

Corruption and the Nigerian Economy: A Descriptive Survey of Inhibiting Behavioral Factors

Good Wilson

Department of Political Science,

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers State,

Nigeria

Abstract

It has been observed by scholars and commentators that corruption is a major challenge to social, political, and economic development in any country. The consequences of corruption are unfavorable for the progress of any society. Against this backdrop, this article examines the effects of corruption on the economic development of Nigeria. It discusses the sociocultural, political, and economic factors responsible for the endemic nature of corruption in Nigeria and concludes that the “top-to-bottom” corruption in Nigeria has negatively affected the country’s economic development. To change this situation, the leadership must genuinely commit to fighting corruption from the top down; corruption control mechanisms need to be strengthened, the offenders need to be punished, and the citizenry needs to be mobilized to demand transparency and accountability.

Keywords: Nigeria, corruption, political leadership, economic development

Introduction

Corruption, throughout history and across societies, has become a persistent phenomenon. It is evident in all types of political systems and in various forms both in established and developing democracies. Corruption is ubiquitous. However, its effects differ from one political system to another. The devastating effects of corruption are overwhelmingly evident in the developing countries where the economic base is often weak, the political structures are fragile, and there are inadequate mechanisms for control (Dike, 2011). Transparency International (TI) in partnership with Afrobarometer conducted a survey in 28 sub-Saharan African states between March 2014 and September 2015. Over 43,000 participants

(43,143) provided their views on government corruption in their countries. Many governments were poorly rated by these respondents on their efforts to stop corruption in their states. For example, about three out of four respondents scored their governments' anti-corruption efforts low in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and South Africa (Transparency International, 2018).

The phenomenon of government corruption has experienced an upsurge of academic interest characterized by numerous publications and conferences devoted to it. For example, the *Journal of Developing Societies* published a two-part special issue on culture and corruption (volume 32, issues 1 and 2, 2016), which included an article on corruption in Nigeria (see Bamidele, Olaniyan, & Ayodele, 2016). In 2015, the chairperson of TI, José Ugaz, speaking about corruption in Africa, stated that:

Corruption creates and increases poverty and exclusion. While corrupt individuals with political power enjoy a lavish life, millions of Africans are deprived of their basic needs like food, health, education, housing, access to clean water and sanitation. (Transparency International, 2015)

TI's Corruption Perceptions Index measurement in 2018 found perceptions of huge corruption levels in the public sector worldwide. Not a single country was corruption-free and two-thirds of all the countries measured were perceived to have serious corruption problems, including Nigeria (Transparency International, 2018). Nigeria was ranked 144 out of the 180 countries in the index, which placed it among the countries perceived to have the worst corruption (Denmark was ranked number 1, with the least corruption).

Nigeria suffers from the problem of endemic corruption and is confronted with a severe socioeconomic and political crisis of development. The state has been criticized by various corruption-monitoring agencies as among the most corrupt nations in the world. Nigeria received a score of 27 out of 100 on the 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index maintained by TI. (Transparency International, 2018). TI's perceived corruption ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to an international survey of experts and businesspeople. It uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

In Nigeria, everybody talks about corruption and blames the country's high levels of unemployment, poverty, and insecurity on corruption. Sermons, lectures, and workshops identify the causes and possible means for control or eradication of corruption; yet, no one agrees or owns up to corruption unless they are caught in the act. Corruption is perceived as

an act of moral degradation and a departure from the agreeable norms and objectives of proper societal behavior; but despite its widespread condemnation by nearly everyone in society, corrupt practices continue to increase and impede the country's developmental strides and societal well-being. The focus of this article is on corruption that takes place within the political system. It examines these questions: what exactly is corruption? Why has it continued to increase in spite of its widespread condemnation? What are its economic effects? What measures can be adopted to control and eradicate it? A descriptive and historical approach is utilized in analyzing this subject. The article makes use of secondary data to provide a quantitative as well as qualitative understanding of the issues under examination. There are six sections. The first section (this section) introduces the subject matter while the second section introduces the conceptual and theoretical vocabulary used in this article. The third section examines the causes of corruption while the fourth section deals with efforts that have been undertaken at corruption control. The fifth section examines the effects of corruption on Nigeria's economic development. Finally, the sixth section provides concluding comments and recommendations.

Concepts and theoretical Perspectives

The concept of corruption has become an essential feature of regular discourse formally and informally in Nigerian society, where the phenomenon is believed to be the main basis for the country's underdevelopment. Defining corruption is problematic; this is so because the concept is used to denote a number of deviant forms of behavior that cut across social, political, and legal norms. According to Ofoeze (2004, p. 20), corruption is

any action or inaction of any person, or group (public or private) deliberately perpetrated to secure advantages for oneself, a relation, associate or group(s) in a manner that detracts from the accepted regulations, morals, and/or ethical standards or codes and hence constituting a travesty of justice, equity and fair play.

According to Lipset and Lenz (2000, p. 112), corruption has also been defined as any "effort to secure wealth or power through illegal means, private gain at public expense, or misuse of public power for private benefit."

Corruption is always connected to the failure to adhere to some conventional standards about individual behavior, the cultural norms of society, and the use/abuse of physical objects. Based on the abovementioned definitions, an act can be described as corrupt when:

1. the act has to do with people occupying authority positions of public or private trust;
2. the committed act negates the laws, regulations, values, and norms of society; and
3. it is intentionally carried out to promote private interests and intentions.

Political corruption occurs within the political sphere of governance and the exercise of public authority, when the political decision-makers, policy formulators, and implementers engage in the kind of corrupt practices described above. Corruption occurs when legislation and policies are made for the advantage of the policymakers and self-interests. In practice, political corruption affects and distorts policymaking, political institutions, governance, rules, regulations, and orderly procedures (Amundsen, 1997). The underlying assumption is that, political corruption occurs when public office becomes the instrument for achieving personal benefits (World Bank, 1997), and when the “corruption is intentional” (Garner, 2004; Neild, 2002). Corruption occurs when a personal benefit is expected, material or immaterial, but typically wealth, political power, and social status. Corruption is involved when public officials take actions that enhance the welfare of their family or their particular ethnic community to the disadvantage of other members of the public. In this article, the emphasis is on the public sphere where political actors engage in corrupt activities and on the interface between the public and private spheres (see Johnson & Sharma, 2004).

Development is a multifaceted process in human society; it can be viewed from the political, social, and economic perspectives. Some efforts to give the concept precision have been made, but it is generally used in ways that are not that different from the earlier concepts of “progress” or advancement. Some scholars, political leaders, and experts tend to equate development with economic growth in the sense of an increase in total economic output or per capita income. Others prefer to emphasize structural changes as a major component of development, and argue that development must reflect changes such as a reduction in unemployment,

poverty, inequality, access to basic social amenities, etc. (Bassey & Utre, 2007; Chêne, 2014; Nye, 1967).

Some illuminating thoughts have been offered by Sen (1990) on the concept of development. He associates “capacity expansion” and freedom with development, and contends that capacity enhancement requires adequate support from the state and civil society. The satisfaction of every individual’s basic necessities requires this. For Sen, development requires the expansion of individual freedom and the autonomy of civil society. Development has been conceptualized by Todaro (1989) as a multidimensional process that entails key modifications in social structures, institutions, and popular attitudes, the reduction of inequality, the acceleration of economic growth, as well as the eradication of absolute poverty. Development, whether political, economic, or social, is conceived by Rodney (1972) as both an increase in output and changes in the technology and organization of production. For Rodney, development is a multidimensional concept which connotes changes within all realms of social life.

For most scholars of development, the political system is a fundamental factor in the realization of development however they conceive it. For example, for Almond and Powell (1966), development is attainable when the political system has the capacity for articulating and aggregating public interests, allocating resources, and maintaining law and order through well-functioning institutions. According to Almond and Powell, political development involves an evolutionary process in which a democratic society is constructed through the adoption of democratic structures and forms of behavior, which facilitate the achievement of national objectives in economic and social development. Social development generally is conceived as progressive social change; it refers to a process in which social norms and social institutions are transformed over time, resulting in the transformation of the ways of life and the major social structures of society (Adeniyi, 1999). Economic development is most often construed as advancement in the overall living standards of the people in any given society. Economic development generally is conceived in terms of the attainment of Anglo-European ideals of modernization represented by an increase in the production of capital and consumer goods, some degree of greater economic and social equity, as well as certain institutional improvements and the adoption of capitalist economic values (Falodun, Omogiagor, & Ezeaku, 1997). In general, economic development involves improvements in the overall quality of life of the majority of the people in a given society. In most of the conceptual perspectives reviewed above,

there is a link between corruption and development. Generally speaking, corruption is considered a major obstacle and threat to good governance and to national economic and social development.

More specifically, what is often referred to as elite theory can be utilized in explaining the ascendancy of corrupt practices in Nigeria. Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923), Gaetano Mosca (1858–1941), and Roberto Michels (1876–1936) are among the major proponents of elite theory (Varma, 1999). The elite theoretical perspective places emphasis upon the leadership in a given society and how it affects governance and socioeconomic matters. The terms “elite” or “elites” generally refer to everyone in a given society who by virtue of their exposure, talents, connections, education, and material wealth exercise overwhelming influence in political, social, and/or economic life (Bottomore, 1976; Nwankwo, 1997; Parry, 1976). They are a privileged minority who generally have leadership/organizational skills, leadership ambitions, and they often have access to key bodies of knowledge and information. In the political realm, they play significant, if not the dominant, roles in orchestrating the policy agenda and determining political priorities (Geraint, 1969; Ikelegbe, 1994; Varma, 1975). As Ihonvbere contends (2009), the elite/elites control the political and economic structures of society, especially the means of coercion, and they produce and maintain the ideological domain of society.

The origin and development of the elites in Nigeria is the product of the character of colonial Nigeria. The elites, who emerged during the decolonization period as the political leaders of postcolonial Nigeria, did not deviate substantially from the development ideology of the colonial regime, which is evident in the postcolonial exploitation of the Nigerian people (Ayandele, 1974; Post & Vickers, 1973). For the Nigerian elites, governance is seen as a means to an end, their self-enrichment through corrupt practices rather than genuine nation building. Thus, they have continued to impede the democratization of Nigeria instead of playing a leading role in promoting good governance as is required in any society (Enemuo & Momoh, 1999).

From the elite theoretical perspective, one can infer that the cultivation of corruption in Nigeria is from the top to bottom. The leadership in Nigeria over time has been widely considered corrupt. A sizeable number of public officials, especially political officeholders, have become very rich after leaving office (Adedjoja, 2013; Sklar, Onwudiwe, & Kew, 2006). A culture of nonaccountability has infiltrated the socioeconomic strata both in the public and private sectors in Nigeria. The political elites have used their monopoly of political power for their personal benefit without

any meaningful public accountability (Global Financial Integrity, 2013; Kew, 2006).

Causes of Corruption in Nigeria

Several factors have been pinpointed by scholars as responsible for the enthronelement of corrupt practices in the developing countries. These factors cut across sociocultural differences, ethno-linguistic divisions, and political variables. Some of the more notable reasons why corruption has become endemic in Nigeria are highlighted below:

1. **Political office as an avenue for wealth accumulation:** Political offices are seen as an avenue for accumulating wealth by Nigeria's political elites; thus, they regard the appointment or election into political offices as a "must have" at all cost (Agwu, 2011). Politics provides the easiest route to wealth and status and politicians do anything to acquire political office including vote buying, politically motivated killings, and electoral fraud. Political offices are used by the officeholders for appropriating material benefits for themselves, their allies, and kinship members (Seteolu, 2005).
2. **Weak enforcement on the part of governmental control mechanisms:** The various anti-corruption agencies and government initiatives to control corruption in Nigeria have been ineffective and the country continues to rank as very corrupt on the world corruption index, occupying in 2018 the 144th position out of 180 countries in the index maintained by Transparency International (TI, 2018).
3. **Lack of transparency and accountability in governance:** Transparency and public accountability are important elements in the maintenance of democratic forms of government. In Nigeria, the political leaders holding public offices care very little about maintaining transparency in governance (Nnamdi, 2009). Accountability requires that public officials be obligated to give account of their official decisions and actions to the public. However, the conditions in Nigeria are quite different; elected officials do not account for their political actions and decisions and especially there is very little financial accountability (Daily Trust, 2013; Ochulor, Metuonu, & Asuo, 2011; *New York Times*, 2012).
4. **Lack of effective citizens' participation in governmental decision-making:** Citizen participation in the political system is a basic necessity to ensure that political power is used to benefit the

majority of the citizenry, protect disadvantaged groups, and bring about equity in socioeconomic development (Tandon & Kak, 2007). A major obstacle to controlling corruption in Nigeria is the weak attitude of the citizenry toward participating in the government beyond voting in elections. Thus, it is difficult for the citizenry to effectively control the leadership and to ensure transparency and accountability in policymaking and policy implementation (Dike, 2011).

5. **Lack of genuine commitment to creating a national political community and national social and cultural norms:** The absence of a cohesive national political community and national social and cultural norms resulting in loyalty to the national community and patriotism to the country is among the factors fueling corruption in the ethnically divided Nigerian political system (Bassey, 2011). Adebayo (1999) characterizes interethnic relations in Nigeria as “cohabitation without marriage,” while Ifidon (1996) contends that Nigerian citizenship is merely geographical, and lacks any national ideological content.
6. **the influence of the extended family system and the ostentatious lifestyle of the higher public officials:** In most African countries, including Nigeria, because of the importance of extended family ties, individuals have promoted nepotism in public employment to cater for the needs and welfare of family members at the expense of others. This factor places undue pressure on the working members of families to go to any length to meet the demands of their extended family members, including engaging in corrupt practices (Bassey, 2011).
7. **the high cost of financing political parties and electoral campaigns:** The high cost of financing political parties and elections can constrain political office holders to illicit acquisition for future electoral contexts. In Nigeria, the Electoral Act (2010) stipulates the ceiling of expenses by candidates and political parties for specific elective positions. The maximum limits are pegged at: ₦1 billion or US\$2,764,271.00 (1 Nigerian naira = 0.0028 US dollars) for presidential candidates, ₦200 million (US\$552,854) for governorship candidates, and ₦40 million (US\$110,570) and ₦20 million (US\$55,285), respectively, for Senate and House of Representatives candidates (Olorunmola, n.d.). In fact, the high cost of obtaining party nomination forms for political offices in

Nigeria is one of the factors identified as responsible for corruption in the political system. For example, in the 2015 general elections, the PDP presidential forms costs ₦22 million, senatorial seat forms costs ₦4.5 million, House of Representatives and State Assembly forms costs ₦2.5 million and ₦1.2 million, respectively, while the governorship forms were priced at ₦11 million (Oladimeji, 2014; Premium Times, 2014).

Although it has been argued that the sale of forms is a means of raising funds for the party, it has contributed to high party campaign costs and made running for elective offices almost the exclusive preserve of the rich elites while discouraging others who have the ambition but not the needed funding from doing so. In addition, people who support candidates either in purchasing nomination forms or in other aspects of their campaign, see themselves as investors who are hoping to recoup their investments with a substantial profit (Adibe, 2014; Premium Times, 2014). These unhealthy practices are undoubtedly inimical to corruption-free good governance.

the Nigerian Government's Efforts at Controlling Corruption

Both past and present Nigerian political regimes have made efforts to curb corruption. These measures include:

1. the 1975 "Corrupt Practices Decree" of the Murtala–Obasanjo regime;
2. the Buhari–Idiagbon regime's War against Indiscipline;
3. the 1990 creation of a Code of Conduct Bureau;
4. the 1995 Advance Fee Fraud and Other Related Offences Decree by the Abacha regime, which was reenacted by the Obasanjo administration in 2006;
5. the 2004 Money Laundering Act;
6. the 2004 Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act; and
7. the 2007 Procurement Act.

These were accompanied by the establishment of the following anti-corruption agencies (Enweremadu, 2006; Ukwuoma et al., 2008):

1. The 2000 Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC).

2. The 2003 Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).
3. The Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU) which was later transformed into the Bureau of Public Procurement.

The most prominent and active of these agencies are the ICPC, established in September 2000, and the EFCC, established in April 2003. These were part of then President Obasanjo's anti-corruption strategy to curb corruption in response to the negative international attention generated by the high rate of economic and financial crimes in the country. These bodies were supposed to serve as effective deterrence against the corrupt practices during this presidential administration (Bello-Imam, 2005). This optimism came from the success recorded by similar bodies in other countries such as Singapore and HongKong, which led to a drastic reduction in the level of corrupt practices. The speedy investigation and prosecution of corrupt individuals was instrumental to their success. However, these agencies in Nigeria have been faced with deep political and institutional challenges that have limited their credibility and effectiveness in checking corruption (Bello-Imam, 2005; Dike, 2011).

Lack of effective corruption control has been blamed on the attitude of the political leadership, who are believed to have been the bane of development in Nigeria (Adisa, 2003). Since their return to civilian rule in 1999, the Nigerian political leaders have contributed to the country's underdevelopment through mismanagement and corruption (Falola, 2005). The negative impact of corruption in the polity led Nwabueze to state

that the most tragic consequence of corruption in Nigeria is its effects upon the attitudes and mentality of the people. It has created a widespread feeling of frustration, of disgust and cynicism, which has in its turn undermined the enthusiasm for and faith in the state. (Nwabueze, 2007, p. 96)

Lack of effective corruption control has been blamed on the attitude of the political leadership which many believe to have been the bane of development in Nigeria (Adisa, 2003). Since the return to civilian rule in 1999, Nigerian political leaders have contributed to the country's underdevelopment through mismanagement and corruption (Falola, 2005). The attendant negative impact of corruption in the polity prompted Nwabueze to aver

that the most tragic consequence of corruption in Nigeria is its effects upon the attitudes and mentality of the people. It has created a widespread feeling

of frustration, of disgust and cynicism, which has in its turn undermined the enthusiasm for and faith in the state. (Nwabueze, 2007, p. 96)

Acknowledging the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria, a Congressional Research Service report (Ploch, 2012) submitted to the US Congress in 2012 reported pervasive, widespread, and massive corruption at all governmental levels and in the security forces. It also noted that litigants could not rely on the courts to render impartial judgments since judges were easily bribed. In 2013, Adedoya (2013) reported that the law on official corruption was not effectively implemented by the government and that Nigerian officials engaged in corrupt practices frequently with impunity. For example, four former state governors were arrested for allegedly misappropriating or stealing state funds—Alhaji Aliyu AkweDoma, Former Nasarawa State Governor (US\$115 million), Former Governor of Ogun State, Otunba Gbenga Daniel (US\$372 million), Chief Adebayo Alao-Akala, Former Governor of Oyo State (US\$160 million), and Muhammed Danjuma Goje, Former Governor of Gombe State (US\$82 million). Their trials did not yield any punishment for their crimes (Adedoya, 2013; Anyagafu & Sam-Duru, 2014).

Effects of Corruption on Economic Development

Some researchers and practitioners alike posit that corruption can liberalize rigid bureaucratic systems and promote industries in some economies where unnecessary rigidity and red tape can make entrepreneurship impossible and businesses unprofitable. In some countries, despite the existence of systemic corruption, the economic growth rate does not seem affected because the level of economic activities has been strictly controlled for years, while in other countries, corruption inhibits growth and development. The distinction here is between calculable and unforeseeable corruption and between controlled and uncontrolled corruption (Ugur & Nandini, 2011). For example, if businesses can forecast and estimate the amount of corruption and include it as a measurable expense into their calculations, then corruption may not be a significant impediment to investments and trade, especially if they know that a paid bribery will produce a positive effect. But if corruption is disorganized, plentiful, unpredictable, and inconsistent, then corruption is economically damaging (Chêne, 2014; Subair, 2013). The way in which the resources extracted by corruption are utilized makes an important difference in the economic and political systems. If there is a controlled and centralized

system that ensures that such resources/funds are reinvested into the local economy, it may benefit local businesses. This is, however, the exception to the rule. Thus, in most economies, especially in the African continent, high levels of corruption hinder development (Egunjobi, 2013).

The general view on the effect of corruption on economic development is that it discourages foreign investments and foreign aid and hinders local private investments as well as entrepreneurship and planning. Thus, corruption lowers incentives for investment and leads to a decline in economic growth (Chêne, 2014; Epele, 2006). This problem is heightened by the ongoing insurgency and political instability in certain areas of Nigeria.

Distortion of Government Expenditure Patterns and Misallocation of Resources

Corruption also alters government expenditure patterns. It has been observed that in countries where corrupt practices are high, government funds are allocated more to “vanity projects” and projects that are large and difficult to manage by state officials rather than on important public social services such as education and health. Examples of such projects include airports, highways, etc. (Ibrahim, 2003; Mauro, 1997).

Corruption constitutes a serious impediment to the effectiveness of resource mobilization and allocation in Nigeria; hence, it diverts resources from vital programs and projects that should reduce poverty and sustain economic development. Corruption weakens the domestic banking system, which is inimical to growth since it reduces savings and investment and results in low standard of living for the people. Also, resources received from corrupt practices are either moved out of the country to foreign bank accounts and investments in foreign businesses or are spent on the import of luxuries for private consumption or both. The many reports of money laundered by the political class to foreign bank accounts attest to the above notion (Adeyemi, 2016; Nnochiri, 2016).

Corruption increases the budgetary allocations and the operating costs of a government as well as the leakage of revenues and the resources available for public services. The former World Bank Vice President for Africa, Dr Obiageli Ezekwesili, stated in 2012 that Nigeria had lost over US\$400 billion due to corruption since it gained political independence in the early 1960s (Crisis Group Africa Reports, 2006;

Debt Management Office of Nigeria, 2013; Ezekwesili, 2012). Most of the money obtained from corrupt practices is used for political patronage, political violence, and electoral fraud (Human Rights Watch, 2007; *News International*, 2011).

Corruption Contributes to Income Inequality, Low Human Development, and Poverty

Endemic corruption can lead to a high rate of poverty for two reasons. First, it has been discovered that inequality in income is inimical to economic growth (Alesina & Rodrik, 1994), and since income inequality is heightened by corruption, both the reduction of income inequality and poverty reduction are stifled by corruption (Ravallion & Chen, 1997). Corruption is also associated with deficient management of both public finances and the provision of public goods, and it lowers average standards of living (Nevin, 2016). For example, in the human development ranking for 2016 on the African Human Development Index (HDI) released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Nigeria was ranked 152nd out of 188 countries, which means the country is in the category of countries with low levels of human development. Nigeria's HDI value rating has remained low due to the country's continuing widespread poverty. In 2010, it was rated at 0.500, 0.507 in 2011, 0.514 in 2013, 0.525 in 2014, and 0.527 in 2015. In 2016, the HDI value dropped back to 0.514 (Nwabughio, 2016; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2016).

Corruption contributes to increased poverty by illicitly diverting public funds meant for economic development, poverty reduction, and human capacity development to the personal gain of corrupt officials and their corrupt clients. Corruption unduly affects low-income earners who cannot afford to pay bribes and derive no benefits from the corruption-ridden public programs. This situation has contributed to the failure of state institutions, poverty, unemployment, loss of government revenue, and development debacles (Agwu, 2011). Thus, the high poverty level in Nigeria over time is linked to the prevalence of corrupt practices among the political class which has brought untold hardships to the majority of Nigerians.

The Common Country Analysis (CCA) report of the UNDP in June 2015 stated that the average poverty level (percentage of population living in poverty) for the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria was as follows: South

West—19.3 percent, South South—25.2 percent, SouthEast—27.36 percent, North Central—45.7 percent, NorthEast—76.8 percent, and North West—80.9 percent; and the national average poverty level was 46 percent. The estimates were based on data gathered between 2004 and 2014 (United Nations, 2015). In September, the 2016 CCA described Nigeria, despite its rich natural resources and large oil extraction industry, as one of the most unequal and poorest countries in the world, with an estimated population of more than 80 million of the country's 186 million population living below the poverty line (Business Day, 2016; Opejobi, 2016).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The article has examined the issues of corruption, its endemic nature in the Nigerian political system, as well as the antidotes or panacea for managing, reducing, and/or eradicating this menace from the political, socioeconomic, and cultural fabric of Nigerian society. The analysis of corrupt activities, the magnitude, and the amount of resources involved reveals that Nigeria is an enormously rich resource country. The challenge is how to optimally utilize these resources through honest, competent, effective, and accountable leadership. The struggle against corruption must be aligned with economic development, democratization, and the strengthening of democratic institutions to ensure efficient control mechanisms, crime detection, and punishment.

In addition to the above, the following measures to effectively check corruption in the Nigerian political system are suggested below:

1. The high premium placed on political offices should be deemphasized by structurally reducing the high remuneration and privileges attached to these offices.
2. The institutions and organizational mechanisms for ensuring accountability and transparency in governance need to be strengthened.
3. The institutional mechanisms for corruption detection, control, and prosecution should be substantially improved to ensure their effectiveness.
4. People of high moral standards with proven integrity and competency should be encouraged to participate in politics and to seek political offices. This will reduce the number of persons who seek political positions mainly for personal interest.

5. The high cost of financing political parties and elections as well as for obtaining nomination forms by aspirants should be eliminated and the influence of money in politics greatly reduced.
6. Policies and programs that ensure equity and a sense of national unity across the country should be pursued by the national government. This will encourage national patriotism and discourage ethnic chauvinism, divisiveness, and primordial loyalties in the governmental system.
7. To make the fight against corruption effective, the government must fight it from top to bottom and ensure that corrupt political officials are prosecuted, punished, and shown the way out. In addition, corruption control from top to bottom can become more effective through a number of sensitizing and morality enhancing means such as speeches, symposiums, campaigns, etc. This will serve as a clarion call to the rest of society that the government is determined to stamp out corruption from the socioeconomic and political fabric of Nigerian society.
8. Finally, the citizenry must put pressure on their representatives and all political officeholders for accountability and transparency in governance. They should mobilize to take an active and vigilant role in both the policymaking and implementation processes so as to curb corrupt practices in the political system. Achieving these transformations also requires a determined and selfless leadership that musters the necessary political will to achieve them. Corruptly inclined political leaders rarely instigate effective measures for curtailing corruption when such actions eliminate the personal benefits they derive from the corruption.

REFERENCES

- Adebayo, O. (1999). The Nigerian nation-state: Cohabitation without marriage. In O. Eperokun (Ed.), *Nigeria's bumpy ride into the 21st century* (pp. 110–115). Ibadan: The Home of Lords.
- Adedola, T. (2013). US report: There's massive corruption in Nigeria. *This Day Live*. Retrieved from <http://allafrica.com/view/group/main/main/id/00024107.html>
- Adeniyi, O. B. E. (1999). Education and national development. *Journal of Art and Social Sciences*, 1(2), 56–63.
- Adeyemi, O. (2016). *10 biggest corruption cases that shook Nigeria in 2015*. Nigeria: Green News Publication. Retrieved from <https://soapboxie.com/world-politics/Corruption-in-Nigeria>
- Adibe, J. (2014). Exorbitant party nomination forms and systemic corruption. *Daily Trust*, November 13. Retrieved from <http://www.dailytrust.com.ng/>

news/thursday-column/exorbitant-party-nomination-forms-and-systemic-corruption/61360.html

- Adisa, H. (2003). *Corruption and Nigerian government*. Retrieved from file:///E:/ad.asp.htm
- Agwu, S. (2011, July 23). Corruption: Bane of good governance in Nigeria. *The Sun News*. Retrieved from <https://www.thenigerianvoice.com/news/56728/corruption-bane-of-good-governance-in-nigeria.html>
- Alesina, A., & Rodrik, D. (1994). Distributive politics and economic growth. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 109(2), 465–490.
- Almond, A. G., & Powell, G. B. (1966). *Comparative politics: A developmental approach*. Boston, MA: Little Brown and Co.
- Amundsen, I. (1997). Political corruption: An introduction to the issues (Working Paper 99:7). Bergen: Chr. Michelsen Institute.
- Anyagafu, S. V., & Sam-Duru, P. (2014). *US slam Nigeria: Corruption is extremely high in this country—Dep. Asst. Secretary of State*. Valley Forge, PA: The Vanguard, April 06. Retrieved from <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/04/us-slams-nigeria-corruption-extremely-high-country-dep-asst-secretary-state/>
- Ayandele, E. A. (1974). *The educated elite in Nigerian society*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Bamidele, O., Olaniyan, A. O., & Ayodele, B. (2016). Culture, corruption, and anticorruption struggles in Nigeria. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 32, 103–129. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0169796X16653526>
- Bassey P. (2011). The culture of corruption in contemporary Nigeria: The way out (Unpublished). *American Journal, Social Management Sciences*, 2(1), 91–99.

- Bassey, O. E., & Utre, E. I. (2007). Corruption and national development in Nigeria: The way forward. *Sophia: An African Journal of Philosophy*, 9(2), 164–169.
- Bello-Imam, I. B. (2005). *The war against corruption in Nigeria: Problems and prospects*. Ibadan: College Press & Publishers.
- Bottomore, T. B. (1976). *Elites and society*. Harmondsworth: Middlesex Penguin Books.
- Business Day. (2016). *Over 64% of Nigerians living below poverty level—Report*. September 30, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.businessdayonline.com/over-64-of-nigerians-living-below-poverty-level-report/>
- Chêne, M. (2014). *The impact of corruption on growth and inequality*. Berlin: Transparency International, Anti-Corruption Helpdesk.
- Crisis Group Africa Reports. (2006). Nigeria: Want in the Midst of Plenty, N° 113, 19 July, pp. 36–38.
- Daily Trust. (2013, July 22). Nigerian lawmakers top salaries chart. *Daily Trust*, Abuja. Retrieved from <https://allafrica.com/stories/201307221471.html>
- Debt Management Office of Nigeria. (2013). Total public debt stock as at 30th September, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.dmo.gov.ng/oci/edebtstock/docs/External%20Debt%20Stock%20as%20at%2030th%20September_%202013.pdf
- Dike, V. E. (2011). *Corruption control: A new paradigm for effective control in Nigeria*. Retrieved from <http://www.NigeriaWorld.com/feature/article/corruption.html>
- Egunjobi, T. A. (2013). An econometric analysis of the impact of Corruption on economic growth in Nigeria. *E3 Journal of Business Management and Economics*, 4(3), 054–065.
- Enemuo, F., & Momoh, A. (1999). *Civil associations in Nigeria: Politics of transition and governance 1986–1996*. O. Oyediran & A. Agbaje (Eds.) (pp. 73–104). Great Britain: Russell Press Limited.
- Enweremadu, U. D. (2006). The struggle against corruption in Nigeria: The role of the ICPC. *IFRA Ibadan Special Research Issue*, 2, 41–66.
- Epele, A. (2006). Corruption and the Nigerian society: Causes, effects and the futility of solutions. *The Politics Magazine*. Benin City: University of Benin.
- Ezekwesili, O. (2012, August 28). Nigeria loses \$400bn to oil thieves. *Vanguard*. Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/08/nigeria-loses-400bn-to-oil-thieves-ezekwesili/>
- Falodun, A. B., Omogiagor, N., & Ezeaku, L. C. (1997). *Roundup economics for senior secondary certificate examination*. Lagos: Longman.

- Falola, T. (Ed.). (2005). *The dark webs: Perspectives on colonialism in Africa*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Garner, B. (2004). *Black's law dictionary* (8th ed.). Eagan, MN: Thompson West.
- Geraint, P. (1969). *The political elites*. London, UK: George Allen and Unwin.
- Global Financial Integrity (GFI). (2013). Financial flows cost Nigeria \$130b. Retrieved from File:///E:/illicit.CSP.htm.
- Human Rights Watch. (2007). *Criminal politics: Violence, 'godfathers' and corruption in Nigeria* (p. 39). New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.
- Ibrahim, J. (2003). Corruption in Nigeria: Transition, persistence and continuity. *The Nigerian Social Scientist*, 1(2), 3–13.
- Ifidon, E. A. (1996). Citizenship, statehood and the problem of democratization in Nigeria. *Africa Development*, XXI(4), 93–107.
- Ihonvbere, J. (2009, March 19). *Leadership and the future of Nigeria*. Valley Forge, PA: Vanguard.
- Ikelegbe, A. O. (1994). *Public policy making and analysis*. London, UK: Uri Publishing Ltd.
- Johnson, R. A., & Sharma, S. (2004). About corruption. In R. A. Johnson (Ed.), *The struggle against corruption: A comparative study* (pp. 1–19). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kew, D. (2006). Nigeria. In Sanja Tatic (Ed.), *Countries at the crossroads*. New York, NY: Freedom House.
- Lipset, S. M., & Lenz, G. S. (2000). Corruption, culture, and markets. In Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington (Eds.), *Culture matters* (p. 112). New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Mauro, P. (1997). The effects of corruption on growth, investment, and government expenditure: A cross-country analysis. In Kimberly Ann Elliot (Ed.), *Corruption and the global economy* (pp. 83–107). Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics.
- Neild, R. (2002). *Public corruption: The dark side of the social revolution*. London, UK: Anthem Press.
- Nevin, A. S. (2016). *Impact of corruption on Nigeria's economy*, February 23, 2016. Retrieved from http://pwc.blogs.com/africa_upfront/2016/02/impact-of-corruption-on-nigerias-economy.html.
- Nnamdi, H. S. (2009). *Nigerian government and politics*. Lagos: Trust Pub.
- Nnochiri, I. (2016). Money laundering: EFCC recovers looted \$2trn in 12 years. Vanguard, February 3, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/02/money-laundering-efcc-recovers-looted-2trn-in-12-years/>
- Nwabueze, B. (2007). *How president Obasanjo subverted Nigeria's federal system*. Ibadan: Gold Press Ltd.

- Nwabughio, L. (2016). Nigeria still ranked 152nd in 2016 human development index by UNDP on August 30, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/08/nigeria-still-ranked-152nd-2016-human-development-index-undp-2/>
- Nwankwo, A. A. (1997). *On the brink of disaster: Nigerian ethos and meaning of the tragic state*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Nye, J. S. (1967). Corruption and political development: A cost-benefit analysis. *The American Political Science Review*, 61(2), 417–427.
- Ochulor, C. L., Metuonu, I. C., & Asuo, O. O. (2011). Corruption in contemporary Nigeria: The way out. *American Journal of Social and Management Sciences*, 2(1), 91–99. Retrieved from <http://www.scribbr.org/>
- Ofoeze, J. (2004). *Corrupt local government*. Ibadan: Longman Press.
- Oladimeji, W. (2014). 2015: Party nominations and monetisation of elective offices. *National Mirror*. Retrieved from <https://www.latestnigeriannews.com/news/880779/2015-party-nominations-and-monetisation-of-elective-offices.html>
- Olorunmola, A. (n.d.). Cost of Politics in Nigeria, Background Paper. Retrieved from <http://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Nigeria-Cost-of-Politics.pdf>
- Opejobi, S. (2016). Nigeria one of the poorest countries in the world, over 80m living below poverty line—UN report. *Daily Post India*, September 5. Retrieved from <http://dailypost.ng/2016/09/05/nigeria-one-poorest-countries-world-80m-living-poverty-line-un-report/>
- Parry, G. (1976). *Political elite*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Ploch, L. (2012). *Nigeria: Current issues and U.S. policy*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service Report for Congress. Retrieved from <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/504db3912.pdf>
- Post, K., & Vickers, M. (1973). *Structure and conflict in Nigeria 1960–1966*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Premium Times. (2014). Lawmakers decry high cost of parties' nomination forms. October 27. Retrieved from <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/170219-lawmakers-decry-high-cost-of-parties-nomination-forms.html>
- Ravallion, M., & Chen, S. (1997). What can new survey data tell us about recent changes in distribution and poverty? *World Bank Economic Review*, 11(2), 357–382.
- Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. London, UK: Bogle Ouyerture.

- Sen, A. K. (1990). Development as capacity expansion. In K. Griffing & J. Knight (Eds.), *Human development and the international development strategy for the 1990s* (pp. 41–58). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Seteolu, D. (2005). Historical trajectories of elections in Nigeria: The state, political elite and electoral politics. In Godwin Onu & Abubakar Momoh (Eds.), *Elections and democratic consolidation in Nigeria* (pp. 34–42). Lagos: Triad Associates.
- Sklar, R. L., Onwudiwe, E., & Kew, D. (2006). Nigeria: Completing Obasanjo's legacy. *Journal of Democracy*, 17(3), 100–115.
- Subair, K. (2013). On the consistency of economic growth with corruption in Nigeria. *Journal of Economics*, 4(2), 183–195.
- Tandon, R., & Kak, M. (2007). *Citizen participation in democratic governance: In our hands*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.
- The News International*. (2011, July 18). A rain of locusts. *The News International*, pp. 14–20.
- The New York Times*. (2012, January 12). *Nigerian politicians are among the world's best paid*. Nigeria boils over. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/13/opinion/nigerian-anger-boils-over.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=902AB56AFB87DC3118442F0EC2E43D8B&gwt=pay&assetType=REGIWALL>
- Todaro, M. P. (1989). *Economic development in the third world* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Longman.
- Transparency International. (2015). *Corruption in Africa: 75 million people pay bribes, Sub-Saharan Africa*. November 30, 2015. Retrieved from http://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_in_africa_75_million_people_pay_bribes
- . (2018). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2018*. Retrieved from https://www.transparency.org/files/content/pages/2018_CPI_Executive_Summary.pdf
- Ugur, M., & Nandini, D. (2011). *Evidence on the economic growth impacts of corruption in low-income countries and beyond*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.
- Ukwoma, B., Olawale, R., Ndujihe, C., & Nejuvie, I. (2008, July 11). Raising the stakes in the fight against corruption in the country. *The Guardian* (pp. 28–29).
- United Nations. (2015). *Ranking of Nigerian states by poverty rates*. Retrieved from <http://ooduarere.com/news-from-nigeria/breaking-news/ranking-of-nigerian-states-by-poverty-rates-by-united-nations/>
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (1997). *Human development report*. Oxford: Oxford University Press for UNDP.

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2016). *Trends in the human development index, 1990–2015*. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/trends>
- Varma, S. P. (1975). *Modern political theory* (3rd ed.). Jangpura: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd.
- Varma, S. P. (1999). *Modern political theory*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd.
- World Bank. (1997). *Helping developing countries combat corruption: The role of the World Bank* (pp. 39–51). New York, NY: Oxford University Press
- Crimes in Nigeria.