

Efcc's Function in Nigerian Governance, Politics, And Electoral Malpractice, The Viewpoint of the Efcc's Abuja Head Quarter

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Abstract: Therefore, this essay looks at political corruption in the context of election preparation and in light of recent advancements in the battle against the threat. The list of advisors A recent report from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, or EFCC, is stirring up debate in the political arena and serves as a reminder that the Commission and politicians do not have romantic relationships. In other words, nothing more agitates the typical Nigerian politician than a danger to his or her political goals, and nothing brings Nigerian politicians together more than the identification of a shared foe. This may help to explain the widespread indignation that followed the EFCC's publication of a list of politicians to political parties, warning them not to field certain candidates in the general elections scheduled for April 2015. The EFCC made it apparent when it released the list that it was only advisory and that it lacked the authority to prevent anyone from contesting the General elections in 2015. Lawyers and other right-wing activists attacked the EFCC, claiming that it is rapidly entering a period of lawlessness, just as the Commission was ready to justify its removal off the list. As the April election approaches, this essay explores the risks and difficulties that Nigeria faces due to political corruption. It looks at the idea of political corruption, its sources and effects, and how to prevent it from happening in the political system. In the paper's conclusion, INEC and the parties are praised for removing themselves from the list. This stands in stark contrast to the events leading up to the 2007 elections, when the Obasanjo-led Ahmadu Ali-led PDP wrote to Iwu's INEC to prevent some of its members from running the elections.

Keywords: Financial and economic crimes, electoral malpractice, political exposure, corruption manifestations, elections, political and governance, and corrupt behaviors.



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1.0 OVERVIEW

According to a report released a few years ago by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), corruption in Nigeria has cost the country an astounding 220 billion pounds since 1960. Since corruption has a terrible impact on national growth, this most likely explains why development is moving slowly. Thus, this chapter looks at how corruption has affected Nigerian governance since the country's independence. It makes the case that corrupt practices and similar ones would unavoidably hinder democratic administration, contaminate the political environment, establish a spatial economy, and cause the impoverished to become more numerous. The thesis in this chapter is based on the fact that corruption throws its thesis is based on the reality that Nigerian governance has been plagued by a lack of accountability, openness, and honesty for an extended period of time. Anti-corruption organizations should instead be governed and answerable to the judiciary, consist of individuals with a track record of honesty, and be headed by a judge who has a reputation for being courageous and forthright. Abalaka (2023).

Government assistance programs have been distorted and diverted, and corruption has weakened development's objectives and vision. In fact, it has persisted in undermining the efficiency of the democratic process, particularly the ability of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), which oversees elections, to hold and institutionalize free and fair elections. Consequently, as given its detrimental impact on the endeavor to strengthen democracy, political corruption must be addressed before the 2011 election campaign gets underway (Sulaiman, 2018).

Therefore, this essay looks at political corruption in the context of the 2011 election preparations and in light of recent advancements in the battle against the threat. The principles related to corruption are examined, along with the detrimental impacts of corruption on Nigeria's election process, in the parts that follow. In the literature, it also goes into detail on the circumstances that foster graft's growth. The EFCC and INEC, two crucial anti-graft organizations in the electoral governance space, are then highlighted. Assessing their jobs, relationships, and contextual challenges is the goal. and efficiency in battling political corruption and gaining knowledge for lessening it come 2011.

1.1 The notion of corruption

activities that are deemed immoral, including fraud, graft, bribery, stealing, perjury, lying, dishonesty, indiscipline, and debased activities like sexual immorality or perversion, are generally referred to as corruption. Economic and financial crimes, nepotism, prejudice, and bias in value allocation or decision-making are also considered corrupt practices. Therefore, corruption is an anti-social activity that deviates from the norm (Okojie and Momoh, 2019:1). Therefore, it can be concluded that corruption extends beyond the World Bank's limited definition of using public office for personal benefit (Ajiteru, 2023).

However, our practical definition of corruption will be based on the United Nations' recommendation in its "Manual on Anti-Corruption Policy III," which makes a distinction between the two significant types of corruption—grand and petty. Grand corruption includes anti-state activities like money laundering, 419 scams, looting, and the operation of illicit overseas bank vaults by both private citizens and public officials. Even if they are connected to grand corruption, other behaviors like immorality, dishonesty, and perjury will be classified as petty

corruption. Therefore, small corruption may refer to private corruption, whereas grand corruption is another phrase for public corruption. However, as one can learn from the other, the two are not mutually exclusive (Abalaka, 2023).

However, the term "grand corruption" is further explained by the occurrence of political corruption. The Nigerian State has seen significant social degeneration as a result of political or grand corruption, carrying Godfatherism, influence peddling, election rigging, vote buying and manipulation, manipulative political financing, embezzlement in office, and fraud are some of the rotten baggage that goes along with it. Political corruption, according to Aiyede (2016), is the misuse of governmental or public authority for unlawful private gain. Political corruption, according to Ajiteru (2023), is an attempt to get wealth or authority for personal gain by unlawful means (Sulaiman, 2023).

According to the Nigerian anti-corruption law, corrupt practices include, among other things, using financial advantage, giving dishonest advice in order to gain an advantage, working less than a full day for a full day's pay, being late or lazy for public office or tasks, and failing to report instances of inducement to anti-corruption bodies (Sulaiman, 2023). Thus, for our purposes, in Grand corruption, or the use of public office for private gain, will serve as our framework because we are studying Nigerian public life.

1.2 Signs of Corruption

1.2.0 Corruption in the Private Sector

Private corruption refers to unethical behavior by private individuals who are not part of the government. These could be people who are not affiliated with any institutions and engage in immoral activities, such as perversion, dementia, or fraud or scamming. The other group consists of individuals in the organized private sector who may commit fraud or other forms of theft in their businesses or who conspire with government officials to engage in dishonest financial activities.

In Nigeria, private corruption has taken the form of routine bribes to achieve a goal, violations of traffic regulations, plagiarism, piracy, school grade manipulation, illegal fuel pump price inflation by dealers, robbery, sexual gratification for promotion or better marks, etc. Abalaka (2023).

1.2.1 Corruption in Public

This is the well-known corruption that occurs within the government or by public servants and their private sector partners. Official, big, or institutional corruption are various terms for public corruption. This type of corruption involves people who hold public office. In this instance, those in positions of power take use of their position to steal from the commonwealth. Let's take a quick look at how public corruption manifests itself (Ajiteru, 2023):

i. Political corruption: This type of corruption arises in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government under democratic leadership. This degree of corruption is the higher as state funds are involved. Inflation of contract money, embezzlement of funds, misappropriation of funds, and personal and primal attachments in appointment and contract award are all important instances of public corruption in the executive. Nigeria's legislature has recently been in the news for high-profile bribery scandals (the Farouk Lawan-Femi Otedola bribery allegations and the Hembe-Oteh bribe scandal), in which the people they were investigating accused the chairmen of the House of Representatives probe panels of requesting and accepting bribes from the suspects. When the judiciary ignores a clear case of criminal activity, attempts to minimize the seriousness of a crime, or travesties justice for a specific political interest. The president of the Federal Court of Appeal was suspended due to allegations of collusion in electoral issues involving several western states, where the president allegedly acted in the advantage of a political party called Ajiteru (2023). The court has been in a crisis for a while.

ii. Bureaucratic corruption: In this case, corruption still occurs at the governmental level. It includes civil workers, technocrats, and public servants who carry out government directives. The people and leadership of ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) are among them. Since these government offices are in charge of allocating, releasing, and using funds, corruption at this level is at its worst. The employees are the ones who report and suggest the financial requirements of the units or projects, and it is they that carry out the payment and transfer. At this time, corruption becomes rampant. There have been instances where leaders of ministries and parastatals have been busted and charged with high-profile fraud and theft before appropriate courts and tribunals. Favoritism and nepotism in public office appointment, promotion, and compensation processes are further examples of bureaucratic corruption. Some people receive awards and promotions quickly because of their friendships, family, or religious or ethnic ties to the employer, whereas others never receive promotions due to such trivial factors.

iii. During the military regime in Nigeria, military corruption was possible. Ironically, the military was a system that viewed itself as a corrective measure against corrupt practices and poor leadership. That was the army's initial goal when they launched their attack in January 1966. However, we also know that the July counter coup was an ethnically motivated revolution intended to exact revenge for the previous coup's killing of several northerners. Because of this mindset, the professionalism that served as the foundation for the institution's "corrective" idea started to wane as corruption slowly infiltrated. As a result of several accusations made against General Gowon's state governors and military ministers, the military had degenerated by 1971. The situation worsened under the Babangida and Abacha regimes, who were exposed as the nation's two most corrupt presidents (TI, 2018).

iv. Additional types of institutional corruption: These additional types of institutional corruption consist of in the entertainment and media sectors, as well as within the labor movement. The media is especially notorious for the "brown envelope" or graft syndrome, which states that news reports can only be published if specific people or groups in the story pay for them to be published, if the reporter polishes their image for those who can afford it, or if negative stories are dropped after money has been paid to discredit them. In order to be cast in films, whether they are excellent or extremely poor, people may need to "sort" or "settle" with cash or sexual pleasure at musical or film auditions. The government occasionally compromises labor organizations to prevent them from taking part in industrial action or to betray the cause of the movement by fattening the accounts of labor leaders in order to "sort" them.

2. Explaining the Concept of Corruption

It goes without saying that there isn't a single, all-inclusive, and widely recognized definition of corruption. The process of developing a definition that is accepted by everyone would be drawn out and difficult. In any case, a functioning democracy with consultation and consensus among pertinent stakeholders would be necessary to develop such a definition. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's Global Programme against Corruption (UN Anti-Corruption Tool Kit, 2021), legal, criminological, and political issues are the main causes of the challenges in developing a consensus definition.

Despite the foregoing, it is important to assert that corruption does not always result in harm or loss in some situations. In this sense, laws and legislation have been created and modified to favor certain politicians in order to keep them in office. It will be challenging for the opposition political parties to actively engage in politics and reach their constituencies in Nigeria due to the country's constitution, legislation like the Public Order Act, and some provisions of the revised constitutions. Since 1999, this has contributed to the PDP's continued dominance. It's unclear if these situations are included in the harm and loss mentioned. Sulaiman (2023). It is important to note a few things regarding the numerous definitions provided above:

1. It is overly limited to define corruption as the misuse of public office for personal benefit; there are many more phenomena that are worthy of the term "corruption" than those that include the misuse of public authority for personal benefit. Examples include corruption incidents in the United States, Germany, and France that featured illegal party funding rather than personal benefit, as well as other elections in Africa (Nigeria and Zimbabwe) whose outcomes were purportedly tampered with. Abalaka (2023) supports this notion by pointing out that the concept is not appropriate for corruption of democratic processes.
2. A few of the definitions are overly general and could be interpreted incorrectly.
3. The majority of the aforementioned definitions assume that corruption occurs in the public sector, but the private sector is equally rife with corruption. This pertains to everyone who believes that corruption is the misuse, abuse, or exploitation of public authority, position, and power for personal gain (Senior, 2019).
4. In terms of forces preventing and combatting corruption, the definitions do not hold accountable everyone who fails to take action or who does not conduct adequate oversight.
5. Not all acts of corruption end in harm or loss, and it is crucial to remember that not all authority, position, and power are entrusted (Ajiteru, 2023). the misuse or participation in the misuse of resources, authority, or positions in the public or private spheres for one's own benefit.

3. From a theoretical standpoint:

The extractive corruption theory will serve as the analytical basis for this work. According to this idea, the State is the more powerful party in the relationship between the State and society. In other words, the corrupter is essentially a passive player, whereas the corrupted (the state or certain state agencies) gains the most from corruption. Importantly, the ruling class is the most powerful group in society; they use the state apparatus as a tool to extract resources based on the experience of new patrimonial states in particular and the functioning of authoritarian polities in general. In other words, the theory suggests that the state is not just

The SADC 2017 term will be used as the working definition for this study after all of the aforementioned concerns have been taken into account. SADC (2019:8) asserts that corruption is the most powerful force in society, although there are numerous power centers as well (Sulaiman, 2018). The well-known adage that "all power tends to corrupt" and "absolute power corrupts absolutely" is also emphasized by the idea. In other words, the more political power is concentrated in the hands of a few numbers of people, the more likely it is that power abuse, egotistical greed, and archaic accumulation will occur.

Once more, the idea asserts that the ruling class abuses state power mainly to protect their own corporate interests at the expense of the people. To get respect, they employ force, aggression, and persuasion. To limit participation and power, they may employ complex institutional arrangements such as presidentialism, a dominant-multi-single-party system (such as the ruling party in Nigeria), and the cooptation of competitors sharing (Nigerian Government of National Unity). They may employ electoral fraud and press censorship, create unfair laws and disregard those they have created, and violate human rights through torture, imprisonment, and political surveillance. In terms of the economy, authoritarian rulers use a variety of methods for private appropriation and economic accumulation, and political corruption is just one of them (Abalaka, 2023).

New-patrimonialism is another characteristic of the idea. That is, a type of political system with substantial political weaknesses, widespread patron-client structures, and a lack of demarcation between public and private pursuits. There is no separation between the public and private spheres under a fully patrimonial government, and the contemporary notion of corruption is absurd since the ruler's Since the ruler's favor is the only criterion for nomination to office, there is no nepotism

and personal wealth is equal to government revenue. According to Max Weber (2014), classical or traditional patrimonialism is when a person, not an office, is given the authority to rule and is used more through informal clientelist and nepotist behaviors than through powerful official channels of power.

Lastly, clientelism is another characteristic of this ideology. In exchange for money and political backing, patrons offer their clients positions, services, and public support through this intricate hierarchical network of patron-client connections. patrons at various levels to garner support by distributing and extracting riches and using these clientelist networks of reciprocities, prestige builds a pyramid of social difference. For example, national political office holders, contractors, traders, administrators, and others who operate as condescending middlemen relate to states and local governments as clients. In exchange for their patron's safety, leadership, and feeling of community, these low-class customers then provide their patron with labor, material and financial advantages, social prestige, ethno-religious support, and electoral support. The clientelist system reaches all the way up to the president of the republic, starting with the middlemen (Sulaiman, 2023).

Applying this theory to our discussion, I propose that incumbents can employ a variety of strategies to hold onto power, some of which are corrupt and criminal and many of which are quite legitimate. The dishonest application Using political power for the sake of maintaining and expanding it can be done by vote buying, co-optation, favoritism, clientelism, and patronage politics. The distribution of monetary gifts and rents, as well as symbolic values like status and "inclusion," are examples of the means. The manipulation of different monitoring and control institutions, which results in "impurity syndromes," is another example of the corrupt use of political power for the extension and retention of authority.

To combat corruption, for example, the Nigerian government established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in 2003. As part of a series of actions that resulted in Nigeria's expulsion from the Financial Action Task Force, the EFCC achieved some noteworthy successes, including the investigations into Alamieyesegha noncooperative list of the Force (FATF) in 2006. However, just months after detaining James Ibori, a significant associate of the recently dead Nigerian President Yar'Adua, Nuhu Ribadu, the controversial head of the EFCC, was fired in 2007. According to this, some Nigerian politicians might be more interested in an anti-corruption commission that reveals the wrongdoings of their predecessors than in one that identifies and eliminates corruption inside the present administration.

James Ibori's younger sister Christine-Ibori-Ibie and his female acquaintance Udoamaka Okoronkwo are already serving jail sentences in the UK for mortgage fraud and money laundering. A Southwark crown court in London found the two guilty on three counts and sentenced them to five years in jail. Regarding Okoronkwo, from May 20, 2005 and she earned over N105.5 million from the Delta state government on June 8, 2005. In three trenches, the funds were sent to her London-based HSBC account. The court also discovered that money from Okoronkwo's HSBC accounts was used to purchase a number of homes and other assets for Ibori (Sulaiman, 2018).

4.0 Commission on Economic and Financial Crimes (EFCC):

4.1 Context and Purpose

The second anti-corruption organization established by the President Obasanjo administration is the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Fighting economic and financial crimes is its main goal. In addition to being tasked with upholding the terms of various laws and regulations pertaining to economic and financial crimes, the Commission has the authority to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and sanction economic and financial crimes, including: Economic and Financial the Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, the Money

Laundering Act 1995, the Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act 2004, the Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts) and Financial Malpractices in Banks Act 1994, the Banks and other Financial Institutions Act 1991, the Crimes Commission Establishment Act (2021), and the Miscellaneous Offenses Act.

Cases pertaining to good governance, accountability, and openness in government are included in the scope of economic and financial crimes under its jurisdiction. Among other things, it looks into cases of official corruption, bribery of public officials, corruption in land allocation, money laundering, stock market fraud, tax fraud, oil bunkering, and diversion of public funds through fraudulent contract awards. As a result, the EFCC is very helpful in the fight against electoral fraud. In fact, it is an actual tool for encouraging responsible leadership. Former Bayelsa State Governor D.S.P. Alamieyeseigha was arrested in London in October 2005 thanks in large part to the EFCC. He was later impeached, prosecuted, and found guilty of corruption and money laundering in Nigeria (Abalaka, 2023).

The EFCC has been an impressive anti-corruption agency in Nigeria, as we have mentioned. It has had success in convicting and sentencing those involved in financial and economic crimes, including high-ranking men. Significant progress has also been achieved in the asset's recovery effort. Indeed, it is said to have been collaborating with a number of foreign law enforcement and intelligence agencies to address money laundering issues, particularly those involving certain Nigerian state governors. Its background will be extremely helpful in detecting voting fraud and associated wrongdoings Sulaiman (2023).

The problem, though, is the growing perception that the government uses the EFCC to deal with alleged foes and opponents. Its failure to look into the financial crimes connected to the 2003 elections has drawn criticism from some quarters. Others have objected to its refusal to look into the alleged bribery in the National Assembly during the discussion of the unsuccessful constitutional amendment bill that aimed to prolong the terms of state chief executives and the president. Additionally, it has been charged for disregarding the rule of law.

4.2 The Anti-Corruption Movement's Weaknesses

The first set of obstacles in Nigeria's fight against corruption are the institutional shortcomings of the Due Process Commission, EFCC, and ICPC. By their actions, the intuitions of commission and omission, seem to lack total autonomy. While the apparently successful EFCC can prosecute but seems unable to penalize, the ICPC is extremely sluggish to move and cannot, strictly speaking, prosecute. Due to their strong ties to the president who established them, the ICPC and EFCC have come to seem like tools of state pressure and mistreatment of both actual and perceived adversaries of the civilian government.

Both commissions' selective investigations and prosecutions lend credence to the aforementioned scenario, especially when it comes to cases of corruption involving politicians and private sector individuals who oppose federal government policies or President Olusegun Obasanjo's recently shelved third term bid. Of those present at the Tafa Balogun, Fabian Osuji, Alamieyesegha, Joshua Dariye, Bola Tinubu, Orji Uzor Kalu, Mike Adenuga, and, more recently, Ibrahim Babangida and Abubakar Atiku were on the federal government's white list until they somehow sided with the opposition (The News, 2019). According to Abalaka (2016), the EFCC and the entire anti-corruption apparatus appear to ignore corrupt cases, corrupt individuals, and corrupt organizations until they start to disagree with the president's policies and personal choices that have an impact on governance.

Balogun, Osuji, Alamieyesegha, Osomo, and other victims of the political witch hunt were successfully investigated and removed because they were culpable. However, many other accusations and cases were not investigated because they involved people who supported the administration. (2019, ThisDay). Additionally, there are constitutional restrictions. First,

compared to the accusations, the number of those found guilty by the courts is quite small. Despite having prima facie evidence of wrongdoing against most state governors, the ICPC and EFCC have been unable to bring charges against them due to limiting legal frameworks. According to the EFCC, the state governors collectively own foreign accounts valued at \$175 billion. As per the existing legislation, governors in office cannot face criminal charges until they resign from their positions (Abalaka, 2023).

74 public office holders, including the president, vice president, 36 state governors, and 36 deputy governors, are granted immunity by the 1999 Federal Constitution, which prevents them from facing criminal charges. imposed on them, or be detained or imprisoned while in office. These laws have been accused of impeding anti-corruption efforts because they primarily target high-ranking public officials who commit serious financial and economic crimes while enjoying immunity for the duration of their four-year or eight-year terms, if they are elected to a second term. For example, Okonjo-Iweala, the former finance minister of Nigeria, asserted that most governors travel abroad as soon as they get funds from the federal government, but they are not subject to arrest or prosecution (Independent, 2021).

Perjury by offenders, falsification of fact-finding by inquiry panels, information and record manipulation, destruction of records or evidence of corruption, and general lack of cooperation are some of Nigeria's other anti-corruption issues. either because they don't believe in the crusade or because corruption is so pervasive in the country.

4.3 Corrupt Practices' Effect on Governance

National growth is sacrificed on the altar of corruption. According to the BBC, corruption has costs that extend beyond its financial consequences. Its social, cultural, and political shortcomings have an overall impact on the country's progress. The repercussions on a country's social, cultural, and political life are more serious. Let's look at a few of these impacts.

4.4 The Burden of Governance and Poverty

A state's insolvency is the direct result of stolen wealth. Because it hinders the creation of jobs, this poses a serious challenge to the creation and distribution of wealth. The final effect is widespread unemployment and widespread poverty. Because there aren't enough resources to manage the government or complete development initiatives, the burden of governance increases.

4.5 Structural and Economic Underdevelopment

There are more gaps in structural development the fewer resources there are due to the treasury being depleted. Resources intended for many have been distributed to a select few. Underdevelopment and economic backwardness are the outcomes.

4.6 Unable to Regulate Other Types of Criminal Activity

A corrupt government, organization, or person would not have the courage or moral and legal basis to control or prosecute others, which is another structural issue corruption causes. Thus, it creates an environment where corrupt behaviors proliferate unchecked.

4.7 Obligation to Foreign Countries

The drained resources would need to be restocked. The state might repeatedly borrow money, which would increase its debt. The depletion of Nigeria's foreign and domestic reserves and increased foreign borrowing are examples of this.

As of March 31, 2013, Nigeria owned 6.6 billion USD in external debt, which included bonds and debts to the World Bank, African Development Bank, Exim Bank of China, and French Development Agency, among other organizations (DMO, 2018).

4.8 Institutions' inability to function

Institutions will not be able to operate or function and fulfill their mission if both persons and institutions are compromised. A system that is buffeted and in a constant state of chaos will result from this. Because of the disrespect for procedures, the government's institutional ability would undoubtedly deteriorate, as well as due process. The failure of organizations like Nigeria Airways, NITEL, the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), and commercial banks, among others, can be explained by this lack of capacity brought on by poor office and financial management.

4.9 Inadequate Productivity and Service

Once more, the compromised system hires staff members based on feelings rather than qualifications. As a result, mediocrities are used, which directly affects output and service quality. Favoritism and nepotism in public service, appointments, and value distribution are the key concerns here. Poor service delivery results from the denial of qualified workers who can perform exceptional tasks and the engagement of inept friends, family members, or those who have bribed to gain the jobs. Ajiteru (2023).

4.10 Risks to National Security

Security staff who are compromised might take little to no action to safeguard people and property. Citizens run the danger of consuming phony or contaminated medications in areas where corruption has impacted the food and health sectors. According to numerous reports, the Boko Haram security threat and other instances of armed gangs on the rampage defeating the security system have either been made possible by bribed security personnel or have been able to defeat a security network that has been undermined by corruption (Abraham, 2018).

Corruption also has major social and political repercussions, such as the judiciary undermining the rule of law, public administrators providing unfair and ineffective services, the legitimacy of the government being undermined, democratic values of trust and tolerance being undermined, and, of course, a negative external image of the nation. According to Sulaiman (2018), Nigeria has been dealing with these issues for years as a result of widespread corruption in the country.

5. Difficulties

The court is one of the main obstacles the EFCC's Advisory List must overcome. In the 2006 case of Oyewole Fasawe and the Attorney General of the Federation, the Supreme Court held that the EFCC could not prevent an individual from running for office. "The EFCC investigation report in Exhibit 2 attached, prepared and submitted by EFCC to the President of Nigeria as averred in the affidavit, has probative value," Justice Inumidun Akande ruled. This is due to the fact that the Act's Sections 5 and 6 outline the duties and unique authority of the second respondent (EFCC). The Abalaka (2023) states that "functions do not include the power to prepare the report as in Exhibit 2 and submit it to the President of Nigeria."

The Supreme Court also decided that INEC did not have the authority to bar a candidate from running for office based only on the EFCC list. "Section 137(1) of the 1999 Constitution does not confer on INEC the power to disqualify any candidate from contesting election, either expose or by necessary implication," the court said in the case of INEC and Atiku Abubakar. Furthermore, INEC is not given the authority to dismiss any candidate anywhere in the constitution (Eme, 2019).

I believe that Atiku and his close friend Fasawe prevailed in their cases because the Supreme After sensing persecution, the court justice decided to take former President Obasanjo to task. The decision was political. However, it is a ruling of the nation's highest court and a law in and of itself, regardless of whether it was political (Sulaiman, 2023).

The problem presented by the 1999 Constitution is related to the aforementioned. The 2007 constitutional crises and tenure extension brought on by the EFCC's advisory list are not quickly

forgotten by Nigerians. Some candidates were prohibited from running in the elections by INEC because they were on the list. It stopped Alhji Ibrahim Bapetal, the Action Congress candidate in Adamawa, and Prince Abubakar Audu, the All-Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) candidate in Kogi State. The narrative was repeated in numerous other states.

Following Atiku's successful appeal against his exclusion, the candidates who had been disqualified from the 2007 elections went to the tribunal one after the other. The tribunals canceled the elections and ordered INEC to hold new elections in which the disqualified candidates had to be permitted to take part. The rerun elections were won by all of the current governors. Some governors desire to serve five or six years in office for a single term, which is precisely the cause of the current constitutional impasse.

An additional threat is presented by the political parties. The EFCC and INEC collaborated in 2007. The anti-graft agency is in contact with the parties in 2010. The parties should so fulfill their moral obligation and rights by keeping out those who are currently under EFCC prosecution. Since the Supreme Court criticized INEC in 2007, it is assumed that since this is an internal affair, the parties are safeguarded this time. Despite its persuasiveness, this argument is not infallible, according to Ajiteru (2023).

First, until you are proven guilty, our legal system assumes you are innocent. The prosecution bears the burden of proof. What happens if your party doesn't establish its case in court and disqualifies you from running for office, say, governor because the EFCC is pursuing you? It indicates that your bid to be elected governor has been unfairly rejected. For the moment, Despite this, you are assumed to be innocent. Therefore, it would be incorrect for a party to remove you due to an advisory list from an anti-graft organization Abalaka, (2023).

Second, in the 2007 Chibuike Amaechi case, he won the People's Democratic Party's primary for governor. However, Obasanjo dismissed him, citing an EFCC right, and replaced him with Celestine Omehia as the PDP's nominee. Based on the EFCC charge, the Supreme Court once more declared that the PDP was in violation of the law for dismissing Amaechi. Despite the fact that Amaechi did not even print a poster or run for office, it stated that he was the legitimate PDP candidate in the governorship race and proclaimed him the winner. What this indicates once more is that an EFCC indictment cannot be used by any party to disqualify a candidate. A court of law must be involved.

Furthermore, it might be challenging to identify people who are politically exposed, especially if the client supplies inaccurate information or neglects to supply essential information. Even with all of the banks' efforts to identify PEPs, it is a truth that they lack the necessary authority, resources, or knowledge to identify these people. The information that banks can access is limited. Client-provided information, which can be obtained via business records or the media, is what they must rely on. Specifically, it is frequently not feasible for PEPs' relatives or close colleagues to establish a business partnership with a bank. to create such relationship—a "PEP relationship"—based on the banks' scant knowledge. Additionally, this presents another difficulty for election administration organizations and anti-corruption agencies (Sulaiman, 2023).

A British High Street bank was recently accused by Global Witness (2020) of taking millions of pounds in deposits from dishonest Nigerian politicians, casting doubt on their dedication to combating financial crime. Barclays, Nat West, RBS, HSBC, and UBS contributed to the entrenchment of poverty and corruption in Nigeria between 1999 and 2005 by accepting financial contributions from dishonest Nigerian governors. This incident is particularly noteworthy because almost all of these institutions were previously under the Financial Service Authority (FSA), the UK banking regulation, in 2001 for allegedly aiding former Nigerian Sanni Abacha, the tyrant, smuggled around a billion pounds into the United Kingdom. According to this investigation, these

banks were once again taking corrupt Nigerian money after they were supposed to have tightened their systems.

Another obstacle to revealing PEPs is the involvement of foreign banks and their regulatory agencies. The source of tens of millions of dollars seized from two Nigerian governors accused of corruption was not sufficiently investigated by five major UK banks, according to a 40-page analysis published by Global Witness on October 10, 2010. The research claims that "banks appear less concerned about dirty money passing through their accounts but are quick to penalize ordinary customers for minor infractions" (Global Witness, 2020:2). The report continues by asserting that "without a bank willing to process payments from daily sources, or hold accounts for corrupt politicians, large scale corruption is simply not possible" (Global Witness 2020:4).

While acknowledging that Barclays, Nat West, Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS), HSBC, and Switzerland's UBS may not have broken the law in accepting the money, Global Witness pointed out that the Financial Services Authority (FSA) needs to do more to stop money laundering through British banks (Sulaiman, 2018). To stop banks from aiding corruption, the FSA must take far greater action. Regulators have not yet officially penalized or even named any British banks for accepting corrupt funds, whether knowingly or unknowingly (Global Witness, 2020:6). This stands in sharp contrast to the US, where banks that handled illicit funds have been hit with fines totaling hundreds of millions of dollars.

Lastly, a complete PEP compliance solution presents a hurdle. Even if the World Check database has hundreds of thousands of PEPs, the issue of compliance obligations persists. Importantly, the system's capacity to recognize and evaluate PEP risk is equally as important as the sheer volume of PEP profiles in the database. More than 75% of the top Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) in the globe have access to globe Check PEP risk intelligence, according to World Check (2020). World-Check prioritizes quality over quantity and aims to assist companies in recognizing and reducing real PEP risk rather than just "checking the boxes" and verifying PEP's stance. Every month, the World-Check PEP database receives thousands of new profiles, and as new public source data becomes available, previous profiles are continuously updated (Abalaka, 2023).

5. The Price of Corruption in Politics

Transparency International (TI) recently received the Corruption Perception Index 2020. Nigeria did not improve from the previous year (see table below). TI is well-known for creating an annual global Corruption Perception Index (CPI) that gauges public opinion regarding corruption in a variety of domestic sectors, i.e., at the governmental level. The index is based on comprehensive surveys with entrepreneurs and analysts who are familiar with each environment. Additionally, Nigeria's CPI showed that it ranked 134th out of the assessment's 178 counties. Nigeria ranked 130th in 2019. She finished 121st in 2018. We received a pitiful 2.4 out of 10 points in 2020 (a score of 10 indicates "highly clean" status, while a score of zero indicates stratospheric levels of corruption).

Nigeria's rating since 2006 is shown in the table below:

Table 1 below examines Nigerians position from 2006 to 2020. Table I: Corruption Perception Index Rankings

Year	Rankings
2006	54 out of 54
2007	52 out of 52
2008	81 out of 85
2009	98 out of 99
2010	90 out of 90
2011	90 out of 91

2012	101 out of 102
2013	132 out of 133
2014	144 out of 146
2015	152 out of 158
2016	150 out of 163
2017	32 out of 147
2018	121 out of 150
2019	130 out of 150
2020	134 out of 178

Source: Eme, (2020:404) "Corruption in Nigerian Government Institutions: A Case of Police Equipment Fund, Journal of Liberal Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, pp 440-458.

In other words, Nigeria is one of the most dishonest nations on the African continent, if not the entire world, and it is also becoming more and more entangled in the muck of corruption every year. The following are included in the cost of corruption: In terms of politics, corruption is a significant barrier to democracy and the rule of law. When institutions and offices are abused for personal gain, they lose their validity in a democracy. This is detrimental to democracies that are already established, but it is even more detrimental to those that are just starting to emerge. A corrupt environment prevents the development of accountable political leadership (Abalaka, 2023).

Mohammed Bello Adoke, the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the Federation, just released a letter after the EFCC released a contentious advisory list of politicians facing corruption trials, a letter was sent to the agency's head, Farida Waziri, requesting that she calm down. The government appears more focused on appearances, despite the commission's adamant denial that it is giving itself the authority to prevent anyone from running. Adoke is worried that overzealous anti-graft agencies would give the idea that the administration is using them to witch-hunt opponents, which is why he wrote a letter instructing Waziri and others to "cool it."

Once more, Justice Emmanuel Ayoola, the head of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offenses Commission (ICPC), sharply criticized the National Assembly and the Executive branch for underfunding the commission. It is an exceptional circumstance when the agency's head vents his annoyance. public underfunding. However, who is to blame for the chairmen?

Economically speaking, corruption causes the nation's wealth to decline. Since gaining independence, corruption has been fueled by Nigeria's possession of some of the world's greatest oil reserves. The average life expectancy in 2007 was 48 years, and more than half of Nigerians still lacked access to clean water, despite the country earning around 370 billion US dollars in oil and gas exports between 2000 and 2008 alone (UNDP Reports, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2017, and 2019). The depletion of national wealth frequently causes limited public resources to be directed toward unprofitable, high-profile projects like refineries, power plants, pipelines, and dams at the expense of less spectacular but essential infrastructure projects such as roads, schools, hospitals, or the provision of water and electricity to both rural and urban communities. Additionally, it distorts competition and prevents the growth of just market structures, which discourages investment.

It erodes people's faith in the political system, its institutions, and its leadership on a societal level. A disillusioned populace's frustration and widespread indifference lead to a poor civil society. Despots and democratically elected but dishonest leaders can then use this to convert national resources into personal profit. Bribery demands and payments became commonplace. Those who refuse to cooperate frequently leave the country, depleting the political system of its most capable and upright citizens. For example, Mohammed Bello Adoke, the Justice Minister and Federal

Attorney General, on Thursday, He was unsuccessful in his attempt on October 28, 2010, to have the federal government drop the criminal charges against Fidelis Anosike and others for allegedly converting N3 billion worth of Daily Times Nigeria assets fraudulently.

According to Justice Pat Ajoku of the Federal High Court in Lagos, Adoke has the authority to drop criminal charges against anyone in line with Section 174 (1 and 2) of the 1999 constitution. However, Adoke must use this authority in the public interest and to avoid abusing the legal system. Justice Ajoku emphasized, "I have observed that the complainant is on his own," when asked why the AGF handling a matter would decline to collaborate with the complainant. It seems that the AGF has abandoned him rather than working with him (Abalaka, 2016). Degradation of the environment is yet another effect of corrupt systems. Historically, the Western world has been able to export its polluting industry to developing countries due to the absence or non-enforcement of environmental laws and regulations.

In recent months, the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) has been embroiled in controversy regarding its toxic waste alarms. The agency's alert has been referred to as "false" on multiple occasions because, upon closer inspection, the containers holding "toxic waste" turned out to be used electronics, including air conditioners, refrigerators, television sets, and video recorders, among other items (Sulaiman, 2018).

The way in which Some stakeholders are criticizing the agency for voicing concerns about the importation of toxic trash and for detaining the ship afterward. They see this as an attempt by the agency to join the long list of government organizations that work at the ports.

The most recent detention of an American who allegedly escaped detention has drawn more criticism for the agency Abalaka (2023), despite the fact that the agency has successfully detained three ships in the past, examined the consignments alongside other security personnel at the ports, and ordered the ship to return the goods to the port of origin on each occasion. At the same time, both domestic and foreign parties are recklessly exploiting the country's resources, including minerals, timber, and wildlife. Natural habitats have been devastated by agents. Funding for environmentally damaging projects is prioritized because they are prime candidates for embezzlement of public funds into private coffers. Ajiteru (2023).

6. Final Results

This study has looked at the phenomena of corruption in Nigeria, defining its sources, manifestations, and implications for the country's growth. The chapter also looked at a few instances of high-level corruption and how it has impacted Nigerian politics and government since independence. It conducted a historical investigation of corruption and found that it has been in Nigeria from the pre-colonial period of Western inroads into Africa. It also found that the Post-Colonial State has become more corrupted due to a number of societal issues, such as poverty, greed, selfishness, and similar things. It goes without saying that in order to combat political corruption in the electoral process, the EFCC and other anti-corruption agencies must work together. This is due to the fact that political corruption erodes democracy. Compromised democratic values, growing political apathy among voters, mistrust of the electoral process and authority, and the comfort of authoritarian tendencies in the polity are all consequences of political corruption. In this section of the article, these issues were examined. Certain circumstances are said to serve as fertile environment for political corruption in the literature. For example, a sad and uneducated public, self-serving insular cliques, and a weak judicial system are all conducive to political corruption.

The anti-corruption movement's advantages and disadvantages were noted with the disastrous consequences for nation-building brought to light. The anti-corruption war must be fierce and supported by innovative and methodical tactics due to the grave implications corruption poses to the country. The executive branch of government should no longer have authority over anti-

corruption organizations. They ought to be free from political corruption. Instead, the judiciary—especially the Supreme Court, which is frequently separate from the Executive or Presidency—should be in charge of and answerable to these authorities. Additionally, the anti-corruption agencies should be led by a Supreme Court judge with a reputation for being straightforward and brave, and they should be composed of individuals with a track record of integrity who have never connected with any political party.

7. Suggestions

Given that political corruption has as a danger to the expansion and advancement of democracy, strategies for addressing the issue must be developed and articulated. Some of the suggestions are included below:

1. Voter education and political awareness of Nigerian election and political corruption laws are necessary.
2. To deal with situations involving political corruption, INEC, EFCC, and other security and anti-corruption organizations should be given complete authority. Laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to anticorruption should be stated in plainer language and made available to the general public.
3. In order to establish their independence and foster honesty among its ranks, the EFCC and INEC require leadership that commands legitimacy.
4. The creation of an anti-corruption court is necessary that will oversee all criminal prosecutions of dishonest public officials and governments.

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