



**QUALITY EDUCATION AS A CATALYST FOR REVAMPING  
CORRUPTION FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF 21ST CENTURY AFRICA**

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**Abstract**

*One of the major crises facing the 21st century Africa is the high rate of corruption in leadership. This has been found to be one of the reasons for the bad governance and underdevelopment. The paper reveals the corrupt practices that characterized African leaders as money laundry, economic wastage among others and indicates*

*the steps taken by some African nations like Nigeria to curb corruption which includes the establishment of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independence Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), as indication that corruption is on high increase and has led to bad governance and poor development in Africa and how. It highlights quality education as a catalyst for revamping corruption through developing in learners that will emerge as leaders the right knowledge, skills and attitudes like discipline, honesty, moral, value for quality leadership towards good governance and sustainable development of 21st Century Africa. The paper in conclusion establishes that inculcation of the right knowledge, skills and attitudes in learners through quality education will produce quality leaders that will bring about good governance and drive sustainable development in Africa. Among the suggestions made are that quality education should be provided in African schools for the development of the right knowledge, skills and attitudes in citizens and that African nations and institutions of learning should identify and celebrate the achievements of good leaders who achieve good governance, sustainable development and promote quality education in their institutions like Rev.Fr. Pro. Ichoku of Veritas University of Nigeria for other African leaders to emulate.*

**Keywords:** Corruption, Governance, Revamping, Sustainable Development and Quality Education.

## **Introduction**

Quality is a word everyone is interested in and desires to have starting from the household to the general public. It has to do with efficiency, effectiveness and equity in delivery of goods and services is defined by Achufusi, Umeh and Ezenduka (2011) as satisfying agreed-customer requirements because of efficiency, effectiveness and equity it entail. When quality is narrowed down to education it entails the efficiency, effectiveness and equity which all in education are expected to observe in the product of education (Wilfred Bonse, Itodo, Akwe, & Ogwuche), for tackling societal problems such as corruption, bad governance, poor development among others.

Education is essential to people's life and existence. It is a vital tool for developing individuals in the society and nations at large. Education is termed a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, interest, abilities, competence, technological advancement and the cultural norms of the society by the people (Abdul-Radeem2012), hence the need to be qualitative. It is a process that is associated by constant change and activity. This is one of the reasons why changes continue to take place. The society which education is meant to serve is equally a dynamic one (Numor, Omiyefa & Akoja,2020). Thus, education must continue to keep pace with changes in society to be relevant to the needs and aspirations of the global world. Education with quality is meant to tackle societal problem (Audu, 2015) and since new problems keep emerging in society on the daily basis, education also must respond accordingly to keep being relevant. This is why education should be qualitative.

In line with this, Wilfred-Bonse, Agahiu and Galu (2018) stressed that education is deemed qualitative under certain conditions such as; if learners exhibit the expected competence to resolve relevant problems which could be inform of revamping corruption towards achieving good governance and sustainable development of the 21st century Africa and if the societal problems which could be inform of bad governance and poor development especially in the 21st century Africa are effectively address and tackled by the school.

It is no longer news that corruption has eaten deep into the fabric of the African nations in the 21st century. Such corruption has gotten to the climax that some African countries and leaders have been stigmatized with money politics, money laundry, political godfatherism, economic wastage, misplace priorities, insensitivity to the plight and welfare of the masses, thereby milking their country dry at the expense of enriching themselves. The extent of corruption that leads and resulted to bad governance and poor development in 21st century African nations is stirring everyone at the face.

Corruption simply means any dishonest or fraudulent act, practices or behavior in which someone that is entrusted with the position of power uses it to benefit themselves at the expense of others as it is obtainable in African society in the 21st century whereby African leaders that are entrusted with power use their power to milk their country dry as earlier indicated by benefiting themselves at the expense of others. This leads to bad governance and poor development of the 21st century African nations.

Governance simply means the activity of governing a country or controlling a country (Ebimene, 2019). It involves the use of power to make and enforce rules, manage the country resources for development and to deliver services to the people they govern regardless of whether the government is democratic or not while development according to Halilu (2019) means the following; the improvement of people's lifestyle through education, income, skills development, employment and everything that has to do with human life, it means having decent housing, having security within those houses and means that people should be able to read and write; the reverse being the case in most African countries with illiteracy as the other of the day among the masses. Sustainable development on the other hand is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Darroch, 2018; Ogbu, 2019). This is also the United Nation (UN) accepted definition of sustainable development.

For any country to experience good governance that is devoid of corruption in the aspect of leadership towards sustainable development, corruption will first of all be revamped or dealt with at all levels of governance through inculcating in the citizens the right type of education so that the right leaders that are not corrupt and have the interest of the masses at heart for good governance will emerge for the development of 21st century Africa.

The contribution of education especially quality education to most countries of the world especially the developed countries like United State of America (USA), China and Japan need not to be overemphasized because it is so glaring. That is why Maduewesi and Ofojebe (2012) maintained that the development of any nation depends largely on the advancement made in their education. African leaders need to borrow a leaf from the developed country, hence the need to acquire quality education at the four walls of classroom for attitudinal change of leaders towards revamping corruption and towards good governance, leading to sustainable development in African 21st century.

The importance of quality education to any people, nation or continent cannot be trivialized (Wilfred-Bonse, Agahui & Galu). This is due to the fact that without education, especially quality education knowledge that rules the world cannot be acquired. This confirms the saying that knowledge is power. Ogwuche, Aboho and Wilfred-Bonse (2021) noted that most countries that led the world in technology attained to the height they are today because of the knowledge the citizens acquire through quality education. The authors further asserted that education should promote the development of the three domains of learning –cognitive, affective and psychomotor if termed quality education in other to empower the learners with essential skills to contribute meaningfully to the development of the individual and society, especially 21st century African society, as enshrined in the National Policy of Education (FRN, 2014).

It is worthy to note that the countries termed developed like United State of America, Britain among others as earlier mentioned did not attain to the height they did overnight. It is through the inculcation of quality education that their attitude/mindset were affected positively thereby producing good leaders like Abraham Lincoln, Collins of USA among

others who revamped corruption, sustain good governance and development of their countries. Time and space will not permit me to mention the names of the Vice Chancellors of great Universities like Oxford, Harvard and Cambridge that inculcated quality education to learners that made them and their Universities to stand out in the society, as well as the able Vice Chancellor of great Veritas University, Nigeria, Rev. Fr. Prof. Ichoku who despite the corruption, bad governance and poor development that is ravaging the 21st century African society made and is making great positive impact in the University in inculcating quality education to students that spur up, moved and prompted colleagues, pupils and friends outside and within the country to celebrate him as an academic and ecclesiastical fore bearer in lofty and stylized manner characteristic of his achievement. Among these achievements is his contribution to the pursuance of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) which impart is being felt in and outside the University environment. This is geared towards the provision of: quality education as a catalyst for revamping corruption for good governance and development of 21st century Africa which is the focus of this paper.

### **Corruption in African Society**

Corruption has become a permanent ill in the African society in the 21st century. This is anti-ethical to good governance and the development of the continent. Corruption simply means any decision, act or conduct that subjects the integrity of the people in authority or institutions charged with promoting, defending or sustaining governance, thereby undermining its effectiveness in performing its assigned roles (Ocholi & Wilfred-Bonse, 2014). This is corruption in governance.

Corruption in governance in 21st century Africa has thus aggravated the crisis of development which result to high incidence of poverty and underdevelopment in the continent. The word corruption has become a

trademark of leaders in most African countries in the 21st century. This has resulted to impersonalization of African nation's resources. Although solutions have been sought to curtail corrupt practices in Africa still corruption in high places still persist.

Nigeria as one of the African countries for instance established anti-corruption agencies like Economic and Financial crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to curb corruption (Ibrahim, Okojie, Mohammed & Aliu, 2020) and yet corruption is still on high increase. The culture of corruption has germinated, well nurtured and yielding the fruits of bad governance and poor development in African societies. Moral values have become extinct and given way to corrupt practices in such a way that nobody sees anything bad in stealing from public purse anymore. This act leads to bad governance that invariably result to lack of development in 21st century Africa.

The extend of corruption among the African leaders might be as a result of lack of inculcation of quality education that will build up the cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspect of learning in learners towards changing their attitude and behavior and imparting skills for patriotic citizen. This will enable them to emerge as uncorrupt leaders for good governance towards the development of the 21st century.

### **Concept of Governance**

Governance can be viewed as the activity of governing or controlling a country. This is done by the people who are in the position of power to rule their country. Fukuyama (2013) defines governance as a government's ability to make and enforce rules and deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not. Governance has to do with the management of resources and organization of individuals and groups towards a targeted goal. Ebimebe (2019) explained that the world bank

sees governance in two related slightly different ways. The first is the emphasis on how political power is exercised to manage a nation's affairs. Secondly as the “use of power in the management of a country 's economic and social resources for development. One thing that stands out in Ebimebe (2019) definition is the management of a country's affairs which could be educational, political, economic, social and so on gearing towards the betterment or backwardness of that country.

Governance can be good (positive) or bad (negative) in nature. Good governance entails the ability to influence people and institutions towards well defined goals, which contributes to the betterment of the society (Godwin2018). Good governance has to be positive for it to lead to a better society. It is good governance that propel the society towards desirable direction. The target of good governance is the achievement of desirable outcomes in government. Poor governance has been a major problem in the 21st century Africa which has resulted to lack of development, injustice, violence and all forms of crimes in the society. Therefore, for the attainment of good governance that is devoid of corruption and that will drive development in Africa corruption needs to be revamped through inculcating quality education in the citizens for positive attitudinal change towards the development of Africa countries in the 21st century.

### **An Overview of Development and Sustainable Development**

The word development has different interpretation depending on the angle one is viewing it from. It is usually used in the context of social, economic, political and cultural. Atubi (2019) contended that development is a multi-faced process which involve the way and manner that institutions, people, industries, technologies interact with each other within the political, technological, social and economic systems. The author added that development can take various forms which could be educational, economic, political, regional, technological and so on.

For the sake of this paper development include growth or progress in educational, political, attitudinal change economic, cultural, technological. regional that result from having good governance that devoid of corruption for sustainable development in the 21st century African society. Sustainable development on the other hand can be termed as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation as earlier asserted. It is seen as a holistic improvement which aims at the improvement of the present and future generation. It is a global agenda and it is progressive and continues development that aimed at actualizing the political, social and economic agenda of the nation. It has to do with the principle that future generation should live in a world that the present generation has enjoyed but not diminished.

Ameda and Okpa (2019) argued that Sustainable Development is when the development of today does not undermine the development needs of present and future generation to come. Sustainable Development is essential in Africa to curb the rising cases of crime, high rate of unemployment, increasing poverty, food security, poor health care services and degradation in rural, urban and environmental challenges militating against the development endeavours and this can only be attained by inculcating quality education for change towards revamping corruption for good governance in the 21st century Africa.

### **Relationship Between Quality Education, Corruption, Governance and Sustainable Development of 21st Century Africa**

Corruption as earlier defined in this paper means any dishonest or fraudulent act, practices or behavior in which someone that is entrusted with the position of power uses it to benefit himself at the expense of others. This has to do with selfishness in satisfying oneself at the expense of others when one is in the position of power. Ocholi and Wilfred- Bonse

(2014) earlier on judged corruption in governance to mean any decision, act or conduct that subjects the integrity of the people in authority or institutions charged with promoting, defending or sustaining governance thereby undermining its effectiveness in performing its assigned rolls.

Governance on the other hand means a government's ability to make and enforce rules and deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not as earlier defined by Fakuyama (2015). The ability to make and enforce rules and deliver services that will be beneficially to the people and lead to their development can only be gotten from the government that is devoid of corruption and government that is devoid of corruption that will give good governance can be raised by inculcating the value of right attitude which include discipline, integrity, honesty through quality education while development means growth or progress in educational, political, attitudinal change, economic, cultural, technological, regional that result from having good governance that is devoid of corruption as a result of the type of education received. Sustainable Development also means development that addresses the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their needs (Ogbu, 2019; Anthony & Gana). This can only be attained by having good leaders in positions of authority that are raised through quality education who are not corrupt and that will give good governance to the people for sustainable development of the 21st century Africa. When the right leaders are raised through quality education, corruption which seems to be the backbone of bad governance and underdevelopment in Africa will be revamped, leading to good governance and sustainable development of 21st century Africa. Thus, there is a relationship between quality education, corruption, governance and sustainable development of 21st century Africa.

### **Quality Education for Revamping Corruption for Good Governance and Sustainable Development**

Quality education is used to describe efficiency, effectiveness and equity in the process of teaching and learning. UNICEF (2000) in an attempt to define quality education provided a comprehensive definition of quality education to include:

- i. learners who are healthy, well -nourished and ready to participate, learn and supported in learning by their families and communities.
- ii. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive and provide adequate resources and facilities.
- iii. Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and Skills for life and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/ AIDS prevention and peace.
- iv. Processes through which trained teachers use child -centered teaching approaches in well managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.
- v. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitude and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in the society.

The definition of quality education by UNESCO is all-embracing. It includes among others the outcomes in the learners that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes like discipline, dedication among that are link to national goals of education and positive participation in the society.

The inculcation of knowledge, skills and attitudes like discipline, dedication. Faithfulness. honesty, moral and social responsibility in learners through quality education for good leadership in society will enable them emerge as good leaders that is devoid of corruption towards achieving and sustaining good governance and development of 21st

century Africa. When quality education is inculcated in the citizens, right knowledge, skills, and attitudes are developed for positive participation in the society (Ogwuche, Aboho & Wilfred-Bonse, 2021) which include positive participation for leadership that is in contrast to corruption towards support for good governance and development of 21st century Africa. This confirms the words of Ahmed (2014) that quality controls the wide array of beneficiary results of educational activities on both individuals' learners and the wider society. Therefore, when quality education is inculcated in the learners who will emerge as leaders in the 21st century Africa to develop in them the right knowledge, skills and attitude as earlier stated for good leadership, corruption will be revamped, good governance will emerge and be sustained, leading to sustainable development of Africa nations in the 21st century. Thus, quality education is a catalyst for revamping corruption for good governance towards sustainable development of 21st century Africa.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has advanced strong points towards using quality education as a catalyst to revamp corruption that is plaguing African nations for achieving good governance and sustainable development of 21st century Africa. The paper discussed what quality education, corruption, governance development and sustainable development are, revealed the ills of corrupt practices in leadership in 21st century African society and the relationship between quality education, corruption, governance and development as well as using quality education in advancing ways of revamping corruption and sustaining good governance and development in the 21st century Africa through inculcating the right knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable the learners to emerge as good leaders without corruption for good governance towards the sustainable development of 21st century Africa.

### **Suggestions**

In view of the above discourse the authors suggest that:

1. Quality education should be inculcated across all levels of education in Africa by schools for the development of the right knowledge, skills and attitudes in citizens of African nation towards producing the right leaders that will be devoid of corruption for achieving good governance and development in 21st century Africa.
2. The government across African nations in the 21st century should ensure that they provide adequate equipment, train teachers and all it takes to inculcate quality education in learners in schools towards producing uncorrupt leaders for good governance and sustainable development.
3. The schools through implementers of curriculum should emphasize the disadvantages of corruption and advantages of good governance that bring about development in other to inculcate the right attitude for good leadership in students, the leaders of tomorrow so as to produce leaders that have the interest of African nations at heart.
4. Curriculum developers should develop the curriculum that discourages corruption and encourages good governance and sustainable development in other to inculcate the attitude of good governance and sustainable development in the minds of the learners who will emerge as leaders in the 21st century.
5. African nations in general and institutions of learning in particular should identify and celebrate the achievement of good leaders who stand out in societies to promote quality education in their institutions like Rev. Fr. Pro. Ichoku of Veritas University of Nigeria, for other African leaders to emulate. This will act as a catalyst to revamp corruption among the African leaders, promotes good governance towards sustainable development of 21st century Africa.

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