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BUREAUCRATIC MALFEASANCE IN NIGERIA'S POST-COLONIAL PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract
This study is poise to unravel the underpinning factor, responsible for unabated corruption in Nigerian bureaucratic institutions. The issue of corruption in public institution had endured overtime yet not exhaustive. Successive authors had pontificated on this subject matter citing cultural factors and individuals being responsible for corruption. However, this study will rely on historical analysis as well as other relevant data to buttress the study. Again bureaucratic corruption are as a result of imperial's economic intention and self entitled nature of Nigeria bureaucrats. The post colonial democrat has became selfish with regards to distribution national resources. Relying on Alva's theory of state this article asserted that corruption in the public institutions is as a result of class formation instituted by the colonial masters. In addition bureaucratic corruption has been influenced largely by the establishment of an unequal system that have remained persistent even after colonial rule. Also class struggle have further exacerbated corruption especially among the elites and sometimes having the bureaucrats in the mix. Inadvertently, the bureaucrats are taking undue advantage of the abnormality to enrich themselves in the process unduly. In a nutshell, so long the government remains the major controller and distributor of the common wealth, corruption in public institutions will continue to thrive.

Introduction

When Max Weber(1947) was describing the state as a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory, he was conceiving an entity, which could effectively organize human society to bring about order, tranquility, and peaceful coexistence. I recent time however, a clear-cut depiction of the role of the state has been postulated by scholars, owing to growing interest in the discourse on the state (its nature, characteristics, and processes e.t.c.). The state has often been seen as the platform for organizing society-men, materials etc. As some scholars opine, the state is saddled with the responsibility of reconciling multitude of conflicting interests without bias (Appadora 1975).

To this end, the various competition as well as demand by several opposing groups is harmonized and processed by the state to ensure law, order and peaceful coexistence. Besides, the state is the sole organ responsible for the distribution of resources to the varying competing interests in every political system. This role of the state engenders it to the various competing interests group. In another view, since the state is the organ that distributes resources to the competing groups in society, the control therefore of the state becomes a source of tension in a political system. Politics is often seen as the competition for power. Who controls power, controls the distribution of resources as well as determines the control of the means of production. This view has been reiterated by Marx and Engel over the years, “that in capitalist society the state was above all the coercive instrument of a ruling class itself defined in terms of its ownership and control of the means of production" (Marx-the Communist Manifesto, and Engels- Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, in Miliband, 1973:7).

However, it is imperative that the state has become a very positive entity in the determination of resources. Since who controls the state controls the reins of power, and invariably determines who gets, what, when, and how? (Lasswell, 1936). The state is seen thus as a key factor in wealth creation. In Nigeria of today, the nature of the state as well as its control of the means of production position the state as the centre of competition by the various groups in society. More so, since the means of production are to a large extent centralized in the state, the control of the state is thus very significant in the bid to accumulate wealth. The over centralization of the means of production in the state has placed the state in an overriding position. State officials in this regard see the state position as a means of acquisition of wealth. It is this notion that has made official corruption very prevalent in Nigeria.

In the words of Tanzi (1998:559), in recent years, and especially in the 1990s, a phenomenon broadly referred to as corruption has attracted a great deal of attention. In countries developed and developing, large or small, market oriented or otherwise, governments and prominent politicians (military presidents of countries and prime ministers)have lost their positions, and, in some cases, whole political classes have been replaced. One can understand that the growth in the discourse of corruption is a global phenomenon. More especially, the transition from military rule to liberal democracy in Nigeria in 1999 ushered in significant and unguarded press freedom, which has helped greatly in propagating the anticorruption gospel as well as expose corrupt practices which aforetime were swept under the carpet.

WHAT IS CORRUPTION?

The concept of corruption, though has been defined by several authors. Bayley (1966:720) argues that “corruption, while being tied particularly to act of bribery, is a general term covering the misuse of authority as a result of consideration of personal gain, which need not be monetary.“Makumbe (1999) sees corruption as the abuse both of power and of discretion and involving a monopoly resources. Nye (1967:419) opines that corruption involves “behaviour which deviates from the normal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (family, close clique), pecuniary or status gain, or violates roles against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence." Leff (1964:8) goes further to define corruption to include “bribery to obtain foreign exchange, import, export, investment or production licenses, or to avoid paying taxes”. Mbaku (1996) assert that "bureaucratic corruption provides civil servants with the opportunity to raise their compensation above what the law prescribes.”Osterfeld (1992, 204-18) has argued that in a heavily regulated economy one can find two distinct types of corruption: “expansion corruption,” which involves activities that improve the competitiveness and flexibility of the market, and “restrictive corruption”, which limits opportunities for productive and socially beneficial exchange. The restrictive corruption according Osterfeld (1992:209-10), is characterized by redistribution of income and wealth in favour of individuals or groups. Most public - sector corruption falls in the restrictive category and involves illegal appropriation of public resources for private use (e.g outright embezzlement by a civil servant) or the illegal use of an individual's position for his own personal enrichment. Rose-Ackerman (1996) argued that corruption occurs at the interface of the public and private sectors. Sometimes officials simply steal state assets. She however concludes that the more interesting and complex cases occur when a private individual or organisation bribes a state official with power over the distribution of public benefits or costs.

In his discourse on corruption around the world, Tanzi (1998:54) opines that the most popular and simplest definition of corruption is that it is the abuse of public power for private benefit, as enunciated by the World Bank. Several scholars have attempted to explain bureaucratic corruption in the confines of the behaviour of bureaucrats as well as their activities within the state. The activities through which bureaucrats have maximized their benefits include providing services for interest groups that seek favours from the government (Mbaku, 1996). As further expatiated by Rose-Ackerman (1996), several governments have sold state firms and provided infrastructure service concessions to private operators. All these she claims can create corrupt incentives. In the contract award procedures, some firms might provide incentives to government officials as pay off to enable them to be selected or even become the sole supplier of certain goods and services. There is no doubt that the involvement of the government of Nigeria in major economic activities has heightened bureaucratic corruption substantially. Rose - Ackerman (1996) further reiterates that when governments sell goods or services at below-market prices, firms will often pay off officials for access to state supplies. Johnston and Hao (1995) observes that in China, where many raw materials are sold both at state subsidized prices and on the free markets, payoffs reportedly are common. Mbaku (1996) discussed several causes of bureaucratic corruption in the African context. One of such causes is the obligation by civil servants to share the proceeds of their public offices with their kin folk as enunciated by Apter (1963).

"The African extended family places significant pressure on the civil servant forcing him to engage in corrupt and nepotic practices. Bureaucrats are believed to exploit their public positions to generate benefits from themselves, their families, and their ethnic or social cleavage"(Mbaku, 1996). Joseph (1987:84) completely agreed with Mbaku's postulation when he averred that the individuals responsible for the development of an effective civil bureaucracy which was committed to national purposes could not overcome this entrenched attitude that the very offices of the bureaucracy were highly desired spoils of the system". It is this factor Mbaku (1996) referred to as the "Soft state". A "soft state" is said to embody "a weak or diffuse sense of national interest and the absence of a commitment to public service" (Gould and Mukendi 1989: 434). This is what obtains in Nigeria, where the public service is seen as nobody's business. Other factors that has been put forward by scholars with regard to bureaucratic corruption include pervasive and chronic poverty, defective cultural norms and behaviours et cetera. Poverty no doubt is one very reason for the large scale occurrence of corruption in many developing countries. Especially with many years of military bastardization of the economy, public servants become susceptible to manipulations by private firms for their ability to win government favours. As Mbaku (1994) posits, the military distorted resource distribution through its disproportionate share of the public budget. This development has contributed largely to increased corruption, underdeveloped and pervasive poverty and deprivation. On the cultural norms and behaviours, this could be traced to the clash between traditional and foreign norms which accompany modernization as well as industrial development efforts (Mbaku, 1996, Alam 1989, Bayley 1966, Jabbra 1976). Robb (1992) view corruption in Africa as a white-collar crime. White-collar crime itself was the product of a complex economy ushered in by the industrial revolution. He assert that the industrial revolution gave birth to financial growth which orchestrated increasing dependence on finance and investment, as well as enormous banking networks, stocks and credit and a complicated legal system. The above factors, coupled with the increase in lawyers, financiers and other professionals, greatly aided the expansion and the potential for white-collar crime. While the industrial revolution greatly affected the European nations and the United States, it was not so with Africa. Africa rather than experience the financial growth as witnessed in Europe, declined due to rapid export of her resources by the colonial government thereafter. Robb's view is relatively weak in explaining bureaucratic corruption in Nigeria. Mulinge and Lesetedi (1998:15) argued, “the incidence of corruption could be best understood in the context of colonialism- its systematic use of material inducements to compel African chiefs/administrators to collaborate with them in the pursuit of their colonial project of dominating and exploiting their own peoples. The practices of post - colonial Africa's political and bureaucratic elites are merely an extension of such colonial policies and practices which have served to entrench it. They opine that “the emerging colonial powers did not find sizeable monetary economies in their newly acquired territories. The existing economies, therefore, lacked the financial and economic infrastructure necessary for engaging in corruption.

Consequently, the new economies promoted by colonial governments had to nurture the conditions for the evolution of structures that were conducive to corrupt practices”(Mulinge and Lesetedi 1998:18). This economic infrastructure revolution was carried out through the introduction of monetary tax.“It was not the introduction of taxation *perse,* but the manner in which the tax itself was collected, that encouraged corrupt behavoiur...to motivate chiefs to generate as much tax revenue as possible, and to do so with zeal, the colonial administrations allowed them to retain a part of it " (Mulinge and Lisetedi 1998:19). Colonial chiefs “were implicitly encouraged to use their positions to amass wealth and demonstrate thereby that it paid to cooperate with Europeans” (Leonard 1991:29). It is pertinent to note that the discourse on corruption especially as it affects the bureaucracy in Africa comprises mostly of scholars tendency to explain factors that contribute to corrupt behaviour from the conditions of either the individual or cultural as we have seen above. The major problem with Apter (1963) postulation is that public servants who loot the treasury most times do that under no undue influence. Many times, those who have been involved in looting the treasury still have a whole lot of pauperized relations that do not benefit in any measure from the proceeds of corrupt public servants. Worse still, there were cases where bureaucrats from the same ethnic group undo one another in order to acquire dubious gains. Gould and Mukendi (1989:434) in trying to push hard their structural argument of bureaucratic corruption attributed this development to the absence of commitment to public service. While this assertion is to some extent true, we must not rule out the fact that there are persons to their fatherland, thus making a mark in the process. One would have expected the various reforms and increased remuneration to have addressed this issue of lack of commitment, but it has not been so. On the issue of pervasive and chronic poverty, extremely high levels of material deprivation, and severe inequalities in the distribution of resources (Leys.1965, Mbaku 1994); while this conception possess certain measure of validity, it can be argued that corruption cannot be shown to have redistributed wealth significantly, as the position of the poor remains the same. In fact, poverty has been argued to have been on the increase rather than declining. The position of Mulinge and Lesetedi (1998) is very significant in defining corruption in Africa in the context of colonialism. They however fail to trace how the reward system which favoured the local chiefs most of whom transformed into the feudal lords and the new political class became a bureaucratic issue. While it encouraged corruption, it cannot be said to explain bureaucratic corruption in itself.

This paper however, defines bureaucratic corruption as bureaucrats using their positions or office to accumulate wealth at the detriment of the state. Bureaucratic corruption as a phenomenon is viewed as a process of class formation arising from colonialism. It is argued that the nature of the bureaucracy established by colonialism made it a very desirable and influential institution during the colonial era. At independence, the bureaucracy became a broker in the contest between foreign bourgeois and the indigenous bourgeois who were predominantly from the political class (nationalist leaders). As mediators in the contest between the bourgeois, the top bureaucrats exploited their positions to accumulate sufficient resources. thereby taking hold of the means of production that was centrally controlled by the state. Thus, we find thetop bureaucrats emerging as members of the bourgeois class. This method of accumulation of private property became a way of life for all concerned, especially bureaucrats.

Moreover, as buttressed by Mulinge and Lesetedi (1998:19), the practice of rewarding tax collectors became a principal method of accumulation of private property, a *way of life that was hard to give up which encouraged chiefs to abuse their office.* Once a method of accumulation has been initiated, it is definitely hard to give up. We can understand the very reason why bureaucratic corruption continues to thrive in Nigeria. The framework of analysis adopted in this research is the theory of the state as enunciated by Hamza Alavi. In his analysis, Alavi (1973) contends that the superstructure inherited at independence by the post-colonial state is largely overdeveloped in comparison to the base. He posits that the bureaucratic institution inherited at independence is grossly overdeveloped in relation to the state apparatus. The development is a product of colonialism, which not only equipped a powerful bureaucratic- military apparatus, but depended on it extensively in the subjugation of the polity. His theory was very significant in the analysis of the character of the state in relation to Pakistan and Bangladesh.

THE POST-COLONIAL STATE AND IT'S CONTRADICTIONS

Every post-colonial state experienced some strong characteristics of contradictions. The Nigerian state was not an exception in this regard. The colonial state, especially in Nigeria was preoccupied with mobilizing the entire state towards facilitating the appropriation of resources for the metropole (Coleman 1958, Crowder 1978). Thus the public service was geared towards accomplishing this objective. For instance, the colonial public office originally was constituted by workers in the public works Department (PWD) that were responsible for construction of roads and rail networks for evacuation of agricultural products. Other visible public servants were those in charge of regulatory activities including produce inspectors. These of course were in addition to the traditional government officials responsible for law and order. The colonial government relied heavily on these officials for the success of its administration. Thus from the very beginning, bureaucrats were placed in positions in which they had control over the distribution of economic resources. It is a well-known fact that a good number of these officials corruptly enriched themselves using their positions. The public service served as one of the agencies of exploitation by the colonial bourgeois class. It should be noted that the presence of colonialism in the Nigerian state did not signify that there was absence of classes as well as competition between the classes that existed in the colonial state. Firstly classes took the dimension of satelite- metropole relationship as enunciated by the scholars of the dependency school of thought, prominent among whom are Frank (1967), Ake (1981) etc. Also, there was class relations in the form of imperial bourgeoisie and the peasant farmers who were not only small scale farmers, but used crude implements in the productive process. As buttressed by Williams (1980:23), in order to secure their own profits, colonial interests blocked the development of indigenous capitalism and limited the development of peasant production. The nature of Nigeria's decolonization struggle saw the emergence of an indigenous bourgeoisie. This indigenous bourgeoisie was itself a creation of colonialism.

Ake (1981)refers to the creation of this indigenous bourgeoisie as the most interesting contradictions of colonialism.The indigenous bourgeoisie was facilitated by the introduction of Western Education. Since the colonizers lacked sufficient manpower to administer the colony, they had no option than to educate some natives to assist in the administrative process as intermediaries in commerce and administration (William 1980, Ake 1981). The indigenous bourgeoisie who chammpioned the decolonilization struggle eventually emerged as the new political leaders at independence. With a new political class seizing the reins of power at independence in 1960, the imperial bourgeoisie metamorphosed into what is now referred to as the metropolitan neocolonialist bourgeoisie. This era also coincided with the development capitalist production in Nigeria. Despite the seeming control the indigenous bourgeoisie had over the state at independence, its desire to outwit other competing groups in the productive process was not going to be an easy task. As Williams (1980:23) elucidates, “the state proved incapable of regulating functional competition for money and opportunities for profit, since it was itself the major source of money and opportunities for the indigenous bourgeoisie and their clients.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POST COLONIAL STATE

“It is for the state's attention or its control, that men compete, and it is against the state that beat the waves of social conflict. It is to an ever greater degree the state which men encounter as they confront other men... It is possible not to be interested in what the state does, but it is not possible to be unaffected by it” (Miliband 1969:3). In recent time, the state has assumed a new role. The state stands as a very distinct entity in the productive process as well as its control of the means of production. The interesting phenomenon about the Nigerian State however is that the state controls the means of production as well as distribution of goods and services. The drive for development after independence created an atmosphere where the state became involved in every sector of the economy. This ranged from power generation and supply to the extractive industries, water resources, manufacturing etc. The state became the major business organisation in the country, thus generating a trend where whoever controls the reins of state power virtually controlled the means of production and distribution in the polity. As Mbaku (1996) reaffirmed, shortly after independence, many African countries adopted statism as their development model. This approach to resource allocation emphasized state control and eventually turned many African governments into major economic units.

Today, African governments are the primary investors, exporters, importers, and bankers. Turner (1976) refers to the state role in this regard as "the entrepot state" in the country. As Osaghae (1998:19) posits, "to facilitate its regulatory and extractive roles, the post-colonial state centralizes the production and distribution of national resources, and in the context of state capitalism this encourages the perception of the states as an instrument of accumulation and the patron - client ties as the dominant mode of political relations." The above assertion was buttressed by Turner (1976) when she harped that the peculiar character of Nigeria's political economy is the central role of the state in determining the distribution of financia1 resources, whether these involve loans or contracts from state agencies or the "gatekeeper" role of the state in mediating relations with foreign capital. The nature of the Nigerian state depicted an environment of competition between the various bourgeoisie segments in the society i.e the indigenous bourgeoisie, the metropolitan bourgeoisie. Since the colonial state needed the public service as a very important tool in its coercive attempts, it behoves the ruling political class to utilize this same elements in their attempt to maintain control of the means of production, since the state control these forces. The consequential effect of this development is the emergence of another bourgeoisie element who also became a competitor for the control of the state resources. As Alavi (1973) puts it, the colonial state he added is therefore equipped with a powerful bureaucratic-military apparatus and with governmental mechanisms that enable it, through routine operations, to subordinate the native social classes. The weakness of the indigenous bourgeoisie at the moment of independence enmeshed them in bureaucratic controls by which those at the top of the hierarchy of the bureaucratic- military apparatus of the state are able to maintain and even extend their dominant power in society, having been freed from direct metropolitan control (Alavi, 1973:147-8). This argument portends that the bureaucracy emerged as a distinct social class after independence coupled with the state extending its control over virtually every economic activity, the bureaucrats became major players in the productive as well as distributive process.

Alavi (1973) recognized the new role of the military-bureaucratic apparatus when he countered the proposition of the classical Marxist theory of the state. In his argument, the post -colonial state is never the instrument of a single class. Rather, three distinct social classes i.e the metropolitan bourgeoisie, the indigenous bourgeoisie as well as the landed classes are in competition. "The state in the post-colonial society directly appropriates a very large part of the economic surplus and deploys it in bureaucratically directed economic activity in the name of promoting economic developments "(Alavi, 1973: 148).

THE STATE AND BUREAUCRATIC CORRUPTION

In the previous segment, we discovered that the discourse on bureaucratic corruption mostly centered on incentive offered to public servants by private organisation or varying interests in a bid to get government favours. This paper, though do not dispute the occurrence of such phenomenon, however, argue that bureaucratic corruption can be better understood when we examine the nature of the state as well as the character of the bourgeoisie in Nigeria. At independence, the indigenous bourgeoisie who took over the reins of power lacked the resources necessary to compete with the metropolitan bourgeoisie in the competitive process. Primarily because the metropolitan bourgeoisie dominated the investment sector through her superior access to credit, supplies, and technological advantage, it still had enough base or very strong base in the competitive process for accumulation (Williams, 1980). The indigenous bourgeoisie was forced to rely on its political role and control to manipulate state policies. Ake (1981:94) aptly captured this scenario in this form. “In this postcolonial era a new dimension comes into the equation. This is the creation of a new type of monopoly resulting from state capitalism, “that is the involvement of the state in an entrepreneurial role." He went further to say, “it would appear that state capitalism arises primarily out the desire of the national petit-bourgeoisie which inherited political power from the colonisers to create an economic base for its political power (Ake 1981:96). This brought about the setting up of state enterprises with public funds, and sometimes in partnership with private investors, which were given privileges in areas such as import licences, credits tax concessions, government contracts, government patronage, and even preference in the granting of foreign exchange. It is this that saw the emergence of banks such as the African Continental Bank (ACB), National Bank, Bendel Brewery, the Northern Nigeria Development Company, a conglomerate of investments and enterprises controlled by the then Northern regional government to mention but a few.

“Many of these enterprises were products of nationalizations of foreign-owned private enterprises” (Ake 1981:97). The Nigerian 1972 Indigenization Decree, implemented in 1974 was a critical point in ensuring the extension of indigenous control of economic opportunities. Williams (1980) averred that the decree reserved specific economic opportunities for Nigerians and required Nigerian participation in firms engaged in a wide range of other activities. Major expatriate companies, even when not affected by the terms of the decree, have issued shares to the Nigerian public, as the bourgeoisie styles itself (Williams 1980:51). The decree reserved large areas of economic activity for indigenous businessmen, including advertising and public relations, pools, assembly of radios, record players, etc., blending and bottling of alcoholic drinks, block and brick making, bread making, clearing and forwarding, and retail trading. In addition, government now had 40 per cent ownership of banks and 55 per cent shares in all oil companies (Williams 1980).Williams believed strongly that the Indigenization Decree in Nigeria further strengthened areas of economic activity in which the indigenous bourgeoisie would be protected from foreign competition, or in which foreign companies would have to operate through them, an earlier initiative.

Moreso, finance for indigenous participation in foreign industries or takeover of them has been provided by banks, now 40 per cent government-owned, and required to allocate at least 40 per cent of their loans to Nigerian businessmen, by the legally and illegally gained wealth of the state-sponsored bourgeoisie, and by employees of foreign companies who have been lent money by firms to buy their shares at favourable prices. Civil servants are reported to be among the main recipients of bank loans for share purchases. Thus managers and bureaucrats have assimilated themselves to Nigeria's capitalist class (Williams 1980: 39-40). State economic expansion brought with it a greater responsibility for controlling, directing and investment. With this the number of parastatal agencies soared.

According to Turner (1980:124), by 1975 half of the people working in federal and state civil services - 160,000 - were employed in statutory corporations. This was made possible as a result of the great increase in oil income (as a consequence of OPEC action) from $160 million (US) per month in September 1973 to $770 million in May the following year (Schatz 1984). Higher civil servants became superintendents of an "overloaded state" which had expanded without a concurrent ideological justification for its enhanced role (Joseph 1987). Interestingly, the bureaucrats benefited immensely from the Indigenization policy. The "economic nationalism brought about a "revolutionary" expansion of the public sector under the aegis of an active bureaucracy (Joseph 1987:82). According to Okigbo (1979),by 1974,the public sector alone accounted for 39 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product, compared with 9.2 per cent in 1962. With massive state involvement in virtually every sector of the economy-oil exploration, power generation and distribution, manufacturing, banking, telecommunications etc, bureaucrats were appointed to boards of parastatals as well as other positions in the various corporations (fully or partly owned by government). Strikingly, since the Indigenization policy was introduced during the military era, the military leadership relied strongly on the senior bureaucrats - as is always the case - to implement the policy to the letter. As Abubakar (1971:5) puts it:

> *Unlike the western societies where many more efficient political institutions exist, the bureaucracy here is the major instrument of social change. It is the main if not the only engine of directed growth ... The bureaucracy as a whole must have, as a primary role, the function of aggregating and regulating political institutions, and implicit in its own privileged position it has also the role of deciding or influencing the course of development.*

It should be noted here that the bureaucrats engaged in corrupt practices primarily to evolve into a bourgeoisie. While playing a crucial role in the competition between the bourgeoisie groups i.e metropolitan, indigenous, and the landed class, the bureaucrats entrenched themselves into the bourgeois class through their crucial role in mediating class interests. As Alavi (1973) opines, "The strength of the bureaucracy rests in the extensive proliferation of administrative controls and in the direction of a vast array of public agencies engaged in a variety of activities" (p.151). Coupled with the above, the position of the bureaucrats were strengthened by the weakness inherent in the political class, whose members were largely from the indigenous bourgeois class.

Thus Frank (1969) described the indigenous bourgeoisie as a "lumpe bourgeoisie", ie lacking in initiative and a sense of history as well. This deficiency of the indigenous bourgeoisie made it rely heavily on the bureaucrats for advice and direction on many occasion. It was this class who later explored the opportunity to enrich itself. One can boldly say on this wise that the bureaucracy indulges in corrupt activities in a vicious attempt to create a class in itself. In another dimension, the military institution, which itself was a product of the colonial dictatorship, helped in no small measure in promoting a bureaucratic bourgeoisie. Alavi (1973) describes the military - bureaucratic class as the major instrument of colonial subordination and repression. They were repressive particularly to the nationalists who later became leaders at independence. Thus a new relationship of mutual accommodation had to be established (Alavi, 1973. 150). This assertion can be buttressed by the massive scale of bureaucratic involvement in every facet of military rule in Nigeria as discussed above.

As Turner (1976)earlier said, the central role of the state in determining the distribution of financial resources, whether these involve loans or contracts from state agencies, or the "gatekeeper" role of the state in mediating relations with foreign capital, worked effectively for the bureaucrats to acquire loans for themselves from government owned banks. Besides, their involvement in contracts award was itself a sham. They either awarded contract to themselves or collected large "Kickbacks" which ensure their involvement in the productive process. The involvement of bureaucrats in capital acquisition using government machinery was exposed by the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, as well as the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) when the Gowon military regime was over thrown in 1975. Cases of fraudulent bank loans, unethical contracts award etc were unearthed by these bodies. The bureaucratic role as exemplified by Abubakar (1971) was grossly exploited by bureaucrats to the detriment of the state in Nigeria. The (PCC) which was set up in the wake of the Murtala regime in 1975 to investigate the conduct of governors and higher civil servants believed to have abused their offices stated that in the case of Philip Asiodu, one of the "super-permsecs" of the Gowon era,

> *Between 1974 and 1975 Mr. Asiodu was able to raise loans amounting to N345,000 in his personal capacity. In addition, he was connected with loans amounting to N1,105,000 raised by companies of which members of his (Federal Ministry of Informations) 1978 immediate family or with himself as partner were the sole owners.*

Though the above development was not limited to Asiodu, it nevertheless portrayed a whole scheme of fraudulent practices embarked upon by government officials' especially senior bureaucrats. At the end of the investigation, the bureaucrats who were indicted were forced into retirement with full benefits. The Federal Government report demonstrated that the bureaucrats involvement in corrupt practices was to facilitate the accumulation of capital thus becoming part of the bourgeois class.

As Joseph (1987:89) puts it, "since most retired individuals went into the business world, using their knowledge and contacts to develop their enterprises quickly, they can be said to have been forced to operate more completely as private businessmen and women than was possible before they left the service." We can see that the suspicious relationship between the indigenous bourgeoisie and the bureaucratic class before independence metamorphosed into one of silent competition, where the bureaucrats, acting as agents of the state, used the state to acquire the bourgeoisie status. Joseph (1987) described the involvement of the state in economic activities at a large scale as the making of the "the entrepot state". He identified four factors that could qualify an "enterpot state". As it concern the Nigerian State.

1. The export of primary agricultural products has been succeeded not by that of manufactured goods, but of mineral (petroleum) products,
2. The state has become the most important source of investible capital whether forits own ventures or those of individual Nigerian Capitalist;
3. Foreign capital remains the most effectively utilized investment capital in the economy, especially for large-scale undertakings.

4. The post-secessionist ideology of public sector leadership has not led to a collectivist economy or state monopoly capitalist sector, a trading- oriented indigenous private entrepreneurial sector, and a politically subordinate but highly profitable foreign-owned or foreign dominated sector (Joseph, 1987: 85-86).

Conclusion

It is evidently clear that the phenomenon of bureaucratic corruption can be better being understood from the nature and character of the state. The state being an "entrepot state" became a fertile ground for bureaucrats who were mediators in the competition of the various bourgeois class. The situation afforded the bureaucrats ample opportunity to acquire capital using state machineries, thereby becoming controllers of the productive forces. Their position of influence was further strengthened by the intervention of the military on several occasion in Nigerian politics, thus making then extremely influential. As Alavi (1973) posits, the military-bureaucratic class became extremely influential after independence due to its role in the colonial era.

As such, it was able to assert its authority, and eventually becoming extremely influential in the determination of economic interests and favours of the state. Bureaucratic corruption is thus a means of elevation of the bureaucratic class into the bourgeoisie category as Osoba (1969) mentioned. To date, the influence of the bureaucrats remains overwhelmingly high. Whether in state agencies (economic or productive) or in determining contracts, and regulating private competition for state resources.

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