Chapter 6
E-Governance and Corruption Impasse in Nigeria:
A Developmental Expedition Synopsis

Opeyemi Idowu Aluko
University of Ilorin, Nigeria

Gabriel Temitope Aderinola
University of Ilorin, Nigeria

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 (Emechele, 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 has been ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world by the Transparency International (TI) since late 1990s (Ribadu, 2003; Action Aid, 2015). The World Bank studies showed that nearly $1 trillion USD was paid in bribes annually and in some countries such as Nigeria, Kenya and Venezuela the bribe paid was up to 12% of gross domestic product (Nwabuzor, 2005).

The formulation of the new national ICT policy in 2001 began with the establishment of the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). This was expected to promote e-governance initiatives. However, there were problems due to the unavailability and poor telecommunication facilities, electricity power supply and other enabling infrastructure for e-government activity. Little wonder, the e-governance activity in Nigeria is poor and rank low (Yusuf, 2006; Adeyemo, 2011; Oye, 2013).

Some of e-governance initiatives and utility in the recent times include: registration of teachers, e-passport and visa application, voters registration, tax payment, land registration and e-payment, online registration of examinations and the monthly publishing of the allocation to States and local governments by the Ministry of Finance to enable citizens and civil societies engage their governments on their use of public funds. The use of card reader and in the last general elections has brought some measure of credibility and sanity into Nigerian elections, e-wallet in the distribution of fertilizers to farmers and the cashless policy introduced by the Central Bank of Nigeria. The introduction of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS), the adoption of Bank Verification Number (BVN) and the cashless policy in the banking sector have helped to checkmate the activities of 'ghost' workers in Nigeria and also save billions of Naira for the government (Enofe, Ogbaisi & Mboto, 2015).

Conceptualizing E-Governance

The term governance needs to be understood before we move on to e-governance. The concept of 'governance' is as old as human civilization. In essence, the term 'governance' refers to the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). The word 'governance' can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Governance is not the exclusive preserve of the government. It extends to civil society and the private sector. It covers every institution and organization from family to the state.

It involves exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage the affairs in and the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development. It can be better understood as the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations and mediate their differences. Boeninger (1992), opined that it is the capacities of a system to exercise authority, win legitimacy, adjudicate conflicts as well as carry out programme implementation.

E-governance concept originated at the beginning of 21st century, mostly as a copy of e-commerce into public sector. All intentions were directed towards the presence of the public services on the Internet. In the early years of its development, e-governance follows the evolutionary e-business evolving model, which in particular means that in the early days of e-governance evolvement, primary focus of the e-services was simple appearance of graphic user interfaces with no interactions. Early enthusiasm during the mean time weakened but such experiences brought crucial acknowledgments (United Nations, 2008). Today, the development of electronic public services enters in the new phase, which is mostly determined by reengineering of existing processes of public government. Public sector by its nature (based on information and communications) is ideal for international increase of efficiency and quality (Fang, 2002; Mario, et al 2009).

The term is used in a loose manner to describe the legacy of any kind of use of information and communication technology within the public sector. It represents the use of internet to deliver information and services by the government (Bhatnagar, 2003). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs define e-governance as utilizing the internet and the world-wide-web for delivering government information and services to citizens (United Nations, 2008). Therefore, e-governance is the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to transform government by making it more accessible, effective and accountable.

E-governance refers to the use of information technologies (such as the Internet, the World Wide Web, and mobile computing) by government agencies that can transform their relationship with citizens, businesses, different areas of government, and other governments. These technologies help deliver government services to citizens, improve interactions with businesses and industries, and provide access to information (Moon, 2002). E-governance is also the use of emerging information and communication technologies to facilitate the processes of government and public administration (Drucker, 2001).

In contemporary governance, Basu (2004) states that "e-governance refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses and other arms of government". This will result to a less corrupt society, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth and cost reductions. According to Chatfield (2009), e-governance refers to the use of information and communication technologies, particularly the internet, to deliver government information and services. E-governance is understood as the use of ICT to promote more efficient and cost effective government, facilitate more convenient government services, allow greater government access to information, and make government more accountable to the citizens (World Bank, 1992). For the purpose of this paper, the definition of e-governance provided in the European Commission (2003) will be adopted: "the use of information and communication technologies in public administrations combined with organizational change and new skills in order to improve public services and democratic processes and strengthen support to public policies".

The aim of e-governance is to allow the public to initiate a request for a particular government service without going to a government office or having direct contact with a government employee. The service is delivered through government web sites (Brannen, 2001; Moon, 2002). E-governance comprises of an alignment of ICT infrastructures, institutional reform, business processes and service content towards provision of high-quality and value added services to the citizens and businesses. Wimmer and Traunmuller (2001) contend that the main objectives of e-governance should include the following: (1) restructuring administrative functions and processes; (2) reducing and overcoming barriers to coordination and cooperation within the public administration; and (3) the monitoring of government performance.

A major goal of e-governance projects in developed economies is to enhance productivity of both public and private sectors through the leveraging of ICT. E-governance has captured the interest of developing countries. There has been a considerable demonstration effect of the constructive difference that e-governance has made in advanced economies in the delivery of services, provision of information and internal administration of the public sector. A country's ICT infrastructure and its openness to public sector reform play an important role in determining the types of applications and kind of goals for which e-governance is implemented (Bhatnagar, 2003). A country's willingness to adopt basic public sector reform must determine the breadth and scope of e-governance applications. Many times e-governance applications are used as a catalyst and enabler to further reform. E-governance projects are funded with the expectation that these applications will increase efficiency, and bring about more transparency and accountability to citizens.

An Analysis of Corruption

Corruption is the process of circumventing formally agreed, official schedules or implicit rules for decision-making (in the public or private sector) by use of personal inducements in order to achieve institutional and/or personal objectives. Corruption can be defined as a process by which the virtue of the citizen is undermined and eventually destroyed (Otalor and Eiya, 2013). Corruption can also be defined as the use of public office or the use of official position, rank or status by an office bearer for his own personal benefit Myint (2000) in Otalor and Eiya (2013). While activities such as fraud and embezzlement can be undertaken by an official alone and without involvement of a second party, others such as bribery, extortion and influence peddling involve two parties – the giver and taker in a corrupt deal.

Two party type of corruption can arise under a variety of circumstances such as: government contracts, government benefits, government revenue, time savings and regulatory avoidance, Influencing outcomes of legal and regulatory processes (Otalor and Eiya, 2013). Corruption or "corrupt" behavior has broadly been defined as the violation of established rules for personal gain and profit", or "efforts to secure wealth or power through illegal means – private gain at public expense; or a misuse of public power for private benefit or a behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role, because of private gain (Sen, 1999; Lipset and Lenz, 2000; Nye, 1967). This definition includes such behavior as bribery (use of a reward to pervert the judgment of a person in a position of trust); nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of inscriptive relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private uses (Banfield, 1961 in Otalor and Eiya, 2013).

Corruption has also been looked at as the abuse of public office for private gains through rent seeking activities when an official accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe. Public office is also abused when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit or even if no bribery occurs, through patronage and nepotism, the theft of state assets or the diversion of state resources (World Bank 1997). Corruption requires a multifaceted attack. It requires, for example, a set of regulations against corrupt practices, a code of conduct for employees and vendors, awareness raising campaigns, training of staff, internal controls, sanctions and incentives, protection of whistleblowers and an open approach towards information reporting (Otalor and Eiya, 2013).

Corruption is one of the greatest challenges of the contemporary world. It respects no national boundaries and deepens poverty around the globe by distorting political, economic and social life. Corruption undermines good government, fundamentally distorts public policy, leads to the misallocation of resources, harms the private sector and particularly hurts the poor citizens who bear the heavy economic and social costs of corruption (Stapenhurst, Johnston and Pellizo, 2006).

The Effect of Corruption on Economic Development

Some researchers have defined corruption as an act in which the power of public office is used for personal gain in a manner that contravenes the rules of the game (Jain, 2001; Tanzi, 1998) while others have defined it as the abuse of public power for private benefit (Rose-Ackerman, 1999). For example, as Tanzi (1998) opines, although the definition of corruption suggests that it is the abuse of public power for private benefit, it cannot be concluded that corruption does not exist in the private sector. Tanzi (1998) goes on to state that it exists in large private enterprises, especially in procurement and hiring issues. In the public sector, it can raise public expenditure and lower the amount of tax received, thereby increasing fiscal deficits and creating macro-economic instability (Mauro, 1997; Bhargava and Bolongaita, 2004).

Scholarship on corruption in the past decade (Aides and Di Tella, 1999; Aidt, 2003; Elliot, 1997; Jain, 2001; Mauro, 1997; Svensson, 2005; Tanzi, 1998) has indicated that corruption discourages investment, limits economic growth, alters the composition of government spending, usually undercuts a nation's mission of reducing poverty and hinders improvement in the quality of life for the rural and poor segments of developing countries (Bhargava and Bolongaita, 2004). Using indices of government corruption, along with country level economic data, Mauro (1997), documents that the amount of corruption is negatively linked to the level of investment and economic growth. The analysis further indicates that when the corruption index improved by one standard deviation, the country's investment rate increased by more than 4 percentage points and the annual growth rate of per capita GDP increased by over a half percentage point.

Similarly, analysis of country data from the data bases of world organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank provide further evidence that corruption worsens income inequality and poverty (Gupta et al., 1998; Bhargava and Bolongaita, 2004; Tanzi and Davoodi, 1997) and hurts the poor most of all. Although, the argument that bribery may be viewed as payment of speed and efficiency for the rich, in countries with high levels of corruption the poor have to bribe even for access to basic services. Since they pay a higher proportion of their income on bribes, income inequality is exacerbated (Vittal, 2003). Thus, as Bhargava and Bolongaita (2004) contend, controlling corruption is then nothing less than promoting economic development, increasing country competitiveness, improving social conditions, and reducing poverty. However, dismantling corruption is no easy task. Most of the efforts in the past decade to address corruption typically began with an analysis of the underlying causes or enablers of corruption.

From an economic perspective, corruption arises from economic rent, which refers to "…the extra amount paid (over what would be paid for the best alternative use) to somebody or for something useful whose supply is limited either by nature or through human ingenuity" (Mauro, 1997:2). According to this author, seeking economic rents by creating artificial limitations is an underlying source of corruption. Trade restrictions may be viewed as government induced sources of rent. Similarly, government subsidies, price controls, and multiple exchange rates are all potential sources of rent-seeking activities. In addition, restricted natural resources, low wages in civil service, and sociological divisions (such as ethnic divisions and loyalties) also enable corruption.

Analyzing the financial crises that occurred in Indonesia, Korea, and Thailand in the late 1990s, Bhargava and Bolongaita (2004) suggest that corruption was partly responsible. The authors claim that a lack of transparency and a weak banking system that was not prepared for financial liberalization, led to the financial crises. In addition, in his analysis of the causes of corruption, Tanzi (1998) distinguishes between the factors that affect demand for corruption and those that affect supply of corruption. He concludes that the circumstances that affect demand include regulations that restrict or create artificial limitations of goods and services, certain characteristics of tax systems, certain spending decisions, and price controls resulting in goods at below market prices. On the other hand, the factors that affect supply of corruption include rigid bureaucratic traditions, low level of public sector wages, weak or ineffectual penalty systems, institutional controls, lack of transparency of rule processes, and examples of corruption set by leaders. Although many policy analysts emphasize the public sector as a primary enabler of corruption (e.g., Mauro, 1997; Tanzi, 1998; Kauffman et al., 2000), similar conditions of discretionary power and lack of accountability occur in the private sector too. As Tanzi (1998) describes, privatization can create its own conditions to enable corruption, through payment of commissions to get access to markets and insider information not available to others that promote corruption in response to market competition.

Maor (2004) investigates two hypotheses related to transparency and accountability by a comparative analysis of five anticorruption mechanisms in the United States, the Soviet Union, Italy, and Australia (Queensland and New South Wales). First, he examines corruption investigations of senior officeholders following the creation of anticorruption mechanisms (e.g., commissions, special prosecutors, independent counsels, investigating judges) and hypothesizes that the outcome of this process is a concerted move by targeted political executives to undermine the credibility of anticorruption mechanisms and, when deemed necessary, to terminate their operation, and second, the extent to which the prosecutors are successful depends on both institutions and media accessibility the more centralized and fused political power is, and the less media accessible the government is, the harder it will be to carry out an investigation.

The hypotheses are strongly supported by the research and suggest that transparency and accountability are imperative to combat corruption. Kim et al. (2009) documented and evaluated an anti-corruption system called OPEN (Online Procedures Enhancement for civil application) in the Seoul Metropolitan Government. They utilized institutional theory and incorporated three distinctive (yet interrelated) dimensions of institutionalization (regulatory/coercive, cognitive/mimetic, and normative), and four anticorruption strategies embedded in the system to investigate how an e-government system for anticorruption in a local government has evolved. They found that in implementing such a system, the regulatory dimension was most effective, and (as in many IS implementations) strong leadership was crucial to its success.

Thus, we argue from the preceding discussion, that the conditions that promote public officials' discretionary and monopoly power to extract economic rents are core enablers of corruption. In addition, unless public officials face clear consequences for demanding and extracting economic rents, it is difficult to mitigate corruption, especially in developing countries where informality of bureaucratic processes and the lack of enforceable consequences maintain discretionary power. Clearly, then the discretionary and monopoly power of public officials to extract economic rents has to be dismantled and public institutions have to be to strengthened in order to enable accountability and transparency. If corruption is to be mitigated, the critical question remains: how can its enablers be targeted? In the next section, we argue that IT enabled e-government can improve the transparency of the bureaucratic process and therefore, promote accountability.

The Nexus Between E-Governance and Corruption and Security Frameworks

E-government has become an umbrella term covering all use of information technology in government (Torres et al., 2006) and includes IT-based sharing of information and conducting transactions within the government (G2G), between government and businesses (G2B), and between government and citizen (G2C). As noted by Singh et al., (2010:256), e-government "…entails streamlining operational processes, transcribing information held by government agencies into electronic form, linking disparate databases, and improving ease of access to services for members of the public". E-government has also been promoted as a strategy of public sector reform, with a focus on how it can improve the managerial process (Kudo, 2010).

Extant research on the evolution of e-government (West, 2004; Caba et al., 2005; Torres et al., 2006; Christou and Simpson, 2009) focus on the numerous factors that influence the growth of e-government in the past decade and found that income levels, strength of institutions and the commitment of the government to promoting e-government were the most important factors. Other studies focus on the factors that determine the level of development of e-government (Kim, 2007; Siau and Long, 2006) and suggest that one of the most important factors was the economic growth of the country. Rodriguez et al. (2011) examine socio-economic factors (economic development. technological development, and education) and characteristics of public agencies (organizational complexity, institutional capacity, degree of leverage, administrative effectiveness and control of corruption) to examine the influence of such factors on the development of e-government.

Their results differ from earlier studies and suggest that economic growth was not an important factor but the characteristics of public agencies such as effectiveness and fulfillment of programs and public policies efficiently, effectively and responsibly were necessary for the implementation and development of e-government. They also conclude that the control of corruption does not encourage the development of e-government. Finally, Bertot et al. (2010) study the potential impacts of ICT (specifically e-government and social media) on cultural attitudes about transparency. They suggest that a culture of openness must be embedded within the governance system. In addition, this must be combined with technical and social capabilities to truly implement e-government transparency initiatives (Bertot et al., 2010).

Literature that focus on e-government initiatives to target corruption, (Hopper et al., 2009) suggest that electronic delivery of services (e.g., submitting internet applications and tax returns for computer processing) can reduce corruption by reducing interactions with officials, speeding up decisions, and reducing human errors. Similarly, in reviewing the literature to identify the potential role of e-government in reducing corruption, Singh et al., (2010) emphasize that e-government eliminates discretion from the equation by removing intermediary services and allowing citizens to conduct transactions themselves. Andersen and Rand (2006) also study the relation between corruption and e-government and examine a cross-section of countries from the 1997 to 2002 period.

The security frameworks in well-designed ICT policies are likely to be effective in the fight against corruption. Shim and Eom (2008) opined that the impacts of bureaucratic professionalism, bureaucratic quality and law enforcement through the use of national level data and find that both e-government and traditional anti-corruption factors have a positive impact on reducing corruption. The security frameworks as observed by Shim and Eom (2009) is that ICT and social capital curb corruption and ICT has the potential to reduce unnecessary human intervention in government work processes, the technology reduces the need to monitor corrupt behavior. They uses panels of datasets from various sources and concluded that ICT is an effective tool for reducing corruption and social capital also has positive effects on reducing corruption, although the relationship between social capital and ICT is inconclusive.

To summarize, in the setup of the security frameworks as an important strategy for dismantling corruption is the easy access to information for all citizens by providing e-government initiatives. This can result in greater transparency that reduces the ability of the public sector official to demand bribes. Thus, e-government cannot just only provide greater information to the population but also remove the discretion of the public official and allow citizens to conduct transactions themselves which, in turn, could lead to a reduction in corruption.

E-Governance and War Against Corruption in Nigeria

Introduction of e-governance in the country has played and is playing a vital role(s) in the herculean war against the cancer of corruption in the Nigeria. Through e-governance public and private sectors adopted measures that strangulated corruption to a comatose degree in certain sectors and in some instances annihilated it permanently. It started at the Federal Government level and private sector, State and Local Governments followed suit.

Before the advent of e-governance in Nigeria, understanding the real workforce in the three tiers of authorities (Federal, State, and Local Governments) was a mystery and hard like rocket science. Personnel in Administration in league with their colleagues in Finance inflate the workforce with ghost workers running into hundreds of thousands. And perpetrators of such crime created a system where most staff are not paid in the banks using workers functioning accounts, they pay cash using their ministries cashiers. The amount oozing through this channel into the pockets of these fraudsters surpasses the real salary bills government pay to workers. Successive governments battled with this menace through setting up special staff audit committees and what they called “TABLE PAYMENT” and physical appearance of staff without getting to the root of the matter.

The palaver lingered until the introduction of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) by the three tiers of governments across the nation. Recently, the Federal Government made further discovery of ghost workers after scrutinizing 215 Ministries, Departments, and Agencies. About 45,000 ghost workers were uncovered making the Federal government to save 100b in salaries of the said workers alone. Similar scenarios unfolded at state and Local Government levels, many told stories of how the introduction of Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System saved them billions in salaries only (www.cnknigeria.com 14/2/2013).

Introduction of e-governance and transaction in financial transactions like e-mail, e-verification of payment, e-transfers etc eliminated corrupt practices bordering following of files and cheques from one desk to the other and from one accounting officer to another. It has been established that the unfortunate culture of physical following of files and other contract papers breeds unholy cum corrupt practices between the contractors, internal monitors, and the banks. E-measures ended some of those practices and cleansed the system to some level of decency. (www.negst.com.php). Public officers were left with working on papers and pushing their assessments without knowing owners or seeing them. The pace of files and assessment papers movement instilled confidence in the heart of owner thereby making them resist temptation of seeking of avenues to bribe their ways through.

The financial sub-sector witnessed extensive cleansing impact of e-governance. Their integrated data system and interconnectivity checkmated fraudulent practices.

It also scaled down unnecessary delays associated with clearing of transactions, which take days or weeks before customers get them or services are delivered. With the introduction of e-payments, cheques and other payment orders are ready within minutes or hours (depending on the nature or quantum of the transaction). Before this period papers in form of orders and cheques are physically carried from one branch to headquarters and down to the branch of customers. This snail space shuttle instigates people to break laid down rules just to get services in time. Breaking due process comes with palm greasing of the officers in charge of the process.

Introduction of automatic teller machines helped immensely because people transfer or withdraw cash without necessarily going through the ritual of signing cheques and queuing in long lines in branches where their accounts is. Such long queues often make people corrupt the process by cutting corners using bank staff who are products of the same corrupt system.

Recruitments and examinations in schools, ministries, departments, and parastatals are electronically done. Candidates apply online; write examination online via buying well secured scratch cards and their scripts marked electronically. Within days results of examinations are out and candidates told his fate. The practice was not like that before now; they were slow, esoteric, and manipulated due to excessive involvement of personnel rather than machines. This process also nips in the bud inconsistencies associated with age and other academic claims by candidates, issues very essential for recruitments. In each recruitment exercise especially into Nigerian Armed Forces, so many candidates are rejected or recruitment offer withdrawn because of phantom claims that contradicted regulations associated with the recruitments which are noticed due to employment of e-governance.

E-governance has helped the country's most active anti graft body Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in tracking financial fraudsters and international money launderers. EFCC partnered with other global crime fighting bodies and law enforcement agencies of other countries to trace inflow and outflow of monies and the possible sources. Through their eagle eye operations, many top government functionaries and captain of industries were caught in money laundering and other financially related crimes at home and abroad. E-measures like instant sending of alerts messages which includes photos and other claims of customers by banks to EFCC on individual's withdrawals that are up to Five Hundred Thousand Naira (N500,000) and One Million Naira (N1, 000, 000) for cooperate bodies. This measure instigated massive arrests of fraudsters and money launderers even before they left bank premises. And those who succeeded in escaping arrest from banks, proper investigations are carried out and most times clues are gotten that ultimately leads to arrest and prosecution. It is not an easy task for money launderers to head straight banks because of almost 100% risk involved in such acts. Bank staffers abetting fraudulent and subversive practices have developed cold feet or resisting the temptation because of the high risk and possibility of falling into the net of EFCC.

Nigeria's electoral body Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) boarded the e-governance plane by introducing biometric registration of voters and compilation of results (www.nigeriaintel.com). Before this era, electoral register are compiled manually which was open to various forms of manipulations in terms of double registrations in the same centre and in other centers. There was also the problem of results compilation and delay in doing so. But today election results are transferred through their well organized site from either the Local Government or Zonal collation centers to their state offices or national headquarters in Abuja. This stopped the menace of election officials changing figures on transit. Elections results now reach headquarters within seconds. This has reduced to the minimum corrupt practices of politicians of violating electoral laws that promotes credible electoral contests. INEC has a well functioning website with information of their electoral calendars, results of previous elections, and everything that has to do with them.

With the transfer of the country's capital from the coastal city of Lagos to the Abuja land became an issues. Black marketeers and other racketeers started trading in none existing lands or selling same plots of land to various people. Another level of corruption perpetrated by public officers in the lands department of Federal Capital Authority is selling of green zones and other strategic locations not earmarked for residential or commercial purposes. Criminals involved in this unholy business of lands buying and selling became super rich and their heinous business running into a multi-billion Naira empire. The former minister of FCT took a bold step of establishing Abuja Geographic Information System (AGIS) in 2003. AGIS was to: provide a comprehensive, all-inclusive, state-of-the Art, foolproof, computerized, Geospatial data infrastructure for the FCT; and computerize the cadastral and land registry for the FCC (Federal Capital City), the Area councils and the satellite Towns of the Federal Capital Territory. Integrating the entire lands of Federal Capital Territory into a single data bank sent the illegal land cartel involved in duping people and causing monumental legal tussles in various FCT courts between individuals and between government and citizens. AGIS was able to tell buyers whether such lands exist for sale and what each piece of land stands for. Cases of developing lands outside the original master plan stopped in a nick of time.

Many State's Boards of Internal Revenue have developed functional data base of monitoring individuals and cooperate taxes by knowing when they are due for payment. Corrupt ways of declaring profit and loss at the end of each financial year just to evade taxes or get complete tax holidays have been drastically reduced. Recklessness associated with revenue collectors whose trademark was siphoning of public monies because of improper records has made way for a more transparent collection and remittance procedure. States Chief Accounting officers now tied most of the revenue accounts with alerts showing payments and withdrawals from such accounts. And they can with a simple pressing of a computer key stop illegal withdrawals or query unauthorized withdrawals from key signatories to such accounts. Apart from boosting the revenue base of governments, this has scaled down the level of corruption in the system.

Some State's Governors developed a syndicate accounting system that linked accounts of all states ministries and parastatals to single alarm system that tell them withdrawals and deposit of monies. This trap has made fraudsters within the civil service especially men and women in the Account Department deter from the usual style of open robbery of the treasury in league with top brass of the civil service. Fraudsters now have to think twice before attempting to dip their thieving fingers into the common treasure. The North East State of Gombe is a classical example of where this integration of all accounts within the State to a single alert in the governor's handset is working. Governor Dankwambo's style is replicated in many States now and the system has checkmated fraud from public servants.

Challenges of E-Governance in Fighting Corruption in Nigeria

There is no contesting the fact that introduction of e-governance have massively downsized the level of corruption in the public and private sectors. The indices show that there is improvement in the cleansing processes in the system. Local and international anti graft watch dogs gave introduction of e-governance much of the credit in the war. Through this remarkable improvement confidence is gradually returning and local and international investors are taking the risk of investing in the country and donors are once more reconsidering making their facilities available to government and businessmen in the country. This is by no means piquing that the cancer of corruption has been cut off or successfully healed through the introduction of e-governance.

Despite the tremendous boom in ICT in the country a commanding sizeable number of people are not in the world of ICT. Those outside the ICT curve are not only those without Western education, we have highly placed government functionaries without a simple knowledge of operating a PC, the best they can do is handle a small cell phone. This low level of knowledge of is still giving criminals some rooms to wangle through their heinous schemes due to the gullibility of the people. Many are still falling on the booby trap of fraudsters because of lack of knowledge to simply verify bogus claims of criminals.

Content management by government and organization is another cog in the wheel of progress. Ministries and parastatals web sites are sometimes dead zone with outdated information to satisfy the need of the moment. The problem is not only associated with lack of latest equipments or gadgets but the knowledge of simple information management by officers in charge of such units. And since they can't manage theirs, they can't also help out in answering questions forwarded to them by either law enforcement officers or other anti graft bodies. This is also affecting the inter-agency connectivity in synergizing effort is so hard like rocket science. There are cases where criminals manipulate sites or break into control systems of government sites and manipulate information for heinous reasons. Many a times people received messages from official government sites or addresses just to later realize that such message though coming from them are not genuine.

Nigeria is a very large country with a three different physical geography. Till today, most parts are yet to be connected to the Global system for mobile communications and other ICT facilities. Even some Local Government Areas which are headquarters of the lowest layer of administration are not connected. By this a large part of the country is not incorporated into e-governance, making those corrupt practices concomitant in the system glow. Manual means of verification and transmission of messages that encourages corruption is still the standing order. People still follow files and lobby for their speedy movement from one desk to the other and files are still shuttled by messengers within and outside their areas of administrative jurisdictions. At this level of authority government clients that is contractors are still in the usual game of corrupting public officials and getting things don't outside laid down set rules and procedures.

Power supply is one of Nigeria's serious problems next to corruption, though corruption created the problem of power supply. Solving this problem is still a far cry and affecting effectiveness of its contribution on the war on corruption. Shortage of power supply is so chronic that most States spends days without seeing power. The federal capital territory is not left out of the problem. E-governance can't be effective because it is a process that uses power round the clock. And once there is no power for a second, much is lost and the system's capacity to perform is given complicated fractures. Instances abound where banks were forced to halt because of lack of power, business were put on slow motion, and delivery of services delayed all because of lack of power. Consequent upon these CCTV cameras that supposed to pick pictures of criminals on streets and within business premises are rendered useless and ineffectual. And other sundry means of gathering information are suffering thus sometimes making corrupt practices flow with impunity.

Another problem associated with this is weak financial muscle of government at all layers of authority and the private sectors. There is no doubt Nigeria is one of African's strongest economy and the continent's largest market due to its population. However, protracted corruption in the public and private sectors, policy vacillations, and misplaced priorities has rendered the country financially week. This has denied the country the needed capacity to install all equipment needed for a robust e-governance, training of personnel to man the equipment and the political will to implement laws enacted by the parliament in response to e-governance in the country. Much of the problem now does not know what to do but having the strength to do what is needful.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In this paper, we have looked at the various meanings of e-governance. As we can see, e-governance is more than just a government on the website but as a strategic framework to curb corruption. The strategies of e-governance can enable government and citizens to engage and partner with each other and other stakeholders. We also discussed the objectives of e-governance as well as the types of service delivery in e-governance. E-governance as we observe from our discussion may enhance access to government by citizens. It may increase access by those who work within government and those who work with government. It facilitates good governance for all stakeholders. The chapter strongly believes that the NITDA Act directives could send positive signals of the country's commitment to fighting corruptions. The international rating agencies are watching such steps aimed to improve Nigeria's corruption rating. The onus therefore, lies on government to monitor the process to ensure that its benefits are not eroded. Consequently, the following are recommended:

It is imperative and significant to have a mechanism to tackle the practice whereby public sector payments are made through names other than the authentic payees (contractors, suppliers or vendors). This would reduce the incidences of induced or "forced kind gestures" from any quarter. We however, urge caution here because fraud committed on electronic platforms are usually colossal and could go on for a longtime unnoticed due to the skewed format for software programming. The chapter recommends a security framework measure of regular internal and external e-governance transaction auditing to reveal any existing systemic fraud and forestall new fraud initiatives. The electronic platform must be made to identify all partners to any transactions. This is to reduce the rising incidence of anonymity that plays a critical role in corruption.

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