are woefully inadequate.

Graduate unemployment is rising and so too is the crime rate”. His study found that corruption has an adverse effect on the growth rate of Gross Domestic Product in Nigeria. Paolo (1997) found evidence of a negative and significant relationship between corruption and government expenditure on education, which is a reason for concern since previous literature has shown that educational attainment is an important determinant of economic growth. A possible interpretation of the observed correlation between corruption and the composition of government expenditure is that governments find it easier to collect bribes on some expenditures items than on others. Regression analysis indicates that the amount of corruption is negatively linked to the level of investment and economic growth, that is to say, the more corruption, the less investment and the less economic growth.

According to Ribadu (2006) cited in Omololu (2007), he posited that Nigeria presents a veritable case for understanding the connection between corruption and political malaise. Ribadu gave a graphic summary of the situation. He termed the period between 1979 and 1998 “the darkest period” in Nigeria’s history of corrupt regimes. The civilian administration of 1979-1983 was bedeviled with profligacy, ‘wanton waste, political thuggery and coercion... disrespect for the rule of law... bare faced, free for all looting of public funds through white elephant projects.

In the just concluded 6th Session of the House of Representative on May 29 2011, the ex-speaker of the House of Representative, Hon Dimeji Bankole is now being quizzed by the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) over 10 billion naira embezzlement. It has become difficult to vouch that there is a government undertaking in Nigeria where corruption is not the order of the day. No wonder then that Transparency International, a non-government organization using what is termed Corruption Perception Index (CPI) categorized Nigeria as first in the ranking of corrupt nations of the world in the year 2000. In 1999, Nigeria was ranked 98 out of the 99 countries (Salisu, 2006). In 2001 the image of Nigeria slipped further (90 out of 91 countries), coming as the second most corrupt nation with Bangladesh as the most corrupt. Nigeria maintained the same position with Bangladesh in 2003, (Ike 2009).

Time it has been in Nigeria when a Head of State was reported to have paid a total sum of N12.4 billion between September 1988 and 30th June, 1994 into a “Special Dedicated Account”, funds which under normal conditions should have been paid into the Federal Accounts as required by law, News watch (2004) and The Punch Editorial (2003). Out of this amount, the report further

reveals that the military President and the Governor of the Central Bank clandestinely disbursed N12.2 billion without any explanation as to the extra budgetary expenditures.

Many factors account for the spate of corruption in Nigeria's social life. One is that the debilitating socio-economic situation of Nigerians must have heightened the potential for corrupt and sharp practices in public and private sectors of the economy. The second is that the leaders get entrenched in corruption because they lack independent economic base; hence they rely on the state for survival, and such perpetrators often go scot-free. President Obasanjo, highlighted the elements of corruption in Nigeria as: use of one's office for pecuniary, gratification insincerity in advice, influence peddling, insincerity in advice with the aim of gaining, tardiness, slovenliness and less than a full day's work for a full day's pay.

We cannot divorce corruption from poverty amongst the populace. For example, an average Nigerian earning \$260 a year is less well – off than two decades ago because less than one percent of the population own over 60 percent of the nation's wealth. Over 50 percent of the wealth is however kept overseas thus leaving Nigeria's economy comatose. As a result of mismanagement and relentless assault on the public till, Nigeria's GDP per capita plummeted from \$1,010 in the early 1980s to less than \$300 in 2006 (CBN Statistical Bulletin,2007). About 70 percent of Nigerians survive barely on an income that is less than one dollar per day (Sanda, 2002).

It is important to decipher between fraud and corruption. Fraud is criminal deception, use of false representation or trick, deception intended to benefit a party. Fraud is the use of criminal deception to obtain an unjust or illegal advantage. It is the diversion of persons or organizations money or materials for the satisfaction of the perpetrators personal or selfish desires by criminal deceptive means. Ovuakporie (1994) similarly defines fraud as an act or cause of deception or trickery deliberately practiced in order to gain some advantage dishonestly. A person is said to do a thing 'fraudulently' or 'with intent to defraud' when he does that thing with intention to deceive and by means of such deceit, to obtain some advantage for himself and to cause loss to another person. Corruption is decomposition; moral deterioration; use of corrupt practices, bribery, kickbacks, embezzlements e.t.c. Fraud is a component of Corruption and the discussion that follows on this study can also be viewed from that perspective.

Historically, corruption has always existed simultaneously with human development and efforts at curbing its menace has always been short lived. Modern waves of corruption which fraud is a subset do not seem to recognize the essence of sovereignty, territorial boundaries or race. Corruption is a global phenomenon not peculiar to Nigeria alone.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Corruption has undermined economic development by generating considerable distortions and inefficiency. In the private sector, corruption increases the cost of business through the price of illicit payments themselves, the management cost of negotiating with officials, and the risk of breached agreements or detection. Although some claim corruption reduces costs by cutting red tape, the availability of bribes can also induce officials to contrive new rules and delays. Openly removing costly and lengthy regulations are better than covertly allowing them to be bypassed by using bribes. Where corruption inflates the cost of business, it also distorts the playing field, shielding firms with connections from competition and thereby sustaining inefficient firms.

Corruption also generates economic distortions in the public sector by diverting public investment into capital projects where bribes and kickbacks are more plentiful. Officials may increase the technical complexity of public sector projects to conceal or pave way for dealings, thus further distorting investment. Corruption also lowers compliance with construction, environmental, or other regulations, reduces the quality of governmental services and infrastructure, and increases budgetary pressures on government.

Economists argue that one of the factors behind the differing economic development in Africa and Asia is that in the former, corruption has primarily taken the form of rent extraction with the resulting financial capital moved overseas rather than invested at home (hence the stereotypical, but often accurate, image of African dictators having Swiss bank accounts). Corruption facilitates environmental destruction. Although even the corrupt countries may formally have legislation to protect the environment, it cannot be enforced if the officials can be easily bribed. The same applies to social rights such as worker protection, unionization and prevention of child labour. Violation of these laws and rights enables corrupt countries to gain an illegitimate economic advantage in the international market. The consequences of corruption are enormous

while its effects are interwoven. Some possible consequences of corruption according to Alashi (1994) include;

- (i) Misallocation of resources which constitute a cog in the wheel of the country's purposeful development;
- (ii) As an economic crime, it undermines the confidence in the integrity of workforce leading to low staff morale;
- (iii) The crumbling of the country's financial sector is largely accounted for by financial impropriety;
- (iv) Tendency for the recycling of the corruption process to finance other criminal activities with attendant grave implication on national security.

These negative effects combine to make some analyst conclude that corruption may be the greatest cause of underdevelopment in Africa. Importantly corruption being a hidden threat to financial institution, a killer disease to industries, a drain pipe to the nation economy should be a matter of serious concern to any patriotic citizen of this country and indeed the entire populace who bear the brunt of its menace. It is obvious that Nigeria needs an efficiently vibrant financial system for a meaningful economic development, and this can only be achieved through the introduction of financial discipline into all facets of the economy. To enhance this, there is need to have a critical evaluation of this bug that destroy the vineyard (society). It is on this note that this study is considered worthwhile.

REASONS WHY CORRUPTION STRIVE

According to Tishchenko (2008) the arguments in favour of corruption are:

A. Information Deficits

- i. Lack of government transparency
- ii. Contempt for or negligence of exercising freedom of speech and freedom of the press.
- iii. Weak accounting practices, including lack of timely financial management.
- iv. Lack of measurement of corruption. For example, using regular surveys of households and businesses in order to quantify the degree of perception of

corruption in different parts of a nation or in different government institutions may increase awareness of corruption and create pressure to combat it. This will enable an evaluation of the officials who are fighting corruption and the methods used.

- v. Tax havens which tax their own citizens and companies but not those from other nations and refuse to disclose information necessary for foreign taxation. This enables large scale political corruption in the foreign nations.

B Lacking control over and accountability of the government

- i. Democracy absent or dysfunctional.
- ii. Lacking civic society and non-governmental organizations which monitor the government.
- iii. An individual voter may have a rational ignorance regarding politics, especially in nationwide elections, since each vote has little weight.
- iv. Weak legal Profession.
- v. Weak judicial independence.
- vi. Lacking protection of whistleblowers.
- vii. Lack of benchmarking that is continual detailed evaluation of procedures and comparison to others who do similar things, in the same government or others, in particular comparison to those who do the best work.

C Opportunities and incentives

- i. Individual officials routinely handle cash, instead of handling payments through the bank.
- ii. Large, unsupervised public investments.
- iii. Sale of state-owned property and privatization.
- iv. Poorly paid government officials.
- v. Government licences needed to conduct business, e.g., import licenses, encourage bribing and kickbacks.
- vi. Long-time work in the same position may create relationships and outside the government which encourage and help conceal corruption and favoritism. Rotating

government officials to different positions and geographic areas may help prevent this.

- vii. Costly political campaigns, with expenses exceeding normal sources of political funding.
- viii. Less interaction with officials reduces the opportunities for corruption. For example, using the Internet for sending in required information, like applications and tax forms, and then processing this with automated computer systems. This may also speed up the processing and reduce unintentional human errors.

D Social Condition

- i. Self-interest closed cliques and “old boy networks”
- ii. Family and clan-centered social structure, with a tradition of nepotism being acceptable.
- iii. Lacking literacy and education among the population.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

From the introduction presented one can see that corruption menace has become endemic in our daily undertakings. Its daily occurrence nature leaves one to wonder as to whether there can ever be an end to this economics woe. For this reason the study examines; the perception of employees on the possibility of corruption eradication as well as the attainment of employees on their perception of corruption eradication. This is to enable the identification of those innate traits, which might assist in the reorientation of employees for positive change of attitude.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

The issue of corruption has been hampered by lack of effective headship due also to weak opposition. The effectiveness of a leader depends on the prevailing conditions by which the leader operates. The effectiveness of a leader can only be enhanced and sustained if the powers are checkmated by the elements within his or her internal and external environment. Despite overflowing human, natural, and capital resources, and over eleven years of uninterrupted democratic experience (1999-2011) and in an era of unprecedented oil boom, precipitated by high global prices and demand, the nation has witnessed no significant improvement in both the

economic or human development index. The clear lack of separation of powers and transparency has sent a bad signal around the globe that political or economic opportunities in Nigeria depend on the intrinsic relationship between businesses or individuals and the government power. War against corruption is more attainable in countries with dynamic opposition culture, where the oversight functions of the legislature are readily promoted (Ogbonna, 2008)

Alhaji Ibrahim Dankwabo, in a memo he sent recently to the House of Representatives public hearing on non-remittance of revenue by ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) into the federation account, listed eight points-four of which he said were more worrisome... by which money meant for all Nigerians end in private pockets. According to the Account-General, they are insufficient information on the activities of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and oil revenues, leakages in tax revenues, differential accounting methods by the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN); leakages in Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) and the Federal Government and Independent sources (Editorial Business Times, 2008). He alluded that public servants exploit loopholes in the system to loot the treasury. The scourge of corruption has become a big embarrassment to Nigeria and Nigerians both at home and abroad. This has adversely affected the country's Corruption Perception Index which is used by the Transparency International in ranking countries on issues of transparency, competitiveness and investment-friendly. There is no doubt that the economic and social development of the country has been stunted by the pervasiveness of corruption.

Corruption cannot strictly speaking, be said to be an ordinary expected human behavior (Alashi, 1994). According to him, of all the problems confronting the Nigeria economy corruption is easily the most intractable. In his own submission Famodimu (1986), opined that judging by the facts available in respect of major corruption presented in the past and considering their astounding successes, apparent careful planning and the boldness with which they were executed, one cannot but frankly, admit that corruption is an upcoming sector of the invisible, yet forceful industry called crime. However according to Stuart (1997), "corruption is a difficult thing to define in the ethics of trading which are essentially the ethics of deceiving the other side". Though the maxim 'caveat emptor' is ingrained in our law, its application is steadily

being eroded. People desire material possession at all cost and swindles others hence, corruption is very pervasive in Nigeria.

There are many school of thought that the occurrence of fraud is precipitated on a combination of factors. One such school of thought was that offered by Rosenfield (1988) who classified such factors tersely into three Viz; pressure usually financial, perceived opportunity and rationalization. In his presentation, he made it clear that non-shareable financial pressure motivated fraud occur in various forms. The most prominent of which are; living beyond one's means, gambling debts or stock and commodity market speculation of simple avarice innate traits. Opportunity, his second reason relates to the available exploitable loopholes within the operating system, though the first act of fraud is very difficult to commit but once committed it rarely stops. Rationalization on the other hand according to him, explain some ways by which people tend to rationalize their behavior as not being inconsistent with one's personal ideas of integrity. According to him, these are the three factors which act like weights on the balance scale such that when there is enough pressure, perceived opportunity and rationalization fraud is bound to occur.

Another school of thought manifested itself in the view expressed by Ovuakporie (1994) where he made it clear that there is a general consensus among criminologists that fraud is caused by three elements via; will, opportunity and exit. These he tagged "WOE" and explained as: the will to commit the fraud by the individual; the opportunity to execute the fraud and the exit which is the escape route from sanctions against successful or attempted fraud. Sharing the same thought in a computer environment, (Krauss, 1976) also agreed with the fact that there are three factors that motivate people into committing fraud. He however named his own as; dishonesty factor; opportunity factor and motive factor

In furtherance of his theory he conceptualized his representation in a mathematical equation, given as $CF_p = \frac{D \times O \times M}{1000}$

1000

Where CF_p = probability of fraud occurrence

D = dishonesty factor

O = Opportunity factor

M = Motive factor

To illustrate how this concept works, let us assume that specific values are assigned to the variables within the range of 0-10 such that a totally dishonest person would have a value 0 equal to 10, the opportunity that person has if it were extremely good, would have a value 'O' equal to 10. A very strong motive would have a value M equal to 10. Within all these optimum values attached, the equation at maximum probable will be:

$$CF_p = \frac{D \times O \times M}{1000 \times 1000} = \frac{10 \times 10 \times 10}{1000 \times 1000} = 1 \text{ (a probability of 100\%)}$$

The interpretation of this is that with a probability of 1 incidence of fraud/corruption is certain to occur. Conversely, the other extreme would be where any of the variables (D.O.M) is 0. Wherever this situation exists, fraud would not occur. This is to say if a person is totally honest regardless of the opportunity or motives that exist fraud/corruption would still not occur. While, if there is no opportunity however prevalent the other two variables will become irrelevant. The essence of this theory is to shed light on the fact that combinations of factors are responsible for any incidence of corruption.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Edo/Delta State Civil Service in a survey research design. The study population consisted of employees of the various units of the Ministries from which samples of 160 respondents were drawn. The sampling frame was made up of Civil Servants who have the knowledge of the official financial procedure and are literate enough to understand the main target of the study, as well as able to respond to the questionnaire by themselves. The sample selection was accomplished through random sampling in which questionnaires were administered to the respondents made up as shown on the Table 1 below.

SAMPLE FRAME

Edo State 100

Delta State 95

Retrieved

Edo 85

Delta 75

The sample consists of civil servants from the offices of the Auditor-General, Accountant-General, Top Executive, Senior officers and Junior officers.

Table 1: QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTRATION

Respondents	Administered	Retrieved	Properly completed
Top Executives (GL 14 and above)	50	28	20
Senior Officers (GL 08 - 14)	70	64	50
Junior Officers (GL 01 - 07)	75	68	66
TOTAL	195	160	136

Source: Field Survey, (April, 2007)

The data collection instrument (questionnaire) was divided into parts with a view to eliciting such information as the bio-data of the respondents; ascertain whether he has knowledge of corruption or not and whether he has any experience in financial matter which could bring about valuable opinion on the subject matter. The researcher however encountered difficulties in getting the people to respond promptly to the questions. In some cases, the respondents kept the questionnaire for days before filling them; some simply expressed their disinterest in filling it and hence returned it while others claimed they have lost theirs. Out of 195 questionnaires, a total of 160 questionnaires were eventually retrieved and edited, this amounted to a response rate of 82% while only 136 or 70% were completed properly and thus considered valuable for the analysis. Simple descriptive statistics in form of frequency distribution and the Analysis of Variance test (ANOVA) were subsequently employed for the purpose of effecting data analysis and testing the hypotheses.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Gender Distribution

In line with the objective of the study the opinions of the respondents were sought on whether or not corruption eradication is feasible. Table II below presents the responses of the respondents to the question.

Respondents	Feasible	Not Feasible	Total
Male	32	58	90
Female	20	26	46
Total	52	84	136

Source: Field Survey, (April, 2007)

The gender analysis shows that, of the 136 valuable respondents, 90 (i.e 67%) were male while 46 (i.e 33%) were female. Out of the 90 males, only 32 (i.e 34%) were positively inclined to the possibility of achieving corruption eradication is impossible why 58 (i.e 66%) opined that corruption eradication is impossible. On the other hand in respect of the female, 20 respondents (i.e 44%) out of the 46 respondents expressed that it is feasible to eradicate fraud while 26 of them (i.e 56%) said that it is not possible to eradicate fraud. On the whole, 84 respondents (i.e 62%) claimed that corruption cannot be eradicated while only 52 (i.e 38%) were optimistic that corruption eradication is feasible. From all the above, gender disparity seems not to constitute any barrier to respondents opinion as a larger percentage of both genders agreed that corruption eradication is not feasible.

Age Distribution

The responses of the respondents to the question on whether or not age has anything to do with employees' perception on corruption eradication were equally sought. Table III below presents the findings in respect of the question.

TABLE III: RESPONSES ON CORRUPTION ERADICATION PRESENTED ON AGE BASIS

Respondents by Age	Yes	No	Total
16 – 25	3	9	12
26 – 35	7	20	27
36 – 45	24	46	70

46 and above	2	25	27
Total	36	100	136

Source: Field Survey, (April, 2007)

Data analysis revealed that all the respondents fall between the age of sixteen and fifty-six years. Out of the 136 valuable respondents, 12 respondents fall between 16 – 25 years, 27 were between 26 - 35 years, 70 of them were within the age bracket of 36 – 45 years while, the remaining 27 were above 46 years of age. The responses according to age distribution revealed that out of the 36 respondents of not more than the age of 35 years only 10 (i.e 26%) felt that corruption can be eradicated while 29 (i.e 74%) cast aspersion on such possibility.

Within the 97 respondents that were above 35 years of age only 26 (i.e 27%) vouched for the possibility of corruption eradication while 71 (i.e 73%) felt it is not possible. On the whole, of the 136 total respondents only 36 (i.e 26%) show optimism on the possibility of corruption eradication. This is against the 100 respondents (i.e 74%) that expressed their resentment on such possibility. Age therefore seems not to influence employees' perception of corruption eradication.

Educational Attainment Distribution

The third table shows the frequency distribution of the responses of the respondents on whether or not educational attainment has positive effect on corruption eradication.

TABLE IV: RESPONSE ON CORRUPTION ERADICATION PRESENTED IN LINE WITH EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Level of Education of Respondents	Positive	Negative	Total
WAEC/NCE or Equivalent	6	41	47
OND/NCE or Equivalent	4	5	9
B.SC or Equivalent	16	51	67
Master Degree holders	2	11	13

	28	108	136

Source: Field Survey (April, 2007)

The educational qualification of respondents ranged from WASC/GCE to Masters degree. Out of the respondents 47 (i.e 34%) were WASC Holders, 7% were OND/NCE holders while, 49% and 10% were Bachelors and Masters Degrees holder respectively.

The analysis of respondents according to their educational qualification show that, of the 56 respondents with either WASC/OND or NCE only 10 (i.e 18%) opined that education has positive effect on corruption eradication while, 46 (i.e 83%) had resenting voice against such opinion on its eradication. In respect of the highly learned respondents that is, those not below the level of a graduate only 18 (i.e 23%) of them stated that education has positive effect on corruption eradication while 52 (i.e 77%) opined against it. On the whole 108 of the 136 respondents covered by the study claimed that education has negative effect on employees’ perception of corruption eradication.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

In all, three hypotheses were advanced and tested by the use of Analysis of Variance test. The results are presented below.

Hypothesis 1: Total corruption is not significantly feasible.

By the use of ANOVA statistic, the value of the calculated F was arrived at 26.4 while from the F distribution table, the critical value of F at 0.01 level of significance was 98.5. This result show that the calculated F is less than the critical F (i.e. $26.4 < 98.5$) and hence the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted (table ii refers).

In view of these findings it was concluded that total eradication of corruption is not significantly feasible. With this result it became clear that majority of respondents are of the opinion that corruption cannot be eradicated. This outcome looks a bit pessimistic from the researcher’s point of view and hence, the study went further to examine whether the position taken by the respondents was motivated by their age or educational attainment.

Hypothesis 11: There is no significant difference in employees' age and their perception on corruption eradication.

From the ANOVA calculations the F value was 8.26 as against the table value of F which was 16.69. This then implied that the calculated F is less than the table value of F (i.e $8.26 < 16.69$) and hence, the null hypothesis was also accepted. This led to an inference that age disparity does not present a significant difference in employees perception as to whether or not corruption could be eradicated (table iii refers).

Hypothesis 111: Workers' educational attainment has no significant influence on their perception of whether or not corruption could be eradicated.

This hypothesis was equally tested as a result of which it was revealed that the calculated F value was 3.52 while the table value of F was 16.69. By this result it became clear that the value of the calculated F was far less than the tabular F value (i.e $3.52 < 16.69$). From the conclusion the null hypothesis was equally accepted. This means that educational attainment has no significant impact on the views of employees on corruption eradication (see table iv).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of this research, the opinion of majority of the respondents pointed to the fact that total eradication of corruption is not feasible. This conclusion could be corroborated by the fact that out of the 136 valuable responses, 84 (i.e 61% based on gender classification) opined that corruption cannot be eradicated. There was none of the three classifications under which the analyses were conducted (be it gender, age or educational qualification) opined that corruption cannot be eradicated. This was attested to by the outcome of the three tested hypotheses all of which were accepted and hence, signifying that none of these parameters has any significant effect on the respondent's disposition to whether or not corruption could be eradicated. This to a large extent shows the level of pessimism of individual on the success of any effort directed at corruption eradication. To corroborate all these findings, the researcher subsequently sought the respondents' reasons for their pessimism on corruption eradication. The responses brought out in clear terms the reasons why they felt that corruption cannot be eradicated within the system.

The aggregates of their responses are itemized below:

- i. Injustice has always been messed up in most corruption cases involving highly placed and notable individuals.
- ii. Corruption becomes the order of the day in virtually every sector of the economy because it is a way to get rich quickly and in most cases with relative ease.
- iii. Bad governance and the fact every government in Nigeria has always been corrupt and so it is difficult to eradicate corruption.
- iv. Since there is no corporate culture against corruption in this country, nobody questions the source of anybody's wealth however questionable it may be.
- v. The poor remuneration worsened by inflation tends to be an impetus for people to be reckless with public funds.
- vi. Corruption is an age-long tradition which has become a part of the system and hence, its total eradication may not be within the power of a single generation.
- vii. Our society exalts people who are wealthy and hence, wealth acquisition has become a do-or-die affair of which neither morality nor legality forms part of consideration for the perpetrators. This day people travel out of the shores of Nigeria to acquire money at any means that will translate to higher value.
- viii. The 'get rich quick syndrome' has permeated almost all facets of the society and hence, the innate tendency of an average Nigerian is to grasp as much as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The effect of corruption on the economy cannot be overemphasized and so, it became obvious that the situation needs the attention and contributions of all and sundry in order to sanitize the system. With the long list of reasons adduced by respondents to back up their opinion that corruption eradication is not feasible, it is obvious that if the government can institute measures to provide solutions to all the stated problems, corruption incidence could be abated to a reasonable extent. Furthermore, the government should put in place enlightenment campaigns against corruption so as to change people's orientation towards its eradication. This is very

necessary as people may turn non-challant attitude towards any government efforts at curbing its menace since, they do not believe in the possibility of its eradication.

Finally, the people in places of authority must be honest and accountable as that is the only way by which they themselves could deal justifiably with the culprits. Such government officials must not operate any form of double standard whereby some are treated as sacred cows (untouchable) while others are dealt as with according to the law. Furthermore, justice must neither be delayed nor denied, as punishment must be meted timely and appropriately to deter others from committing the same act. This mean that government itself should operate under an acceptable standard of honesty, accountability and probity in order to, have the moral justification to deal decisively with culprits. For whoever would ask for justice must come with a clean hand. With all these in place, the hope of corruption eradication can be re-kindled.

The government also needs to put in place policies and programmes that will ensure good quality of life for the citizens and reduce the cost of living. Because of the prevailing economic situation people take desperate steps to make end meet. Effort should be made to close the corruption channels that can be handled easily while Yar'Adua administration should address the issue of legislation as a means of closing loopholes in the finance system. There should also be sanction for infraction and poor performance and poor incentive for commendable performance should be addressed.

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