

Chapter 6

E-Governance and Corruption

Impasse in Nigeria: A Developmental Expedition Synopsis

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ABSTRACT

E-governance is a technological innovation that brings governance to the fore of integrity and accountability. It requires high technological commitment so as to bring the government closer to the people. Corruption on the other hand is a bane to growth and development in any country. E-governance is a corrective measure to corruption which prevents government officials from shady activities due to its transparency nature. The connection between e-governance and corruption is analyzed in this chapter, and Nigeria is selected as a case study in developing countries. The chapter concludes on the premise that e-governance reduces the strength of corruption in any country and more investment is needed to enhance this development.

INTRODUCTION

E-government is a concept that has its etiology in the nineteen century. It refers to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to promote more efficient and cost effective government, facilitate more convenient government services, allow

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greater government access to information, and make government more accountable to the citizens. E-government is the use of ICT by government agencies to transform relations with citizens (government to citizen) (G2C), businesses (government to business) (G2B), government organizations (government to government) (G2G) and employees (government to employee) (G2E). ICTs have a lot of advantages of improving service delivery to citizens, interacting with business and industry, increasing public accessibility to information, fostering more efficient government management, increasing transparency and accountability and eventually reducing corruption and costs of governance.

Corruption on the other hand is a vice that delimitate the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery within the public or private sector. It has the tendency to destroy or shut down the whole government and private sector existence to becoming a state of anarchy. ICT can reduce corruption by promoting good governance, strengthening reform initiatives, reducing the potential for corrupt behavior, strengthening relations between government employees and citizens, allowing tracking activities, monitoring and controlling behavior of government employees by the citizens, enhancing the effectiveness of internal control and management of corrupt behavior by promoting government transparency and accountability (Bhatnagar, 2003; Shim & Eom, 2008; Anderson, 2009; Mauro, 1997). In fact, Lupu and Lazar (2015) found that a 1% increase in the use of e-government reduces corruption by over 6.7% in the EU/non EU countries.

Corruption has been a major issue in Nigeria because of the negative impact on the people, government and drawbacks on economic development and national progress (Emechale, 2009; Ajie & Wokekoro, 2012). It pervades all facets of the country's public and private sector (Inokoba & Ibegu, 2011) with devastating consequences of poverty, decaying infrastructures, unemployment, poor budget implementation and performance, low standard of living (Odo, 2015). Corruption has seriously affected every sector of the economy and hampered sustainable development in education, health, employment, power and electricity generation, transportation, legislature, judiciary, civil service, politics, electoral process and other major sectors of the economy (Ezigbo, 2006). It has hindered economic growth and development (Cookey, 2005), foreign direct investment (Cooker, Ugwu & Adams, 2012) and resulted in poor human development indices and massive poverty of Nigerians (Action Aid, 2015). Corruption increases the rate of injustice, disregards rule of law and destabilizes society by creating social tensions, increases the crime rate, violence and terrorism. It also acts as a barrier to advancing any innovations (OECD, 2010). Ribadu, (2007) argued that corruption is Nigeria's worst problem responsible for its woes, instability in the Niger Delta, debt overhang, barrier to democratic elections and impediment to flow of foreign direct investment (FDI). In fact, the misfortune and woes of Nigeria has been linked to the pervasive, endemic corruption. Nigeria

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