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Military Rulers as Harbingers of Corruption in Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study examined corruption as the major issue of underdevelopment in Nigeria and how the military rulers and their cabinets both in the military era and the era of democracy have been involved in cases of gross corruption. It also aimed at stating how far the tentacles of corruption have reduced Nigeria to being a third world country since independence and how corruption can be kicked out of the country. This was a comparative study of the acts of corruption among Nigerian Leaders, while focusing majorly on those with military background. This did not in any way undermined the authority of the military but rather showed the ills of having the military in power and those with a military history in a position of leadership in a democratic dispensation. The study was qualitative in nature and made use of published and unpublished books, internet materials and existing works that are related to Corruption and the Military; these were all used in fulfilling the objectives of the study. This study served as a reservoir of truth and revealed that Nigeria is a country blessed with more than enough resources to make her a developed nation, but the corrupt practices of the Nigerian leaders right from inception had stopped this from being achieved. It was recommended that stringent and realistic methods must be taken to wage war against corruption to make Nigeria a corruption free country. This would also allow Nigeria to soar to greater heights and thus lead to key developments in the country.

Keywords: Corruption, Military Rulers, Harbingers

1. Introduction

Absolute power corrupts undeniably. It is an irrefutable fact that corruption has been a nuisance in Nigeria's development. Thus, without mincing words the phenomenon has ravaged the country and destroyed most of what is held as cherished national values. This statement is true and can be seen from the state in which the country has been left in by former military dictators. Owing to its large population, Nigeria has been referred to as the "Giant of Africa". It is not disputable that Nigeria is one of the richest in terms of natural resources. Nigeria is one of the countries in the world that loses billions of dollars every year due to corruption. Unfortunately, the military class saddled with the responsibility of directing the affairs of the country have been the major culprit in perpetrating this act, by milking Nigeria dry especially during the oil boom.

The Military have been primarily responsible for defending the countries territorial integrity against foreign aggression. The military is to defend the country against invasion by any foreign force and also crush insurgency within its territorial borders. The first ever military takeover of power in Nigeria was on January 15, 1966 and the coup was led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwuand he claimed this was because the civilian leaders had obviously failed. There was gross mismanagement in the civilian administration and corruption was rampant. He also claimed that the civilian leaders were greedy and only looked out for their own interests. The military were at first welcomed with widespread enthusiasm by the people all over Nigeria.

This study argues that the military leadership class in Nigeria cannot exonerate itself from the current travails of socio-economic underdevelopment in the country. It explores from a historical perspective the destructive effect of corruption on public policy decisions, the management of collapsed infrastructure and the nation's resources as well as its socio-economic implications to development. It is instructive to state that military leadership in the context of this study refers not only to the government or to the leadership of an organized state, but embraces the totality of the military class that has the capacity to exert influence on the machineries of government even from behind the scene. This study shall account the contributions of both the civilian and military leadership class that have managed and directed the affairs of the country since independence to the growth and institutionalization of corruption in Nigeria. This is a way of justifying this study that the military leadership of the country since independence is responsible for entrenching corruption in Nigeria and by extension has impeded meaningful socio-economic development.

Commenting on the experience of the Nigerian nation, the renowned novelist, Chinua Achebe, insisted that the root cause of the Nigerian predicament should be laid squarely at the foot of bad leadership. "The trouble with Nigeria," Achebe argued, is simply and

squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air, or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership (Achebe, 1984).

Nigeria's confluence of problems frustrates its ability to fulfill administrative duties and provide effective services and national security. The main problem in Nigeria is corruption, pervasive, economically devastating corruption. Corruption has found its roots into every level of association, this poses a significant problem because it erodes the foundation of trust required to facilitate cooperation and to build a strong civil society that will be able to hold its officials accountable. There is a public trust deficiency across all institutions, including the military. This lack of trust came from factors such as decades of failed leadership and broken promises from military leaders and prolonged military interventions that failed to correct the injustices and corrupt practices of previous civilian administrations.

Nigeria is a state that corruption has been systematically institutionalized by political actors over the course of four republics and 30 years of military rule. More than any other, the 1985–1993 regime of General Ibrahim Babangida is regarded as the period during which corruption spread through every aspect of life. The objectives of this research are to evaluate the impact of corruption by the military leaders in Nigeria, analyze the concept of corruption in relations to military rules in Nigeria, identify the reasons for corruption under military rule, observe the cases of corruption under military leaders and to recommend solutions that would create a 'New Nigeria' that is free from corruption.

2.1. Concept of Corruption in Nigeria

The main reason Nigeria is not making progress is that those in authority are just pocketing public funds. Corruption in Nigeria is not exclusive of politicians, civil servants, and captains of industry; among the low class citizens there is an instinctive honing of stealing skills. One should stop thinking people suddenly become corrupt when they join the government. However having been tutored and mentored on petty stealing from a young age, Nigerians naturally explode when they occupy positions of authority at any level either in private or public sector. They join the train of selfish and corrupt leaders after suddenly finding themselves in the corridor of power. Rather than use their positions to repair the country; they conform to the enrichment craze. In other words corruption is defined as the involvement in behaviour which can be illegal, wicked or dishonest which damages the moral fabric of society.

The concept "Corruption" suffers from ambiguity because it has no settled definition. This means that there is no straight forward definition, or generally accepted definition for the term corruption. However, multiple attempts have been proffered by different scholars on the definition of corruption. Although, there is often difficulties in defining it, because it means not only different things to different people, and even to the same people different things at different times. Thus, some people see "corruption" as a conscious and well planned act by a person or group of persons to appropriate through unlawful means the wealth of another person or group of persons. Then to others, it is the act of turning power and authority to ready cash.

Corruption is crippling Africa day by day and it is a persistent problem in the developing countries and Nigeria is one of these countries. The CPI (Corruption Perceptions Index) report defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, in public and private sectors. Corruption was first used in the 14th century and it originates from the Latin word "corruptus" which means to break one's heart. McMullan defines corruption in the following way 'a public official is corrupt if he accepts money or money's worth for doing something that he is under duty to do anyway, that he is under a duty not to do, or exercises a legitimate discretion for improper reasons (McMullan, 1961). Erunke in her broad view of corruption defined it as the unlawful use of official power or influence by an official of the government either to enrich himself or further his course and/or any other person at the expense of the public, in contravention of his oath of office and/or contrary to the conventions or laws that are in force. It is very unfortunate that this menace knows not any time nor period; it happens anytime or period of any nation's history (Erunke, 2014). Also section 2 of corrupt practices and other Offences Act 200 (now called ICPC Act) defines corruption as "bribery, fraud and other related offences". The reality being that corruption in Nigeria is a wall-to-wall phenomenon, blanketing and smouldering every aspect of the country's socio-economic life.

Corruption is a persistent phenomenon in Nigeria and Nigerians have been unable or unwilling to put a name to the various strains of corruption, with the result being that for most, it is a way of life among the leaders. Corruption is a global phenomenon. It is not the exclusive preserve of any nation, race or section of the world but transcends national boundaries and frontiers, (Aluko, 2009). The rise of public administration and the discovery of oil and natural gas are two major events seen to have led to the increase in corrupt practices in the country. The government has tried to contain corruption through the enactment of laws and the enforcement of integrity systems, but success has been very slow in coming. In 2012, Nigeria was estimated to have lost over \$400 billion to corruption since 1960.

2.2. Some Features of Corruption

- i. Giving and receiving bribes: This is the token (monetary or kind) that is received or collected by a public officer in a corrupt relationship.
- ii. Inflation of contracts: This is the inflation of contracts, that is the contractor and the public official inflate the price of goods or services to be rendered.
- iii. Greed: This is the act of officials not being content with what they have or what they earn.
- iv. Kick back and payment upfront: This is when payment is made by the contractor to the public officer after securing the contract.
- v. Abuse of public property: This is when a public official uses public property as his own or for his own personal benefit.

2.3. Classification of Corruption

Corruption impacts on economic and social development. For the sake of analysis, some studies have taken a broader approach in the discussion of corruption by dividing it into different forms.

2.3.1. Grand Corruption

This is the most dangerous and covert type of corruption. This type of corruption is defined as corruption that involves heads of states, ministers or other senior government. This is the type of Corruption which pervades the highest levels of government, leading to the broad erosion of confidence in good governance. It basically occurs at a large scale, perpetrated by high government officials, senior corporate executives and others in position of power and authority. It occurs when the politicians and political decision-makers are corrupt and act in a way that promotes corruption. Grand or political corruption is sometimes seen as similar to corruption of greed as it affects the manner in which decisions are made, as it manipulates political institutions.

This type of corruption is found where public officers in high positions, in the process of making decisions of significant economic value, routinely demand bribes for ensuring that contracts are awarded to specific contractors. One of the most alarming cases of massive and grand corruption can be seen in the way the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida was run. He lived a lavish life and released corrupt civilian politicians detained for corrupt practices by the previous regime of General Muhammadu Buhari.

2.3.2. Petty Corruption

This class of corruption is practised on a smaller scale. It is defined as the use of public office for private benefit in the course of delivering a public service. This usually involves small amounts of money given by civilians to a public official to perform his duty. This public official abuses his position by accepting a token for what is a routine approval. Examples of this can be seen during the process of acquiring customs clearance or the issuing of building permits.

Petty corruption can also be found amongst low income workers, who delve into corrupt practices to make ends meet. They tend to make more income through this process. This type of corruption is not only limited to public or civil servants; it cuts across every aspect of institution. A lecturer who asks for money to boost a student's score is also a perpetrator of petty corruption. Nigerian Citizens encounter this type of corruption daily.

2.3.3. Electoral Corruption

Electoral corruption is a direct subversion of the electoral process by individuals, who are greedy for personal gain or enrichment. It is mostly seen in Africa because of the numerous violations of the electoral rights and democracy. Elections are mostly tainted with the purchase of votes with money, promises of special treatment, and intimidation. These practices are very common in Nigeria and have been so from the first elections held in Nigeria.

This class of corruption is one of the deadliest because people are killed, maimed in the name of elections. There is widespread rigging that is votes turn up in areas where there were no votes cast. It is a "do or die affair". There is also falsification of election results, underage voting, multiple voting, harassment of electoral officers and candidates. Another process is undertaken in which ballot boxes are stuffed with illegally obtained ballot papers which are in favour of a candidate. Electoral corruption in office involves sales of votes in the legislative level, judicial appointment, or governmental appointment.

2.3.4. Corporate Corruption

This happens during relations between private business corporations and its suppliers or clients. This occurs when corporate officials or executives make use of corporation funds for personal privilege, benefit, or gain at the expense of the corporation and its shareholders. Major examples of corporate corrupt practices include bribery, insider trading, embezzlement, tax evasion.

2.4. Causes of Corruption

1. **Unequal Wealth Distribution:** There is great inequality in the distribution of wealth in Nigeria. That is the rich are very affluent while the poor are extremely poor. The difference between the upper class and the lower class is extremely wide. The poor want to breach this gap once they have attained powerful positions, and thus engage in corrupt practices.
2. **Poverty:** Poverty is the state of being inferior in purchasing power, it is the state of being extremely poor. Poverty does not only encourage corruption but it also drives the individual to engage in corrupt practices. When there is the absence of provision of food there is an inevitable compulsion by the poor to engage in corrupt practices in order to make money or feed. There is no question that poverty and corruption are linked.
3. **Illiteracy:** Corruption feeds off illiteracy. That is literacy can prevent corruption because citizens would be able to read newspapers and online media, and would be able to critically evaluate their own public institutions and leaders. If the illiteracy level is high, corruption would flourish.
4. **Unemployment:** This is the state of not having a job. This is a very common factor in the Nigerian economy whereby jobs are hard to come by for university graduates. The graduates go into the labour market for years without securing a job. In order for some of these graduates who have given up on searching for jobs to make ends meet, they engage in corrupt practices. As it is popularly believed, "an idle mind is the devils workshop".
5. **Greed:** Greed is undoubtedly an important cause of corruption. This is because people are not content with what they have, and are envious of what other people have. The more they have, the more they want to acquire.

2.5. *Effects of Corruption*

1. Corruption discourages honesty: Corruption discourages honesty and thus affects productivity within a sector or area. Corruption affects the development of a country because funds meant to develop the country is looted away or embezzled.
2. Corruption increases cost: Corruption in the form or guise of bribery increases costs and thus affects the economy. An example can be seen in the clearing of cars from customs, due to the bribes the agent pays to the custom officers, the car is ridiculously priced when it's about to be sold. This is hard on the citizens.
3. Corruption creates distortion in the society: That is corruption leads to a state in which there is no balance, the rich are extremely rich while the poor are extremely poor.
4. Corruption discourages patriotism: The rich would be patriotic to the government because it favours them, but the poor or the down trodden masses will not be patriotic to the government because they feel cheated.
5. Corruption Causes Poor Investment: Unemployment in Nigeria would have been reduced to some degree if investors were pulled into Nigeria. Organizations that would have put resources into Nigeria are perplexed in light of the fact that they don't know whether the degenerate practice of corruption will destroy their businesses in time. In light of this, they decline to put resources into Nigeria.

2.6. *Military Intervention*

Military intervention is defined as the conscious act of displacing and supplanting an existing political order, a government, by soldiers with the objective either of governing or influencing the political affairs of the country in particular direction determined largely by the interventionists themselves (Fawole, 1994). In Nigeria the first military intervention took place on January 15, 1966 when Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and four majors (Timothy Onwuaturgwu, Emmanuel Ifeajuna, Adewale Ademoyega, and Chris Anuforo) organized a military coup against the Civilian Government. This coup was achieved under the guise of stopping corruption, Alhaji Tafawa Balewa the first prime minister of Nigeria and some other prominent Nigerians lost their lives in that coup. The Nigeria Army until 1966 was a professional force. The officers and men trained in the art of warfare, peacekeeping efforts in foreign lands, and other military activities. All this changed when Major Kaduna Chukwuma Nzeogwu and his fellow conspirators struck in January 15, 1966. That coup effectively brought the military also known as the men in "khaki" into the murky waters of Nigerian politics.

2.6.1. Causes of Military Intervention

1. Corrupt practices by the politicians: Corrupt practices by politicians and government officials to whom the resources of the nation are entrusted to manage led to military intervention. The leaders use their positions to manipulate jobs and award contracts to their family members, friends and in-laws. Contract awarding officials use their positions to demand certain percentage of the contract fees as Kick-backs. Worse still those who have embezzled government funds display their newly acquired wealth without caution. They build industries and invest in businesses in foreign countries with Nigerian tax payers' money while they leave the society underdeveloped. Necessary amenities like electricity remain epileptic, good roads, hospitals and good sources of water supply are not provided. This often led to protests and insecurity by the down trodden masses (Osah, 2016).
2. Ethnicity: Ethnicity was a major reason because every tribe was scared of being controlled by the other and this brought about disunity. The formation of political parties such as the Northern People's Congress (NPC) for the Hausa/Fulani and Action Group (AG) for the Yoruba laid the foundation for tribal politics in Nigeria before the attainment of independence. Each party seeking to further or promote the interests of their kinsmen. This disunity paved the way for military intervention in Nigerian politics (Osah, 2016).
3. Lack of Free and Fair Elections: The accepted means of change of leadership in a democratic system is through elections. In Nigeria elections are always rigged. Attempts are made by party opponents to slander each other, so as to gain the upper hand in the election. In western region before the January 1966 coup massive fraud, riggings and corruption were prominent during this period (Osah, 2016).
4. Ambitious Military officers: Some military coups are organized by military officers because of their selfish personal ambition to rule. They see political power as a means of amassing wealth and elevating their social status in the society. The coup of Lieutenant Colonel Dimka and some military men who assassinated General Murtala Mohammed at a time when the government was doing well and receiving praises from the masses is a very good example of this (Osah, 2016).
5. Lack of independence of the judiciary: A situation where the judge of the Supreme Court is appointed by the Head of state it is likely that there would be the suppression of legal opposition through the abuse of office by the Head of state. The inability of the judiciary to pass fair judgment on matters arising from electoral fraud and other criminal or civil cases may lead to military incursion because judiciary is the final arbiter of law and the last hope of the common man. When the law courts undermine the constitution, pervert justice carry on with perjury, there would be a public outcry which may lead to military intervention. Some military coups are sponsored by some influential and wealthy politicians within, who want to dethrone a regime for their selfish gains. At other times foreign governments and bodies may influence military coups in a particular country and impose a leader that would favour the policies of their home government (Osah, 2016).
6. Breakdown of Law and Order: When the civilian government is not capable of managing the religious, political or communal crisis the army may come in to rescue the situation. In 1965, during the first republic, the AG intra party crisis led to a

breakdown of law and order in the Western region. In 1964, soldiers were deployed to the Tiv land to suppress the riot during the period of Tiv crisis that led to the death of hundreds of people (Osah, 2016).

7. Political Patronage in Promotions: The soldiers become disenchanted with how the country is being run, especially in cases that have to do with their internal promotion. The soldiers would intervene in politics or control of the country when they feel the politicians assert influence on their promotions.
8. Military Spending: The military come into power in a bid to increase their spending. The military if they feel adequate funds are not being released to them, would be tempted to intervene in politics

2.6.2. Theories on Military Intervention

These are the theories on why the military come into power or seize power from civilian government and they are:

1. Socio-Economic Development: Nations with a low level of socio-economic development are more likely to be faced with the problem of military interventions. Nations with a high level of socio-economic will create awareness of political events and capacities for political actions. Socio-economic development breeds industrialization and thus the complexity of industrialization puts the management of the country beyond the hands of the military. A country without industrialization gotten from socio-economic development will be prone to military intervention because the military wouldn't see the governance of the country as complex but would rather see it within their skills set.
2. Political Development: A nation that is not politically developed, that is there are no strong political actors or institutions will be prone to military interventions. A country in which democracy is practised fully will not be prone to military interventions. Strong civilian governmental and political institutions, democratic values, and so forth can be indicators of political development level. The presence of weak or failing political institutions will create a loophole in which the military would look to seize power from the civilians.
3. Centrality of The Military: This theory believes that giving the military too much power would lead to military intervention in the governance of the country. The greater the resources and the cohesion of the military, the greater the likelihood of interventions are (Mayer and Burnett, 1977). One view emphasize the sectoral interests of the military, treating the military as a potentially parasitic institution which, given its centrality to the state's claim on legitimate violence, is prone to use this to dominate politically, and especially if civilian institutions are weak (Jenkins and Kposowa, 1992). The military is potentially a parasitic institution and would thus feed on the weaknesses of civilian institutions or the civilian government especially when the military has a lot of resources at its disposal.

2.6.3. Myths on the Effectiveness of Military Rule

1. Legitimacy: This myth believes that the military leaders enjoy greater legitimacy than civilian leaders. This is because when the military come into power at first, there is a wide outpour of public support and acceptance due to the shortcomings of the ousted civilian leadership. The military come under the guise of fixing the failings or shortcomings of civilian leaders and thus they receive public acceptance.
2. Efficiency: This second myth believes in the efficiency of military leaders over the civilian leaders. It believes that the military are more efficient than civilians due to the efficient nature and structure of the military. This efficiency is derived from the discipline instilled in the military leaders and the hierarchical chain of command, in which lower ranking officers follow orders without question.
3. Stability: This myth is that the military leaders are better able in maintaining stability than civilian leaders. The military are trained in the art of warfare and tactics in maintain control and stability. They believe because of this that theoretically capable of ensuring stability in conflict torn areas within the country by the use of force.
4. National Identity: This myth focuses on national identity and says that the military leaders are more capable than the civilian leaders in forging a national identity, seeing as there is no ethnicity or tribalism in the military and recruits are recruited regardless of tribe to serve the country. The recruits put aside their differences and beliefs and come together in serving the country as a whole and not only their tribes.
5. Economic Development: This final myth is that the military leaders are better than their civilian counterparts in promoting economic development. It says that the military are trained in using modern technology unlike political parties and thus would be able to use this modern technology for the overall modernization of the economy.

2.7. Reasons for Corruption under Military Rule

1. Low Wages: This is a reason why the military engage in corruption or corrupt practices when they are in power. The problem of low pay creates both incentives and opportunities for corruption and misuse of public resources. The officers who feel they are underpaid engage in corrupt practices so as to compensate their declining purchasing power.
2. Lack of a system of check and balances: The military has no system of check of balances when in power. The lack of this system enables corruption to flourish because the military are not accountable to anyone and thus the military cannot be questioned.
3. Greed: Greed is a main reason for corruption in Nigeria. It is because of greed that military leaders and their cohorts embezzle from the funds they are supposed to use for national development for their own selfish needs. This affects the development of the country.

4. Military Spending: The military once they come into power, increase the spending of the military, and thus avenues for corruption are created in this spending process.
5. Elites Collusion: The civilian elites in Nigeria who have engaged in politics and have enriched themselves through corrupt practices, influence the military leaders through their lifestyles and the leaders also want this lifestyle and they also engage in corruption.
6. Poor Punishment System: The military leaders see that the corrupt civilians who they came to remove are not adequately punished and are still enjoying their ill-gotten wealth. This is another reason why the military leaders would engage in corruption.

3.1. Military Rule and Corruption in Nigeria

The military is not elected by anyone and for that reason; its intervention in the politics or the governance of the country is very harmful for the democratic process and accountability. The military may become involved in the governance of a country on account of an actual or created internal or external threat to national sovereignty. The military took over the machineries of government in Nigeria in 1966 in order to check the drift towards disintegration staring the nation in the face at this period.

The military as an organization has its values and norms, which has made it a unique organization. These values and norms are transferred to the civilians during military governance. In the exposition of the military values and norms, it was observed that the military is a highly structured organization, and that the training which they receive from the army, forges them with a high sense of discipline and responsibility towards the nation. Although a military regime may provide temporary stability in the short term but in the longer term risk will rise for two main reasons, the system of governance would become corrupt and secondly there would be the emergence of armed opposition. Professor Sam Aluko while speaking on what happened during military rule in Nigeria said “when a nation gives its rule to the military, the nation is finished. When a soldier captures a city he loots it. When a soldier captures a country what do you expect? He loots it”.

In the specific case of Nigeria, the military proved to be “corrupt, permeated by secret societies and protection rackets” (Dent, 1978). On assumption of powers through coups in most third world countries, the military come as an image of change to stop the corrupt practices of the civilian leaders, but rather fall into the same vice of corruption that was their excuse for the coup. Corruption under the military in Nigeria was witnessed in such an unprecedented scale that made the corrupt practices under the civilian leaders look like mere Childs play.

Military involvement in politics fosters corruption; General Obasanjo said “no matter how noble the intentions of the pioneer coup-makers may have been the prolonged involvement of the military in the administration and management of the state had aggravated the problems of political instability and deepened corruption within our society” (Obasanjo, 1999). Military rule by nature is characterized with arbitrariness. By virtue of the fact that the military are not accountable to anybody or the National Assembly makes them able to perform all sorts of atrocities, the end game of which is corruption. Corruption flourishes in this situation of unaccountability. Corruption grows like cancer and infects all the other organs of the government. There have been 8 military Heads of State in Nigeria, and two of them have gone on to be presidents after democracy was achieved in 1999, they will all be analyzed in this chapter.

3.2. First Republic

The first republic was from 1963-1966. The fall of the first republic happened when a group of junior military officers led by Major Patrick Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu conducted a coup against the civilian government. On announcing his coup on January 15 1966, he said among other things “my dear countrymen no citizen has anything to fear as long as that citizen is law-abiding. Our enemies are political profiteers, swindlers, the men in high and low places that seek bribes and demand ten percent, those that seek to keep the country divided permanently so that they can remain in office as ministers and VIP of waste, the tribunals, the nepotistic, those who make the country big for nothing before international circles, those that have corrupted our society and put the Nigerian political calendar back by their words and deeds”. Major Nzeogwu emphasized that the aim of the coup was to establish a strong, united and progressive nation free from corruption and internal strife. This coup was successful and was hijacked by General Aguyi Ironsi who was the most senior officer at the time. General Ironsi, an Igbo, emerged as the head of state. In his policies and actions, Ironsi did little to allay the fears of Igbo domination. He appointed Igbos to sensitive governmental positions; this can be seen as a form of corruption. That is the type of corruption known as Nepotism, which an office holder shows favoritism to his friends, family or kinsmen. General Aguyi Ironsi was overthrown and killed in a counter coup launched by General Yakubu Gowon.

General Yakubu Gowon, a northerner came into power after his counter coup in July 29, 1966 toppled the military government of General Aguyi Ironsi. The politicians whom general Ironsi had detained in prison for corrupt practices were freed. This new administration embarked on unreasonable projects, which served as an avenue for the looting of public funds. General Yakubu Gowon ruled the country during the time when Nigeria experienced unprecedented wealth from the oil boom of the 1970s, his government mismanaged the Nigerian economy and was also entangled in corruption. By the year 1974, reports of unaccountable wealth of General Gowon’s military governors and public office holders was the topic of discussion in both the local and international arena. There is the well-known cement scam which ran during General Gowon’s regime, known as “Cement Armada”, the Gowon military government on behalf of the Ministry of Defence inflated the prices of cement needed, according to the report of the Belgore Commission of Inquiry, the Ministry of Defence needed only 2.9 million tons of cement at a cost of N52 million, as against the 16 million tons of cement it was said to have ordered at a cost of N557 million. An excess of over N505 million was seen to have been corruptly gotten from the public account. The Federal Assets Investigation Panel of 1975, set up by the Muritala Mohammed military

government found ten out of twelve states military governors of Gowon's regime corrupt because of their practices and how they had corruptly amassed wealth while in power. The Gowon government NYSC scheme which was initiated in 1973 and lived up to expectation until the late 1980s eventually succumbed to corruption and maladministration; this was because the administration was only built on a superficial level. The Gowon era which lasted for about nine years witnessed corruption on such an unprecedented scale and this large scale corruption led to the coup of General Muritala Mohammed.

General Muritala Mohammed in 1975 toppled the regime of General Gowon in a palace coup, which means a peaceful handover without resorting to violence. A coup regardless of the reason is a corrupt way of getting power, because it goes against democracy. General Muritala Mohammed was from the Northern state of Kano and ruled for close to seven months but during this period he was seen as a principled and a very honest man. General Muritala Mohammed first started by declaring his assets and asking all government officials to do the same. He then started to probe the past leaders' administrations to recover wealth which was corruptly amassed. He set up The Federal Assets Investigation Panel of 1975 which indicted some state military governors in Gowon's regime and also the Belgore Commission of Inquiry was established. General Mohammed initiated what is known as the great purge in which was not limited to state governors alone it spreads to the judiciary, the police, and the civil service. Several public officers were dismissed for corrupt practices, many of them were ordered to refund the money they had stolen. At the end of the great purge more than 100,000 workers were dismissed from the civil service for corrupt practices. He also tried to stem the abuse of public property by officials, when he made a law banning officials from using official cars when not on an official duty. General Muritala Mohammed is seen as a military leader who really wanted to stem the rot of corruption in Nigeria and wanted to hand power back to the civilian government but certain elements in the military were not happy with this and he was assassinated in an abortive coup by Colonel Bukar Dimka in February 1976.

General Olusegun Aremu Obasanjo who was the Chief of Staff of General Muritala Mohammed, succeeded him in 1976 after his assassination. He carried on the plan laid down by Muritala Mohammed to transfer power back to the civilians and continued the other plans of his predecessor. General Obasanjo did not show the same zeal in fighting corruption as General Muritala Mohammed. He though tried to create accountability in government by establishing the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) in all states. This was just a mere mirage to deceive the civilians, because the commission failed woefully. The National Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC 1977) hosted for black Africa in Lagos by General Obasanjo, the festivals hosted by military rulers were seen as mere jamborees or avenues for corrupt enrichment by concerned state officials and so patriotism was lacking. General Olusegun Obasanjo handed over power to the civilian government of President Shehu Shagari in 1979.

3.3. Second Republic

The second republic was from 1979 – 1983. The republic was led by Shehu Shagari whose administration followed the corrupt practices and flamboyant lifestyle of the Gowon regime. General Muhammadu Buhari who seized power in 1983 claimed that his regime was an offshoot of General Muritala Mohammed's regime. He seized power from the government of President Shehu Shagari which was engrossed in corruption. The coup was carried out in the aim of stopping corruption and restoring discipline to the country. General Buhari, believed all the political office holders in the second republic guilty of corruption until they proved otherwise. He detained them all and set up numerous Tribunals both at the Federal and State levels to probe them. The findings which emerged from the Tribunals were very shocking. General Buhari introduced the War against Indiscipline (WAI), in which he attempted to bring discipline and sanity into the nation by force. The Regime was humanely corrupt because due to its practices it scarcely showed respect for human rights, and as such human rights were grossly violated. This was the pretext under which General Ibrahim Babangida led a palace coup to topple the regime of General Buhari.

General Babangida came to power in 1985 under the guise of fighting against General Buhari's strict and authoritarian regime. In the next thirteen years of his rule, there was no serious attempt to curb corruption but rather corruption reached an alarming rate and became institutionalized during this year. Babangida during his regime undermined the efforts of both Muritala Mohammed and Muhammadu Buhari by not only encouraging and participating in corruption but by pardoning corrupt officials convicted by the regimes of Muritala and Buhari and returning their seized Assets. General Babangida also reversed the dismissal of officers done under Muritala and made a decree which not only restored their rank but also returns their seized properties. By 1990, Nigeria was the 17th poorest country in the world. Despite the money gotten from oil wind fall, about \$12 billion from oil was unaccounted for. The regime officially sanctioned corruption in the country and made it hard for the measures of long term imprisonment taken against corruption to be applied. General Babangida by 1991, had appointed close to 70 governors, some of whom were redeployed from state to state, all this was done in order to give his loyalists jobs in the government, so that they too will benefit from it. The volume of corruption could be seen here as one which was very large. The regime believed in exploiting legal loopholes in order for public officers to make money and to secure the comfortability of his own life, that of his family after office and also to secure the future of his unborn generation. The corrupt nature and financial recklessness of the Babangida regime was detailed in the Okigbo Panel Report of 1994. General Babangida also corruptly annulled the election of M.K.O Abiola, which was regarded as one of the freest and fairest elections ever conducted in Nigeria. In face of all of this and intense public opposition to his rule, he reluctantly handed over power to the interim government of Ernest Shonekan in 1993.

General Abacha who came to power in 1993, after overthrowing the interim government headed that was by Ernest Shonekan. Nigerians and the world alike thought that after General Babangida's regime, the worst of corruption was over, but General Abacha shocked them and Nigerians were appalled at how he ran the country's treasury and economy like his own personal bank account. Corruption under this regime of General Abacha became bold; the corrupt practices became blatantly obvious for all to see. General Abacha alongside his family and close allies ran Nigeria's treasury like his own personal treasury. General Abacha, his family and

friends looted the nation's treasury with reckless abandon; they did this without any fear of repercussion. Abacha in order to perpetuate corruption, state authorities were pushed into the background and they lost power. Key ministries like petroleum, sold minerals, finance, works and housing, transport, industries and parastatals operated under the close watchful eye of General Abacha. Ministers became figureheads, if they did not join the fraudulent practices of this regime. Another form of corruption practiced in this regime was the Abuse of privileged information and Nepotism. General Abacha practiced this by giving privileged information to his sons and nepotism too by helping them build a business empire through government contracts. Abacha's late son Ibrahim provided contracts for many people, Ibrahim was evidently Abacha's business arrowhead handling discussion with the many contractors that operated during this regime. He also handled the Abacha family investments. He performed all this duties until 1996, when he died in a plane crash. Through a well-engineered scheme Abacha successfully looted the Nigerian treasury in order to make for his family and friends. Abacha died from a heart attack in 1998 and by that time the "Times" of London newspaper reported that General Abacha and his family were worth some £3.5 billion or \$5.6 billion (N 476 billion). It has been said that in reality the Abacha family may indeed be worth about \$ 8 billion or more (N 700 billion). After his death General Abdulsalami Abubakar took control of the government.

General Abdulsalami Abubakar who took over after Abacha's death showed a dedicated commitment to return power to the civilians but did not do much in the fight against corruption. He did not clean house or purge like General Muritala Mohammed did when he came into control of the government. General Abubakar positioned himself, friends and military colleagues for the next round of looting the public treasury, and it did not take a long time for hints of corruption to emerge. A few weeks into General Abubakar's military regime, the sum \$50 million was discovered to be missing by the National Economic Intelligence Committee (NEIC) led by Professor Samuel Aluko. General Abdulsalami didn't reply for the first few weeks, but later said the money was used to offer assistance to unnamed needy neighbouring African countries. General Abdulsalami though he had a short reign, awarded a lot of contracts to enable corrupt practices. Reuters News agency reported, that about N60 billion would be spent by ministries in 26 days. The Federal Reserve under General Abdulsalami went from \$7 billion to \$4 billion in just about eleven months in power. The contract for CBN headquarters building in Abuja was reportedly awarded for about N15 billion by the Abdulsalami Regime.

3.3.1. The Establishment of Democracy 1999

General Abdulsalami handed over power to the civilians in 1999. The civilian who attained this power through a 'Democratic Election' was none other than former military head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo who will now be referred to as President Olusegun Obasanjo.

It is said once a soldier, you are always regarded as a soldier. President Olusegun Obasanjo operated like a soldier thus his cabinet were not held accountable during his eight years of presidency. If corruption in the 1990s was endemic, corruption since the return of democracy in 1999 has been legendary. Throughout the eight years presidency of President Olusegun Obasanjo, he was fully incharge of the petroleum ministry, where high-level corrupt practices took place with impunity. Again, during the first four years of the Olusegun Obasanjo administration, federal ministers allegedly stole more than N23 billion from the public coffers. An audit report released by Vincent Azie, acting Auditor-General of the Federation, showed that the amount represented financial frauds ranging from embezzlement, payments for jobs not done, over-invoicing, double-debiting, inflation of contract figures to release of money without the consent of the approving authority in ten major ministries. A survey on the level of corruption in Nigeria carried out in 2003 by the Institute of Development Research of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria ranked political parties in the country third in the list of thirty most corrupt public institutions in Nigeria (Adekeye, 2003: 29). This is a sad development for Nigeria because political parties are the ideological powerhouse of civilian administration. On the contrary, political parties in Nigeria have been the main avenues for promoting corrupt practices in the country through godfatherism, extortion, to mention but a few. A corrupt ruling party undoubtedly would always produce a corrupt government. President Olusegun Obasanjo ruled for two terms and because of his military background he tried to go against the constitution of the land and advocate for a third term. He later stopped after receiving widespread disapproval from the citizens and international community at large.

The next military leader to come into power in a democratic setting is General Muhammadu Buhari who won the election against the incumbent president Goodluck Jonathan. President Muhammadu emerged victorious in the 2015 presidential elections. This is the first time an incumbent. President Muhammadu Buhari and his party, the All Progressives Congress, have instead of stemming the tide of corruption, transformed Nigeria from being just a corrupt nation to being dubbed a "fantastically corrupt" nation. These points were stressed and asserted by David Cameron, the UK's Prime Minister, who, by all standards, should be one of the very few men who should know about leaders worldwide based on the reports regularly made available to him. Cameron made scornful remarks about the hypocrisy and false pretenses of some leaders who would be in attendance during the Anti-Corruption Summit to be hosted by the British Prime Minister in England, describing both Nigeria and Afghanistan as being fantastically corrupt. Since the avowed war on corruption as declared by the president, there is hardly any member of the president's party including former governors and ministers who have been questioned not to talk of being prosecuted. But the PDP has suffered untold assault on its members particularly the vocal ones. The war against corruption should not be favourable to one side. The UK Mail Online ran a story on Buhari where it made a series of startling revelations known to the world on its web platform. In that report, the newspaper stated that "Buhari sends his daughter to a £26,000 (N12m)-a-year English school". This is in addition to the fact that his 16-year old son, Hanan, "had flown first-class from London to Nigeria, despite his father's ban on officials using premium travel". As if that was not enough, the UK Mail Online went ahead to reveal exactly how Buhari had spent a stunning "£150,000 (N67.5m) on educating his daughter Zahra, a Surrey University student". This is the same man who during the presidential election campaigns claimed he lived an austere life and had struggled to buy his presidential candidacy form and furthermore claimed he borrowed from a bank to do that is quite fantastic.

President Buhari's government and the cabinet he chose flagrantly and repeatedly disobeys court orders, this cannot happen in advanced countries such as Britain or the USA. That is the worst form of corruption. A situation where judges are intimidated, harassed and reportedly compromised just to do please and dance to the tune of some government officials makes Nigeria corrupt. President Buhari runs this government like he is still a military leader, an example could be seen in how long it took him to appoint ministers and his complete control of the NNPC in the early stages of his administration.

3.4. *The Impact of Corruption under Military Rule in Nigeria*

A careful, deliberate and pragmatic analysis of all the military regimes reveals that Military leadership and corruption are positively correlated. The foundation of this argument rests solely on the fact that majority of the military leaders came to power with the primary aim of enriching themselves and their cronies rather than offering the much needed selfless services to the nation and its citizens at large. The magnitude of corruption during the military regimes cannot be turned a blind eye simply because the military leaders looted Nigeria's treasury with reckless abandon which led to underdevelopment and has brought forth poverty. The end result was that Nigeria became mere toy in the hands of the military class with various military individuals, at different times, attempting to seize power primarily to enrich themselves and their associates.

The major effect of military rule entrenched with corruption is that it brought untold poverty and underdevelopment in Nigeria, and these would be highlighted below:

- I. In the year 1980 the economy steadily declined at a rate of 0.4% annually, this is because Nigeria's reserves were being looted and the money was laundered to other countries.
- II. In 1994 (\$171.02), twenty years after the oil boom, per capital income of average Nigerian was a lot lower than that of the year 1974 (\$401.68).
- III. In 1990, Nigeria was labelled as the 17th poorest country in the world which was ironic being that Nigeria experienced an excess of cash from the oil boom.
- IV. In 1996, Human Development Report (UNDO) ranked Nigeria 137th out of 174 in its index of development. This showed the crippling level of underdevelopment in Nigeria.
The Money embezzled during military rule greatly outweighed the budgets of most states at the time, the money could have been useful in funding projects which definitely would have helped in developing Nigeria.
- V. The 1994 Okigbo Panel Report on the Reorganization and Reform of the Central Bank of Nigeria indicted former Military President, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, former Head of State and General Sani Abacha, for mismanaging an estimated \$12.4 billion oil windfall just between 1988 and 1994.
- VI. General Babangida authorised the dedication of crude oil of 65,000 barrels per day (bpd) for the finance of special priority projects including Ajaokuta Iron & Steel, Itakpe Iron Mining, and Shiroro Hydro-electric projects. The account was also to be used for external debt buy-back and the build-up of reserves. The quantity was then subsequently bumped up to 105,000 barrels per day and in early 1994, to 150,000 barrels per day. In addition, a Stabilisation Account to receive the windfall of oil proceeds of the Gulf War and a Special Account for Mining Rights and Signature Bonus were opened. Altogether, \$12.4 billion was received into these accounts from 1988 to June 1994, leaving only a balance of \$206 million as of 30th June 1994. (Executive Summary of Okigbo Panel Report, 1994, item 0.38). This money was originally intended to be used for projects, which ordinarily would have aided in the development of Nigeria.

The economic impact of the corruption perpetrated with these accounts on Nigeria's well-being was tremendous. The gross taking on these accounts from their inception in 1988 to June 1994 was \$12.4 billion, which was held totally outside the country's external reserves. If the funds were counted as part of the external reserves and were held as such, the impact on the exchange rate in the years under review would have been so significant that the Naira would have been a lot stronger in 1994, in relation to the dollar, than it was in 1985 when it stood at N1 to \$1.004. (Okigbo Panel Report, 1994: item 7.153). The damage Nigeria sustained through the rampant corruption during the military regimes, most especially the regimes of Babangida and the Abacha has massively set the country back on the path of socio-economic advancement and other forms of development.

3.5. *The Effects of Military Rulers on the Democratic Administrative System in Nigeria*

Militarization relates to the processes in which the civilian populace, who are being ruled by military elements or have been ruled by military leaders, imbibe the philosophies and practices of military organization displayed in governance. The practice of democracy in Nigeria in the last eighteen years has raised considerable speculation and debate, one of which is the explicit display of 'militarized political culture' in the democratic sphere. The political conduct of the politicians is that akin to the conduct of a commanding officer, they believe in a win at all costs mentality rather than dialogue, negotiation and resolution as demanded and provided for by the provisions of democracy. The politicians many of whom have not been in the military imbibe the culture from those who have been in the military, politics and elections in Nigeria can be likened to warfare. That the soldier is no longer in power does not suggest that he is to be blind to whatever is happening around him. These views to a large extent, harmonizes with the objective of this study. It points us to the important fact that the military had considerable influence on all aspects of the lives of the people. Jemibewon (1998) submitted that the Nigeria military have had enormous influence in all aspects of the Nigerian experience.

The years of democratic practice in Nigeria has been faced with considerable problems, reminiscences of militarism. We had witnessed incidences such as President Buhari running his government for months without a cabinet, also his complete takeover and control of NNPC in the early stage of his civilian tenure, this can be likened to General abachas take over and control of the NNPC,

the order by former President Yaradua to shut down Channels Television for allegedly notifying the public that he was likely to quit on account of poor health, forceful closure of the previous former Vice President Atiku Abubakars office by former President Obasanjo all within a democratic space. The elections have been rigged, coups have taken place under the democratic setting, elections have been stolen by some corrupt elements and votes have been bought. The militarization of politics in the democratic sphere goes against the principles of democracy.

3.6. Effects of Corruption on the Political and Socio-Economic Structure of the Nigerian State

In understanding the issue of corruption in Nigeria and its impact on development, there are so many things to look at. From the common man to the top government officials, corruption is rampant. It destabilizes economic progress, impedes policy changes required for development and diverts limited funds for private use. You can feel the effects of corruption in the political, social, moral and economic life of the people. The effects of corruption on a nation's political and socio-economic development are numerous. Between 1970 and 2007, Nigeria lost estimated \$400 billion oil revenue to official corruption (Agbo, 2009). This money could have been used in funding numerous projects which would have aided in developing the country. The effects of corruption impede economic growth among other things.

Corruption brings about a situation in which potential investors would be discouraged in investing in Nigeria because of investment loss. A country like Nigeria which has attained independence 56 years ago should have a developing economy but instead the economy is under developing, the irony here is that most of the captains of this sector are actually experts in their field Development projects are often made unnecessarily complex in Nigeria so as to hoodwink the public and serve as a way to justify the corrupt and huge expense on it. Corruption causes a reduction in quality of goods and services available to the public, as some companies could cut corners to increase profit margins. Corruption affects investment, economic growth, and government expenditure choices; it also reduces private investment (Mauro 1998). Becoming corrupt in Nigeria is almost unavoidable, as morality is relaxed, because to survive people have to make money. Also, corruption almost destroyed the banking sector in Nigeria, many banks allowed corrupt officials to launder money through them, also the battle between the Central Bank and the shareholders of the troubled banks under the reign of Charles Soludo and Lamido Sanusi.

Aside the destabilizing effects of corruption on the economy of this country, the following are still the major effects of corruption in the society: It is not only gives bad image to Nigeria, but it also discouraged genuine foreign investors from coming in to run business in the country. It breeds high rate of indiscipline in the society, giving rise to a state of "mighty is right", a state of anomie where normlessness holds away in the society; When public officials connive with contractors to inflate the value of Government contracts, the cost of governance and administration shoot up, with very little to show in terms of projects and programmes which impact on the average citizen's wellbeing; When Government officials collect bribes to issue clean bills of health for poor quality of contract jobs and services rendered to the government, the public have to contend with poor quality projects with short life span, e.g. roads, public buildings, office equipment, electricity transformer, etc.; Political corruption is rape on democracy because the popular will of the people is subverted; Corruption discourages honest endeavors, hard work and merit; Miscarriage of justice when judicial officers give judgment to the highest bidder.

Corruption has disrupted the education sector, despite the government spending so much in this sector, by building of schools, renovation of classrooms etc., there is still no convincing claim that government schools are the best for students because most of the money being spent here is being funneled away by corrupt government officials, thus teachers would not be paid salaries, the building projects would not be properly done. The state of the educational sector has become so bad that citizens take their offspring to private schools and spend millions in tuition fees. This money would have been pumped back into the economy if the public educational sector was not in a deplorable state.

4.1. Creating a New Nigeria

There is no mincing of words; Nigeria as it is right now is crumbling under the weight of corruption. The first thing that comes to mind when the name Nigeria is mentioned or a citizen from Nigeria is seen overseas is corruption and deception (fraud). A citizen from Nigeria is automatically guilty of one of these vices until proven otherwise. This bad image has been nurtured overtime from the corrupt practices of leaders to the way elections are conducted as a 'do or die' affair in the country. The Police are unreliable and have become compromised, from cooperating with criminal elements to harassing the citizens. This is an agency that is meant to protect the citizens but rather they are even terrorizing the citizens more than the criminals but it can be argued that this police force is not well constituted and because of corruption from the leaders they are not well supplied in term of ammunition to protect the citizens and also their welfare is not well taken care of, because funds meant for these purposes have been diverted by corrupt leaders. The healthcare sector in Nigeria is in a pitiable state, even the leaders know this and as such they leave the country to go overseas for medical check-up, consultations and even surgery. The money that is meant for the development of the healthcare sector has been diverted and thus the healthcare sector in Nigeria is not up to standard. The corrupt leaders leave the poor people who cannot travel out of the country to their fate.

Nigeria as a country is one that at the state level cannot afford to pay civil servants, let alone assure the retirees of their pension. The truth is that the approach taken by Nigeria is clearly not working and this is a view that has been postulated by many scholars and researchers on the curbing of corruption in Nigeria. The years of military rule and the militarization of politics in the civilian setting has destroyed any chance of this approach working. Sincerely Nigeria does not practice democracy because the ideologies of democracy are being abused daily by the corrupt leaders. Elections are a 'do or die' affair, the elections are rigged and this is an abuse to the ideals of democracy. The law agencies are compromised, the citizens have lost faith in the system, and corruption and

dishonesty are the flavors of the day. The foundations such as understanding, mutual respect, mutual recognition, truth, sanctity of life amongst others are needed to build a strong and united nation. Looking at Nigeria, these foundations can be seen to be lacking otherwise it won't be so difficult for Nigerians to sit down and have honest conversations with one another (Popoola, 2015).

The class system in Nigeria shows that a few people are affluent compared to the majority who are living in abject poverty. The university produces graduates yearly with no jobs available, this leads to graduates being frustrated. Insecurity as expressed in kidnappings in the Niger Delta to the Boko Haram insurgency in the North is a problem facing Nigeria. The Niger Delta Militant crisis and the Boko Haram insurgency could have been crushed since but for the corrupt practices of leaders who diverted the funds meant to be used in crushing these insurgencies.

In creating a new Nigeria, some basic progress oriented transformations are in place. They are constitutional reform and political reform. The legislative houses are needed to be charged to deliver a new constitution that identifies and aligns with the cultural diversity in our nation. They are also needed to deliver a comprehensive political reform that customizes the democratic system of governance that is able to cater to Nigeria's multi ethnic society.

1. **Constitutional Reform:** It is believed by a lot of people that the current 1999 constitution concentrates too much power in the center. A government with too much power is too far removed from the people that are most in need of its policies. This concentration of power makes the federal government to be seen as an overlord, whose favour everyone courts. There is a saying about power which says too much power corrupts, this concentration of power in the middle makes the capturing of such power a do or die affair. This desperation combined with the failed promises of the military heads of state, as well as the civil war has created distrust among the people, all this had led to where Nigeria is today; a nation where ethnic bigotry is a major political tool. The federal government needs to be stripped of much of its powers, these powers should then be transferred to the state and local governments.

There should be a law eradicating the 'state of origin' and replacing it with 'state of residence', this would allow any Nigerian contest for any public office so long as they are resident in the state the office being contested for is located. During the making of this new constitution, states should be allowed to set the length of time a Nigerian needs to be resident in that state to be eligible to contest public office.

Another example is to make education up to WAEC level compulsory for every Nigerian child, the states should make education at primary level free while also determining to what extent they want to subsidize secondary school fees. All states should have the same uniform amenities regardless of where one decides to live. The constitution should leave certain powers at the center, powers such as national defence, sovereignty of the nation, monetary policies, immigration, diplomacy, human rights etc.

2. **Democratic Reform:** There is also a need for a democratic reform alongside the need for a constitutional reform. The current practice of winner takes all in the electoral process doesn't appear to be the most suitable to our democratic maturity especially given the deep rooted disharmony and distrust among all the different ethnicities. Given this, perhaps a proportional representation electoral system is more suitable to Nigeria. In this system, the distribution of seats gained by a party will be directly related to the proportion of votes cast for that party at a general election. For example, if during the Ogun State House of Assemblies elections, APC gets 40% of votes, PDP 35%, CPC 25%, this would mean that all parties would have members in the State Assembly with the number of members gained directly related to the percentage of total votes received. The reforms of the electoral and political systems must be aimed at achieving transparency and especially the accountability of leadership.
3. **Punishment of Corrupt Persons:** Capital punishment should be looked at for corrupt individuals. The acts of these corrupt individuals should be given a lot of publicity, thereby shaming the individuals. In Nigeria, the rich are most times glorified regardless of how such wealth was attained. If the acts of corrupt persons are made known, then the government should shame such people. This would deter people from engaging in corruption.
4. **Privatization:** Privatization is a popular concept and process that connotes act of transferring ownership of specified property or business operations from a government organization to a privately owned entity, as well as the transition of ownership from a publicly traded, or owned, company to a privately owned company. The public enterprises in Nigeria have long been seen as constituting an unnecessary burden on government resources, due to their inefficiency, mismanagement and corruption. The privatization and commercialization Decree of 1988, is the legal norm that initiated privatization in Nigeria, followed by the Public Enterprises Act of 1999. The ongoing process of privatization has been slow due to corruption. It has been used as a way of transferring public properties and assets into the hands of private conspirators of the present leadership, most times these assets are sold at below market value to their collaborators. Privatization has been able to eliminate corruption and if it is well managed, it would in the long run reduce the corrupt practices of public officials.

4.2. *The Commendable War against Corruption*

The war against corruption has been fought on many fronts but the most effective has been the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) was established in 2003, partly in response to Nigeria being named as one of 23 countries that were not cooperative in the international community's efforts to stop money laundering. The mission statement of the EFCC is to rid Nigeria of Economic and Financial Crimes and to effectively coordinate the domestic effort of the global fight against money laundering and terrorists financing.

Due to the hard work and commitment from this body, the fight against corruption in Nigeria has gotten international attention. It must be stated that at no time in the history of Nigeria has so much been demanded from a single institution or agency of Government

like the Expectations from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Waziri, 2011) . The Commission has assumed a larger than life status and has grown to be perceived in the eyes of Nigerians as a solver of all problems even those outside its mandate. (Waziri, 2011)

The Statute creating the EFCC vested it with the mandate to:

1. Investigate and prosecute economic and Financial Crimes. Section 47 of the enabling acts sets out financial crimes to cover several issues such as bank frauds, tax evasion, capital market fraud, futures market frauds, etc.
2. Be the national coordinator for anti-money laundering.
3. Be the designated Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit.
4. Implement the provisions of the Advance Fee Fraud Act, Failed Banks Decree, Money Laundering Act and the Banks and other Financial Institutions Decree.

From a practical point of view, the EFCC mandate has to do with the provision of financial security for the Nigerian economy. It implements the mandate through tackling those menaces such as official corruption, tax evasion, bank fraud, Advance fee fraud, illegal bunkering and several other shades of economic crimes that cause underdevelopment. It has grown to become the premier anti-corruption agency in Africa and indeed the level of recoveries it has made is arguably unrivalled in the history of any agency in the world. The EFCC seeks to create a level playing field for all stakeholders within the Economy.

The Commission has recovered over \$20 billion since its inception in 2003. These recoveries include some part of the Abacha loot as well as recoveries arising from the bank sanitization exercise which the Commission embarked on with the Central bank of Nigeria. Unsurprisingly, a substantial portion of these recoveries are Government Funds that have been embezzled and criminal proceeds from bank frauds. Thus in cases of official corruption and theft of Government funds, the proceeds of the crime are remitted to the office of the Accountant General of the Federation of Nigeria or that of the applicable State Government, as required by public service rules. Where the victim is a private entity, the proceeds of the crime are given to such private entity.

4.2.1. The Challenges Faced

As indicated earlier, the commission operates within a rough terrain and it is only its doggedness that has ensured the results that it has posted.

1. Unfavourable Legal Framework: The key challenge of the Commission has been the absence of the requisite favourable legislative framework necessary for the success of an anti-corruption war. The first of these constraints is the absence of a special court for the trial of cases of corruption and financial crimes. The citizens have already noted the agonizing effect of the slow pace of trials in Nigeria. If there was to be a special court, then the ratio of convictions in high profile cases and the resultant multiplier effect on the anti-corruption war will be enhanced.
2. Weak Funding: The next challenge the Commission faces is weak funding and capacity building structure for its staff. It must be accepted that fighting corruption is expensive. It must also be accepted that the investigation of specialized economic crimes can only succeed where the officers are suitably and adequately trained. An officer who is well paid would have no reason to cover up for the corrupt leaders. This is a battle that can only be won by men who are ready to give their all to win this battle. The funding to fight this war must be put in place.
3. Lack of Cooperation: Another problem faced is that some countries have not been too cooperative in retrieval of stolen funds and it will appear that their national interest guides cooperation with us. We must understand that the ill effects of corruption does not only affect the origin of the illicit funds but also the receiving countries in the sense that in both locations, funds that have no bearing on productive ventures has either left the economy or has been injected into it.
4. External Influence: A problem faced by the EFCC is that of external influence. The influence from the executive and legislative arms in particular frustrate the work of this body. An example could be seen in the case of a former EFCC Chairman Nuhu Ribadu who started a campaign that indicted several top government officials. He was then removed from the office by top officials, then later he was demoted from Assistant Inspector General (AIG) to Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP). In the present cause of the present acting chairman of EFCC Ibrahim Magu who has led the organization in prosecuting corrupt officials, he has even started prosecuting some senators. He has discovered ridiculous amounts of foreign currencies that were embezzled being stashed in unoccupied houses. These same government officials with whom he has started investigations against are part of those who would confirm him as the chairman and as such efforts to confirm him have been frustrated by the corrupt elements in positions of authority. The EFCC should be free from influence and should be allowed to operate as a single entity, this will allow it to operate without obstacles.

4.3. Summary of Findings

1. Corruption is the bane of underdevelopment in the country. The amount of money embezzled by those in power would have been enough to start or complete plenty projects which have been abandoned.
2. The Military are not the only ones guilty of corruption. The leaders from independence have engaged in massive corruption, this was the pretext used by the military in usurping power. Corruption under the military was more potent and announced because they were not accountable to anyone.
3. The EFCC to a large extent have tried in the war against corruption. This gives hope to everyone to show that all hope is not lost.
4. The Military intentions might have been noble, but it gave way to political instability and the entrenchment of corruption in Nigeria.

5. The civilian administrations of both President Obasanjo and President Buhari have been no different from when they were military heads of state. Their administrations have been reminiscent of their military regimes

5.1. Summary

This research work is an attempt to study the impact of corruption and how the military rulers in both the military era and civilian setting have contributed to underdevelopment in Nigeria. It also shows how corruption can be curbed. Notwithstanding the skepticism of people that corruption can never be curbed in Nigeria, this research work is serving as a beacon of hope for a developed Nigeria, which is free from corruption and its vices. The anti-graft agencies have tried in accordance with their roles and duties in the Acts establishing them to reduce corruption in Nigeria. Their achievements have gone a long way in redeeming Nigeria's image in the international arena.

The study introduces the topic and its background, the study talks about corruption as seen in the view postulated by different researchers on the topic, the study touches on the causes of corruption. The definition of military rule is also looked at while also focusing on the theories guiding military intervention in politics, the study shows some of the causes of corruption in the military and how corruption has affected the nation so far. The methodology used in the actualizing of this study is the qualitative method; collection of data from textbooks, websites, PDFS, past and present works relating to corruption and the military. The study attempts to put aside corruption and the evils it brings to create a new Nigeria which is free from corruption while also focusing on the most effective mechanism in the war against corruption. The study is then summarized, concluded and recommendations are given in the final chapter.

5.2. Conclusion

Truth be said, corruption is the shadow following Nigeria every day. It is the main cause of poverty and underdevelopment in the country. If a person cannot earn a living to sustain himself and his family, he would thus engage in dishonest means to make money. Corruption has evolved in Nigeria and has brought the nation to where we are today. Nigeria as a country does not have a say in a committee of developed nations. People are dying every day because they lack basic social amenities needed for them to survive, our leaders loot the nations treasury meant for the wellbeing of all citizens, this was very rampant under military regimes, that is under our military leaders during military rule and also under civilian rule by the governments of former military leaders. To put an end to this, corruption has to be curbed completely in the country.

This serious problem did not start in one day, this problem started but became more rampant under military leaders in both military and civilian rule because they still operated under the same doctrine of not being accountable to anyone under civilian regimes, they went against the true practice of democracy and ruled like they did while they were military heads of states, thus the entire government engaged in massive corruption. This problem of corruption cannot be eradicated in one day; the fight against corruption is a war that can be won with one battle at a time. To win this war or fight against corruption, everyone must come together to ensure accountability and transparency in all dealings in the ministries, agencies, governmental organizations and all other aspects in the society. Corruption and its vices should be a thing frowned upon by all members of the society. The institutions set up to wage war against corruption in the country are trying their best to win this fight against corruption; they should be supported and backed up by the people and the world at large.

The researcher urges all living in the country; citizens and immigrants alike to come together regardless of their tribe or religion and join hands together to win the war against corruption. It is known fact that anything that has a beginning would surely have an end, and thus the researcher strongly believes that very soon with the impact of everyone; corruption would be a thing of the past in Nigeria.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study hereby recommends the following;

1. The rule of law implies that nobody is above the law. The rule of law must be enforced so that every single individual and institution is accountable to law. Every one regardless of his status (former military ruler), under a democratic setting must respect the law. If the rule of law is strictly observed, corruption will be curtailed.
2. The constitution of the land must be respected and obeyed to the letter. Every rule guiding the behaviours of public officials are entrenched in the 1999 constitution. The political heads are to act in accordance with the dictates and injunctions of the law. This will foster accountability and probity
3. Hindrances such as the immunity enjoyed by major political office holders in Nigeria must be removed. The immunity should be waived automatically in cases where the office holder has engaged in corruption and has been investigated and found guilty. Unfortunately, this legal instrument enjoyed by leaders have shielded them from investigations and prosecutions either while in office or outside in most cases. This immunity suppresses the justice system in the country.
4. The freedom of Information Bill should further be explored and strengthened to the extent that the secret deals of public officials and politicians, including their private businesses and accounts are made public for everyone to see. This will Encourage a free press and electronic media to forcefully report to the public on corrupt practices in the society
5. The leaders should be made accountable to the people by having forums in which they would be questioned by the citizens.

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