

# Political Class and Anti-Corruption War in Nigeria

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## Abstract

Political class and corruption have been blamed for the existence of underdevelopment in Nigeria and how its negative inferences have brought a set-back across various sector of the society. Government had made efforts to wipe away this portent by creating anti-corruption agencies, but corruption still exist and keep increasing across most sectors in Nigeria. This study aimed at perusing on political class and anticorruption war in Nigeria. This study pointed out causes of corruption by the political class and also other factors that led to poor growth and development in Nigeria and how to prevent the glitches. Social network theory of development has been applied for this study. Documentary method was adopted for the study, with a major secondary source of data in the course of the study. The work-study stated how corruption, ascriptions and greed grosses in the various process of political class in Nigeria. And recommendations were made for this phenomenon such as independent operations and strengthening of anti-corruption agencies to fight against corrupt practices, promoting regional and international economy social network balance Cooperation to yield smooth growth and development among the political class as whole.

**Keywords:** Political class, Corruption, growth, Development, Agency

## Introduction

Corruption exist and persist across the world. It manifests from petty bribes and kickbacks to grand theft of public resources. Technology development has made corruption a global problem that transcends geographical boundaries. It is a basic issue for development. Corruption hurts the weak and impoverished, raises costs, and restricts access to essential services like social programs, health care,

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education, and even justice. To prevent these negative impacts, its call for confrontation with determination and deliberate actions. This commitment requires building transparency, inclusive and accountable institutions across the political class. Indeed, across western and central Africa states emphasis are required for good governance, accountability, and transparency, with aim of reducing corruptions especially in Democratic space.

In Nigeria, the birth of Democracy on May, 29, 1999 brought happiness and jubilation to the country. Nigeria's progress has been impeded by the resurgence of corruption in the country after years of democracy. Two anti-corruption institutions were proposed by Obasanjo's administration in response to the concerning trend in the extent of financial and economic corruption by politicians; the Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC). These two organizations were established to prevent corruption's disastrous impact on the Nigerian economy. According to Smith (2017), despite all of the difficulties Nigeria is facing, corruption continues to be the primary barrier to its progress, exacerbating poverty and inequality. Achebe stated in his seminal work "The Trouble with Nigeria" that political leaders in the nation are the cause of its problems; they abuse their position of authority to commit crimes and establish their own policies (Achebe 1983). According to the EFCC (2005), corruption is a cankerworm that has gnawed away at the nation's fabric, stunting progress in every sector. Under development in Nigeria has many factors but corruption and the political influence has upper hand in under developing Nigeria. This has necessitated the study to examine the extent to which political class and anti-corruption war has effect in Nigeria polity.

## **Conceptual Review**

### **❖ Political class**

A small number of people in a society who possess a disproportionate amount of income, privilege, political influence, or expertise are known as the political class. Another name for them is the political elite. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, "elite" refers to individuals or groups that are seen as having greater authority than others of the same kind. According to Mosca (2016), the political elite sees it as a very limited number of politically conscious and engaged individuals, particularly in a democracy. According to Marx (1934), the bourgeoisie, or political class, are those who control the means of production in a society and use their cultural

hegemony to define and maintain the prevailing ideology (ideas, culture, mores, conventions, and traditions) of that society.

### ❖ **Corruption**

In layman's terms, corruption is the use of one's position to get a bribe from someone who needs something significant, such as applying for a job at a company or admittance to a higher university. However, corruption is more than just what the average person understands; according to Salish (2000), corruption is the misappropriation of public monies for personal benefit. The politicians are keeping the money that should be utilized for the nation's growth. Political corruption is the unlawful use of official authority to further a private interest, according to Morris (2018), a professor of politics. Since individuals in positions of authority frequently have the capacity to create laws that protect them, Kaufman (2017), a World Bank economist, expanded the idea to include "legal corruption," which is the misuse of power inside the framework of the law.

Some academics, such as Amino (1972) and Rodney (1972), believe that the African way of entering the global economy is to blame for its underdevelopment. Western academics thought that the externally imposed style of production was the reason for Africa's underdevelopment (Zambakari, 2012). According to Nageri et al. (2013), Agbiboa (2012), Maunro (2007), Obayelu (2007), Sachs (2005), and Smith (2007), underdevelopment occurs when a country's potential or resources are not completely used for the benefit of all citizens. We learn from Walter Rodney that corruption is not the same as underdevelopment (Rodney 1973).

### ❖ **Empirical studies**

The study views the research work by Aguna, (2015), which investigated on expertise in colonialism and Cost of governance: A study of Imo state, Nigeria. The study was only focused on the cost of governance and hinged on competence of the beneficiaries in terms of good governance in rural areas. This study ignored contribution of the good policies to socioeconomic development which is a vacuum to the study at close.

Aganga, (2010), studied on the principle of colonial leadership style and governance at Agatu area of Bunue state. He collected data from primary sources using a descriptive survey research approach. According to the report, despite the several tactics the government has implemented, colonial leadership has not successfully

and sufficiently met its goals in promoting development in the region. The study recommends that policies should be well design and implemented towards grass root development.

Akanbi, (2019), examined Corruption, accountability and governance in rural community of Edu in Kwara state. Primary and secondary sources of data were collected, and the sample size was determined using the systematic sampling approach and administered using the opportunistic sampling method. The study's findings showed that government development was not producing satisfactory outcomes.

Musa, (2015), explored on poverty and corruption in National Development: a study of a few states in North Africa that included oral interviews in addition to primary and secondary data. According to the report, while North African states have seen good development, much more work remains. There were very minor advancements in the field of generating.

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Olu, (2019), studied on the principle of Web in revealing potential of West African states political class. He used secondary sources to gather data for his descriptive survey study strategy. Notwithstanding the many tactics their governments have implemented, the study shows that the leadership of West African states has not successfully and sufficiently met its goals in promoting development in their regions. The study recommends that policies should be well design and implemented towards the states grass root development of African states.

Oskar (2019) conducted research on the conceptual underpinnings and emerging issues surrounding corruption at the grassroots level in African governments. The study's methodology took into account the variety of rural areas and the many types of difficulties encountered. There are no good theoretical applications in the subject.

## **Methodology**

The study applied documentary research, using majorly secondary sources of data such as articles, periodicals, other internet sources, and books among other recognized materials for the study.

Additionally, the study uses primary sources through face-to-face talks with important individuals within the study area. Hence, the data for this work were considered based on the documented sources of how the idea of political class expedite efforts against corruption the third world states through economy subjugation and exploitation by world system. The documented data used for this work were analyzed through content analysis in aiding the study.

## **Theoretical framework**

The broad concept of social network theory focuses on people, groups, and organizations as well as the web of interpersonal connections that both allow and restrict human behavior in accordance with social systems. Proponents of social networks Higgins and Kram (2008), posited that the mentoring of social network should be multiple simultaneous relations that provides valuable development assistance and advices against crimes.

By designating the majority of linkages, toughening existing connections, and comparing the diversity of networks to various public networks (both local and global), this coin development network model does all of these things at once. This idea demonstrated that a country is interconnected between the large-level, or organizations, and the machine-level, or individual behavior (instrumentality) of data processing (Weyer, 2012). As opposed to grammatical rules that apply to nouns that imply sex or animateness, races, age, or organizational characteristics, the hypothesis is based on established connections and their forms as well as the placement of performers within a network. Therefore, the connections—that is, the embeddedness of objects inside a network and the interaction between hierarchy and individual attributes—are the key points. This is why this idea is relevant to the research, to the debate or struggle against Nigerian governmental class adulteration. Despite the fact that the theory may be weak in other ways.

## **Causes of corruption in Nigeria**

A 2017 survey research found that the following elements contribute to corruption:

- Money greed, desire, and wealth attributions
- Low press freedom
- Low levels of democracy, low political transparency
- Poverty
- Political instability
- Gender inequality
- Lack of commitment of society.

When comparing the most and least corrupt nations, it has been observed that the former group includes countries with significant socioeconomic disparity, while the latter category includes countries with a high degree of social and economic fairness.

### **❖ Causes of underdevelopment**

Nigeria is a blessed and wonderful state with a large percentage of population and it also have an endless natural resource. It possesses outstanding qualities and has the potential to grow into a great country. However, the nation is enduring hardship and battling the issue of underdevelopment, which is not good. There are a lot of unpleasant things that contribute to it. Some of the reasons behind Nigeria's underdevelopment are listed below, along with solutions.

**Corruption:** It is among the most difficult issues in Nigerian daily living. It is a massive problem that hinders our progress and impacts practically every aspect of national life. It appears that regardless of the political leader we select, the outcomes will be the same and that they are not really concerned with enhancing the quality of life for Nigerians or the development of the nation. The majority of politicians either ruin the nation's services in another country or divert the funds that are communicated for various initiatives related to the country's incident and add bureaucracy to their bank records. Many MPs' extravagant behavior makes it very evident that they also collect money from the civil repository in addition to their official fees. There were skilled attempts to battle dishonesty in Nigeria and to become involved in disputes. For example, the administration created the EFCC and ICPC to combat baseness in the nation, but all of this effort was in vain.

We must first transform ourselves and our perspective on society in order to eradicate corruption. The "leading by example" approach must be used; powerful leaders should demonstrate the wrongness of corruption by setting an example. Achieving success also means fighting tribalism and strengthening national unity.

**Dependence on oil:** One nation that is nearly entirely reliant on oil security is Nigeria. Nigeria has significant oil reserves that support the nation's overall income, but we also have other revenue streams that receive little to no attention. E.g., we have subdivisions like farming and touristy that are a shackled and abandoned immature distinguished to lubricate subdivision. The travel subdivision would have continued to call foreign financiers and outside businesses if it were in better shape, but this aspect of frugality is currently disregarded. The unchangeable question is also bound by the farming area. Despite having an abundance of raw materials, Nigeria is nonetheless developing more slowly than it used to. Naturally, the answer is that agricultural subdivisions and travel bears require more thought and attention, just as the habit lubricant probably does. Extending these seconds will generate enough revenue to finish the desired projects and improve Nigeria's saving situation.

**Unemployment:** this is also a serious problem in Nigeria economy that is also affecting the fast grow of the economy. The rate of unemployment in Nigeria is far higher than the employment, when the rate of employment is greater than that of unemployment there will be higher contribution to the development of the country. Due to high prerequisites and a shortage of work, young people in Nigeria are unable to get employment. In Nigeria, a person's education and abilities do not guarantee employment; rather, it is based on their connections or ability to purchase employment. A person's knowledge and abilities that may have contributed to the progress and development of the nation are wasted if they are unable to pay for it. One consequence of underdevelopment in Nigeria is that the country's GDP continues to decline annually due to high unemployment rates.

**Insurgency:** It is one of the ongoing issues with Nigeria's progress. In 2009, the Islamist organization Boko Haram began its campaign. Since their decision to revolt against the Nigerian government, tensions have persisted in the nation due to the militants' continued activities. Thousands of lives and property are lost as a result of their violent acts.

The Boko Haram gang is totally opposed to western education and profit; unfortunately, they often display their faith and zeal against people who do not have the same unwavering trust and bureaucracy. Based on the amount of people they have killed and the dietary habits they exhibit, they have rightfully been identified as members of the world's most extremist dealer organization.

The question of whether the insurgents can operate for a while is crucial for anyone planning to establish property in Nigeria. Being skilled does not provide total security, especially if the loan search is conducted in the northeastern portion of the division. The financiers may decide to build their grant anywhere outside of Nigeria as a result of this grant authorization.

**Poor project supervision:** Many competent initiatives have been filed to raise the nation's incident in many sectors. However, similar to the first point, many initiatives fail to find a home, and even if they do, they often lack the conditions necessary to endure over time. In the absence of the exceptional, the project quickly becomes abandoned. Just prior to the project's respectable completion, the project managers should stick with the family achievement.

If they don't embrace the ruling class and refrain from reprimanding the board for extra thrifty aspects before the project is properly completed, we run the risk of continuously reiterating the same project, which severely slows down below expansion.

**High level of illiteracy:** one more reason for Nigeria underdevelopment is high rate of illiteracy in the country.

Is poverty the primary cause of illiteracy in Nigeria? From an early age, many children are responsible for providing for their families; rather than attending school, they will be begging on the streets to make ends meet. Some parents place little to no significance on their children's education since they are not educated themselves.

As a result, many Nigerians are born illiterate and without even a rudimentary education. The county will have more creative and capable individuals who will be able to generate fresh ideas that can improve the present and the future if the rate of illiteracy declines.

Numerous initiatives are available to provide basic education to individuals who cannot afford it, and they are effective ways to combat illiteracy.

It is possible to progressively overcome the reasons of underdevelopment mentioned above. Our nation has a strong opportunity of improving and developing if we resolve the aforementioned problems.

❖ **How to eradicate corruption in Nigeria**

- Government should stop given ways to pardon the convicted political criminals.
- Removal of constitutional immunity.
- The anti-corruption bodies should be given full independent in order to stop government or anyone from interfering in their duties.
- The two anti- corruption agencies should prosecute corrupt people found guilty of the act without delay.
- Enhance synergy among various organizations. And among others

## **Conclusion/Recommendations**

The political class and corruption are the major factor that hinder the development of Nigeria economy. Corruption increases poverty and high rate of poverty in the country that brings down the image of the country in the eyes of the world. The fight against corruption and underdevelopment of political class in Nigeria cannot be done only by the government it has to involve each and every citizen and institutions. Individually people need to change and amend for the betterment of the country and also leader should lead by good example. For betterment of anti-corruption war on political class; independent operations and strengthening of anti-corruption agencies to fight against corrupt practices, promoting regional and international economy social network balance Cooperation to yield smooth growth and development among the political class as whole, otherwise corruption will persist in the state beyond imaginations.

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