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主 論 文 の 要 旨

論文題目

Title

Functional Corruption in Nigeria:
Political Stability, Inter-ethnic Elite Alliance and 'Bring Back Our
Corruption' Movement

(Translation of Title *If any)

ナイジェリアにおける腐敗の諸機能： 政治的安定、民族エリート間連合、
「我々の腐敗を返せ」運動

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論 文 内 容 の 要 旨

Main Argument

Two notions run through the literature on corruption. The first is that corruption in public governance promotes political instability. The second is that the masses are always the victims of corruption; therefore, they are eager to support anti-corruption measures. However, this study contends that contemporary experiences in Nigeria tend to negate these notions.

Despite humungous corruption under the post-1999 democratic dispensation in Nigeria, there has been relative political stability compared to the period before 1999. Furthermore, the masses (supposed victims of corruption) harshly resisted Nigeria's post-2015 anti-corruption campaign. The resistance was expressed through the Bring Back Our Corruption (BBOC) counter-campaign which called for a return to the period of pervasive and unhindered corruption.

These deviations from intuition and the mainstream literature raise questions to which conventional understandings do not seem to have answers. The study thus addresses two research

questions:

- i. Why has Nigeria maintained political stability since democratisation in 1999 despite widespread corruption?
- ii. Why did the masses oppose Nigeria's post-2015 anti-corruption programme even though they are considered victims of corruption?

The study argues that the experience of Nigeria tends to point to the largely ignored functionality of corruption in high-corruption states. In such states, the contexts may exist for corruption to function to promote political stability and informal welfare provision for poor masses. The study proposes two levels of interconnected analyses to reveal these contexts. The first is to examine how historically politically unstable states (due to fierce elite struggle for rents) that have transitioned to relative stability sustain the tenuous stability. The second is to determine the nature of the interaction between the governing elite and ordinary citizens where the formal welfare system is weak, socioeconomic vulnerability is high, and opportunities abound for elite-masses informal transactional exchanges.

While these contexts markers can enable us to identify cases where corruption has the potential to be functional, certain conditions may have to be present within these contexts to make corruption functional in the regards claimed in this study. In the case of Nigeria, where the contexts exist, the fulfilment of the necessary conditions accounts for why the post-1999 period has experienced political stability despite humungous corruption, and why a citizens-led 'anti-anti-corruption' movement on the scale of the BBOC resistance greeted the post-2015 war on corruption.

As to why post-1999 Nigeria has recorded unprecedented stability despite pervasive corruption, the study identifies the following condition:

- Elites form informal cross-ethnic alliance and institutions to share rents.

As to why the BBOC resistance emerged contrary to the intuition that as victims of corruption, the masses will back anti-corruption efforts, the study identifies the following conditions:

- The masses were embedded in patron-client relations.
- The masses were dependent on patronage for their livelihood.
- The post-2015 war on corruption began with unprecedented intensity and coverage.

Chapter Breakdown

In chapter one, the study provides a background to corruption in the developing world and the scale of its deleteriousness. The chapter points out the inadequacy of the overwhelming inclination among scholars to study corruption only from the viewpoint of its non-functionality and why this may be counterproductive to a balanced understanding of corruption and why anti-corruption policies might fail in states like Nigeria. The chapter introduces the case for exploring the functional corruption approach for relevant insights. The chapter describes the method of data collection – consolidation of qualitative primary and secondary data obtained through oral interviews, personal observation, semi-netnography (on Facebook), peer-reviewed journal articles, textbook, news sources and other relevant materials.

Chapter two provides a clarification of the key concepts and variables in the study. The chapter undertakes an analysis of the functional approach, its application in diverse disciplines, before narrowing down on its history and application in the study of corruption. The chapter reviews the literature on political stability from the non-functional and functional perspectives and clarifies the study's position in the debate, particularly with regards to understanding the experience of Nigeria. It is in this chapter that the condition for corruption-stability nexus in post-1999 Nigeria, and conditions for the BBOC pushback against the post-2015 war on corruption are articulated as the study's analytical framework.

Chapter three begins data analysis. This chapter provides a historical background of the origins

of corruption, ethnic hostilities, political instability and failure of formal welfare provision in Nigeria from 1960-1998. The chapter demonstrates why this was Nigeria's most unstable period due to conflicts over rents by ethnic civilian and military elites. The period witnessed a chain of military regimes brought about by incessant coups. The chapter further shows how, although corruption was widespread under the military, much of the corruption was in the monopoly of a tiny band of ethnic elites in each military regime. Due to the lack of inclusivity of corruption, the condition was unfulfilled for corruption to perform a political stabilisation function.

Chapter four discusses the evolution of corruption from a driver of political instability to a tool for building informal cross-ethnic elite alliance and institutions to share rents, facilitating elite cooperation, and maintaining relative political stability from 1999 to 2014. This began with the transition to democracy in 1999. Democratisation not only liberalised politics, but it also democratised corruption. The chapter shows how the predication of elite consensus and political stability on the politics of corrupt settlement further weakened formal welfare provision and expanded opportunities for elite-masses informal welfare exchanges. The chapter notes that although the condition for corruption to function to promote political stability was fulfilled during this period, those for popular anti-corruption reactions were not, due to the absence of intense and comprehensive anti-corruption enforcement efforts.

Chapter five shows how, following the execution of an intense and comprehensive war on corruption in 2015, both the elite and masses reacted with hostility. While elites seemed to have strained the delicate stability to derail the war on corruption, the masses responded with the BBOC pushback. The study infers that the hostility was because the fight against corruption, by its intensity and coverage, disrupted the settlement politics that since 1999 sustained cross-ethnic elite consensus and support for political stability. By so doing, the war on corruption disrupted the flow of patronage from elites to their poor clientele. Given that the masses had come to depend on patronage for their livelihood since 1999, the post-2015 anti-corruption campaign became counterproductive to their

wellbeing, thus provoking the hostile reaction.

Chapter six concludes the study. In answer to the research questions, the study makes the following inferences:

- i. By 1999, elites succeeded at creating informal cross-ethnic alliance and institutions to share rent. Thus, in the democratic dispensation, corruption evolved from a trigger of political instability to a tool for stabilising elite relations, and ultimately, the political system. The ensuing politics of corrupt settlement incentivised previously antagonistic rent-seeking military and civilian elites to maintain cross-ethnic alliance and support for stability. However, sustaining elite accord and the fragile stability required moderating anti-corruption efforts and perpetuating the regime of corruption.
- ii. The regime of corruption broadened elite-masses transactional exchanges and proceeds from corruption provided a crucial informal safety net for vulnerable Nigerians. Hence, by 2015, the masses were deep in patronage exchanges, and their subsistence depended considerably on the availability of patronage. By its unprecedented initial intensity and coverage, the post-2015 anti-corruption programme disrupted the flow of patronage from elites to the masses while formal welfare remained inadequate. The further deterioration in socioeconomic conditions of ordinary Nigerians while the safety net of corruption was undermined, provoked the BBOC resistance.

The study's uniqueness is its deviation from the typical understandings that have come to define the functional corruption scholarship. Traditional functional corruption studies measure the functionality of corruption by how much acts deemed as corrupt lead to positive outcomes with utilitarian benefits. Traditional functionalists gauge the functionality of corruption mostly by how much it facilitates bureaucratic efficiency, service delivery, political development, economic growth and equal opportunities for prosperity. This study pushes the boundary by making two arguments.

The first is that even where corruption produces none of these outcomes, it could still be functional. The second is that where corruption is functional in overlooked regards, anti-corruption policies and programmes may have a high risk of failure due to resistance by those who intuitively should support such efforts.